

MINUTES

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

November 17, 2011
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Edward Winter, Sarah Strand, co-chairs; Paul Adkins, Diana Alldredge, Dick Beers, Philip Farrington, Gary Gillespie, Dave Jacobson, Alexandre Lockfeld, Bill Morganti, Eleanor Mulder, Jennifer Smith, members; Ron Kilcoyne, MPC liaison; Kathi Wiederhold, Paul Thompson, Petra Schuetz, Andrea Riner, Lane Council of Governments; Kurt Yeiter, City of Eugene; David Reesor, City of Springfield; John Evans, Natalie Stiffler, Lane Transit District; Al Couper, guest.

ABSENT: Wendy Butler-Boyesen, Rosalia Marquez, members.

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review

Mr. Winter called the meeting of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to order. Those present introduced themselves. There were no changes to the agenda.

Ms. Wiederhold noted that the agenda materials related to the Regional Transportation Options Plan were sent out separately.

Comments from the Audience

There were no comments.

Approve October 20, 2011, Minutes

Mr. Morganti, seconded by Ms. Strand, moved to approve the minutes of October 20, 2011, as submitted. The motion passed unanimously, 12:0.

Nominate Officers

Mr. Winter stated that the CAC's recommendation to reappoint the five members whose terms were expiring was conveyed to the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) at its November 10 meeting; however, the MPC decided to open the recruitment process and have the five members and any individuals interested in the CAC submit applications. The MPC extended the five CAC members' terms, including officers, until the recruitment process was completed.

Ms. Riner said the MPC was open to a streamlined CAC recruitment and staff would propose an expedited process at the MPC's December meeting.

Mr. Winter noted that during the last recruitment the CAC had established an application review committee that made appointment recommendations to the MPC. He was not certain that would be part of the process this time, but invited members to indicate their interest in being on a review committee if one were used.

Mr. Farrington asked if the CAC bylaws specified when officers were selected and if the MPC's action was unanimously supported by members. Mr. Winter said the bylaws did specify officer terms and time of election, but the MPC directed that the terms be extended until the recruitment process was completed. Ms. Wiederhold pointed out that the MPC approved and adopted the CAC bylaws and had the same authority over any amendments to them.

Mr. Kilcoyne added that the MPC's action was not unanimous. He said one MPC member expressed concern with Mr. Gillespie's membership on both the CAC and the Lane Transit District (LTD) board of directors. Another MPC member wanted to open the recruitment process to the public. He said there was considerable discussion among MPC members on both issues.

Mr. Winter noted that several MPC members indicated there should be a general policy about CAC members serving on other bodies and they did not want to single out specific individuals and situations.

Several CAC members expressed concern that appointments to the committee seemed to be taking on political overtones because it was difficult to find citizens interested in transportation issues who were not involved in other transportation-oriented groups.

Mr. Winter suggested tabling the nomination of officers based on the MPC's decision.

Mr. Gillespie stressed that he had and would continue to recuse himself from CAC discussions and actions that affected LTD. He was proud of the CAC's work and his service on the committee and willing to continue as a member. Ms. Strand said she had assured the MPC that Mr. Gillespie was a valuable member of the CAC and there was no conflict of interest. Mr. Winter said several MPC members expressed their appreciation for the experience of CAC members.

Ms. Wiederhold observed that the CAC had found its voice and the MPC seemed to appreciate its recommendations on substantial issues. That may have raised the MPC's interest in CAC membership.

Mr. Lockfeld said he was initially concerned that the CAC would be a "rubber stamp" body for staff recommendations and was pleased to discover that it often addressed controversial issues and made significant recommendations to the MPC.

Ms. Strand suggested that staff could educate the MPC about the cost and challenges of a full recruitment process as part of its proposal for moving forward with CAC appointments.

Ms. Smith, seconded by Mr. Gillespie, moved to table the nomination of officers until more information was available from the next MPC meeting. The motion passed, 11:0; Ms. Strand abstaining.

Regional Transportation Options Plan Status Report

Ms. Schuetz provided an overview of the planning process. She said the purpose was to develop the most effective application of transportation demand management (TDM) and transportation options practices to address the goals and objectives of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Staff was also developing recommendations regarding RTP policies to be used during the next RTP update process. She said a best practices toolkit was nearing completion and would include demographic information affecting transportation planning with a focus on transportation options. Information was available on the project website: www.regionalTO.org.

Mr. Jacobson asked for clarification of the opportunities analysis. Ms. Schuetz explained that the analysis included obtaining expert and industry sector opinions about the future of transportation in specific areas and where there were opportunities to redefine and expand transportation planning. She said 75-80 strategies relevant to transportation options had been identified and those would be examined to determine if performance measures could be developed.

Mr. Farrington asked how the work group's products would be used since the current RTP update did not include policies. Ms. Schuetz replied that draft policy language would be developed and available for the next RTP update. The language could also be used to inform the local transportation system plan (TSP) update process.

Ms. Riner pointed out that while another RTP update was not required for four years, it could occur sooner if there was a need for changes to policies as a result of local planning efforts.

Draft Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update

Mr. Winter asked staff to report on the disposition of the CAC's recommendations regarding the draft RTP.

Mr. Thompson said the CAC recommendation regarding the bicycle policy definition and intent language had been incorporated into the draft plan, which was scheduled to be adopted at the MPC's December 2011 meeting.

Mr. Farrington asked if all public comments received to date on the RTP had been submitted to the MPC. Mr. Thompson said printed copies were distributed at the MPC meeting and all comments on the draft were posted on the RTP update website. Staff response to comments would be available when the public comment period closed.

Mr. Farrington found the website difficult to navigate and hoped that could be improved for future planning activities.

Mr. Thompson noted the CAC's previous action to recommend adoption of the draft RTP if missing data was incorporated and did not vary significantly from projected trends. He said consequently the adoption of the RTP was delayed until the MPC's December meeting. Performance measures information was sent to the entire mailing list of those interested in the RTP update – 700-800 people – and that information included the missing data. He said the general trends had not changed, although there were some differences due to a projected slowing of population and job growth and use of updated models and new data.

Mr. Winter asked if the models accounted for greater use of transit when the price of fuel increased. Mr. Thompson said vehicle operating costs were part of the assumptions.

Ms. Mulder asked if the Envision Eugene initiative would use the data to inform its planning activities. Mr. Yeiter said the data would be used in the TSP update process.

Mr. Beers noted that he had submitted lengthy comments to staff. Mr. Thompson acknowledged receipt of the comments and said they would be part of the submission to MPC and responses would be provided once the public comment period ended.

Ms. Strand, seconded by Mr. Morganti, moved to recommend to the MPC approval of the draft Regional Transportation Plan at its December 2011 meeting.

Mr. Beers asked if the draft RTP was now completed. Mr. Thompson replied that all information had been included in the draft and the document was now complete.

The motion passed, 10:2; Mr. Beers and Mr. Farrington voting no.

The committee took a short break.

MPC/Other Updates

Mr. Winter said the CAC's recommendation regarding support for inter-urban rapid transit was presented to the MPC along with a request that it be included in the RTP. Ms. Strand said there were questions from the MPC to clarify the CAC's intent.

Ms. Mulder said the recommendation to support inter-urban rapid transit should also be communicated to all Congressional representatives.

Mr. Yeiter said there was some concern on the part of staff about whether the CAC's recommendation to prioritize inter-city transit meant rail should take priority over other transportation modes.

Reports from CAC Representatives on Outside Committees

Mr. Jacobson reported that the Lane Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) had discussed *ConnectOregon* legislation, which in 2005 authorized \$100 million for investment in multi-modal transportation, including air, rail, marine and transit infrastructure. He said in 2011 the legislature authorized \$40 million for *ConnectOregon* funding. He said the discussion addressed the decrease in available multi-modal transportation funding. He said the ACT was also working on defining the interaction between the ACT and MPC. He felt the interaction had gone well to date. He invited CAC members to attend ACT meetings.

Mr. Yeiter reported that Eugene Transportation Community Resource Group (TCRG) was exploring how to emphasize sustainability in the Eugene TSP updates. The group was now developing goals, objectives and performance measures and would use data from the RTP model in the process as well as the Envision Eugene project. He said notes on the group's discussions were available on the website.

Wrap-Up

Ms. Strand commented that she drove to work on Highway 99 and while the bridge over the railroad tracks near Roosevelt Boulevard had been greatly improved for traffic, it was still very unsafe for pedestrians, especially children. She said the bridge was heavily used by pedestrians and hoped that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) would revisit the issue of pedestrian improvements.

Mr. Thompson said the MPC had discussed the matter with ODOT and consequently ODOT and the City of Eugene had submitted an application for flex funding for a pedestrian improvement project.

Mr. Farrington asked if the bridge project was included in Eugene's bicycle/pedestrian master plan. Mr. Yeiter replied that the plan addressed many gaps in the bike/pedestrian system, but he was not certain if that specific project was included. He said multi-modal improvements to Highway 99 were a priority for the City.

Mr. Lockfeld asked if and when the CAC could recommend changes to the draft FY12-15 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP). Mr. Winter said that would be scheduled for discussion at the CAC's December meeting.

Mr. Lockfeld commented that the 30th Avenue project did not include a bike/pedestrian component and asked if a request to include that component could be made. Ms. Riner said the CAC could make that recommendation, although MTIP projects had already been funded as currently presented.

Ms. Strand observed that there were examples of the CAC's impact on funding decisions and priorities.

Mr. Gillespie announced that LTD was working with the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) to host a sustainability conference in Eugene in 2013. He said the conference would tie into the sustainability efforts of Eugene and LTD. Mr. Kilcoyne said the conferences had typically been held in large cities and LTD hoped to host the conference locally to showcase the sustainability efforts in smaller communities.

Committee members discussed a recent advertisement in the Register Guard that encouraged people to oppose EmX development because it would expand the area's population to 500,000 and a Eugene Weekly article on the CAC's bicycle/pedestrian recommendation.

West Eugene EmX Update

Mr. Evans updated the CAC on the West Eugene EmX extension. He said the 13th Avenue alternative had been recommended by the CAC and other groups, but the Eugene City Council had selected the 6th/7th avenues alternative and that selection was affirmed by the LTD Board and the MPC. He said the MPC stipulated that LTD and the City Council reaffirm their selection of the 6th/7th avenues alternative after the environmental work was concluded, if necessary. He said the environmental assessment had begun and LTD had completed work for the grant application to the Federal Transit Administration for 75 percent of the project funding. The remaining 25 percent would be funded from State lottery-backed funds.

Mr. Morganti suggested that the CAC, MPC and LTD's Accessible Transportation Committee tour the selected alternative route in order to see the connections with other routes.

Ms. Smith asked if the 6th/7th alternative would be competitive for federal grant funds. She was also concerned that local dissension about the project could impact competitiveness. Mr. Evans said it was competitive based on a design that would improve travel time and avoid slowing traffic along the route. It also met ODOT's objectives for improvements to that section of the roadway and the 6th/7th avenues corridor. Mr. Kilcoyne said the FTA's concern related to support from local policy bodies and cost effectiveness of the project, rather than community controversy during the planning process.

Mr. Beers did not feel that population statistics related to the project were accurate. He asked how travel on Highway 126 from Florence to Interstate 5 would occur with buses operating in the vicinity. Mr. Evans replied that the project would improve traffic flow on West 11th Avenue, which would benefit traffic coming in on Highway 126. He said the West Eugene EmX extension was part of a larger network and would extend EmX's reach. Each extension added riders and increased boardings on the system. He offered to meet with Mr. Beers to share more data on the project.

Mr. Farrington asked if there was a presentation that illustrated revisions occurring during the alternative selection process that were material to improvements to the EmX project as it evolved. It would be helpful to be able to demonstrate the progression of refinements to address concerns raised during the planning process. Mr. Evans said there was a presentation that documented the examination of property impacts along routes and efforts to mitigate those impacts.

Mr. Farrington suggested the presentation should be posted on the project website.

Mr. Winter asked committee members to review the draft MTIP document provided in the agenda packet prior to the December CAC meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for December 15, 2011.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)