

**Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee Meeting
MINUTES
June 18, 2013
The Discovery Center
The Dalles, OR**

Members Attending:	Wayne Stewart Marc Berry Ernie Drapela Barbara Briggs Judy Davis Larry Olson (ODOT) Dennis Comfort (OPRD) Art Carroll (HCRH AC, Emeritus)
HCRH AC Staff:	Kristen Stallman Sara Morrissey
Others Attending:	Susan Hanson (ODOT) Magnus Bernhardt (ODOT) Pat Cimmiyotti (ODOT) Jamie English (OPRD) Diane McClay (OPRD) Gary Brannan (FHCRH) Angie Brewer (Gorge Commission) Jerry Igo Scott Turnoy (MCEDD) Mike Odom (WFLHD) Brent Coe (WFLHD) Steve Lawrence (Mayor of The Dalles) Carolyn Wood (The Dalles City Council) Michael Byrne (Master Stone Mason) Michael Friend (Laughing Deva Prd.) John Hardham (Laughing Deva Prd.) Peter Marbach (P.M. Photography) Dave Bybee

	Al Gillis Terry Anderson Mike Hayes Fred Scholtz
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Call to Order:

Wayne Stewart called the June 2013 Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee (HCRH AC) meeting to order with eight Advisory Committee members present.

Minutes:

Advisory Committee members did not have any changes or edits to make to the meeting summary from March 19, 2013. Marc Berry moved to approve the meeting summary as written and Dennis Comfort seconded the motion. The Historic Highway Advisory Committee members unanimously adopted the summary.

Public Comment:

Jerry Igo, a previous member of the HCRH AC, shared that there was a beetle (California fivespined Ips bark beetle) present on the east side of the Gorge that was attacking the Ponderosa Pines. The trees are dying in large quantities and the beetle is wiping out groves of trees in the hundreds. Mr. Igo stressed the importance of informing members of the public about the invasion of this beetle. Mr. Igo shared that the recent fire in the area to the east of Mosier had become a breeding area for the beetles. Top-killed ponderosa pine trees and dead young and old pines now scatter the landscape in the eastern Gorge with outbreaks occurring in Mosier and Hood River. This level of mortality due to the California fivespined Ips has not been previously reported in the eastern Gorge area. The beetle has spread out further than the Oregon side and is now in Washington around Underwood, White Salmon and the Catherine Creek Trail Area. In Oregon it can even be found east of The Dalles. Agency staff are working on the issue but Mr. Igo wants members of the public to be aware of this insect and the impact that it has on natural resources.

Art Carroll asked if the beetle was different than the mountain pine beetle and Mr. Igo confirmed that it was a different type of beetle. This beetle is more aggressive and has been present in the area for three to four years. Mr. Igo said that the best way to treat the outbreak is when the needles of the tree die to cut the tree immediately. In fire season it is

necessary to burn the needles and the brush from the tree. It is then necessary to either cover the pile in plastic or spray it with pesticides. Make sure to prune trees only from mid-Oct. through December during outbreaks. Prune or remove all infested trees, clean up all debris and chip or burn the tree before the next spring when the adult beetles emerge. If a pine tree has foliage that has rapidly changed to yellow, orange or red in the past season, it is best to remove these trees because the beetles will infest these trees and lay their eggs inside and develop unless the tree is felled and materials destroyed.

Wayne Stewart announced that Judy Davis has been reappointed to the HCRH AC. He thanked her for being willing to serve on the committee.

City of The Dalles Trail Update:

Carolyn Wood, former HCRH Advisory Committee member, spoke about the history of the City of The Dalles. The community has always spoken about the need to improve the connection between the City and the Columbia River. Twenty years ago community members began exploring possibilities of developing a river front trail and formed the Friends of The Dalles Riverfront Trail. Now nine-miles of trail is nearly complete and aims to be fully constructed in 2014. There have been environmental and archeological issues along the way but the trail is nearly complete. The trail is a multi-use path that runs along the banks of the Columbia River and can be used by cyclists and pedestrians. It connects the Discovery Center with The Dalles downtown area. Ms. Wood shared that there are occasional conflicts between pedestrians and large groups of cyclists. This needs to be improved. Additionally, the multi-use path connects with the downtown bicycle facilities and connects with 10th street that has a bike lane. There is a new commercial dock along the path and a new Lewis and Clark Festival Center. Ms. Wood shared that this trail was the culmination of visioning and planning efforts from the mid-90s. In 2014 the city was planning on constructing another undercrossing at Washington street and building a plaza at 1st street. The Friends group is also working to acquire funding and construct a trail near Mill Creek. Ms. Wood also mentioned that The Dalles had recently had other infrastructure improvements that increase livability in the city, such as the ODOT roundabout. There has been a lot of nice development in the downtown area, including the Mill Creek Bridge and historic lights. Additionally, the Gorge Community College is constructing a technology center. This will be finished in 2013.

Steve Lawrence introduced himself as the mayor of The Dalles. He has been mayor for five months and is overwhelmed by the amount of issues that the city needs to address. He shared that the HCRH AC was comforting because the committee is committed to one end goal and can work purely on achieving this goal. He shared that a month ago he had been driving through town and had encountered upon a group of cyclists who were sitting on the curb. The cyclists told Mayor Lawrence that they had riding in The Dalles as they were riding up the Gorge on both the Oregon and Washington side of the river. At that moment Mayor Lawrence realized that The Dalles could be a cycling destination.

Mayor Lawrence called Chad Sperry, a cycling event organizer, and learned about the Historic Highway reconnection efforts. Mr. Lawrence was leading a cycling tourism effort for The Dalles and is working on getting businesses and community excited about this effort. He is working with a group of community members to determine priority projects that will attract cyclists. He intends to attend the Policymakers Ride on August 2nd and is working with The Dalles, Wasco County and the Mid Columbia Economic Development District to push for cycling in the area. There is a lot of energy behind cycling in The Dalles.

Kristen Stallman reiterated what Mayor Lawrence said. ODOT had recently installed a sign that directed cyclists off the Historic Highway at the Discovery Center and directed them to ride along the Riverfront Trail into downtown.

2016 Celebration Film Concept

Michael Friend, John Hardham and Peter Marbach introduced themselves as documentary filmmakers and an author/photographer. Mr. Friend said that the 100th anniversary of the HCRH is quickly approaching and that his group wanted to complete a film project for the 100th anniversary.

Mr. Friend and Mr. Hardham have created multiple videos and documentaries, two of which were at the Discovery Center. Mr. Friend explained that they were looking for funding to do a video. The filmmakers requested to partner with the Historic Highway Advisory Committee and to be acknowledged as the official film makers for the Historic Highway and 100th Celebration. He asked if any of the members had any ideas for where funding could be found. Mr. Friend shared that he had met with Kristen Stallman a month

ago at a Gorge Commission meeting and she had suggested that they present their idea at the HCRH AC meeting. The video would also be accompanied with a book about the Gorge.

The video needs to be exclusively for the Historic Highway. He suggested making small videos that could be linked with QR codes at stops along the Highway. People traveling on the Historic Highway could stop at these designated locations, scan the QR codes with their smart phones and watch a video about the Highway. The book could also be linked to the videos with QR codes.

Mr. Hardham shared that while the Historic Highway had been designed by Sam Lancaster and funding had been found by Sam Hill, the crew of hundreds of laborers had never been recognized for their work. This was a unique opportunity to capitalize on sharing the history of the Gorge and Historic Highway with a larger audience. The reconnection project presents a unique opportunity to explore why the Historic Highway was built and how it was built. This project could be a series of videos that would focus on some of the sites along the way. The videos can be accessed along the route through the QR code. Mr. Hardham thought that the video could potentially be distributed through OPB. He added that the HCRH AC would have control on the content and messaging of the video.

Mr. Marbach shared that he was landscape photographer. He had focused on projects in the Gorge over the past few years. Knowing that the centennial celebration was in 2016 he thought this presented a perfect opportunity to develop a book of photographs for the Historic Highway. He shared his first book, Oregon Harvest, with the committee members. This was a book that celebrated the people and the land. Other books that Mr. Marbach had created were Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. He explained that books were harder to get published these days. The best way to get books published is through a public / private partnership. It is possible to purchase an ad for \$15 per book for 10,000 books to pay for the publishing costs. Barbara Briggs shared that she had all of Mr. Marbach's books and that she treasured them.

Mr. Friend reiterated that they were interested in partnering with the HCRH AC and were looking for ideas to get funding for the project. They were searching for \$70,000 to cover the cost of publishing the book and producing the videos. He then played a short video that he had put together for the committee to preview their work.

Ernie Drapela summarized their presentation by explaining that their role was to capture the mystique of the Gorge so that visitors can understand and experience the mystique. Ms. Briggs said that it was easier for the HCRH AC to partner with the film makers if there was an exact request. Mr. Hardham replied that they were requesting an endorsement for a stamp of approval so when they went to search for funding they could state that they would be making the exclusive and official program for the centennial celebration of the Historic Highway. Having an endorsement would allow the group to leverage this acknowledgement for additional funding.

Mr. Drapela shared the 2013 progress report with the film makers and said that there was a list of supporters who could potentially fund the project. Mr. Stewart asked if there were advisory committee members who were interested in forming a small sub-committee to further discuss whether or not the HCRH AC should endorse the filmmakers / photographer. The sub-committee could continue to meet with the filmmakers / photographer over the next few months and come back to the advisory committee in September with recommendation of whether or not the HCRH should endorse the project. Ernie Drapela, Barbara Briggs and Marc Berry volunteered to serve on the sub-committee.

Wyeth to Mitchell Creek Preliminary Engineering

Mike Odom representing Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD) presented an overview of the project and details on design elements. He shared that WFLHD had hired a CH2M Hill, an engineering firm, to assist with the engineering, environmental and design work from Wyeth to west of Mitchell Point. Walker Macy had been brought on as a sub-consultant to address the landscape architect elements. Additionally, ODOT was still highly involved with Kristen Stallman and Magnus Bernhardt's input as well as Kevin Price and Mark Davison from the Oregon Parks and Recreational Department (OPRD). There is a project team meeting every three weeks to track progress and review products.

Mr. Odom shared that WFLHD had \$4 million to complete the preliminary engineering and design work. This included NEPA and NSA permitting. WFLHD is going to move forward with a Categorical Exclusion (CAT-X) for NEPA. The USFS wants cumulative impact analysis completed for when the trail is located on their land.

The project team is working hard to reconnect the old sections of Highway and to design the state trail to avoid traveling on the shoulder of Interstate 84. The designers are working to keep the trail at less than a 5% grade and to honor the original Historic Highway design. There may be resource impacts but it will be for the benefit of the trail users and in the long run. The trail design includes additional amenities including view points, interpretation, site furnishings and trailheads, etc.

The trickiest section of trail design has become the Summit Creek Viaduct. This section is located to the west of Lindsey Creek where a segment of the Historic Highway lies 50 ft. above Interstate 84. The project team is currently looking at developing a viaduct structure that would attach to the cliff face. However, the visual standard in this area is supposed to dictate that any construction in the area needs to not be 'visually evident'. The project team met with the Interstate 84 Corridor Strategy Team to discuss how this structure could be constructed. One strategy was to explain that the viaduct was not culturally visually evident. A historic structure would be less 'visually evident' than a modern structure.

Mr. Berry asked for a clarification on the term 'visually evident'. Ms. Stallman explained that this meant the structure should not be visible to the casual user. Mr. Drapela asked for the length of the viaduct and Mr. Odom replied that it was 400 ft. in length and the wall height would be 12 ft. Mr. Carroll noted that the retaining walls for the McCord to Moffett Creek segment were tall and evident from I-84. Mr. Odom said that the wall was actually a subcomponent of a larger project and that the issue was that the structure was visually evident.

Mr. Odom then shared plans for future work. WFLHD would be submitting a NSA application to conduct geotechnical investigations in September and October of 2013. WFLHD may phase the geotechnical approach and only conduct enough investigations in the first phase to inform the impact assessment. The project team was also moving forward with the visual assessment and cumulative impacts analysis on the full corridor.

The project team was aiming to have a completed NSA application submitted by winter of 2013 and have design acceptance for sections A through D by May 2014. The goal was to have a full design and contract completed by late summer / early fall in 2014.

Mr. Stewart shared that Sam Lancaster had attended the last project team coordination meeting. Chet Orloff, a historian from PSU, had dressed up as Sam Lancaster and had attended the meeting. He encouraged the designers to think of the full vision and to design a world class facility that would create a legacy through the Gorge.

Cascade Avenue Update

Ms. Stallman explained that when the super Wal-Mart had been proposed the city and ODOT had analyzed how the highway would be impacted by the development of the Wal-Mart. In this process, Wal-Mart proposed constructing the new Mt. Adams roadway and purchased the land for development. However, the Wal-Mart itself was never developed. Then when the Interchange Area Management Plan (IAMP) was developed it identified the need to develop this roadway as the existing Country Club road is too close to the existing interchange exit. The new roadway would also have a right hand turn lane off of the Historic Highway to accommodate large truck traffic. Ms. Stallman announced that the project was currently under construction and was scheduled to be completed in late summer. The HCRH width at the intersection of the HCRH with the new roadway is larger than the historic width of 44 ft. to accommodate the right turn lane. However, past this intersection will return to the 44 ft. in width. Ms. Stallman presented the committee with a letter to SHPO asking for an easement from the programmatic agreement. Mr. Carroll asked if a stop light would be warranted at the intersection and Ms. Stallman replied that a stop light would most likely be warranted for the intersection in the future. The current design requires a stop sign with turn pockets. Ms. Briggs complemented the project and shared that this had been a horrible intersection. Mr. Stewart asked about whether entrance signage was being installed. Ms. Stallman shared that there was still interest in developing an entrance sign, especially from the agricultural / vineyard businesses. There was interest in making a fruit and wine loop. Mr. Brannan asked if landscaping would occur on the project and Ms. Stallman replied that there would be landscaping in the area. The old Country Club road will remain available for use as a bicycle and pedestrian facility.

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department - Comprehensive Park Planning Effort

Jamie English introduced herself as a new OPRD senior park planner. She had recently joined the agency on April 1st and was working on the comprehensive plan for Gorge parks. Ms. English shared that In the Columbia River Gorge OPRD manages 15 parks, six natural areas, three scenic view points, six scenic corridors, and 47 trailheads connecting visitors

with over 150 miles of trails. She provided the advisory committee members with dates for future open houses regarding the project. These were the following;

- August 14 – West End – Gresham Public Library – 5pm to 7pm
- August 15 – East End - Mark O. Hatfield West Trailhead – 5pm to 7pm

OPRD would also be meeting with agency stakeholders prior to the public meeting on August 15th. OPRD will analyze how the existing parks connect with the Historic Highway. OPRD has an existing Gorge comprehensive plan from 1994. Many of the parks will remain the same but other changes will be made, such as the addition to biker/camper sites.

Ms. Stallman shared that she would be working with OPRD on the public involvement component. Community members who care about the State Trail typically also are invested in OPRD state parks. There will also be a virtual open house to capture a lot of public input. The Historic Highway e-newsletter has 900 subscribers and Ms. Stallman noted that she would add the OPRD information to it.

Ms. English said that the comprehensive plan would discuss management, design and updates for the Gorge parks. The comprehensive plan would look at the needs of the parks and discuss how changes would be made. Mr. Carroll shared that he thought the overnight sites would be a better fit with OPRD rather than the USFS. He thought coordination was needed between OPRD and USFS to discuss day-use versus overnight sites in the Gorge. The role of the overnight and the day-use sites is not intended to be exclusive but ought to be a joint strategy.

Ms. English said that this evaluation would be part of the plan's assessment process. The assessment process would look at existing conditions at each site. Mr. Carroll said that there was a whole new education movement that was more geared towards cycling and cycling to parks. He asked how this would be incorporated into the plan. He hoped that the new OPRD comprehensive plan would address these issues and that the USFS would consider providing different services than ever before. Ms. English shared that the Historic Highway Master Plan would be integral in contributing to the planning process.

Ms. Stallman asked if OPRD would be examining potential acquisition sites. Ms. English said that they would be examining acquisition sites as part of the planning process. Mr. Carroll said that the USFS had a land adjustment plan and how this plan would play into the planning process. Mr. Drapela said that the HCRH AC was committed to viewpoint management and he hoped that OPRD would reflect this commitment in the comprehensive plan and pursue a high standard for viewpoint management.

Mr. Stewart shared that Travel Oregon's cycling economic study should be incorporated into the planning process. He shared that Travel Oregon was further investigating on how cyclists were spending money in the Gorge and that Ms. English should get information from this agency to incorporate into the plan. Mr. Stewart also said that OPRD should look at acquiring the Baumann property, currently owned by the Friends of the Gorge (FOG). The FOG want the property to go into public ownership and this would be a good location for people to stage a trail ride or access the Mitchell Point tunnel from the east side of the tunnel. The site is on the north side of the highway and would be a great day-use area. Dennis Comfort said that OPRD would like to see the design work for this site. Mr. Stewart said that FOG was hoping that a public entity would purchase the site.

Ms. English said that the comprehensive plan looked at existing assets, the needs of the project and established guidelines for how to manage these assets over the next 10 years. She encouraged HCRH AC members to participate in the planning process and attend public open houses.

Historic Highway Commemorative Stamp

Dave Bybee shared that he had a letter that Ms. Stallman had written and that would be sent to two senators and five representatives. Ms. Stallman added that the letter would tell the citizen advisory stamp committee that the Historic Highway is an important stamp to pursue. This would create a unified front to support a commemorative stamp.

Ms. Stallman inquired if anyone knew a representative in Walden's office. Ms. Briggs said that she knew individuals at Walden's office. Ms. Stallman shared that Travis Brouwer from ODOT would PDF the letter and have it signed by the necessary individuals. Mr. Drapela said that the requested action needed to be very clear.

Opening State Trail Celebration and Policy Makers Ride

Ms. Stallman began the presentation by sharing the HCRH progress report. This outlines the work that is happening in regards to preliminary engineering and NSA permits. This document also provides a visual image to share with the public and policymakers and to explain how much funding is needed to complete the project and how it will be applied to future segments. The front of the progress report is an artist rendering of the McCord Creek Bridge. The back of the report has a list of organizations that wrote a letter in support for the trail construction. Ms. Stallman encouraged HCRH AC members to take the progress report with them when sharing information about the HCRH State Trail.

The Policymakers Ride is scheduled for August 2nd. This is being led by Jerry Norquist (Cycle Oregon), Mike Houck (Wild in the City), Jonathan Nicholas (ODS / former Oregonian reporter) and a group of individuals who are planning the event. It provides policymakers with a bicycle ride through a specific area that shows the good / bad / ugly in cycling infrastructure. Jason Tell recommended focusing the ride on the Historic Highway! The ride will start at Corbett and end with a ride on the Sternwheeler in Cascade Locks. 150 policymakers/elected officials have registered for the ride and \$6,000 has been budgeted to pay for the ride. This cost includes a ride on the Sternwheeler and lunch. The ride's theme will be 'Remember – Restore – Reconnect'. Ms. Stallman believes this is an amazing opportunity to show off the HCRH and all the hard work that the committee has done to date. There will be various speakers at key points along the ride including the following:

- 'Remember' – Portland Women's Forum - Multnomah County Commissioner Diane McKeel and Jonathan Nichols. 100 years ago Sam Hill brought policymakers to this exact point and had made the commitment to build the highway.
- 'Restore' – Wahkeena Falls – Kevin Price and Marge Dryden – will speak about the restoration of the highway and partnerships along the project. Kevin will also speak about the installation of the ADA ramp at Vista House.
- 'Reconnect' - Jason Tell and the mayors from the communities along the Historic Highway (Troutdale, Cascade Locks, Hood River and The Dalles).
- There will be two speakers on the Sternwheeler – Scott West (Travel Oregon) who will discuss the economic impacts of cycling and Pat Egan (Oregon Transportation Commission Chair) who will speak about the importance of the HCRH State Trail project.

This will also be the first ride along the HCRH State Trail from John B. Yeon to Moffett Creek. This will be the first time in 77 years that a cyclist can travel from Troutdale to Cascade Locks without having to travel on I-84.

The grand opening of the trail for the public will be held on September 14th and 15th. This will be the ribbon cutting event for the trail opening. The event will be held at 11 a.m. The City of Cascade Locks is also holding a large scale city celebration event called the 'Revive the Historic Highway'. The city is planning various events throughout the town including an antique car show, fun run, beer and food festival, etc. The Friends of the Gorge are also having a campout weekend with campfire talks and guided hikes. The Cascade to Crown bike ride will be held on September 15th. Ms. Stallman and Ms. Morrissey are working on planning the event and coordinating the event elements with the various agencies and jurisdictions that are planning events. Ms. Stallman requested that all HCRH AC members be present for the September 14th ribbon cutting event.

Mosier Hub & TSP Update

Pat Cimmiyotti shared that ODOT is working with the City of Mosier on the bike hub. ODOT is currently doing the survey right-of-way work for the hub and through town. A visual for the hub has already been created but the survey data collected will inform ODOT how much of the visual drawing can be completed. The survey will further inform the design of the hub. Mr. Cimmiyotti added that ODOT had recently realized that the typical section of the HCRH and the City's Transportation Systems Plan (TSP) did not relate. The HCRH Programmatic Agreement does not relate well to a downtown streetscape as it does not allow for on-street parking or bike lanes. The design for the HCRH through downtown Mosier is being revisited and a new series of cross-sections will be created to help the community come up with a vision for Mosier.

Magnus Bernhardt shared that ODOT had \$30,000 to complete phase 1 on the project. Mr. Bernhardt's goal for this phase is to define the design with the survey information and to define the edge of the Historic Highway downtown. The survey information will be very helpful in completing this first phase of the design. Mr. Brannan asked if ODOT would be surveying the original highway alignment and Ms. Stallman replied that it would not be surveyed. Mr. Brannan asked if sewer and water lines were available at the hub location. Mr. Bernhardt confirmed that both utilities were available for use. He explained that the

hub would be a place to gather, stage your ride, find information on a kiosk, access to a picnic table and a water fountain. Mr. Brannan said that people in the cycling community had requested that a restroom be included in the design. Ms. Stallman replied that the issue with a restroom was that the city would have to maintain the restroom and did not currently have funds or staff to maintain a restroom. Mr. Cimmiyotti added that there was not a lot of space in the triangle and that the cost associated with maintaining a restroom is high. Mr. Bernhardt added that the original proposal, which included a restroom, had a cost of \$1.2 million.

Mr. Stewart asked when survey work would be complete. Mr. Cimmiyotti said that the survey work was already in progress and that Mr. Bernhardt would receive a copy of the survey work in mid-July. Mr. Cimmiyotti added that he was working on another project with the City of Mosier, OPRD and the local watershed council on a stream restoration project at Rock Creek. In the Mosier quarry there was a natural landslide area and yearly floods. The project aimed to complete some rock work to reduce the change of flooding in the future. The project team was currently pursuing environmental permits to complete the work. The funding for this project is available and it should be completed in the summer of 2013. Mr. Cimmiyotti hoped that this project would mitigate any need for future work around the bridge.

Oregon Heritage Tourism Award 2013

Mr. Stewart shared that the HCRH AC had been awarded the Oregon Heritage Tourism Award for 2013. Mr. Stewart accepted the award on behalf of the committee and was able to speak at the event. He thanked all of the HCRH AC members and all the work that they do. Ms. Briggs requested that ODOT provide all of the committee members with a photo of the trophy.

The Dalles Gateway Sign

Ms. Stallman shared that funding had been allocated to construct the sign. Brad Dehart from ODOT would be the project manager and believed that it would go into construction in the summer of 2013. The stone for the monument has also been selected. The Friends of the HCRH are going to purchase the stone. Ms. Stallman shared that the stone is called 'empire stone'. A mason in the audience shared that he had a source for black basalt which would be a better stone for the sign and the surrounding environment. Ms. Stallman said

that the project would do an invitation to bid the project to 3 stone masonry companies to select a final contractor. Mr. Brannan shared that he had developed a plaque that acknowledged the groups that had contributed to the funding of the sign. The sign design will be a standard bronze plaque that will be 13" and 17". The sign will be affixed to the easterly facing side of the Chenoweth Creek monument. The sign has a cost of \$800. Mike suggested that instead of being 13" by 17" that it be 12" by 17" because it will work better with the stone pattern. Mike XXX said that the committee should go to the Caswell gallery to speak with Charlie Warren as he knows a lot about the appropriate stones for monuments.

Judy Davis moved to approve the plaque design and size and Art Carroll seconded the motion. Wayne Stewart abstained from voting. The Historic Highway Advisory Committee members unanimously adopted the plaque with the change in size to 12" x 17".

Updates

Oregon Department of Transportation - Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee Staff Updates

Please review the agenda packet with ODOT staff updates.

Ms. Stallman requested that HCRH AC members visit the HCRH on a busy Sunday during the summer. The roadway is becoming more crowded, both with vehicles and cyclists. ODOT has submitted a grant for funding to conduct a transportation management study to address the crowding. Options to manage crowding include but are not limited to the following: shuttle, parking meters, videos, making the HCRH one-way.

Scott Turnoy introduced himself as a Project/Mobility Manager from the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District in The Dalles. He acknowledged that the crowding would need to be addressed in the near future. Ms. Briggs also noted that this conversation would be crucial in the future. As economic development continues to be promoted in the Gorge there is only going to be more crowding in the future.

Diane McClay said that it would be important that this conversation, about crowding on the Historic Highway, feed into the on-going conversation about developing a sustainable recreation strategy. She shared that Stan Hinatsu (USFS) and Angie Brewer (Gorge Commission) were involved in this effort. The plan develops strategy to protect that areas that are over loved and aims to promote other recreational areas in the Gorge that are less utilized. Ms. Stallman said that she would request that Ms. Brewer present the sustainable recreation strategy at a future HCRH AC meeting.

Mr. Carroll asked why the conversation about crowding couldn't happen prior to being awarded the grant. It is obvious that issues already exist. Mr. Turnoy asked if the grant would identify the project and develop strategies about how to solve the issue of crowding. Ms. Stallman shared that ODOT was not very concerned about the crowding as the highway had a high safety rating and that places like Multnomah Falls probably liked the crowding as it most likely led to higher food sales on-site. Mr. Comfort expressed that overcrowding damaged the experience of the highway. Ms. Stallman asked if it actually did impact the experience because some people did not really care about crowding. Ms. English asked if it is overpopulation of the public or if there are too many cars on the highway. Ms. Stallman believed that it was both issues. She also noted that it would be a good experiment to make the Historic Highway a one-way route on Saturday and to install parking meters at locations like Multnomah Falls to encourage vehicle turn-over and raise revenue to the agencies managing the resource.

Ms. Stallman shared that the Corbett community continued to have concerns about cyclists on the roadway. Lawn signs had recently been developed that read 'share and be aware: ride right in traffic, be patient, pass with care'. These signs support both the community and the cyclists. It provides the citizens with a tool for empowerment and local control. Mr. Brannan believed that the signs would create additional awareness and comfort for both parties. He and Ms. Briggs complemented Ms. Stallman on the development of the sign.

Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway

Mr. Brannan provided an update on Jeanette Kloos to meeting attendees. She is in good spirits and is doing well. The following information reflects the updates of the FHCRH

- The 7th annual Gorge bike ride had occurred in early June. The event had 459 paid riders (436 individuals participated) and grossed \$17,000, which resulted in a profit of over \$10,000.
- Mr. Brannan shared the cork coaster that is a 'faux' HCRH State Trail medallion. These will be distributed at the policy makers ride and sold at the Historic Highway opening celebration on September 14th.
- Mr. Brannan shared that the ODOT needed to provide the FHCRH with the locations of where the medallions will be located along the trail.
- Mr. Brannan said that FHCRH had already given OPRD a bike counter – where was this counter being used? Ms. McClay said that she would find out where this counter was being used and how it would work with the bike counter effort that is currently ongoing between ODOT and OPRD.
- FHCRH received a donation of \$5,000 specifically to complete rock work. This donation was anonymous. Mr. Brannan requested that Ms. Stallman send him a list of rock walls or other rock features that need funding. Perhaps at Memaloose?
- Future FHCRH activities include:
 - Further development of the Eagle Creek Viaduct
 - Help plan Troutdale Historical Society Exhibit
 - Plan John. B. Yeon to Moffett Creek Grand Opening – Sept. 14
 - Begin planning 100th anniversary events for the HCRH.
- Mr. Brannan also shared that there was also volunteer opportunities available with the FHCRH and requested that people sign up for the opportunities if interested.

Oregon Department of Transportation - Maintenance / Construction

Larry Olson shared that he wanted to return to the Corbett community to discuss biking along the Historic Highway. The community was a good ally for OPRD and ODOT as they had a group that watches the parking lots in the summer to provide security and deter thefts. The community really loves and values the Historic Highway. The whole group is not opposed to cyclists but everyone does want to find a better way to blend all the different modes along the Historic Highway.

The tree root issue along the Historic Highway State Trail near Toothrock viaduct and Ruckle Creek continues to be worked on. Mr. Olson is searching for funding to repave this section of trail. It has been difficult to find funding as it is hard to validate using ODOT gas funding money on a section of trail that is not on ODOT Right-of-Way (ROW). There is a race along the Historic Highway State Trail, the Mt. Hood Classic, on June 22 and Mr. Olson is trying to address the paving before the race begins. Ms. Stallman asked if it would be possible to use FHCRH money to fund the paving project as it does not qualify for federal or ODOT gas tax money. The project cost is \$11,000 and it would take crews two weeks to complete the project. Ms. Stallman stated that it would be great to get the trail paved by August 2nd for the policymakers ride. Mr. Carroll asked if it would be possible to have riders who travel on this section of trail pay an extra \$2 for their registration fees to pave areas with root damages. He thought it might be creative to have a user fee to go towards trail maintenance. He also asked if FHCRH could fund the paving project.

Mr. Carroll noted that there would be a lot of these root projects, or minor trail restoration projects, along the State Trail in the future. It will be important to think about how these maintenance projects get funded in the future.

Mr. Olson also noted that he had patched up a lot of the HCRH roadway on the west end, especially in areas that were failing or had large potholes. He has had a few complaints from the cycling community about the repaving project from Troutdale and Springdale. The repaving created a lip on the roadway, near the edge of the roadway, and he has received complaints from various cycling groups. Mr. Brannan said that the Portland Wheelman were not pleased about this section of roadway due to the change in the pavement and the creation of the lip.

Mr. Olson also said that they had begun to mow in the Gorge. ODOT mows the ROW once or twice a year. Magnus Bernhardt asked what the purpose of mowing was. Mr. Olson replied that it was for fire control and to keep the roadway clear. Mr. Olson said that he had recently reviewed the Lewis and Clark State Park plans and that he would submit comments soon as he had concerns about the vegetation in the plan.

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Ms. McClay shared that OPRD had received funding to get a maintenance crew on the Historic Highway State Trail from Cascade Locks to Moffett Creek to cut back vegetation and conduct viewshed management. Ms. McClay shared that Andy Wells resigned in May and OPRD is currently seeking two new rangers – one for the HCRH State Trail and one for Viento. She added that Mark Stevenson is the Gorge manager west of Cascade Locks while Ms. McClay manages the Gorge area to the east of Cascade Locks. Ms. McClay has also been serving on the review committee for the Gorge sustainable recreation plan. Dennis Comfort added that Tim Wood and Jason Tell had recently met to discuss the maintenance agreement.

US Forest Service

Ms. Stallman shared that the usual USFS contact, Christine Plourde, was currently on a rotational position in Boise Idaho for six months.

Western Federal Lands Highway Division

Ms. Stallman shared that the consultant teams (CH2M Hill and Walker Macy) were putting together preliminary engineering plans, landscape designs and working on the environmental elements. Mr. Stewart attended these meetings to provide feedback and input.

Committee Round Table

Marc Berry shared that it was possible to touch the Columbia River at Rock Creek.

Art Carroll said that when the viewshed management plan was first developed it was focused on the west end. Five sites had been completed and seven were left to complete. He asked what the project timeline would be to finish the final seven projects. He also asked if there were possibilities to add sites to the viewshed management plan and if the inventory would also include sites on the eastern edge of the Gorge. He asked who was managing the inventory of the viewsheds. Ms. Stallman replied that Sandra Koike, who developed the initial viewshed management plan, is still working at ODOT and is available to work on the project. Mr. Carroll requested that viewsheds be placed on the September HCRH AC agenda.

Mr. Carroll asked if the Historic Highway had an ‘adopt a highway’ program. Mr. Olson replied that there was an adopt-a-highway program available for the Historic Highway.

There are signs along the Historic Highway that encourage people to adopt segments and keep them clean. The signs say 'this adoption area is available' and provide members of the public with a phone number. There has not been a lot of interest in adopting a segment of Historic Highway. Ms. Stallman suggested that the HCRH AC adopt a section of highway. Mr. Olson said that there was a 2 mile section that needed to be adopted. Mr. Carroll liked the idea and believed the HCRH AC should adopt the highway and clean up trash two to three times a year along this adopted segment of highway. He also wondered if any cycling groups would be interested in adopting different segments along the Historic Highway.

Wayne Stewart shared that he continued to hope that in the future there could be a finalized maintenance agreement between OPRD, ODOT and USFS. This continues to be unresolved.

Ernie Drapela shared that he had recently climbed the Syncline and Stacker Hills across from The Dalles. The Maryhill Loops will be the scene of an international downhill skateboarding competition June 26 – 28. He also recently traveled to Lewiston Idaho and spotted big horn sheep along the way! Mr. Igo added that he had heard that the sheep heard had started with 24 sheep and had grown in size so that they were now over 100 sheep large!

Judy Davis shared that she was interested to see the new installation of Historic Highway Route 30 signs between Mosier and The Dalles.

Planning the Next Meeting Date:

The committee agreed to meet again on Tuesday, September 24th at the Bonneville Dam Auditorium.