

MINUTES
Historic Columbia River Highway
Advisory Committee
November 13, 1997
Wood Village City Hall
Wood Village, Oregon

Members Present: John Lundell, Jack Wiles, Julie Curtis, Bill Pattison, Jeff Plummer, Charlie Sciscione, Richard Blaine, James Hamrick, Janice Newton and Carolyn Wood.

Staff Present: Dwight Smith, Jeanette Kloos, Bob Hadlow, and Gail Smith.

Public Present: Dave Sell, USDA Forest Service; Jerry Igo, Native Plant Society of Oregon; Nancy Russell, Friends of the Columbia Gorge; Diana L. Ross, Wasco County Planning Dept.; Stephen Kenny, and Jean Hepburn.

Bill Pattison, chair, called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as distributed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No comments.

NEW MEMBER OF HCRH AC

Bill Pattison introduced Janice Newton, a new member to the Advisory Committee. Janice is a transportation planner for the city of Portland and was an economist for Multnomah County. She enjoys mountain climbing and hiking and is looking forward to working as a committee member making decisions regarding the HCRH.

ADA ACCESS - MOSIER TRAILHEAD

Russ Richards, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, presented a proposal for handicapped accessible parking at the junction of the HCRH and Rock Creek Road, just west of Mosier. (see attached sketch.)

- 1) move the gate further north and provide for handicap access, 4 parking spaces
- 2) improve sight-distance by cutting back bluff north of HCRH
- 3) improve access from parking area to gate, with a path separated from the roadway with a barrier (guardrail).

Sight distance needs to be improved to locate handicapped parking at the gate.

Charlie Sciscione had heard concern that there may be cultural resource impacts associated with the cut. Russ said that he reviewed the cultural survey of the area and did not find any features in the area to be cut. Russ will contact Hal Gard, ODOT's archeologist, who was responsible for the

survey, to determine if the proposal will affect the cultural site. Under CRGNSA Management Plan, the proposal will not be pursued if it has an Adverse Effect on a cultural site. The Advisory Committee unanimously passed a motion adopting the proposal pending cultural review, but directing OPRD to investigate the alternative trail proposal,

ACCESS POLICY

Jack Wiles, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, reported that two public meetings were held, in Hood River and Portland, regarding the access policy for the HCRH State Trail. Jack will summarize all the comments and send them out to the AC for further discussion at the next meeting.

At the public meetings, Jack noted that people had misunderstandings about construction and opening of the trail. Jack felt the meetings were a good opportunity to give a clearer update.

The requirements for access for the elderly are not as clearly defined as they are for the disabled. The trail will be closed to motorized vehicles, but vintage car owners are very excited about using the HCRH for special events and are extremely supportive. Bill stated that the HCRH will be in heavy demand for use by the vintage car clubs. Vintage cars will need to be defined more clearly. A vintage car is currently defined as a vehicle built before 1946. Car clubs asked that the Advisory Committee consider other possible definitions.

Nancy Russell asked if information was mailed to the running clubs in the area. Jack mailed information to the various clubs but no one attended the meetings. Nancy Russell directed the committee's attention to a letter from Lewis McArthur concerning horses on the HCRH State Trail (attached). Horse usage is currently prohibited; this should not be re-opened for further study.

John has heard concerns from citizens in Hood River about bicycle use. Would a day use permit fee apply to bicyclists? Jack clarified that bicyclists are always admitted to State Parks at no cost. The day use fee is for parking.

The summarized comments and revised policy will be sent to the AC for review. Discussion and recommendation for approval will occur at the next meeting.

SCENIC BYWAY CORRIDOR

Jeanette Kloos is preparing to submit an application to nominate Troutdale-Warrendale and Mosier-The Dalles sections of the HCRH as a National Scenic Byway. Jeanette must have the application in by December 15 and would like comments as soon as possible.

Charlie asked about additional signage needed if the designation is received. Jeanette said no additional signs are proposed.

John Lundell offered several comments on the draft document. He suggested that the discussion of Hood River to Mosier better define the different phases.

Jeanette requested that additional comments be received by December 1.

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

Bob Hadlow circulated a draft document of the National Historic Landmark nomination. Bob asked the AC to review the document and help in filling in the blanks. Dave Sell requested and received a

copy for Forest Service review. Bob patterned the draft after two other applications that were successfully used to nominate Glacier National Park/Going to the Sun Road and Mt. Rainier National Park.

Bob stated that this will be the first highway nominated to National Historical Landmarks status outside of a national park. The nomination must clearly show that the HCRH has “high integrity”. Robie Lange, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., questioned whether the abandoned sections between Dodson and Mosier have sufficient integrity. The draft document includes Dodson to Cascade Locks, but excludes Cascade Locks to Hood River (actually Ruthton Point). The committee strongly felt that the nomination should be drafted to include all of the HCRH and tell the whole story. If some parts need to be removed later, it will be easier to remove parts of the document than to add.

James Hamrick noted that the process is difficult (less than 1% of historic sites earn Landmark status) and is political. We need to go beyond writing the nomination document and lobby for the designation. Even with congressional support, Astoria Column was rejected. We should include former Senator Hatfield and the current Oregon delegation in lobbying efforts. Dave Sell recommended that we brief both the NSA staff and the Forest Service Regional office. Since the Forest Service owns some of the significant resources (Multnomah Falls and Eagle Creek) they should also sign the nomination. Some Forest Service recreation personnel in D.C. could be helpful in the lobbying effort.

Dave Sell suggested that the evolution of transportation be discussed including the Oregon Trail, railroad construction, wagon roads, etc.

The National Park System Advisory Board meets only twice a year. Bob visited with National Park Service staff recently and received genuine support for this HCRH application. Robie Lange and the Advisory Board will review the application and then an oral presentation will be made to the Advisory Board. The board makes a recommendation to the Secretary of Interior. There are eighteen National Landmarks in Oregon.

Bob will send a second draft for the HCRH Advisory Committee to review before the next meeting. It will include both the description and the significance sections.

PROJECT UPDATES

HOOD RIVER TO MOSIER UPDATE

PHASE 1

Phase 1 of this project is almost done. The tunnels are open and completed. The water source for the project is still being developed. Preliminary engineering for the water line has been awarded.

PHASE 2

The rockfall catchment project had bids opened October 23rd with JAL Construction in Bend submitting the low bid. The bid was below the engineer’s estimate. Construction of the rockfall catchment, associated fencing and gates, construction and paving of the parking lot at the West Trailhead and fencing of the overlook will all be constructed by JAL.

PHASE 3A

Money is not available at this time for the paving and guardrail. The revised agreement to obtain right of way use was sent to Hood River County for their approval. At this time the agreement has not been returned. Hood River County wants exclusive right to terminate the agreement, however, ODOT must be able to guarantee that the improvements will be maintained.

PHASE 3B

The restoration of the East Pit is going well. Dave Sell reported large equipment working in the area has made a dramatic change after 15 days of work. The work is 2/3 completed and this already has given the area a more natural look. The roads are obliterated and plants have been ordered. Forest Service will be installing 4,000 feet of fencing. The work on this project is within the budget allowed.

Weed control is under way. The noxious weeds in the area will take up to two years to control.

Jim Azumano has been talking with Charlie Sciscione about use of rock from the quarry for emergencies.

Dave Sell clarified that an emergency must be declared by the Governor and any use of rock must also meet all other Federal requirements, including the Endangered Species Act.

PHASE 3C

The West Trailhead at the Koberg Quarry will be constructed by the same contractor as Phase 2, JAL construction. This project had bids above the engineer's budget.

PHASE 3D

The contract for the West Trailhead includes the fence for the overlook at the east portal, but the rockwork for the overlook is not included.

Poison oak is abundant in the area and it was suggested that a sign should be installed as a warning.

PHASE 3E

The cliffwalk is completed and planting will begin as soon as there is enough moisture in the area to keep the plants growing.

PHASE 3F

The timbers from Elk Creek Tunnel will be salvaged for the timber lining in the tunnel.

MOFFET CREEK - TANNER CREEK

Moffett Creek Bridge rail will be restored next year.

The Moffett Creek-Tanner Creek project was significantly over the engineer's budget and will need to be rewritten. Some work will not be included in the plans for the next bid.

EAGLE CREEK - CASCADE LOCKS

Eagle Creek-Cascade Locks bids were high and the project will be re-advertised. There may need to be some design changes made on this project. Additional funding depends on the passage of the new Transportation bill.

MULTNOMAH FALLS- CASCADE LOCKS (BRIDGES)

Construction of the new McCord Creek Bridge has started. The 1915 bridge was demolished. The 1960's bridge will be upgraded and earthquake seismic fittings added. Carolyn Wood asked if one way traffic was planned when construction of the bridge begins. Charlie stated the plans are to have two lanes going east and one lane going west until next summer.

INTERPRETIVE SIGNS

There are 27 signs to be installed and work should be completed by next Spring by Coral Construction.

ACTIVITY STATUS REPORTS:

ODOT

Charlie Sciscione, District 2C reported that rocks are being stockpiled for work to be done next summer.

Tanner Creek Bridge rail work is completed.

The Latourell culvert wall will be under construction next year. Richard Fix and his contractor have completed the Vista House wall repair project.

The forms for the spindles for Moffett Creek are ready and the spindles will be cast this winter and installed next summer.

FHWA has decided that Horsetail Falls Bridge is below standard and needs repair. Charlie stated that a temporary fix will be done at this time and then long term plans will be made to bring the bridge back up to standards.

FOREST SERVICE

Dave Sell reported that the Forest Service has no pending development reviews. The Benson Foot bridge and the trail at Multnomah Falls remain closed.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS:

Jeanette received three development reviews. Two developments were not on the HCRH. The third review was the Corbett Water District at Evans Road in Corbett. The water district would like to add a storage building. The decision has not been made on the design of the sidewalk in front of the building. The design could follow that at the old school across the highway, which has a curb and pedestrian sidewalk; but the new school has an asphalt path separated from the HCRH by a landscape strip. The HCRHAC felt that ODOT should comment that the developments should follow the Master Plan, with no access from the HCRH, but that the citizens of Corbett should also voice their opinion on the walkway type. Julie Curtis recommended that future discussions of developments should be preceded by a site visit, at least by staff, and photos of the area should be available during the discussions.

PRESENTATION TO RICHARD FIX

A special presentation was made to Richard Fix for his masonry work on the HCRH. Richard has been restoring and repairing the HCRH for 12 years. Richard was presented with three pictures showing the cliffwalk as it was in 1920, when it was abandoned, and during his restoration work.

MEMBERS ISSUES:

Carolyn Wood heard from participants in the Maryhill Museum tour of the HCRH. They said that the tour was very well done.

Bill Pattison asked if press releases ever went out regarding different information regarding the HCRH. Jeanette reported that all media are notified of HCRH AC meetings. All events such as the Grand Opening and the volunteer project have press releases prepared and distributed.

The Chenoweth Interchange is open. The screening, developed by Joe Paiva, will be installed in March.

NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION:

Thursday, February 12, Best Western-Columbia River Inn, Cascade Locks.

Attachment:

OPRD proposal - Mosier ADA parking
McArthur letter on horse usage

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