

MINUTES

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

October 20, 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, Rosalia Marquez, Bill Morganti, Eleanor Mulder, members; Ron Kilcoyne, MPC liaison; Kathi Wiederhold, Paul Thompson, Lane Council of Governments; Kurt Yeiter, City of Eugene; David Reesor, City of Springfield; Savannah Crawford, Oregon Department of Transportation.

ABSENT: Jennifer Smith, Paul Adkins, members.

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review

Ms. Strand called the meeting of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to order. Those present introduced themselves. She welcomed Ron Kilcoyne, Lane Transit District general manager, as the new Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) liaison.

Ms. Strand reviewed the agenda and noted that if necessary discussion of the Regional Transportation Plan would be postponed until Mr. Thompson's arrival at 5:45 p.m.

Comments from the Audience

There were no comments.

Approve September 22, 2011, Minutes

Ms. Butler-Boyesen, seconded by Ms. Mulder, moved to approve the minutes of September 22, 2011, as submitted. The motion passed unanimously, 12:0.

Expiring Terms of CAC Members

Ms. Strand noted that the terms of the following members would expire on December 31, 2011: Dick Beers, Gary Gillespie, Alexandre Lockfeld, Sarah Strand and Edward Winter. She said that those members had indicated they were willing to be reappointed to new terms on the CAC. She asked for comments from the committee.

Mr. Lockfeld indicated that if there was a member of the public who was interested in serving he would relinquish his next term.

Mr. Winter stated that there was no pool of applicants currently available and it was unlikely that the extensive recruitment process would be conducted for one opening on the committee. He said the learning curve for a new member was lengthy because of the complex issues that came before the CAC and a second term was beneficial because of the knowledge base that a member brought to a second term. He said the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) had also expressed a desire to see members serve two terms.

Ms. Mulder said she had spoken with a community member who was interested in joining the committee and asked if someone's application could be considered outside of the formal recruitment process in order to encourage membership diversity.

Mr. Jacobson commented that the recruitment and orientation process was expensive in terms of time and labor. He said that anyone who had expressed an interest in the CAC would be on the mailing list for future recruitments. He agreed that it was beneficial for members to serve a second term in order to apply the understanding they gained during their first terms. He encouraged Mr. Lockfeld to remain on the CAC.

Ms. Marquez thanked Ms. Mulder for her desire to encourage diversity, but said those who were sincerely interested in transportation issues could apply during the next recruitment.

Ms. Alldredge asked if a vacancy on the committee required another recruitment process. Ms. Wiederhold replied that according to CAC bylaws the committee could consist of 10-15 members; current membership was 14. Typically recruitments were conducted when membership was 12 or less. She said the CAC had several options, including recommending reappointment of the five members with expiring terms and requesting a more streamlined process for filling occasional vacancies.

Mr. Gillespie suggested inviting anyone who expressed an interest in CAC membership to attend a meeting and observe the activities.

Mr. Jacobson said the current recruitment process was straightforward and open to anyone. He said members could encourage interested people to apply when recruitment was opened again, rather than trying to conduct a special recruitment for one or two individuals.

Mr. Farrington, seconded by Mr. Jacobson, moved to recommend to the Metropolitan Policy Committee the reappointment of Dick Beers, Gary Gillespie, Alexandre Lockfeld, Sarah Strand and Edward Winter to the CAC. The motion passed unanimously, 12:0.

Draft Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

Ms. Wiederhold provided an overview of the discussion format, which would focus on those areas of major concern. She said if the committee felt it needed additional time to review the RTP an additional meeting could be scheduled. She determined there were no concerns regarding Chapter 1. She said Chapter 2 contained policies, goals and objectives and even though the MPC had directed staff not to recommend changes to policies during this RTP update, the CAC could identify policy issues that it felt should be addressed. She said adoption of the next RTP update would occur in four years and that it would include a review of the policies.

Mr. Yeiter explained that local jurisdictions were in the process of drafting their individual transportation system plans (TSP), which would replace the existing TransPlan as the local plans, and those TSPs would include major policy reviews and revisions. He said the MPC had indicated some policy areas that should be addressed during the process. He said any major policy inconsistencies between the local plans and the RTP could be addressed prior to the next scheduled RTP update.

Mr. Reesor said Springfield was using guidelines provided by the MPC to frame new draft policies.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen pointed out that the list of categories in Chapter 2, page 10, seemed to gloss over the issue of freight. She said the desire to live locally and sustainably did not exclude the need to move goods into and out of the area.

Regarding TSI Other Modes Policy #3: Passenger Rail and Bus Facilities, Chapter 2, page 36, Ms. Mulder said it was important to emphasize the need and support for inter-city connections.

Mr. Farrington asked if the statistical data, for which there were placeholders throughout the plan, was available at this time. He said the plan was incomplete without the data to support the findings on which it was based. He expressed concern that the draft had been released to the public before data was available. He asked when the data would be provided. Ms. Wiederhold said the agenda packet contained a memorandum from Mr. Thompson responding to that issue.

Ms. Strand suggested deferring the remainder of the discussion until Mr. Thompson's arrival. There were no objections.

MPC/Other Updates

Mr. Winter reported that the MPC had unanimously accepted the CAC's recommendation to write a letter to the legislature in support of alternative funding for the student bus pass program. He said there was considerable feedback from the MPC on the CAC's recommendation to include language in TSI Bicycle Policy #1 that the physical separation of bicycles and pedestrians from the flow of traffic was preferable. He said the MPC asked staff to develop language for its consideration.

Ms. Strand commented that the MPC's interest in CAC recommendations was high. She said Mr. Kilcoyne had been appointed as the liaison to the CAC and asked that he introduce himself to the committee. She said the MPC's next meeting was November 10 at the Eugene Library.

Mr. Kilcoyne described his career in transit and committee members welcomed him to the CAC.

Ms. Strand said that CAC officers met on the fourth Thursday of the month and all CAC members were welcome to attend.

Reports from CAC Representatives on Outside Committees

Mr. Jacobson reported on the recent Lane Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) meeting and asked Ms. Crawford to describe ACT initiatives.

Ms. Crawford said the ACT was developing a list of priorities for the MPO area and Lane County and would request input from the MPC for other priorities that should be incorporated into the ACT list.

Ms. Mulder observed that there seemed to be less interaction among ACT members than occurred on the CAC and some people were more concerned with local issues than with regional ones.

Mr. Jacobson said the ACT was developing a public outreach process and he hoped to see some of the process developed by the CAC included.

Ms. Strand encouraged CAC members to use their CAC representatives on the ACT to provide input and stay informed about activities. Mr. Jacobson added that all ACT meetings were open to the public.

The committee took a short break.

Draft Regional Transportation Plan (continued)

Mr. Thompson discussed the MPC's reaction to the CAC's recommendation regarding the preference to physically separate pedestrians and bicycles from the flow of traffic. He said there was some support for the recommendation, but there was concern regarding use of the word "preferred," including concern about the potential impact on future grant applications for funding for bicycle improvements that did not include a physical separation. He said staff had been directed to provide revised language to the MPC at its next meeting. He said the Eugene Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee supported building the correct type of bike facility on the appropriate roads because physical separation was not always necessary and developing a network of primary bicycle facilities. There was concern that the sentence, if applied literally, could be taken to apply to every street on which there was a bicycle facility, which could be expensive and mean fewer facilities. He asked for feedback from the committee.

Mr. Lockfeld said the intent of the recommendation was not to imply that every bicycle way be physically separated, but rather the preferred alternative when practical. He hoped to see the recommendation reflected in the RTP goals in a way that preserved its intent to increase safety and ridership.

Mr. Thompson said he had conveyed the CAC's desire to increase bike ridership among those who currently did not ride or rode very little by increasing safety through improved bicycle facilities.

Ms. Butler-Boyesen confirmed that the CAC's intent when reviewing the related goals and policies was to increase bicycle ridership by addressing the safety concerns of those who did not ride bicycles regularly; frequent bike riders were not the target.

Mr. Gillespie pointed out that there was a difference between "preferred" and "required."

Mr. Morganti wanted to see separate lanes for pedestrians because bikes could present a danger to walkers.

Mr. Winter added that in order for more people to ride bikes they had to feel safe and that intent should not be lost. The CAC's recommendation did not intend that every bike lane be physically separate.

Ms. Mulder said that feeling safe was also a matter of choosing which streets to use. She did not want to see policy language that would lessen the number of bike facilities.

Mr. Thompson said the Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) would meet next week to also consider language for the MPC that would address the intent to increase new bicycle user trips. Based on the CAC discussion, he read the following potential language: “In order to encourage bicycling trips by those not currently using that mode and an overall increase in bike trips and safety, it is preferable, when practical, that bicycles and pedestrians be as physically separated as possible from the flow of traffic.”

Mr. Morganti said that the City should pay for sidewalks instead of the individual property owner.

Mr. Lockfeld, seconded by Mr. Morganti, moved to recommend the following language to the MPC: *“In order to encourage bicycling trips by those not currently using that mode and an overall increase in bike trips and safety it is preferable, when practical, that bicycles and pedestrians be as physically separated as possible from the flow of motorized traffic.”* The motion passed, 11:1; Mr. Beers voting no.

Mr. Thompson stated that statistical modeling was not completed and therefore data had not yet been included in the RTP draft. He said the MPC had been informed of this by staff prior to release of the draft for public review. He said preliminary runs of the model showed that trend numbers would not change significantly.

Mr. Lockfeld questioned whether it was reasonable to release a document for public review and input when the data was not available. Mr. Thompson said the MPC had not directed staff to delay the public participation process. The final numbers would be available when the RTP that would be presented for adoption was released next week. He explained that the modeling was being done by Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) and there had been delays in in the development of land use assumptions with the local jurisdictions and there was only one staff person who could run the model; LCOG was transitioning to a new model that more staff could operate to avoid similar delays in the future.

Mr. Gillespie suggested that the CAC could recommend to the MPC that implementation of the RTP should be delayed until the data was available, rather than issuing a document with data that was unevaluated by the community.

Ms. Strand asked if the federal deadline to update the RTP this year could be postponed or extended. Mr. Thompson said there was no mechanism for requesting an extension; the MPO could request a grace period or simply not meet the deadline, but the risk was that there could be consequences in the future. He said it likely would not present a problem if the RTP was adopted in December instead of November.

Regarding the statistical data, Mr. Thompson explained that initially there were over 30 performance measures in the RTP and there had been discussion in the early part of the update process of removing all of them because they were not required by the federal government and all of the measures were contained in TransPlan and being considered as part of the local jurisdictions’ TSP updates. Some key indicators were retained in the RTP draft to give the public some idea of the trends. He felt that better indicators were being developed as part of the TSP updates and those would be reflected in the RTP when it was next updated.

Ms. Marquez asked if project funding would be affected if the correct data was not available. Mr. Thompson said the statistical data did not affect funding, but missing the November deadline for the RTP update could potentially result in the suspension of funding, although that was very unlikely to happen. He reiterated that the final and correct data would be incorporated in the RTP prior to its adoption.

Ms. Mulder suggested that the process should move forward with the data that was available, since it would have no impact on project funding.

Mr. Farrington remarked that the CAC represented the public's interest in a public process. He was unhappy with the process and felt that the release of the draft RTP to the public had been premature. He preferred to review the document as a whole, rather than in segments as the CAC had done over the past several months. He said it was very difficult to gain an overall understanding of the RTP and determine what information was new and what had been carried over from the previous version. He had been unable to find a complete version of the current draft online, which made it difficult for people to know where to focus their attention.

Mr. Thompson responded that the MPC over a year ago decided and directed staff that the RTP update would address goals and objectives, but not policies, and this information was conveyed to the CAC. The decision was made because policies were under review at the local level as part of the TSP updates. He said the full draft RTP was available online as part of the MPC meeting package.

Mr. Winter asked how soon RTP policies would be updated once the TSPs were adopted. Mr. Thompson said all three TSPs were scheduled to be completed by 2013 and the RTP update process would be complete within the next two years after that, with a new RTP adopted in 2015. He said the local TSP process could generate some policy changes that would need to be addressed in RTP amendments soon after the completion of the TSPs in order to retain consistency, but the full update of the RTP likely would not begin until the TSPs were completed.

Mr. Farrington asked what aspects of the plan the average citizen could comment on and potentially influence, since the policies were not subject to change. Mr. Thompson said that citizens could comment on any part of the plan and pointed out that the CAC had made recommendations to the MPC regarding changes to policy language. He said while staff was directed not to update policies that did not mean the MPC would not consider recommendations from the public regarding policies.

Mr. Jacobson asked if the CAC's input would be helpful to local jurisdictions working on TSP updates. Staff present at the meeting indicated that CAC input would be welcome.

Mr. Lockfeld noted that freight was addressed in TSI Goods Movement Policy #1: Freight Efficiency. He asked if CAC members felt the language was adequate. Mr. Thompson commented that the goods movement policies addressed freight. He said that by and large freight policies were established at the State level and freight stakeholders generally preferred to focus their attention on the State entities that dealt with those policies.

Ms. Mulder stated that a related issue was passenger rail and it was important to draw attention to the need for funding for passenger rail planning and service. Mr. Thompson said the MPC had made rail a standing report item on its monthly agenda and the RTP included a new objective related to rapid passenger rail. He cited the language of Objective #10: Rapid Passenger Rail in Chapter 2, page 7 of the RTP draft. He said the CAC could recommend modification to the language.

Ms. Mulder, seconded by Ms. Marquez, moved that the CAC strongly endorses the importance of access to inter-city passenger rail and bus transit for the Central Lane MPO area and encourages prioritizing of state and federal funding for those purposes. The motion passed unanimously, 12:0.

Mr. Farrington asked what content in the draft RTP was new and what had been carried over from the previous RTP. Mr. Thompson replied that essentially all of the content was carried over, pending local TSP updates. He said the RTP was only required to include capital projects and the Eugene projects related to nodal development and implementation of nodal development zoning were included at the request of Eugene in order to demonstrate to the community the cost of implementing nodal development.

Ms. Strand determined that there was consensus that an additional CAC meeting was not necessary.

Ms. Mulder, seconded by Ms. Strand, moved to recommend that the MPC adopt the Regional Transportation Plan with the understanding that statistical data would be available and not significantly different. The motion passed, 6:3:3; Ms. Butler-Boyesen, Mr. Farrington, Mr. Morganti, Ms. Mulder, Ms. Strand and Mr. Winter voting yes; Mr. Gillespie, Mr. Lockfeld and Ms. Marquez voting no; Ms. Alldredge, Mr. Beers and Mr. Jacobson abstaining.

Wrap-Up

Ms. Wiederhold stated that committee members could also provide written comments to staff or online.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for November 17, 2011.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)