

MINUTES
Historic Columbia River Highway
Advisory Committee
November 5, 1998
Columbia Gorge Discovery Center
The Dalles, Oregon

Members Present: Bill Pattison, Sally Donovan, James Hamrick, John Lundell, and Janice Newton, Jefferey Plummer, Charlie Sciscione, Jack Wiles, and Carolyn Wood.

Staff Present: Jeanette Kloos, Kevin Bracy, Robert Hadlow, Gail Smith, Sam Wilkins, and Debra Dowse.

Public Present: Nancy Russell, Friends of the Columbia Gorge; Tom Turck, CRGNSA Forest Service; Jerry Igo, Native Plant Society of Oregon; Bus Gibson, Mazama; Jon Swanson and Ron Airing, Springdale Job Corps Center; and Ken Lantz.

Bill Pattison, chair, called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes were approved as corrected. One correction was noted: Jack Wiles thanked Nancy Russell for her help in securing a challenge grant for Vista House (not requested help).

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

NEW GUARDRAIL PROPOSALS:

Jon Swanson, Springdale Job Corps Center, introduced a community proposal to add 840 ft. of guardrail along the HCRH that would protect students at the Job Corp who walk along the path behind the fence to the store in Springdale. There have been three unreported accidents at this site in the last month. This section of highway has limited site distance because of the curves. Vehicles and bikers share the highway. A review of accident data in the state system did not reveal any accidents, since the accidents that did occur were not severe enough to require reporting to the state system (the vehicles were removed by tow trucks). Jon stated that the accidents that occurred in the last three months were taken care of by local people and not reported. Ron Airing, Springdale Job Corps Center, stated the cost to repair the fence was about \$10,000.

Jerry Igo stated that, as a bicyclist, he would rather go down the slope than be pinned into a guardrail.

Charlie Sciscione, District 2C, supports the proposal for the installation of a guardrail at this location.

John Lundell asked about moving the trail further over. There is a creek in the area and that would not be an option. The trail is on the flattest area available. Janice Newton asked if the accidents had common features. Ron Airing said that darkness, ice and speed are often factors. Springdale's traffic and population have increased in recent years with more commuters. Also, Charlie reported that Corbett Hill Road has been closed to trucks over 33 tons and the trucks are now using the HCRH.

This part of the HCRH currently has single-rail, steel backed wooden guardrail in the locations noted in the 1924 log of the highway. Charlie has about 1,400 feet of guardrail left over from another job that could be used to correct this problem. Charlie suggested using the guardrail here.

The AC unanimously approved a motion to approve use of about 840 feet of single rail wooden guardrail in front of the Job Corps Center.

Sam Wilkins, District 9, reported to the AC that the citizens of Mosier have requested 386 feet of guardrail be installed at the bottom of Kingdom Road in Mosier. At this point there are no documented accidents. The fear is that, with snow and ice, a car will be unable to stop at the bottom of the hill and slide into traffic on the HCRH. Sam stated that the District has no funds available for this improvement.

Janice asked if there has been a history of accidents. Sam stated that none have been recorded with the county or the State Police. Jack suggested that sand and gravel could be applied for ice conditions, but Sam stated that the side streets are not state-owned highways. James asked if the district had received an official notification from the city of Mosier asking for the guardrail. Sam has received no notice. John Lundell recommended gathering more information before considering approval. The AC agreed.

ALL AMERICAN ROAD – TROUTDALE EVENT:

The Troutdale Chamber of Commerce and ODOT held a celebration of the All American Road designation for the HRCH on October 17th in Troutdale. Former Governor Victor Atiyeh; Ann O’Ryan, AAA; and several antique car clubs attended the event. Todd Davidson, Director of Oregon Tourism Commission presented the plaque to Kay Van Sickel. Four AC members attended (Kay, Jeffery Plummer, John Lundell and Janice Newton). All four were impressed by the turnout and how well the event was organized. John Lundell suggested sending a letter of congratulations to the Troutdale Chamber of Commerce.

Jeanette passed around pictures of the event and shared information she received at the National Scenic Byway Conference. Jeanette showed brochures and flyers with ideas for parking, fee machines, etc. There are only 11 All-American Roads in the country. A resource center is being developed to help promote byways and provide technical information for National Scenic Byways.

PROCESS FOR CONSENSUS ON HCRH IN URBAN AREAS:

The first meeting on the consensus process needs to be rescheduled from Nov 30th. (Note: now Dec 8th.) It will be an all day session. Sam Imperati will be the neutral convener. The first meeting will be for all parties involved to give their background and an idea of what they would like to see accomplished at the meetings. Sam will try to keep everyone focused, moving from past, to present into a better future.

Bus Gibson asked for a briefing on what this meeting was about. Jeanette stated that there are three urban areas that are a concern, Cascade Locks, Mosier, and Hood River. The Urban areas are exempt from the CRGNSA Management Plan regulations. ODOT has stated that ODOT will not cause any adverse effects to the HCRH, but this is not the case for the three cities and Hood River County. Charlie stated that this is a dilemma for ODOT: how do we support the economic health of the communities and also protect the cultural resources? ODOT wants to maintain and improve political and working relationships with the communities. This is not easy, but Charlie believes it can be accomplished. Carolyn Wood said that Advisory Committee members should emphasize that all parties can "win". Jack Wiles would like to focus on the design elements (lighting, and

landscape), not "modernizing", but accommodating traffic. Bus Gibson stated those cultural resources must be protected in urban areas.

Nancy Russell commented that there is a wonderful future for tourism, but maintaining the long-term goals for HCRH is a challenge.

Janice Newton stated there must be guidelines and agreements for the roles and responsibilities that deal with the HCRH.

NEW FUNDING

Jeanette Kloos had some great news! The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century included \$2.0 million for use on the HCRH. It will be released over a six-year period. A Public Lands Discretionary fund grant of \$2.8 million to be used for the Hood River to Mosier project was awarded recently. This is 100 per cent Federal money that needs to be obligated by September 30, 1999. There is also a grant of \$500,000, which is not tied to any project. Proposals and options are shown on the attached charts. Jack Wiles suggested that ODOT and OPRD meet and make joint recommendations to the advisory committee. He further suggested a conference call meeting to help quicken the process and not wait to decide at the next meeting in January.

PROJECT UPDATES

HOOD RIVER TO MOSIER UPDATE:

PHASE 1/2/3

Kevin Bracy presented a slide show to inform the AC of all the work that has been completed on the project. JAL is working on the ticket structure. The HRCH gate and interpretive signs are completed. The irrigation system is in. Crystal Springs Water District is the source for the water system. Landscaping and stripping will occur in November. A new issue is the uniformity of the color stain on the mid-tunnel catchment. Consensus of the members was that it was not that big of an issue, that the color need not be uniform. Seventy-five percent of the columns are completed. The rock anchors are 100 per cent completed. Kevin reported that the project will close down for the winter, after Thanksgiving. At the pre-construction meeting Kevin stated that it was clearly stated that the contractor should only work when conditions are safe. A couple of yards of material fell after the first rainfall. The project calls for a 1.5-inch pavement overlay. This will need to be supplemented in some areas where the pavement and base need to be rebuilt. The project is still on budget and expected to be completed by September or October of next year.

James Hamrick asked that the fence between the two tunnels be installed early next spring. Kevin Bracy said that is being proposed, however, the Permeon must be applied before the fence is installed and that must be done when no rain is expected for several days.

MOFFET CREEK - TANNER CREEK

This project is expected to be finished by mid-November. The switchbacks are paved. Plantings, the fence and gate are the remaining items to be completed.

EAGLE CREEK - CASCADE LOCKS

The contractor was scheduled to be finished, but equipment was still there as of this morning. Have heard nothing from FHWA. Charlie Sciscione has informed FHWA that the repair to I-84 is not adequate and must be smoother.

INTERPRETIVE SIGNS

The signs will be installed next week.

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

Robert Hadlow reported that he has been sending more photos of the HCRH to Robie Lange. Robert has labeled the photos by milepost.

Robert also reported that he has received a letter from Clifford Nelson informing him that he has a guest book from the Crown Point Chalet, near Vista House, an old restaurant along the HCRH.

Nancy Russell mentioned that she discovered that a friend from the Trust for Public Lands is a member of the Landmark committee. They had just visited Tanner Creek to Eagle Creek. Nancy believes this first hand knowledge of the HRCH will be helpful to the Landmark committee discussion.

ODOT is developing a HRCH site on the Region 1 WebPages. The interpretive drawings are being converted into a form that can be included in the website by Peter Reedijk.

TOOTHROCK TUNNEL LIGHTING

The project will be opening for bids on January 28th. The advance plan review is available for review. The project is to be completed by October 1999.

ACTIVITY STATUS REPORTS:

ODOT

Charlie Sciscione reported that the Horsetail Falls Bridge reinforcement is complete. The wrapping of the bridge beams with carbon and glass fiber that has been soaked in resin was a success. Charlie believes that the color and texture could be improved, but it is an inexpensive new alternative to help preserve bridges. It has gained interest from national and international organizations. The strength of the new materials is being tested through a research project.

Sam Wilkins, District 9, reported that the vegetation is growing back better than expected in the fire-damaged areas. This is helping to keep the rock fall at a minimum. The district, however, is still checking the highway daily for rockfall.

Chenoweth Interchange work is continuing. The HRCH Chenoweth Creek Bridge railing has been removed from the current contract and will be completed later under a new contract.

Nothing has happened with the closure of the "shooting range pit". Installing guardrail to block the area off and adding no trespassing signs is the proposed solution. Work release crews clean the area once a month.

The Wasco County Seven-mile pit is an alternative location for target practice.

OPRD

Jack Wiles reported the passage of Measure 66 would benefit parks. Details on the allocation of money will be determined after the legislature meets. OPRD is busy prioritizing projects.

Charlie asked Jack if a letter to OPRD asking for some of the lottery money to be used to work on Starvation Creek would be appropriate. With the passage of Measure 66, hopefully the Starvation Creek project can get underway in the near future, as long as the general fund isn't reduced in the legislative session. Jack suggested a letter of support for Starvation Creek from ODOT be addressed to Bob Meinen.

The upper windows on the balcony at Vista House have been repaired and the windows can now be opened. Modifications on the windows were first class. Over \$300,000 had been raised for Vista House but \$2,000,000 is needed to completely restore Vista House. OPRD is writing grant proposals to raise additional funds. The next work project will include actions to repair water damage to the balcony.

The project at West Mayer has presented an issue. Rock fall material from I-84 has been placed in the Rowena Pit. ODOT and ORPD intended to remove this material for the West Mayer project. Craig Sipp has received word from Wasco County that the Rowena Pit was approved as a disposal site. However, stockpiling and removal is different use than "disposal" according to Wasco County.

Bus Gibson asked about the berm and fence restricting access to Ruthon Point. Jeanette Kloos said that a title search is being done and ownership should be resolved in the next few months. Jeanette also stated that the trail use is okay. A parking area was proposed during the previous restoration but was opposed by the neighbors. Connecting this section to Hood River near the Meridith Hotel, providing access to this area is currently the second priority for future funding.

FOREST SERVICE

Tom Turck reported on two enhancement projects. The first project is the plantings in the East Pit, which is now complete. The historic Rowena Barn, located on Forest Service property near the Tom McCall preserve, is being stabilized and re-roofed. Funds for this work were provided by Trust for Public Land and the Forest Service. This project should be completed by December.

One concern of the Forest Service is that the debris from last year's rockslides has not been cleaned up. Jurgen Hess and Mike Boynton have requested that agencies plan to pre-designate sites to be used this winter.

Jurgen Hess has commented on the Oregon Scenic Byway sign at Chenoweth Creek. The Oregon Scenic Byway sign does not conform to the Gorge Graphic Sign system, but the location is not technically in the Scenic Area. The Oregon Scenic Byway committee is in charge of the design and location. Pat Moran, in Salem, is the contact for making changes.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS:

Jeanette received two development reviews two days ago that had no issues with the HCRH. Three more reviews came in yesterday, none on HCRH. See chart (attached).

MEMBERS ISSUES:

Carolyn pointed out that the Gorge Discovery Center received a Silver Hammer Award from Vice-President, Al Gore. This is an honor, which was only given to 18 projects, nationally, for staying within budget.

Jeffery Plummer wanted to know if Bob Hadlow found out any more information on the film of the HCRH, about driving it in the thirties. Bob stated that he was still working on it and that he did find a copy in the archives in DC, but that getting a copy was too costly, about \$200.

Jeffery also wanted to know what will happen to the bridge railing from the McCord Creek Bridge, currently dumped along I-84. John said it was the responsibility of the contractor to clean up the job site and that hopefully it will be cleaned up soon. Charlie will talk to contractor.

John Lundell asked for clarification on whether the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs actually owned land adjacent to the HCRH, or not. Jeanette showed the members with a map where their property lines were. The Confederated Tribes own three properties. Their property is not adjacent to the HCRH, but if they can get easement rights across lands that are adjacent; they may be able to access the HCRH.

Jeanette has received an application for Transportation Enhancement funding. A new requirement is that projects must have a minimum cost of \$200,000.

Bill Pattison asked Charlie when McCord Creek Bridge would be completed. Charlie reported that the bridge would be completed in time for Thanksgiving holiday traffic.

**NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION:
Wednesday, January 27th, City Hall, Wood Village.**

Attachments:
4 Funding Charts
Development Review Chart

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