

# MINUTES

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

October 15, 2008  
5:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Webb Sussman, Chair; Dave Jacobson, Vice Chair; Sarah Strand, Wendy Butler-Boyesen, Eleanor Mulder, Edward Winter, Philip Farrington, Bill Morganti, members; Kathi Wiederhold, Lane Council of Governments; Savannah Crawford, Sonny Chickering, Mac Lynde, Joanna Ridgeway, Oregon Department of Transportation; Lloyd Gordon, Gary Gillespie, Alexander Lockfeld, Richard Beers, guests.

**ABSENT:** Diana Alldredge, John Anderson, members.

## 1. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Mr. Sussman called the meeting of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to order at 5:31 p.m. Those present introduced themselves.

Mr. Sussman noted he would be resigning as chair of the CAC after their December meeting. He noted that Vice-Chair Dave Jacobsen preferred to continue to serve as Vice-Chair rather than move into his position, and that he and Dave were talking with members about potential candidates for Chair. He commented he was the last of the originally appointed CAC members, and that he would be happy to assist the new chair during the upcoming transition.

Ms. Wiederhold said that staff members Andrea Riner and Byron Vanderpool would be absent from the meeting.

Ms. Wiederhold noted that there were three potential new members present at the meeting, Alexander Lockfeld, Richard Beers, and Lloyd Gordon, who would not become official members until the November MPC meeting.

## 2. Comments from the Audience

There were no members of the public present.

## 3. Approve September 17, 2008 Minutes

\_\_\_\_\_, seconded by Mr. Morganti, moved to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2008 MPO CAC meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **4. Statewide Transportation Improvement Program**

ODOT Area 5 Planner Savannah Crawford provided an overview of the current status of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and distributed copies of the 2008-2011 and draft 2010-2013 STIP documents.

Mr. Lynde, responding to a question from Mr. Sussman, commented that the STIP documents were available online.

Ms. Crawford noted that the maps used in her presentation showed the STIP projects in Lane County for the 2010-2013 period reflected in the draft STIP. She remarked that each of the STIP projects would be finalized in the next one to two years. She proceeded to brief the CAC on the various elements of the ODOT bridge, modernization, safety/operations, and transportation demand management programs as reflected in the draft STIP. Additionally, Ms. Crawford noted that some projects from the 2010-2013 draft STIP were not new projects but were carried over from the previous STIP.

Mr. Sussman asked why the westbound edge of the OR569 River Road/Coburg Road Development modernization project had been chosen to be River Road and not Highway 99. Ms. Crawford replied that the regional transportation plan had specifically designated River Road as the westernmost edge of the project boundary. Mr. Chickering added that the ODOT Safety Priority Index System (SPIS) had been used to determine the boundaries of the project using an analysis of the number and type of accidents that had occurred in that area over a certain period of time. Mr. Sussman was surprised that Highway 99 was not used as the western boundary of the modernization project because the interchange between the Beltline and Highway 99 had been the site of several accidents.

Mr. Farrington asked how the \$2.5 million study to be completed within the 2010-2013 time period would fit in with the draft STIP projects. Ms. Crawford replied that the planning study to which he was referring was part of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and was not directly related to the STIP projects being discussed.

Mr. Chickering, responding to a request from Ms. Mulder for clarification of the nature of the planning studies being discussed by Ms. Crawford and Mr. Farrington, noted the preliminary NEPA planning studies were designed to narrow down the list of possible projects to a manageable amount.

Mr. Farrington asked if there was any chance the timeline for the draft STIP projects could be accelerated. Ms. Crawford replied that such an issue was dependent on the planning process, and that such acceleration was possible but by no means a certainty.

Mr. Sussman noted for Mr. Farrington that part of the funding constraints encountered by ODOT was that they simply did not have the personnel necessary to accelerate individual STIP projects.

Mr. Lynde added that the planning studies being employed as part of the NEPA were likely to cost more than the \$2.5 million initially projected.

Mr. Chickering noted that he would be pushing hard to stay within the confines of the 2010-2013 draft STIP schedule.

Ms. Crawford and Mr. Chickering proceeded to provide additional information regarding the safety/operations projects listed in the draft STIP.

Ms. Strand asked why there were no STIP projects listed for Linn County as there was the potential there for similar head-on collision accidents. Mr. Chickering replied that there was no real reason that Linn County had not been addressed, only that the current STIP projects had been directed towards Lane County where a greater number of accidents had occurred.

Mr. Winter asked how the signal rebuilding project at Beltline Highway and Greenhill Road could cost approximately \$1.4 million. Mr. Chickering replied that the project included all engineering and staff work as dictated by the ODOT capital program, and that the projected cost of the project was budgeted for every phase from inception to completion. He noted that the construction cost, which was only a portion of the total budget of the project's cost, was currently indeterminate. Mr. Chickering added that increased steel costs as well as engineering difficulties related to the mast poles on the traffic signals might account for the project being significantly more expensive than similar past projects. Mr. Lynde commented that the project estimate also allotted funds for sidewalk improvements related to the signal rebuilding project.

Mr. Beers asked why the Beltline/Greenhill signal rebuilding project was so critical. Mr. Chickering commented that statewide reviews of traffic signals performed by ODOT had determined that the signal was in much greater need of replacement than other similar traffic signals. Mr. Beers remarked that it appeared as if the entire roadway near the Beltline/Greenhill signal needed to be renovated into a four-lane roadway. Mr. Chickering replied that there were currently no such plans to do so.

Mr. Chickering said that while the bridge, operations and preservation STIP projects each represented a silo of money devoted to those projects based on technical merit, the modernization STIP projects had been determined and prioritized with the assistance of the CAC and other local community input.

Mr. Farrington asked how the Interstate 5 at Coburg Interchange modernization project had been changed from its earlier incarnation. Mr. Chickering answered that local entities in charge of the project had been granted federal funding to assist with the execution of the project, which had been somewhat downsized from how it had appeared in the previous STIP. Mr. Chickering did not anticipate any additional federal funding to be directed to that particular STIP project.

Ms. Crawford proceeded to brief the CAC on the various ODOT preservation projects in the draft STIP.

Ms. Wiederhold, referencing the flow chart of transportation planning documents developed for the MPO-CAC's by Susan Payne, LCOG staff member, regarding the STIP projects for the benefit of the newer members, noted that many of the projects that went into the STIP had originated out of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as well as the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP). She then asked the ODOT representatives to elaborate upon ODOT's community outreach efforts with regard to the ODOT modernization projects such as bicycle and pedestrian projects that might not be listed in the STIP.

Mr. Sussman recommended that the CAC, particularly the newer members, carefully review the flow chart to become more familiar with the various documents and processes the CAC normally dealt with. He suggested that the ODOT representatives not only take copies of the chart with them back to their offices in Salem, but also feel free to suggest ways in which the chart might be improved.

Ms. Crawford noted that there were several ODOT modernization programs, such as grant programs, that were part of the STIP but were not listed in the 2010-2013 draft. She noted that the bicycle and pedestrian programs mentioned earlier by Ms. Wiederhold were those types of grant programs.

Mr. Lynde commented that bicycle and pedestrian projects often were incorporated into certain ODOT

preservation projects. In response to a question from Mr. Sussman, Mr. Lynde noted that this was similar to what was currently being done on Highway 99 South.

Mr. Lockfeld asked if the bike lane upgrade listed as part of the local Bertlesen Road project was under the purview of ODOT. Mr. Chickering responded that the Oregon Highway Plan required ODOT to add alternative mode upgrades such as was listed for bicycles when they performed urban improvements. Mr. Sussman added that the stretch of Bertlesen Road which Mr. Lockfeld had been referring to was part of the National Bicycle Touring Route and as such there was a push for ODOT to accommodate bicycle enthusiasts along that portion of roadway.

Mr. Lynde noted that one of the nice things about local projects listed in the draft STIP such as Bertlesen Road was that they were often initiated and advised by local groups who often had a much greater knowledge base on them than ODOT personnel. He noted that local ODOT projects regarding issues of congestion mitigation and air quality had been addressed in this manner as well.

Mr. Lynde noted that ODOT often provided for certain projects with what was known as the immediate opportunity fund whereby ODOT, in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Economic and Community Development, could provide funding for transportation improvements directly related to new businesses in certain communities. Mr. Chickering listed a project involving an improved traffic signal for the Country Coach business in Junction City as one example.

Mr. Lynde, responding to a question from Mr. Farrington as to specifically how and when a CAC could introduce recommendations for ODOT projects, replied that any CAC member could always contact Mr. Chickering or his staff to discuss potential recommendations. Mr. Chickering added that local government jurisdictions worked on an annual budget cycle with yearly reviews of their respective capital improvement programs, while ODOT worked on a two-year budget cycle which could conceivably make project recommendations more difficult.

Mr. Morganti asked how much overlap would be present with all of the ODOT projects that were being discussed. Mr. Chickering answered that while from a budgetary standpoint each of the projects were under the control of ODOT, there was often a certain amount of overlap with various city governments. He also noted that ODOT would be entering into an inter-governmental agreement with the City of Springfield with regard to certain upcoming projects.

Ms. Wiederhold reminded those present that the CAC would be making recommendations regarding the STIP to the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC), which might also be an effective avenue for making specific ODOT project recommendations or suggestions.

Mr. Farrington commented he had asked his earlier question regarding project recommendations because he had attended a Lane County CIP meeting where he discovered that it was clearly much too late to propose any ODOT projects or similar transportation improvements. Mr. Chickering noted that technically he might not have been too late as the Lane County Roads Advisory Committee or the Board of County Commissioners could have taken his project suggestions under more serious advisement.

Ms. Wiederhold hoped there might be some tracking mechanism available so that any suggestions brought before ODOT or Lane County, even after it was no longer possible to consider them in the current draft, might be brought forward for consideration and review in the next draft.

Mr. Lynde, responding to a request for clarification from Mr. Sussman, noted that the Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) listed on the STIP was a body of elected officials and representatives from local

communities other than Lane County that would periodically meet to determine how to best divide ODOT resources and funding for STIP projects. He noted that Lane County had previously chosen not to participate in any ACT activities as those functions were primarily addressed within Lane County by the Board of County Commissioners.

Mr. Sussman noted he had been confused by the use of the term ACT in the STIP because he was familiar with the acronym as it was also used to describe a mass transit initiative known as Alternative Commuter Transportation.

Ms. Sussman thanked the ODOT representatives for their presentation regarding the STIP.

Mr. Lynde noted there was a great deal of information regarding the current and draft STIP's online and encouraged the CAC to visit those online resources.

Mr. Sussman called for a short break at 6:23 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

Mr. Sussman distributed copies of a recent newspaper article describing an upcoming transportation meeting concerning the future of electric cars which would be held at 7:00 p.m. on October 16, 2008 in Harris Hall.

Mr. Sussman welcomed Gary Gillespie as one of the newer CAC members who would be officially indoctrinated into the group at the November CAC meeting.

## **5. Central Clearinghouse for Public Involvement.**

Mr. Jacobson opened the meeting to suggestions and comments from the CAC regarding their proposal to establish the MPO Central Clearinghouse, additional copies of which were distributed to those in attendance at the meeting.

Mr. Jacobson briefly described the nature and origins of the proposed Central Clearinghouse, noting that the proposal had been drafted using comments and discussions offered at the CAC's September 17, 2008 meeting.

Mr. Jacobson proceeded to review each of the elements of the proposal for the benefit of the CAC, noting for the benefit of the new CAC members that their primary charge in proposing the Central Clearinghouse was to make transportation input decisions accessible to the public.

Mr. Sussman asked if the MPO partners had been involved with any aspects of the proposed Central Clearinghouse. Ms. Wiederhold answered that she had consulted with MPO partner staff regarding using the existing online and automated phone resources of Eugene and Springfield rather than creating those elements from scratch.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen was concerned that there was nothing specifically written in the proposal about who would ultimately be in charge of the online elements of the Central Clearinghouse, including the website and any subsequent updates to that website. She noted that, if the goal of the Central Clearinghouse were to use a website as its primary format, then it would be completely unusable if it was not kept current. Mr. Sussman commented that similar informational websites used by the Eugene and Springfield public works departments as well as ODOT were often not kept up to date by the individual project managers who would be best able to do so. He added that it was oftentimes very difficult to have to contact those

individual project managers directly to get them to update the necessary information.

Ms. Wiederhold noted that the Initial Phases of the Central Clearinghouse as described in the proposal would be conducted primarily through the use of online links to the information that the MPO-CAC wanted to disseminate to the public. She said that the Future Phases of the Central Clearinghouse would be dedicated to create a half-time position to oversee and update the Central Clearinghouse more efficiently. Ms. Mulder expressed that this half-time position could be referred to as the Central Clearinghouse's "editor-in-chief."

Mr. Jacobson was concerned that if the Central Clearinghouse was ultimately tied into any one agency's system, it might be at the mercy of budgetary shortfalls or administrative neglect. He felt it was important that the Central Clearinghouse function as an independent stand-alone system directly under the purview of the MPO.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen restated that, regardless of whether or not the Central Clearinghouse functioned through a series of links to different agencies, it would be useless if not updated properly.

Mr. Sussman elaborated upon Mr. Jacobson's earlier comments by saying it would not be advisable for the CAC to over-depend on the City of Eugene in its efforts to establish the Central Clearinghouse because that agency's funding commitments to the project were not guaranteed.

Ms. Wiederhold, responding to a request for clarification from Mr. Farrington, stated that the Central Clearinghouse would ultimately be owned and maintained by the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) although each of the LCOG member organizations would be responsible for input.

Mr. Farrington, responding to a comment from Ms. Wiederhold that the MPO website was owned and maintained solely by LCOG, asked if there might be any way for the CAC to economize the establishment of the Central Clearinghouse by using resources already devoted to LCOG's MPO website. Ms. Wiederhold noted that MPO staff had recommended that the Central Clearinghouse be initiated with a completely separate domain and website so that it might be more recognizable to the public.

Ms. Wiederhold confirmed for Mr. Farrington that funding for the Central Clearinghouse would ultimately be overseen by the MPC.

Mr. Jacobson commented for the benefit of the newer CAC members that the MPO website was an excellent resource for learning about local transportation systems and initiatives.

Ms. Wiederhold commented that she would consult MPO partner staff to give their input on the Central Clearinghouse proposal.

Ms. Wiederhold expressed it would be necessary to have dedicated funding for any half-time position created to oversee and maintain the Central Clearinghouse website rather than have that position be a temporary hire.

Mr. Jacobson elaborated on the Future Phase item from the proposal that funding options would be researched for the purpose of providing telephone options to the Central Clearinghouse in addition to the website by saying that online and phone functionality should be developed in parallel.

Mr. Lockfield asked if the phone functionality of the Central Clearinghouse would be tied into the pre-existing automated telephone resources used by the City of Eugene. Mr. Jacobson noted again his concern

that the Central Clearinghouse not be tied in to any one particular agency or system other than the MPO.

Ms. Wiederhold briefly described how the telephone options would ideally work with the Central Clearinghouse.

Mr. Sussman commented that the telephone options had been a significant focus of the CAC due to suggestions that many members of the public might not be physically capable of using a computer to gather the information that would be organized by the Central Clearinghouse.

Mr. Jacobson, responding to a question from Mr. Morganti, noted that the Central Clearinghouse would ideally not allow information to overlap which might adversely affect the transportation plans of different agencies. Mr. Chickering added that ODOT would have unique challenges in utilizing the Central Clearinghouse as proposed since there might often be multiple versions of identical projects listed on the website, particularly if the Central Clearinghouse functioned as a separate system under the MPO.

Mr. Farrington felt that the telephone hotline planned for the Central Clearinghouse would not need a half-time position to oversee its use. Mr. Jacobson added that the Central Clearinghouse could easily use a voice mail system to collect information which could then be forwarded to a particular transportation agency.

Mr. Gillespie assumed that citizen involvement was a requirement as part of the funding process for the Central Clearinghouse. Mr. Sussman confirmed that was the case for many transportation projects. Mr. Gillespie further commented that he was less worried about tying in to pre-existing online resource from agencies such as Eugene and Springfield than he was about functioning on an independent basis. Mr. Gillespie felt that functioning independently carried with it a greater risk of information being lost or outdated.

Mr. Sussman commented that the links pages on various governmental agency websites in the area were kept reasonably up to date, and that tying in to pre-existing online systems was a notion that should be held on to for the immediate future.

Ms. Wiederhold, responding to a question from Mr. Gillespie, reported that the funding for the proposed half-time position that would be overseeing the online and telephone resources of the Central Clearinghouse had not yet been completely secured.

Mr. Lockfeld asked what currently happened when ODOT received calls from the public regarding transportation concerns. Mr. Chickering noted there was a system called Ask ODOT designed to route calls from the public to the appropriate transportation agency. Mr. Chickering noted there was also already an informal network of professional transportation contacts both inside and outside of ODOT which helped to efficiently relay transportation concerns to the appropriate entity.

Mr. Jacobson maintained that while informal professional networks such as those described by Mr. Chickering were indeed effective, they were often difficult to maintain. He expressed that there needed to be a way of formalizing such contacts in a way that they could exist regardless of current staffing.

Mr. Sussman observed that it might be difficult to update and maintain staff contact information within the Central Clearinghouse, and that it might be advisable to examine the Ask ODOT infrastructure to see if it could be applied to the Central Clearinghouse.

Mr. Jacobson proceeded to review the Details/Specific Suggestions portion of the Central Clearinghouse

proposal for the benefit of the CAC.

Mr. Sussman commented that it might be better for agencies with information listed on the Central Clearinghouse to be reachable via a web form contained directly within the Central Clearinghouse rather than by the use of email links.

Mr. Sussman emphasized it would be necessary to have any text information on the Central Clearinghouse website presented as darker text in a larger font over a lighter background.

Mr. Jacobson asked the CAC if any further information or suggestions would need to be added to the proposal before it could be submitted to staff. No further information was offered by the CAC.

Mr. Jacobson called attention to the CAC draft schedule for 2008-2009, noting that the Public Participation Plan Check-In would be postponed until the November 2008 CAC meeting.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen hoped that the Title VI training sessions would occur before the Title VI Final Draft at the February 2008 CAC meeting.

Members of the CAC briefly discussed the STIP organizational chart previously distributed by Ms. Wiederhold.

Mr. Farrington noted for the benefit of the newer CAC members that the UPWP item listed in the February 2009 portion of the draft schedule referred to the Unified Planning Work Program, a work program for the MPO to direct its staff throughout the calendar year.

Mr. Farrington asked when it was most likely that the CAC officers would present a status report on the committee's progress to the MPO. Mr. Wiederhold said she would work with LCOG transportation program manager Andrea Reiner to schedule that.

Mr. Jacobson and Ms. Wiederhold briefly described the relationship between the MPO and the MPC for the benefit of the newer CAC members.

## **6. Updates from Staff**

Ms. Wiederhold noted that LCOG was currently drafting a schedule concurrent to the CAC draft schedule which had been distributed earlier in the meeting. She noted that schedules for the MPC Policy Committee and the MPO staff group were being drafted as well. She added that there were currently efforts underway to more fully interconnect the CAC and the MPO staff groups.

Mr. Jacobson asked if there would be any need for a joint meeting of the CAC and the MPC in the immediate future. Ms. Wiederhold answered that the submission of the Central Clearinghouse proposal might be an ideal reason to schedule such a meeting. Mr. Farrington offered that a review of the MPC's strategies regarding the Regional Transportation Plan might also be a good reason to schedule some type of joint meeting.

Ms. Wiederhold commented that the MPC was relying on the CAC to assist in its community outreach efforts.

Mr. Gillespie expressed that a joint meeting of the CAC and MPC would benefit from having all relevant

parties in the room discussing their ideas.

Ms. Sussman noted it might be difficult to have officers from both group commit to attending a joint meeting as the MPC traditionally met during normal business hours.

## **7. Wrap Up**

Mr. Winter asked how long the CAC officers' term were. Mr. Sussman replied that the chair and vice-chair typically served in those positions for one year.

Mr. Farrington had no comments to offer.

Mr. Gordon had no comments to offer.

Mr. Morganti had no comments to offer.

Mr. Chickering commented that ODOT would be conducting two open house sessions regarding their I-5 at Coburg Road project at Coburg City Hall on October 17 and 18.

Ms. Mulder urged the CAC members to speak to their friends and families regarding the upcoming ballot measures.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen asked what safety criteria ODOT employed in evaluating projects. Mr. Chickering noted that the SPIS system he mentioned previously was most often used.

Mr. Gillespie asked what officer positions were available in the CAC. Ms. Wiederhold noted that the CAC used both a chair and a vice-chair, although the possibility existed of having co-chairs.

Mr. Jacobson thanked the newer CAC members for their attendance and input during the meeting.

Mr. Lockfeld noted he had questions regarding the history and origins of the CAC that would most likely be answered during his orientation process.

Mr. Beers noted he was looking forward to serving on the CAC.

Ms. Wiederhold thanked Mr. Chickering for his input and asked the four new members of the CAC to remain to discuss orientation schedules.

Mr. Webb thanked the potential new CAC members for their attendance and input during the meeting.

Mr. Jacobson asked Ms. Wiederhold to draft and distribute an updated CAC roster.

Mr. Webb adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

(Recorded by Wade Hicks)