

BURNSIDE BRIDGEHEAD CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE Committee Meeting

March 13, 2007

Session Notes

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**BBHCAC Members in Attendance:** Jim Andrews, Norman Chusid, Lynne Coward, Frank DuFay, Joni Hartman, Tim Holmes, Bruce Murray, David Nemarnik, Robert Wentworth, Michael Whitmore, Chuck Willis, Brian Wilson, **Ex Officio CAC Members in Attendance:** Brian Bennett (Opus Northwest) Bruce Wood (Opus Northwest), Kia Selley (PCD Project Manager)  
**PDC Staff in Attendance:** Trang Lam, Bruce Allen.  
**Presenters:** Chris Armes (PDOT), Bill Hoffman (PDOT).  
**Others in Attendance:** Mary Christopher, Lois Cohen, Chris Kang.  
**Facilitator:** Sue Dicile.  
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Note:

"Q" = CAC member question

"A" = an answer contributed by the previously noted presenter, unless otherwise noted.

"C" = CAC member comment unless otherwise noted. (Public comments are noted in separate sections)

The meeting convened at 3:02 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADMINISTRATION

Review of September 12, 2006 Meeting Notes

- The notes were adopted without revision.

ANNOUNCEMENT

It was announced that a Central Eastside day center for the homeless is being proposed. It was commented that this is not consistent with plans for the Central Eastside and could impact other social programs nearby and the emerging small businesses in the area. A proposal to draft a letter from the CAC was not adopted. Kia offered to look in to the status of the proposed center and inform CAC members via email. It was agreed that individual members could then send letters if they chose to do so.

MEETING SCHEDULE

It was noted that the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 6/12/07. The facilitator asked if the email summaries were keeping CAC members sufficiently informed in lieu of meetings during the months in which there was little activity for CAC consideration. One member stated that he did not receive an email update. Some members stated that they wished to meet more frequently, while others noted that they are glad not to have to meet when there are no substantive items to address and that the emails are sufficient. A member recommended that the CAC revisit its original goals.

Q: During the interim period in which we have not met, have any key project deadlines passed?

A: No. The MOU to execute the DDA expired 12/31/06, and was extended to 3/30/07.

PROJECT UPDATE AND DISCUSSION

Development Program

Brian Bennett presented the overview. Highlights of the overview included:

The development team is now focusing on:

- Still seeking an anchor tenant.
- Affordable housing.
- Determining the best synergistic mix of parking, office, and retail uses.
- Examining implications of the slowed condo market, which may make it advisable to move condo development into a later project phase.

Changes in way affordable housing is subsidized have made getting subsidies more difficult. This is a “global” problem and not specific to this project.

Q: Regarding the recent requirement for a 30% set-aside for affordable housing: How much set-aside will be in this project? How will the project be affected?

A: It is too soon to determine how much TIF set-aside will be in this project. But we expect there will be some level of TIF set-aside participation.

Q: Has there been any progress attracting a large grocer as an anchor tenant?

A: We have had talks with one, but they believe there will not be enough housing units in the area.

Street Vacation on portions of NE Third Ave. and NE Davis St.

Kia Selley provided an overview. The affected area was illustrated on a map distributed to the CAC. (See *the handout for further detail of the overview*). Highlights of the overview included:

- The purpose for the street vacation being proposed is to achieve greater connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists by putting the S-curve on the same grade, from the BBH development to the Burnside Bridge.
- PDC submitted a street vacation letter to PDOT last summer to support both BBH and the Eastside Burnside-Couch project.
- When this topic was discussed with the Planning Commission, Commissioners requested more information about bike and pedestrian access to the Burnside Bridge and the district via the Couplet. All access issues are not known at this time because couplet engineering has just started, but we have now expedited the design process to the point at which sketches are being done.

Kia asked if the CAC is interested in providing a letter of support and member testimony to the Planning Commission. It was noted that the date at the Commission has not been set.

Q: Is there any indication the Planning Commission will not approve?

A: It is anticipated that they will, but it could be prolonged. We want to demonstrate support and bring the issue to closure. Vacating a street is a big deal to City. The City will need to be assured that the District is supportive.

Q: Are there negative impacts?

A: We don't believe so.

Q: Have businesses been notified?

A: Yes.

C: As a business owner in the affected area, we feel that as long as NE Second Avenue is open it will be okay. The affected access road is mostly for employees of the Convention Plaza building.

Q: Do we need street rededication?

A: A portion of the vacated area will be rededicated for the Couplet project.

Q: What does the triangle on the map at the northwest corner of NE Third and Davis signify?

A: The proposed vacated portion of NE Davis Street that will allow for more efficient utilization of the redevelopment area.

C: If there is a way to connect Davis to NE Second it would provide more access in and out of the area.

A: (Bennett) Some of that property is owned by BES and ODOT, so there are some unknowns. But we will consider that.

Bill Hoffman of PDOT provided PDOT's perspective:

- PDOT is supportive of vacation.
- In order to vacate the right-of-way we have to demonstrate it's no longer needed for transportation purposes.
- We are now notifying those using the right-of-way, including underground users. The only red flag is from the bike community. NE Third Avenue plays a role in north-south bike movement. So we are looking for ways to mitigate vacation of NE Third.
- The following ideas are being considered:
 1. Improving NE Second Avenue by removing tracks so that it will safely accommodate bikes.
 2. A Davis-to-Second bike connection.
- The ability to address this in a way that is equitable and favorable is important to approving vacation.
- Bike access to the bridge is another significant factor. Vacating NE Third Avenue provides an opportunity to take another look at those possibilities.

Q: The triangular piece of yellow shown on the map might provide a solution. Has that been looked at?

A: There is an opportunity there for a public access easement for bikes, even through ODOT/BES property.

C: The Central Eastside Industrial Council got a commitment early on for NE Second Avenue to be dedicated to freight movement. Interfering with freight movement within the Industrial Sanctuary in order to prioritize bicycle movement will not be favorably entertained by the CEIC.

A: The bicyclists feel they can dodge trucks.

C: That's the problem. They are not co-existing there now with freight trucks.

C: It is a problem that the Bicycle Transportation Alliance (BTA) has not sent another member to serve on the CAC.

A: PDC has asked the BTA if they would like to have a representative on the committee.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the CAC authorized Chair Holmes to send a letter indicating:

- The CAC supports the street vacation since it is critical for the BBH project.
- The CAC has expressed design concerns regarding the impact on freight movement on NE Second Avenue. The vacation strategy must honor and meet the commitments about prioritizing freight movement on NE Second Avenue.

Disposition & Development Agreement (DDA)

Kia Selley overviewed the elements of the DDA, noting items to be negotiated, current agreements, and remaining issues. *For a detailed matrix of all of these elements, please refer to the handout that was distributed at the meeting.*

Kia noted that she will accept comments via email in the event that CAC members identify anything missing from the DDA and any questions about the DDA matrix.

Q: Has consideration been given to DEQ requirements for environmental clean-up?

A: Yes. PDC has obtained a "No Further Action" determination from DEQ for Blocks 76 and 67, which will guide future remediation efforts. Underground storage tank issues have been assessed, and there is a plume of contamination in Couch just north of Block 75. All remediation work will be done in accordance with DEQ.

A: (Bennett): Opus is requesting that PDC purchase an insurance policy in case something comes up after the purchase.

Q: Regarding infrastructure and site preparation: Should demolition be required to include recycling and reuse?

A: Yes. That is addressed in item 10 in the DDA matrix.

C: Deconstruction Services is a lot different than demolition outfits – who "does" deconstruction.

C: Going above and beyond what is required reflects well on the project.

Kia reminded the CAC to be aware that more than the \$6.4 million PDC contribution to project financing (*referenced in the "Project Financing" item on page 3 of the matrix*) may be required for economic development, to attract a large tenant with quality jobs, or to help finance affordable housing.

RELATED PROJECT UPDATES AND DISCUSSION

Eastside Burnside-Couch (BC) couplet; Eastside bicycle connections to the Burnside Bridge; and pedestrian connections

Bill Hoffman provided an overview of progress on the eastside BC couplet and the S-curve. *(For a visual representation of the issues discussed, please see the handout that was distributed at the meeting).*

Highlights of his overview on Drawing "A" (East Burnside and Couch) included:

- Moving the couplet forward is an iterative process.
- PDOT is working with Lloyd Lindley who has worked on the couplet previously and has started working on the design of Couch as it moves through the BBH property.
- The hand-outs illustrate an added bike lane on Couch beginning at 6th, which is being explored as means to get bikes to the bridge.
- Traffic signals will be present at each intersection.
- A bike lane is proposed all the way through the Bridgehead property – on the Couplet.
- Where the S-curve meets the Burnside Bridge there will be bike and pedestrian crossing opportunities.
- Looking West on Couch from the BBH property *(see graphic in the hand-out distributed at the meeting)* 7' parking lanes are proposed on both sides, with two 11' travel lanes, and 5' bike lanes.
- The design stresses integration of the BBH into the rest of the Central Eastside via the streetscape.

C: A concern about this alternative is the loss of on-street parking. (Note: Two other CAC members contributed comments reiterating this concern).

A: We have looked at many ways of providing bicycle connection to the bridge. Each alternative has challenges as does this, but we think this alternative is the most practical and safest.

Q: Why put bikes on Couch? It is a main street.

A: Because Couch is the safest and most direct route to the bridge that we have explored.

Q: Is the S-curve large enough at the turn for large trucks?

A: Yes. It widens out in the curve. We have met with the freight community several times on this section.

Highlights of Bill Hoffman's overview on Drawing "B" (Plaza intersection at NE 3rd and Couch) included:

- The illustration speaks to Opus' design as it is now, but the design process is early and is iterative.
- The diagram shows the plaza at the same level as the street so that all segments of project can be integrated around the plaza and enable Couch to move through in a way that brings unity to the project. There are 12' and 14' travel lanes (14' to address trucks).

Highlights of Bill Hoffman's overview on Drawing "C" (NE 3rd Avenue between Couch and Burnside) included:

Q: Why is there no right-of-way width change?

A: As parking comes off, the right-of-way dynamics are changed. The wider travel lane is needed by trucks at the curve.

C: If you imagine the plaza on Saturday and Sunday, there would not be many cars. Could traffic be eliminated through there for special events, as is done on SW Main through the Performing Arts Center?

A: That is a good idea. It will depend on whether the right-of-way is chopped up by driveways etc.

C: Alternatively, could there be an alternative lane for autos so the street could be more comfortably closed.

C: Like closing Bourbon Street after 6pm in New Orleans.

C: Or Barcelona which also has street closures.

Q: Does the 2% for Art rule apply and how much?

A: 2% of public infrastructure, excluding federal money, will apply. So based on the TIF contribution, the % for art is likely to equate to \$100,000 - \$200,000.

C: Consider the impacts of eliminating parking in favor of bike movement.

A: We will keep looking for solutions. A solution to get bikes onto the bridge must be found before there is certainty for street vacation approval.

Q: How will the future street car be integrated?

A: As is, this will be over-designed with the street car project in mind. We have given most thought to the street car on West Burnside, but will be sure the eastside project can accommodate the street car at a later date. We are very focused on the whole range of future issues, such as future utilities needs and access, and avoidance of re-digging.

Q: What about City-wide rail?

A: That hasn't started yet. We are well in advance of that planning.

Q: Traffic signals over the street suggest "speed" and people won't see pedestrians. Side signals at pedestrian scale would be better.

A: (Bennett) We are talking to council about branding the project. That could include antique-style lights.

Funding strategy

Kia Selley provided an overview. Highlights included:

- Material is on the website and will be kept updated.
- The project is estimated to cost \$22 million. We will get more refined estimates as design proceeds. (*See the DDA matrix for confirmed and potential sources.*)
- Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) funds totaling \$3 million have been recommended for this project by JPACT. The BBH project meets the criteria really well. CAC support is very beneficial.
- Even though all the money is not in the bank, using conservative estimates, we believe we have a fully funded project.

The CAC authorized Chair Holmes to send a letter stressing the importance to the area of the BBH project and the Eastside Burnside-Couch couplet, and expressing their support for qualifying the Eastside Burnside-Couch project as eligible for TSDC funds. Kia noted that she would check on the timing and format for doing this.

Opportunities pointed out included:

- LID
- A District parking study/analysis

Regarding a District parking study, the following status update was provided: URS Corporation was selected to conduct the study. Contracts will go to Council in April. After that, work can start with PDOT on scope of work and study area definition.

Other questions and updates

Q: What is the status of Beam's involvement?

A: It remains to be seen how that will pan out.

C: With the streetcar moving forward we should make sure we are on top of it.

A: (Hoffman) The streetcar is not being driven hard on the Eastside. There is plenty of time to capture that.

PRIMARY OUTCOMES OF THIS MEETING:

- The CAC authorized a letter to the Planning Commission under Chair Holmes signature indicating:
 - The CAC supports the street vacation strategy, with the following caveats:
 - The CAC has design concerns regarding the impact of bicycle travel and the proposed bicycle amenities on freight movement on NE Second Avenue. The vacation strategy must honor and meet the commitments about prioritizing freight movement on NE Second Avenue.
 - The impact on access to local businesses should be carefully considered.
- The CAC authorized a letter to Metro under Chair Holmes signature stressing the importance to the area of the BBH project and the Eastside Burnside-Couch couplet, and expressing their support for qualifying the Eastside Burnside-Couch project as eligible for Transportation System Development Charge (TSDC) funds.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Handouts distributed at this meeting:

- Eastside Burnside-Couch Couplet Fact Sheet
- Burnside Bridgehead Street Vacation Request Map
- BBH Project Disposition & Development Agreement Overview
- Couch and Burnside Transition Concept

Respectfully submitted by facilitator Sue Dicile

If you have comments about the notes from this meeting please direct them to the facilitator at 503-287-9345 or: sdicile@aol.com