

MINUTES

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

April 15, 2010
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Dave Jacobson, chair; Sarah Strand, vice-chair; Paul Adkins, Dick Beers, Wendy Butler-Boyesen, Philip Farrington, Gary Gillespie, Alexandre Lockfeld, Bill Morganti, Rosalia Marquez, Eleanor Mulder, Edward Winter, Diana Alldredge, Jennifer Smith, members; Sonny Chickering, MPC liaison; Kathi Wiederhold, Andrea Riner, Ellen Currier, Jeff Cook, Stacy Clauson, Lane Council of Governments; Tom Schwetz, John Evans, Connie Bloom Williams, Lane Transit District; Kurt Yeiter, City of Eugene, Wade Hicks, City Minutes Recorder.

ABSENT: Phillip Carroll

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Mr. Jacobson called the meeting of the Central Lane MPO Citizen Advisory Committee (MPO CAC) to order at 5:30 p.m. and asked those present to introduce themselves.

Mr. Jacobson asked if any adjustments to the meeting agenda were needed.

Ms. Wiederhold suggested that the presentation on the MTIP Web Map be moved to earlier in the agenda since the scheduled representatives from LTD had not yet arrived.

2. Comments from the Audience

No public comments were offered.

3. Approve September 16, 2009 Minutes

Mr. Lockfeld asked that his comments as reflected in the minutes of the March 18, 2010 CAC meeting be revised to more clearly indicate that the 30th Avenue bicycle lane referenced therein was a lane that would be physically separated from vehicular traffic.

Mr. Jacobson, noting no further adjustments or revisions to the minutes, deemed the minutes of the March 18, 2010 CAC meeting approved as amended.

4. Member Spotlight

Mr. Jacobson read his prepared remarks as part of the Member Spotlight agenda item and requested that they be entered into the record as follows:

Born in Buffalo, New York. Moved to Los Angeles when young. Graduated UCLA. Worked for LA County Civil Service Commission and Sheriff's Office. Went back to UCLA for a teaching credential; taught for LA City Schools. Returned to school (SFVSC - now CSUN) for M.A. degree in psychology. Holds CA License as Marriage & Family Therapist.

Family moved to Thousand Oaks; raised three children. Had a private learning center and a family counseling practice. Was on a local school board, was homeowners association president, was on many, many school district committees and City of Thousand Oaks committees, including Citizens Traffic Committee.

Closed down the learning center and started teaching for the CA Youth Authority. Retired from the State. Was on the 1998-99 Ventura Co. Grand Jury, studying County operations and bringing criminal indictments for the D.A.

Moved to Springfield in 1999 where I have had some property since 1990. Currently manage four duplexes.

Play bassoon in Eugene Symphonic Band, Springfield Community Concert Band, and a bassoon quartet. On Springfield's Police Planning Task Force. Became an Instructor in AARP's Driver Safety Program, was the OR State Coordinator for the program for five years, and was regional coordinator with over-sight responsibility for six Northwestern states.

Appointed to the MPO CAC in May 2006. Chair since January 2009.

Mr. Chickering arrived to the meeting at 5:34 p.m.

Mr. Yeiter and Ms. Clauson arrived to the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

Ms. Bloom Williams arrived to the meeting at 5:38 p.m.

5. Preview Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) Web Map

Ms. Currier provided a brief overview of the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program as well as the process by which the MTIP web map had been created. She noted that the MTIP represented those priority projects from the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) expected to be funded within the next three to five years.

Ms. Currier noted that while there was currently no interactive version of the web map available, the current map was available in a pdf format and that an interactive map was expected to be incorporated into the next iteration of the MTIP web map.

Ms. Currier noted that the MTIP web map had not yet been posted on the LCOG website and that she hoped the CAC would provide feedback and suggestions regarding the latest version of the MTIP web map.

Ms. Currier asked if any of the CAC members had viewed the RTP map from the LCOG website and asked them for their responses to it.

Mr. Jacobson noted that the interactive functions of the RTP map worked very well and very quickly when used with a DSL connection.

Ms. Currier, responding to a question from Mr. Farrington, noted that the CAC was still welcome to provide further input regarding the MTIP map. Mr. Farrington suggested that information regarding the timing of certain projects such as those on 13th Avenue might be provided on the map.

Ms. Currier noted that much of the information from the RTP map was also displayed on the current version of the MTIP web map.

Mr. Cook stated that one of LCOG's goals with the RTP and MTIP maps was to make sure that the information contained on each map remained consistent and easily accessible.

Mr. Schwetz and Mr. Evans arrived to the meeting at 5:47 p.m.

Mr. Lockfeld acknowledged that some of the filters in the interactive maps were difficult to use and noted that a concurrent list of all the RTP projects on the map might also be useful. Ms. Currier responded that such a list might be used but that it would also be possible to pare down the project information on the list depending on the needs of the user.

Mr. Cook, responding to questions from Mr. Winter and Ms. Riner, noted that information regarding the timelines and dollar amounts for the RTP projects was included on the interactive map.

Mr. Jacobson asked who the interactive RTP materials were primarily directed toward. Ms. Currier responded that the materials were primarily to be used by those community members who were interested in which RTP projects would be going forward over the next four years.

Ms. Currier, responding to a question from Mr. Winter, noted that projects in the planning phase would not be included on the interactive RTP map but would be listed elsewhere on the RTP website.

Mr. Lockfeld maintained that it was not particularly easy to locate the RTP and MTIP materials from the LCOG website.

Mr. Farrington believed that much of the tabular information included in the RTP and MTIP maps were probably more than what most people needed. He further suggested that the information therein might be pared down in order to communicate elements of the projects more efficiently.

Ms. Smith suggested that the information in the maps might be paired with certain population data and equity information.

Mr. Morganti suggested that the acronyms used on the RTP and the MTIP online materials might be in a different font color so that they might be more easily located.

Ms. Riner asked how frequently the MPO CAC members each used the RTP and MTIP online maps and the Committee members generally discussed their responses.

Mr. Beers asked which transportation agencies typically used the MTIP web map. Ms. Riner responded that the MTIP web map was available to all of the agencies within the boundary of the Central Lane MPO as well as a variety of State transportation agencies.

The MPO CAC members briefly discussed various elements of the MTIP web map.

Ms. Riner had recently learned that ODOT was working to create a maneuverable online map that would allow users to view information on transportation plans throughout the State.

Ms. Alldredge noted the CAC's efforts to facilitate public participation regarding local transportation project planning and asked how the RTP and MTIP maps might be used to demonstrate more information regarding projects that were in the planning phase. Ms. Currier responded that the MTIP web map might not be able to be used in such a manner. Mr. Cook expressed a concern about putting projects that were in the planning phase or which had not been adopted into the MTIP web map and believed that including such elements might be misleading to the public when presented alongside projects that had been adopted and were under development.

Mr. Winter suggested that information regarding projects in the planning phase might be listed separately from the MTIP web map.

Mr. Farrington suggested that LCOG refrain from using unnecessary abbreviations or hyphenations as much as possible in its online materials such as the MTIP web map. Mr. Lockfeld suggested that any uses of acronyms on the MTIP web map use hyperlinks to definitions of the acronyms as well as information on the relevant projects.

Ms. Currier stated she would send the CAC members an email with further information regarding the development of the MTIP web map and encouraged them to respond with more feedback regarding it.

Mr. Cook noted that there was currently no mechanism for feedback from the community to be collected or disseminated regarding the MTIP map.

Mr. Cook, Ms. Currier and the CAC members briefly discussed ways in which community members might be able to get further information regarding the projects displayed on the MTIP web map.

Mr. Cook noted that the MTIP and the Keep Us Moving sections of the LCOG website were connected and suggested they might be used to list more specific information regarding MTIP projects.

Ms. Riner noted there were still some problems regarding the type and quantity of information that was displayed on the MTIP web page.

Ms. Currier, responding to a question from Mr. Farrington, briefly noted how amended project items were listed on the MTIP web map.

Mr. Winter suggested that contact links on the MTIP web map for the various agencies involved in the MTIP projects would be helpful.

6. Briefing on West Eugene EmX Extension Project and Locally Preferred Alternative Decision Making Process

Mr. Schwetz reported that LTD staff continued its work on the preparation of the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the WEEE project. He further noted that LTD had recently completed the bulk of its public outreach efforts with respect to the development to the DEIS and that the current challenge in that regard was to maintain an appropriate level of community awareness regarding the DEIS and the ultimate selection of the locally preferred alternative (LPA)

Mr. Schwetz referred to a timeline for LTD's LPA draft-decision making process and stated that the DEIS was expected to be released in November of 2010 with the final LPA decision to follow in early 2011. He noted that upon the selection of the LPA the WEEE project would be at approximately the 30% design level and would be subject to the Federal Transit Administration's record of decision on the development of the overall project.

Mr. Schwetz noted that LTD was already considering corridors for future EmX expansion beyond the completion of the WEEE project and asked that the MPO CAC members begin considering their respective priorities in that regard.

Mr. Schwetz maintained that LTD had communicated with specific community groups in addition to general community workshops in order to explain elements of the LPA and the larger WEEE process. He hoped the CAC would continue to provide valuable advice on how LTD might engage with broader sections of the community regarding future EmX expansions.

Mr. Jacobson noted that Ms. Butler-Boyesen had been heavily involved in discussions of the WEEE project as a community member and asked for her perspective regarding LTD's public outreach strategies.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen recognized that there were still some members of the community who remained ignorant of the specifics of the WEEE project such as the DEIS. She suggested that LTD might distribute information regarding the DEIS and the LPA in a manner similar to LTD's distribution of its regular Riders Guide publication.

Ms. Mulder stated that many members of the public still did not understand the "whole picture" of the WEEE project particularly with respect to the DEIS and its stated focus on environmental costs and displacement problems with the project. Mr. Schwetz in his response to Ms. Mulder's comment recognized that it was challenging to effectively explain certain elements of a complex, large-scale project like the WEEE and maintained that LTD had continually worked to encourage the public to take a broader view with respect to the various alignment alternatives described as part of the LPA process.

Ms. Mulder stated that a recent LTD public outreach meeting with local representatives from the League of Women Voters had been particularly helpful in explaining the phased nature of the WEEE project.

Mr. Farrington noted his attendance at a recent LTD open house event and believed it would be helpful for LTD to more clearly demonstrate the work products of LTD subcommittees such as the WEEEDO. He believed that recent discussions of the WEEE project had been overly focused on the various alignments for the project and believed that more basic data needed to be relied on for future discussions. He maintained that the large amount of anecdotal testimony from both LTD staff and community members had led to a number of false conclusions being circulated regarding the WEEE project.

Mr. Gillespie also recognized that a number of false conclusions and misrepresentations had been made in the community, particularly with respect to the ways in which various funding elements could and could not be used by LTD for the WEEE and future EmX expansions. He believed that LTD needed to continue to address the basic, critical components of each area of the WEEE project so that further misrepresentations regarding the EmX system might be avoided.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen briefly commented on the WEEE project as it related to Title VI neighborhoods and believed it was necessary for LTD to continue to focus on the "broad picture" of how EmX expansion projects affected the community.

Mr. Schwetz responded to Ms. Butler-Boyesen's comments and stated that the more LTD's EmX system was developed the more LTD's regular bus service would be affected. He noted that continued development of the EmX system would necessitate various reconfigurations of LTD's other services and that it would likely take significant time in order to determine the full effects of expanded bus rapid transit services in the community.

Mr. Morganti stated that he was currently required to take three different buses to travel to River Bend Hospital. Mr. Schwetz noted that the Gateway EmX buses would run all the way to the hospital from LTD's Springfield Station and would not require any unnecessary transfers.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen believed that a lot of people still did not understand how the Gateway EmX expansion would actually work in relation to other LTD's transit services.

Mr. Winter believed that it was important for LTD and the MPO CAC to continue to examine the effect that EmX expansions would have on local neighborhoods and businesses.

Ms. Clauson recognized that that the WEEE project represented a unique and important opportunity for the advancement of alternative transportation modes in Lane County and surrounding areas. Mr. Schwetz agreed with Ms. Clauson's statement.

Mr. Lockfeld noted that many community members were still concerned about reconfigurations of LTD service routes and asked how LTD had investigated the use of collector bus routes to address such concerns as EmX services were developed. Mr. Schwetz commented the WEEE project would not necessarily eliminate regular bus routes in the corridor and noted that the precise configurations of those routes and any associated collector routes were still to be determined.

Ms. Marquez noted that the WEEE project would affect significant numbers of transitional families in public housing along the corridor. She further noted that a lot of the information regarding the WEEE project and its effect on the community had not been effectively communicated to those members of the community. She believed that LTD needed to increase its efforts to explain elements of the EmX projects and the long-term effects of those projects to minority families.

Mr. Jacobson noted that more information regarding population and business trends would be helpful for future CAC discussions regarding EmX expansions. Mr. Schwetz responded that such information might be made available. Mr. Schwetz further commented that LTD would continue to seek the expertise of the CAC members on how information such as Mr. Jacobson had described might best be applied.

Mr. Jacobson called for a break at 6:43 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

7. Annual Review of Public Participation (PPP) and Title VI plans

Ms. Riner encouraged the CAC members and support staff to take advantage of the group's opportunity to review its annual evaluations of its PPP, its Title VI plans and its overall public involvement efforts.

Ms. Riner believed it was important for the CAC and the CAC's PPP/Title VI Annual Review Subcommittee to first consider broader questions regarding the ultimate direction of the CAC's public outreach efforts.

Mr. Jacobson noted that the CAC's discussions impacted a significant number of people and recognized the importance of allowing those affected by CAC discussions to have a clear voice in those discussions.

Ms. Riner reported that the review of the PPP would involve more detailed evaluations of the plan's goals, objectives, actions and measures.

Ms. Riner noted that the review of the objectives of the PPP would involve an examination into the types of tools and strategies that were used to reach those objectives.

Mr. Jacobson noted that one problem of the CAC was that it tended to "preach to the choir" with respect to local transportation concerns. He recognized that the CAC needed to broaden its efforts to reach out to members of the community who did not ordinarily involve themselves with such matters.

Mr. Lockfeld asked how an evaluation of goals would differ from an evaluation of objectives with respect to the review of the PPP. Ms. Riner responded that the PPP review of its goals would encompass broader, more philosophical areas while the review of the PPP objectives would address smaller, more incremental and more tangible tools that were used to enact various public outreach strategies.

Mr. Jacobson suggested that an improved PPP evaluation process might provide a model for future CAC projects. Ms. Riner added that it would also better inform how the CAC involved itself in an advisory capacity to various local government agencies and associated committees.

Ms. Smith noted that a strong and clear statement of the CAC's public participation goals helped the group to better reflect the values of the community with respect to local transportation issues.

Ms. Wiederhold expressed that previous earlier PPP reviews had been more detailed and focused on public outreach for key MPO products over the previous year. She asked CAC members to respond to the broad question about the goals of the MPO public involvement program in the attachment: Are we heading in the right direction? She told CAC members that, after their discussion, she would ask them to weigh in on the question by voting in a straw poll to indicate whether they felt the MPO was headed in the right direction with its public involvement program, needed some significant work on one or more goals, or were not headed in the right direction. She suggested that CAC members not discuss each of the goal statements one by one, but instead focus on those where the MPO was doing particularly well or needed to make improvements

The CAC members briefly discussed their thoughts regarding the PPP direction goals in the attachment.

Mr. Gillespie appreciated that the PPP and the CAC in general had been expressly focused on soliciting feedback and input from community members and organizations that were not generally part of local transportation discussions. He hoped that the goals of the current and future iterations of the PPP would continue in that regard.

Mr. Lockfeld also recognized the importance of finding out what those people who did not normally get involved with public planning processes actually wanted with respect to various transportation issues.

Mr. Winter believed it was important to generate public confidence in the CAC's various direction goal processes.

Ms. Mulder, responding to a question from Ms. Wiederhold, maintained that the CAC had not historically done a good job of maximizing outcomes of high strategic value.

Mr. Farrington recognized the perpetual struggle of the CAC to organize and explain to the public the vast amount of complex information regarding local transportation matters. He believed that any future efforts in that regard needed to continue to be both timely and equitable.

Ms. BloomWilliams noted that it was challenging for the CAC and other groups involved in local transportation matters to help the community understand the complex nature of long-range transportation planning strategies.

Mr. Farrington suggested it would be easier for the CAC to funnel its public outreach efforts into discussions of specific transportation projects.

Ms. Wiederhold conducted a straw vote regarding the direction goals listed by the support staff and recognized that the CAC members generally supported the goals as stated. All the CAC members except one felt that the MPO public involvement program was headed in the right direction. One member felt that more work was needed on a specific goal. No members voted in the straw poll that the MPO public involvement program is not headed in the right direction.

Mr. Jacobson felt that the use of the term "strategic" to describe the CAC's public involvement efforts with respect to its direction goals was nebulous and hoped that a more specific phrase might be used. Mr. Wiederhold suggested that the matter of the language used in the stated direction goal be forwarded to the CAC's subcommittee for further consideration.

Mr. Lockfeld agreed with Mr. Gillespie's earlier comment regarding the need for the CAC to solicit input on local transportation issues from people who were not normally involved in the process.

Mr. Gillespie referred to Mr. Jacobson's earlier comment regarding the use of the word "strategic" in the direction goals and noted that the specific strategy that was being referred to was the solicitation and recruitment of community members and groups who were not normally involved in transportation planning discussions.

Ms. Riner hoped that the CAC members would consider strategies that would make the most efficient use of the Committee's time and resources.

The CAC members and support staff briefly discussed their respective positions regarding the direction goals of the Committee as they related to the review of the PPP.

Ms. Clauson asked the CAC members to consider the tools and objectives they might use to achieve their goals and directed the CAC members to the list of public involvement tools that group had used in the past. She hoped that a careful review and discussion of CAC public involvement tools might suggest additional public involvement tools and strategies for the successful implementation of same.

Ms. Clauson, responding to a question from Ms. Butler-Boyesen, noted that the MPC held public hearings regarding area transportation matters during their regular monthly meeting.

Mr. Jacobson asked when the CAC would be expected to make its recommendations to the MPC regarding its review of the PPP and Title VI plans. Ms. Wiederhold suggested that the CAC members and support staff confer with the members of the CAC's PPP/Title VI Annual Review Subcommittee before making a final determination as to when recommendations would be made to the MPC.

8. Wrap-Up

Mr. Jacobson noted that the CAC had a great deal to work on over the next several months and hoped that the CAC members would continue to engage in thoughtful and productive discussions.

Ms. Wiederhold reminded the CAC members about the upcoming CAC field trip and asked that they feel free to contact her with suggestions about where the field trip might take place. She noted that the dates for the field trip had not yet been firmly established.

Mr. Jacobson adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

(Recorded by Wade Hicks)