

MINUTES  
Historic Columbia River Highway  
Advisory Committee  
November 7, 1995  
Columbia River Inn

Members Present: Richard Blaine, James Hamrick, Dave Jensen, John Lundell, Lewis L. McArthur, Jack Wiles, Carolyn Wood, and Charlie Sciscione (Alternate for Bruce Warner).

Staff Present: Phil Gagnier, Robert Neill, Larry Krettler, Dwight Smith, Tom Garner, Jeanette Kloos, and Glenda Bonham.

Public Present: John Capri, FHWA; Greg Humphreys, FHWA; Michael Odom, FHWA; George Fekaris, FHWA; Allan Harwood; Bob Hatch, N-B Hatch Company; Jean and Eldon Hepburn, Portland Women's Forum; Brian Litt, Columbia River Gorge Commission; S. Gordon Marsh, Woodward-Clyde Consult.; Tom Stipe, Friends of the Columbia Gorge; Art Carroll, US Forest Service; David Sell, US Forest Service; Tom Turck, US Forest Service; Bus Gibson; Kenneth Lantz, and Mike Hebrank.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the September 12, 1995 meeting were approved as distributed.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments.

**EAGLE CREEK TO CASCADE LOCKS**

A presentation was given by Mike Odom, Project Manager, and George Fekaris, Environmental Engineer, from FHWA. A Draft Project Check list was distributed to the Advisory Committee. The two main purposes of the checklist were to inform the public about the project and outline any potential impacts to resources and to solicit input from the public and other agencies.

Mike Odom gave an overview of the project and stated the project purpose is to construct a 2.6 mile combination pedestrian/bike path from Cascade Locks to Eagle Creek intending to follow as closely as possible the original alignment of the HCRH and re-link several portions of the existing pavement. The project will be tied to ODOT's Tanner Creek to Eagle Creek project. For small sections of damaged pavement the project would dig out the damaged

pavement and place a base and new pavement. In areas where there is no pavement they would

be constructing a new path, removing vegetation where necessary and revegetating after construction. Areas adjacent to the freeway would include a traffic barrier. Funding for the project is through the Public Lands Highway Program managed by the FHWA. Currently \$720,000 is programmed for this project in fiscal year 1997.

George Fekaris presented the schedule for the project. (see attachment)

Mike Odom then gave details of the different segments of the project:

**Segment 1 Eagle Creek to Ruckel Creek Bridge**

There is no existing pavement. They are proposing to build a new path through this entire segment with 3 alignment alternatives. Alternative A is preferred. Alternative B that begins at the campground on top of the hill would be too steep (10% grade) and would have a heavy environmental impact. Alternative C would go through the flat area and would not be on the HCRH alignment.

**Segment 2 Ruckel Creek Bridge ending south of I-84**

This is all paved and in good condition. There are two nice sections connected by a detour road and they will identify the areas needing overlay and overlay them.

**Segment 3 South of I-84 ending at public access road**

There are small sections of pavement on both ends. The remaining sections were obliterated during construction of I-84. The two sections will need to be connected and an underpass constructed under I-84. A portion of I-84 would need to be closed during construction of the underpass and traffic would be impacted and could possibly be down to one lane.

**Segment 4 Access Road west of Cascade Locks**

Pavement needs little or no repair. They are proposing to close the access road to vehicular traffic and only be accessible to hikers and bicycles. Union Pacific Railroad would prefer that all access across the tracks be at the most improved access that begins under the Bridge of the Gods. This access point provides access to the same locations as the points proposed to be closed.

**Segment 5 I-84 on-ramp to parking area under the Bridge of the Gods**

This segment is currently a 2-way highway. They are proposing changing the on-ramp to a one lane access and using any remaining pavement for the ped/bike path. They plan to rehabilitate the parking area and there is also a proposal to include a sidewalk to connect with the sidewalk east of the Charburger.

The document includes a more detailed description and check list. The document will go to the different agencies and to the public by the end of the month and then to the open house.

FHWA responded to questions about the project: There is currently parking south of the fish

hatchery at Eagle Creek and under the Bridge of the Gods. FHWA will investigate whether this will be sufficient. FHWA will coordinate with Hood River County. Cost estimates will be refined and funding issues addressed by FHWA. Dwight Smith stated that the undercrossing would need attention to design details so that it does not look like a “cattle undercrossing”. Can the piece of HCRH pavement under the Bridge of the Gods be incorporated into the project?

Mike Odom requested comments on the check list by November 17, 1995.

## **MOFFETT CREEK TO TANNER CREEK**

Presentation by Larry Krettler, ODOT. The project is divided into two sections.

### ***Section 1***

The first section of about 400-500 meters will consist of overlaying the existing pavement. The guardrail will be extended to eliminate the parking near the Moffett Creek Bridge and a second access near the east end is also proposed for elimination. There will be one access in the center of this section that will be gated. There are no engineering problems with the first section.

### ***Section 2***

At the end of the flat section, several walls have to be constructed and the path will pull away from the highway for short sections where there is enough room to the north. The major problem is the area by the Tanner Creek Bridges on I-84. One proposal was estimated to cost \$783,000 for a structure here; the total cost of the project is only \$1.2 million. Alternative switchback examples were given (see attachment). The first isolated piece of pavement just west of the Tanner Creek Bridge would be destroyed if a long switchback is used. The switchback would be in the \$200,000 range which would be more in the range of money available for that particular part of the project.

Dwight Smith asked the Advisory Committee if it was acceptable to destroy a small (2-300 ft.), isolated section of pavement that is currently below the duff level, if doing so would make the adaptive re-use project more feasible by bringing the cost down. The Advisory Committee decided to delay a decision on this matter until they can see drawing and sketches and get further information.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

### **HOOD RIVER TO MOSIER CONNECTION**

#### ***Phase 1 Construction***

Tom Garner, Project Manager stated that the west portal to the west tunnel has safety hazards, which need to be corrected. A price agreement was put together which was not accepted by the contractor. Right now they are going to step back and put everything on hold until it can be re-evaluated and discussed by Tom Garner and the contractor. Tom Garner stated that the

contractor has a strong interest in completing the project.

**Status of tunnel:** They should be through the east tunnel by the end of the week. They are going to remove all of the midsection debris that they can. They could possibly start into the west tunnel from the east end. The catchment structure needs to be reevaluated, now that the area is accessible. Tom Garner will arrange to have a geologist check the tunnels and catchment area. There are gates that are locked to keep out casual observers as it is not safe.

The railing construction on the west end of the project is finished. On the west portal 6 or 8 feet of the roof has completely collapsed. They will try to put a new “roof” in behind the portal.

They will continue into the west tunnel until the hazard level increases and then stop for the winter. There were some big rocks that came down last week west of the tunnels. They will be doing some drainage work in the east tunnel.

The Advisory Committee will look at the tunnels in November 16, and will have a geologist go with them.

### ***Phase 2 Design***

James Hamrick stated the catchment structure is being designed for the area west of the west tunnel. The design from Miller Engineering is less massive than the original \$4.2 million design yet still has the general function of the original design.

There is a concern about securing the catchment structure during the times of year when it is closed. He is not sure how much of the year the structure will be open to the public with the rockfall hazard closures and closures required for endangered species (mitigation plan being developed). The project is proposed to have gates at both ends of the structure. The OPRD is looking at liability. A proposal was made that a fence be installed along the length of the catchment structure (see attachment). OPRD proposed a 52 inch high rail and signage to let people know that this is a hazardous area. Included was a proviso that the Department will review and monitor (once the structure is finished) both the rockfall and the public’s willingness to comply with the restrictions for a period of 2 years.

Lewis McArthur requested that the cost for a 42” concrete balustrade with a horizontal bar 10 inches higher be estimated and compared to a fence alternative. This design could be modified with the addition of another bar if additional height was determined necessary. The 52” height was acceptable to those in attendance.

### ***Right-of-Way***

Jeanette Kloos stated that all of Right-of-Way is acquired except the east trailhead; all acquisitions should be completed in the near future.

On the west trailhead Howard Houston has offered to donate property less than a mile west of

the gate. Options are being discussed. The Gorge Commission has a development review in progress on these parcels. It would need to be amended to include this proposal. There are many issues including Forest Land designation, recreation, visibility from key viewing areas, etc.

### **TANNER CREEK TO EAGLE CREEK**

There is \$1.2 million available and the low bid came in at \$1.4 million. With construction engineering costs added, approximately \$500,000 is needed to accept the bid. Jeanette presented the following options to the Committee:

- Change the scope of the project, taking out the stairway down to Eagle Creek. This would still supply public access and accessibility to the main view point overlooking Bonneville Dam.
- Ask for a transfer of Forest Highway Funds. (The Forest Service and Federal Highway Administration would need to agree)
- Take funding from the Moffett Creek to Tanner Creek project.
- Not build the project.

After discussion of the options the Advisory Committee unanimously with one abstention, fully funding the project by transferring funds from Moffett Creek to Tanner Creek project.

### **GUARDRAIL**

The contractor, Coral Construction, is producing the rail and they should start installing in two to three weeks. Completion date is May 31, 1996.

### **OVERLAY**

Suspended until the middle of March and should take two to three weeks when it starts. They have completed 2/3 of the maintenance work necessary to carry through the winter.

### **THEMATIC SITE SIGNS**

The review process is finished and they are still waiting for a couple of approval letters.

### **INTERPRETIVE SIGNS**

The signs have been on hold until Sharon Timko is back (January). Construction is expected next summer.

### **HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD PROJECT**

The HCRH presentation of some of the HAER sheets at the Hood River Harvest Festival was a success and people showed a great deal of interest in the display and the history of the HCRH. The City of Hood River is interested in taking some of the panels and displaying them in their local museum. A traveling display was discussed with the National Parks Service. Maryhill Museum is interested in a display.

### **HCRH MASTER PLAN**

Status: Will be in print by the end of the year.

## **ACTIVITY STATUS REPORTS**

### ***ODOT***

Charlie Sciscione stated the paving project for the west end of the HCRH has problems with the mix design that repeatedly did not pass specifications; Paving will resume in the spring. The contractor did some temporary repairs to get through the winter.

There was a slide near the Stark Street Bridge on October 29 and about 70 cubic yards came down. There was an overhang (another 70 cubic yards) up above that the contractor pulled down and then the road was cleaned and re-opened.

Lewis McArthur asked about patrolling the driveable parts of the highway every 24 hours. Charlie Sciscione said they are trying to provide that.

### ***OREGON PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT***

Jack Wiles stated that they now have a low wattage radio transmitter at the Vista House. The Vista House condition assessment is completed; \$1.4 million additional work is estimated to continue restoration.

A rule making is in progress to prohibit “base jumping “ (paragliders) off Crown Point.

### **COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE SCENIC BYWAY CORRIDOR**

Jeanette Kloos said the pre-application was submitted and she will be initiating public involvement and will be sending out a newsletter questionnaire.

The Draft Management Plan will be available for review in a month or so.

Lewis McArthur nominated Julie Curtis to work on this project.

### **DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS**

A Review was received concerning a manufactured home across from the high school.

The next meeting scheduled for December 19, 1995 unless this can be handled with a conference call.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is January 9, 1995.

Attachments: Eagle Creek to Cascade Locks Schedule  
Moffett Creek to Tanner Creek Drawings  
Drawing of Catchment Fence

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Admin.doc