

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee Meeting

MINUTES

December 9, 2010
Bonneville Auditorium
Bonneville, OR

Members Attending:	William Pattison, Chair; Wayne Stewart, Vice-Chair; Marc Berry; Art Carroll; Ernie Drapela; Diane McClay; Mark Davison; Kevin Price
HCRH AC Staff:	Kristen Stallman, Samuel Haffner, Susan Hanson, Magnus Bernhardt, Rich Watanabe
Others Attending:	Jeanette Kloos, Gary Brannan, Brian Bainson, Dick Weber, Judy Davis; Terry Anderson, Dave Bybee, Al Gillis

Call to Order:

William (Bill) Pattison, Advisory Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

Minutes from the September 23, 2010 Meeting:

There were five corrections to the minutes from the September 23, 2010 meeting:

- The first full paragraph on page 10 references "Ruthton Park". This should be "Ruthton Point".
- The last paragraph on page 20 refers to "Oregon Park and Recreation Commission." This should be "Oregon Recreation and Park Association".
- On the first line of page 21, "as there" should be struck from the text.
- In the last paragraph on page 21, the first sentence should read, "Wayne shared that his position as the governor's appointee to the Historic Highway Advisory Committee had expired".
- On page 22, the word "Loops" should be added after "Hood River"

Bill Pattison moved to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2010 meeting as corrected. The motion was seconded and passed.

Public Comment:

No public comments

Changes to the Agenda:

No changes to the agenda

State Trail Plan Presentation:

Brian updated the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee (HCRH AC) on the status of the Historic Highway State Trail Plan. The plan includes 11 miles of State Trail between Wyeth and Hood River and is nearing completion. The State Trail Plan comes as the result of various meetings with, and recommendations from, OPRD, USFS, ODOT and Hood River County, as well as the helpful input from Advisory Committee members.

Brian passed around copies of the executive summary which sums up the work done on the State Trail Plan. Brian then explained that the executive summary is divided into three primary sections:

Section 1	Process undertaken, importance of planning effort, background
Section 2	Project sections (8); visual representations; cost estimates for each section (in 2014 dollars)
Section 3 (final 2 pages)	Next steps; work to be done between now and construction; resources assessment: visual, environmental, cultural, etc.; Interagency work do be done between OPRD, ODOT, USFS

Brian explained that an underlying goal of the State Trail Plan is to get people excited about the project and provide momentum in getting the project developed and funded. He asked that the Advisory Committee adopt the plan, provide feedback, so that he can put the finishing touches on the document and finalize the plan for printing and distribution.

Brian then passed out the latest version of the State Trail Plan to Advisory Committee members, apologizing that he was short on documents due to printing problems. He added that once the final version of the Plan is completed, the plan and executive summary will be available on the ODOT website; background documents such as alternative studies, additional drawings, GIS info and grading plans will be archived in ODOT's files.

Kristen Stallman thanked Brian for the incredible work he has done on the State Trail Plan, adding that before he undertook this great effort, many people were skeptical that the trail could be constructed. As a result of the State Trail Plan effort, the public's general question is 'when' rather than 'if' the State Trail can be completed. She commented that it also clearly marked the steps to be taken in the next couple of years to make this vision a reality.

Brian thanked everyone for their praise adding that the work had been a labor of love. He added that he is ready to hand off this work, and encouraged final comments and suggestions to ensure that ODOT and OPRD have the tools needed to implement the plan. He noted that between now and the next meeting, additional documents would be made available, including finalized cost estimates that would seek to make the Trail as affordable and buildable as possible.

Kristen then added that the cost estimates have come down considerable as the State Trail Plan has been developed. The total cost has dropped from about \$70 million to about \$50 million.

Wayne Stewart then mentioned that there was a bit of confusion in the document regarding 2010 costs versus 2014 costs. He suggested that it would be clearer if all the cost estimates were put in 2014 dollars consistently throughout the document. He said that he was concerned because this document would be shared with funders, and needs to be clear as possible. Brian agreed with Wayne's concern and planned to make the necessary adjustments.

Art Carroll then asked if the 2014 cost were based on a percentage calculation. Brian responded that he was using an ODOT calculation for future costs which is based on a calculated percent increase.

East Mitchell Point Meeting:

Brian then discussed the outcomes of the October 29th meeting at East Mitchell Point with concerned community members who live on East Mitchell Point Road. This is the one area where a drivable section of the Historic Highway State Trail is included in the State Trail Plan abuts private property.

Brian recounted that the meeting with neighbors had been successful, and that neighbors had given important input on their concerns,

helping his team shape the final version of the State Trail Plan to reflect competing interests in the East Mitchell Point area.

Brian explained that the original plans had included a small trailhead at the end of the drivable section of East Mitchell Point Road (original alignment of the Historic Highway) just before the east entrance to the future Mitchell Point Tunnel. The neighbors disapproved of these plans for a parking lot, explaining that they did not want to see any parking or facilities on the east side of Mitchell Point. Their opposition stemmed largely from security and fire concerns associated with increased traffic.

Brian explained that in response to the community's concerns, his design team revised their original plans for a parking lot (a use allowed use under current zoning) and began to explore alternatives. Brian noted that whether or not a parking lot is built on the east side of Mitchell Point, an increase in vehicular traffic is inevitable once the East Mitchell Point Tunnel is completed. Given this inevitability, Brian's team developed a preliminary study of design alternatives. One alternative included a potential parking area with a cul-de-sac turnaround on the south side of I-84 near the eastbound onramp. This alternative would minimize vehicular traffic further down East Mitchell Point Road.

Brian reiterated that these design alternatives are preliminary and that he had not yet gotten feedback from ODOT or OPRD. He hoped to complete these design alternatives by the end of January, and that they could become an appendix to the main report. He then added that the East Mitchell Point Tunnel may be the first section of the State Trail Plan to be funded, and that this could help the Committee and Agencies brainstorm what the solutions could be.

Bill Pattison added that one important item coming out of the meeting was concern by neighbors with the narrowness to the I-84 underpass even as it exists today. Brian responded that the State Trail Plan included the suggestion that ODOT do a study of what to do about the future of this underpass. Among the solutions that should be explored are a second underpass, signalization of the underpass, or widening of the underpass. The report notes that once this becomes a major destination, a plan needs to be in place to handle the access demand.

Mark Davidson commented that he saw the State Trail Plan as an excellent "shopping list," but wanted to know if, strategically, there is

a desired timeline for this series of projects. He suggested that a timeline could be included at the bottom of the page. Brian replied that in the final version there is a plan for a phasing timeline, but that this has not yet been completed. Kristen added we do this an appendix or supplemental report to this document.

Art Carroll asked if the upcoming discussion of project priorities (on the day's agenda) included priorities for this project or other projects. Kristen responded that this was a good question for Brian- When could we talk about the prioritization of projects themselves? Kristen then added that she and Wayne had brainstormed project priorities over the summer, and the outcome of their discussion could be summarized in the State Trail Plan.

Brian noted that in developing the State Trail Plan, his team broke the project down into these 8 sections, because each of these sections by themselves would go somewhere, and would not just be trails to nowhere. He added that the Mitchell Point Tunnel is a natural priority, as it is the major hurdle connecting west to east. Beyond the tunnel project (the first priority), they then looked at getting people to destinations as well as closing gaps. The last on the list was Shellrock Mountain, which can be built once the trail reaches either side. Shellrock Mountain has many environmental, cultural, and geotechnical hurdles. Brian added that projects can be broken down even further within the 8 sections, depending on how the projects receive funding. However, the Mitchell Point Tunnel and Shellrock Mountain projects are big-ticket items that must be funded in full.

Art then asked Brian if it was reasonable to explicitly note or separate some of these substrategies, and if so, should they come up with a draft strategy? Brian agreed that there are critical hurdles (such as Ruthton Park to Ruthton Point) that may warrant the development of substrategies. Kristen then proposed developing both a 'big pot of money' strategy and a 'small pot of money' strategy, wherein appropriate projects could be identified as revenue becomes available.

Art noted that all of the projects in the State Trail Plan are within Hood River County and that we should be specific about coordination with the County. Kristen responded that she is now working to identify funding to do a draft comprehensive NSA Permit for the entire 11 miles outlined in the Plan. As we become ready to submit NSA permits for specific sections of the Trail, we can pull from this draft comprehensive permit. Kristen added that we currently have \$10,000

to do a draft comprehensive permit, but more revenue would likely be needed to do this appropriately.

Wayne stated that he is still concerned with the direction the State Trail Plan is going on East Mitchell Point. He agreed that a turnaround near the other parking area as an alternative to the original plans probably makes sense as an interim solution. However, the issue is that East Mitchell Point Road is being treated as if it were a private road even though it is a drivable portion of the HCRH. He pointed out that one of the priorities of the Advisory Committee is to maintain existing segments of the Historic Highway, and that the Committee needs to think about this in both the long-term, and as an issue of statewide importance, and not strictly a neighborhood issue.

Kevin Price thanked Wayne for his comments and added that he does not want to see the same issue at Mitchell Point as OPRD faced at Angel's Rest. Kevin explained that the Angel's Rest parking area was at full capacity from the day it opened, and that failure to manage demand had a domino effect resulting in visitors parking along the roadside of the HCRH. Kevin pointed out that the Tunnel will be a natural attraction, and that there will be large management challenges without parking alternatives to West Mitchell Point.

Brian added that the current issue is that we are limited to 25 parking spaces on the west side of Mitchell Point. Without a zone change, these 25 parking spaces will be inadequate from the day the tunnel opens. He felt that there needs to be a traffic management study, and that this was a discussion that needs to continue.

Gary Brannan discussed his impressions from the meeting with East Mitchell Point community members and highlighted that there were two things that surprised him. First, the neighbors revealed that UPRR has been using the I-84 underpass as a two-way thoroughfare. Second, during the harvest season, there are large trucks going through the underpass. With little or no sight lines, he agreed with the neighbors' assessment that with cyclists and pedestrians passing through, there is high potential for an accident if no changes are made to the width or signalization of the underpass.

Jeanette Kloos noted that there has been a great deal of research done by Rails-to-Trails regarding common community fears when pedestrian and cyclist paths are developed near residential neighborhoods. These studies have shown that common fears are generally not reflected by

facts; vandalism and trash generally decreases, while safety in numbers results in greater personal safety for recreationists and neighbors alike. Jeanette wondered if the results of these studies are something that we would want to share with area residents.

Mark commented that a similar exercise was done in Lewis and Clark State Park regarding parking. Kristen asked if there is a plan in OPRD to do the same type of work along the State Trail corridor. Mark answered that he could see something similar happening in this context.

Art asked if, given the fact that construction of the Mitchell Point Tunnel is likely years away have we looked how we might propose a larger parking area on the west side that is compatible with scenic area standards. Should we ask for a zoning exception if it can be demonstrated that it is compatible with scenic area standards?

Brian answered that there was a preliminary look taken at what additional parking and that it was possible on the west side. While there are rock fall and visibility issues, it is possible to create a total of 50-60 spaces while mitigating for impacts. He added that this area was originally zoned for 25 spaces, and that he has been told the original classification was in part due to the fact that nobody ever expected the tunnel to be rebuilt, and therefore the future demand was not anticipated.

Brian explained that the State Trail Plan was designed to work within the constraints of current zoning regulations, but that the plan notes a zone change on the west side as an option worthy of consideration. He added that the proposed parking lot on the east side was also within the existing zoning code.

Art reminded the Advisory Committee that not only does the National Scenic Act call for 'protection' and 'mitigation,' but also for 'enhancement' of the CRGNSA resources. He added that the word 'enhancement' might provide some vernacular for legal status in changing the recreational intensity class. The Committee might be able to build the case for changing the west side to a level-3 intensity classification (allowing for the 50-60 parking spaces), but that might be the limit as a level-4 intensity may be unreasonable and inappropriate. Moreover, it is a question of what fits the environment and the spirit of the act.

Brian responded that if you just look at the site planning as an exercise, a 50-60 vehicle parking area can be built. We have the preliminary document and drawing that show what can be done if we decide to go forward with such a plan. Brian then compared this to the Mark O. Hatfield Trailhead where the Mosier Tunnels are less accessible; concluding that the Mitchell Point Tunnels will be far more popular with the public as a destination given their accessibility.

Brian concluded by mentioning that there are other things that may happen that could shift the dynamics of this conversation; additional property may be acquired or additional park space may be developed, such as the Baumann Property, which may provide the higher level of parking.

Kristen then remarked that these are the kinds of questions that they wanted the State Trail Plan to raise. This is a joint plan, and this discussion has OPRD thinking about how we manage this issue. The door has been opened to questions that we were not considering before, such as traffic, alternative access, and the concept of improving trail access in urban areas to ease parking demand in the scenic area. Kristen then pointed out that this Trail Plan is a first step and it does not seek to answer all the questions, but identifies what questions need to be asked in the future.

Mark asked rhetorically if the criteria that OPRD has developed around parking should be revisited to manage the *spirit* of what we seek to achieve in the Scenic Area.

Bill then asked Jeannette and Gary their thoughts on where they wanted to leave this discussion regarding East Mitchell Point, as the Committee needed to move on from this subject at the moment.

Jeanette felt that the Committee and agencies are moving in the right direction on this issue, and that with the two alternative proposals on the table are options for consideration in the future.

Bill then commented that one of the very effective aspects of the State Trail Plan is that it provides potential donors/funders with a clear understanding of how revenue is being spent in reconnecting the HCRH State Trail.

Brian reiterated that with additional feedback from ODOT and public, we have several options for parking on the east side of Mitchell Point.

He also mentioned that there would be a great deal of earthen material coming out of the tunnel upon reconstruction, and that if material is kept close, a great deal of money could be saved.

Brian added that Wayne's question- what is appropriate in balancing the desire of neighbors with the larger questions of HCRH and NSA policies still needs to be addressed, and that the Advisory Committee needs to ultimately decide what is appropriate.

Wayne then stated that the more he listens to the direction of the conversation around Mitchell Point parking, the more he concludes that the Baumann Property is the optimal solution rather than a zoning change on the west side. He suggested that ODOT look into developing a half-diamond interchange.

Marc Berry asked if the Mitchell Point Tunnel is one of the first priorities. Brian answered that the Tunnel has always been a high priority, in part because it is not possible to fund it in pieces. It would likely have to be funded through the next federal transportation reauthorization bill. Marc responded that his instinct would be to focus first on building the complete Trail up to the Tunnel, and that this would create momentum for getting a final large source of funding for tunnel construction. Brian agreed that this is an appealing option, but that it could also work the other way; if the tunnel is completed, there will be demand to build the infrastructure required to reach it.

Ernie made a final observation that the current Mitchell Point parking area is designed to serve the current demand of hiking to the west. There is a diversity of users, and if we predicate the new parking to serve new requirements, we may be able to build the case to enhance parking on the west side in addition to any parking development on the east side.

Kevin reminded the group that there are two types of users that will be on the future State Trail; recreationists (hikers and cyclists), and tourists. Kevin noted that most people at Mosier have preferred to walk the single mile from the trailhead rather than the three miles from Hood River. In designing a future site, we need to keep in mind that tourists will not use a site or trailhead that requires distance to reach the destination.

Diane added that there are also parking spaces as Viento State Park. Future recreationists will be able to take the time to go from Viento to

Mitchell Point. When this section is completed, it has the potential to relieve at least some of the parking congestion at Mitchell Point.

Gary agreed with Kevin's point, and then noted that in a previous Advisory Committee meeting, they had discussed the possibility of creating 3 parking areas, each less than 25 spaces, that would be separated and terraced at West Mitchell Point.

Kristen reminded the Committee that the plan did not want included anything would require recreational intensity class (RIC) zone change. Brian added that this would be a 'back-pocket' idea as planning moves forward, and that there is nothing in the current Plan that requires a RIC zone change. Further, this idea was included in 'issues for further study.' Kristen added that on page 42, the Plan talks about a Scenic Area Access and Recreational Demand Study, and that this has been identified as a next step and will require a cooperative planning effort.

Art asked the group the distance to Mitchell Point from the Baumann Property. Brian answered that it is about one mile.

Work Session on Priorities:

Kristen Stallman called to order the second item on the agenda; a work session with the Advisory Committee to discuss the action plan and priorities for the 2011 year. She confirmed that all Committee members had received the priorities matrix that was sent out in the packet and asked Ernie Drapela to facilitate this section of the agenda.

Ernie started by noting that there was one addition to the list that had been brought up in today's discussion; The Chenoweth Bridge. He then asked if there were any other additions to the list. There were none.

Ernie suggested that because each item on the list could entail a big discussion, those present should vote on what should be focused on in today's meeting. He then asked that each person vote on 4 items from the list that they felt should be discussed and suggested that we skip the items that receive only a couple of votes. He then read through the list of items while voting was done with a show of hands.

Vote results:

Item	Vote Tally
Raising pub awareness	4
Preliminary engineering funds	1
Maintenance Agreement	5
Economic study	6
Gorge access plan	0
Historic route 30 designation	0
OTC policy	0
Partnering with city partners	7
Mitchell Point Tunnel	7
Pro bono work	2
State Trail Plan	6
Cultural landscape inventory	1
View management	3
Chenoweth bridge	2

Based on this vote tally, Ernie proposed that the items with the most votes should be discussed first, with discussion of mid-tier items if time permits. He then explained the top four items in further detail:

Partnering with City Partners	<i>For example, working with Hood River on Exit 62 and the City of Mosier of the Mosier Triangle</i>
Economic Study	<i>Showing the economic benefits of the State Trail</i>
Mitchell Point Tunnel	<i>Developing more confidence in the costs and engineering issues</i>
State Trail	<i>What come next after the State Trail Plan?- rockfall study, permitting etc.</i>

Ernie then began facilitation of the four topics above.

Partnering with city partners/ Economic Study:

Ernie pointed out that we are in an era of shared resources and revenue, and therefore partners need to work together. He pointed out that this issue is closely tied to the economic study issue, and there is a need to be able to present to local partners the economic value in what is being offered. He then asked for other thoughts on the topic.

Bill commented that Kristen has done a great job in building key relations through open houses, meetings, and communications with local officials. Ernie agreed with this positive assessment and added that we cannot let up on this successful effort, and that we need to show the payback on the investment in the Trail.

Mark D. asked if the Committee was now having a combined discussion of city partnering and economic study. Ernie responded that this is an option due to their interrelation.

Mark D. explained that he was interested in looking at *consumptive* versus *non-consumptive* benefits. Kristen asked for clarification of these terms. Mark explained that consumptive benefits would include tourists spending money directly, whereas non-consumptive benefits would include benefits to lifestyle, health, and exercise. Ernie added that he had heard the terms *tangible* and *intangible* when discussing these benefit types.

Jeanette noted that Travel Oregon is working on developing a statewide bicycle-specific economic study, and that this would be one piece of the puzzle that could help things along.

Ernie said that he saw mention of Travel Oregon's study in his notes and wondered if we would need to generate data for their benefit or if they would generate data for the Committee's benefit. There is a need to explore what kind of data is wanted and how it is going to benefit all parties. Ernie then asked for other comments on an economic study. There were no further comments.

Mitchell Point Tunnel/State Trail:

Ernie then changed topic to the Mitchell Point Tunnel and suggested that this discussion be combined with the State Trail topic. He asked the group what other issues needed to be tracked at Mitchell Point for desired results.

Wayne responded that he has spoken with David Evans and Associates (DEA) about what work should be done next on the Tunnel, and they had told him that a "part one, two, and three prospectus" was needed.

Rich responded to Wayne that typically when ODOT get a project, they do a 'first study' which defines what the project is and gets things kicked off. Wayne responded that DEA suggested that this, along with

further geotechnical exploration on the east side where there is softer soil and weaker rock, should be the next steps.

Rich said he thought a feasibility study could start right away, but a "part one, two, and three prospectus" would include getting a design effort underway.

Art noted that when he saw this as an agenda topic for discussion, he thought it meant a discussion on confirming that the Tunnel is the preferred option for traversing Mitchell Point. He felt that there is a need to communicate how and why a Tunnel is a superior option compared to a trail that goes over the top of the mountain.

He asked if the engineering group took a look at this. Kristen responded that ODOT looked at the alternatives and that there was confidence that a tunnel was the most practical option.

Art responded that if there is confidence, the Advisory Committee needs working knowledge of ODOT's conclusions. Ernie added that there is a need to show the advantage of a tunnel in economic terms, but also show that it enhances the scenic corridor, is historic, and brings back the original alignment of the HCRH.

Bill asked if there had been a third route proposed; a viaduct skirting around the north side of Mitchell point. Jeannette answered yes, that the main barrier to this and what drove up costs was the engineering, the need to prevent rocks from falling on I-84, and the need to keep it visually subordinate.

Art suggested that a one-page document be produced, similar to an EIS, which shows all three options and dispels doubts about the tunnel being the best option. If there is confidence internally, this could effectively communicate that confidence to the public.

Bill agreed that Art's proposal was a good idea, and added that Rep. DeFazio had specifically requested that we show why we chose the tunnel as compared to the alternatives.

Kristen thought that this could be written up, but pointed out that the purpose of this item is to build confidence that the tunnel is feasible from a geotechnical standpoint. She added that there is a lot of energy being put into this project and does not want to see large, unexpected cost overruns.

Rich responded that GRI can answer this question best, and that it might be worth asking them once again what potential flaws and risks are involved in this project.

Wayne added that GRI has told him that they are comfortable with the western part of the point, that there is some discontinuity in the center, and on the eastern end there seems to be about 150ft of rotten rock. There will need to be some drilling and checking of conditions in this 150ft section. He noted that there is no doubt that there tunnel will work, but that it is a question of what volume of work needs to be done.

Ernie asked if any drilling had taken place yet. Wayne answered that no drilling has been done yet.

Maintenance Agreement:

Ernie began the discussion of the Maintenance Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) by noting the huge investment in the HCRH restoration and the fact that upon completion it will be very heavily used. Maintenance responsibility needs to be clearly defined between agencies so that repairs can be made quickly, adequately, and affordably.

Kevin explained to the Committee that the existing MOA gives OPRD responsibility for day-to-day issues and gave ODOT responsibility for major occurrences that require major repairs. The agencies decided they needed to revisit this after a fire over the summer damaged a post and rail. OPRD was unable to make an insurance claim because the guardrail was within ODOT right-of-way.

Kevin told the Committee that ODOT and OPRD had met in November to discuss drafting a new agreement, and that Sam Haffner had agreed to develop the draft of a new MOA. He explained that one arrangement considered was for OPRD to take ownership of the Trail instead of maintaining it on ODOT right-of-way. Additionally, Larry Olson proposed that ODOT could maintain responsibility of "structures" (i.e. bridges, stairways, rock catchment structures, viaducts, etc.) while OPRD could take responsibility for "non-structures." Kevin also mentioned that the Trail is still blocked partially by a rock fall near Eagle Creek.

Ernie responded that the Advisory Committee is in agreement on the need to pursue this, and that a list can be made of what should be included. Kevin then pointed out that a challenge is in incorporating new sections into the agreement as they are developed.

Raising Public Awareness:

Ernie asked the Committee how public awareness of the HCRH and State Trail could be improved.

Jeanette responded that they are continuing to schedule 'History Pub' sessions, adding that Kristen has asked that these be modified to not just discuss the historic aspects of the HCRH, but also the restoration and reconnection efforts.

Dave Bybee of the Sierra Club passed out copies of an article on the HCRH from the fall edition of the Sierra Club's *Columbia Overlook* newsletter and commended Kristen on doing a wonderful job helping to make this article possible. Susan Hanson added that this was an excellent example of having other groups work as the ambassadors on the HCRH and State Trail project.

Judy Davis noted that 2011 is the 25th anniversary of the National Scenic Area, and that she felt the HCRH needed to be part of the 25th year commemoration.

Mark asked if there is a Facebook page devoted to the HCRH. Kristen responded that ODOT does not have one. Jeanette said that Friends of the HCRH is working on developing one.

Kristen brought up the fact that the Friends of the Gorge tours have been highly successful and that they have sold out. She added that she sees an opportunity in the Sierra Club or another similar group partnering with Friends of the HCRH on these tours.

Dave Bybee mentioned that last year he made a connection with Dan Floyd from Safeway Grocery at a 40th year commemoration of Earth Day event. Safeway has a longstanding interest in community involvement and he would to talk with Dan Floyd about whether they can be involved in some way.

Wayne recounted that a while ago, he and Kristen met with Oregon Public Broadcasting, which has some interest in doing a segment on

the HCRH for the Oregon Experience series. While OPB was interested in the concept, they would need some outside funding to develop the program. Wayne then asked Judy if she felt it would be possible to tie this in with the 25th anniversary events. Judy replied that the 25th anniversary consortium has contacted OPB. Jeannette added that Friends of the HCRH has been in contact with OPB, and that they had been told Oregon Experience concentrates on significant individuals, and were therefore directed toward Oregon Field Guide, but have not yet heard back from them.

View Management:

Art Carroll started the discussion on view management noting that it has been an ongoing challenge, but with dialogue and guidelines there has been little action taken. He stated that he feels that part of the reason the Historic Highway is underappreciated is that there is a lack of opportunities to enjoy the scenic views along the route. Vegetation has taken over to the point that there has been complete loss of many viewpoints that were there 30 years ago. He added that in the Gorge Management Plan there is already preliminary identification of sites along the Highway. Mark asked if we know how many, or what percent, of these sites have been lost. Kristen responded that the Gorge Commission is doing an indicators study and that the Committee can get a copy of this study.

Kevin noted the importance of involving the public when doing view management, and that he considers it a maintenance responsibility rather than a planning issue. He recalled that when trees were removed at Latourell Falls for this purpose, a great deal of time was spent responding to public misunderstanding and misinformation. This also underscores the fact that management must be done in the right time of year.

Mark responded that with viewsheds that have overgrown to this level, the first step needs to be a plan in which lost viewpoints are described and a remedy is proposed. Second, this needs to be taken to the public. He pointed out that the problem with treating this as a maintenance plan is that maintenance plans are cyclical and cannot help us restore viewpoints that have long been lost. Ernie added that a third step should be workload priority.

The Committee then took a break for lunch

John B. Yeon to progress and design presentation:

Kristen called the Committee back to order, are shared updates on funding for the John B. Yeon to Moffett Creek trail segment.

Updates on the John B. Yeon to Moffett Creek project:

- \$3.4 million available from Highway Enhancement funds
- \$600,000 from Oregon Bicycle-Pedestrian Program
- Grant application for \$1.5 million in ODOT Flex Funds submitted in November.
- Current challenge is that geo-tech is still being conducted and final cost estimates have not been made. Total cost of \$6 million is an assumption based on what we know so far.
- NSA Permit was submitted to the Multnomah County at the beginning of December

Ernie asked Kristen if she knew how long the Permitting process would take. Kristen responded that it could take up to 6 months.

Design Presentation:

Magnus reiterated the importance of this priority project and that when it is finished there will be a complete connection between Troutdale and Cascade Locks.

Magnus presented a power point presentation to correspond with a handout that guides shows the design elements of the trail connection from west to east.

Key items covered in presentation:

- John B. Yeon parking lot -- Currently 60 cars are seen in the summer, which is above capacity. The Plan makes up for lost spaces.
- The trailhead will have an interpretive and bidirectional way finding sign. Rocks will delineate starting point. Some minor restoration needed to create this space.
- 54% of this project is along I-84, though an underlying objective is to keep away from the interstate where practicable.
- Several geo/hydro work sessions at ODOT have fine-tuned plans for barrier styles, grading, bridges, and tree protection.
- The proposed McCord Bridge will have an 85ft span and reflect historic architecture. It will be 30ft below I-84 and not be visibly evident.

- MSE walls will include gabion baskets.
- The “picnic area” will be a clearing to rest and provide views of talus slopes and Beacon Rock.
- Beyond the picnic area is sensitive salamander habitat. Efforts to mitigate impacts on habitat include small cut and rock walls.
- Impacts on wetlands will be mitigated through donations to the Columbia River Land Trust.
- The State Trail will intersect Trail 400 at two locations.
- A new railing type will be introduced, but this type has already been approved by the Advisory Committee and is in the Master Plan
- Geotechs are currently in field determining if walls or cut slopes will be needed in the switchback area. A large landing area is planned at switchback to help cyclists make turns. Amenities will include a bench.
- Engineering will also be required to traverse under I-84 bridges to reach the existing State Trail. A gravity wall and cut back on the existing bank will be required to skirt bridge piers.
- Finally, the trail will tie in with the original Highway alignment; the edges flush with the ground.
- Continuation of the trail will be clearly marked with moss-covered section of the abandoned Highway west of the trail intersection will be left is. This will allow for personal exploration of the original alignment

Questions and comments on presentation:

Diane mentioned that there have been some issues with boulder walls at Eagle Creek. There have also been issues with silting from rainfall. Magnus agreed that drainage would be needed in the areas mentioned.

Kevin asked if there would be amenities including potable water at switchback. Magnus answered that there is nothing planned. Kevin noted that potable water stations need to be looked at in the larger view.

Bill asked in the white guard rail would be the same as the existing ones. Magnus answered that this is being investigated, and that there are not the same requirements as in an urban environment.

Ernie asked if the trails will have a pitched slope to minimize ice buildup. Magnus answered that there will be an out-slope of 2 percent wherever possible.

Gary asked if the picnic area was where the State Trail intersects with Trial 400. Magnus answered yes, that this will be signed, and that USFS has approved.

PNCA Poster Series:

Kristen explained that a poster series on the HCRH was being developed through collaboration between ODOT and Pacific Northwest College of Art. Funding for this project came from scenic byway grant funds. Kristen explained that the posters are still in draft form and that Kristen, Sam, and Sara Morrissey would be making the final decisions on the posters. She then presented a series of draft posters and elicited input from the Advisory Committee.

Magnus asked if the final size was variable. There were.

Gary asked if the posters could be sold. Kristen responded that ODOT could not sell theirs, but that if someone else wanted to print them they could sell them.

Marc suggested that some photos of the eastern sections of highway be included.

Kristen added that the goal would be to print the final design before the holiday.

ODOT Updates (Kristen):

Kristen rehashed the sources for funding that ODOT had already received to build the John B Yeon to Moffett Creek state trail segment. Additionally:

- The Flex Funds application received 16 letters of support, and that these letters were unsolicited, reflecting the payoff from partnerships and outreach efforts.
- We submitted a grant for \$1.4 million for Transportation Enhancement funds. If granted but the funds would not be available until after 2012.

- \$1.2 million from Forest Highway Enhancements is available for the Starvation Creek to Hole-in-the-Wall Falls trail segment. This project can be accelerated.
- The Crown Point Viaduct Restoration Project is at the design acceptance stage. This project is coming in \$1 million under budget, so funding could be stretched to other projects. Kristen is arranging a meeting with Western Federal Lands Highway Division and State Parks to explore options, such as gutter work, view management work, parking lot improvement, or rock walls.
- Kristen expects a call for Scenic Byways grant applications in the near future. Brad Dahart from Region 4 would like to see funding from this for the Chenoweth Bridge Project.
- ODOT is working with OPRD on Latourell Falls. OPRD may want to do a trail improvement, which is eligible for a Scenic Byways grant.
- Forest Highway project proposals are due in January. Kristen thinking about submitting for repayment of the road between Larch Mountain Road and Latourell Falls.
- The NSA Permit application for John B. Yeon to Moffett Creek was submitted to Multnomah County earlier in the week.
- Sam is working on the Maintenance MoA and is ready to share this with Kevin.

Friends of the HCRH updates (Jeanette):

- Jeanette explained details of Grand Fondo race. Race profited \$40,000, but amount going to Friends of the HCRH is undetermined.
- Friends is working on getting a Facebook page.
- Friends plans to present to the Portland Women's Forum
- Friends is working on doing another 'history pub' event at the Kennedy School, possibly in May.
- Friends is working with an engineer on the Eagle Creek viaduct
- Jeannette will be attending the National Bike Summit in the spring
- The Oregon Bike Summit is happening in the spring also
- The Gorge Ride is being planned for the summer
- Work parties are being planned, geared at invasive species work
 - Diane suggested that they coordinate on dates, as OPRD has a schedule for ivy scrubbing and inmate crews
- Wants to know what the Advisory Committee thinks Friends should be working on.
 - Suggestion that they develop a consistent system to mark the trail alignment

- Ernie suggested pushing The Dalles toward building an arch similar to Troutdale's to mark the east end of the HCRH, and that this could be an opportunity for Friends to gain notoriety on the east end.

Diane (OPRD) Updates:

- Lights at Vista House are being changed for the holiday season
- The dog house is repaired. Its thermal imaging process is holding up and not leaking.
- Vista House is going through a design process for a skylight.
- Latourell Falls is going through a permitting process with Multnomah County for renovation and a new restroom.
- There is a water break at Dabney and the restrooms are down temporarily.
- Benson, Dabney, and Rooster Rock restrooms are closed for the season
- Vista House will be open in the winter 10-3 on weekends, weather permitting.
- OPRD filled a recent opening for a Ranger 1 position
- Fence repair on the eastside of Mosier twin tunnels; the contract met a supply shortfall, and their contract has been extended until March 1st, but completion anticipated sooner.

(Kevin):

- OPRD is working with Daughters of the American Revolution to develop a new set of interpretive panels in the Vista House. The current plaque no longer fits with the interpretive assessment.
- Met with the Gove family concerning pathway east of Mosier regarding a property trade. Fair compensation was offered but OPRD has heard nothing more.

(Mark)

- The Lewis and Clark Master Plan is nearly complete. An internal review will be shared with OPRD and ODOT

Comments and questions for OPRD:

- Wayne asked Kevin about construction for the Wyeth overcrossing. Kevin responded that the Army Corps of Engineers has nearly completed the project, and that fencing will be

installed on the north side of the railroad tracks for safety reasons. Diane added that Koberg Beach project is in final stages of construction.

- Bill asked Kevin if they get reports from volunteers of issues on the trail. Kevin responded that they keep incident records and safety issues are reported, though it may be time to elicit survey. Bill added that he was thinking about the issue of roots deteriorating the trail and wondered if it had been brought up elsewhere
- Magnus asked if root barriers are commonly used by OPRD. Kevin responded that there were none on the Banks-Vernonia Trail, but that they were in the plans for Latourell Falls. He noted that they are an expensive product and are also expensive to install.
- Gary mentioned that he did a mini-study on bio-friendly moss removal. Diane responded that OPRD was looking into that.
- Bill asked Kevin if he felt the Advisory Committee asks a lot of OPRD every 3 months and if this poses budgetary problems. Kevin responded that the challenge is for staff to meet changing priorities. Another general challenge is the vicinity to Portland and the large swells of visitors and peak times and seasons. Diane added that another challenge is the growing area they cover and the fact that there are only three equipment sections, so any future opportunities for additional host sides would be helpful. Kristen noted that this was mentioned in Brian's report as an issue to be addressed.

Marc Berry Comments:

- Concern with bike issue at Mosier Creek Bridge. Bikes are entering the bridge at high speeds.

Ernie Drapela Comments:

- Shared with group story of finding an historic guidebook to the Gorge, noted historic names for key locations. Guidebook will be added to the archives at ODOT.

Next Meeting:

Kristen proposed the final week of February at The Dalles Discovery Center.