

Eastside Project Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, January 18, 2006, 825 NE Multnomah, Second Floor Conference Room,
2:00pm

Members in Attendance: Joe Angel, Hank Ashforth, Mike Bolliger, Dick Cooley, Wayne Kingsley, Tom Markgraf, Bill Medak, Rick Parker, Susan Pearce, Chris Smith, Dee Walsh
Others: Lee Perlman

Staff Attendance: April Bertelsen, Kay Dannen, Rick Gustafson, Ross Roberts, Karen Withrow

1. Meeting to Order.

The meeting was called to order by our chair, Hank Ashforth – approval of the minutes not noted.

2. Alternative Analysis FTA Update.

Ross Roberts from Metro reported on the schedule and development of technical reports, evaluation report and conduct of the public approval process. It is expected that this committee shepherd the public process with the hosting of two open houses the first part of March and the public hearing the end of March and/or first of April. This process leads us to a steering committee recommendation which, in turn, will take the process through Portland City Council, TriMet board, PSI board and Multnomah County and then to JPACT for resolution and ultimately to the Metro Council for the Locally Preferred Alignment (LPA) in May 2006. There was concern by the committee that the open houses do not occur anytime during March spring break, as it is important to gather as much public input as possible during these open houses.

Technical analysis that needs to be completed:

- Ridership forecasts that make sense (expect to see more on this at the Feb. 22 Eastside PAC meeting.
- Traffic analysis straightforward
- Cost-effectiveness is reasonable
- Data sufficient for evaluation

Recommendations need to be formulated for the decision-making process:

- Consensus regarding mode of travel, whether bus or streetcar
- Consensus on MOS, whether Oregon, Morrison or OMSI
- Consensus on Funding Plan
- Consensus on Phasing Strategy

3. Alignment for Streetcar Options.

The committee reviewed the alignment report presented by Carter MacNichol at the December 21, 2005 meeting and raised specific issues regarding the proposed alignment. Provided at this meeting is a list of issues to be addressed in the next phase of evaluation work. Committee members are encouraged to review the issues and add to the list of issues at this meeting. The issues list is proposed to be included with the recommendation to select a preferred alternative.

Joe Angel concurred with minutes of 12/21 regarding his remarks on the Weidler/Broadway couplet and streetcar running in the right hand lanes, but had further recommendations he would like to ask staff to study further. On the Broadway/Weidler couplet streets, encourage independent movements for bikes/pedestrians/auto/streetcars. Joe recommended that several things should be studied with much more intensity.

- On all segments with a one-way couplet, we should look at a right running alignment with pedestrian walks next to the streetcar. On the left side of the street we should look at a “Bike Expressway or Bike Boulevard” that would use the left edge of the streets. Because the walks on various bridges over freeways, etc., are now not used much, it may be advantageous, for safety reasons, to use these as the dedicated paths for each mode, especially if the roadway is narrow.
- Look at a dedication path, especially on public facilities like the Rose Quarter and Coliseum, for “bike expressway” that would connect to major town center areas or major density points like the Lloyd Center. Should these expressways be on public dedications or on streets that lead directly to big attractors and out of the way of turning movements that cause danger or constant conflicts?
- The issue of headway times has to be pushed as a MAJOR decision point that drives other decisions. I believe that people want and demand convenience if we ever hope to have high ridership from the public.

On the ridership headway issue, Rick indicated that it would require 2 additional vehicles for any of the three proposed MOS’s. You would also need to add about 20% to the current estimated operating budget for a projected opening in 2009. Rick G. indicated there is no question that an inner city circulator should be at 10 minute headway mode. Joe felt strongly that other costs could be manipulated, but holding firm to a 10-minute headway goal is of the highest priority.

4. Financial Feasibility.

A funding strategy for streetcar options was included with the agenda packet. This funding strategy has been presented to the PAC at previous meetings. Several potential funding strategies are recommended for the committee’s consideration.

- Federal Small Starts
- Committed Federal
- PDC Convention Center tax increments
- Local Improvement District (LID)
- Bridge Funds
- PDC Funding, urban renewal districts including the River District, Convention Center and Central Eastside
- New Market Tax Credits

It was recommended by the committee, that the project consider parking meter revenue bonding as a source of revenue.

Also attached with the agenda packet was a draft letter of support for the Local Improvement District (LID) and explanation of the improvement district. Hank Ashforth and Rick Parker have agreed to meet with property owners to encourage them to send letters of support for the LID in February. It is the goal of this committee to receive at least 10 letters of support from property owners from each the Lloyd Center District and Central Eastside as well as 2-3 letters of support from the OMSI area. It will be important to have this board level of support from the community in support of funding streetcar construction on the eastside. It is important to ensure that Mayor Potter is supportive of the project as well as Commissioner Adams. Mayor Potter needs to also ensure that support is forthcoming from PDC. TriMet and the City of Portland need to come to agreement on funding future operations. These elements need to be in place by the end of 2006. TriMet is experiencing considerable financial pressure because of three rail lines (downtown mall, I-205 and computer rail) coming online in 2009, about the same time as Eastside streetcar is proposed to open.

Rick reviewed the proposed Local Improvement District (LID) process with the committee. It is projected that the LID to OMSI would be a total of \$10 million, \$6 million to Lloyd with a MOS to Oregon, \$8 million with a Morrison MOS. It is projected that the LID would be set up similar to the original Westside streetcar project. \$6 per \$1,000 of assessed property value for Zone A and \$3 per \$1,000 of assessed property value for Zone B. There would also be a minimum assessment rate of \$.45 in Zone A and \$.225 in Zone B per square foot of land. Payment for property owners would be made one year after construction is completed and can be paid in one lump sum or financed through the City over a 20-year period. The idea of assessing owner occupied residential units has met with some controversy. The LID assessment would not cover the operations of streetcar.

5. Other Business.

N/A

6. Public Comment Opportunity.

There were no comments presented by the public-at-large.

Next Meeting: February 22, 2006 at 2 pm, 825 NE Multnomah, Second Floor Conference Room.