



Transportation Planning and Development Program
1600 SE 190th Avenue, Portland OR 97233
503-988-5050 Fax 503-988-3389
<http://www.multco.us/transportation-planning>

Multnomah County Bicycle and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 9, 2018

Board Room, Multnomah Building, 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland, OR

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Art Graves
Martha Berndt
Joel Huffman
Rory Renfro
Andrew Holtz
Michael Rubenstein
Gary Purvine

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Ryan Farncomb
Greg Olson
Carolyn Briggs
AJ Zelada
Jim Couch
Susan Watt

STAFF: Kate McQuillan (Transportation Planner), MaryJo Andersen (SRTS Coordinator), Mike Pullen (Communications Office), and Megan Neill (Engineering Services Manager, Bridges Section)

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm. There was a quorum of members present.

2. Approve March 2018 Meeting Minutes

There were no March 2018 meeting minutes for approval; Kate will have them at the next Committee meeting.

3. Public Comment

Members of the Committee requested additional information (and possibly a project briefing?) of the Better Naito project from the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT). The project is moving along quickly and will have impacts to the bicycle and pedestrian network that connects to Willamette River Bridges. The Committee also requests hearing more information about the Central City in Motion plan from PBOT.

Michael Rubenstein shared that the Sauvie Island Community Association (SICA) is moving ahead with the bicycle safety meeting on June 21; however, they are looking for a facilitator to help with the meeting. If anyone has any leads or wants to volunteer, please contact Michael.

4. Staff Report

Kate informed the Committee that Annual Tour is planned for the regular July meeting. Kate arranged for a tour of the Arata Road construction site with the Project Manager. The Committee was generally okay with an earlier start time of 6:00pm and with meeting on-site (at the Wood Village Baptist Church's parking lot). Kate will follow up with the Committee shortly with additional details about the tour.

5. BPCAC Member Stories

There was no BPCAC member story this month.

6. Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge – Alternatives Evaluation Results

Mike Pullen and Megan Neill attended the evening's Bicycle and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee meeting to provide an update on the outreach for the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridges, as well as the "Alternatives Evaluation Results" that were presented to the project's senior agency group as well as the Stakeholder Representative Group (SRG).

The County has secured the funding to move forward with the National Environmental Policy Act (or NEPA) alternatives study phase, which will occur over the next 2-3 years. The NEPA phase kicks off this summer with the regulatory process with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The project is on track to then go through design after the NEPA phase, then enter a construction phase for a few years, and ultimately open by 2028.

Generally, the alternatives can be broken down into two categories: Replace the Burnside Bridge (i.e., new bridge), or retrofit the existing bridge (except for spans over I-5 which would need to be replaced no matter what). Initially, over 100 alternatives for the Burnside Bridge were on the table. Using the criteria that Megan presented to the Committee back in December 2017, the project team narrowed down to 26 alternatives (see handout). Currently staff have a prioritized list of nine alternatives to bring to the public during the summer of 2018 for feedback, but are also seeking input from the BPCAC (and other stakeholders) about further narrowing the number of alternatives to four for the public's feedback.

Overall, the Committee is supportive with narrowing down the number of alternatives down to four. The alternatives that included a "stacked bridge" seemed to be more expensive, and would not provide the most comfortable bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Since right of way did not seem to be an issue, the Committee felt fine removing this alternative from the prioritized list. One member recalled the alternatives selection for the Sellwood Bridge replacement where a stacked bridge was considered but then removed from the table for similar reasons discussed above.

The Committee discussed a “telescoping” option on a vertical lift bridge (such as the Steel Bridge) that would have a shared path on the lower level. Committee members did like this idea, but noted that connections to the east side where it crosses I-5 would be difficult. The lower path would experience many impacts due to lifts from river traffic. This alternative would really benefit the City of Portland effort’s to activate the Willamette River’s waterfront more.

Generally, the Committee thought that having a mode-separated bridge could be redundant; especially if the primary bridge would be required to include bicycle lanes and sidewalks anyhow. The costs associated with building a mode-separated bridge could be better used to create a world-class primary facility for all modes. On the other hand, however, a mode-separated bridge could be used by the public immediately following a major earthquake when the primary, traffic bridge would likely be limited to emergency responders.

The Committee generally liked the concept of twin bridges, particularly since this would eliminate the need for a costly detour bridge during construction. Overall, when considering all the alternatives that Mike and Megan discussed, the Committee was sensitive to the project’s budget and wanting to ensure that the scarce funds are used to construct the best multimodal options available.

The Committee repeatedly requested that whatever the final alternative is, that the bridge will need to incorporate “world class” bicycling and pedestrian facilities. The Sellwood Bridge replacement project was a step in the right direction, but the Committee feels the Burnside Bridge could go further explore safer, more comfortable, separated facilities that are both iconic and are designed to make users feel excited to be there.

7. Other Business

MaryJo Andersen, the County’s Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Coordinator, provided a quick update on her work with the East Multnomah County Safe Routes to Schools program. MaryJo is working with elementary schools in the Reynolds School District on walking and biking encouragement events, as well as planning some “open streets” events at two schools that will be rebuilt and opening in the fall of 2018. MaryJo is also assisting the City of Gresham who are leading efforts with the Gresham-Barlow School District.

MaryJo also shared with the Committee that she is soliciting volunteers to join an advisory committee that will help advise the work of the East County’s SRTS program. If anyone on the Committee is interested, or knows of someone who would be, they can reach out to MaryJo.

Meeting Adjourned

The meeting adjourned at 8:33pm.

Meeting minutes written and submitted by: Kate McQuillan

The next scheduled BPCAC meeting: Wednesday, June 13, 2018