

Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) Meeting #22

6 to 8:00 p.m. Thursday, May 22nd, 2008
Sherwood Police Training Center
24095 Borchers Drive, Sherwood

MEETING SUMMARY

I-5/99W SWG members present

Loretta Pickerell (*1000 Friends of Oregon*)
Mark Brown (*Metro CCI*)
Mike Feves (*Far West CPO*)
Dave Volz (*Tualatin CCI*)
Ray Phelps (*Wilsonville Chamber of Commerce*)
Tom Aufenthie (*CPO 5*)
Jon Reimann (*Westside Economic Alliance*)
Ron Johnson (*Washington County Oregon Farm Bureau*)
Tom Sullivan (*Wilsonville CCI*)

I-5/99W SWG members absent

Marie Dodds (*AAA Oregon*)

Scott Stoddard (*Tualatin Chamber of Commerce*)
Jim Haynes (*Sherwood Chamber of Commerce*)
Adrian Emery (*Sherwood CCI*)

Project staff present

Lawrence Odell (*Washington County*)
Russ Knoebel (*Washington County*)
Amy Gibbons (*ODOT*)
Scott Richman (*DEA*)
Mara Krinke (*DEA*)
Randy McCourt (*DKS*)
Vaughn Brown (*JLA*)
Shareen Rawlings (*JLA*)

Welcome & introductions

Vaughn discussed the project schedule, and mentioned the fact that this SWG meeting (meeting #22) would replace the June 12th meeting date, as requested by the SWG. Vaughn thanked the group for submitting comments relating to the AAR to project staff. He mentioned that these comments were included in a comment log that would be include comments and suggested revisions from the EMT, PSC, SWG committee members as well as members of the public.

Vaughn went on to explain that the PSC had approved the AAR for release to the public. Vaughn mentioned that SWG comments regarding the AAR received in this meeting would be included for internal review of the document. He explained that at the meeting this evening, SWG members would have additional time to provide comments on the AAR before the report is officially released to the public on June 12th.

Approve May 22nd Meeting Summary

Lawrence mentioned a comment regarding the previous meeting summary. The correction was noted.

EMT report – Lawrence Odell (Washington County)

Lawrence described the EMT's approval of the AAR for public review. Again, he reminded the SWG that the EMT (save one member) agreed unanimously to release this document for public review. Wilsonville's representative on the EMT responded with a conditional approval of the AAR. Lawrence explained that as the EMT chair he presented this decision to the PSC, who unanimously agreed to release the AAR for public review in their most recent meeting. The PSC expressed a strong desire to discuss major policy issues and topics

for discussion. Lawrence explained that the PSC would begin to discuss these policy issues in their next meeting on June 11th. He mentioned that he thought the PSC was looking forward to receiving public comments on this document, as well as the SWG comments. The EMT will continue to focus on policy discussion topics, which will be introduced to the PSC in their next meeting.

SWG member Dave Volz mentioned that he was interested in the answers to the questions that SWG members and other community members posed regarding the Alternative's Analysis Report. For example, Dave mentioned that he expressed a concern regarding the number of businesses that would be relocated as well as the number of residents. Similarly, he had expressed several comments and concerns regarding the validity of traffic forecast data and a consistency between Metro forecasts and the State model. Lawrence responded reminding the group that Washington County, Metro and ODOT are currently working together on a study that will look at induced growth in greater detail. This report will be available to committee members as well as the general public later in the process.

Dave mentioned an additional concern regarding project costs, specifically the magnitude of auxiliary lanes on I-5 and additional impacts to I-5. Russ reminded the group that traffic data is an engineering science. He explained that the traffic data in the AAR is correct, however it is a policy decision/discussion in terms of how many lanes the jurisdictions and agencies would like to see. This is the type of policy discussion that the PSC would begin to pursue in their upcoming meetings.

Loretta expressed a concern regarding the validity of the data. She mentioned that the traffic model has not been updated to accommodate projected issues such as emissions, gas prices, peak oil and other concerns. She mentioned that funding priorities and transportation policies will shift in order to accommodate state and regional mandates to curb emissions.

Alternative Analysis Additional Comments - Scott Richmond (DEA)

Scott explained that the project team has received more than 259 total comments, 140 of which were submitted by the SWG. He explained that the comment log is organized in the order in which these comments were logged. He referred the group to the Draft Comment Tracking Log.

Scott walked through several examples of SWG comments, outlining staff responses where applicable. He explained that the project team would incorporate comments from the internal review that warranted changes to the AAR document. The AAR would then be revised, and would be re-released to the SWG accompanied by the comment log outlining all comments including those that did not require a response or edit.

Michael Feves asked if comments could be received by Friday June 6th at noon. Scott mentioned that project staff would attempt to accommodate comments received after the SWG meeting.

Amy Gibbons explained that ODOT has requested a final copy of the Alternative Analysis Report by Monday, which was pushing a large portion of the AAR schedule.

Loretta asked about the project schedule – expressing a concern regarding the compressed project schedule. Amy Gibbons responded, explaining that the project is at a very important place, and there is a strong push from project team members, committee members and the agency staff to move forward with the process.

Vaughn explained that there is a mix of perspectives among committee members – mentioned that some members that would like more time devoted to this stage of the process and others that are more interested in moving forward with the refinement process and moving towards a possible solution alternative. Vaughn explained that the project team is attempting to balance these perspectives in meeting scheduling and agenda development.

Loretta expressed a frustration that her comments were treated as public comment and questioned the purpose and role of the SWG in this process if the project schedule demanded that they provide comments on the AAR in such a short period of time. Michael expressed a concern that the number of comments received indicated that the AAR is not ready to be released to the public. Michael reiterated Loretta's comment and frustration regarding project schedule. He asked why the project management team could not push the schedule back a couple of weeks in order to ensure that the AAR is adequate for public review. He said that he did not understand the urgency communicated by the project schedule.

The group discussed the project schedule and the review period. Tom Sullivan mentioned that if the committee felt a desire to release information to the public, the AAR should be a quality document not an adequate analysis. He discussed the cost and benefits of the project- expressed the belief that Wilsonville would be receiving the brunt of transportation impacts. Tom said that Wilsonville is resistant to the project because they will receive the brunt of impacts. He expressed a frustration that many comments and concerns are deferred by project staff as a design comment, and expressed a concern that design discussions would be held off until after a major decision is already made.

Loretta mentioned that the comments she has submitted address the up front questions, specifically in terms of questions and data that the public will be interested. She mentioned green house gases, and a concern over energy used as a surrogate, had said that she believed that some of the key findings in the AAR were fundamentally misleading. She mentioned that she believed that it is unfair to move forward because other people think it is ready. She said that it feels like there is a sentiment that the SWG's input does not matter.

Ron Johnson asked for confirmation regarding the PSC's decision to move the AAR forward for public review. He mentioned that many members of the public are ready for the project to move forward as well.

Dave expressed a concern over displacements, specifically business impacts and relocations. He mentioned that he wanted to know more about the traffic study and how this study quantified these impacts.

Scott explained that the traffic study looked at a reasonable level of impact area based upon a typical roadway. There are some areas where the area is more densely developed, and other areas where the land use pattern is more rural. He explained that density and therefore

impacts vary between each connector alternative. He explained that the report looks at the order of magnitude of these impacts in order to begin to compare these ranges between alternatives. A more refined level of detail will be calculated once a design is selected for the roadway.

Dave raised several other policy questions relating to I-5 impacts and additional displacements. Amy Gibbons addressed some of the concerns regarding I-5 and future improvements. She said that ODOT has acknowledged a need for additional studies regarding I-5 within the project area. Based upon general procedure, since these improvements are not programmed as part of this project, ODOT is moving forward with what improvements are currently planned. As of right now, widening I-5 is not a plan. She reminded the group that pursuing improvements to I-5 are not part of this project.

Tom Aufenthie asked how public comments relating to the project alternatives will be included in the internal comment log. Scott explained that the project team anticipates a lot of comments from members of the public. He explained that these comments would be quantified and organized. The project team would be looking to the public to provide comments on which elements they like and they don't like at the upcoming open house hearings.

Tom went on to ask how his comments would be viewed – asked if comments received from SWG members would be considered as representative of their respective agencies and organizations. Tom mentioned that he would like his comments recorded as a representative of CPO 5.

Michael clarified one of his comments in the internal comment log.

Ray Phelps mentioned that he thought it was important that the comments received from the SWG should represent the stakeholders they represent. He mentioned that the comment log did not indicate that comments received from the SWG represent stakeholder agencies. He said that it appeared that the value of SWG comments appear to be diluted and requested that a separate set of comments be dedicated to the SWG. Scott Richmond noted the suggestion. The project team agreed to separate out SWG comments and public comments.

Loretta mentioned that some of the essence of her comments did not appear in the comment log. She suggested that the PSC should be informed that several SWG members did not have enough time to review the AAR. She said that she thought it is important to make additional comments outside of the topics and concerns that have already been raised by other SWG members. Vaughn asked if Loretta would be willing to work with the project team to clarify her statements and work towards a staff response. Loretta agreed.

Lawrence suggested that the project team include verbatim comments from SWG members as an appendix. The project team confirmed that they would pursue this format.

Open House Hearings Format and Materials – Scott Richmond and Vaughn Brown
Vaughn Brown described the general layout and concept of the open house hearings. He explained that this meeting would be a combination of open house information sharing and

information relating to the AAR with the opportunity for official public testimony. Vaughn explained that the last major public outreach effort was over 16 months ago, and that the project team was looking forward to receiving public input on the range of alternatives. He mentioned that the hearing would be more focused on what the public thinks about each of the solution alternatives – stressing the fact that these open house hearings would be viewed as a kickoff to the refinement process.

The open house hearings would be held June 24th, 25th, and 26th. He described the venues, and briefly described the goals of the open house forums including:

- Present key findings from the Alternative Analysis Report
- Display summary evaluation criteria results
- Gather input and feedback regarding preferred transportation solution elements
- Provide an opportunity for community members to interact directly with project team members and staff

He described notification of the open house hearings– reference document and staffing.

Vaughn then walked the group through the open house hearing stations and a draft cut of the open house hearing materials. He described the stations and basic content/goal of each station including:

- Sign-in and Welcome Station
- Process Walkthrough and background
- Project Alternatives
- Transportation
- Land Use and Planning
- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Other Environmental Impacts
- Comment Card and Input Station

Vaughn explained that the discipline stations would present notable findings, accompanied by graphics and visual summaries. He walked through a brief discussion of each of the open house stations.

Transportation

Loretta said that she believed that the real thing that the public cares about for this whole project is travel time – specifically in terms of how long it takes people to get between destinations. She said that it seems like the information presented in the AAR is misleading and not engaging. Tom Aufenthie expressed a similar concern that the public will be most interested in how this project may impact them.

Michael said that he liked bar charts – requested that the project team include more bar charts in their presentations.

Loretta asked about predominant traffic. She wanted to know where most of the trips in the region are happening. She mentioned that the project team should be focusing more on

predominant travel. Loretta said that there was no perspective on how well these alternatives will address the predominant travel in the region. She mentioned that it was very difficult to get any sense of context for the numbers that are provided in AAR.

Randy responded, and referred the group to a figure in the AAR. He described the data findings in the report that address Loretta's concerns regarding predominant travel patterns. The project team agreed to look at additional ways of conveying travel times and traffic volumes to the public.

Tom Sullivan asked for displays that will illustrate how traffic will increase at different locations throughout the project area. He also suggested that the open house present information about weaving and merging impacts on I-5.

Michael mentioned that most of the traffic traveling in the project area is regional. He suggested that regional travel times be presented to the public so people can look at how the alternatives will impact them.

Tom Sullivan expressed a concern regarding the manner in which EESA is portrayed. He mentioned that the descriptions and findings seem very negative.

Loretta was concerned that EESA demonstrates a lack of vision or creativity. She explained that there are many new and creative approaches to transportation planning and transit which are not included in EESA. She mentioned that it may be too late to include some of these elements before the alternatives go out to the public – but hoped that the group could discuss and suggest some of these options later in the process.

Ray Phelps and Mark Brown reiterated the concern that EESA is not represented in a positive light. Mark Brown also mentioned that it was important to acknowledge all of the potential impacts and benefits of EESA and communicate these to the public.

The project team confirmed that they would work to ensure that positive attributes of EESA were clearly communicated. Randy mentioned that the project team wanted to ensure that EESA was portrayed realistically – acknowledging that EESA does have some significant impacts to Tualatin-Sherwood Road.

Dave expressed a comment regarding the traffic charts. He asked that the project team make sure to include existing conditions, so people can have a greater understanding of how alternatives may change or impact them. He asked that data highlighting impacts to I-5 also be highlighted as a display.

Land Use

Tom Sullivan asked for clarification regarding the use of the word “impact” in displacement chart. Scott explained that impact in this chart was considered as a land use displacement. The project team confirmed that they would use more specific language to describe these impacts.

Ron Johnson asked how staff would be presenting information. He asked if staff would provide their recommendations. Scott mentioned that staff would not make

recommendations on a preferred alternative. He mentioned that the project team hoped that the public process would inform the refinement process.

Ron asked when the consultant team would move into a recommendation. Scott said the project team would wait for feedback from the public and the project committees. At this point, there was no official consultant team recommendation included in the project process.

Biology and Wetlands

Concern about the language used to suggest that Alternative 6 has the highest negative impacts to fish and wildlife habitat. Lawrence explained that the EMT moved completely away from including a discussion of positive and negative impacts – explained that the language used in these displays would remain consistent with the EMT's.

Michael asked how cost would be presented to the public.

Scott explained that the displays would highlight a more detailed estimate of cost, as requested by the SWG. Scott also mentioned that the project team would outline segmented elements for the connector alternatives as well as EESA to get a better sense of costs associated with different transportation improvements and features.

A SWG member asked if the project team could filter out the comments that address process and other questions in the comment log – but pull out comments regarding the data regardless if they are addressed or not.

The group discussed notification and email protocols, and agreed that it would be ok to send an email out with members' emails visible.

Ron Johnson asked if the project team considered changing the layout of stations – wondering if people will cluster around one station. The project team and SWG members discussed layout and SWG members suggested that the project team place the alternative station at a location where people can reference it while completing their comment cards.

Public comment

Dan Ruediger

Request a farm and forest slide be included in the open house presentation and presented in the notable findings. He emphasized the importance of farm and forest land and commented on staff whispers and sideline comments during the SWG meeting.

He mentioned that each connector increased traffic on an already failed I-5 by at least 20% with no current plans to expand I-5. He mentioned that he thought that it is important to communicate this fact to the public.

He would like to see big maps of the alternatives that would show the topography. Thinks that topography is a fatal flaw of Alternative six and also thinks that these maps should show businesses and residential lots. Suggests a multi-layer map to show what the plans are for these connectors, what the potential impacts are. He also requested a map that shows land uses – addressed an additional notable finding that state statute requires that this process

select a viable option within the UGB over alternatives outside of the UGB. Recommends that Alternative 6 should be dropped from the table, and emphasizing the statute that guides development to occur inside the UGB.

Dan also asked for costs relating to how much money has been spent already on this project. He emphasized how important this information is to the public.

Close and adjourn

Vaughn acknowledged comments received but noted that comments seemed to be targeted toward individuals and suggested manipulation of the process. He stated that those comments were unfair, unkind and counterproductive. He expressed hope that participants would return to treating each other in a respectful manner.

The next SWG Meeting (Meeting #23) will be held July 17th, 2008 at the Sherwood Police Training Center.