

MINUTES

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

September 22, 2011
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Edward Winter, Sarah Strand, co-chairs; Diana Alldredge, Dick Beers, Wendy Butler-Boyesen, Philip Farrington, Gary Gillespie, Dave Jacobson, Alexandre Lockfeld, Bill Morganti, Eleanor Mulder, Jennifer Smith, members; Sonny Chickering, MPC liaison; Kathi Wiederhold, Andrea Riner, Paul Thompson, Lane Council of Governments; Natalie Stiffler, Lane Transit District; Kurt Yeiter, City of Eugene; David Reesor, City of Springfield.

ABSENT: Paul Adkins, Rosalia Marquez, members.

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review

Mr. Winter called the meeting of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) or order. Those present introduced themselves.

Mr. Winter thanked Sonny Chickering for his service to the CAC and congratulated him on his promotion to Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) regional manager. Ms. Strand presented Mr. Chickering with a card of appreciation from committee members.

Mr. Winter distributed a Eugene Weekly article about bicycle projects and street safety.

Ms. Strand noted that the article referred to the recent death of a bicyclist and the possible relationship to a canceled Hunsaker Lane/Beaver Street bike project. She suggested the CAC should be proactive in reviewing the documents presented to it. She asked to add discussion of a recommendation to the MPC to support reinstatement or alternative funding for the student bus pass program to the agenda.

Mr. Winter determined there were no objections to adding the item to the agenda.

Mr. Farrington arrived at 6:35 p.m.

Comments from the Audience

There were no comments.

Approve July 21, 2011, Minutes

Ms. Butler-Boyesen pointed out that Ms. Wiederhold's name was misspelled in the list of those present.

Mr. Morganti, seconded by Ms. Butler-Boyesen, moved to approve the minutes with the correction of Ms. Wiederhold's name. The motion passed unanimously, 12:0.

Draft Regional Transportation Plan

Mr. Thompson explained that the September 2011 Draft Regional Transportation Plan provided in the agenda packet, except for the addition of final versions of maps, was the same document that the CAC had reviewed in part or in whole during its previous meetings. He said the public comment period would be open through November 7.

Ms. Wiederhold distributed an RTP update informational flyer that would be posted throughout the community in English and Spanish and asked CAC members to take copies to post and add their suggestions for posting locations to the list.

Mr. Thompson asked for CAC input on the draft plan and noted there would be an opportunity at the October 2011 meeting to provide additional feedback and make recommendations to the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) regarding adoption.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen asked if bikeway projects were also intended for pedestrians. Mr. Thompson replied that all off-street path projects were multi-use paths.

Mr. Winter commented, regarding Chapter 2, TSI Bicycle Policy #3, that buffered bike lanes encouraged more people to bike because of the additional safety they provided and hoped to see that addressed in the RTP. Mr. Thompson said the term "bikeway" was broadly defined in the plan, although buffered lanes were not specifically mentioned. He said it would be appropriate to recommend addition of that language.

Ms. Smith said she had reviewed the City of Eugene's draft bike plan and found its goals and objectives to be weak. She encouraged Lane County to provide leadership in bicycle safety. She agreed that only separating bike lanes with a line of paint did not encourage new bicyclists who were concerned with safety.

Ms. Mulder pointed out that with limited funding, construction of more expensive bikeways, such as buffered bike lanes would mean fewer overall miles of facilities, although she would prefer to see buffered lanes.

Mr. Thompson said the characteristics and operation of bikeways was still a topic of discussion by the bicycle community.

Mr. Lockfeld said it was always preferable to have the bikeway physically separated from the flow of traffic, which made it more comfortable and encouraging for people to ride bikes.

Mr. Lockfeld, seconded by Mr. Morganti, moved that the CAC recommend to the MPC the addition of language to Chapter 2, TSI Bicycle Policy #1, Policy Definition/Intent recommending the physical separation of bikeways from the flow of traffic on the street.

Ms. Strand supported the motion as it was an example of how the CAC could have a stronger voice in ways to improve the area's transportation system.

Mr. Beers expressed concern with the ability to fund physically separated bikeways, particularly if fuel tax revenue decreased as people used their cars less.

Mr. Lockfeld asked how RTP projects were funded. Mr. Thompson replied that the financial plan was set forth in Chapter 3 of the RTP and pages 45-46 contained tables that identified total financial needs over the 25 years of the plan, the projected revenue for that period, and the projects that could likely be funded. He said the plan also identified specific funding sources, but not the amount of revenue that was projected from each source because of the long-range nature of the document.

Mr. Jacobson described traffic and bicycle flow on Alder Street between 13th and 18th avenues. He said it was quite dark at night and he felt bicyclists were often oblivious to vehicles and pedestrians on the street. He agreed with the motion to make a recommendation to the MPC, but better bicycle safety should also include education of bike riders.

Mr. Gillespie supported the motion, but expressed concern with the level of funding available for physically separated bike lanes. He was interested in seeing how well the shared lane operated on East 11th Avenue. He was also concerned about bicyclists using sidewalks when there were no bike lanes. He agreed with the need for more education for those using Alder Street.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen noted that the financially constrained list included the Hunsaker Lane/Beaver Street as a striped lane bike project, although it was uncertain when the project would be implemented within the plan's timeframe.

Mr. Farrington suggested that Chapter 2, TSI Roadway Policy #2: Motor Vehicle Level of Service should include the flexibility to modify level of service standards. He thought the fiscally constrained list would become invalid when the reduction in federal transportation funds became known and many projects would have to be removed from the list. He was concerned that if flexibility was not built into the plan it would impede the implementation of policies such as transit-oriented or infill development in the future. He said an example might be a property owner along West 11th Avenue who wanted to upzone the property for mixed-use development but was prevented because under the State Transportation Planning rule the development would add more trips to an already failing system.

Ms. Smith asked if Mr. Farrington was suggesting that there should be flexibility regarding the level of services standards that the community would accept. Mr. Farrington said that was correct and the Portland metropolitan area had already applied a lower level of service because officials realized they could not build their way out of congestion, but wished to intensify development within cities.

Mr. Yeiter confirmed that the example Mr. Farrington gave had already occurred three or four times along West 11th Avenue.

Mr. Thompson added that those situations occurred not only because the levels of service standards stood in the way, but also because the West Eugene Parkway was eliminated and no alternate facility had been identified to handle the projected traffic. He said there was a conscious decision not to change the levels of service standards in the RTP because ODOT was in the process of overhauling mobility standards and Eugene, Springfield and Coburg were updating their transportation system plans (TSP) and did not want the RTP to place constraints on those updates. The Policy in question exists in the current Eugene-Springfield

TSP (TransPlan) as well as the RTP, and would need to be modified in both documents in order to address the concerns. The preference is to modify that in the local TSP(s) first, and then have that reflected in the RTP.

Mr. Morganti said cars, bicycles and pedestrians should all be included in the plan.

Ms. Strand pointed out there was local political support for increasing bicycle travel and it was proven that a physical separation of bikes from traffic increased ridership.

Mr. Lockfeld restated his motion as follows: The CAC recommends to the MPC that TSI Bicycle Policy #1 be modified by adding the following sentence to the second paragraph of Policy Definition/Intent:

“...safely accommodate bicycles. *It is preferable that bicycles and pedestrians be physically separated from the flow of traffic.* If a street...”

Mr. Morganti seconded the motion as restated. The motion passed, 11:1; Mr. Beers voting no.

Mr. Farrington said he had a series of questions and comments that he would forward in writing to staff.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen noted that in several places in the plan percentages were referenced, but no values were given. She asked when those figures would be added. Mr. Thompson said those numbers were based on modeling work and he anticipated they would be available in two weeks. He did not expect the figures would vary significantly from those in the currently adopted RTP as trends were not changing.

Mr. Beers asked if 2010 census data was used for population demographics in the plan. Mr. Thompson said 2010 census data was used for several things, but other data sources were better for some items, such as maps. He said the data sources were cited when used throughout the document.

Mr. Farrington suggested that the next meeting be devoted in its entirety to reviewing and commenting on the RTP. He also suggested the MPC hold a public hearing later in the public comment period to allow people sufficient time to study the document. He said while the CAC had seen pieces of the plan as they were completed over the past year, it was difficult to provide meaningful feedback until the entire plan could be reviewed.

Mr. Winter determined there were no objections to devoting the CAC's next meeting to the RTP review discussion. He said perhaps an additional meeting could be scheduled if committee members wanted more time to discuss the plan.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen pointed out that the maps contained a great deal of information that could answer questions regarding projects.

The committee took a short break.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Update

Ms. Riner provided a status report on the Oregon Sustainable Transportation Initiative. She said the State was developing an overall Statewide Strategy, along with three work products relating specifically to the MPO's work: target rules, scenario planning guidelines and a greenhouse gas toolkit. She said the target rules had been completed and work was progressing on scenario planning guidelines and the toolkit. Many representatives from local jurisdictions were participating in the development of those products. She said ODOT was working with technical and policy advisory committees on development of a statewide strategy to reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector.

Mr. Jacobson asked what type of enforcement efforts would be involved. Ms. Riner responded that currently only Portland Metro would be required to implement strategies to achieve emissions goals, but there was no enforcement beyond the requirement to develop a plan to achieve target goals. Ms. Riner emphasized that the statewide strategies would address all transportation modes, both urban and rural.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen asked if other sources of GHG were being addressed. Ms. Riner said the ODOT efforts were focused on the transportation sector; the State's Global Warming Commission was working on other GHG and climate change issues.

Ms. Alldredge asked if small efforts such as not topping off gas tanks would be considered as part of the initiative. Ms. Riner said many of the strategies did involve changes in personal behavior and those could be encouraged by government, but not necessarily mandated or regulated. She would share work products with the CAC as they became available.

Mr. Beers asked if a baseline had been established. Ms. Riner said that would be in the toolkit, which she expected would be available after the first of the year.

Mr. Gillespie said Point2point Solutions recently conducted a campaign to increase carpooling and reduce vehicle miles traveled. The program provided Unique Eugene dollars as incentives to participants.

Concluding her presentation, Ms. Riner said that Portland Metro was close to completion of early scenario planning tasks and preliminary indications showed achieving the State's target goal could be possible.

MPC/Other Updates

Mr. Winter reported that the MPC had discussed the RTP update at its last meeting and a representative from Portland's TriMet had presented information on its business assistance program along transit corridors. He said Lane Transit District (LTD) was preparing to implement a similar program.

Ms. Strand thanked the MPO for providing scholarships that allowed CAC members to attend the Oregon Planning Institute conference and Ms. Riner for her assistance in obtaining the scholarships. She reported on the conference and said it highlighted the importance of the CAC's role as a link between the public and government.

Mr. Winter, Mr. Morganti and Ms. Mulder agreed that the conference was very interesting and informative.

Ms. Strand asked for a motion to support the student bus pass program.

Mr. Morganti, seconded by Ms. Smith, moved to propose to the MPC that the MPC write a letter to the legislature strongly encouraging legislators to identify funding for the student bus pass program.

Committee members and staff discussed the viability of several funding sources.

The motion passed, 10:1:1; Mr. Beers voting no and Mr. Gillespie abstaining.

Reports from CAC Representatives on Outside Committees

Mr. Jacobson reported that he had made a presentation on the RTP to the Lane Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) and suggested that those living in outlying communities and working in the MPO provide input on the plan. He said there was also a discussion about the rail line across 42nd Street in Springfield.

Ms. Strand reported that the Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) had discussed use of ODOT flex funds and the need for jurisdictions to develop project proposals. She hoped the CAC would be involved in that process. Mr. Thompson noted that the application timeframe was very short, with project proposals due October 20, preventing the CAC from providing input.

Mr. Thompson clarified that under Roberts Rules of Order a chair or co-chair could make a motion or provide a second only if they then relinquished their duties as chair until completion of the vote on the motion.

Ms. Mulder suggested that a list of the flex fund proposals could be emailed to CAC members so they could advocate for those they supported. Mr. Thompson described some of the projects that were being considered for applications.

Mr. Farrington asked if a roadway improvement/preservation project would be eligible for the flex funds if it included multiple modes. Mr. Thompson said it was not likely to be eligible because the funds were targeted to non-roadway projects.

Wrap-Up

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)