

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee Meeting

MINUTES

October 16, 2008

Hood River County Library

Hood River, Oregon

Members Attending: Marc Berry , Wayne Stewart, William Pattison, Jerry Igo, Arthur Carroll, Kevin Price

HCRH AC Staff: Robert Hadlow, Magnus Bernhardt

Others Attending: Gary Brannon, Jeanette Kloos, Larry Olson, and Matt Joerin

Call to Order

William Pattison, chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

Public Comment

No public comments. The Advisory Committee had no additions to the agenda.

McCord Creek to Moffett Creek Update

Much of the morning session was devoted to this topic. First, Wayne Stewart reported that recently, he and Bill Pattison, Art Carroll, Jerry Igo, and Magnus Bernhardt worked out a new alignment for the McCord Creek to Moffett Creek segment of the HCRH State Trail. It is primarily on the south side of Interstate 84. Magnus received some LIDAR data for this alignment from the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industry. LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) is an optical remote sensing technology used in land surveying. Several individuals who work for local offices of engineering consultant firms have donated their time and expertise to calculate horizontal and vertical alignments for the Trail segment. They will use this information to prepare concept plans (30 percent plans) for this project. At that point, ODOT will need to decide whether it will complete engineering plans in-house or send it out to a private consultant. Since this is an unusual way for ODOT to develop a project, the agency needs to investigate the liability issues of developing biddable engineering plans based, in part, on pro bono concept plans provided by engineers who are not employees of the agency.

Wayne was concerned that the project will stall and not advance. He believes that ODOT needs to address the liability question directly, resolve it, and move on. Art wants ODOT to develop a timeline for the project with benchmarks to keep it moving.

There are some concerns about right-of-way between Interstate 84 and the Union Pacific Railroad mainline. Wayne reported that Bill Brugal of the consultant firm HDR and a former UPRR employee, is willing to sit down with ODOT and the UPRR's Portland staff to talk about the proposed Trail alignment address concerns that the project may not meet UPRR standards for distances away from the mainline.

Wayne stated that the 1,600-lineal foot retaining wall, proposed as part of the Oregon Bridge Delivery Partners' (OBDP) Moffett Creek Bridge, will provide a location for a portion of this Trail segment.

Magnus would like to begin the environmental studies for the project will set-up an internal ODOT meeting to kick-off this process.

The bottom line is that there is about \$450,000 of the \$500,000 earmark that Oregon received to develop HCRH State Trail connections between McCord Creek and Hood River. Also, there is about \$150,000 remaining from the earlier Warrendale to Moffett Creek Project's preliminary engineering budget. The combined \$600,000 can be used for the preliminary engineering for the McCord Creek to Moffett Creek Project. If one estimates that construction will cost \$6 million for the project, PE is usually calculated at 10 percent or more of construction costs. So, the \$600,000 would barely cover the PE costs for the McCord Creek to Moffett Creek Project.

The pro bono concept plans from local engineers would help ODOT stretch the money available for PE. In addition, the environmental work completed for the Moffett Creek Bridge replacement project and a small portion of the work from the earlier Warrendale to Moffett Creek Project will have some utility on the Trail project.

If all the available funds from the earmark are used to develop the McCord Creek to Moffett Creek Project, none would be available for preliminary

engineering, including environmental compliance work, for connection projects between Cascade Locks and Hood River. It is possible that engineers and environmental specialists could complete pro bono concept plans and environmental baseline reports for those segments. Again this would be a way for ODOT to leverage limited funding to move projects along.

Jeanette Kloos believes that pro bono work could even include fully developed engineering plans. She stated that the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department used pro bono work to develop the Fort-to-Sea Trail on the Oregon Coast from planning to construction.

In addition, no construction money is available at this time for the McCord Creek to Moffett Creek Project. However a request has gone to Congressman Peter DeFazio for \$20 million for HCRH State Trail connection projects.

Both Art Carroll and Matt Joerin stated that the environmental work needed to begin on the connection projects between Cascade Locks and Hood River. They wondered whether ODOT could start this work in-house, or work with the Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway and their pro bono experts.

Marc Berry asked Wayne Stewart to summarize his concerns. Wayne stated that he was frustrated about the slow progress on all the projects, in particular McCord Creek to Moffett Creek. He wants an ODOT "champion" to take on this project and carry it forward. He believes that the agency should assign a project leader, get a timeline, and assemble a budget. When he pushes ODOT, all he receives in return are excuses. Wayne would like the AC to write a letter to Jason Tell, ODOT Region 1 Manager, to address his concerns, which he believes are the AC's concern.

Jerry Igo moved that the AC prepare a letter to Jason Tell regarding their support for moving forward this project. Jeanette Kloos stated that the FHRCH would send a parallel letter. The motion passed.

HCHR DVD Presentation

Jerry Igo reported that he showed the HCRH DVD many times on the Columbia River cruise ships where he works seasonally as a tour guide. Ernie Drapela reported prior to the meeting that he had shown the DVD to five groups in

recent weeks and received much public support. Jeanette Kloos has shown it to the Portland Women's Forum and a local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Robert Hadlow will contact Ted Burney, ODOT videographer, about creating a shorter (7-minute) version of the DVD.

Preserving the Historic Road Conference Review

William Pattison and Robert Hadlow reported that they attended the *Preserving the Historic Road Conference* in Albuquerque in September. There were over 160 participants. The papers were very good, including some on the roads of native peoples. Of interest, also, was a session by the National Transportation Safety Board on the topic of safety on historic roads. The National Cooperative Highway Research Program rolled out a current project at the conference. They have a consultant developing design and management guidelines for historic road corridors. These will be useful both for engineers who design projects for historic roads and for folks who manage historic roads.

HCRH Lecture and Tour Review

Robert Hadlow and Jeanette Kloos reported that there was a good turnout for the HCRH lecture at Portland's Architectural Heritage Center, on Thursday, September 18th—nearly 60 registrants. Even more people participated in the accompanying fall tour the following Saturday. The AHC and the FHCRH may try to do a spring lecture and tour with a focus on the Mosier to The Dalles section of the HCRH and wildflowers.

Lunch

Updates

Chenoweth Quarry

Magnus Bernhardt reported that ODOT needs to turn in its National Scenic Area permit. There are dollars available for Brian Bainnson to finish construction documents and that Brad DeHardt confirmed that construction money was available.

Reconnection Strategy Report

Jeanette Kloos reported that ODOT is working with the FHCRH to update the report.

Sandy River Bridge

Magnus Bernhardt reported that ODOT and OBDP are exploring eastside connection options from the bridge bike/ped path to the USFS property and have had several stakeholder meetings to determine feasibility. ODOT is currently developing two cost estimates. One option constructs a path under the bridge and continuing to the northeast, ending at the USFS parking lot. The other option explores a culvert under Interstate 84 adjacent to Jordan Road along the west edge, with the path terminating at the USFS parking lot.

Interstate 84: HCRH at Viento

Robert Hadlow reported that this project has gone out to bid. Tree cutting will commence soon, ahead of March 15, to avoid conflicts with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. .

Wyeth to Starvation Creek

Magnus Bernhardt reported that he, Jeanette Kloos, and others walked the highway segments between Wyeth and Starvation Creek.

Viento to Hood River

Wayne Stewart reported that he, Jeanette Kloos, and others walked the highway segments between Viento and Hood River.

Oneonta Tunnel

Robert Hadlow reported that the new construction contractor had already laid foundations and poured curbs. They have made test panels of shotcrete, for the tunnel ceiling. The steel sets are in production and the timber lining is in fabrication. The contractor is targeting the end of December to finish the project.

Weight Limit Signs

Jeanette wondered why there are weight limit signs on the Horsetail Falls bridge. Robert Hadlow will check into it.

Vista House Stone Wall

Kevin Price reported that OPRD plans to stain the concrete cap on the newly repaired basalt masonry guard walls at Vista House to more closely match the adjacent walls.

Vista House Hours

Kevin Price reported that Vista House will be open 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekends and holidays through the winter.

Portland Women's Forum State Scenic Viewpoint

Kevin Price reported that OPRD will continue removing vegetation that is blocking views of Vista House and the Columbia Gorge. Much of the vegetation is blackberry canes.

Mitchell Point State Park

Kevin Price reported that OPRD has installed an environmentally-friendly CXT restroom at this park.

Weed Mapping Project

Kevin Price reported that OPRD is undertaking GPS mapping for all invasive plant species. It will yield very good data for strategic planning and eradication.

HCRH AC Roundtable

Art Carroll attended James Hamrick's retirement party at the Old Church in Portland in September and Nancy Russell's memorial service at the Portland Art Museum. Both events had large attendance.

Wayne Stewart reported that Aubrey Russell would like to turn over the Baumann Property at Ruthton Point to OPRD. Walker Macy will produce three site designs including railroad crossing alternatives for the property.

Jerry Igo expressed concern about use conflicts on the HCRH State Trail between Hood River and Mosier. He sees bicyclists travelling very fast as they head east through the dark tunnels. Wayne Stewart suggested posted speed signs near the tunnels for liability. Kevin Price will look into this, along with other signs and striping at critical points along the trail.

Marc Berry reported that former AC member Carolyn Wood sold Hudson Insurance.

Jeanette Kloos reported that former AC member John Lundell's wife passed away a few months ago.

William Pattison reported that the Friends of the Gorge would like to thought about naming the landform above the Mosier Twin Tunnels in honor of her.

The meeting ended. The next HCRH AC meeting will be on December 4, 2008, likely in Cascade Locks.