

Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations
September 13, 2016 – Oregon Trail Room, Gresham City Hall
Meeting Minutes

NEIGHBORHOOD	ATTENDEES	NEIGHBORHOOD	ATTENDEES
Centennial	<i>Marlene Byrne</i>	Northeast	<i>INACTIVE</i>
Central City	<i>INACTIVE</i>	North Gresham	<i>Linda Parashos</i>
Gresham Butte		Northwest	<i>Kat Todd</i>
Historic Southeast		Gresham Pleasant Valley	
Hollybrook		Powell Valley	
Kelly Creek	<i>Charlie Teem, Carol Rulla</i>	Rockwood	<i>John Bildsoe</i>
Mt. Hood	<i>INACTIVE</i>	Southwest	<i>INACTIVE</i>
North Central		Wilkes-East	<i>Greg Hartung</i>
Guests:	<i>Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara, Jennifer Koozer, Shirley Craddick, Sue Ruonala</i>		

Welcome: Meeting was called to order by Coalition President Carol Rulla at 7:06 PM. No quorum; approval of minutes delayed to next meeting.

Public Comment: Sue Ruonala, a resident of Powell Valley Neighborhood Association, raised concerns about the route change for the Troutdale-Springwater Trail and the lack of neighborhood notice, especially to Powell Valley and Northeast Neighborhood Associations which are most affected by the change. At the 7/12 Coalition meeting and in the project documents currently online, three routes were proposed, but Sue learned a few days ago that the preferred route is now a totally different route that goes down Williams Rd. in PVNA and through neighborhood streets in NENA. She objects to the lack of notice to affected residents and the lack of transparency about the change. Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick responded that 1) no route decision has been made yet, 2) the new route is a composite of the other routes & goes along streets to respond to concerns about homeless camps on trails, and 3) there will be an open house on the proposed route. Sue reiterated her objection to the lack of notice and noted that the new route was not included in any of the options or information previously distributed or even currently on Metro's website. Councilor Craddick will discuss this with the planner, Robert Spurlock, and will clarify the date of the open house. She also noted that Metro has a responsibility to bring jurisdictions together to develop common policies and could help coordinate efforts for safety on trails, but city councils would need to initiate this. She gave the example of Mayor Bemis initiating the changes that led to transit policing to address MAX safety. She suggested that the Coalition might wish to discuss this with City Council. John asked about the cost of monitoring on the trails and who would pay for it. Councilor Craddick said that Metro and the cities would determine that, but the cities need to express interest.

Powell-Division Project: *Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara, Metro; Jennifer Koozer, TriMet*

Elizabeth gave a brief history of the corridorwide project, which goes beyond transit and includes Local Action Plans for both Gresham and Portland. **Highlights** – The proposed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route will replace the overcrowded 40' Line 4-Division bus with a 60' articulated BRT, which will have 60% more capacity and better maneuverability. With easier boarding, faster fare collection, fewer stations, signal prioritization and a real-time information system, it will move people faster and with more reliability. John – What are the improvements to hold more bikes? A – Currently buses have space for 3 bikes outside the bus. The BRT could have 6 outside or bikes inside. Space for bikes inside allows for faster boarding with bikes but it has to be weighed against the loss of seats for people, especially space for the disabled.

New information – Staff is re-evaluating the feasibility of using the Tillikum Bridge rather than the Hawthorne Bridge. Staff did significant public outreach this summer on station locations and on the route down inner Division. The proposed stations are where 74% of current riders get on or off the bus and those whose stops would be eliminated would need to walk 2-3 blocks more. Analysis of inner Division shows that the current bus creates the biggest slowdown in traffic and the new BRT would actually improve transit and traffic time. Inner Division has good pedestrian infrastructure so most of the project's infrastructure improvements would be made on outer Division. More in-depth cost and budget analysis indicates the project from downtown Portland to MHCC would cost over \$200M. The project would be more competitive for a \$100M federal grant if total cost were reduced to \$175M. The 16-mile route is also long compared to other BRTs (typically 6-8 miles). It isn't feasible to shorten the east end of the route because it has higher ridership and more destinations. Instead staff proposes to eliminate the west end connection from the Gresham Transit Center to MHCC (saving about \$24M) and to look for cost savings in each station's design. Staff is looking at other options to improve service to MHCC, including increasing the frequency of the three bus lines to MHCC (#20, 80 & 81) from 20-30 minute

service to 12-15 minute service. Currently there are 300 transit riders/day to MHCC, and 83% use Line 20 from the Rockwood area. MHCC data indicates that Portland is the city with the most students who attend MHCC, followed by Gresham. Councilor Craddick – Does the data distinguish between students with Portland addresses who actually live in Gresham? John – That question came up at the special meeting with Gresham representatives on the Powell-Division Steering Committee. Michael Calcagno, the MHCC Board member serving on the Powell-Division Steering Committee who got the data from MHCC, is looking into that question. John also noted that the ridership data doesn't take into account those who would take the BRT from Division to MHCC but don't use the current buses because of the poor transit service. His kids have chosen to go to PCC rather than MHCC because of the longer transit time and required transfers to get to MHCC, even though MHCC is a shorter distance from his house near Division & Birdsdales. Carol – Would a Phase 2 of the BRT be able to add back the connection to MHCC? A – That's not likely to be competitive for a federal grant. TriMet believes MHCC ridership now would benefit most from improvements to Line 20. Carol – But we don't know who's not riding because of the poor transit service from Division to MHCC. A – Staff will be looking at minimizing transfer times with improvements to Lines 20, 80 & 81. Councilor Craddick – All are disappointed by the elimination of the MHCC connection. John – Asked about chances for getting the \$100M federal grant. A – The Line 4 ridership competes well, but the connection to MHCC is less competitive because there aren't as many riders on that portion. A connection to MHCC with future work on a Powell project may make more sense and be more competitive. John – Noted the iterative process between community desire, technical work, community involvement, more tech analysis, etc. Councilor Craddick – Commented that the Coalition is powerful. What do we want? Would the community want a street car line to connect the four East County cities? John – A street car is expensive. Councilor Craddick – The question is what it brings, like economic development, and weighing the trade-offs. Elizabeth – Noted that the goals of the Powell-Division Project are wider than just transit. Gresham's Local Action Plan (LAP) emphasizes local economic development, while Portland's LAP emphasizes protecting areas and affordable housing. Marlene – Thinks the proposed station locations look good in the Centennial area but some are too far apart to the west. John – Missing North-South sidewalks to stations is a big problem on the east end of the route. What will be done? A – Most sidewalks on the route will be provided, but off-route sidewalks will cost too much. Local jurisdictions will be the best ones to build them since they will own them. Councilor Craddick – Has been talking to cities about how to help ourselves compete, but regional dollars need to be spent on regional projects. John – Without the connection to MHCC, this project has shifted west to Portland. A – More money will be spent east of 82nd than west of it, even without the MHCC connection. John – What are the local investments that are being proposed and the gap in funding even with the reduced total \$175M cost? A – Currently, \$58M has been identified for local funding, and staff is looking for other resources to fill the \$17M gap or ways to reduce costs. Portland would contribute \$8M, but nothing is proposed for Gresham to contribute.

Neighborhood & City News & Reports:

- Charlie – Open House for the Troutdale-Springwater Trail Project will likely be Dec. 14 or 15 at MHCC.
- Carol – Reminder: Gresham Repair Cafe is Sat., Oct. 8, 1:00-3:30pm, at the Gresham Library.
- Linda – North Gresham NA had a horrible ENN meeting experience last night for an industrial project abutting Fairview. About 100 Interlochen residents came, and it was too large a crowd for the location. The crowd was also unruly and yelling. The developer decided to reschedule the meeting for a different venue. The few neighbors who stayed were the ones who live closest to the project. They had very reasonable concerns about traffic, noise, property values, buffering, etc., and the developer was able to discuss these with them. Carol – Encouraged other NAs to support NGNA at rescheduled ENN meeting. Linda – Will report back when meeting is rescheduled.
- Carol – ePlan likely won't be ready until the end of the year, so training will be done in the new year.
- John – Any more thoughts on the street car idea? Greg & Charlie – Geography would make it very difficult.
- Carol – Two of the three Gresham City Council races have challengers to the incumbents. Does the Coalition want to hold a forum or Q&A with candidates? A – No one felt that they had time to organize something. Coalition members expressed interest in other forums (e.g., if Rockwood CDC holds another one) and a willingness to help publicize them to NA members.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:04 PM.