

MINUTES

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

March 17, 2011
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Edward Winter, Co-chair; Sarah Strand, Co-chair; Dave Jacobson, Phillip Carroll, Wendy Butler-Boyesen, Alexandre Lockfeld, Eleanor Mulder, Bill Morganti, Diana Alldredge, Jennifer Smith, Phil Farrington, members; Stacy Clauson, Paul Thompson, Kathi Wiederhold, Andrea Riner, Lane Council of Governments; Sonny Chickering, MPC Liaison; David Reesor, City of Springfield; Kurt Yeiter, City of Eugene; Wade Hicks, LCOG Minutes Recorder.

ABSENT: Paul Adkins, Richard Beers, Gary Gillespie, Rosalia Marquez, members.

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Ms. Strand called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. and asked those present to introduce themselves.

Ms. Strand reviewed the meeting agenda.

2. Comments from the Audience

Ms. Strand noted there were no audience members present to provide comments or testimony.

3. Approve January 20 and February 17, 2011 Minutes

Mr. Morganti, seconded by Ms. Butler-Boyesen, moved to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2011 MPO CAC meeting.

Mr. Jacobson and Ms. Strand offered corrections to the minutes.

Ms. Strand called for a vote on Mr. Morganti's previously stated motion. The motion passed unanimously, 11:0.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen, seconded by Mr. Morganti, moved to approve the minutes of the February 17, 2011 MPO CAC meeting.

Mr. Morganti and Ms. Mulder offered corrections to the minutes.

Ms. Strand called for a vote on Ms. Butler-Boyesen's previously stated motion. The motion passed unanimously, 11:0.

4. Public Participation Plan Annual Review

Ms. Wiederhold summarized from the previous meeting that the annual review of the MPO Public Participation Program for the current year would take a broader perspective on the Plan as per the direction of the Committee. She further noted that the Committee members had agreed to appoint an annual review subcommittee to review the Plan and program and suggested that the subcommittee could meet twice in April to form a recommendation to be brought to the CAC at their May meeting.

Ms. Wiederhold noted those CAC members who had served on the 2010 Annual Review Subcommittee.

Mr. Jacobson suggested it might be good if the subcommittee members from the previous review could continue in their review capacity.

Mr. Morganti, Ms. Alldredge and Mr. Winter each volunteered to serve on the PPP annual review subcommittee.

Ms. Wiederhold noted she would work with subcommittee members to schedule a meeting to initiate work on the Annual Review.

Mr. Jacobson commended the work of the previous review subcommittee.

5. Draft Unified Planning Work Program

Ms. Riner commented that the UPWP development and review process had become much more efficient and productive over the last three years and that the two-year cycle for the Central Lane MPO UPWP process had proven to be efficient and informative.

Ms. Riner, responding to a question from Mr. Jacobson, discussed some of the reasons why the UPWP had evolved over the last several years to incorporate a more integrated perspective on land use and transportation planning issues. She further discussed how MPO staff has been involved in the development and review of various state-required local transportation system plans which are land use and transportation documents.

Ms. Riner noted that the Central Lane MPO's Sustainable Communities grant had also allowed the MPO to better coordinate land use and transportation planning work within our metropolitan area.

Mr. Farrington discussed his perceptions of how the various local transportation system plans were related to one another. He noted that the Regional Transportation Plan might incorporate more integrated land use and transportation elements as it was developed and executed.

Mr. Farrington asked for further clarification regarding the nature of the Sustainable Communities initiative. Ms. Riner responded that she had received assurance from HUD that the Sustainable Communities grant funding had been fully committed in the federal budget and that it already is being drawn upon.

Ms. Riner, responding to a question from Mr. Farrington, stated that she was confident that the RTP Update could be completed within the projected timeframe. Mr. Winter asked Ms. Riner to explain the differences between the RTP and the Regional Transportation System Plan (RTSP). Ms. Riner answered that the RTP was the federally-required, primary long range transportation plan produced by the Central Lane MPO that provided long-range protection of regional transportation needs. The RTP is not a land use document. The RTSP is required by statewide land use planning and is more oriented towards land use and transportation systems of local jurisdictions. The RTSP is a land use document.

Ms. Riner, responding to a question from Mr. Winter, stated that the objectives for the Central Lane MPO's transportation planning program as listed in the UPWP had been taken directly from the federal SAFETEA-LU requirements. Ms. Riner further described how various components of the RTP had been developing over the past several years. She noted that there was a requirement for the Central Lane MPO to develop a RTSP by the end of 2013.

Mr. Farrington asked how the RTSP might be affected if the 2010 Oregon Sustainable Transportation Initiative (Senate Bill 1059) was not funded. Ms. Riner described that such circumstances would not greatly affect the development of the RTSP, but would impact the MPOs ability to complete the greenhouse gas reductions planning tasks described in the UPWP.

Mr. Farrington believed that the Sustainable Transportation Initiative would subsidize much of the modeling and scenario planning used in the UPWP projects.

Mr. Farrington asked for additional clarification regarding the timeline for the development and adoption of the RTP given the work coming out of the other coordinated regional transportation projects , such as the Eugene and Springfield Transportation System Plans, and how that might be incorporated into the RTP. Ms. Riner responded to Mr. Farrington and described how the development of the RTP had been considered against the concurrent development of the Eugene and Springfield TSP's. The local processes and plans will feed into the work to develop the RTSP.

Springfield Senior Planner David Reesor reminded the CAC members that the MPC had appointed a regional policy subcommittee to address regional issues related to the RTSP update. Mr. Reesor noted that while the RTSP was considered a land use document, the RTP was not.

Ms. Riner expressed that the MPC had been charged with modernizing the language of the RTP goals and objectives.

Ms. Riner, responding to a question from Mr. Farrington, described how feedback collected through the RTSP's interactive map and web survey would be used to inform the process to develop more modernized language for the goals and objectives language of the RTP.

Mr. Farrington suggested that input that could be pertinent to modernizing the goals and objectives in the RTP might be overlooked if feedback was not carefully collected in tandem with the RTSP interactive map. Ms. Riner responded to Mr. Farrington's comment and noted that the information collected from the online survey would likely relate more to policy issues than would comments from the input map.

Mr. Thompson arrived to the meeting at 6:13 p.m.

Mr. Chickering asked Mr. Farrington to elaborate on any significant issues raised by the Springfield Planning Commission. Mr. Farrington responded that he did not know of any specific changes but had learned through the City of Springfield's website that there was a list of projects that might be significantly modified by the Springfield Planning Commission.

Mr. Reesor responded to Mr. Farrington's comment and noted that the Springfield Planning Commission had recently reviewed several of the existing policies, goals and objectives of TransPlan. He further noted that the Springfield Planning Commission also had discussed how local issues and values might be considered by the Springfield City Council.

Mr. Reesor, responding to a question from Mr. Chickering, stated that the Springfield Planning Commission had held ongoing discussions regarding how nodal development might be addressed in the Springfield TSP.

Mr. Yeiter addressed Mr. Chickering's question and added that Eugene staff had created an online survey form to be completed by the City's transportation advisory committee, the Eugene Planning Commission, and the Eugene Sustainability Commission. He noted that the results of that survey had indicated a preference for increased development along transit and core commercial corridors in Eugene. He noted that City staff had recently adopted the term "twenty minute neighborhoods" to describe the kinds of development that might be used in Eugene in the future.

Mr. Yeiter noted that Eugene staff had decided to postpone further revisions to the policy phase of the Envision Eugene land use initiative until a community values discussion process could be completed.

Mr. Yeiter, responding to a question from Ms. Strand, stated that a draft version of a "Pillars and Strategies" document from the Envision Eugene initiative recently had been completed to articulate the general land use concepts that had evolved through the Envision Eugene initiative. Mr. Yeiter noted that further information regarding the document would be presented on the City's webpage.

Mr. Yeiter, responding to a question from Ms. Smith, stated the public involvement process for the Envision Eugene initiative had not yet been completed and that members of the public were encouraged to provide further feedback on the initiative.

Ms. Riner asked staff to describe to the CAC when they might expect to see a proposal for how the MPC intended to modernize the goals and objectives language of the RTP. Mr. Thompson hoped that such a proposal might be presented to the CAC at their April meeting so that their feedback might be taken to the MPC during their regular meeting in May.

Break

Ms. Strand called for a break at 6:22 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

6. Draft Congestion Management Process

Mr. Thompson provided an overview of the draft of the Central Lane MPO's Congestion Management Process (CMP) document and noted that it would be formally presented to the MPC at their April meeting. He further noted that the CMP had been developed for incorporation into the RTP update.

Mr. Thompson noted that all MPO's with a population greater than 200,000 were required by the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) to develop a CMP.

Mr. Thompson noted that the Central Lane MPO's draft CMP document had been reviewed by FHWA representatives on two separate occasions.

Mr. Thompson expressed that traffic congestion was not generally considered by the MPC to be as high of a priority as other transportation related issues such as system preservation, safety, transit services and greenhouse gas emission reductions. The MPC identified these regional priorities when establishing the most recent STP-U funding framework.

Mr. Thompson noted that the draft CMP document provided information on the current traffic congestion management policies in the region.

Mr. Thompson summarized the primary elements of the draft CMP document for the benefit of the CAC members.

Mr. Thompson, responding to a question from Mr. Morganti, stated that the HERS-ST stood for the Highway Economic Review System (State Version), a software model distributed by the federal government for MPOs to analyze economic development impacts of various transportation policies. Mr. Thompson noted that the MPO has found the system to be so data intensive as to preclude its usefulness to the MPO.

Mr. Thompson stated that the CMP document addressed congestion within the context of the various long range transportation plans in the community. He noted that the document described various transportation system efforts including intelligent transportation systems and transportation funding priorities.

Mr. Thompson noted from the CMP document that Central Lane MPO staff in 2004 had developed a congestion management system (CMS) report that described current and emerging congestion issues. He further noted that the 2004 report had identified the primary congestion management corridors in the region.

Mr. Jacobson asked if there were any existing intelligent transportation system (ITS) models that might be applied locally. Mr. Thompson replied that many of the elements of those systems were highly individualized.

Mr. Thompson, responding to a question from Ms. Butler-Boyesen, noted that a sign was currently being constructed on Delta Highway just southeast of the bicycle/pedestrian bridge that would be used to warn motorists of traffic congestion problems. Mr. Chickering added that overhead clearance for the sign had not been sufficient and that further modifications would need to be made.

Mr. Thompson, responding to a question from Ms. Strand, discussed how the federal requirement for the CMP had recently been changed to make the previous congestion management system requirement less onerous for most MPOs. He noted that rather than requiring a specific system to address traffic congestion, MPOs are now required to develop a process that simply includes a consideration of traffic congestion.

Mr. Thompson, responding to a question from Mr. Carroll, briefly discussed how the CMP would interact with various elements of the RTP. Mr. Carroll interpreted Mr. Thompson's response to indicate that the CMP could be considered a supporting document to the RTP but would not necessarily be the impetus for any specific policies or projects.

Mr. Thompson referred to earlier statements from the FHWA which indicated that MPOs were required to follow the processes necessary to develop elements such as the CMP but that local jurisdiction were given the authority to set their own specific policy decisions at the local level.

Mr. Thompson, responding to a question from Mr. Carroll, briefly discussed how the CMP might be used in the event that traffic congestion problems in the community increased considerably.

Mr. Thompson noted that a draft list of new projects that was recently presented to the MPC had included a review of a volume-to-capacity (V/C) congestion map for the metro area. He noted that the review had indicated that there were not currently any serious congestion issues that needed to be immediately addressed by projects that were not already included in the RTP.

Mr. Chickering and Mr. Reesor noted that the City of Springfield had recently approved a project to eliminate the Main Street couplet as a means of addressing congestion in that area.

Mr. Reesor stated that Springfield staff was investigating the possibility of a new RTP project to turn Main Street into a two-way roadway as a means of encouraging economic development and also addressing traffic congestion.

The CAC members and staff briefly discussed various areas and times in the community where increased traffic congestion typically occurred.

Mr. Thompson noted that the appendices listed in the draft CMP document contained a list of reports and analyses which described local traffic congestion issues in much greater detail than the summary information in the CMP.

Mr. Reesor, responding to a question from Mr. Carroll, stated he could not recall if the Springfield TSP update contained any specific elements or requirements intended to address traffic congestion in Springfield.

Mr. Thompson responded to Mr. Reesor's comment and noted that the requirement of a TSP update was to provide for the facilities and services needed to serve the long term transportation needs of the Cities of Eugene and Springfield. He further noted how the current iterations of the TSP's might be interpreted with respect to traffic congestion strategies.

Mr. Yeiter recalled that congestion management policies were not a required component of the Eugene TSP update but noted that traffic congestion strategies discussions would be included as the development of the update moved forward.

Mr. Farrington believed that State laws allowed communities to set their own traffic congestion standards. He maintained that Portland had accepted higher levels of traffic congestion at peak travel times in order to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation.

Mr. Thompson responded to Mr. Farrington's comment and briefly discussed how certain state laws allowed jurisdictions to apply for alternative mobility standards with respect to traffic congestion levels.

Mr. Thompson stated the 2004 congestion management system report served as the predecessor to a two-year TGM grant that allowed the Central Lane MPO staff to develop an alternative mobility standards (AMS) report. Mr. Thompson briefly described how the AMS report had been applied to consider the transportation needs of various facilities in the metro area.

Ms. Mulder distributed materials from the League of Women Voters of Lane County that described how voters could contact their elected officials.

Mr. Thompson, responding to a comment from Ms. Strand, commented on how time factors were considered in the analysis of various transportation projects. He maintained that travel time data continued to be used across nearly all modes of transportation in considerations of how improved transportation systems might be implemented.

Ms. Strand suggested that travel times as a priority factor in the consideration of transportation project viability might soon become an obsolete method of evaluation.

7. Updates

Mr. Jacobson noted that he had attended the most recent meeting of the Lane County Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) where a detailed PowerPoint presentation entitled "State of the System" from Acting Area Director for Region 2 Eryca McCartin was given regarding the rapidly decreasing rate of federal funding available for State transportation projects.

Mr. Jacobson noted that there was a recruitment conducted to fill a number of open citizen representative slots on the ACT. Mr. Jacobson commented that he had suggested to the other ACT members that a subcommittee be formed to review the applications for the open citizen representative positions

Mr. Chickering noted that the application period for the ACT citizen representatives had closed on March 15, 2011.

Mr. Chickering noted that the ACT steering committee was scheduled to meet on March 24 to review applications regarding the citizen representative slots.

Mr. Chickering referred to Ms. McCartin's presentation from the ACT meeting and noted that it also had addressed the current overall condition of the State highway system. He noted that in general the presentation had indicated that many elements of the State highway system were falling behind target levels of established condition rating.

Mr. Jacobson noted that the ACT citizen representative slots would be filled by persons with specific areas of transportation interest and expertise. Mr. Thompson noted that twelve applications for the slots had been received to date.

Mr. Jacobson, responding to a question from Ms. Strand, stated that the next meeting of the Lane County ACT had been scheduled for Wednesday, April 13, 2011 at 5:30 p.m.

Ms. Smith noted she had recently seen ACT recruitment posters on LTD buses.

8. Reports from CAC Representatives from Outside Committees

Mr. Winter noted that he and Ms. Strand had attended the most recent MPC meeting and noted that the MPC had at that meeting approved the name Whilamut Passage for the new I-5 bridge.

Mr. Winter noted that one of the County representatives on the MPC had voiced his opposition to LTD's West Eugene EmX Extension project. Mr. Winter further noted that in response to recent developments surrounding the WEEE project that an additional public hearing regarding the West 6th/7th Avenue alignment alternative had been scheduled for April 5 at the Wheeler Pavilion.

Mr. Thompson noted that contrary to an article in the Register-Guard newspaper earlier that morning the April 5 MPC public hearing regarding the WEEE project would address all of the alignment alternatives and not just the West 6th/7th alternative.

Mr. Morganti believed that many community members who had opposed the West 11th/13th Avenue alignment alternative would support the West 6th/7th Avenue alignment. Mr. Jacobson noted that some parts of the West 6th/7th Alignment alternative actually traveled on West 11th Avenue.

9. Wrap up

Ms. Smith noted that she had recently attended an open house event for the Eugene Bicycle/Pedestrian master plan. She stated that the event had been well received by the individuals who had attended. Mr. Carroll noted that he had been very encouraged by the development of the plan.

Mr. Chickering stated that ODOT had scheduled an open house event to present proposed artwork for the new I-5 bridge at the Eugene Public Library on April 7, 2011.

Mr. Farrington noted that he had been unable to attend the most recent meeting of the Eugene TSP update subcommittee.

Mr. Yeiter noted that the next meeting of the Eugene TSP advisory group would be sometime in mid-April.

Mr. Farrington noted he had also attended the bicycle/pedestrian master plan open house event but had been frustrated that many of the project ideas he had suggested to staff over the past several years had not been included in the plan.

Mr. Farrington noted that he had recently spoken with Eugene and Springfield City staff and with representatives of LTD's point2point commuter solutions program regarding the possibility of implementing a local car-sharing program.

Mr. Lockfeld encouraged the other CAC members to read Bob Welch's column from the March 17, 2011 Register-Guard regarding past community efforts to block construction of nuclear power plants in the region.

Mr. Morganti noted that he had not been able to speak at the previous public hearings regarding the WEEE project because of the extended length of the proceedings. He noted that he had alternatively submitted written comments regarding the project.

Mr. Jacobson noted that the UPWP and the CMP documents had been very detailed and commended the staff for their work on them.

Ms. Strand noted from the recent MPC meeting that county representative Sid Leiken had expressed that the minutes of the recent CAC meetings had been very informative and interesting to read.

Ms. Mulder noted that she recently had discussed future uses of the Civic Stadium property with Ms. Smith and agreed with her that the Fred Meyer proposal might be helpful to the development of twenty-minute neighborhoods in the south Eugene area.

Ms. Alldredge noted that the recent Project Homeless Connect event had been very successful with almost 1600 guests and approximately 900 volunteers providing various services.

Ms. Alldredge stated she would be participating in a citizen's police academy later in March.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen encouraged the other CAC members to attend the MPC's public hearing on April 5 to give feedback in support for the WEEE project. Ms. Strand added that the CAC members were not precluded from offering public comment at the MPC meeting.

Ms. Riner noted that LTD representative Mary Archer had recently accepted a position in San Francisco and thanked Ms. Archer for her work to support the efforts of the CAC.

Mr. Yeiter noted that the LTD Board of Directors had voted in favor of the West 6th/7th alignment as the locally preferred alternative at their March 16 meeting. He further noted that the LTD Board had also voted to authorize point2point solutions to solicit proposals for a local car-sharing program.

Ms. Strand adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

(Recorded by Wade Hicks)