

Meeting Minutes

Project: US 26: Outer Powell Transportation Safety Project (OPTSP)

Subject: Community Advisory Group Meeting #6

Date: Wednesday, December 02, 2015

Location: Human Solutions Community Room, 12350 SE Powell Blvd.

Refreshments were served at 5:30 p.m.; meeting started at 6:00 p.m.

1. Introductions – Joan Brown-Kline, project team facilitator, started the meeting with a warm welcome, and Community Advisory Group and Project Team introductions.

Community Advisory Group attendees:

- Jean Ky, Powell Plaza retirement community resident
- Teresa Keishi Soto, East Portland Action Plan (EPAP), and OPAL committee member
- Tom Barnes, Powellhurst-Gilbert Neighborhood Association Chair
- Joe Little, property and business owner along Powell Blvd.
- Nicole Naegeli, area resident
- Carol Fenstermacher, Centennial School District, Community Engagement Coordinator
- Noelle Mickelberry, Oregon Walks, Executive Director
- Dan McCue, David Douglas School District, Communications Director
- Jennifer Beil, Pastor at St. Timothy Church, Community Advisory Group Co-Chair
- Kem Marks, Powell resident and EPAP representative
- Djimet Dogo, IRCO Africa House, Executive Director
- Cammy Pierson, Curtis Trailers, property and business owner

Project Team attendees:

- Mike Mason, ODOT Project Manager
- Shellie Romero, ODOT Interim Area Manager
- Susan Hanson, ODOT Community Affairs Manager
- Andy Johnson, HDR Project Manager
- Alex Cousins, HDR Public Involvement Manager
- Cassie Davis, HDR Public Involvement Coordinator
- Scott Richman, DEA Project Manager

Public/Other attendees:

- Loveda Sass, public (Teresa's neighbor)
- April Bertelsen, Portland Bureau of Transportation

2. Public Comment Period – Joan opened the meeting to any public comments.
 - Loveda stated her biggest concerns are curbs and sidewalks for pedestrian safety.
3. Community Outreach Update – Alex and Cassie gave an overview of the community engagement activities since the last Community Advisory Group meeting.

- Open House (Alex) – The September 16th, 2015, open house was held at Ron Russell Middle School. The event focused on concept design treatments for bike lanes, bike/bus interactions, and intersection treatments. Interactive corridor maps with the project footprint were on display for participants to review and comment on, along with information and displays on cross sections, and driveway access criteria. The project team heard from several business and property owners who expressed concerns about potential property impacts. Alex read a list of event comments that emphasized the need for safety improvements to crosswalks, bike lanes and intersections.
 - Mike noted that there was a property/business owner at the event that expressed concerns about potential loss of parking. He said another property owner, of a residential complex, asked questions about impacts to his property. He is supportive of the project elements.
 - Festival of Nations (Cassie) – The September 20th, 2015, event was held at the Division Shopping Center and was geared towards recognizing and celebrating the many different cultures in the area. Project staff had a booth at the event to bring more awareness to the project and solicit feedback from the community. The booth featured a large interactive drawing pad where event participants were encouraged to write down one thing they would like to see changed along Powell Blvd. The most frequent suggestions included added sidewalks, turn lanes and crosswalks, and improved drainage. There was also a large world map where participants were asked to put a pin where they or their family was from. By the end of the day the map reflected participants from 17 different countries around the world.
 - Rosewood Initiative – Community Care Day (Mike) – The October 17th, 2015, event was focused on providing an opportunity for minority, low income and youth to engage and connect with local and governmental agencies. The project team staffed a table with information about the project including translated fact sheets and project videos in Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese and English. The event attracted a large group from the Hispanic community, which allowed for the project team to share the Spanish translated project video approximately 12 times. The primary suggestions received from this event were about improving access to transit stops.
 - Translated Project Videos – Alex announced that the project video has now been translated into Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese and Cantonese and posted to the project website. Community Advisory Group members were encouraged to share the videos with their affiliated groups and communities.
4. Environmental Process Updates – Andy and Scott provided an update on the progress of the environmental documentation of the project and status to date.
- Scott discussed environmental review terminology and the different types of environmental categorizations the project could receive depending on the results of the technical report findings.
 - Environmental Assessment (EA) – This is a concise public document used to assist in determining impacts of a transportation project proposal.

- An EA would take up to a year of additional environmental investigation, documentation and review in order to determine if there are significant impacts. This would delay the final design process.
 - Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) – This is a documented finding of no significant impacts on the environment after analysis of a project is completed through an EA process.
 - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) – This may be prepared when an EA identifies significant impacts affecting the quality of the human environment as a result of the project.
 - Categorical Exclusion (CatEx) – This category of action indicates the project components individually or cumulatively do not have a significant effect on the human environment and therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor environmental impact statement is required.
 - If no significant impacts are found due to the project, then this would be the most likely categorization the project would receive. The project would proceed to the design phase of the funded segment.
- Andy and Scott Richman provided an overview of the technical reports that were assembled as part of the environmental analysis. Some technical reports revealed potential impacts, while several others showed minor to no impacts, according to ODOT's preliminary conclusions. This section of the meeting will primarily focus on reviewing the technical reports that pose potential longer-term impacts.

Potential Impacts	Minor / No Impacts
Vegetation	Biology/Wetlands
Visual	Air Quality
Noise	Utilities
Right of Way	Section 4(f)
Water Resources/Quality	Section 6(f)
Socio-Economics/ Environmental Justice	Land Use
Parks and Recreation	Geology
Cultural/Historic	Hazardous Materials

- Scott noted that Section 4(f) is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act that focuses on public parks and recreation uses, historical resources, and natural wildlife refuges. While seven historic properties will be impacted, the impacts are minimal and will only affect small slivers of the entire property. Section 6(f) focuses on land and water conservation and seeks to protect specific regulations that apply to recreational areas.
 - It is good to keep in mind that some environmental elements will have positive impacts.
- Vegetation/Trees (Andy and Scott provided an overview – see table below)

Potential Impacts
Short Term: Tree removal in some locations
Long Term: Tree removal may have a minor impact on songbirds and other species that visit local trees
Cumulative: Combined impacts of the proposed project and other future projects are not expected to result in adverse cumulative impacts to natural elements

- Scott said widening of the corridor for sidewalks, bike lanes and various roadway treatments and drainage will require removal of some trees. Trees are also assessed within the visual impacts analysis.
- Biology reports show that impacts will be minimal in terms of tree canopy and sensitive species.
- Trees on certain tax lots would require a rigorous mitigation process.
- The project team has done a preliminary assessment of trees, but the level of detail on exactly which trees and how they would be impacted has not been fully vetted.
- Mike said there are stormwater planters anticipated to be installed throughout the corridor that will include vegetation and tree plantings.
- Jennifer said one of the major concerns previously discussed was the concern for trees being a detriment to safety. Trees block lights and allow for people to hide in the darkness.
- Jean agreed with Jennifer and said the trees and bushes between SE 130th Ave. and SE 136th Ave. pose safety concerns.
- Tom asked what responsibility the property owners have to maintain trees, vegetation or debris that borders their property.
 - Mike said that typically any leaves that fall on the roadway are the responsibility of the agency to maintenance, while leaves that fall on sidewalks are the responsibility of the property owners.
- Visual – (Andy and Scott provided an overview – see table below)

Potential Impacts
Short Term: Construction vehicles and equipment, staging areas / temporary fencing, removal of existing roadway sections, vegetation/trees, and traffic congestion
Long Term: Widening and striping, new turn lanes, concrete sidewalks and medians, new landscaping, signage, and stormwater planters, defined driveways. Most view changes were found to have low to moderate impacts and several changes were assessed to be neutral or beneficial
Cumulative: Reasonably foreseeable future actions are not expected to greatly change the visual quality of the project area, thus no cumulative impacts are expected on visual quality

- Scott said that Powell Blvd. will look differently after this project is complete. Spaces along the corridor will be more clearly defined for sidewalks, curbs, bike lanes, and vegetation. There will be some tree removals but also new trees where there were not trees before.
- Noise – (Andy and Scott provided an overview – see table below)

Potential Impacts
Short Term: Noise from construction activities would range from 70 to 100 dBA at 50 feet and may be a temporary nuisance to adjacent properties
Long Term: Noise level exceedances would occur as a result of extending the highway footprint closer to existing land uses and potential noise receptors. Up to 295 properties may experience exceedances of existing standards, however, noise levels are predicted to increase by no more than 5 dBA above existing sound levels as a result of changes in the current highway alignment
Cumulative: Noise levels for the Build Alternative were predicted using past, present, and reasonably foreseeable development actions in the region. No-Build Alternative: 47 to 71 dBA Build Alternative: 47 to 72 dBA

- Andy said that there will be some noise impacts, but no more than a 5 decibel increase. Conversely, in some areas the noise will reduce.
 - There are four locations that meet the threshold for noise walls. Project team members will meet with neighbors in these areas to discuss noise wall criteria and neighbor preferences.
- Right-of-Way – (Andy and Scott provided an overview – see table below)

Potential Impacts
Short Term: Costs for temporary easements and construction expenses would occur. Total estimated short-term costs would be approximately \$5.3M
Long Term: Acquire small amounts from up to 322 parcels. Estimated 5.6 acres of permanent acquisitions and 17.3 acres for temporary acquisitions. Two residential and three business displacements/relocations. About 3 percent of the total taxable land would be acquired.
Cumulative: None

- Parking has been assessed throughout the corridor however there is a degree of subjectivity to categorizing parking impacts at varying locations.
 - There are several small strips of properties that are likely to be impacted, a few relocations, but no full-site acquisitions. The project team will work with the property owners to discuss relocation options.
 - Shelli asked where the businesses or residential tenants would be relocated to.
 - Mike said this is something that has to be negotiated with the property owners.
 - April said there are typically conversations with property owners about mitigation on where to relocate.
 - Andy said one of the potential business relocations is the furniture store near SE 122nd Ave.
 - Tom asked about the empty lot next to the furniture store and if this area could be an option for potential parking relocation for the furniture store.
 - The project team did not know who owned the empty lot, but it is a good example of something they would consider to see if it is a viable relocation option.
 - Nicole expressed concern for parking at corridor businesses – there is already limited parking and people try to cram into the limited spaces along the road or off the road at

certain businesses. She further expressed safety concerns caused by people trying to get in and out of businesses with limited parking facilities.

- Kem asked if the team was talking about parking spaces that people use even though they do not own the space.
- The project team said they are only referring to parking that is owned by others and not ODOT. The ODOT Right-of-Way that people now use illegally would no longer be a parking option.

- Water Resources / Quality – (Andy and Scott provided an overview – see table below)

Potential Impacts
Short Term: No streams, water bodies or wetlands are present in the area
Long Term: Proposed water treatment facilities would have a positive impact on water quality by capturing and treating highway runoff that currently collects along the highway during rain events
Cumulative: Combined impacts of the proposed project and other future projects are not expected to result in adverse cumulative impacts to natural elements

- Andy said the project team has a design solution for pretreatment and drainage along the corridor. Underground Injection Control (UIC) units are anticipated to be used to drain and treat stormwater.

- Socioeconomics / Environmental Justice (EJ) – (Andy and Scott provided an overview – see table below)

Potential Impacts
Short Term: Temporary increases in dust, noise, equipment, traffic disruptions, and delays could affect individuals in the project area
Long Term: No properties would become isolated and no negative impacts on households or income are expected to result. One public service use and one minority owned business would be affected by right-of-way acquisition. About three percent of the total taxable land would be acquired.
Cumulative: Potential cumulative impacts are expected to be beneficial as the proposed improvements would be combined with other minor improvement projects to enhance safety and travel along the highway.

- Scott said that Environmental Justice is a U.S. executive order that takes into account the protection of low-income, minority, elders and people with disabilities when it comes to environmental laws and regulations.
- Scott said there is one EJ business and one public service business that will be impacted along the corridor. However, the team has not found any significant adverse impacts for socioeconomics or EJ.

- Parks and Recreation – (Andy and Scott provided an overview – see table below)

Potential Impacts

Short Term: Construction activities would be located to avoid parks and access to them, however, temporary use of a portion of Ed Benedict Park and/or Powell Butte Nature Park may be required during construction

Long Term: Minimal park area would be converted for transportation use from Ed Benedict Park, and no recreation uses would be affected

Cumulative: Would improve bicycle, pedestrian, and transit safety and accessibility to parks and recreation facilities

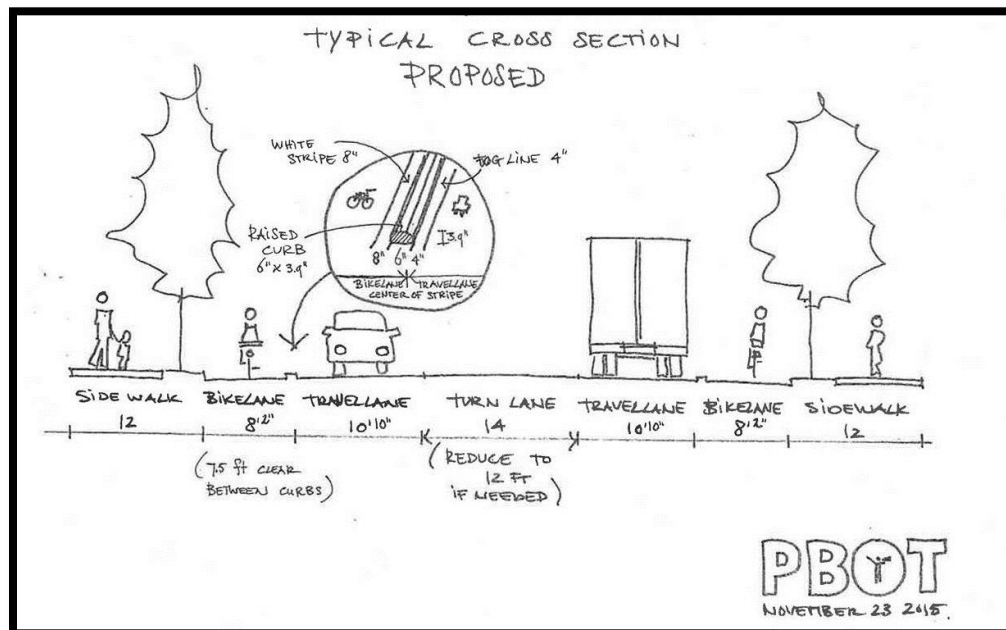
- Project team said there would be temporary impacts due to construction activities, but safe access to the park would remain available.
- Parking along the road in front of Ed Benedict Park would become sidewalk.
- Teresa asked about the barrier fence between the skatepark and the road that was previously discussed and if it still being considered.
 - Andy said yes, there is adequate space to have a potential fence like the wrought iron type fence discussed at the previous meeting.
- Andy noted that the project team worked very hard to minimize the number of right-of-way impacts associated with the project.

5. Transition into Design Process – Mike said that since the environmental conclusions ODOT is reaching may mean that the project will likely not require an Environmental Assessment process, and since funding came through last summer for SE 122nd Avenue to SE 136th Avenue, the project team can proceed into the design phase. HDR is negotiating a contract with ODOT to perform the design work anticipated to start in early 2016. This also signifies the conclusion of the environmental and planning phase of the project. Mike asked the Community Advisory Group to continue to be a part of the project for review and feedback during the refined design. Mike shared that the design work is anticipated to begin around February/March 2016. Construction is anticipated in 2019. There are 80 properties that need to be addressed within the right-of-way process, thus the right-of-way team will need to work rigorously in order to complete their work prior to construction.

- Tom inquired about utility impacts.
 - Mike said that utility coordination with other agencies will be a part of the process moving forward. He further noted that there is a large 50-inch water main line that runs down Powell Blvd.
 - Tom asked if there is possibility to replace the main line at the same time this project is under construction.
 - Mike said that the project team is not entirely sure what will happen with the main line. This will depend on what the City of Portland decides; they are currently assessing it. Regardless, ODOT will be working with them as the project progresses.
 - April noted that there are other projects that may coincide with this project and the city and ODOT plan to coordinate on them as well.
- Mike said that Decision Committee members will be briefed on project updates on a regular basis.

- Alex noted that Community Advisory Group meetings will be less frequent moving forward. He further asked if the committee had any comments about the number of times they plan to meet.
 - Teresa said that she is finding her neighbors to be increasingly apathetic. She would like to see them get more involved and attend more open houses.
 - Susan stated that it might be more useful if the team goes to them as opposed to asking them to show up at an open house.
 - Teresa said going door to door and business canvassing helps.
 - Mike said that the right-of-way effort will revisit the corridor businesses.
 - Nicole said that having the team out in the community, knocking on doors, passing out flyers would be good because people have lost hope. They have been waiting for this project to happen for a long time.
 - Kem said that East Portlanders have a lot of distrust in things getting done. He also said he would like to have quarterly meetings in 2016 and 2017.
 - Teresa said thank you to ODOT and the team for being there for the community.
 - Tom urged the project team to continue to send out notifications, come to public events in the neighborhood, and have a presence in the community so people see that the project is still alive.
 - Shelli asked if Tom and other Neighborhood Associations and community affiliates would be willing to team up with the project team to staff booths at events like National Night Out.
 - Tom said he leads the National Night Out event for his Neighborhood Association and is very busy the day of the event, but can't speak for others in the community.
6. Concept Design Updates – Andy provided a report back on some of the previous design elements reviewed at the last meeting.
- Bus Stop Treatments
 - At the last Community Advisory Group meeting, Paul had asked about the number of bus stop pull outs compared to in-lane stops. At this time the design accounts for five bus pull outs and 36 in-lane stops
 - Jennifer spoke on behalf of Paul reiterating his interest to have more bus pull outs along the corridor to help alleviate traffic.
 - **Action:** The project team will send the committee a copy of the bus stops graphic.
 - Teresa expressed that she would have liked to see a stronger presence of TriMet at these meetings. She would also like to know if the distance between bus stops will change with this project.
 - Kem seconded Teresa's request to know the distance between bus stops
 - April said during the initial conceptual plan that TriMet had discussed consolidating some of the stops. TriMet has a higher than typical number of stops throughout the corridor due to the lack of sidewalks. Since this project plans to add sidewalks throughout the corridor, some of the stops will be consolidated. However, she does not know what the distances between stops would be.

- Alternative evaluation process – Andy discussed the design treatment options that were discussed and agreed upon for further investigation at the last Community Advisory Group meeting.
 - Of the four bike treatment options reviewed, the buffered bike lane and raised bike lane treatments will be carried forward and assessed during the design phase.
 - For intersection treatments, the bike signal phasing treatment that allows cyclists and pedestrians through the intersection ahead of vehicles seems the most feasible and will be carried forward for further analysis and consideration in final design. While the other full enhanced intersection design options are not moving forward into the design phase, some of the features of these designs may be considered at certain intersections for feasibility and applicability.
 - The bike/bus wrap around treatment that routes bikes around the bus stop platform is being carried forward for consideration in certain areas.
 - Fence barrier options at Ed Benedict Park between the skatepark and roadway are being carried forward into the design phase.
 - Andy shared that Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) recently proposed a new curb separated bike lane option a week prior to this meeting. He invited April to address the committee to share and explain the treatment.



- April said that PBOT was interested in having another separated bike option and this curb separated bike lane option is what they came up with. This treatment would put a raised curb between the vehicle lane and bike lane. The curb would be 3.9 inches in an effort to minimize impacts to freight moving through the corridor. The raised curb would break for areas where there are driveways and streets. A similar treatment has been used in Austin, Texas.
- Jennifer noted that this concept is similar to the vertical delineators concept that was ruled out primarily due to the number of breaks it would have in order

to accommodate the high number of driveways throughout the corridor. She further asked if this concept would have the same issue.

- April said that this is one of the considerations with this concept and that the curb would break at driveways. She further suggested the potential to have different treatments in areas where there is a high frequency of driveways.
- Shelli asked what Austin's experience has been with this treatment.
- April said she did not know.
- Andy said that he heard about cars parking in the bike space between the raised curb and the sidewalk curb.
- Alex asked about cars bouncing off the curb and potential safety concerns.
- April said there are different kinds of treatments for the curb, i.e. curved and mountable, that could minimize this concern.
- Andy said this concept would not have any impacts on the footprint or environmental elements.
- Andy said that the project team has not had a chance to investigate this option and asked the Community Advisory Group if they recommend moving this treatment forward for further assessment..
 - a. Nicole said as long as there are not too many small segments, but more continuous strips. She likes the potential for encouraging new bike riders, but emphasized the need to make sure cars can still get in and out of driveways easily.
 - b. The majority of the Community Advisory Group agreed to recommending further investigation of this option.
 - c. Jean said there is always going to be bad driving behavior and no matter the treatment you cannot always stop that.
 - d. Jennifer said she likes that the option likely prevents cars from passing vehicles by going into the bike lane and Kem agreed with her.
 - e. Djimet asked if there would be anything between the bike lane and sidewalk.
 - f. Project team said yes – there is a planned 6-inch curb and some type of vegetation.
- Leveraging available funding
 - The project team said that during briefings with Representative Shemia Fagan and Representative Jessica Vega Pederson, both said they are looking to continue pursuing more funding for the additional segments of the project corridor.
 - Noel noted that Oregon Walks gave Rep. Fagan an award for her commitment to pedestrian safety.
 - Kem said there has been some discussion about PBOT pursuing a federal TIGER Grant, which assists with project funding. He said he has heard talks around pursuing this grant for the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project; however he thinks the Outer Powell project would be a better project for which to use that money.



- April said this is something around which PBOT has had conversations, but no decisions have been made.
7. Decision Committee Update – Andy said that the next Decision Committee meeting will be December 8th and asked the Community Advisory Group if they had anything they would like Jennifer and Paul to communicate to the committee.
- Teresa stressed the urgency of this project and how important it is to get something built sooner than later and not to hold up the project any longer. People have waited too long.
 - Nicole stressed the need to protect kids.
8. Final Thoughts – Joan asked the committee if they had any final thoughts.
- Nicole said she is concerned about the driveway at SE 127th Place where there is a dental clinic and chiropractic office. This driveway has safety issues with customers coming in and out of the parking area because it is so close to the entrance onto and off of Powell Blvd. She further suggested having the business owner move or modify their parking area to avoid conflicts with cars turning on to or off of SE 127th Place.
 - Mike said that access management is an important next step in the process and typically assesses these aspects of the project.
 - April said that they do not recommend having driveways within 25 feet of the corner of the main street.
 - Project team members thanked the committee for all their hard work and support with the project.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.