



## Southwest Corridor Plan Steering Committee

Monday, June 9, 2014

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Metro Regional Center

### Committee Members Present

Craig Dirksen, Co-chair

Bob Stacey, Co-chair

John Cook

Steve Novick

Lou Ogden

Denny Doyle

Gery Schirado

Al Reu

Roy Rogers

Neil McFarlane

Jason Tell

Metro Council

Metro Council

City of Tigard

City of Portland

City of Tualatin

City of Beaverton

City of Durham

City of King City

Washington County

TriMet

ODOT

### Committee Members Absent

Bill Middleton

City of Sherwood

### Metro Staff

Malu Wilkinson, Elissa Gertler, Juan Carlos Ocaña-Chíu, Matt Bihn, Michaela Skiles, Francesca Patricolo, Alan Gunn, Anthony Buczek, Tim Collins, Jamie Snook, Camille Tisler

## **1.0 Welcome and introductions**

Co-chair Stacey welcomed the committee members and audience to the meeting and invited the committee members to introduce themselves. He explained that a great deal of interest has been expressed in the project, and the written comments received up to June 6, are available in Appendix A: Public Involvement Report and are reflected in the proposed changes to the initial recommendation. Additionally, he noted that there would be several public testimonies given at the meeting.

Co-chair Stacey further explained that the committee will not be discussing what to build, but will be considering which options and modes should be studied in the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS).

## **2.0 Consideration of the Steering Committee meeting summary from May 12, 2014**

Co-chair Stacey asked the committee to consider the meeting summary from the May 12, 2014 Southwest Corridor Plan Steering Committee meeting. Mayor Schirado moved to accept the summary without revisions, and Councilor Reu seconded the motion. The meeting summary was accepted unanimously.

## **3.0 Suggested changes to the discussion draft**

Co-chair Stacey introduced Mr. Matt Bihn, who outlined the suggested changes to the discussion draft. He reviewed the progress that was made in narrowing the project and pointed out the options that were already removed. He explained that after the staff recommendation was submitted, there was a great deal of public and staff comment. The memo broke down recommended changes into three categories:

- PTL recommended changes to discussion draft recommendation
- PTL recommended further technical analysis prior to initiating DEIS
- PTL recommended questions to address during Scoping

Mr. Bihn then outlined the proposed changes in each category and the reasoning behind each recommendation.

Co-chair Dirksen brought to the committee's attention an article recently released which led to a misinformed discussion about where lanes would be taken from Barbur Blvd. He asked that Mr. Bihn outline the places where lanes could potentially be taken and the technical analysis behind those designs. Co-chair Dirksen further noted that this would be further considered in the DEIS.

Per Commissioner Novick's inquiry about preliminary estimates for the tunnels, Mr. Bihn explained that costs were estimated in future dollars at one billion dollars for the short tunnel and two billion dollars for the medium tunnel.

#### **4.0 Public Comment**

Mr. Don Baack expressed the Hillsdale neighborhood's commitment to the alternative project on SW Slavin Rd, which would give bicyclists and pedestrians an option away from Barbur. He also explained the neighborhood does not support the east part of the red electric project, and feels that Slavin Rd. would be a more effective project. He noted that the neighborhood supports the Hillsdale Station, whether it is served by a BRT cut and cover tunnel or by the medium tunnel. Mr. Baack also suggested that the option adjacent to the freeway and Barbur receive further study, so any outcry from the Barbur business community will not bring the project to a halt.

Mr. Michael Harrison, of OHSU, noted that OHSU has not developed a strong position on the mode or alignment, but recognize that there are constraints due to their location. He explained that OHSU is excited that the medium tunnel will remain on the table, and expressed appreciation for the committee's and staff's work.

Mr. Robert Hamilton hoped that the medium tunnel, which would serve Hillsdale, would receive further study, in order to bring new businesses to Hillsdale and add vitality to the town center. He read a fictional story which illustrated how new transit in the corridor could affect everyday lives. (Written comments available as an attachment to the record)

Mr. Arnold Panitch hoped that the route would serve Hillsdale. He noted the need to serve Wilson High School, which has the most highly utilized bus stop in the corridor, and to further potential development in the corridor.

Mr. Roger Averbeck reminded the committee that one of the project's goals is to support local land use visions. He noted that several communities in SW Portland already have local plans, but more outreach and analysis must be done. He expressed hope that Barbur Blvd will eventually have complete bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Per Commissioner Novicks inquiry, Mr. Averbeck explained that the pros and cons found in the analysis need to be included in materials distributed.

Ms. Marianne Fitzgerald, former President of SWNI, outlined the goals and objectives SWNI has for this project including: access to jobs, services, and education, and increased livability. She noted that in the letter sent to the committee previously, SWNI did not take a stance on station location, but did make recommendations on multimodal projects. She hoped that the project will tie in to the community and will not impede access. Ms. Fitzgerald also thanked the Portland working group for the forum they provide to residents.

Mr. Rick Seifert noted the importance of serving civic institutions in the Hillsdale town center. He also hoped that the project could provide more support to the less privileged residents in Hillsdale who rely on transit. Mr. Seifert expressed the belief that the medium tunnel is the best option for serving this area. (Written comments available as an attachment to the record)

Mr. Floyd Smith, of AORTA, expressed support for the long, deep tunnel, which will link South Waterfront to PCC Sylvania all the way to Tigard. He expressed the belief that this option would serve the necessary stations most effectively.

Mr. Anton Vetterlein, of the Homestead Neighborhood Association, noted that the Homestead neighborhood borders Barbur and Terwilliger as well as OHSU and the VA hospital. He expressed the neighborhoods support for the medium tunnel, which they believe would reduce congestion on Barbur Blvd. He noted that any loss of auto capacity on Barbur is unacceptable to the association. He asked that OHSU be directly served, auto capacity be maintained on Barbur, and bike buffers be added to Barbur.

Mr. Gerald Fox expressed his belief that high capacity transit must serve major trip generators, in particular OHSU and PCC Sylvania. He suggested that the project team continue to analyze a potential direct connection between the downtown transit mall and OHSU. He also expressed frustration that the southern entrance to Tualatin was dropped prematurely, and urged staff to reconsider. (Written comments available as an attachment to the record)

Mr. Jim Howell, of AORTA, urged the committee to reconsider the tunnel options, particularly the long tunnel. He asked that the cost be considered in perspective with the long term benefits of viable transit alternatives for I-5 commuters.

## **5.0 Recommendation for further study**

Co-chair Stacey overviewed the decision before the committee, noting that any HCT project would be buttressed by increased local service and multimodal and green projects. He explained that the recommendation would only identify those options and alternatives that should be studied further. Co-chair Stacey also pointed out the need to discuss funding with the public and to explore investing creatively to stretch a limited number of dollars, noting the need for more public involvement in coming months, not less.

Co-chair Dirksen impressed on the committee the need to reduce the number of options to a manageable amount. Mayor Doyle noted that he was comfortable with the changes outlined in the memo, which he said shows staff's responsiveness to new information and public comment.

Mr. McFarlane acknowledged the work that was done, but expressed concern about the current project schedule being too assertive. He noted that he was not concerned about the recommendation itself, just the schedule moving forward. He suggested that the project take a flexible period of time prior to entering the DEIS to further engage the public and conduct more technical analysis in order to narrow the list of alternatives that enter the DEIS. He pointed out the need for further dialogue with the community in order to garner the support that would be needed for future funding. Commissioner Novick added his concerns about finding potential community investments to match federal funds and the need to have that conversation prior to entering the DEIS.

Mr. Tell also asked that time be given to the project partners to reconcile the high level of interest and ideas surrounding the project, with what would be technically and financially feasible. He also noted that ODOT remained committed to funding the process, whether the next step is the DEIS or a focused refinement period. Mayor Cook asked for clarification on the function of the scoping process, noting that he was under the impression the initial DEIS phase would allow the committee to reconcile the assortment of ideas and the technical information.

Mayor Ogden noted that he shared Mr. McFarlane's concerns about the schedule, and explained that he still needed clarification on how much flexibility would be built into the process once the project entered the DEIS.

Co-chair Dirksen clarified that during the scoping phase the project would be further narrowed and options that were discarded earlier in the process could be brought back, but that it would be more expensive. Ms. Wilkinson further clarified that during scoping, staff could continue to do technical analysis and facilitate more public comment. Co-chair Dirksen also expressed concern about how an interim process would be funded, as project partners had committed funds for the DEIS process, but not for an additional period of focused refinement. Commissioner Rogers stated similar concerns regarding the budget and how this new period would affect needed contributions from project partners.

Mayor Ogden asked for further explanation of the time constraints for each step of the process. He asked if it would be possible to work without a date certain for the conclusion of the focused refinement period. Co-chair Dirksen responded that the process could not be open ended or it would not move forward efficiently. Mayor Ogden also noted that as long as the funds would be managed well, he saw no reason not to use the funds committed to the DEIS for the preliminary process.

Committee members also discussed the amount of public support there was for a tunnel, which would primarily be in Multnomah County, and the fact that Multnomah County is no longer a participating partner.

Co-chair Dirksen presented several options to the committee on how to proceed.

1. Perform additional scoping after entering the DEIS, after a few months, choose which alignments move forward
2. Take a 60 day pause with additional stakeholder involvement, enter NEPA later this summer, make decision in November following the scoping process
3. Take a longer pause, enter the NEPA process in November, and make a decision after scoping in January.

Mr. McFarlane made a motion to accept the third option and was seconded by Mayor Doyle.

Mr. McFarlane suggested that the notes from the meeting be used to craft several high level questions that need to be answered prior to November. Additionally, he noted that he was accepting staff recommendations outlined in the recommendation document, but recognized that it was a pre-NEPA flexible analysis and wanted to leave the door open to other options and further analysis and narrowing. Committee members discussed how this would or would not allow the tunnel options to move forward.

Commissioner Rogers inquired about the extended timeline's effect on needed contributions from jurisdictions. Ms. Gertler noted that she did not think there would be an additional ask, but staff would put together a scope of work with a budget.

Ms. Wilkinson and Ms. Gertler outlined the concerns of the committee and asked if the memo in the meeting materials effectively laid out some of those concerns.

At this point, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Tom Mills, of TriMet, explained that the Southwest Service Enhancement Plan could help the project narrow what would move into the DEIS for scoping.

At this point, Co-chair Stacey asked that the committee dispense with the final two agenda items in order to adjourn the meeting on time.

## **9.0 Adjourn**

Co-chair Stacey adjourned the meeting at 11:02 a.m.

Meeting summary respectfully submitted by:

<SIGN HERE FOR FINAL VERSION>

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Camille Freestone

Attachments to the Record:

Item	Type	Document Date	Description	Document Number
1	Agenda	06/09/14	June meeting agenda	060914swcpssc-01
2	Summary	05/12/14	5/12/14 meeting summary	060914swcpssc-02
3	Memo	06/02/14	Changes to draft recommendation	060914swcpssc-03
4	Document	06/02/14	Recommendations summary	060914swcpssc-04
5	Document	06/02/14	Discussion draft recommendations	060914swcpssc-05
6	Comment	06/06/14	Additional public comment: Dave Cassinelli	060914swcpssc-06
7	Comment	06/09/14	Public comment: Gerald Fox	060914swcpssc-07
8	Comment	06/09/14	Public comment: Rick Seifert	060914swcpssc-08
9	Comment	06/09/14	Public comment: Robert Hamilton	060914swcpssc-09