

# Meeting Minutes

Project: US26: Outer Powell Transportation Safety Project (OPTSP)

Subject: Community Advisory Group Meeting #1

Date: Wednesday, December 03, 2014

Location: Human Solutions Community Room, 12350 SE Powell Blvd.

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Meeting started at 5:35 p.m.

1. The meeting began with Committee Advisory Group introductions.
  - Joan Brown-Kline, the meeting facilitator, asked each person to state their name, affiliation (if they were representing any group), and one thing they would like to see changed along Outer Powell Blvd. from I-205 to the Gresham/Portland city limit:
    - Paul Grosjean, Pleasant Valley Neighborhood Association – Improved safety
    - Noel Mickelberry, Oregon Walks – Safer pedestrian crossings
    - Carol Fenstermacher, Community Engagement Coordinator for Centennial School District – Safe walking for students
    - Dan McCue, Communication Director for David Douglas School District – Getting kids to and from school safely
    - Barry Bahmanyar, Program Manager for Impact Northwest Senior Program – Safer crossings for seniors
    - Joe Little, Corridor Property Owner (112th and Powell) – Safety for pedestrians and turning lanes
    - Tom Barnes, Powellhurst-Gilbert Neighborhood Association – Continued implementation of the Outer Powell Conceptual Design Plan, and all around safety along the corridor for pedestrians
    - Pastor Jennifer Beil, Pastor at St. Timothy Church – Concurs with her fellow group members and would like to see the same things changed along the corridor
    - Pamela Benoit, Human Solutions – Safe crossings
    - Teresa Soto, Corridor Resident and OPAL representative – No more pedestrian deaths
    - Kem Marks, Corridor Resident and East Portland Action Plan representative – Sidewalks and lower speed limits
    - Jean Ky, Corridor Resident – Safe crossings and sidewalks
    - Djimet Dogo, Corridor Resident and Executive Director at Africa House – Powell Boulevard to be wider
    - Cora Potter, Lents Neighborhood Association and Ride Connection – Safer crossings especially for streets along the 120<sup>th</sup> section of the corridor
  - The Project Team introduced themselves:
    - Susan Hanson, ODOT Public Outreach
    - Mike Mason, ODOT Project Manager
    - Shelli Romero, ODOT Strategic Advisor



- Alan Snook, ODOT Major Projects Unit Manager
- Andy Johnson, HDR Project Manager
- Cassie Davis, HDR Project Assistant
- Alex Cousins, HDR Public Involvement Manager
- Additional Attendees:
  - April Bertelsen, Portland Bureau of Transportation and Agency Working Group for this project – Safety, and community interests to be represented

2. ODOT Project Manager Mike Mason provided background information and history related to the project:

- This project follows the 2013 Outer Powell Boulevard Conceptual Design Plan, a City of Portland-led project that ODOT participated in. The current project will refine the Outer Powell Conceptual Design Plan in order to arrive at a preferred design alternative for implementation. In addition, this project will identify impacts from the preferred alternative and complete an Environmental Assessment. The focus of this planning effort is on safety.
- Project limits extend along SE Powell Boulevard from SE 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the Portland/Gresham city limits, approximately SE 174<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- Outer Powell experiences a high volume of vehicle collisions – approximately 65 percent are from rear-end collisions and 25 percent from turning movements.
- ODOT's Safety Priority Index System (SPIS, which ranks locations by the number and severity of crashes) rated Powell Boulevard at 122<sup>nd</sup> Avenue as the number one worst intersection in the state of Oregon for severity and number of crashes in 2012.
- Funding for the last phase of this project with City of Portland came from a transportation grant program.
- This project picks up from where the concept plan left off.
- ODOT will prepare an Environmental Assessment to find out what the environmental impacts will be for this project. The Environmental Assessment will be submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for their determination on the significance of the identified impacts.
- In general, the Outer Powell concept design calls for one lane in each direction, a center turn lane for most of the corridor, sidewalks along both sides of the street, and a bike lane going both directions. In order to accommodate this design the roadway footprint will have to be widened, which will require Right of Way acquisition and property impacts.
- Today the approximate width of the corridor is 56 feet and the concept plan seeks to widen to 76 feet. The entire length of the corridor will be evaluated in order to determine the exact widths necessary for all road sections along Outer Powell Boulevard.
- Part of the evaluation includes determining potential trade-offs related to design. The intent is to minimize the need to acquire Right of Way while still arriving at a preferred design alternative.
- Paul Grosjean asked if Powell will ever be a higher capacity corridor (i.e. more driving lanes for vehicles) and whether the concept plan recommendation would be locking the corridor in at three lanes. A decade ago he worked on the Pleasant Valley Concept Plan and they were



- told one of the outlets (SE 162<sup>nd</sup>) would be for higher capacity, i.e. five lanes rather than three lanes.
- Mike Mason answered that the concept design plan looked at both the five-lane cross section and the three-lane cross section. However stakeholders decided that the three-lane concept was appropriate for the near term. At this point, ODOT is not looking to build five lanes, but rather is seeking a three-lane solution through the entire project corridor. In the longer term, as conditions warrant, the Outer Powell Conceptual Design Plan called for a four-lane cross-section from SE 162<sup>nd</sup> Ave to Gresham.
  - The Project Team will be looking closely into the potential impacts brought forth by this project. The impacts will be packaged together in a report that will be reviewed by FHWA as part of an Environmental Assessment.
  - Kem Marks asked if the team will be looking into positive environmental impacts.
    - Mike Mason stated, yes, the team will be reviewing and documenting the pros and cons of the project.
  - The Environmental Assessment process compares the preferred design alternative improvements to the No-Build alternative, or status quo (if no changes were made at all).
  - Kem Marks asked if the team will be looking into environmental impacts that affect asthma rates.
    - Project Team responded that while environmental impacts related to air would indeed be taken into account, the extent of air impacts on asthma rates is not identified in the assessment.
  - The Project Team noted the importance of environmental justice within this project. The considerations of minority, low income, seniors, transit-dependent, and non-English speaking groups is an important aspect of this project. Opinions and feedback from the following community groups, among others, are being actively sought and will be taken into account as part of the environmental assessment:
    - Chinese-speaking
    - Spanish-speaking
    - Vietnamese-speaking
    - Russian-speaking
    - Recent immigrants
    - Faith-based organizations
    - People with disabilities
    - Low-income populations
    - Elderly population
  - The Outer Powell Transportation Safety Project is one of ODOT's highest priority projects and this Community Advisory Group is an important aspect of planning to ensure the interests of the Outer Powell community are represented in the preferred alternative.
  - Jean Ky expressed concern about the feasibility of a 76-foot corridor in a constrained right-of-way. She also expressed concern for people's safety along the corridor between now and the time a refined Outer Powell is constructed.



3. Joan Brown-Kline asked that the Community Advisory Group and the Project Team read through the Community Advisory Group Charter together. The Charter addresses the following: committee purpose, committee outcomes, membership selection, facilitation, duration and number/frequency of meetings, committee decision-making, ground rules, roles and responsibilities, process, and communication protocol. The group reviewed and discussed any preferred revisions.
- Mike Mason clarified the project ends at the Portland-Gresham city line; although the project materials say SE 174th, it is closer to SE 176<sup>th</sup>, which doesn't intersect Powell Boulevard like SE 174<sup>th</sup> Ave does.
  - The Community Advisory Group will be putting together recommendations to be presented to the Decision Committee.
  - There will be a designated Community Advisory Group member chosen as Chair to be a voting member of the Decision Committee.
  - Mike Mason noted there is also an Agency Working Group for this project that will be providing information to the Community Advisory Group on technical design elements for consideration.
  - **Action:** Add 'seniors' and 'people with disabilities' under the Membership Selection section.
  - Committee Decision Making – Joan introduced red/yellow/green cards each member will receive as tools to aid in decision making.
  - Tom Barnes asked how the committee will have conversations without talking over one another and the method for giving people the right to speak.
    - **Decision:** The committee decided to either use one of Joan's red/yellow/green cards to signify desire to speak, or by use of name plates by standing them up on their sides as a signal to speak.
  - **Decision:** The group expressed a desire to give equal amount of time to project solutions in addition to project concerns.
  - **Action:** Project team to bring name tents to future Community Advisory Group meetings.
  - **Action:** Project Team to have a video of the corridor available for next meeting.
  - Community Advisory Group asked how soon they will get agendas and minutes prior to subsequent meetings.
    - Project Team responded typically one week in advance of the meeting.
  - Community Advisory Group asked how often the Decision Committee meets.
    - Project Team said approximately every 3-4 months, which is slightly less frequently than this committee.
  - Community Advisory Group asked if the Decision Committee meetings will be held along the corridor.
    - Project Team responded yes, that is the intent.
  - Community Advisory Group expressed concern about not being a part of the first Decision Committee meeting being held the following week.
    - Project Team noted the first Decision Committee meeting will be similar to this one, giving general project background, schedule and a Charter for that group. No decisions will be made at the first Decision Committee meeting. The Community Advisory Group Chair will be selected at their second meeting and then will attend



subsequent Decision Committee meetings. That person will be briefed on details and discussions from the first Decision Committee meeting to keep them informed and caught up before the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

- Communications and media protocols were reviewed.
- **Action:** Updated charter will be finalized and provided at the next CAG meeting.

#### 4. Project Schedule

- Next project milestone is March 2015, when design refinement and a preferred alternative will be advanced into an Environmental Assessment.
- In March we will be looking for recommendations for what is the right path forward for a refined design.
- Team will be looking for a 'Practical Design' one that minimizes impacts to the corridor.
- Short-term schedule includes tasks like safety and traffic analysis, and documenting existing conditions.
- A Design Charrette will be conducted early next year. This is intended to bring various people from the community together to look at different pieces of the corridor and reflect upon how things look and feel to the average user. This exercise will draw upon land use elements as they relate to the roadway. Participants will be encouraged to draw what they feel and see. The Community Advisory Group will be noticed of this meeting beforehand and members are encouraged to attend.
- First project Open House will be on Tuesday, Dec. 9, from 6-8pm at Centennial High School. The public will be encouraged to interact with project staff and maps to express areas of interest and concern.
- Teresa Soto expressed the importance of having a connection with the community and is very pleased with Joan's and the Project Team's efforts to connect with the community.
- Tom Barnes asked about whether the Open House will be video taped.
  - Project Team responded that while the entirety of the open house will not be video taped there will be a video station for the public for their concerns to be heard. This footage will be included in a project video that will be posted to the website.
- Tom Barnes wanted to make sure people who do not have access and/or knowledge of online communications will still have an opportunity to get information and express themselves. The Project Team intends to solicit community participation in a variety of ways, both in-person and electronically.
- There will also be an online virtual open house available in March.

#### 5. Nominating a Committee Chair

- Community Advisory Group was asked if there are any individuals specifically NOT interested in serving as the Decision Committee Chair for the Community Advisory Group.
  - The following individuals raised their hands: Teresa Soto, Djimet Dogo, Jean Ky, Dan McCue and Carol Fenstermacher.
- The Project Team was asked when the next Decision Committee meeting will be scheduled.
  - Project Team responded it is expected to be sometime in March, but the exact date is undetermined at this time.



- The committee talked about the potential to have a Co-Chair, but it was undecided at this time, a single Chair is more practical and efficient. Names for the Chair position will be collected through December and voted on at the second meeting.

#### 6. Closing Remarks

- The Community Advisory Group was asked how understandable and readable the project materials were and if there are ways the team could improve.
  - Community Advisory Group stated materials were very readable and clear.
- Alex Cousins noted there will be a lot of opportunities to get involved including Open House events and Design Charrettes. Community Advisory Group members are urged to invite and encourage friends, family and colleagues to get involved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.