

**Portland Streetcar Loop Project Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Wednesday, July 16, 2008, 2:00-3:30 p.m., Lloyd Tower, 825 NE Multnomah, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room**

*Members in Attendance: Rick Gustafson, Deek Heykamp, Susan Lindsey, Rod McDowell, Ann Niles, Susan Pearce, Brad Perkins, Michael Powell, Owen Ronchelli,*

*Others: Lee Perlman, Steve Pinger*

*Staff Attendance: Kay Dannen, Julie Gustafson, Denyse McGriff, Dave Unsworth*

**1. Meeting to Order:**

Meeting was called to Order by Rick Gustafson.

**2. FTA Grant Status:**

Rick Gustafson summarized the prior meetings report on the FTA Grant status for those who were not at the meeting last month. Since the last meeting the Senate Appropriation subcommittee and full committee has met and made public their earmark for Portland Streetcar, Inc. to get the \$50,000,000. Theoretically since we have the Finding of No Significant Impact and the earmark for the money the city is able to issue the Notice to Proceed on the Engineering Contract. Rod McDowell commented that he agrees with the consensus last month that PAC would encourage the City to proceed with Final Engineering to help prevent further costs in the project. Engineering was projected to start April 1, 2008 and each day that we wait to start Engineering, is one day longer to start construction. Deek Heykamp asked about the ability of PSI to go to the engineering firm after the final design starts and stop all further work. Gustafson replied that yes, that is possible, but is costly. Dave Unsworth added that on the I-205 Light Rail project Tri-Met found a way to finance the final engineering so they could stay on schedule and on budget. The project we have submitted to the FTA has a 4.5% inflation rate. Because we are asking the government for the federally mandated maximum, any inflation costs must be covered by the City. Unsworth added that the biggest factor in cost is staying on schedule. Owen Ronchelli commented that it is comforting to hear that other projects have taken the risk that PSI is talking about taking by proceeding with final engineering. Unsworth added that there are several positive signs right now from the FTA. Gustafson added that the steps we are working on with the FTA all lead up to being funded. There is a \$5,000,000 inflation budget built in to the project to help cover costs.

Michael Powell asked where we are with the House subcommittee. Gustafson responded that they are not publishing the results from their subcommittee because of the attacks on earmarks in the political battles. The chairman of Appropriations has refused to convene the full committee until after the current President leaves office due to these attacks. Brad Perkins commented that he can't believe that the members of Congress and the Senate don't have their phones ringing off the hook with demands for alternative fuels and means of transportation. Susan Pearce agreed with Perkins. Perkins added that he believes there should be more pressure for change and that more needs to be done to think about the future of transportation at the national level. Gustafson responded that there is work being done in that direction. Unsworth added that not everyone in Congress is an Earl Blumenauer and that the FTA has opposition from several states that cannot envision a streetcar project and that finding a way to make changes in policy and law is met with opposition.

**3. Finding of No Significant Impact:**

The FTA has issued the FONSI for the Loop Project.

**4. Pearl District Alignment:**

The discussion is ongoing as to which alignment will be chosen.

**5. Final Design:**

We are asking the City to enable a notice to proceed for final design in August which would be a four month delay from the original schedule.

Each stop on the East Side will be custom designed to accommodate the cities requirement for runoff water. There will be bioswales at each station which increases the size and impact of each station. Rick Gustafson asked for the committees help in beginning to educate the public about the new designs. The swales are not in relation to the stations, but are due to the pouring of concrete creating an impervious surface. Brad Perkins, Ann Niles and Susan Pearce all asked about the Net Parking Loss due to the bio-swales.

**6. Pearl District Alignment:**

Rick Gustafson reported that the issue of bicycle circulation in the Pearl needs to be decided before we can settle on a Streetcar option (Northrup Option or Lovejoy Option). One option for bicycle routing is to create a bike boulevard on Marshall which is problematic due to the cobblestones on Marshall that are protected by the neighborhood. A second option is to only move the westbound bicycle lane off of Lovejoy onto Marshall. The third option would be to leave both bicycle lanes on Lovejoy which would move the proposed streetcar stop.

**7. Other Business:**

Rick Gustafson reported that he met on July 15, 2008 with the Pedestrian Advisory Committee and they had a concern about the bridge from MLK to OMSI and the exclusion of the pedestrians on the bridge due to the 7% gradient which does not meet ADA requirements. Dave Unsworth requested that if the project does allow pedestrians on the bridge that they seek legal counsel and apply for a waiver to prevent the City and TriMet from being sued for not complying with legal regulations.

Dave Unsworth asked about the new cars. Gustafson reported that the contract is out for bids with only one bid at this time from Oregon Ironworks. Brad Perkins asked if they have built the prototype of the new car yet. Gustafson responded that the PSI Board of Directors visited OIW last week and that the prototype is progressing nicely. They have welded the three sections of the car and are working on the assembly. OIW is hoping to have the prototype on the streetcar alignment in January or February 2009. Michael Powell added that a lot of the work on the prototype has been creating all the parts needed so that in the long run they will be able to function almost like an assembly line. Brad Perkins asked about the bicycle lanes on Broadway/Weidler and how they are affecting the process. He asked if there has been any discussion about moving those bike lanes. Gustafson responded that at this time there has not been discussion regarding any moves to those bike lanes. Gustafson asked Owen Ronchelli to discuss the TMA's agenda for bicycle lanes in the Lloyd District. Ronchelli reported that there has been discussion about NE 7<sup>th</sup> becoming unsafe with the addition of Streetcar and that they are looking at moving the bike lanes to either 6<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup>. Susan Pearce added that she likes the current trend towards developing bike boulevards rather than adding bike lanes to already busy streets.

**8. Public Comment:**

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

**Next Streetcar Loop PAC meeting:** 2:00 – 3:30pm, Wednesday, August 20, 2008, Lloyd Center Tower, 825 NE Multnomah, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room.