

**I-5 to 99W Connector Project SWG #1
6-8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 20, 2005
Meeting Summary**



Location:

Sherwood Police Training Room
20495 SW Borchers Drive, Sherwood

SWG members in attendance:

Loretta Pickerell, 1000 Friends of Oregon
Elliott Eki, AAA Oregon
Tom Aufenthie, CPO 5 (unincorporated Washington County)
Mike Feves, Far West Association of Neighborhoods
Bill Shake, Friends of the Refuge
Jack Laverty, Oregon Trucking Association
Susan Rychlick, Sherwood Chamber
Dave Volz, Tualatin CCI
Bob Adams, Tualatin Chamber
Jon Reimann, Westside Economic Alliance
Ray Phelps, Wilsonville Chamber

SWG members absent:

Adrian Emery, Sherwood CCI
Jerry Renfro, Tualatin Fire & Rescue

Organizations without a member identified:

Washington County Farm Bureau
Metro Committee on Citizen Involvement
Wilsonville CCI

Guests:

Darren Pennington, CPO 5 SWG alternate
Stephanie Garrison, Citizens for Farmland Protection
David Shetteles
Bernard Danylchuk
Commissioner Roy Rodgers, Washington County PSC member

Staff and consultants:

Vaughn Brown, Jeanne Lawson Associates
Kristin Hull, Jeanne Lawson Associates
Scott Richman, DEA
Mark Turpel, Metro
Barry Hennelly, Washington County
Michael Ray, ODOT
Mike McKillip, City of Tualatin

1. Welcome and committee charge- Commissioner Rogers

Commissioner Rogers welcomed the SWG members and guests. He thanked SWG members for their commitment to the project. He provided an overview of the I-5 to 99W Connector Project's history beginning with his role in identifying the need for a corridor 20 years ago when he was mayor of Tualatin. He noted that the LUTRAQ recommendations that were the result of the Western Bypass Study called for a connector between I-5 and 99W. He told the SWG that the need for a connector is well-established and this project is charged with finding a place to put it. He detailed some of the concerns of the local jurisdictions about the project. He reminded the SWG that they, like the PSC, are operating by consensus.

Committee questions and discussion

Question: Why isn't Tigard part of the PSC?

Response: *The PSC member municipalities are those that have jurisdiction over lands within the study area and may need to consider changes to local comprehensive and/or transportation plans.*

Question: How much weight will the PSC give to SWG advice?

Commissioner Rogers: *It would be foolish to ask your opinion and not take it. The PSC will take the consensus advice from the SWG very seriously and will follow-up with SWG members if guidance or advice cannot be incorporated into project decisions.*

2. Meeting purpose and introductions

Vaughn Brown reviewed the meeting purpose. He asked SWG members to introduce themselves and to answer the question: "What would project success look like for you?"

Responses included:

- Corridor that minimizes environmental impacts and appropriately mitigates unavoidable impacts.
- Economic growth – freight mobility, jobs
- Reach agreement for a project that minimizes disadvantages and maximizes advantages.
- Solution that minimizes impacts to farmland – recognizes need for balance.
- Develop logical multimodal system with interchanges that meet all needs (truck, car, pedestrian, bike).
- Economic growth while maintaining livability.
- Improve traffic flow for freight and employees; create fluid traffic flow while addressing concerns.
- Identify a clear definition of the problem: freight or commuters, local or regional traffic.
- Solution that addresses needs in regional context in a cost effective way, supported and informed by sound data and analysis and compatible with existing land uses without exacerbating pressures on the urban growth boundary (UGB).
- Consensus between PSC, SWG and project team on solutions.

Vaughn then asked staff and other guests to introduce themselves. He also invited SWG members to designate alternates.

3. Project overview

Barry Hennelly provided a project overview. A copy of his presentation is attached.

Barry reviewed the project decision-making chart and noted that the PSC is the decision-making body and the CETAS, the Collaborative Environmental and Transportation Agreement on Streamlining, must concur with project recommendations. Barry noted that one-third of the project budget is dedicated to public involvement. He also reviewed the project flow chart and explained that this project will be completed in two major phases: the first phase will identify a corridor and make the necessary plan amendments and the second phase will identify a preferred design and complete the NEPA process.

Committee questions and discussion

Question: What is NEPA?

Response: *NEPA stands for National Environmental Policy Act. It is a federal law that sets environmental analysis and public process standards for any project that receives federal funding. It was developed in response to the pre-NEPA standard process of not evaluating alternatives or asking for public input into decision making.*

Question: What went wrong with the past study? How is this study different?

Response: *The last effort showed that there is a problem, but it did not find the solution to the problem. This effort is designed to comply with NEPA and result in a project that is eligible for federal funds. This new effort has the necessary resources to look at the problem and possible solutions in a broader way. There is also a clear-cut project decision-making process in place.*

Question: What is the project budget?

Response: *\$4 million*

Question: What was the final product from the last PAC?

Response: *The last PAC did not create a final report.*

A member requested a list of all committee members involved in the project. Staff agreed to provide that list to the SWG at the next meeting.

4. Committee protocols

Vaughn Brown led the SWG through a discussion of SWG protocols using a draft protocol framework. The SWG spent most of the time discussing a process for reaching consensus. SWG members agreed that reaching consensus would be important since their advice to the PSC might not carry as much weight if they did not reach agreement. Members wished to reserve the right to call for a SWG poll at any time and emphasized that polling will be used at all major project decision points.

The SWG also discussed member interactions with the press. Members agreed that they would emphasize that their personal views and not discuss or characterize the views of other members. They further agreed to support the consensus decisions of the group and to refer press inquiries to the PMT for official project statements.

The revised protocols are attached. The SWG agreed to review revised protocols and adopt protocols at their next meeting.

Staff agreed to provide summaries of PSC meetings to the SWG.

Committee discussion and questions

Question: Where does the SWG feedback go?

Response: *Feedback from the SWG will be shared with all of the Project committees. The SWG's feedback will be reported directly to the PSC.*

Question: What is the RTP? Is the RTP amendment process concurrent with this phase?

Response: *The RTP is the Regional Transportation Plan. It is a plan for transportation improvements that every metropolitan planning organization is required to produce to meet federal requirements. It lays out policies about how the region will make transportation investments and establishes project priorities.*

The RTP amendment process will follow this phase of the project. The SWG will continue to meet during the RTP amendment phase, but will likely meet infrequently.

Question: How is the Federal Highways Administration involved?

Response: *FHWA is a part of CETAS, the Executive Management Team and the PSC.*

Question: Will the PMT really define the scope?

Response: *The PMT has defined the work plan and scope for the project.*

Question: Would an SWG member be in violation of the SWG protocols if the member explained to their represented group why the member compromised to find consensus?

Response: *The SWG agreed that individual members should explain to their represented groups why compromise was necessary and that identifying an agreement as a compromise would not violate their agreement to support SWG decisions.*

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Question: Can SWG members provide project progress updates to the press?

Response: *SWG members should not present themselves as officially representing the project. SWG members are requested to refer press inquiries to the PMT for official statements about the project.*

5. Public comment

Stephanie Garrison, Citizens for Farmland Preservation

Stephanie asked why the Washington County Farm Bureau was not represented. Vaughn responded that they had been contacted and staff hoped that they would soon designate a representative.

Stephanie told the SWG that the reason the region has traffic problems is because transportation planning is done for short term projects. She encouraged the committee to look at long-term, 30-40 year solutions and to look at the big picture. She told the committee that Wilsonville is suffering because I-5 is failing and that I-5 should get fixed before more traffic is dumped on I-5 with the connector. She thought that the project should look at ways to minimize impacts on farmland, the wildlife refuge and the environment.

6. Next steps and close

The next SWG meeting is scheduled for November 3 from 6-8 p.m. at the Sherwood Police Training Room.