

HIGHWAY 138E
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #1

November 17, 2009, 6 – 8 p.m.

Roseburg Public Safety Center, South Umpqua Room, 700 SE Douglas Avenue

MEETING SUMMARY

Members in attendance:

Joyce Bartkus, Chestnut/Walnut
Neighborhood
Georgia Stiles, Developer
Jim Kent, Public Works Commission
John McDonald, Planning Commission
Art Adams, Trucking/Freight
Greg Rietmann, Diamond Lake Business
owner
Lance Colley, Roseburg School District
Dan Baglien, Economic Development
Commission
Brett White, Downtown Business Owner

Members absent:

Gary Crowe, Chamber of Commerce
Seth Buechley, Laurelwood Neighborhood

Alison Eggers, Benson Neighborhood

Resource members:

Brian Davis, Community Development
Director
Marion Thompson, City of Roseburg
John Raasch, ODOT
Elizabeth Stacey, ODOT

Consultant team:

Jennifer Danzinger, DEA
Kevin O’Hara, DEA
John Wiebke, DEA
Mike Hohbach, DEA
Adrienne DeDona, JLA
Doug Zenn, JLA

Meeting Goals:

- Discuss and approve group roles, responsibilities and protocols
- Review NEPA process, project purpose and need
- Review project goals and objectives
- Review project alternatives from previous planning study
- Discuss next steps, including open house and meeting schedule

Welcome:

Marion Thompson welcomed the group, explained the purpose of the project and initiated a round of introductions. Marion explained that the project duration would be approximately 18 to 24 months. She said that the role of the CAC would be to serve as an information resource to the groups they represent. Marion added that the committee would be tied to the Roseburg Planning Commission. John McDonald will serve as a liaison to the Planning Commission for the project.

Adrienne DeDona reviewed the meeting agenda.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Overview:

Kevin O'Hara explained that the project is a follow up to the Highway 138 Corridor Solutions Planning Study that developed alternatives to address congestion in downtown Roseburg. He said that all of the alternatives developed during the Corridor Solutions Study require National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance due to their size and complexity. Kevin said that any preferred alternative developed must be consistent with the City's Transportation System Plan (TSP) before the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will approve it.

Georgia Stiles asked if it was possible to fast track the process. Kevin replied that the project required a significant amount of technical analysis and public input in order to narrow the alternatives.

Kevin reviewed the project study area and explained that it could change since there are currently no alternatives being considered in the area to the north.

Kevin summarized the NEPA study process requirements:

- Evaluation of a no-build scenario
- Review of social and environmental impacts
- Extensive public process, including stakeholder committees, open houses and a formal public hearing. Kevin explained that the public involvement role is critical because FHWA wants to know how the project might impact the community. The PDT and CAC play a role in seeking public input in order to help make sound decisions.
- Evaluation of DOT Act Section 4(f) resource impacts. 4(f) resources are publicly or privately owned historic sites, publicly owned parks and recreational areas, and publicly owned wildlife refuges. Kevin explained that Roseburg has at least two parks and several historic/cultural districts and resources and that Section 4(f) requires evaluating options for avoiding or mitigating impacts to these resources.

Kevin said that the Environmental Assessment (EA) process will hopefully end with a *Finding of No Significant Impact* (FONSI). Following the EA process, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will issue a FONSI or require the preparation of an EIS.

Kevin reviewed the decision-making chart and reiterated that the final decision would be made by FHWA. The CAC will provide advice and communicate concerns to the PDT for recommendation to FHWA. Kevin explained that the Roseburg City Council may have to amend the TSP to include the preferred alternative before a FONSI could be issued. He said that they didn't believe the alternatives would require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); therefore this process is an EA.

Kevin reviewed the project schedule:

- November 2009: project initiation – CAC and PDT meetings
- January/February 2010: open house to reintroduce the project to the public. This will provide the public with the opportunity to suggest additional projects to carry forward to 10% design.
- Spring/Summer 2010: 10% design of alternatives, CAC and PDT meetings, 2nd public open house
- Summer/Fall 2010: narrow alternatives to 2 or 3 and forward to 20% design
- Fall 2010: CAC and PDT meetings, 3rd open house
- Spring 2011: technical reports, draft EA
- Summer/Fall 2011: issue draft EA for comment, CAC and PDT meetings, formal public hearing
- Winter 2011: respond to public comment
- Winter 2011/Spring 2012: FHWA Decision

Lance Colley asked if previous studies, such as archaeology, could be used rather than having new studies done in the same area. Kevin confirmed that existing available information would be used.

Lance asked if there was an option to recommend less than eight alternatives get carried forward to 10% design. Kevin replied that there was an opportunity to narrow the alternatives before proceeding to 10% design.

Purpose and Need:

Kevin explained that the NEPA process requires the development of a purpose and need statement. The purpose and need will be a key factor in determining what alternatives advance in the study process. He reviewed the project purpose and need and explained that the focus is resolving a transportation issue. Kevin noted that the purpose and need can be refined as the project moves forward. He also explained that the alternatives included in the EA must meet this purpose and need.

Kevin summarized the project purpose and need as follows: (a complete version is included in tab 4 of the project binder): *The project purpose is to address mobility, safety, connectivity, and multi-modal needs on Highway 138 between I-5 Exit 124 and Fulton Street.*

The project needs are summarized as follows:

1. *Address congestion downtown and along Stephens Street*
2. *Improve east-west travel across the railroad tracks as they shut down when trains pass through the at-grade crossings,*
3. *Address impacts to freight movement from some of the tight turning curb radii,*
4. *Bridge existing gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian transportation system.*

Lance asked if the CAC could recommend changes to the purpose and need statement. Kevin replied that this could be done, but the purpose and need is limited to solving a transportation issue by FHWA.

Group Protocols:

Doug Zenn reviewed proposed group operating protocols for meeting and decision-making procedures, including:

- The group will work toward consensus on decisions in order to move the process forward (i.e. the facilitator will ask to see head nods from the group before moving on). Doug explained that the group could carry forward 10 individual recommendations to the PDT, however a unanimous voice would be more powerful and would be of more value.
- Materials should be reviewed ahead of time, especially the agenda in case something needs to be added.
- Public comment will be allowed at the end of each meeting for no more than 15 minutes. At the beginning of each meeting, the facilitator will ask the audience if there is anyone who would like to provide comment at the end of the meeting to gauge how much time is needed. Other opportunities for public comment will be available through open houses, individual CAC members, public comment and the City website.

Goals and Objectives:

Adrienne reviewed and summarized the goals and objectives as follows (a complete version is included in tab 4 of the project binder):

1. Improve circulation and more efficiently move traffic between I-5 and Diamond Lake Boulevard.
 - a. Meet design standards for projected travel demand and vehicle types
 - b. Minimize vehicle queues and traffic flow interruptions
 - c. Improve spacing between access points
2. Mitigate conflicts between rail and vehicular traffic and improve freight travel routes.
 - a. Resolve traffic blockages due to passing trains
 - b. Provide safe and efficient movement of freight traffic between Diamond Lake Boulevard and I-5.
3. Mitigate adverse impacts to natural and cultural resources.
 - a. South Umpqua River, Deer Creek, and associated flood plains.
 - b. Unstable sloped areas
 - c. Native species and their habitats
 - d. Aquatic resources
 - e. Provide storm water treatment and control
 - f. Archaeological, historic, and cultural resources
 - g. Section 4(f) and 6(f) resources. 6(f) resources are parks that have received special funding. Lincoln Park is identified as a 6(f) resource.
4. Develop a solution that at least preserves local efforts to expand economic development.
 - a. Serve projected regional growth expansion
 - b. Maintain and enhance access to downtown
 - c. Improve long-distance travel
5. Minimize the community impacts and maintain livability of surrounding neighborhoods.
 - a. Preserve historic neighborhoods such as Laurelwood.

- b. Avoid disproportionate impacts to low-income and minority populations.
- c. Minimize adverse impacts to existing residences and businesses.

The group discussed removing the goals that are obligated by law, or including them as a general statement rather than a goal of the project. This will be further discussed at an upcoming meeting.

John McDonald requested adding a stronger statement such as 'promoting' economic development in goal 4 rather than 'at least preserving' existing economic development efforts.

Project Alternatives:

John Wiebke reviewed the various project alternatives, including the original 19 alternatives evaluated during the Corridor Solutions Study. The 19 alternatives explored were narrowed to three during the study, however this project will take a step back to review eight of the project alternatives that meet purpose and need. The following eight alternatives will be the starting point for this project (for detailed information see the PowerPoint presentation prepared for the committee meetings):

- 1a) Modified no-build alternative. Minor enhancements to the existing corridor.
- 2a) Widens Washington Avenue to a 4 lane roadway and Oak becomes a secondary, 2 lane roadway.
- 2c) The same as 2a, but uses Rose instead of Stephens as a major connector. This would impact the Public Safety Center.
- 3a) Involves a new bridge north to Stephens. The intersections would be close together and involve a large footprint. This option vacates Washington Avenue Bridge.
- 3d) Involves elevating the railroad tracks over the center of Roseburg. This idea came from the railroad. It would have to start as far back as Mill-Pine neighborhood and it would be very expensive.
- 4a) Involves a new bridge and shifting alignment to the north. It would need 30 feet of clearance for the above grade crossings. The landing areas needed for this alternative would need to be considered.
- 6a) An east/west couplet that involves Stephens as a one-way street and Winchester as a one-way street.
- 6b) An east/west couplet similar to 6a, but includes a new bridge to Stephens.

John Wiebke noted that alternative 1a could be folded into both 6a and 6b.

Input about all eight alternatives would be collected from the public at an upcoming open house. The public will also be encouraged to provide any other suggested alternatives.

Next Steps:

Adrienne explained that the next step in the process is holding an open house to reintroduce the project to the public. She said that open house would be an informal, drop-in style format with display boards and other background information on the project and the eight alternatives just presented to the CAC.

Adrienne asked for input regarding when to hold the open house. The group suggested mid-January for the open house. Adrienne said that the next committee meeting would take place after the open house sometime in late January or February. The committees will be notified by e-mail of the open house and upcoming meeting date.

Adrienne added that the meeting summary, PowerPoint presentation and a link to the previous Corridor Solutions Study will be e-mailed to the CAC following the meeting and will be posted on the City's project web page once it's up and running.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:05 p.m.