

**Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee  
November 16, 2004  
Lake House  
Blue Lake Park  
Fairview, Oregon**

Members Attending:	Bill Pattison, Jerry Igo, Art Carroll, Jack Wiles, Ernie Drapela, James Hamrick, Carolyn Woods, Wayne Stewart, Patti Kileen, Matt Garrett.
Staff Attending:	Jeanette Kloos; Robert Hadlow, June Carlson, Stacy Codington.
Others Attending:	Diana Ross and Kim Titus, USDA Forest Service; Dave Sell, Western Federal Lands Highway Division, FHWA; Daniel Callahan, TDC Investment; Stephen Kenny, Jim Hessel and Louise Yarbrough, Friends of Vista House; Kevin Price, OPRD; Nancy Russell, Friends of the Columbia Gorge; Mary Bishop, Oregon State Parks Trust.
Note taker:	Charmell Burgess Camacho, ODOT

Bill Pattison, Chair, called the meeting to order. The Advisory Committee approved the minutes of the September 9, 2004, meeting without changes.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**ONEONTA ENHANCEMENTS**

Dave Sell, Western Federal Lands Highway Division, FHWA, presented information on the Oneonta Gorge parking/vista project. David Evans & Associates is completing the preliminary design. The Environmental Checklist is available for public review. This Forest Highway Enhancement project is a partnership between ODOT, FHWA and the CRGNSA Forest Service. This site attracts 15,000 visitors each year. Access is disorganized and below a cliff where rocks fall. The project will improve access, including parallel parking on both sides of the tunnel, strengthen the Oneonta Creek Bridge and reopen the Oneonta Tunnel for bicyclists and pedestrians (the tunnel was filled with rock during 1950s). The project will minimize impacts and restore historical features, including replacing original guardrail. About \$400,000 is available for construction; however the current cost estimate is \$600,000. ODOT will take over final design and construction later next summer.

Engineers believe that there is a low risk of collapse in the tunnel once the fill is removed; the rock is different than what is found in the Mosier Twin Tunnels. This project will not complete the hiking loop trail back to Horsetail falls; a proposal is needed on how to cross the Horsetail Falls

Bridge and/or Horsetail Creek. Those who attended the public meeting in Corbett supported the project. Some asked about removing the log jam in Oneonta Creek; this project will not remove the log jam. PE should be finished by mid-January 2005. HCRH AC unanimously approved a motion supporting this project.

### **HOOD RIVER SQUARE PROPOSAL**

Daniel Callahan, TDC Investment, distributed the attached package of information about the Hood River Square project on Cascade Avenue, west of Wal-Mart, in Hood River. The City of Hood River has approved site plan. Mike Keyes (ODOT) has suggested that left-turn lane from the existing turn lane west to I-84 be completed at the same time, rather than disrupt traffic several times. This will require cooperation of several landowners; discussions are ongoing. There is existing curb, but it needs to be moved about three feet north. Although there is no requirement for set back from HCRH, buildings will be 15 feet from highway. There is currently a rock wall that separates the site from the highway. This plan is consistent with City of Hood River Programmatic Agreement on the HCRH, even although it has not been fully signed. A motion to approve the Hood River Square proposal passed unanimously.

### **DISCUSS ORGANIZATIONAL RULES FOR HCRH AC**

June Carlson began the discussion of organizational rules for the Advisory Committee by stating that several issues have been raised. First, the beginning of the discussion of the 100th anniversary of the highway's dedication raised issues of what we might want to accomplish by 2016, what would be realistic goals in terms of staff time and project funding, particularly given staffing reductions in Region 1. Second, ODOT's Bridge Delivery Program is controversial and includes many bridges in the CRGNSA. Third, there is awkwardness for ODOT employees and serving as staff for an advisory committee that has an independent mind and, potentially, takes positions on issues that differ from those held by ODOT.

The HCRH AC Charter dates from 1989 and describes the purpose, intent, and roles and responsibilities for the HCRH AC and ODOT staff. It has not been revised or updated since then. Election of officers should be coming up soon. June suggests that the Advisory Committee review and modify the "charter". She suggested that the Advisory Committee members might take a more active role on ODOT project development teams, for example. Bill Pattison agreed with June's idea and appointed Wayne and Carolyn to be on a subcommittee to review and revise the charter. Bill would also like to see June and Matt working on this subcommittee. Matt said that he would like to work on this revision and also on arranging meetings bringing together the AC and the ODOT Director and the Oregon Transportation Commission. He said some

strategic planning is needed leading up to 2016. The ODOT Public Affairs can help.

June discussed the fact that with ODOT's recent reorganization and the current bridge program, there is a lot of pressure to get more and more done despite staffing issues. ODOT has looked at Jeanette's workload and believes that she can better serve the agency by refocusing her talents in other areas under the umbrella of the Region 1 Planning Unit. There is no desire to remove her completely from working on the HCRH, but rather free up some of her time and talent to assist with other projects; she will remain as staff for the AC. Matt will ask the Region's Public Affairs and Project Delivery units to help with finding funding and increasing visibility of the HCRH.

Wayne Stewart understands that the legislation creating the HCRH AC indicates that ODOT will provide staff for the committee. Matt noted that even if the subcommittee determined that there was no need for changes in the Charter then that would be okay, a review is still needed. Patti Kileen noted that the references to the Tourism Commission need to be updated. She agreed that it is good to plan for continuity of knowledge for the future.

Ernie Drapela has been serving on the Oregon Trails Advisory Committee for long time and discussed how the staff's role has changed, to the benefit of OPRD, but the Trails Committee suffered from the change. He was concerned about the future loss of staff and expertise and how it will affect the AC's role.

June indicated that the goal here is not to amend SB 766 (or how it is codified in the Oregon Revised Statutes). The Charter provides a mechanism for carrying out what was mandated in SB 766. Changes to the Charter should have Advisory Committee approval. In addition, she believes that there would be some advantage in asking the ODOT Director and the Oregon Transportation Commission to affirm any changes made to the Charter. Matt indicated that the OTC has approved charters for the Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs). James Hamrick asked if an Administrative Rulemaking would be required; Matt indicated that it could be explored, but this was not done for the ACTs.

**VISION FOR HCRH 100TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF DEDICATION--2016**

**Discussion of Re-prioritization--Jeanette Kloos and Stacy Codington**

Jeanette provided the attached "story" of the HCRH. When discussions of the 100th anniversary began three meetings ago, members asked for a prioritization of projects. At the last meeting, a prioritization exercise was attempted, after a description of the projects. The results were not clear.

Each project should have received 10 dots, one from each member. Some people voted more than once for some projects, but not at all for others. Two projects were removed from the list since they are now funded from other sources. The results were prioritized with reconnection and restoration projects on top, then the enhancement projects ranked by the average score.

Stacy Codington talked about goals and prioritization of projects on the unfunded list. The group talked about the enhancement projects on the list and the possibility of future funding from other sources and how this fits in with the list's prioritization. Wayne Stewart suggested that the existing list be revised into high, medium, and low priority. Art Carroll agreed, saying that the reconnection projects are a high priority, but many are expensive; the enhancement proposals can help build support and interagency cooperation and should also be pursued. Patti asked about the purpose of the 100th anniversary-. Was it to have a spectacular, tangible project, to generate interesting in the HCRH, to have a landmark event, or something less dramatic? Carolyn added Ford Motor Company generously helped underwrite the 75th anniversary celebration. Matt Garrett said that a signature event tied to completion of a project is desirable. It offers the opportunity to educate the public about the highway. Dave Sell indicated that the World Heritage Site proposal would generate public interest; FHWA may have some funding for this proposal. Dave said that it would also be helpful to get the HCRH from Mosier to The Dalles on the Forest Highway system, so that projects on that section could be eligible for Forest Highway funds.

Bill Pattison said that he had attended the STIP meeting in Hood River and discussed with Matt Garrett those HCRH projects that are in the plan. Matt requested a letter from the AC. The Committee discussed the attached draft letter, identifying the HCRH AC recommendations for the 06-09 draft STIP. Matt requested that a description of the projects, including a cost estimate, be attached to the letter. A motion was passed supporting the draft letter.

#### **VISTA HOUSE UPDATE**

James Hamrick updated the AC on proposed ADA improvements to Vista House. By November 18, OPRD expects to have a letter from the Oregon Department of Justice ruling on ADA issues. In addition, the city of Gresham Building Inspector, the Oregon Disabilities Commission and Building Codes Agency in Salem have jointly contributed to a letter, which is expected in the near future; that supports the position that if ADA access is not provided to the basement, then the basement could not be used by any part of the public. These two documents will determine how OPRD will proceed. The Multnomah County permit process has been on hold, but the comment period is expected to begin soon. The Parks

Commission discussed the option of a separate building. Another option would use the north elevation door; however this would eliminate about 20 parking spaces.

Oregon's chief elevator inspector concluded that it was possible to install an elevator in Vista House that could be concealed from view in the rotunda when not in use. Cost estimates are being completed at this point. This proposal would have no railing, no warning lights, and would need an attendant to be able to turn the keys manually. Perspective drawings (photo simulations) are being done. One of the biggest challenges would be designing the temporary barrier that would prevent the elevator from working if someone was standing on the platform. At the Thursday, November 18, meeting, OPRD will clearly present what will be proposed in the Multnomah County permit application.

Matt asked about the concerns that various parties have voiced and whether OPRD has explored all avenues. OPRD has dealt with a multitude of problems surrounding water damage, while also addressing parking, historic preservation, scenic resource concerns, etc. OPRD is willing to entertain a redesign, but it is doubtful that everyone will be satisfied. OPRD needs to make a decision and go through the approval/appeal process.

Wayne Stewart raised concerns that there has not been a true, open design effort, using a holistic approach. He would like to step back and look at options. He understands that there are tradeoffs, but he is concerned that there are unresolved issues with the current proposal, such as the turning movement space and seeing the ramp at night. Ernie Drapela suggested rescinding the previous motion. Bill Pattison suggested waiting until after the November 18 meeting, to determine whether or not there is a need to revisit the motion.

Jack Wiles explained that the "sweet spot" is "universal access." There are provisions in the ADA for exceptions from universal access requirement. Under the Federal law, the SHPO can object if there is a "threat to the historic significance" of a building, but the previous OPRD director had made an agency policy decision to provide access to both levels of the building.

Mary Bishop chaired the fundraising committee; if she had known there would be such a problem with the bathrooms, she would have suggested that no work be done on the bathrooms. She feels that OPRD needs to look at all aspects to avoid any defacing of the building. We are able to see the beauty and historic value now that the restoration is nearly complete. Many people are concerned about all the changes that may be made just to make it accessible and get it open. Nancy Russell spoke with

Lewis L. McArthur, who expressed the option that Vista House should not be messed with or altered in this manner.

Jim Hessel, president of the Friends of Vista House, said that the intent is to keep the building historically accurate and a work of art. The Statue of Liberty was recently restored and ADA accommodations were not made, so is there another option for Vista House?

Diana Ross believes this is a design problem that can be solved with more input from the design community. She felt OPRD needs to get all stakeholders together to look at criteria for each option to have them available for comparison. Art Carroll asked if the Forest Service has offered the services of Chuck Fraiser; Jack Wiles indicate that he met with Chuck early in the process and that he had been helpful.

Jerry added that he sees two problems: desire to open the building in the spring of 2005 and having enough time to design the perfect solution. "Stairglide" was a solution used at restaurant and lodge in Hells Canyon. This only cost \$7,000; it would not cause long term damage to building and allow a spring opening. Later, OPRD could look again at the solution of outside bathrooms or other options.

Bill Pattison asked that committee be on standby for future special meeting. If the county sends out the permit packet, Jeanette will notify the committee. Tuesday, December 7, at 2:00 P.M. in Troutdale was chosen as tentative date for a special meeting.

## UPDATES

*Rowena Pit Restoration*—The Wasco county permit has been received. OPRD will ask other agencies if they have material that is suitable for filling the deep pit within the five-year period allowed. The Forest Service will develop a wider area open space plan.

*HCRH Interpretive Sites and Signs*—Advanced plans are ready for distribution. An easement for one sign is being donated by the Columbia Gorge Hotel. The Gorge Discovery Center requested a change in location of the sign on their property. An agreement is in progress. .

*Casino*—There is an article in a recent issue of the Portland Tribune that discusses the casino and its progress.

*City Programmatic Agreements*—The Mosier Programmatic Agreement has been signed. The statuses of the Hood River and Cascade Locks agreements have not changed.

*Gutter Project*—The environmental checklist is complete.

*Eagle Creek exit ramp-bike*—The Forest Service is organizing the first project meeting.

**ACTIVITY STATUS**

*ODOT--*  
None.

*OPRD--*

Jack Wiles mentioned that he had received a letter from the Wasco County Historical Society requesting that the overlook east of the Mosier Twin Tunnels be named for Bruce Russell, in honor of his contributions to the Hood River-to-Mosier Reconnection Project. Jack said that he is working with Nancy Russell to develop an appropriate honor for Bruce Russell. Nancy Russell said that a stipulation of the donation was that there is interpretation at the trailheads, but none along this segment of the HCRH State Trail.

Kevin Price said he was glad to be back in the Gorge after six months in Salem. He reported that three campgrounds have closed for the winter. The Friends of the Gorge group has extended their area (eastern boundary previously Bonneville, now The Dalles).

USDA Forest Service--

Diana Ross is working on the Rowena Open Space Plan.

**DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS**

See attachment.

**MEMBERS ISSUES**

James Hamrick distributed a flier on fundraising efforts for Kam Wah Chung. Patti Kileen said that the Tourism Commission will be moving in late December or early January. Everyone will have new phone numbers. Bill requested that the Advisory Committee contact list be updated. Jerry Igo has requested re-appointment from Wasco County. James Hamrick moved to re-elect Bill Pattison as chair and Wayne Stewart as Vice Chair. This was unanimously passed.

**NEXT MEETING DATE AND PLACE**

The next meeting will be January 6, 2005 at the Gorge Discovery Center.