

# Meeting Minutes

Project: US 26: Outer Powell Transportation Safety Project (OPTSP)

Subject: Community Advisory Group Meeting #4

Date: Monday, June 08, 2015

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

---

Food was served at 5:30 p.m.; meeting started at 6:00 p.m.

1. Introductions – Alex Cousins with HDR started the meeting with a warm welcome, and Community Advisory Group and Project Team introductions. Joan Brown-Kline, the group’s usual facilitator, is under the weather and Alex is filling in for her. Alex announced that the committee has a new member, Nicole Naegeli, and asked her to start off the introductions.

Community Advisory Group attendees:

- Nicole Naegeli stated she lives off SE 127th and Powell, and has lived along the corridor for over 10+ years. She sees a lot of collisions and near-miss accidents. Feels danger when she drives along the corridor on a daily basis. Will not walk along the corridor due to the risk of being a pedestrian and a driver.
- Jean Ky, Powell Plaza retirement community resident
- Cammy Pierson, property and business owner of Curtis Trailers
- Paul Grosjean, Community Advisory Group Co-Chair, and Pleasant Valley Neighborhood Association Vice Chair
- Teresa Soto, East Portland Action Plan (EPAP), and OPAL committee member
- Kem Marks, Powell resident and EPAP representative
- Tom Barnes, Powellhurst-Gilbert Neighborhood Association Chair
- Joe Little, property and business owner along Powell Blvd.
- Djimet Dogo, Powell Blvd. home owner, and Africa House Executive Director
- Cora Potter, Lents Neighborhood Association Land Use / Planning Committee
- Noel Mickelberry, Oregon Walks Executive Director
- Jennifer Beil, Pastor at St. Timothy Church
- Elizabeth Quiroz, BTA Advocacy Director

Project Team attendees:

- Mike Mason, ODOT Project Manager
- Alan Snook, ODOT Major Projects Manager
- Andy Johnson, HDR Project Manager
- Alex Cousins, HDR Public Involvement Manager
- Cassie Davis, HDR Public Involvement Coordinator
- Susan Hanson, ODOT Community Affairs Manager
- Shelli Romero, ODOT Interim Area Manager



Public/Other attendees:

- David Hampsten, East Portland representative for the City of Portland (PBOT) Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Jim Chasse, EPAP Bike Co-Chair, and member of the committee from the initial Outer Powell Conceptual Design effort
- John Mulvey, pedestrian and bicyclist
- April Bertelsen, PBOT Transportation Planner
- Josh Anderson, videographer

Alex noted that Josh will be capturing video footage of the meeting for the project video to be posted on the project website. He also asked for anyone not consenting to being on camera to raise their hand.

- No committee members declined consent.

2. Community Outreach Activities – Alex reviewed the recent and upcoming outreach activities for the project.

- Business Canvassing – the project team has been talking to business owners along the corridor to keep them informed as the project progresses. Cassie said the team has performed three rounds of business canvassing and reached over 60 businesses. Half of the business owners have been non-English speaking or English as a second language, reflecting the diversity that exists along the project study area. In many cases where the project team was able to connect face to face with a business owner or staff attendant, they showed them the project footprint so they could see where the proposed future project would be constructed, opening the conversation to any questions or concerns related to their business. The team provided information related to the project, access management, project schedule, project website, and a point of contact to the various businesses they visited.
  - Teresa Keishi Soto asked how many businesses were not visited.
    - Cassie said they canvassed the entire length of the corridor and there were probably around ten businesses they were unable to stop at.
- Upcoming Outer Powell Bike Ride is planned for Saturday, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015 and open to the public. The event will convene at 10:00 a.m. at Ed Benedict Park and participants will ride a loop of the entire project area (from Ed Benedict Park to SE 174<sup>th</sup> and back). Participants will be encouraged to provide feedback about their experience as a bike rider along the project corridor. EPAP Bike Sub-Committee and ODOT will be co-sponsoring the event.
  - Alex noted that some of the project team members did a prep bike ride a couple weeks ago and it was enlightening to see road conditions from a bike rider's perspective. Also, while on their bike ride they met a man in a wheelchair going eastbound in a westbound bike lane. He said he intentionally rides that direction because it is safer for him to be able to see and react to vehicles that come into the lane.
- Project team members will be attending and staffing a table at the Movies in the Park event at Earl Boyles Park on Saturday, August 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 p.m.
- Tom Barnes announced that the Powellhurst-Gilbert Neighborhood Association promotes this event as part of their 'National Night Out' and is teaming with Portland Parks and Recreation to have music and activities at the event. He additionally welcomed ODOT and the project team to coordinate with them on this event and other summer activities.



- The team is planning to perform Bus Canvassing on the TriMet #9 bus route to solicit feedback from transit users along the corridor.
- Share your story – per a request from the project team at the last Community Advisory Group meeting, the committee was encouraged to share their stories and/or the stories of family and friends about their experiences on Powell Blvd. Teresa followed up with neighbors and friends to get testimonials. She provided a list of individuals and their stories to the project team. Teresa pointed out that one of the most poignant anecdotes was from a man that was struck by a car while crossing the street near SE 125<sup>th</sup>. He stressed the importance of installing a crosswalk with a flashing light at SE 125<sup>th</sup> Place.
  - Teresa said the people she spoke with stressed the basic need for sidewalks and crosswalks so they can get to and from bus stops safely.
  - Jean concurred that crosswalks are a priority for residents of Powell Plaza nearby.

### 3. Decision Committee Update – Andy/Jennifer/Paul

- Andy informed the group of updates that came out of the last Decision Committee:
  - Project Purpose was updated and modified to include, *“and supporting the creation of healthy and connected complete neighborhoods”*.
  - Project Need was updated to account for transit users.
  - API was widened at the SE 174<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersection to account for potential modifications to turning movements going eastbound.
  - Teresa asked who from the Decision Committee encouraged these modifications.
    - Andy said that City of Portland Commissioner Steve Novick encouraged the change to the Purpose statement, TriMet General Manager Neil McFarlane to the Need statement, and Councilor Craddick to the SE 174<sup>th</sup> intersection.
  - Tom asked what the phrase *“connected, complete neighborhoods”* was intended for.
    - April Bertelsen responded that it is from the City of Portland’s Comprehensive Plan and the language fits into the City’s vision for Portland.
- Jim Chasse said there was some information in the initial Outer Powell Conceptual Design Plan related to a dedication along Powell Blvd somewhere east of SE 122<sup>nd</sup> Ave.
  - **Action:** Team to investigate potential dedication noted in the Outer Powell Conceptual Design Plan.
- The Community Advisory Group Co-Chairs were asked to provide feedback from the Decision Committee meeting to the group.
  - Jennifer said the other Decision Committee members were very supportive of this project and showed great interest in what the Community Advisory Group thinks. Jennifer further noted that Neil McFarlane also stated his interest in addressing comfort and amenities with regard to bus stops.
  - Paul said he was impressed by how often the Decision Committee members asked what Jennifer and he thought and what they had been hearing from the Community Advisory Group.
  - Teresa asked if the Decision Committee members know who is a part of the Community Advisory Group.
    - The team confirmed that they are aware of who represents the Community Advisory Group.



4. Concept Design Updates – Andy said the team has been refining the design and proceeded to give the group an update on various components of the concept design.
  - Area of Potential Impact
    - Bus stations – TriMet has tentatively agreed to add four bus pullouts:
      - East of SE122<sup>nd</sup> Ave. in the eastbound direction because it is a high use bus station.
      - In the westbound direction at SE 174<sup>th</sup> Ave.
      - Westbound just passed SE 136<sup>th</sup> Ave.
      - Westbound just passed SE 112<sup>th</sup> Ave.
    - Noelle asked what the difference between a bus pullout and a bus queue is.
      - Andy clarified that bus queue refers to locations where a bus can stop and continue through an intersection by utilizing a right turn lane or other dedicated space to avoid traffic queues; a bus pullout is a bus stop facility that allows room for the bus to fully pull out of the vehicle lane.
    - PBOT, TriMet and ODOT had a meeting to discuss how bus stop locations, green ways and crossings could better be aligned. The committee can see these items called out on the Area of Potential Impact.
      - Jean noted that she has to walk down from SE 136<sup>th</sup> Ave. and there should be a crosswalk closer to SE 122<sup>nd</sup> Ave.
      - Andy noted that there are proposed crosswalks near SE 126<sup>th</sup> and SE 132<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Tom asked if lighting at the crosswalks has been considered.
      - Mike Mason said that street lighting has been discussed and illumination will be determined later in the design process. However, the environmental review will assume that lighting is provided along the corridor.
    - Teresa encouraged walking from bus stop to bus stop to better understand the distance a pedestrian has to travel from one to another. She also wants to make sure TriMet understands what it is like for a transit user from this perspective.
      - Kem agreed with Teresa and would like to know what the distance between bus stops is.
      - **Action:** Project team to look into distance between bus stops and report back to the group.
      - Paul noted that these are the kinds of things he and Jennifer can bring to the Decision Committee, pointing out the importance of transit dependent disabled and elders getting to and from bus stops safely.
      - Cora agreed and noted it would be good to consider residential population density with respect to bus stops locations.
      - Kem wanted to make sure the spacing of bus stops is up to standard.
    - Shelli stated there is an access to transit project planned for 2017 currently underway. She thought the phrase ‘access to transit’ could also imply better lighting, shelters, etc. and it would be good to get comments from this group to incorporate into that STIP Enhance-It partnership project for better addressing public needs.
  - Cross Sections – Andy reviewed the various cross sections proposed along the entire corridor.

- Elizabeth Quiroz asked why the project doesn't start at I-205.
  - Mike said they wanted to keep the project within the sidewalk facilities starting at SE 99<sup>th</sup>. During the conceptual design plan it was identified that the intersection related to the I-205 off ramp should be assessed as its own project, and thus was excluded from this study. April confirmed this planning decision. The current planning work assumes the same corridor as the Conceptual Design Plan.
- Andy presented a pie chart that showed how a typical cross section for this project is 76 feet wide and is maintained for about 59% of the project corridor.
- Andy reviewed the cross section handout and proceeded to walk the group through where and how the cross sections vary from section to section.
- Cross Section at/near Ed Benedict Park – 9' sidewalk, 7' bike, 12' through, 14' median/turn, 12' through, 7' bike, 9' sidewalk (see cross section outlined in dark blue in handout).
  - Jim Chasse asked why they don't take out the skate park to widen the road in this section.
    - a. ODOT doesn't want to impact the park.
    - b. April noted that the Environmental Process limits how much a project can impact park facilities without major mitigation.
  - Tom Barnes noted the bikeway on Bush Street and suggested routing bike traffic through the park to lead to this already established bikeway.
    - a. Mike noted that ODOT prefers to keep bike/ped facilities along the roadway and that this would take away from the purpose to provide a "continuous" route, and direct connections to stops along the corridor. He further noted that if the project design were to meander through the park it could trigger serious Section 4(f) impacts that restricts what the project can do when it comes to parks without major mitigation.
    - b. Kem expressed concern with visibility issues if the bike lane were to meander off the main road and through the park.
  - Nicole Naegeli stated she feels the skate park in its present location is a huge safety concern.
  - Cammy said 1.) safety of the kids at the Skate Plaza is a big priority, and 2.) part of the Skate Plaza is on ODOT right-of-way and she is displeased with ODOT not being able to use their existing right-of-way to build this project but rather are taking a larger piece of land on the north side. She feels the current proposed design puts the Skate Plaza closer to traffic. She encouraged putting a fence between the Skate Plaza and the roadway. She feels that due to the City of Portland Parks and Recreation department putting a skate park at this location and on ODOT right-of-way, that she and the kids are now recipients of any potential impacts from the project.
  - David Hampsten asked if there is an opportunity to combine the bike and sidewalk for a 16-foot shared facility.

- Jim stated Ed Benedict Park is going to be a facility that defines East Portland and that the concerns surrounding the Skate Plaza need to be addressed.
- Shelli noted that this topic has been raised with Portland Parks and Recreation and there are on-going discussions.
- Teresa also confirmed her concern for the safety of the kids at the Skate Plaza and something should be done to address it.
- Paul noted that the road being re-designed for this project will be around for the next 100 years and we should keep this in perspective as alternatives are considered, including decisions regarding the Skate Plaza. It will be expensive to move but the impact will be long lasting if it stays as is.
- Tom asked if it would be possible to shift the bike lanes through the park in both directions.
  - a. Andy pointed out that from a bicyclist perspective this is less intuitive and less optimal. This could pose more safety concerns if cyclists have to be routed across the street. Most cyclists would not wait to cross, and would likely continue in the travel lane.
  - b. Mike noted that it is important for this project to maintain continuity for the bike, sidewalk and vehicle lanes throughout the corridor.
  - c. April noted from a bike facility perspective she feels that both the bike and sidewalk facilities should be continuous throughout Powell Blvd. but said she is willing to discuss further with PBOT and their partners.
- Teresa suggested bringing a white board or flip chart to draw out options and ideas that come up during discussion. She needs to see things visually to imagine them.
  - a. **Action:** Team to bring large flip chart pads to subsequent meetings.
- Cora asked what determines the widths of the cross sections.
  - a. Andy responded that the traffic analysis helps inform the decision.
- Jennifer pointed out that there are amusement park rides that are transported through the corridor for the fun park adjacent to Curtis Trailers and noted the potential challenges they may incur if the road is too constrained.
- Alan noted if the through lane is narrowed to 11 feet that it would bring vehicles closer to the cyclists.
- David further noted if the bike and sidewalks were combined they may not need as much width and the overall cross section could be reduced.
- Jim said he thinks both sides of the road should be the same, maintaining a separated barrier for cyclists. He also said he agrees with David's suggestion



- Andy reviewed the cross section that starts slightly west of SE 122<sup>nd</sup> Ave. and ends at the SE 122<sup>nd</sup> intersection – 12' sidewalk, 12' bus queue, 8' bike lane, 11' through lane, 14' left turn lane, 11' through lane, 6' bike lane, 13' right turn lane, 8.5' sidewalk (see cross section outlined in dark green in handout).
  - Kem said the southwest and northeast corners have a bigger turning radius as oppose to the standard 90 degrees, which encourages drivers to come around the corners faster. Also, the current lights take up a lot of space at the corners and make it difficult for people with strollers or wheel chairs to pass by. It would be good to move the poles to allow the full width of the sidewalk to be used.
  - Elizabeth said she would like to see more buffer for cyclists.
  - As a cyclist, David said he would be willing to sacrifice the bike lanes at this intersection and share the bike lanes with the turning lanes so that additional width could be given accommodate sidewalks and island refuges for pedestrians.
  - Jim expressed concern for children who ride their bikes at SE 122<sup>nd</sup> Ave. and suggested combining bike and pedestrian facilities and providing cycle track at this intersection in order to remove cyclists from vehicle traffic entirely.
  - Cora suggested coordinating this project with PBOT's 122<sup>nd</sup> Avenue project to leverage opportunities for better amenities, such as protected bike lanes.
  - Nicole was curious whether people riding their bikes are taking short or long trips through the corridor and have any preference about separated facilities or not.
    - a. Cora said she would take more short rides if the bike treatments were continuous.
    - b. Kem said he thinks protected bike lanes are a good idea and would provide a calmer experience for the rider.
  - **Action:** Team will look into the bike treatment recommendations provided at the meeting and report back to the group what they discover.
- Intersection east of SE 162<sup>nd</sup> – 8.5' sidewalk, 13' right turn lane, 6' bike lane, 11' through lane, 11' left turn lane, 3' buffer, 11' through lane, 8' bike lane, 12' sidewalk (see cross section outlined in lavender (light purple) in handout).
  - This cross section was adjusted to account for safety improvements due to a detailed look at the safety data.
- Intersection at SE 174<sup>th</sup> – 12' sidewalk, 12' bus pullout, 8' bike lane, 11' through lane, 3' buffer, 11' left turn lane, 11' through lane, 8' bike lane, 12' sidewalk (see cross section outlined in yellow in handout).
  - Metro Councilor Craddick, who is a member of the Decision Committee, previously asked about modifying this intersection to account for increased eastbound traffic with the future growth in her district.
  - Cross section maintains a straight line for the bike lane instead of weaving through travel lanes.



- David thinks this intersection may have similar issues with bus pullouts as SE 122<sup>nd</sup> Ave.
  - Elizabeth asked about better connections with planned neighborhood green ways.
    - a. Andy said that bus stops have been moved to better line up with crosswalks and green ways; coordinating the crosswalks to meet where green ways start at north-south crossings, especially where the greenways jog east/west before continuing north/south.
  - Djimet said there are increasingly more people moving to this area especially from SE 125<sup>th</sup> to SE 162<sup>nd</sup>, and thinks crosswalks in this section should be addressed as soon as possible, regardless of this project.
  - Jim noted this is a good opportunity for a continued bike facility, and it is imperative for Powell Blvd. to be as friendly as possible for bike riders. He thinks cycle tracks would be the best bike/pedestrian facility option.
  - David is interested in finding new ways to fund aspects of this project. He said PBOT has a \$30 million surplus in SDC money that they have acquired and more often than not it has been spent on city streets rather than highways. They are starting to pull together a list for next year's projects. He is advocating using some of that money to go to this project in order to help in adding capacity through better bike facilities. He encouraged the team to highly consider cycle tracks as a solution to higher capacity.
  - Elizabeth said that BTA has sent a letter to ODOT advocating for protected facilities in order to create a better community along Powell Blvd.
5. Public Comment – No one provided comment at this time; time was allowed throughout the meeting for the public to comment.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.