

MEETING TITLE: Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee
DATE: Wednesday, October 28, 2009, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
INVITEES: Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee Members
LOCATION: Columbia River Crossing Project Office, Vancouver, WA

AGENDA:

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
9:00	Introductions
9:05	Review of previous meeting summary and review of Action Items
9:15	Update on design refinement process
9:25	Update on transit alignment
9:35	Update on ped/bike facilities in Marine Drive interchange area
9:45	Input on ped/bike interface at Hayden Island station
10:05	Input on ped/bike facilities at and near 39 th interchange
10:20	Input on ped/bike connections; updated bicycle network map
10:45	Presentation on tolling considerations
11:10	Review of project area constraints along I-5
11:30	Update on public involvement activities
11:40	Other topics
11:45	Next meeting topics
11:50	Input by public
12:00	Adjourn

Columbia River **Draft Meeting Summary**

MEETING: Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC)
DATE: September 23, 2009, 9:00 – 11:30 am
LOCATION: Columbia River Crossing (CRC), 700 Washington St., Suite 300, Vancouver WA
FROM: David Parisi

PBAC ATTENDEES:

Bertelsen, April	Portland Bureau of Transportation
Burgstahler, Ken	Washington State Dept. of Transportation
Corkill, Seanette	Arnada Neighborhood Assn.
Elven-Snyder, Debbie	C-TRAN
Goorjian, Lisa	Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation
Greulich, Joe	Clark County Bicycle Advisory Committee
Merrick, Rod	Portland Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Rehberg, Shayna	Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee
Valenta, Walter	Bridgeton Neighborhood Assn., CRC Urban Design Advisory Committee
Wuest, Phil	City of Vancouver Transportation Services

CRC STAFF ATTENDEES:

Belcher, Cara	Design engineering
Brandman, Richard	CRC Oregon project director
Freeman, Natalie	Design engineering
Horowitz, Zachary	Traffic engineering
Liles, Casey	Design engineering
Ovington, Peter	Communications
Parisi, David	PBAC facilitator
Putney, Mandy	Communications
Rust, Lynn	Design engineering
Smith, Vicky	Transit
Treadwell, David	Transit

GUESTS:

Buehler, Ted	Citizen, Vancouver resident
Mansfield, Amanda	Office of Portland Commissioner Amanda Fritz

Review of previous meeting summary and action items

The summary of the August 26 meeting was approved with no changes.

Action items and other matters discussed briefly included the following:

Pathway connections to the bridge from Portland: Shayna Rehberg said a topic that needs to be discussed per Portland Mayor Sam Adams is the connections to the bridge on the Portland side. David Parisi said Mark Ginsberg, Shayna’s delegate from the Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee at the last PBAC meeting, provided a map outlining the BAC’s suggested connections. PBAC will further discuss connections at today’s meeting.

Vancouver Working Group: Seanette Corkill briefly discussed the work of this CRC light rail advisory group and said their final recommendation report will be presented to the Vancouver City Council (October 19 at 4:00 p.m.). The VWG recommended an east/west transit alignment on McLoughlin Boulevard. Seanette

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will send David Parisi a copy of the VWG's minority report supporting an east/west alignment on 17th Street. Other VWG materials are posted on the CRC website at <http://www.columbiarivercrossing.org/ProjectPartners/VancouverWG.aspx>

Marine Drive Stakeholder Group: A meeting of this CRC advisory group is scheduled for September 30 from 9am-12pm at the Portland Expo Center. Shayna Rehberg said she cannot attend but invited other PBAC members to attend on behalf of the committee.

Update of September's Project Sponsors Council meeting

Richard Brandman, Oregon director of the CRC project, introduced himself and said he previously worked for Metro for the last three decades with a focus on light rail and transit planning. He has also worked on bicycle issues and is a bicyclist himself. He actually developed Portland's first bicycle plan when he worked for the City of Portland decades ago.

He said the project appreciates the work PBAC has done and embraces the committee's recommendations. He and the project sponsors realize that safety and security is a top concern. The next step is to take PBAC's recommendations and turn them into reality. They were unanimously endorsed at the CRC Project Sponsors Council (PSC). There are opportunities to coordinate with other agencies, such as using existing command centers to monitor security on the future bicycle and pedestrian path.

Brandman added that last Friday the CRC Urban Design Advisory Group unanimously recommended a bridge design that reflects PBAC's recommendation. Recent media coverage has been preoccupied with how many lanes will be on the new bridge, but Portland Mayor Sam Adams' office supports the design.

Discussion

Given the concerns of the representatives of the Bicycle Transportation Alliance (BTA) at last month's meeting, April Bertelsen asked whether some assurance will be provided on paper about the maintenance and security recommendations. Brandman said it's unfortunate that the BTA and CRC are seemingly at odds when in fact the CRC project and PSC endorse the maintenance and security recommendations. Brandman said he is an optimist on the project and believes the many positive aspects are being overshadowed. The project will include environmental benefits, vis-à-vis tolls, light rail, lower greenhouse gases, great bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and other features.

Shayna Rehberg asked if there has been discussion of getting a commitment to maintenance and security at the level of a memorandum of understanding or a working agreement. Brandman said now that there is concurrence from the Project Sponsors Council, the project will look at how to move the outline of recommendations forward into a more detailed document.

Rod Merrick said what would indicate good faith is to adopt the PBAC recommendations as policy. There doesn't necessarily have to be a detailed document but instead some adoption by the project.

Walter Valenta said at PBAC's last meeting, some members of PBAC were unsure of how the PSC would handle their recommendations. Valenta described some of the PSC members' discussion and their desire for a recommendation without conditions. It was a robust discussion and it reflected an unequivocal commitment from the PSC, he said.

Shayna Rehberg wondered, given some editorializing in the media about potential cost cutting for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, whether there has been any discussion at the PSC level of how secure the facilities are from the threat of cost cutting. Parisi said the PSC discussion of cost reductions focused on highway interchanges, number of lanes, and other features, but not the pedestrian and bicycle portion.

Phil Wuest asked about the impact, if any, to the pedestrian and bike facilities if the bridge is downsized to 10 lanes. Parisi said the project doesn't know yet for sure, but it will be looked at if the number of lanes changes, because that would likely affect the width of the bridge and therefore the covered pathway.

Parisi said PBAC members sent him emails and called him about some recent media coverage the PBAC members thought was inaccurate. He reviewed some of the incorrect assertions, including path width, the number of scenic overlooks, the size of the cantilever over the pathway, and the overall path distance.

Input on Hayden Island transit/pedestrian/bicycle facility interface

Vicky Smith and David Treadwell of the CRC transit team provided an overview of light rail station planning on Hayden Island in Portland.

Key issues to consider include vertical access, interaction of the station with the pathway, and the City of Portland's Hayden Island Plan. On September 30, the project is hosting a public workshop on light rail design for Hayden Island.

Staff showed draft concepts of the light rail station area with the light rail station over Tomahawk Island Drive with pedestrian connections to both sides of the street. With the project's current bridge concept, the light rail station is significantly elevated relative to the existing ground on Hayden Island and as it crosses Tomahawk Island Drive. The project's refined package allows for the opportunity for the light rail station to be at a lower elevation relative to the existing ground on Hayden Island.

The project is still considering side vs. center station platform designs. Transit planning staff look forward to working with PBAC on safety and security, connections, creating active spaces, and other design issues. At the public workshop on September 30, they will discuss issues like elevators, stairs, ramps, public access, and more.

David Parisi said an important issue for PBAC is separation of bicyclists from the light rail passengers boarding and disembarking in order to avoid conflicts or unsafe conditions.

Transit staff said the project's light rail citizen advisory group, the Portland Working Group, understands the importance of making the station area safe for those passing through as well as for those stopping on Hayden Island. Staff described cross section views of the light rail and highway on Hayden Island.

Discussion

Rod Merrick said there was talk in the past of making the station an iconic architectural space and integrating it into the Hayden Island Plan. But he said the draft concepts shown appear pretty minimal – akin to something along I-205 – and appear to just include basic landscaping. He said the station will be surrounded by big box retail stores, so none of this suggests an iconic urban context. Smith answered that the goal is to start working with the Portland Working Group and the public about potential connections, an active space, and interaction with the surrounding area. The project can't control how things develop, but wants development close to the station for an activated public space. Staff didn't want to start showing features and design elements before getting feedback on the question of center vs. side running light rail station.

Lisa Goorjian said that from a multiuse path perspective, more space should be provided at the station because it will act as a trailhead of sorts and as a staging area for those connecting to regional trails. She asked staff to consider this in their design concepts.

David Parisi said PBAC has previously expressed a lot of concerns about the new light rail station design along I-205 at Foster Road and some of the other stations along the new Green Line MAX because they appear to create user conflicts and don't seem to have large enough staging areas.

April Bertelsen said members of PBAC and other advisory groups should attend the workshop, but suggested that it also be an agenda item at a future PBAC meeting. Parisi agreed. Bertelsen spoke to Rod Merrick's concerns and said there's still a lot of conversation about integrating the commercial space into the station.

Smith said next steps are to host the public workshop on September 30, report that feedback to the Portland Working Group at their October meeting, and then to develop design guidelines. Parisi asked Smith to return to PBAC next month to provide an update.

Input on pedestrian and bicycle facilities at and near 39th Street interchange

Cara Belcher, CRC design engineering staff, gave an overview of the 39th Street area including current and proposed travel patterns. Currently vehicles traveling from I-5 southbound to SR500 eastbound and from SR500 westbound to I-5 northbound must exit the freeway, travel on 39th Street, and enter the freeway. The CRC project is proposing direct vehicle connections between I-5 and SR 500 without having to access 39th Street. Details specific to 39th Street such as westbound and eastbound bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the street were discussed.

Nearby destinations include the Burnt Bridge Creek Discovery Trail, Leverich Park, and Discovery Middle School, which creates a high pedestrian traffic area for children walking to and from school.

Discussion

Rod Merrick asked if the project can tighten up the ramp design to free up more land for park space or infill development rather than having unused space. Belcher followed by stating that the proposed design attempts to reuse as much of the existing ramp as possible.

Belcher said the proposed new design may provide the benefit of reducing traffic volumes on 39th Street. There will also be fewer conflict points between vehicles and pedestrians/bicyclists. Routing for middle school students will also be improved with the addition of a sidewalk on the south side of the bridge overcrossing.

Members suggested making the ramp from 39th Street eastbound to I-5 southbound more of a T-shape so the crosswalk is more visible to motorists.

Lisa Goorjian and Phil Wuest will return to PBAC with more information on connections from Leverich Park Road to the Burnt Bridge Creek Discovery Trail.

Staff will look at intersections, traffic controls, planned pathways, elevation information, and come back to the next meeting with that information.

Seanette Corkill wondered if there are any mini neighborhood workshops or outreach planned to solicit feedback from the local neighborhoods about the 39th Street interchange design. Staff will schedule meetings with the following neighborhood associations to solicit feedback about the proposed 39th Street interchange design: Rose Village, West Minnehaha, Lincoln, and Shumway. The meetings should take place sometime after the next PBAC meeting in late October.

Status of City of Portland Bicycle Master Plan Update; Vancouver update

David Parisi said about two years ago the PBAC held an internal exercise to prepare a map showing both Portland's and Vancouver's existing and planned bicycle networks. Lisa Goorjian added that, since then, the Central Park Plan was adopted, which affects Clark College and Hudson's Bay High School, so it may be time for another update of the map, while also being sure to use simple and consistent naming and map conventions.

April Bertelsen gave an update on the City of Portland Bicycle Master Plan and distributed two handouts – a fact sheet on the Bicycle Master Plan and an excerpt of the Portland Transportation System Plan showing the Bridgeton Transportation Network Concept Plan.

Bertelsen said there is a draft plan coming out on October 5 and a City Council meeting tentatively set for December 2. For the CRC project's path to be successful and well-used, she said, people need to be able to get to the bridge via good connections from points north and south.

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Discussion of pathway connections

Staff and PBAC members reviewed maps and discussed pathway connections, bottlenecks and hot spots where pedestrian or bicycle connections are challenging.

Lisa Goorjian asked if the proposed facilities on Bertelsen's map are reflected in Metro's plan. She also wondered if there's value in a joint conversation between the Clark County Bicycle Advisory Committee and the Portland groups.

Shayna Rehberg said the six-foot bike lanes on Vancouver and Williams Avenues in Portland are attractive facilities and therefore key routes for bike commuters.

Ted Buehler, citizen, said it would be helpful to have a statement from PBAC to the City of Portland Bicycle Master Plan staff stating PBAC's support for improvements to the abandoned, neglected areas of the bike network leading north to the I-5 bridge. Bertelsen said public comments can be integrated into the Master Plan Update via Portland Bureau of Transportation staff Roger Geller and Ellen Vanderslice.

Ted Buehler said what's missing from the map is which routes are 45 mph roads with heavy traffic and which are a nice place to bike with children. Bertelsen said there will be different maps for users vs. for policy-level planning.

Update on public involvement activities

Peter Ovington, CRC communications, discussed recent public outreach on the topic of tolling and said the online tolling survey has received over 3,200 responses to date. He distributed a flier promoting the survey for PBAC members to share with their constituencies.

A CRC Tolling Study Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, October 1, at the Portland Expo Center, from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. The meeting will include preliminary results of online survey responses, a staff presentation on additional tolling scenarios being analyzed, and discussion of bi-state tolling coordination.

Ovington announced a public open house on Hayden Island's interchange area management plan (IAMP) scheduled for October 8.

Discussion

A member asked whether CRC is looking at precedents on whether bikes and pedestrians are tolled on other projects. Parisi said CRC assumptions are that only cars and trucks will be tolled. The group briefly discussed whether bikes are tolled on other bridges such as Tacoma Narrows (they are not). Zach Horowitz said the Bridge of the Gods has a toll, but that bridge is privately operated.

Parisi said there is some research being done on potentially having different toll rates for low income, disabled, or other special users. The challenge, he added, is that most places don't allow lower tolls for special groups because if you lower it for one group, others pay more.

Parisi and the group agreed it would be worthwhile to be given a presentation on tolling next month.

Lisa Goorjian asked if there is a map available showing all city level and agency involvement in CRC, including technical advisory committees and others. She said the communication and coordination across agencies can be a challenge and that she wants to keep the bi-state trails meeting and quarterly trails meeting groups updated.

April Bertelsen said she is concerned about pedestrian connectivity across the loop on the outer ring of Hayden Island, which feeds into highway ramps. She is interested in how the pedestrian and bike connections relate to that.

Action items

1. Interchange at 39th Street

- a) Lisa Goorjian and Phil Wuest will return to PBAC with more information on connections from Leverich Park Road to the Burnt Bridge Creek Discovery Trail.
- b) Staff will look at intersections, traffic controls, planned pathways, and elevation information. Staff will come to the next meeting with that information.
- c) Staff will schedule meetings with the following neighborhood associations to solicit feedback about the proposed 39th Street interchange design: Rose Village, West Minnehaha, Lincoln, and Shumway. The meetings should take place sometime after the next PBAC meeting in late October.

2. Pathway connections and maps

- a) CRC staff will work with PBOT staff to update the two year old CRC bike network map using consistent symbols.
- b) Staff will send Phil Wuest a PDF file of April Bertelsen's poster map ("Proposed Bikeways Serving the Interstate 5 Bridge") so it can be marked up.

3. Number of lanes

- a) Staff will email Lisa Goorjian the "stick diagram" showing how auxiliary, or merging, lanes add and drop through the project area.
- b) Staff will clarify when the Project Sponsors Council will make decisions on design refinements and the number of lanes.

Next meeting topics

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Columbia River Crossing project office

700 Washington St., Suite 300, Vancouver WA

The next meeting will include an update on the 39th Street interchange; more information on the Hayden Island light rail station and Portland Expo Center station; further discussion of pathway connections; updated City maps overlaid with CRC maps; a presentation on the project's footprint constraints (particularly environmental and right of way just north of the bridge); and a tolling presentation. A more detailed agenda will be available a week prior to the meeting.

Public comment

Ted Buehler invited staff to add to the next agenda a follow up to the presentation he gave last month. He would be happy to answer questions about how he developed his data and conclusions and would welcome a discussion about what it will be like to bike through the entire corridor.

Buehler showed a chart and said his proposed route is eight minutes faster than the CRC proposal (10 minutes versus 18 minute from Evergreen Blvd. in Vancouver to Delta Park in Portland). If the project gave bikes the same engineering priority as cars, he said, bikes wouldn't have to stop as much and would have faster travel time. He said his proposal would cost a lot more and has some feasibility challenges, but is still worth considering.

Parisi said next month staff will give a presentation on environmental and other constraints so PBAC understands what is feasible.