

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee Meeting

MINUTES

March 2, 2007

Mosier Creek Terrace

Mosier, Oregon

Members Attending: Jerry Igo, Jack Wiles, Rich Watanabe for Jason Tell, Ernie Drapela, William Pattison, Marc Berry

ODOT Staff Attending: Kristen Stallman, Robert Hadlow

Others Attending: See Attached List

Call to Order: William Pattison, Chair, called the meeting to order. The Advisory Committee approved the minutes of the November 16, 2006, meeting without changes.

Mosier Pit Presentation: Peter Shames, representing Hood River Sand and Gravel, distributed a report outlining the proposal to allow access to the gravel pit via a new bridge over Rock Creek. He described his proposal, in context, to the HCRH Advisory Committee and asked the Committee to focus their attention on the potential adverse effects the haul road would have. He felt the purpose of today's meeting was to open the dialogue between Hood River Sand and Gravel and the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee. He discussed his previous meetings with Oregon Parks and Recreation and ODOT Region 4 regarding the proposal. He explained that this proposal will require a conditional use permit from Wasco County. It has been his experience that these permits typically take 2-3 years to process. He described the land use process as a very public process with plenty of opportunities for public comment and participation.

Hood River Sand and Gravel has an existing conditional use permit for the property for use as a gravel pit but their access to the pit is not permitted. Marc Berry inquired about the maximum weight of the trucks. Peter replied that a truck load includes 30 tons of rock but he wasn't sure of the total load's weight. Marc asked about the load capacity of the Rock Creek Road. Peter explained that the highway has been historically used for industrial and agricultural uses. Sam Wilkins, ODOT's Region 4 Manager, replied that Rock Creek Bridge could handle the loads.

Peter explained that his existing conditional use permit limits Hood River Sand and Gravel to hauling 30 loads per day. Each truck load could haul up to 50 tons of rock. The Conditional Use permit limits the hours of operation to Monday –Friday, 7:00 am to 5:30 pm, and 8:00 am – 1:00 pm on Saturdays. The permit prohibits blasting. The loads would be hauled to their Hood River site which is also on the Historic Highway in Hood River.

Peter clarified that by 30 trips he meant 30 trips to and 30 trips away from the site. He said the proposal also includes a provision that the haul road and proposed bridge could be shared by hikers and bikers who were accessing the community of Mosier from the HCRH State Trail. He further detailed how this provision would improve access for and the safety of the Historic Columbia River Highway's users by removing them from Rock Creek Road which is narrow and is subject to speeding cars.

Jack Wiles asked Cliff Houck, OPRD Real Estate Manager, to describe the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's approval process. Cliff explained that using park property in this manner typically would require a revocable permit or license. The department does not like to grant easements because they are too permanent but a license allows OPRD to include conditions of approval, which allow the department to monitor the proposal to see if it is in compliance. If it was not, the license could be revoked. Cliff explained that he has urged Hood River Sand and Gravel to explore issues with the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee and to clarify potential development ramifications associated with encroachment upon a section of the National Scenic Area. Cliff described the State Parks Commission's structure to the audience. He explained that this Commission would need to approve the license. Cliff added that Hood River Sand and Gravel permitting issue is on the Parks Commission's March 8 meeting agenda in Salem but as an informational item only. The Parks Commission would be very interested in public input and also would be interested in formal recommendations from the HCRH Advisory Committee, Hood River County and the City of Mosier.

Cliff Houck provided his phone number to the audience in the event any one had questions or concerns about the State Park's Commission's approval process: 503-986-0731. The next OPRD Commission meeting following the March meeting will be on May 10, 2007. This would be the earliest possible date that the Commission could take action on this proposal.

There was discussion regarding the contact names on the mailing lists. It was decided that those in the audience who signed the Friends of Mosier's Mailing list would be included on the ODOT mailing list for the Historic Columbia River Highway.

Peter Shames explained that, due to current litigation, Hood River Sand and Gravel is investigating the possibility of using the original haul route as a second alternative to access the site. A June 26th trial date has been set to resolve this issue.

John Bloomster asked if the current demand for rock increased, would the number of truck trips increase as well. Peter Shames explained the demand forecasts are constant for at least the next 10 years.

Peter Shames explained the pit's operation schedule as per their conditional use permit. The pit cannot operate between May 15 and September 30. This closure coincides with the high use times along the trail. No blasting or processing is allowed on site. No changes are proposed to the existing conditional use permit.

Brent Foster, Executive Director for the Columbia River Keeper, described the restoration of Rock Creek for the committee and said the industrial haul route would adversely impact the stream. Brent expressed the need for a third option; Hood River Sand and Gravel could transfer ownership of the pit to the City of Mosier or another entity which could then discontinue its use as a gravel pit.

He also cited concerns with the number of trucks and the impact to the city's road as well as the state's trail. He raised additional concerns regarding the atmospheric impacts associated with dust and diesel fumes. He urged Hood River Sand and Gravel to sit down with the community to discuss options for acquisition. He explained that the proposed trail realignment through the gravel pit does not fully mitigate the impacts associated with the gravel extraction operation just because it

removes the users from the Historic Highway. He urged Hood River Sand and Gravel to work with the community to save the community from a contentious process.

Peter Cornielson, representing the Friends of the Gorge, explained that the Friends are trying to better understand the proposal and they are very concerned with adverse impacts to the Historic Highway. Substantive comments on the proposal will follow this meeting. This would allow the Friends the time to better understand the proposal.

Ron Carroll, representing the Friends of Mosier, read from prepared comments. His comments are attached.

Susan Conklin, prior owner of the Wildflower Café, described the appeal of the Historic Highway. Many of her patrons biked to her business on the old highway. February is an important month for the business as this is when the Grass Widows are in bloom and it marks the start of the wildflower season. This timing conflicts with the gravel pit's operation schedule. The Historic Columbia River Highway is touted in National magazines and is the city's pride and joy. She encouraged the committee to protect this asset by not granting approval to the gravel pit owners to use the highway as a haul road.

Holly Gore raised concerns with joggers and other users confronting gravel trucks on narrow Rock Creek Road. She also discussed potential issues with weight limits on the historic Rock Creek Bridge.

Greg Koonce described conflicts with joggers with strollers confronting log trucks on narrow Rock Creek Road. He explained that an industrial haul road and a bicycle path are not compatible users.

Mac Jervey, from the Wasco County Planning Commission, explained that the gravel pit is located outside the city of Mosier but within the City Urban Growth Boundary. Typically, the county applies the city's zoning regulations to these areas. He was doubtful that a conditional use permit would be issued if the proposal was required to meet the city's development code restrictions. Under most circumstances, this would require a recommendation for approval to the County Commission from the City Council and the Mayor.

Jeanette Kloos, representing the Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway, explained that it is important to keep recreational users on the original alignment of the historic highway where these alignments still exist to help the users better understand and learn about the resource.

Ray Jackson expressed concerns for dust and potential additional respiratory problems for those who already have difficulty breathing.

Iva Harmon discussed impacts to the Rock Creek Park. She stated that she collects fees for use of the park and that this project would have a negative impact on recreational use of the park. She stated that Rock Creek Road and the freeway overpass is a choke point in Mosier and that there is concern regarding negative impacts to traffic movement on and off the Interstate 84.

In closing Peter Shames explained that there is 2 million tons of rock that need to be removed from the pit prior to any site restoration. There are challenges and opportunities associated with getting the material out of the pit.

Wall and Gutter Update: Matt Joerin, representing FHWA's Western Federal Lands Highway Division in Vancouver, described himself as Dave Sell's replacement and said that he is filling in for George Fekaris. Using PowerPoint, Matt gave a wrap-up presentation on the Gutters and Wall project which included gutter restoration and extensive wall restoration along the highway. The project revealed four different types of gutters. Following the presentation, the committee discussed maintenance of the gutters and what methods will be appropriate for maintaining the gutters. Kristen informed the committee that she will be working with Larry Olson, the new ODOT District 2C Manager, to provide the maintenance crews with an overview of the Highway, its significance, and opportunities to brainstorm better management and maintenance practices for the key resources along the highway. It was suggested by some that it would be nice to have a map of the gutters and gutters types to aid in the maintenance/scheduling. The Committee encouraged the HCRH AC to work with the maintenance crews to develop a sense of ownership with the crews, as they are the "stewards" of the highway.

HCRH Sign Plan Review: Robert Hadlow gave an update on the Historic Columbia River Highway Sign Plan Project. He described how the project had moved forward since he reported to the Committee last fall. Since then, an ODOT traffic engineer conducted a thorough review of signs on the HCRH and Interstate 84 in the Gorge. He found that many of the guide signs on the HCRH are outmoded or confusing in their message. Some are simply worn out. He recommended placing new guide signs along the Highway. They would not include references to "Historic Highway" or "Scenic Highway," as they do at present. Instead, new signs would only have references to destinations. Historic US 30 shields with directional arrows would appear on the guide sign posts. Other Historic US 30 shields appear along the route for assurance. A new scenic byway sign would incorporate the HCRH keystone and would appear at entrances to the Highway. At present, ODOT sign designers and engineers are working on a draft sign plate.

Cascade Avenue and Mount Adams: Scott Mansur, DKS Associates, and Dave Bick, Public Works Director for Hood River, gave a presentation on the proposed roadway improvements for Cascade Avenue and the proposed Mount Adams Avenue. The City of Hood River has a planned street project that will construct a new north/south roadway - Mt. Adams (formerly 34th Street) - to provide connectivity between Cascade Avenue and May Street to the south. As part of this project, Country Club Road would be realigned to intersect with Mt. Adams Street south of Cascade Avenue. This will improve the spacing between Country Club Road and the Exit 62 off ramps. The goal of this study is to determine costs for future traffic signals associated with the new roadway and to determine the PM peak hour traffic volumes from anticipated developments expected over the next five years. Future developments would be charged a supplemental street system development charge to pay for these future improvements.

Based on the anticipated developments, the future operation of Cascade Avenue and Mount Adams Street intersections would not meet ODOT's .85 VC mobility standard. In order to meet ODOT's

standards, an eastbound right turn lane is needed. This, however, does not comply with the Hood River HCRH Programmatic Agreement.

Dave Bick presented the two options. One option illustrates the Programmatic Agreement but does not meet ODOT's mobility standard. The second option does not comply with the Programmatic Agreement but meets the ODOT mobility standard. The committee discussed future developments and questioned how the committee could agree to anything not in the Programmatic Agreement.

Dave Bick discussed potential mitigations that the City would consider such as different paving for the right turn lane to provide emphasis on the original roadway width.

No action was taken. The Committee agreed to discuss the matter further and do additional research into amending the Programmatic Agreement.

Staff Project Updates: Kristen Stallman announced that she had applied for the Scenic Byway Grant to implement the sign plan and an Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands Grant to further assess the southern trail alignment between Moffett Creek and McCord Creek. Region 1 has also applied for additional funds to restore the Crown Point Viaduct through the Public Lands Highway Discretionary Funds Grant Program. Additional funds from this same program are being sought to enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity in and around the Sandy River Delta and Lewis and Clark State Park. Additional connectivity in this area would have a positive impact on the connections to the Historic Columbia River Highway.

Kristen provided an update on the Cascade Locks Interchange project. The Committee met in a work session and developed a preferred cross section for Forest Lane. Magnus Bernhardt, ODOT's Region 1 Landscape Architect, is working with Wayne Stewart, of the Advisory Committee, to finalize this recommendation for review and approval by the Committee so that we can formally request this cross section be considered by the signatories of the Programmatic Agreement, since an amendment will be necessary to accommodate future traffic projections.

ODOT Updates: Sam Wilkins, ODOT District 9 Manager, provided an update to the committee on the upcoming I-84 bridge bundles in the Gorge. The Mosier Bridge will be let in December 2007 and is on a quick timeline. It has been a normal winter along the highway with routine maintenance issues. There were some rock fall issues along the Rowena Crest that have been addressed. A hazard tree has been removed adjacent to the Rowena Pit.

Larry Olson, ODOT District 2C Manager introduced himself to the committee. Larry is extremely interested in the highway and is looking forward to discovering the fragments. He is working closely with Brian Walker to improve the level of service that maintenance crews provide along the HCRH and I-84. He had directed his crews to clean up the Multnomah Falls parking area and landscaping. He has proposed a list of improvements to painting the pedestrian under crossing and other improvements to further enhance our visitors' experience. He is looking forward to engaging the maintenance crews in highway preservation and maintenance.

Friends of the HCRH Update: Jeanette Kloos announced that the Friends have officially received their 501c3 designation. The Friends applied for and received a grant from Cycle Oregon for a lap top and projector. They are working with a graphic designer on the official website, www.hcrh.org. They are working on an organized bike ride between Discovery Center and Mosier on June 16. On April 22, there will be a kickoff meeting at Menucha. RSVP is requested because the room only holds 100 people. Please contact Jeanette through the website if you would like to volunteer.

OPRD Updates: Jack Wiles announced that he has been working with Matt Joerin and George Fekaris of WFLHD and that OPRD has obtained funding authorization to proceed with the Guy Talbot Vista Project at Latourell Falls. OPRD is working with Brian Bainsion to develop the plans and environmental work needed to complete the upper and lower viewpoint enhancement projects.

Jack discussed the Sandy River Connections Project. This is a group of stake holders looking at opportunities to improve access in and between Troutdale, the Sandy River Delta and Lewis and Clark State Park. OPRD is negotiating with the Port and in the future may manage some the recreational properties associated with the Reynolds Aluminum plant. These properties are important to the 40 mile loop.

Jerry Igo described a noxious weed management program he is working on with OPRD. Verne Holme, NW Weed Management Group, is implementing a coordinated effort in the Gorge.

Kevin Price announced that the campgrounds will open on March 16. The stone wall at Vista House will be repaired in the near future. The Portland Wheelmen have donated a bike rack at Vista House. The Corbett Hill Viaduct Repair Project will begin on March 23. Vandals broke some stained glass windows at Vista House. The security cameras did not capture the event. They were not working properly because of power outages.

Kevin introduced Susan Lathrop, the new HCRH State Trail Ranger. Susan will be replacing Diane McClay who recently was promoted to team leader at Memaloose.

USFS Updates: Diana Ross discussed a recent site visit to the Struck property. She also explained that the Forest Service is involved in the Sandy River Delta project as well and that there a lot of synergy associated with this project.

Development Reviews: None.

Next Meeting:

April 5, 2007 in Hood River (location to be determined)

Draft Agenda:

- Programmatic Agreement Amendments
- Mount Adams Avenue/Cascade Avenue
- Forest Lane Cascade Locks

May 17, 2007 in Troutdale (location to be determined). Site visit to the Sandy River Delta.

MOSIER MEETING ATTENDEES - MARCH 2, 2007

Akin, Bill	Rodrick, Carol
Berry, Marc	Rorey, Barry
Bick, Dave	Ross, Diana
Bloomster, John	Sherer, Jade
Bosman, Franz	Steers, Greg
Carroll, Ron	Shames, Peter
Cherniade, Mark	Stratton, Shawn
Cornelison, Peter	Ullrica, Bob
Currin, Kristin	Villagomez, Anthony
D'Aurey, Patrick	Joerin, Matthew
Dancer, Daniel	Wiles, Jack
DeHart, Brad	Wilkins, Sam
Fitzpatrick, Kathy	Yukos, Ann
Foster, Brent	
Gan, Ellen	
Gore, Holly	
Gray, Kathy	
Gunnerson, Catherine	
Hadlow, Robert	
Harmon, Iva	
Haythorn, Wayne	
Houck, Cliff	
Igo, Jerry	
Jervey, Mac	
Kloos, Jeanette	
Koonce, Greg	
Lathrop, Susan	
Leininger, Jan	
Lund, Hollie	
Mansur, Scott	
Mazzoleni, Deb	
Merritt, Andrew	
Olson, Larry	
Price, Kevin W.	
Rasmusson, Dan	
Richardson, Dan	
Roberts, Vicki	
Rodrick, Allan	

Hood River Sand & Gravel has filed a measure 37 claim against the City of Mosier for \$ 4,050,000 and Howard Houston an additional \$ 2,250,000. Houston is leasing the property to his own company and they are both making claims.

Houston's property is not within the Mosier city limits. He owns a parcel in the Urban Growth Boundary which he leases to his own company, Hood River Sand and Gravel. Both claims stem from the exact same property which is outside Mosier's jurisdiction in the urban growth boundary. They are claiming a loss or a "taking" because Mosier does not allow aggregate hauling on an adjacent property owned by the State which travels through the Mosier city limits in the residential zone.

Not only are the claims against the wrong jurisdiction but they are also trying to base their claims on a property they don't own, and the owner (the state) is precluded by statute from filing measure 37 claims.

Now they want the taxpayers to give them a gift for their bad behavior by allowing them to build a bridge from the state property onto the Historic Highway. This is not a question of a reputable operator being treated unfairly.

The proposal for a new bridge to cross Rock Creek from the state's property to access and transform the Historic Highway into a industrial haul road is inappropriate. Taxpayers did not spend \$ 8,500,000 on the Twin Tunnels Trail to culminate their recreational experience in an open pit mine and truck dodging experience.

To grant approval for ODOT to construct and use the proposed bridge is wrong headed and would change the tone and tenor of the Historic Highway.

James Hamrick, State Historic Preservation Office and HCRH Advisory Committee member, at the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee meeting on Sept. 21, 2006 discussed the seven aspects of integrity and defined adverse effect for the Committee. He said "Adverse effect is any action that alters the integrity of the contributing features. He provided the committee with several examples of adverse effect including damage and/or destruction, alterations, location removal, change in character, introduction of the visual or audible elements, or neglect."

Clearly, transforming the Historic Highway into a industrial haul road from the Twin Tunnels Trail into Mosier would significantly change the character of the road with the introduction of dust, spilled rock, diesel fumes and the roar and sight of dump trucks.

In addition, to consider a joint proposal introduces another element. Even if the "partner" in this proposal were a reputable operator, once created the bridge could become the gateway to all manner of bad acts by disreputable operators, the kind of operators who would propose they would have a very limited impact and agree to months of operations and mitigation only to resort to frivolous lawsuits in an effort to circumvent legal authority. You can put lipstick and a bonnet on a pig, its still a pig.

Ron Carroll
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