

MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee
Eugene Public Library, Bascom-Tykeson Room, 100 W. 10th Avenue – Eugene, Oregon

June 10, 2004
11:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Bonny Bettman, Chair, Jim Torrey (City of Eugene), Don Hampton for Bill Dwyer, Bobby Green (Lane County), Sid Leiken, Anne Ballew (City of Springfield), Gerry Gaydos, Susan Ban (Lane Transit District), Robert Pirrie (Oregon Department of Transportation), members; Bill Van Vactor (Lane County), Ken Hamm (Lane Transit District), Mike Kelly (City of Springfield), Mike Hudson (City of Coburg), *ex officio* members.

Tom Boyatt (Oregon Transportation Commission), Paul Thompson, Byron Vanderpool, Kathi Wiederhold, George Kloeppe, Tom Schwetz (Lane Council of Governments), Greg Mott (City of Springfield), Lisa Gardner (Lane Transit District), Mark Schoening (City of Eugene), Evelyn McConnaughey, Lauri Segel, Kevin Mathews, Rob Handy (guests).

ABSENT: Judy Volta, member; Dennis Taylor, , *ex officio* member.

1. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Bettman called the meeting of the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) to order and reviewed the agenda.

2. APPROVE May 13, 2004, MINUTES

Ms. Bettman submitted the following corrections to the minutes:

Page 4, fourth paragraph under item 6.a., second sentence: replace “responds to” with “*overreaches*”

Page 6: Ms. Bettman voted *yes*, along with Mr. Dwyer, to table the item.

Page 11, next to last paragraph: “~~Ms. Bettman said that was really the crux of the issue about hybrid vehicles. Even though they were better for the environment and more cost-effective, roads were still needed. She said 30 percent to 40 percent of the asphalt in any municipality is roads, and the answer really is mass transit.~~” replaced with “*Ms. Bettman said that what was really the crux of the issue about hybrid vehicles was that even though they were better for the environment and more cost-effective, roads were still needed. She said 30 to 40 percent of the land area in any municipality is asphalt for roads and parking, and the real answer is mass transit use.*”

Mr. Torrey moved, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve the minutes of the Metropolitan Policy Committee meeting of June 10, 2004, as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

3. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There was no one wishing to speak.

4. MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) ISSUES

a. Regional Transportation Plan Amendment

Mr. Thompson distributed copies of public testimony received during the previous 12 hours which were in opposition to, or expressed reservations about, Resolution 2004-05 amending the RTP to add Federal Courthouse Transportation improvements. He said that in addition to the fifteen comments distributed, two additional comments in opposition had also been received just prior to the meeting. He briefly reviewed the purpose of the resolution and asked for questions from the committee.

Ms. Bettman stated that she had requested the addition of a footnote clarifying that the 6th Avenue extension was a State facility and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), rather than the City of Eugene, was responsible for maintaining it. Mr. Thompson replied that the footnote could be included in an errata sheet distributed with the printed version of the plan and incorporated into the online version.

Ms. Bettman opened the public hearing on adopting Resolution 2004-05 and explained procedures for testifying.

Evelyn McConnaughey, 1653 Fairmount Boulevard, Eugene, stated her objection to having the highway (6th Avenue) routed along the riverfront. She said the Willamette River was a treasure and should not be subjected to the noise and pollution of a highway

Kevin Matthews, representing Friends of Eugene, stated that the MPC had the reputation of being a “rubber stamp” committee and that perception would be contributed to if the resolution was adopted after negative testimony had been received. He said the item before the committee appeared routine, but reflected that the City of Eugene had not been doing its job of managing its process around roadway projects. He indicated that although there had been significant public process it included editing, dismissal, and misrepresentation of public opinion and therefore public participation had not been allowed to contribute to technical problems nor developing political understanding or consensus around a project. He asked committee members to walk the proposed route of the 6th Avenue extension near the river and bike path and imagine the impact on citizens. He noted that many other cities had reversed riverfront abuse. He said a final insult was recent action by the Eugene City Council to provide backup funding for the project by a quick amendment to urban renewal rules, which avoided the full public process in the funding stage of the project.

Lauri Segel, representing 1000 Friends of Oregon, stated that she was not speaking to the specific project, rather to the public process. She said that it was difficult for most people to comment in a venue of which they were unaware and the project information provided was obscure, obtuse, and difficult to understand. She questioned why the project had regional significance and was added to the financially constrained list when there were to findings relating to regional significance. She expressed concern that project information came from the Transportation Planning Committee (TPC), which was composed exclusively of staff. She said that a TPC recommendation did not confirm regional significance. She said that the TPC

recommendation was presented as unanimous and questioned whether a quorum of the TPC was present when the recommendation was made. She asked what formula was used to determine financially constrained status and said it was difficult to comment on a project when she had so many unanswered questions.

Rob Handy, 455 ½ River Road, Eugene, reflected on the legacy of Governor Tom McCall and the Willamette River Greenway. He said that the river defined two cities and was a prominent feature in the metropolitan area and helped define local culture and the people. He asked the committee to consider that legacy during its deliberations.

There being no further testimony, Ms. Bettman closed the hearing.

Mr. Torrey moved, seconded by Mr. Green, to adopted Resolution 2004-05 amending the Regional Transportation Plan to add Federal Courthouse transportation improvements.

Mr. Torrey commented that this was not the first time the issue was discussed; it had been on the table and had been discussed by the committee for the past two years and discussed by other groups focused on the downtown area and federal courthouse area. He said that transportation was discussed as part of the courthouse district plan and the proposal had been repeatedly vetted by the Eugene City Council and Planning Commission and the same arguments made during the public hearing were heard by those bodies. He took exception to remarks about misrepresentation and noted that while the project had been described by previous speakers as a road next to a river, in fact the road was on the south side of the railroad tracks and not the north side. He assured the audience that the MPC did hear comments, but hearing comments and agreeing with them was not always the same thing; it was the MPC's job to make a determination of whether it was appropriate to proceed with the recommendation of the staff. He pointed out that the project's funding was backed up with urban renewal funding by action of the City Council and that outgoing members had a legitimate right to make decisions until they left the council in January 2005. He also pointed out that Eugene, Lane County, Springfield, and LTD had funding for the project as one of their United Front objectives. He added that he felt confident that federal funding for the project would be obtained through the Transportation Authorization Act, the project would be a benefit to the community, and he urged support.

Mr. Leiken commented that the project had also been part of the United Front agenda in the past and received favorable support from Congressman DeFazio and Senators Smith and Wyden. He felt that it was important to move forward on the project and would support the motion.

Mr. Green stated that he would support the motion. Referring to previous testimony, he asked if the Eugene City Council was officially on record in support of the project. Ms. Bettman replied that the council had support use of urban renewal funds as backup funding for the project. Mr. Schoening noted that the project was included in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), the Central Area Transportation Study (CATS), and the Courthouse District Plan.

Ms. Bettman asked if there should be findings regarding the regional significance of the project. Mr. Thompson said that projects were included in the RTP if they were federally funded or of regional significance. He said that no additional findings were required as the project was listed as federally funded.

Ms. Bettman announced that she would vote against the motion as the project was a monumental mistake. She said there were mother viable ways to manage traffic to facilitate the location of the courthouse. She said potential redevelopment of the Triad site and the proximity of the Triad and courthouse sites required a re-examination of transportation issues in the area. She stated that the MPC should not have a hearing and vote on the issue on the same day as it did not allow sufficient time to consider comments during the public hearing.

Mr. Green remarked that the project had gone through public hearings before the Planning Commissions and the MPC's public hearings were scheduled and noticed well in advance, allowing time for the public to submit or present their comments. He asked if Ms. Bettman was representing her own views or those of other council members who opposed the project. He said it was his understanding that the MPC was a dispute resolution body. Ms. Bettman said her concern was that the record showed that support for the project was not unanimous.

Mr. Kloeppe explained that the MPC was both a dispute resolution and policy body responsible for long-range transportation planning and the action on the amendment before the committee would represent adoption of regional public policy.

The motion passed, 8:1; Ms. Bettman opposed.

b. Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) Project Amendment

Mr. Thompson stated that the item related to an amendment to the FY04-05 Central Lane MPO MTIP requested by ODOT. He said the amendment would add a \$2.75 million environmental impact study (EIS) project for the I-5 replacement bridge over the Willamette River. He indicated that no public comments had been received on the project and the TPC unanimously recommended adoption of the MTIP amendment.

In response to a question from Ms. Bettman, Mr. Boyatt said that the EIS would produce a record of public process and determine findings of significant impact for the bridge replacement and take from two to five years to complete.

Ms. Bettman opened the public hearing.

Lauri Segel, representing 1000 Friends of Oregon, questioned that the project was moved forward on the future list just because it was opportunistic when there were other projects on the future list that should be considered, such as west Eugene transportation solutions. She stated that opportunity should not eliminate the ability to look at what other projects might be more important. She expressed concern with a lack of public process to identify which projects should be given priority and suggested that many people did not have access to Congressman DeFazio.

Rob Handy, 455 ½ River Road, Eugene, commended staff on the timeliness and clarity of project information and outreach efforts that had generated significant public comment and analysis. He expressed confidence that the MPO would make an informed and careful decision that would reassure the public about the integrity of the process and assure the continuation of state and federal funding.

Kevin Matthews, representing Friends of Eugene, echoed Ms. Segel's concerns regarding the transportation priorities list. He said the process did not fulfill the vision of the community identifying long-term priorities and executing projects in priority order.

There being no further testimony, Ms. Bettman closed the hearing.

Mr. Leiken moved, seconded by Mr. Torrey, to adopted Resolution 2004-03 amending the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program to add the Oregon Department of Transportation Interstate-5 bridge environmental impact study project.

Mr. Leiken explained that the project would use a different funding source than projects on the future list. He noted that the project presented an opportunity to address interchange needs and was strongly supported by Springfield.

Mr. Torrey commented that it would be foolish not to take advantage of an opportunity to design a replacement bridge with an interchange and it was unrealistic to attempt to add that feature at a later date. He said that citizens of Eugene and Congressman DeFazio supported the project and there had been significant public discussion of it. He said the question to be examined was the feasibility of off ramps from the new I-5 bridge at Franklin Boulevard.

Mr. Pirrie offered a retrospective of the project process. He said that ODOT met with local elected officials a year ago regarding building a replacement bridge. He said the process was intended to reach a record of preferred design alternatives, not reach a project decision. He said the EIS would involve the public and determine the environmental impact of various alternatives, the funding for design alternatives, determine the purpose and need for the project, and assess the interchange as part of the bridge, highway, and interstate system.

Mr. Hudson commented that the mayors of Springfield and Eugene, representing their jurisdictions, supported the amendment and it was important to recognize the regional nature of the decision. He said that Coburg was almost overwhelmed with development demands and opening an interchange at Franklin Boulevard could potentially allow for greater development in the urban areas of Eugene and Springfield while simultaneously lessening the impact on farmlands in the area and Coburg supported the amendment.

Mr. Green on clarified for the record that in his experience Congressman DeFazio was very accessible to anyone who wished to speak to him and without his support many projects in Lane County would not have occurred. He offered his assistance to Ms. Segel to facilitate access if necessary.

Ms. Bettman encouraged ODOT to involve the broadest possible array of stakeholders reflecting various points of view. She pointed out that the project concept had not been submitted to a public process, only to the local elected officials. She said she would support the amendment only because a public process would be implemented. Mr. Pirrie replied that ODOT would use EIS public process model employed successfully on the I-5/Beltline project.

The motion passed unanimously.

c. Air Quality Conformity Determination

Mr. Schwetz reviewed the agenda packet materials, which included a cover memorandum, a resolution, and the *Air Quality Conformity Determination*. He noted that the determination covered the RTP amendment approved earlier in the meeting and addressed issues raised with the technical aspects, which went through an intergovernmental review to resolve. He requested that the MPO conduct a public hearing and take action on the *Air Quality Conformity Determination*, adoption of which was recommended by the TPC.

Mr. Leiken asked what entity would assume responsibility for air quality planning within the region if the Lane Regional Air Pollution Authority (LRAPA) was eliminated. Mr. Schwetz responded that it would be the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality that would take over for LRAPA.

Ms. Bettman noted that LTD had made assumption regarding increased ridership in the TransPlan and bus rapid transit (BRT) was behind schedule. She asked if the results of the determination would be affected if the assumptions were modified to reflect reality. Mr. Schwetz referred to table 4 on page 24 of the *Air Quality Conformity Determination* and indicated that modification of assumptions would not have a significant impact. He said that emissions were measured on an ongoing basis and were within acceptable ranges.

Ms. Bettman opened the public hearing.

Kevin Matthews, Friends of Eugene, questioned whether PM₁₀ and other particulate issues would need to be managed more closely and whether assumptions of PM₁₀ and other particulate levels were still viable under likely future scenarios.

There being no further testimony, Ms. Bettman closed the hearing.

In reply to Mr. Matthews' question regarding PM₁₀, Mr. Schwetz said that LRAPA was in the process of applying for attainment status for PM₁₀ indicating that the level of pollution was below the standards and would continue to meet standards. He said that new standards would change from PM₁₀, or particulate matter of 10 microns, to 2.5 microns which could raise some issues. He added that the determination did not state that PM₁₀ was not a concern, only that it had been determined through analysis that transportation sources were not a significant contributing factor.

Mr. Green moved, seconded by Ms. Ballew, to approve Resolution 2004-04 adopting the *Air Quality Conformity Determination* for the Regional Transportation Plan and the FY2004-2006 Transportation Improvement Program. The motion passed unanimously.

d. Public Involvement

Ms. Wiederhold reviewed the MPC's purpose in establishing a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), the recommendations Public Involvement Subcommittee, and the MPC's decision at its April 8, 2004, meeting regarding appointment of a standing CAC. She said that staff was recommending appointment of an MPC subcommittee to accomplish CAC member recruitment and drafting CAC bylaws. She referred to a suggested schedule and tools for developing CAC composition and bylaws contained in the agenda packet.

Mr. Torrey expressed concern about the tool for determining CAC composition and the MPC's suggested list of stakeholders, which he felt was not consistent with an Area Commission on Transportation (ACT)

and would not result in a balanced committee. He said the CAC should be truly representative of the groups from which the MPC wanted to hear.

Ms. Bettman remarked that the purpose was to create a public process similar to an ACT and the Oregon Transportation Commission wanted broad-based participation for stakeholders, although the MPC would remain the decision-making body.

Mr. Schwetz said the intent was to establish a citizen advisory body to the MPO process in order to demonstrate compliance with federal requirements for a public process. Mr. Thompson commented that the MPC's suggested list was part of a motion at the April 8, 2004, MPC meeting.

Mr. Green stated that he was supportive of the concept because of the need to respond to criticisms that the process was not transparent, but agreed with Mr. Torrey's comments regarding the need for broader representation on the CAC. He said he was more interested in the charge to the CAC, which should be very explicit that the CAC was not an ACT or quasi-ACT.

Ms. Bettman asked that the MPC's Public Involvement Subcommittee reconvene to address the CAC work tasks.

e. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update Status

Mr. Thompson reviewed the status of work on the update of the RTP as highlighted in his June 3, 2004, memorandum. He said the update was considered "minor" in nature and would include extending the planning horizon to 2025, updating the financial constraint analysis, and expanding the boundary to include the entire census-defined urbanized area, including Coburg.

In response to a question from Mr. Van Vactor, Mr. Thompson explained that the financial constraint analysis in TransPlan was done by jurisdiction and modernization versus operations, maintenance, and preservation (OMP) and within that approach the only constrained categories were ODOT's modernization project list and Eugene and Springfield OMP needs. He said that the approach used in the analysis was very rigorous and he expected that the standard would not be relaxed or more rigorous in the update analysis.

f. MPO Calendar & Information Items

Report from Region 2 STIP/OTIA III Meeting

Mr. Green distributed a letter from ODOT regional manager Jeff Sheick related to the Beltline project. He reported that at the Region 2 STIP/OTIA III meeting the decision-making process was improved and attendees left with at least one project. He said that the group reviewed a list of funding for Lane County projects, including:

OR69: Beltline at Coburg Road	\$4.1 million
West Eugene Parkway Wetland Banking	\$1.0 million
I-5 Beltline Interchange	\$7.8 million
Beltline, River Road to Coburg Road	\$13.9 million

Mr. Pirrie clarified that those were funding recommendations rather than funding decisions.

Mr. Torrey thanked Mr. Green for his efforts to obtain Mr. Scheick's agreement to restore the Beltline at Coburg Road project as part of the region's recommendation to the OTC for the 2006-2009 STIP cycle.

Ms. Bettman asked if the MPO went to the meeting with a funding threshold. Mr. Boyatt replied the MPO made funding recommendations to the Lane County Board of Commissioners, and the Board of Commissioners met with the three ACTs from around the state to develop a statewide list of funding recommendations. Mr. Green indicated that the funding requested by Lane County was very close to the recommended funding levels with the difference being primarily in the allocation of funds among projects.

Follow-up to June 4 2004, MPO Summit

Ms. Ballew commented that Ms. Bettman had made a good point about maintaining maximum flexibility in the use of funds.

Mr. Green remarked that the OTC said that residents should not have to compete with the trucking industry when traveling from one community to another. He said it was a good opportunity to meet with others from around the state. He said that the OTC Chair had indicated an interest in holding the next meeting in the Eugene area. Mr. Kloeppe said that preparation were in progress for a September meeting in the Eugene/Springfield area.

Mr. Green said that the Lane Council of Governments was different from an ACT and the structure better fitted Lane County. He described some of the different strategies that areas used based on their unique characteristics.

Ms. Bettman said the overarching issue was whether MPOs wanted to identify common ground and join in united efforts.

Oregon Transportation Plan (OTP) Update

Mr. Schwetz explained that ODOT was currently working on an update to the OTP in conjunction with consultants and three committees. He directed members to a list of committees and their members in the agenda packet, along with a list of trends to be addressed by the update. He said the update was expected to be completed by the end of 2005.

Ms. Bettman suggested that increasing the mobility of the population at the least cost should be included on the list of trends to be addressed. Mr. Schwetz agreed that the issue should be included.

MPO Calendar

Mr. Thompson reviewed the calendar and pointed out a number of activities scheduled during June and July 2004.

The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)