

MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee
Springfield Library Meeting Room
225 5th Street - Springfield

July 8, 2004
11:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Bonny Bettman, Chair, Jim Torrey (City of Eugene); Bobby Green, Bill Dwyer (Lane County); Sid Leiken, Anne Ballew (City of Springfield), John Thiel (City of Coburg); Susan Ban (Lane Transit District); Robert Pirrie (Oregon Department of Transportation) Members; Bill Van Vactor (Lane County), Dennis Taylor (City of Eugene), Mike Kelly (City of Springfield), Mike Hudson (City of Coburg), *ex officio* members

Randy Pape (Oregon Department of Transportation); George Kloeppe, Tom Schwetz, Jeff Krueger, Milo Mecham, Paul Thompson (Lane Council of Governments).

ABSENT: Gerry Gaydos, member, Ken Hamm, *ex officio* (Lane Transit District)

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Bettman convened the meeting at 11:30 am. Those present introduced themselves.

II. APPROVAL OF JUNE 10, 2004, MINUTES

Ms. Bettman submitted written corrections.

The minutes of June 10, 2004 were approved as amended by general consensus.

III. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Rob Handy, 455½ River Road, said he had learned how important it was to develop skills and work within a team concept. He stressed that the West Eugene Parkway was probably not the best solution for the Metro area. He called for alternative solutions that would better benefit the community.

Laurie Segel, 120 West Broadway, raised concern over a possible less stringent Carbon Dioxide Emission Review due to exceeding the standards in the past. She asked whether the idea for a less stringent process came from staff or elected officials. She noted that LRAPA funding was tenuous and raised concern over using that agency to monitor the situation. She added her desire to see public review of the situation.

IV. MPO ISSUES

A. Results from Walkable Community Workshops

Jeff Krueger provided a report of the results of the workshops. He said LCOG was one of ten MPOs nationwide to participate in the program. He said LCOG had received \$20,000 in technical assistance grants in addition to local match funds to put on the workshops. He noted that 115 people had participated including people with vision and mobility impairments.

Mr. Krueger said the workshops had focused on providing solutions for four sites in the local area.

- Main Street and South A in Springfield
- Gateway Street in Springfield
- Willamette Street in Eugene
- The Eugene Downtown LTD Station

Mr. Krueger said the format used for the workshops could be used as a model for future groups. He said the group had walked the areas and done actual design work to improve the walkability of the areas. He outlined the work of the groups done for each location from the summary report included in the meeting packet.

Regarding the results of the recommendations made by the work groups, Mr. Krueger said all of the groups had suggested three-lane roads with a center turn lane and bike lanes. He added that bus pullouts were needed. He added that the concept of art in the landscape was a theme that had surfaced repeatedly. He said the downtown LTD Eugene station had received a lot of input on handicapped accessibility.

In response to a question from Mr. Pape regarding whether transportation enhancement funds were available for South A Street in Springfield, Mr. Pirrie said it was a highway so funds should be available.

Mr. Torrey commented that there needed to be a discussion of Bus Rapid Transit on Willamette Street especially given the recommendation of moving to three lanes.

In response to a question from Ms. Bettman regarding what would happen to the recommendations made during the workshops, Mr. Krueger said the recommendations were included in the 'next steps' part of the report and would be used in any implementation that occurred.

b. Environmental Justice Baseline Analysis

Tom Schwetz said by presidential executive order, every federal agency was required to make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of government programs, policies and activities on minority populations.

Mr. Schwetz called attention to the maps included in the meeting packet showing concentrations of minority populations. He noted that the minority and poverty populations were centered around the

University of Oregon and its Westmoreland Housing area. He outlined the minority percentages of the population of the area.

Mr. Dwyer stressed the importance of including protected classes such as senior citizens in the data.

In response to a question from Mr. Green regarding Eugene's housing dispersal ordinance. He noted that the Westmoreland area was student housing and questioned the accuracy of the data given the housing dispersal regulations in Eugene.

Mr. Schwetz said that, in general, it was recognized that the university and its student housing areas were going to be part of the data.

Mr. Green said he remained skeptical of the results of the data. He said the intent of the study was to identify stable populations.

Mr. Schwetz said the way the data was gathered did not allow for a distinction between transient populations and more stable areas.

Mr. Kloeppe said the intent of the executive order to make sure that minority and poverty groups were not disadvantaged by transportation planning decisions.

Mr. Dwyer reiterated that senior citizens needed to be included in any data. He said the federal guidelines were broader than the populations included in the study presented by Mr. Schwetz.

Mr. Schwetz said there was a lot of overlap between the established data to meet requirements and the general planning process that took all impacted populations into account. He said the presented data was not excluding any population.

Mr. Torrey suggested distinguishing student populations so the data could be reviewed with or without that population.

Mr. Green reiterated that the data presented did not meet the intent of the executive order. He said the order was to make sure that large transportation projects did not affect minorities and those below poverty level. He said there were no large transportation projects going through the University or Westmoreland areas.

In response to a question from Ms. Bettman regarding how the data results would be used, Mr. Schwetz said the federal rules were there to make sure minorities and those below poverty level were not impacted by transportation projects and the data would be used when those questions arose.

Ms. Bettman noted that student housing was a stable, if transient, population since the Westmoreland neighborhood was always housing low income students and should therefore be included in the data.

Mr. Dwyer reiterated that transportation policy needed to include seniors and low income home owners.

c. Coordination of Metro Area Transportation Projects

Mr. Schwetz said staff was trying to coordinate the various agencies. He said ODOT had put together a group to discuss transportation projects of various types that would happen through 2006. He said all capital projects and preservation and maintenance projects were discussed as to their impacts on other projects and overall impacts on the community. He said he would present a map of the project locations to the committee at the next meeting. He outlined the information table presented in the meeting packet.

Mr. Pirrie reported that there was excellent cooperation between the local metro partners. He said serious potential transportation problems were being solved because of that cooperation.

Ms. Ballew raised concern that simultaneous construction projects would gridlock the community. She proposed that staff review the projects to see if some could be rescheduled for a year or two without losing any funding. She said she had no specific projects in mind but reiterated that staff should review the projects to see if any could be postponed without losing funding.

Mr. Green said the key was to have good timing of projects rather than postpone them. He suggested that some could be accelerated by working at night. He stressed the importance of educating the public on the importance of the projects.

d. Planning for Second MPC Summit

Mr. Kloeppe said five members of the MPC had attended the first summit. He said Central Lane had volunteered to host the second summit. He called for input from the committee as to topics for the agenda of the Summit. He cited citizen involvement and legislative agenda projects for statewide MPOs, as examples of what was already being considered. He said the tentative date of the summit would be the first Friday in October. He said the Hilton was available as a facility for that date.

Mr. Green stressed the importance of large scale projects that would increase transportation efficiencies for all MPOs.

Ms. Bettman said she would like to see how other MPOs made their decisions.

e. MPO Calendar & Information Items

In response to a question from Ms. Bettman regarding where the impetus for pursuing the limited maintenance plan had originated, Mr. Schwetz said staff had decided to pursue the opportunity to update the plan for addressing air pollution as part of the performance schedule. He said staff was operating on the understanding that reducing costs where applicable was something they should do.

Ms. Bettman raised concern that the air quality implementation update came before the committee as an information item. She said she did not have enough information to condone the plan.

Mr. Schwetz said the plan did not reduce the level of monitoring but did allow operation under federal guidelines that required less funding. He stressed that it made prudent sense to take the approach.

Mr. Kloeppe said there would have to be larger discussion over balancing staff initiative and MPC policy decisions.

Ms. Bettman asked whether the development of the plan could include the citizen advisory group being formed.

Mr. Schwetz said that group could be included but added that there was already a public comment portion of the plan.

Mr. Green raised concern over adding to the charge and agenda of the citizen advisory group.

Mr. Leiken raised concern that the item had more future ramifications than had been assumed by staff. He stressed the importance of presenting the item as a scheduled update on the agenda. He remarked that the item was important enough to have its own place on the agenda other than as a follow up item for information.

Ms. Ballew said the solution suggested by Mr. Schwetz made sense to her.

Ms. Bettman said a lot of growth was anticipated in the next ten years. She said the assumption made by staff was that there would not be enough growth to raise Carbon Dioxide levels above desired standards.

Mr. Schwetz noted that there had been significant growth since 1990 and carbon dioxide emissions had gone down. He said that trend was expected to occur.

Mr. Kloeppe noted that the November meeting was scheduled for Veteran's day and staff was recommending no November meeting.

V. CABLE ISSUES

Milo Mecham provided an update report. He said a review of franchise fees had shown that all fees had not been paid. He said there had been extensive discussions with Comcast and the resolution would be sent back to the individual jurisdictions to take action.

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm.

(Recorded by Joe Sams)
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