

# Meeting Minutes

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

Subject: Decision Committee Meeting #3

Date: Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Location: David Douglas High School - Library (1001 SE 135th Ave., Portland, OR, 97233)

Food was served at 5:00 p.m.; meeting started at 5:40 p.m.

1. Group Introduction and Welcome Back – Facilitator Joan Brown-Kline is under the weather so Alex Cousins with HDR is taking her place tonight as facilitator. Alex welcomed the group, provided a safety moment and led a round of introductions.

- Decision Committee Members:
  - Commissioner Steve Novick, City of Portland
  - Councilor Shirley Craddick, Metro Council
  - Rian Windsheimer, ODOT Region 1 Manager
  - Phil Ditzler, FHWA Division Administrator
  - Jeff Owen, TriMet on behalf of Neil McFarlane
  - Jennifer Beil, St. Timothy Lutheran Church Pastor and Community Advisory Group Co-Chair
  - Paul Grosjean, Pleasant Valley Neighborhood Association Vice-Chair and Community Advisory Group Co-Chair
- Project Team Members:
  - Mike Mason, ODOT Project Manager
  - Alan Snook, ODOT Major Projects Unit Manager
  - Andy Johnson, HDR Project Manager
  - Alex Cousins, HDR Public Involvement Manager
  - Cassie Davis, HDR Public Involvement Coordinator
- Public/Other:
  - Teresa Keishi Soto, Outer Powell Community Advisory Group, EPAP and OPAL
  - Kem Marks, Outer Powell Community Advisory Group and EPAP
  - David Hampsten, PBOT Bicycle Advisory Committee
  - April Bertelsen, PBOT and Outer Powell Agency Working Group
  - Timur Ender, City of Portland, Office of Commissioner Novick
  - Walter Krueger
  - Ruth Register

2. Report Back Overview – Andy gave an overview of the updates that were performed as a result of recommendations from the last Decision Committee meeting.

- Project Purpose was modified to include, “...and supporting the creation of healthy and connected complete neighborhoods”, per recommendation from Commissioner Novick.
- The Project Need was modified to include a bullet that addressed transit riders, per recommendation from Neil McFarlane.



- The Area of Potential Impact was extended to have a more comprehensive boundary by reducing cuts around streets and driveways per Rian Windsheimer's recommendation and support of the Decision Committee.
  - The intersection at SE 174<sup>th</sup> Ave. was widened to better tie into roadway design at the Gresham city limits and to account for increased eastbound traffic movements at this intersection, per recommendation from Councilor Shirley Craddick and support of the Decision Committee.
  - Andy asked if there were any questions about the recommended modifications.
3. The Community Advisory Group Co-Chairs, Jennifer Beil and Paul Grosjean, provided feedback to the Decision Committee about the dialogue occurring at the Community Advisory Group meetings.
- Jennifer said that the group had a very spirited conversation at the last meeting where a lot of community members shared insight about the proposed cross-sections. There has been expressed concern for increased comfort and safety for transit riders including shelters, distance between bus stops and proximity to crosswalks, especially for elders and handicapped people. The group had a lot of discussion about bike safety and various treatments at the last meeting. Jennifer shared that she subsequently had a discussion with someone outside the committee who felt bikes on the roadway are a concern and that they feel anxious when bike riders are on the road. Lighting and illumination has also been cited as a concern.
  - Paul stated that he shared with the Community Advisory Group how impressed he has been with the Decision Committee's attention and interest in what the Community Advisory Group feels. He also expressed that with the recent inclusion of four added bus pullouts into the proposed design that this is an indication of their voices being heard.
  - Paul shared an update about a transportation plan for the Happy Valley area being led by a group of agencies including Clackamas County, City of Gresham, Multnomah County and City of Portland is assessing growth and future impacts to the Outer Powell area and other SE corridors. One specific area Paul noted was the section along Powell from SE 162<sup>nd</sup> Ave. to SE 174<sup>th</sup> Ave. and the interest to expand the roadway to four lanes per the Happy Valley plan. Paul wanted this group to be aware of that.
  - Rian said he appreciates the work the Community Advisory Group is doing and their ability to tackle the difficult questions that arise. He commended them for not being afraid to talk about the issues openly and honestly.
  - Jeff Owen said he has made note of their transit comments to take back to TriMet.
  - Andy further noted that there was a lot of discussion about bike treatments at the last Community Advisory Group meeting and that the project team is re-evaluating the options within the constraints of the corridor based on the feedback.
  - Rian said Andy and the ODOT team spoke with Representative Jessica Vega Pederson and Representative Shemia Fagan prior to this meeting and that the project team is keeping them updated in Salem as the project progresses and is in discussion in the legislature. Both representatives expressed their support for the project and their fellow Decision Committee members' efforts.
4. Public Comment – Andy opened the room for any public comments to be brought forth.



- Teresa Keishi Soto noted that at the last Community Advisory Group meeting there was a large discussion regarding the Skate Plaza and concern for the safety of kids who use it. She further noted that the corridor has a lot of apartment buildings, retirement homes and disabled communities and the committee should keep this in mind moving forward.
  - David Hampsten noted that at the last Community Advisory Group meeting that PBOT stated they have a specialized street cleaning vehicle, however he is unsure to what extent it can clean raised bike lanes. He also said he agrees with Commissioner Novick's comment to add "complete streets" to the Project Purpose statement. He further said he thinks it is important to keep in mind that this project is not just about enhancing a transportation facility along Powell Blvd. but improving the multi-modal connections from other roads that feed into this major corridor in the city. He strongly encouraged ODOT to work with PBOT not only on Powell Blvd. but on other projects and streets that connect to Powell (i.e. Powell Division BRT and SE 122<sup>nd</sup> projects).
  - Kem Marks shared an experience he had last Saturday when he was crossing Powell Blvd. at SE 122<sup>nd</sup> Ave. A driver cut him off to make a right hand turn in front of him as he was stepping out to cross the street. This is not the first time this has happened. He stressed the need for more innovative alternatives to increasing safety and wants the committee to consider things such as changing signal timing to allow pedestrians to walk before the driver gets a green light or installing cameras so unsafe drivers can be identified and ticketed. He further stressed the need to address bad driver behavior.
5. Pubic Outreach – Alex reviewed the recent and upcoming public involvement activities.
- Business Canvassing – Cassie shared that the team has completed three rounds of business canvassing and reached out to 60 businesses along the project study area. Over half of the business owners were either non-English speaking or English as a second language which goes to show the diverse mix of cultures that live and work along the corridor. The team reviewed the Area of Potential Impact with the businesses. Individuals were shown where their business was located on the map and were encouraged to ask questions and share their thoughts. While there was not a lot of expressed concern at this time, people were glad to hear about the project and shared overall support for improving safety along the corridor.
  - Bike Ride – the team is planning an Outer Powell bike ride on Saturday, August 1<sup>st</sup>, from 10:00 a.m. to Noon. The ride will start at Ed Benedict Park and go along Powell Blvd. to SE 174<sup>th</sup> Ave. and back. Alex pointed out that this is not a recreational ride but an opportunity to solicit feedback about existing conditions and provide insight to potential improvements. Andy, Mike and Alex went on a prep bike ride of the corridor a few weeks ago to prepare for the upcoming event and noted that it was an eye opening experience to see and feel the corridor from a bike rider's perspective.
  - Movies in the Park – the project will be hosting 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. This particular event is co-sponsored by Portland Parks and Recreation and the Powellhurst-Gilbert Neighborhood Association.
  - Bus Canvassing – the team is in the process of planning bus canvassing of the TriMet #9 bus route along Powell Blvd. Alex said he might want to have an offline conversation with Jeff Owen to talk about ways TriMet typically performs their bus canvassing and see if there might be an opportunity to coordinate this activity.



- September Open House – the next project open house is anticipated for early September when the team will have more information about the environmental classification and design updates.
  - Project Video – the team is in the process of finalizing a project video. Several project team and Decision Committee members have made contributions to the video and the team plans to provide a copy to Representative Fagan to use in her efforts to gain support and funding for the project. Once complete, the video will be made available to the public via the project website.
6. Environmental Process – Andy provided an update on the recent environmental activities.
- The technical reports are currently being assembled. This includes existing conditions and impacts analysis related to the cultural and natural environments in the study area, such as trees, socioeconomics, stormwater and water quality. In approximately three weeks the review cycles will begin, in mid-August FHWA and ODOT will be evaluating the environmental status and by fall an environmental classification is anticipated to be determined. This will dictate whether the team will proceed into an Environmental Assessment (EA) or if the project will be down-classed to a Categorical Exclusion (CatEx). This decision will intrinsically affect the schedule as an EA requires a more robust evaluation process.
7. Project Design – Andy provided an update on various elements of the project design.
- Cross Sections
    - There are 13 different cross sections throughout the project corridor. About 60% of the corridor maintains the typical cross section of 76 feet, 25% of the corridor has a cross section wider than typical, and 15% is less than typical.
    - Andy walked the group through all the cross sections, highlighting various points on specific sections of the corridor.
    - Cross section at/near Ed Benedict Park – 70 feet (Lanes: 9' sidewalk, 7' bike, 12' through, 14' median/turn, 12' through, 7' bike, 9' sidewalk – see cross section outlined in dark blue on handout).
      - This area is constrained by Ed Benedict Park to the south and Curtis Trailers to the north. At the last Community Advisory Group meeting the project team was encouraged to consider narrowing the corridor in this area to minimize impacts to Curtis Trailers. There was conversation around a proposal to raise the bike lane to create a combined bike/ped facility in order to reduce some of the required width.
      - Curtis Trailers moves large vehicles in and out of their property regularly, which may pose some conflicts to how narrow the cross section can be. The team is looking into the potential constraints and considerations.
      - Team plans to go out to Curtis Trailers to outline the project footprint and where it might impact their property.
      - The Community Advisory Group also expressed concern for the safety of kids at the Skate Plaza and the danger of skateboards and kids going into the roadway. Team is looking into potential barrier options along the Skate

- Plaza. Impacting parks is not easy to do in a NEPA process and is usually avoided.
- Typical Cross Section – 76 feet (Lanes: 12' sidewalk, 8' bike, 11' through, 14' median/turn, 11' through, 8' bike, 12' sidewalk – see cross section outlined in orange on handout).
    - This is the typical cross section that is maintained for 59% of the corridor length.
  - Cross section west of SE 122<sup>nd</sup> – 95.5 feet (Lanes: 12' sidewalk, 12' bus queue, 8' bike, 11' through, 14' median/turn, 11' through, 6' bike, 13' right turn, 8.5' sidewalk – see cross section outlined in green on handout).
    - This cross section accommodates a bus queue lane in the westbound direction and an eastbound right turn lane.
  - Cross section east of SE 122<sup>nd</sup> – 85 feet (Lanes: 8.5' sidewalk, 13.5' right turn, 5' bike, 11' through, 14' left turn, separator, 11' through, 12' bike/bus queue, 10' sidewalk – see cross section outlined in light pink on handout).
    - This cross section accommodates a bus pullout in the eastbound direction.
    - Cross section is constrained by the Walgreens at the westbound northeast corner of SE 122<sup>nd</sup> Ave.
  - Cross section near SE 124<sup>th</sup> to SE 126<sup>th</sup> Ave.– 71.5 feet (Lanes: 8.5' sidewalk, 8' bike, 11' through, 14' median/turn, 11' through, 7' bike, 12' sidewalk – see cross section outlined in fuchsia on handout).
    - This area has experienced some very serious pedestrian crossing accidents and the team is looking at adding improved crosswalk facilities.
    - Human Solutions is very close to the road in this section. Team is trying to avoid impacting them.
  - Cross section west of SE 130<sup>th</sup> Ave. – 82 feet (Lanes: 6' bike, 12' sidewalk, 8' bike, 11' through, 14' median/turn, 11' through, 8' bike, 12' sidewalk – see cross section outlined in turquoise on handout).
    - An additional bike lane was added to this cross section to improve connectivity to the greenway on SE 130<sup>th</sup> Ave.
  - Cross section approximately between SE 153<sup>rd</sup> and SE 162<sup>nd</sup> Ave – 81 feet (Lanes: 17' sidewalk, 8' bike, 11' through, 14' median/turn, 11' through, 8' bike, 12' sidewalk – see cross section outlined in light green on handout).
    - It was noted in the Outer Powell Conceptual Design Plan that there may be an added lane from approximately SE 162<sup>nd</sup> Ave. to SE 174<sup>th</sup> Ave. Thus, the sidewalk along the north side was given 17 feet to account for long term flexibility to potential changing conditions.
    - There is a historic property southwest of the intersection of SE 162<sup>nd</sup> Ave.
  - Cross section east of SE 162<sup>nd</sup> Ave – 83.5 feet (Lanes: 8.5' sidewalk, 13' right turn, 6' bike, 11' through, 11' left turn, 3' buffer, 11' through, 8' bike, 12' sidewalk – see cross section outlined in lavender on handout).
    - Three foot bumper allows for potential traffic separator.
    - Right turn lane in the westbound direction.

- Bike lane and right vehicle turn lane is being further evaluated.
- Cross section west of SE 174<sup>th</sup> Ave – 112 feet (Lanes: 12' sidewalk, 12' bus pullout, 8' bike, 11' through, 3' buffer, 11' left turn, 11' through, 6' bike, 15' right turn, 12' sidewalk – see cross section outlined in yellow on handout).
  - Per Councilor Shirley Craddick's recommendation at the last Decision Committee meeting, an additional eastbound through lane was added to accommodate better connectivity to Gresham, and capacity in her district.
  - Right turn lane provides adequate width for truck movements.
  - This cross section provides a westbound bus pullout.
- Cross section east of SE 174<sup>th</sup> Ave – 80 feet (Lanes: 8.5' sidewalk, 8' bike, 11' through, 14' median/turn, 11' left turn, 11' through, 8' bike, 8.5' sidewalk – see cross section outlined in brown on handout).
  - This section mirrors the Gresham design to provide a more seamless connection.
- Andy asked the committee if they had any questions about the cross sections.
  - Councilor Craddick thanked the project team and said she thinks it is a strong design that agrees with the previous Concept Plan and community comments. She further stated Metro has a few design recommendations to offer:
    - a. Metro feels the right turn lane widths are excessive, especially at SE 122<sup>nd</sup>, SE 162<sup>nd</sup>, and SE 174<sup>th</sup>.
    - b. They would like to see that sidewalks include street trees as much as possible.
    - c. They support raised bike lanes that are separated from the road and feel it could be a great benefit for safety.
    - d. They propose consideration of a Dutch style cycle track intersection concept at SE 122<sup>nd</sup> and thinks it would be a great opportunity to be the first one in the region.
    - e. They encourage the team to maintain adequate safe crossings throughout the corridor.
  - Commissioner Novick noted that PBOT standard turn lane widths are typically 12 feet or narrower and recommended the team considers reducing the current turn lane widths and providing the additional space to bike lanes and/or sidewalks. He further stated that the City is interested in raised bike lanes and/or cycle tracks. He agrees with Metro that horizontal separation from vehicles improves safety.
  - Jeff said he is going to take a look at how to avoid some of the bike/bus conflicts that occur due to buses pulling off and bikes having to weave around them.
  - Rian said he is interested in talking further with TriMet and PBOT about the trade-offs with various alternatives and wants to keep working through these issues together. He further stated that he appreciates the efforts of the Agency Working Group and Community Advisory Group for thinking hard about the trade-offs throughout this process.

- Teresa noted that she can see tire tracks at the Shell station at the corner of SE 122<sup>nd</sup> Ave. and has pulled people back so they don't get hit by vehicles coming around the corner too fast. She further noted at the other corners of this intersection that cars are turning too tight and it is very dangerous.
- Paul asked if there are visual examples that could help better explain raised bike lanes.
- Rian concurred and said it would be valuable to look at these examples as a group. The team is assessing plausibility and considerations and documenting as part of the environmental process. However, a detailed design decision will not be made until further down the road.
- April said she has some visual examples she could provide.
- Andy added that drainage is one of the considerations that will need to be evaluated with raised bike lanes.
- Kem thanked Councilor Craddick for noting the Dutch intersection design; he was trying to allude to these kinds of innovative design options earlier and would like to see a mark up of something like this to understand implications and plausibility.
- Councilor Craddick asked if the gas station near SE 162<sup>nd</sup> Ave. across from the historic building is a brownfield.
  - a. Andy said it is one of the areas they are looking into.
  - b. She noted that the gas tanks at the site could have brownfield contaminants and could be of concern.
- Councilor Craddick thanked the team for considering these kinds of urban amenities. She further noted this is a real opportunity to improve and bring innovation to an important part of the city with so many needs, and would provide a boost in the morale of the community.
- Bike Treatments – Andy reviewed two proposed bike treatment options.
  - Striped buffered bike lanes – at street level
  - Raised Bike Lanes – horizontally separated from vehicle lane; usually raised concrete 2" above the roadway surface.
    - Changing the color of a raised bike lane to brown or green can provide a visual separation of the bike lane from the vehicle lane.
    - Drainage with raised bike lanes can be challenging since raised bike lanes tend to slope toward the travel lane increasing the chances for ponding water. Roadway design standards for a road like Powell Blvd. states that no more than two feet of water may encroach the roadway in a 10 year storm event. Thus a complex drainage system would be required in order to accommodate this kind of design.
    - Andy noted that the team is evaluating these considerations and the trade-offs as part of their bike treatments assessment memo.
    - Walter Krueger asked what the implications are for emergency vehicles that need to pull off with this kind of raised bike treatment.



- a. Andy said this kind of a treatment would allow for the vehicle to pull off the road and onto the raised bike lane. Which is one of the better tradeoffs compared to a cycle track that would not allow for a vehicle to mount the bike lane.
- Ruth Register said she agrees with Walter and that bicyclists scare her. She worries she would not know it was ok to drive up on the raised bike lane if she had to.
- Jennifer asked what the public education is around something like this, and that she also would be unsure of what is allowed regarding a bike treatment like this which is unfamiliar to her.
- Andy asked April what kinds of public outreach and education PBOT has done around things new infrastructure like this.
  - a. Rian said ODOT did a campaign on the corridor called '*Slow down, don't go around*'.
- Andy noted that the center turn lane adds to the safety and accessibility of the corridor.
- Alex noted that the rendering the team is currently using shows the center lane as a landscaped median, which won't occur much in the final design – most of the center median will be open or turning lanes. The rendering will be revised to make it less confusing.
- Walter asked what the design standards are and if the design is within those standards.
  - a. Andy and Alan both noted that design standards are followed unless there are specific areas where the design might call for a design consideration; this is then identified, vetted and documented in the design specifications.
- Councilor Craddick asked if freight analysis has been assessed.
  - a. Andy said there are specific loads permitted along the corridor that have been accommodated, but he is not sure what the exact numbers are on freight activity.

## 8. Project Schedule

- Next Community Advisory Group and Agency Working Group meetings will be in August/September.
- The next Decision Committee meeting will be around October/November. This meeting will include an update on the environmental classification determination, design refinements per committee comments and schedule updates.

## 9. Final Thoughts

- Rian encouraged his fellow committee members to continue working with their Agency Working Group representatives to communicate with the project team as things come up. Communication and awareness is important and highly encouraged.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.