

MINUTES

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

October 21, 2010
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Dave Jacobson, Chair; Sarah Strand, Vice-chair; Phillip Carroll, Wendy Butler-Boyesen, Alexandre Lockfeld, Bill Morganti, Eleanor Mulder, Paul Adkins, Richard Beers, Gary Gillespie, Edward Winter, Diana Alldredge, Jennifer Smith, members; Kathi Wiederhold, Paul Thompson, Lane Council of Governments; Mark Pangborn, John Evans, Mary Archer, Lane Transit District; David Reesor, City of Springfield; Sonny Chickering, MPC liaison, Oregon Department of Transportation; Pam Jongeward, Erin Ellis, Laurel Hayes, Kent Wilson, Sharisa Adairie, guests; Wade Hicks, LCOG Minutes Recorder.

ABSENT: Philip Farrington, Rosalia Marquez, members.

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND AGENDA REVIEW

Mr. Jacobson called the meeting of the Central Lane MPO Citizen Advisory Committee to order at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Jacobson noted that in the absence of Andrea Riner, Item No. 6, the Regional Transportation Plan Policy Set Discussion, had been removed from the agenda.

Mr. Jacobson asked those present to introduce themselves.

2. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Pam Jongeward noted that she was a property manager for certain buildings along LTD routes.

3. APPROVE SEPTEMBER 23, 2010 MINUTES

Ms. Butler-Boyesen, seconded by Mr. Morganti, moved to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2010 meeting of the MPO CAC. Mr. Jacobson, noting no objections or corrections, deemed the minutes approved as submitted.

4. REAPPOINTMENT OF CAC MEMBERS WITH EXPIRED TERMS

Mr. Jacobson noted that Ms. Wiederhold had included the term information for each CAC member on an updated Member List in the agenda packet.

Mr. Jacobson maintained that the overall quality of the Committee was significantly improved by having members retain their positions for longer periods of time.

Ms. Mulder commented that it had taken the Committee members quite a bit of time to fully understand the various goals and discussion areas of the MPO CAC.

Mr. Morganti expressed that he had enjoyed serving as a member of the MPO CAC and appreciated the information he had learned, particularly with regard to the number of single occupancy vehicles used in Lane County.

Mr. Lockfeld arrived to the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Mr. Winter, seconded by Mr. Gillespie, moved to forward a recommendation to the Metropolitan Policy Committee of the Central Lane MPO that Diana Alldredge, Wendy Butler-Boyesen, Bill Morganti and Eleanor Mulder each be reappointed to an additional three-year term with the CAC. The motion passed unanimously, 13:0.

Mr. Carroll stated he had reviewed the CAC bylaws and was confused by information therein regarding the number of CAC members and the procedures for addressing vacant positions on the CAC.

Mr. Jacobson stated that the Committee generally preferred to have a membership roster closer to 15 members than to 10. He noted that it was unusual that the Committee found itself in a position to reappoint certain members.

Mr. Jacobson stated that Mr. Beers, Mr. Gillespie, Mr. Lockfeld, Mr. Strand, and Mr. Winter would be eligible for reappointment next year.

Mr. Jacobson, responding to a question from Mr. Carroll, stated that the CAC typically would begin advertising and recruiting for new members once the current roster had been reduced down to ten or eleven members. He further noted that it had been significantly cheaper to reappoint current members rather than to recruit new ones.

Mr. Winter suggested that alternate candidates from previous recruitment processes might be encouraged to re-apply to serve on the CAC.

Mr. Jacobson expressed that the alternate candidates from the previous CAC recruitment drive had not been up to the standards established by those persons who had eventually been appointed to the CAC.

Mr. Jacobson noted that the City of Springfield had planned to suggest candidates for the CAC.

Mr. Carroll stated that the CAC bylaws detailed when the Committee would need to advertise any vacancies.

Ms. Smith hoped that other CAC members could be reappointed in the future.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen stated that CAC members could serve a maximum of two consecutive terms under the current bylaws.

Mr. Jacobson asked how the guests had learned about the MPO CAC meeting.

Mr. Jacobson thanked the guests for their interest and attendance and noted that members of the public were always welcome at the CAC meetings.

Mr. Jacobson, responding to a question from Ms. Butler-Boyesen, stated that none of the guests had signed up to offer public comment or testimony.

Mr. Pangborn arrived to the meeting at 5:43 p.m.

5. WEST EUGENE EMX ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS REPORT

Mr. Pangborn provided a detailed history of the development and implementation of LTD's current EmX services as well as LTD's plans for future EmX expansions. He noted that one of the primary directives from the State as public transit needs were considered was that vehicle miles traveled needed to be significantly reduced. He stated that while light rail systems had proven prohibitively expensive for the area at a cost of over \$60 million per mile, the entire four-mile Franklin EmX route had been constructed at a cost of approximately \$24 million.

Mr. Pangborn reported that LTD's Franklin EmX service had been enormously successful and that ridership for the service had far exceeded initial projections.

Mr. Pangborn discussed how the West Eugene EmX Extension project had been initiated at the request of the Eugene City Council.

Mr. Pangborn briefly discussed the funding mechanisms for EmX and other bus rapid transit systems and noted that BRT systems could be built only with federal funding and that to even submit applications for such funding a locally preferred alternative selection process was required to be implemented.

Ms. Pangborn noted that the LTD Board of Directors, the Eugene City Council and the Metropolitan Policy Committee were collectively charged with the final selection of the locally preferred alternative.

Mr. Evans commented that LTD staff had requested the CAC's feedback regarding the public outreach tools that had been used regarding the WEEE project.

The WEEE Alternatives Analysis Report was not expected to be released to the public until next week. LTD staff presented preliminary results from the report.

Mr. Evans briefly described the five primary alignment alternatives under consideration for the WEEE project. He stated that the alignment alternatives had been ranked according to various criteria in the WEEE Alternatives Analysis Report. Mr. Evans discussed various elements of the report and noted that the main alternatives could be altered slightly from their original iterations as the WEEE project progressed. He further noted that LTD staff continued to meet with individual property owners in the West Eugene area to find ways to mitigate impacts on any and all properties due to the WEEE project.

Mr. Evans stated that the alternatives analysis report would be presented to the Joint Locally Preferred Alternative Committee (JLPAC) at their first meeting on October 29.

Mr. Evans distributed a summary table of the public involvement tools that had been planned for the next phase of the WEEE project.

Mr. Evans noted that the Eugene Coordinated Land Use Transportation Action Committee (CLUTAC) had been formed by members of the Eugene planning and sustainability commissions in order to evaluate the triple-bottom line sustainability of the WEEE project and the alignment alternatives in particular.

Mr. Evans distributed copies of a table describing the preliminary results of the alignment alternatives analysis.

Mr. Evans, responding to a question from Ms. Mulder, noted that signal prioritizations and queue jumps had been included as elements of the transportation system management (TSM) alignment alternative.

Ms. Smith felt it seemed obvious from the preliminary data that had been presented that the two options for the West 13th Avenue/West 11th Avenue alignment alternative were the best.

Mr. Pangborn responded to Ms. Smith's comment and noted that it was possible to evaluate the alignment alternatives from a variety of perspectives.

Mr. Evans, responding to a question from Mr. Winter, noted that total system-wide ridership projections had been included in order to demonstrate the effects of the WEEE project on the overall LTD transit system.

Mr. Evans, responding to a question from Mr. Lockfeld, noted that the projected ridership data was relatively new and was not associated with the ridership projection data from the Franklin EmX that had proven to be inaccurate.

Mr. Evans, responding to a comment from Mr. Morganti regarding LTD's recent service reductions, stated that expanded EmX service would allow LTD to revise its total transit system in a manner that would help compensate for the recent bus service reductions.

Mr. Pangborn, responding to a question from Mr. Morganti, stated that it was not LTD's intention to replace all of the regular LTD buses with EmX vehicles. Additionally, Mr. Pangborn briefly discussed how the EmX system might be expanded in other areas to provide greater overall service coverage.

Mr. Evans, responding to a question from Mr. Beers, noted that the ridership projections used in the preliminary results of the alternatives analysis had been based on the most recent population data available that was developed in 2007.

Mr. Pangborn discussed how the federal government's decennial census information had been used to develop ridership projections for LTD.

Mr. Pangborn, responding to a comment from Mr. Morganti, discussed how LTD transit services had been used for a variety of purposes and how examinations of those uses had influenced the review of the alignment alternatives.

Mr. Winter asked if the various 2031 projections from the preliminary analysis presumed the implementation of additional bus lines during the interim. Mr. Evans commented that they did not.

Mr. Evans, responding to a question from Ms. Smith, noted that the technical report section of the full WEEE Alternatives Analysis Report used conservative estimates for fuel prices and other factors that would affect the actual ridership of the West Eugene EmX service.

Mr. Pangborn briefly discussed various incentives and disincentives that might ultimately increase the use of the West Eugene EmX service by the public.

Mr. Pangborn, responding to a question from Ms. Mulder, stated that park and ride transit facilities tended to be used in denser, more suburban geographic areas. He noted that the West Eugene area did not necessarily have the kind of dynamics that would facilitate the construction of a park and ride facility.

Mr. Pangborn, responding to a question from Mr. Lockfeld, stated that there might be the possibility of constructing a park and ride facility near the Commerce terminus point for the West Eugene EmX expansion.

Mr. Jacobson called for a break at 6:27 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:39 p.m.

Mr. Pangborn stated that LTD staff expected to receive permission from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to release the full version of the WEEE Alternatives Analysis report to the public within the next week.

Mr. Evans, responding to a question from Ms. Alldredge, noted that the alternatives analysis report would clarify a number of outstanding issues for the public. He further noted that the report would help develop concepts for mitigation involving property owners in the West Eugene corridor.

Mr. Pangborn responded to Ms. Alldredge's question and noted how the full alternatives analysis report would help provide much more accurate information to the public regarding areas such as transit travel times.

Mr. Evans, responding to a question from Mr. Adkins, described how LTD had changed from the use of an environmental impact statement to the use of an alternatives analysis report in order to communicate information regarding the relative strengths and weaknesses of each alignment alternative. He noted that the use of the alternatives analysis had allowed LTD staff to eliminate from consideration those alternatives that had ultimately proven unviable. Mr. Evans further noted that LTD staff was expected to report information on no-build and TSM alternatives in addition to build options as it applied to the FTA for federal funding.

Mr. Evans, responding to a question from Ms. Butler-Boyesen, stated that LTD's preliminary analysis had showed significant adverse environmental impacts for those alignment alternatives that had extended beyond Commerce Street. He noted that those impacts were the primary reason approximately two-thirds of the initial list of alignment alternatives had been eliminated from consideration.

Mr. Lockfeld asked how LTD planned to respond to recent opposition from community groups to the WEEE project. Mr. Evans responded that much of the community opposition appeared to come from West 11th Avenue property and business owners concerned about the potential negative effects of EmX construction and implementation. Mr. Evans stated his opinion that the community group opposed to West Eugene EmX was a self-selected group of individuals who were very difficult to convince of the necessity and benefits of long range, integrated land use and transportation policies.

Mr. Evans stated that a lot of inaccurate information had been passed along by community groups and individuals opposed to the WEEE project.

Mr. Evans, responding to a question from Mr. Lockfeld, noted that the West 11th Avenue business and property owners were primarily concerned about the effect of the WEEE project on the frontage strips along West 11th Avenue. He noted that any property acquisitions necessary for construction of the EmX route would likely only apply to two to ten feet of the frontage strip areas along the roadway.

Mr. Evans briefly described how LTD staff planned to address any property acquisitions that might be necessary for construction of the West Eugene EmX route. He noted that LTD had worked very hard to minimize the need for any property acquisitions as they tended to add significantly to the overall cost of the WEEE project.

Mr. Pangborn stated that the objections of West 11th property and business owners were based in concerns about how businesses and properties would be affected during construction of the EmX route and also by how businesses and properties would be affected by the configurations of the West Eugene EmX system once it had been completed.

Mr. Pangborn noted that there existed a basic philosophical disagreement about whether or not a West Eugene EmX route was actually needed in the West Eugene corridor.

Mr. Morganti stated that he had heard concerns voiced by West Eugene residential property owners who feared that they might be evicted from their homes so that the WEEE project might be constructed.

Mr. Pangborn reported that he had learned that residential property owners in the Whitaker neighborhood were concerned that property values might actually increase as a result of the WEEE project to such a degree that those owners might not be able to continue to afford living in that area.

Mr. Beers asked what the West Eugene EmX service would bring to West 11th Avenue. Mr. Evans responded that West 11th was currently at or near traffic capacity and that the West Eugene EmX service, by allowing greater numbers of people to travel through the area using fewer vehicles, would ultimately contribute to the long-term viability of West 11th Avenue as a retail business area.

Mr. Evans, responding to a question from Mr. Beers, stated that the West Eugene EmX service would allow LTD's regular service to be reconfigured in a manner that would move larger numbers of people in and through the West Eugene area at a significantly lower cost.

Mr. Evans briefly described the current high traffic patterns and frequencies of West 11th Avenue.

Mr. Pangborn briefly described the residential populations of the West Eugene area and noted how residential customers made up a sizeable portion of LTD's West Eugene corridor ridership.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen noted that she was a West Eugene residential user of LTD's bus services. She further noted that since the recent LTD service reductions LTD many buses in the West Eugene corridor had become severely overcrowded.

Ms. Smith commented that West 11th Avenue was much more suitable for pedestrian travel than West 6th/7th Avenue and as such appeared to be a much more viable course for EmX travel.

Mr. Jacobson asked Mr. Pangborn to notify Ms. Wiederhold once the full West Eugene EmX Alternatives Analysis Report was released.

Mr. Pangborn noted that the LTD Board of Directors, the Eugene City Council and the Metropolitan Policy Committee were expected to make a final determination on the WEEE alignment alternative in January or February of 2011. He noted that until that time the MPO CAC members could expect at their meetings to receive regular updates from LTD regarding the WEEE project processes. He further noted that LTD staff would be able to provide information to the CAC regarding the JLPAC discussions.

Mr. Pangborn noted that LTD staff would send Ms. Wiederhold information regarding the times and dates of the JLPAC meetings.

Mr. Gillespie noted that the October 29 meeting of the JLPAC would be held at the Eugene Fire Station at the corner of West 13th Avenue and Willamette Street.

6. UPDATES

Ms. Strand provided an update from the Beltline/Delta Highway Interchange subcommittee meeting and noted that the stakeholders had reached an agreement regarding possible options for the interchange project. She noted that the stakeholders had ultimately determined that a phased project that included a local connector route north of the freeway would ultimately improve traffic patterns and pedestrian access in that area. She noted that Lane County Commission Rob Handy expressed that the West Eugene area should be funded before the Beltline/Delta Highway area. Ms. Strand expressed that many areas of the Beltline and Delta Highways were very dangerous and that the importance of planning to improve access to those areas should not be minimized in any way.

Ms. Alldredge noted from the Springfield TSP Stakeholder Advisory Group that their recent work session meeting with the Springfield City Council had been very productive. She noted that members of that group had recently worked with LTD staff to continue the development of the Springfield Transportation System Plan (TSP.)

Mr. Jacobson described how the Cities of Eugene and Springfield had separated their TransPlan efforts into the development of their respective TSP's.

Mr. Reesor noted that the technical advisory committee for the Springfield TSP had also recently held its first meeting. Mr. Reesor further noted that Springfield staff had planned to attend a follow up work session with the Springfield City Council on Monday, October 25 regarding the continued development of the TSP.

Mr. Gillespie, responding to a question from Mr. Jacobson, noted that no stakeholder advisory group meetings had been held regarding the City of Eugene's TSP.

Mr. Gillespie noted from the Springfield City Council's recent joint meeting with the LTD Board of Directors that there had been overwhelming praise from the Springfield councilors for the Gateway EmX extension. He noted that the roadway reconfigurations and other elements of the Gateway EmX project had already had a positive effect on traffic patterns in the Gateway area even before the EmX service had started. He noted that Springfield and LTD staff had planned an official opening ceremony for the Gateway EmX route for January 9, 2011. Mr. Gillespie briefly noted the course of the Gateway EmX route for the benefit of those present.

Ms. Strand commented on the recent death of former Eugene Mayor Ruth Bascom and noted that she had been instrumental in the development of Eugene's river bike paths. She cited Ms. Bascom as a singular example of how individuals in the community could have a strong positive effect on local transportation issues. The Committee members discussed Ms. Bascom's many contributions to the community and efforts to improve local transportation.

Mr. Jacobson noted that Ms. Alldredge had recently received the Emerging Leader Award.

Mr. Jacobson stated that the Springfield Safety Committee on which Ms. Strand served had recently held a meeting to discuss elements of Springfield's recent Main Street/Highway 126 Safety Study. She noted that several suggestions had been presented at the meeting for ways to improve the major intersections along Main Street and Highway 126. She hoped that the safety priorities for those areas would continue to be given greater consideration than any business elements that might be affected by safety improvements.

Mr. Chickering thanked Ms. Strand for her contributions to the Springfield Safety Committee.

Mr. Chickering stated that Ms. Strand and several other CAC members had served on an ODOT citizens advisory group charged with reviewing local transportation improvements on 51st Street. He briefly reviewed elements of recent ODOT roadway safety improvements for the benefit of the CAC members.

Mr. Chickering noted that he had recently presented information to the Springfield City Council regarding the Main Street/Highway 126 Safety Study in response to two roadway fatalities in Springfield at 51st Street and 57th Street respectively. He reported that the Springfield Council had been very supportive of the study and had directed their staff to participate.

Mr. Chickering described the recent safety improvements that had been constructed on 51st Street in Springfield and the improvements that also had been planned for 57th Street. He noted that the safety improvements had been designed in such a way that no right-of-way property acquisitions from local business owners had been necessary.

Mr. Jacobson commented on other elements of the 51st Street safety improvements and also noted recent accident and fatality statistics for certain areas of Springfield.

Mr. Reesor commented that a Springfield City Council work session had been scheduled for November 8 to discuss the ODOT roadway safety improvements.

The Committee members and support staff briefly discussed additional elements of the 51st Street safety improvements in Springfield.

Mr. Chickering noted that one of the primary recommendations from the Main Street/Highway 126 Safety Study was that street lighting in the entire corridor be significantly improved.

Mr. Jacobson noted that the Lane County Board of County Commissioners had recently agreed to a compromise regarding the number of public members to be appointed to the Lane County Area Commission on Transportation (ACT). Mr. Chickering noted that the Lane County Commissioners were expected to vote to approve the ACT bylaws on October 27.

Mr. Jacobson noted from the most recent MPC meeting that the CAC had been expected to appoint one primary and one alternate CAC representative to the ACT.

Mr. Chickering, responding to a question from Mr. Lockfeld, noted that the ACT meetings would probably occur in the evenings during the second week of each month.

Mr. Chickering noted that the Lane County Board had directed its staff to redraft portions of the ACT bylaws in accordance with the compromise position they had reached regarding the number of public members to be appointed.

Mr. Chickering noted that, upon approval by the Lane County Commissioners on October 27, he expected to forward the ACT bylaws to the Oregon Transportation Commission for final approval on November 9. He anticipated that the ACT charter would be approved at that time.

Mr. Chickering, responding to a question from Mr. Winter, commented on recent ODOT roadway improvements to West 6th and 7th Avenues near their intersections with Jefferson and Washington Streets.

7. Wrap-Up

Mr. Jacobson adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

(Recorded by Wade Hicks)