

MINUTES

Citizen Advisory Committee
of the
Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization
Singer Room – Eugene Public Library – 100 West 10th Avenue
Eugene, Oregon

January 16, 2008
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Webb Sussman, Chair; Dave Jacobson, Vice Chair; Diana Alldredge, Rich Hazel, Wendy Butler-Boyesen, Bill Morganti, Ryan Papé, Eleanor Mulder, Bob Ransom, Damien Gilbert, John Anderson, members; Kathi Wiederhold, Byron Vanderpool, Paul Thompson, Lane Council of Governments staff.

ABSENT: Donald Holtgrieve, Jeanne-Marie Moore, Phillip Farrington, members; Kitty Piercy, liaison from the Metropolitan Policy Committee.

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Mr. Sussman called the meeting of the Metropolitan Policy Organization Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to order and reviewed the agenda. Those present introduced themselves.

Mr. Thompson explained that he intended to discuss Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding priority criteria with the CAC in advance of a special meeting called by the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) in order to garner feedback on the criteria.

Mr. Jacobson reported that the subcommittee had a revised synopsis of the air quality synopsis and requested the opportunity to present it to the CAC. Mr. Sussman granted the item five minutes.

2. Comments from the Audience

Zachary Vishanoff wished to offer comment on “some of the failings” of regional planning. He recalled the bridge collapse on Interstate 35 in Minneapolis and expressed concern that maintenance on the Oregon bridges had been deferred as well. He was also concerned about possible seismic activity in the region and how that could affect transportation infrastructure. He suggested that bridges that needed fixing be marked so that people driving over them would be warned. He opined that “just because the media did not understand the importance of keeping our bridges up” did not mean the CAC should not consider the Minneapolis incident when addressing infrastructure issues. He believed that an independent audit should be conducted of all of the bridges. He felt there should be a public hearing before another EmX line was put in because he did not believe it was working as planned. He thought this money would be better used for deferred maintenance.

3. Approve December 5, 2007, Minutes

Mr. Morganti, seconded by Ms. Butler-Boyeson, moved to approve the minutes of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizen Advisory Committee meeting held on December 5, 2007.

Mr. Hazel commented that the remarks attributed to him on page 6, paragraph 4 did not seem to be what he had intended to say. He wished to clarify that he intended to indicate that people needed to be given the opportunity to participate rather than rating the success or failure based on how many people did “say something.”

Mr. Sussman acknowledged Mr. Hazel’s clarification.

Mr. Jacobson noted that it was indicated on page 4 of the minutes that the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) primer would be discussed at the present meeting but it was not on the agenda. Mr. Sussman responded that the CAC had agreed to defer the item to the February meeting. Mr. Jacobson wished to amend the minutes to reflect this and Mr. Sussman indicated the minutes were so amended. He asked Ms. Wiederhold to note that time should be reserved for the item on the next agenda.

The motion to approve the minutes as amended passed unanimously, 11:0.

4. Statewide Transportation Improvement Program Funding Priorities

Mr. Thompson reported that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) had asked all stakeholder groups throughout the state to prepare priorities for potential additional funding that may come from the Legislature and be available to build more modernization projects between 2010 and 2015. He stressed that it was strictly limited to modernization projects and could not be utilized for other types of STIP projects. He said ODOT was estimating that the Legislature would consider a package that could provide \$140 million statewide. He projected that this would mean \$10 million per year or \$60 million in all over the six year period for the Lane County area. He stated that ODOT had asked Lane County to prioritize \$60 million in projects and had made an added request that the list for prioritization extend to 150 percent of the funding, or \$90 million in projects for the state highway system.

Mr. Thompson reviewed the *Potential STIP Project Ranking – Construction Projects (RTP Constrained Projects Only)*, copies of which were provided to all in attendance. He said that one of the questions the MPC would have to answer was what the top \$90 million in projects should consist of. To that purpose they would have to look at criteria for ranking them. He listed the *C-STIP Prioritization Factors*. He noted that the last step of factors, which asked if environmental milestones were completed, was essentially saying that if the jurisdiction was looking for construction money, had it already finished its planning work given that the environmental work was the last step. He explained that the *Additional Central Lane MPO Prioritization Factors* consisted of the additional factors that had been used the “last couple times” this process had been undertaken.

Mr. Thompson stated that the MPC had decided to discuss the criteria in a special meeting. He noted that given that the projects were to modernize, i.e. to increase capacity, traffic volume might be a technical factor to consider. He related that Commissioner Bobby Green had asked that staff try to look at the system holistically in order to potentially determine which package of two or three projects could have a positive impact on the system as a whole.

Mr. Sussman noted that Transportation Demand Management (TDM) seemed to have been dropped as a criterion. He believed that TDM would definitely have an impact if they were looking at congestion and system-wide improvement. Mr. Thompson responded that four years earlier the MPC had directed staff not to use TDM as a criterion because the money was not permitted to be used for TDM activities.

In response to a question from Mr. Hazel, Mr. Thompson explained that the plusses were utilized instead of numbers to make the ranking more visual and translated to a zero, one, or two.

Ms. Mulder asked how those determinations were arrived at. Mr. Thompson replied that they were based on staff work at the technical level, including staff from ODOT, the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG), and the local jurisdictions, that know the projects and had engineers scoping them. He said since they were all construction projects there was a lot of technical planning documentation available. He stated that the scoring was based on this information.

In response to a question from Mr. Sussman, Mr. Thompson affirmed that the criterion *Supports OHP Policies* was the same as meeting the state transportation goals.

Mr. Sussman expressed some disappointment that there were not more projects that more strongly supported the policies. Mr. Thompson agreed that they were all ranked pretty evenly.

In response to a question from Mr. Ransom, Mr. Thompson underscored that no local funds would be required for these projects. He noted that in some sense the funding originated locally in that it was collected through a state gas tax and vehicle registration fees.

Ms. Mulder asked if it could require local matching funds. Mr. Thompson replied that in the past it had not typically required a local match but it was becoming the practice of ODOT more and more to ask for local participation as a demonstration of commitment and as a partner in funding improvements that benefit the local system.

Mr. Sussman remarked that \$60 million over six years was not a lot of money when considering transportation projects. He asked if it was possible to allocate the money to a single project. Mr. Thompson responded that there was flexibility once the STIP was approved and it could be possible to shift funding all into one year for one project. He noted that Mr. Green had represented the area at the meetings in Salem in previous funding cycles. He related that it was a really good idea to have a mix when conveying the priorities. He added that Region 2 included jurisdictions from Astoria to Eugene and there were a “lot of players at the table.”

Mr. Thompson related that readiness was very important when talking about construction. He said the Beltline Highway was not ready. He noted that the D-STIP list contained \$2.5 million for the highway and explained that this was for “environmental NEPA work,” which was not anticipated to begin until 2010. He predicted that under a good National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process it would not be completed before 2013 or 2014. He underscored that the project was not ready for them to think about construction funding at the same level as the Interstate 5 projects at Beltline Highway and at Coburg.

Mr. Jacobson said he had no question that those two projects should be the top of the priority list.

Mr. Hazel averred that the projects should be rated in regard to TDM even though this was not related to the funding criteria. Mr. Thompson agreed to carry that message forward. He reiterated that though it

could be argued that TDM had “all the weight in the world” it would not necessarily be considered as a criterion beyond the local level.

Mr. Vanderpool stated that the special MPC meeting was a single topic meeting focused on criteria alone. He said there would be no report from the CAC. He noted that a CAC report would be presented at the regular MPC meeting.

Mr. Jacobson related that improvements at the junction of Highway 126 and 42nd Street were not keeping pace with the development in that area. He said the improved onramp already had safety issues.

Mr. Thompson said this was a message that could be carried forward. He noted that it had been funded as a safety project. He thought it could come back as a traffic control/safety project but not as a modernization project.

Ms. Wiederhold made note of the two criteria the CAC wanted to forward to the MPC, as follows:

- The safety criteria factor should be considered.
- A congestion/TDM factor should be considered above land use.

Mr. Ransom observed that there was a growing sentiment that more capacity should not be built. He believed there was an assumption that there was “all this money” and if it was not being spent on capacity it could be spent on something else. Mr. Thompson responded that this exercise was being initiated by ODOT based on information it was receiving that the Legislature would provide modernization and capacity funding in excess of what was now being anticipated. He offered that perhaps Mr. Ransom’s concern should be directed at the Legislature, because ODOT was required to do what the Legislature directed it to do with the money.

Mr. Jacobson commended Mr. Thompson for his work.

Mr. Hazel opined that it seemed like it was a “boxed program,” i.e. the local jurisdiction had to take the money because this was the “only way it was coming.” He further opined that there was nothing wrong with refusing funding that was so restricted.

Mr. Sussman countered that this was not the view of the entire committee.

Mr. Papé asked how he could know that the two recommendations the CAC wished to submit to the MPC had not already been addressed elsewhere. Mr. Thompson replied that safety was addressed by a number of the Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) policies, but they were embedded in them. He felt the committee had brought up items they wanted to be raised to a higher level of consideration.

Ms. Wiederhold made note of the following:

- A segment of the public does not understand and/or support the constraints on the STIP funding.

Mr. Jacobson related that this topic had come up at a recent planning conference that he and Mr. Sussman had attended. He said this type of issue was decided at the highest political levels and once it was decided it was somewhat written in stone until either changes were made at higher levels or until their policies change.

At Mr. Gilbert’s suggestion Ms. Wiederhold added the following point:

- The actual congestion at a transportation facility should be a factor for the MPC to consider.

Mr. Anderson wanted to emphasize that there was a segment of the community that did support the funding and the projects.

Mr. Vanderpool asked the CAC to consider how much detail was useful in regard to this type of exercise. He underscored that staff did not want to flood the CAC with information and at the same time staff wanted to ensure that the information provided was adequate.

Mr. Sussman ascertained that there was general agreement around the table that the information on the STIP funding had been adequate and understandable. Mr. Morganti indicated that he had some difficulty hearing it. Ms. Butler-Boyesen said it would have been useful to receive the charts in advance. Mr. Papé thought the materials were good. He felt that if CAC members wanted more details they should ask. He trusted that Mr. Thompson and Mr. Vanderpool were providing him with the best information he needed to make a decision, but added that it might have been good to spend a little more time on the item.

5. Citizen's Guide to Transportation Planning

Ms. Wiederhold brought copies of the *Citizen's Guide to Transportation Planning* for everyone. She said it had been distributed to all of the MPO partners so it was available to distribute at their venues and events, and it would soon be distributed at the local libraries and the University of Oregon and Lane Community College. She stated that she had brought a box of the guides and encouraged anyone who knew of a good place to distribute them to take some. She solicited suggestions for places to circulate them.

Mr. Jacobson stressed that the earlier in the process people provide input, the more impact that input would have.

The CAC provided the following suggestions for places to circulate the citizen's guide:

- High school libraries
- Chambers of commerce
- Community and senior centers
- Public affairs offices for the radio and television stations
- The YMCA
- Religious institutions
- Neighborhood associations
- Service clubs such as the Rotary and Lions Club
- Veterans services agencies
- Post offices
- Lane Transit District *Bus Talk* – a notice with the URL
- Credit unions
- Bicycle stores
- Inserts in the newsletters of major employers such as EWEB and Symantec
- Department of Motor Vehicle offices
- Social security office
- Employment offices and other state offices
- The Public Service Officer (PSO) for Eugene (located in Planning and Development Department currently)

- The LCOG quarterly newsletter
- Public works department newsletters for the three jurisdictions
- Utility newsletters
- Red Barn Grocery and other small markets

Mr. Sussman called for a ten minute break.

6. Air Quality Document

Ms. Butler-Boyeson read aloud the subcommittee's revised synopsis of the Air Quality Conformity Determination document. It explained that local governments had to make an Air Quality Conformity Determination (AQCD). In the Eugene/Springfield area the law would require that carbon monoxide emissions be curtailed; the area had met standards since 1984 but it must show over a 20-year period that it would continue to meet standards. The AQCD was the document local governments would develop to demonstrate that projects would not lead to a violation of the air quality standard. After the MPO approved it, the United States Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency must approve the conformity determination. The determinations were made by using computer models to analyze and project the amount of carbon monoxide vehicles would produce within a planning area over a designated period. Opportunities must be provided for public comment on the AQCD. The results of the AQCD showed that with implementation of proposed plans, current federal air quality standards would continue to be met. Measured CO levels in the area back up the analysis as they had been steadily decreasing, now less than ¼ of the federal standard. This trend was attributed to improvements in car and wood stove technologies.

Ms. Wiederhold stated that the synopsis would go on the Web and would be translated into Spanish. She said the goal was to have a series of the synopses, one for each key MPO product.

Mr. Sussman commended the subcommittee for its work on the guide.

Ms. Wiederhold suggested that the subcommittee work next on an executive summary for the Regional Transportation Plan and the committee agreed.

7. Public Participation Plan

Ms. Wiederhold explained that the plan specified an annual evaluation of the plan and included measures to assess the success of the public outreach for the previous year.

Mr. Sussman related that the eMPO site needed adjustment so that the tables in the plan were printed length ways. He showed that the sides of the tables he had printed had been clipped.

Ms. Wiederhold stated that the direction for what to do for outreach for each product was in a table on page 13. She said the evaluation measures were listed on page 17.

Mr. Vanderpool said the first thing staff did when addressing an item was to turn to the chart to determine what was required in terms of public outreach. He related that the question had arisen of whether or not to televise the MPC meetings and potentially the CAC meetings as well. He reviewed the costs for televising

the meetings on Metro Television. He noted that the meeting room in Eugene was already wired for sound and video but the meeting room in Springfield was only wired for sound. He explained that a team would have to be sent to Springfield, but the meeting could not be broadcast live. The cost for televising the MPC meetings would be approximately \$6,000. He stated that LCOG did not have the capability to do a Web cast. A recording would have to be made and then converted for the Web and this would add to the cost. He added that the meeting room the CAC currently utilized was not wired for anything. He estimated the cost of televising both meetings to be circa \$11,000.

Mr. Ransom thought it would be good to televise the MPC meetings, but he did not think it necessary to televise the CAC meetings. Ms. Mulder concurred.

Ms. Alldredge related that she staffed the Human Services Commission and its Citizen Advisory Committee. Her experience was that the people who served on the commission, mostly comprised of elected officials, were not daunted by public speaking but the people on the advisory committee found it difficult and were reticent in that situation. She believed the CAC meetings were adequately represented to the public, who were welcome to attend, by the regular reports to the MPC. She suggested that the meetings be recorded and replayed on the radio if there was a great deal of interest in making the meetings more available to the public. She noted that the City's McNutt Room was wired for sound.

Mr. Papé found the idea of televising the meetings to be intriguing. He was more concerned about how the CAC could monitor the public's activity with the committee.

Mr. Sussman pointed out that if the meeting was placed on the Web it would be possible to track downloads. He suggested that a question could be included in the City of Eugene annual survey regarding whether people had watched or listened to the meetings. He suspected that the community television did its own set of surveys. He thought the CAC would receive letters and phone calls from people who watched the meetings as well.

Mr. Hazel remarked that not everyone had cable television. He averred that the committee needed to ensure it was not locked "to the most expensive television proposition in town." He supported televising the MPC meetings over the CAC meetings. He underscored that the MPC was the official voting consortium. He remarked that the committee could not always know how many people would take advantage of increased visibility. He noted that in the last year very few people had shown up for the meetings. He believed that the more access the public had the more attention they would pay to the CAC activities.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen concurred. She reiterated that the committee's charge was to increase public comment early enough that people felt they had an impact in transportation planning.

Mr. Thompson thought it would be useful to provide the MPC input from the standpoint of the CAC's goal of educating the public about the information and increasing participation in addition to the costs and technical issues of televising meetings.

In response to a question from Mr. Morganti, Mr. Vanderpool explained that the money to televise the meetings would come from federal money for public outreach.

Mr. Jacobson saw the value of having the MPC meetings broadcasted. He said the MPC was made up of elected officials and what they had to say was of value to their constituents. He reiterated that a report of the CAC activities was provided to the MPC.

Mr. Anderson thought it might be redundant to broadcast both, given that both groups were discussing the same issues.

Mr. Sussman summarized from committee input that its recommendation was to televise the MPC meetings. He also recommended that the information be placed on the Web as Pod casts and V-casts. He also suggested tying into iTunes. He did not support televising the CAC meetings.

Mr. Papé thought a banner could be included at the bottom of the screen on MPC meetings informing the public of the CAC meetings.

Ms. Alldredge emphasized the utilization of radio as a medium. She felt it was the most accessible form for making meetings more public.

Ms. Wiederhold reviewed the memorandum entitled ***Public Participation Plan*** dated *January 9, 2008*. She said there had been some limitations on what kind of data could be gathered on how many people looked at the Web site. She stated that they had data on how many people looked at the LCOG site and some data on certain pages. She reported that they had done well on meeting the “checkmarks,” on doing everything the committee was supposed to do in terms of the types of outreach, and on the breadth of methods that they had employed to publicize the items for which public input was solicited. She felt they had a “good start” on meeting the committee objectives but they had some “room to go.”

Mr. Sussman said this was the baseline and commented that it looked like a good start.

Ms. Wiederhold asked the committee to consider, given what it had accomplished thus far, where it should go from that point.

Mr. Ransom remarked that the next RTP update would be “huge.” He believed there were rapidly changing viewpoints in the community. He shared a flier that had been generated by a Puget Sound area process called *Vision 2020*. He said it had gone out with all of the newspapers. He felt it was a good outreach project as it provided people with costs, impacts, and pictures of what was there and what was possible. He thought our area needed a major outreach process.

Mr. Hazel averred that many of the things had gone as far as was practical to push for. He held out hope for the eMPO site. He felt that until the access was improved to early project picking and planning, they did not need to go further on how the CAC let people know they could get involved. He added that all outreach was good.

Ms. Alldredge commented that she was driven to participate when a specific topic became interesting. She recalled that one of the first things they had discussed when she had first joined the CAC was environmental justice, something that she had a lot of interest in. She said the challenge for the CAC was how to mainstream the information and how to strongly stimulate interest on the part of the media and the public.

Mr. Jacobson thought it was significant that when the MPC had hearings seven people testified on the Regional Transportation Plan Update and the Air Quality Conformity Determination, two testified on the MTIP, and one testified on the surface transportation program. He said most of the performance objectives were not measurable with the information available. He was glad that Mr. Ransom had brought the flier from the Puget Sound area.

Continuing, Mr. Jacobson related his experience from the previous night of having attended a Springfield meeting on the new fire station. He had received a letter because he owned property near there. He said he visited the library and reviewed plans and had filled out a questionnaire about it. He asked if the City of Eugene did this. He asked why people did not know about up and coming issues. He averred that this was the kind of thing local jurisdictions needed to do at the beginning of a process. He wanted to focus on how to get the word out at that point.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen agreed that the public did not want to comment before approval of a plan, rather the public wanted to comment early in the planning process when changes in the plan were still possible.

Mr. Anderson concurred. He felt the CAC had reached a certain level and he, too, had hope for the eMPO to truly give access and knowledge to the public when projects were at the beginning stages.

Ms. Mulder also agreed with this. She added that sometimes when people were busy with their lives they just did not have time to think about planning.

In response to a question from Ms. Mulder, Ms. Wiederhold affirmed that the CAC meeting usually was listed in the *Community Calenda in the Register Guardr*. She added that a notice that included key agenda item was always sent to a broad media list but that it was up to the media whether to report the items.

Mr. Morganti left the meeting.

Mr. Gilbert thought open houses that were “non-stuffy” informal sessions at fairs or festivals were the best way to have people “stumble into” transportation planning and other items. He felt the public hearings were sometimes daunting for individuals who might want to give input on an item.

Mr. Thompson said after the last RTP update had been adopted, there was a requirement under state law for the local jurisdictions to review their TSPs. He related that there had been a lot of staff discussion on this. He stated that the Springfield Planning Director had indicated to him in an email that he was hoping the CAC would have a role in the public involvement for that process.

Mr. Vanderpool commented that this had been a useful discussion. He questioned whether the plan had been covered sufficiently or did the CAC think it needed more work.

Mr. Jacobson thought the CAC needed to develop a mechanism to help motivate people to become involved earlier in the planning process and then present this to the MPC so that the partners could take it to their respective jurisdictions.

Mr. Ransom called this a “huge fundamental ...radical concept” to get people to be involved democratically in the earlier stages of the planning process. He felt this would entail another discussion. Ms. Wiederhold asked the CAC if they wanted the MPO partner staff to come and talk to the committee about involving the public earlier at the local level

Mr. Vanderpool remarked that there had been a series of discussions beginning around the state. It was early in the process and he was uncertain as to where it would go. He thought that as they underwent the process a need would arise to discuss what a meaningful citizen process would be. He said though the CAC was a part of the MPO, “they all know you are here” and he hoped the CAC would become part of

this process. He surmised that it would benefit the MPC to hear that the CAC was discussing the importance of getting people involved early on and how they could be engaged to do so. He suggested that the CAC offer its assistance to the MPC.

Mr. Sussman suggested the CAC discuss this at the next meeting and focus on timelines.

Mr. Thompson commented that in addition to not knowing what the process for the next update of the Regional Transportation Plan would look like staff also did not know “when it would roll out.” He noted that a Eugene transportation planner had sent an email that suggested that it could take a year of technical analysis before there would be something for the public to weigh in on.

8. Wrap Up

Mr. Sussman encouraged CAC members to rein in sidebar discussions. He felt some were substantive and that points to be made were lost because it was not audible to the minutes recorder and other committee members. He suggested that if someone had a sidebar discussion that person should send a letter or email to Ms. Wiederhold so that any items of merit did not get lost.

Several CAC members wondered if the meeting should start at 5:15 p.m. to avoid overrunning the end time. There was not unanimous support to do so.

Ms. Alldredge announced that planning for the Project Homeless Connect, scheduled for February 7, was underway. She encouraged anyone interested to attend or volunteer.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen, seconded by Mr. Ransom, moved to adjourn. Mr. Sussman deemed the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

(Recorded by Ruth Atcherson)