

HISTORIC COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES
JUNE 2, 1989

Attendance: Lewis L. McArthur, Don Adams, Dave Jensen, John Lundell, Ken Lucas, Jack Mills, Dave Powers, Lorna Stickel, Carolyn Woods. Staff: Jeanette Kloos, Ron Wolfe, Mike Gillett, Claire Carder.

Guests: Berta Youtie, The Nature Conservancy; Mike Abbate, Forest Service; George Erdenberger, consultant to Multnomah County; Rod Mace, Forest Service National Scenic Area; Brian Litt, Columbia River Gorge Commission staff; Gayle Rothrock, Columbia River Gorge Commissioner; Sharon Nesbitt, Gresham Outlook and Troutdale Historical Society; Butch Schmidt, City of Mosier; Kim McMillin, City of The Dalles.

No changes to the minutes were proposed.

Lewis L. McArthur noted that letters had been sent to METRO and to United Telephone since the last meeting.

Jeanette Kloos discussed the I-84 Rockfall Mitigation Project. The safety issues raised at the last CAC meeting were resolved for all except the Viento portion of the project. Alternatives that would provide both a safe rockfall mitigation and a safe pedestrian area at Viento are being explored by the Highway Division staff and will be presented to the construction subcommittee and Ken Lucas before the next CAC meeting. No changes were made to the subcommittee recommendations, which will be forwarded to the project manager.

McArthur noted that additional study will be needed on the overall rockfall hazard potential for proposed trail connections.

Mike Abbate, from the Forest Service, discussed the plans for the Ruckel Creek Group Use Area. They want to preserve the openness of the site. The site will combine a trailhead for Trail 400 and a group use area. A trail is proposed along the south boundary of the area, to connect the trail from Eagle Creek Campground to the Ruckel Creek bridge. Two options are available: 1) build a new path on existing ground; 2) unearth the Historic Highway. The Forest Service is about ready to begin construction drawings for this project. The CAC voted unanimously to send a letter to the Forest Service endorsing the general plan and strongly advocating that the Historic Highway be excavated to create the proposed trail. Additional meetings are expected with the Forest Service to discuss how this would be accomplished.

Berta Youtie, from The Nature Conservancy, discussed the plans to landscape the Rowena Crest area. \$10,000 has been provided by the Oregon Roadside Council. About one acre of land will be

landscaped as a wildflower exhibit with picnic tables and benches. The original proposal included a rock wall to keep 4-wheel drive vehicles out of the area. Since the estimate for the rock work was \$8-12,000, this part of the project was dropped. Some mounding of the area has been suggested to discourage vehicles. Dave Powers suggested that the ponderosa pines should be eliminated from the design. He recommended that plants be no taller than waist high. Carolyn Woods also commented that the area is currently great for flying kites, and trees would interfere with that use. Lorna Stickel mentioned that the City of Portland has used a special curbing to discourage vehicles. The CAC voted unanimously to send a letter to The Nature Conservancy expressing the CAC's enthusiasm for the project and their approval of it. The CAC would like to see additional details as they become available.

Lorna Stickel introduced George Erdenberger, a landscape architect and consultant to Multnomah County. He described his project to develop "themes" for Corbett and other rural centers in the Gorge. The project will be completed in June, but has not been discussed with the public. Three levels of improvements were suggested: 1) clean-up and fix-up would help bolster community pride; 2) additions and remodeling could improve the "street presence" of existing buildings; 3) future development could be subject to stricter design controls. One method of slowing traffic and creating a sense of place would be to narrow the roadway. Don Adams stated that the Highway Division has historically opposed to narrowing roadways, but the Historic Highway is different and narrowing might be acceptable. Dave Powers mentioned that the original width was 18 feet; we would not want a width less than that. He asked what are we trying to protect? We want to achieve as much as possible a 1920's appearance. John Lundell concluded that the major ideas could be used in all the communities in the Gorge; however, he would not want all communities to pinch down the pavement width. Mr. Erdenberger concluded that the changes to the communities should not be superficial and should acknowledge that the Historic Highway is the focal point for any change.

Jeanette Kloos asked the CAC for their thoughts on a management plan for the highway. Lorna Stickel requested that a one page outline of a plan be developed so that the committee would know what would be included in such a plan. Several committee members stated that the CAC would review a plan if developed, but would not do the actual writing. The CAC would discuss the broad direction to be taken by a plan. Mr. McArthur suggested that all CAC members review the 1987 Study as preparation for this discussion.

Jeanette Kloos will arrange a meeting to discuss funding options and the 6-year Highway Improvement Program. Jack Mills and Lewis McArthur will attend.

The CAC unanimously agreed that the Highway Division should ask

Wasco County to return the portion of the highway east of the Mosier school, that is currently in county ownership. John Lundell and Carolyn Woods will explore how this request should be made.

The CAC agreed that a letter should be sent to request that the 75th Anniversary of the highway be included as a Rose Festival event in 1991.

The CAC reviewed the memo to the file concerning moss on concrete. No changes were made to the recommendation that moss be allowed to remain when it grows on bridges.

Ron Wolfe and Mike Gillett presented the Traffic Management Study Draft #2. Additional work is planned to correct level of service determinations. Several committee members asked that the milepost information include reference points. The CAC will review the information and a discussion will be included on the next meeting agenda. Don Adams asked if an analysis of the accident data had been performed. No analysis has been done so far. John Lundell asked if patching always occurs when the pavement has a 5 rating. Don Adams stated that when the pavement is rated 5, reconstruction not patching is preferable, if funds are available. Lack of funding is a problem with maintenance projects. The Historic Highway will receive \$100,000 per year for the next biennium. While this is down from \$150,000 per year, nothing was originally in the budget. Dave Powers asked if the computer program could do a "what if" analysis of one-way operation. Ron Wolfe said no, but the analysis could be done by other methods. The CAC will also discuss the future direction of traffic management analysis at the next meeting.

Don Adams updated the CAC on the wooden guardrail issue. The Highway Division has requested use of a wooden guardrail with a 45 mph speed limit. They also asked about the use of a 2-rail steel box beam design. The Federal Highway Administration has not responded to these requests.

Don Adams also mentioned that the Multnomah Falls sign bridge plans will be sent to the Forest Service National Scenic Area staff soon.

Clair Carder, Highway Division Environmental Section, discussed the Mill Creek Bridge in The Dalles. The bridge is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and is structurally sound, but is too narrow for existing and future traffic volumes. The railing needs to be replaced, even if a no-build alternative is selected. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement discussed the need for a second bridge on a new alignment, however, no funding for that bridge is currently available. The Highway Division is proposing a reconstruction project that would remove and replace the existing deck and railing. The existing sidewalks would be removed and not replaced; two new pedestrian bridges would be constructed on either side of the bridge. The

Federal Highway Administration will not participate in reconstruction of the bridge if there is an adverse affect on the historical properties of the bridge. The CAC (with Dave Powers abstaining) unanimously agreed that the proposed reconstruction without sidewalks would have "no adverse affect" on the bridge if the railings and light standards were duplicated.

Rod Mace, Forest Service National Scenic Area staff, suggested that Tom Amburn of United Telephone should be asked to speak about his fiber optic cable proposals at the next CAC meeting. Lewis McArthur suggested that the construction subcommittee should meet with Amburn before the next meeting. Rod Mace also mentioned a chemical weathering agent for rocks that helps mask new rock cuts. This substance may be useful on the Mitchell Point Rockfall Mitigation project.

Brian Litt, Columbia River Gorge Commission staff, briefly discussed the recreation overlay zones, the process for designating sites suitable for recreation development and the scenic corridor study.

Lewis McArthur requested a meeting with Commission staff, Forest Service staff, Highway Division staff and a representative from the Chinook Trail organization to discuss the overlapping responsibilities and jurisdiction for the Historic Highway, Trail 400 and the Chinook Trail. Lorna Stickel will make the initial contact with the Chinook Trail organization.

Butch Schmidt, City of Mosier, presented information on the City's waterfront plans. While the majority of the proposal is north of the freeway and would have access from the overcrossing, a city park with access from the Historic Highway is also proposed. John Lundell said that the access should be as far as possible from the narrow overcrossing bridge area. The CAC requested that the City return when more detail plans are available.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 25, in Hood River or Cascade Locks.