

**TUALATIN TOMORROW
VISION IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE**

MEETING #14

June 22, 2010

6:38 p.m. – 8:53 p.m.

Police Facility Training Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: Monique Beikman; June Bennett; Frank Bubenik; Candice Kelly; Connie Ledbetter; Larry McClure; Beth Roach; Beverly Robinson; Bethany Wurtz

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ed Casey; Jay Wilcox

PARTNERS: Hal Ballard, Washington County Bicycle Trans. Coalition
Cassandra Ulven, TVF&R
Cindy Haldorson, Legacy Meridian Park Medical Center
Jennifer Wilson, Wetlands Conservancy
Marge Congress, Tualatin Library Foundation
Mike Dahlstrom, Washington County
Sheri Wantland, Clean Water Services
Sherilyn Lombos, City of Tualatin
Steve Wheeler, Clackamas County

STAFF: Carol Rutherford, Office Coordinator
Margie Bradley, Tualatin Tomorrow Champion

GUESTS: Tom Breyer; Kaaren Hofmann; Ellen Keithley; Mike McKillip

High Speed Rail (HSR) Presentation: Mike McKillip, City Engineer, reviewed a Power Point Presentation. One proposal from ODOT shows these trains running through Tualatin. There are positive and negative effects for this service coming through our town. The City's immediate goal is to make the public aware of this proposal even though a final decision and implementation of the service is at least three years out.

For the past 6-8 months City staff has been involved in discussions with ODOT, Lake Oswego, Oregon City, Clackamas and Washington Counties as well as Wilsonville. Open houses have been held throughout the areas that could be impacted. While the open houses have all been completed, there is an opportunity to participate in a survey which is available on line until June 30th. City Council members have been informed about this at a work session. A key issue is how can the City get information out to the community in a timely and meaningful manner. One suggestion was to take advantage of people already involved in City committees who can convey this information to neighbors and other area residents. There is quite a bit of information out there. Staff is also looking for feedback.

High speed rail is viewed as trains traveling in the 79-110 mph range. This is extremely faster than the freight trains that travel around 35 mph and top out at 45 mph. Commuter rail reaches speeds of 55-60 mph. The Federal Government has designated areas throughout the United States for the proposed high-speed corridors. The corridor that could impact Tualatin would run from Eugene to Vancouver BC where Amtrak now operates.

Mr. McKillip reviewed the draft goals as depicted on slide #7 which included decreasing the travel time between Eugene to Portland from 2 hours 35 minutes to 1 hour 55 minutes. Options for the location of high speed rail include:

1. Using the Union Pacific tracks on the east side going through Woodburn, Oregon City, Milwaukie etc. which is the route currently used by most freight trains.
2. Oregon Electric Line which travels on the west side through Wilsonville, Tualatin, and Tigard. This option would require a connection in Tualatin to route the train to Milwaukie prior to going downtown. This could require the construction of a viaduct to connect to the east/west tracks in the Community Park. Another option could be to route trains via SW 118th Avenue or in another area further west from downtown Tualatin. This line could also impact Lake Oswego if the trains were to travel along State Street.
3. The third option was created by Brad Perkins and Rudy Niederer and is the "Cascadia High Speed Railvolution." This would involve the construction of a new rail line along I-5 and include a new rail station in the area of SW Nyberg and SW 75th Avenue. It would then cross over freeway to other tracks around SW Pilkington and northeast to a tunnel into Sellwood across the river. A new station would be constructed in the area of the Rose Quarter and Interstate Avenue rather than the trains going into Union Station. Electric high-speed trains are proposed in this scenario.

Union Pacific has been supportive of Option #1 as depicted on four slides. They want the passenger service and already depend on freight. An appropriate balance between these two services must be achieved with a focus on safety while not compromising the freight service. No comments have been received from the Portland and Western Railroad.

Mr. McKillip reviewed the five steps involved in the entire process. Currently ODOT is completing the second step. The Federal Government has allocated a significant amount of stimulus money for these projects. However, they are not interested in funding research or the environmental impact studies required prior to beginning construction. He also reviewed the next steps and the State money required to qualify for funding.

The next two slides included the benefits and impacts of this service. This list has been enhanced following discussions with staff, TPAC, the Police etc.

Benefits:

- Quicker access Portland to Eugene, Seattle, and Vancouver BC
- Attract businesses that do world-wide work
- Remove some vehicles from I-5
- Provides options for Portland-Eugene travel

- Viaduct eliminates three at-grade rail crossings in downtown Tualatin, eliminates wayside horns and improves safety
- Rerouting eliminates three at-grade intersections and wayside horns and improves safety

Impacts:

- Noise (more trains)
- Traffic (if current alignment is maintained)
- Parking (if a station is located in Tualatin Town Center)

One question is what would happen to WES and what route those trains would take. Options could include a loop through Safeway and Dick's Sporting Goods and then reconnects in Tigard.

Mr. McKillip reviewed the slide depicting opportunities which include:

- More quiet zones
- Park improvements
- SW 124th Avenue right-of-way/construction
- Pedestrian river crossing in the Community Park with a path to Boones Ferry Road on the north side of the river
- Southern arterial
- Impacts to the Community Park may be leverages to a new ball-field complex
- Development of a train station at the Historic Tonquin Station
- Construction of a parking garage downtown
- Completion of the Tualatin River path on the south side of the river.

It is important to think about these things; there is nothing to lose by proposing some of these options. In conclusion, he provided numerous options to obtain additional information on this subject as well as contact information for Kaaren Hofmann, Civil Engineer and himself.

Committee members engaged in a question/answer period. Beth Roach inquired about adherence to Planning District standards and mitigating impacts of further development in this area (including a new station and parking structures). Mr. McKillip responded that they would be subject to the standards in place and would be required to pay SDC's, TIF's etc. and to show that they are mitigating impacts based on their proposal.

Tualatin staff and the City Council haven't made an official decision on whether to support HSR. Councilor Beikman stated that we are watching and learning. The people on the east side are interested in it. Oregon City has spent time and money in developing their station. Lake Oswego doesn't have much support for it. Steve Wheeler commented that they are much more interested because they have Amtrak and heavier freight service now. An inquiry was made if Cascadia (which is a private venture) has done any cost studies for their proposal. This service could provide competition for short air flights along this corridor. When looking at the national map, it is possible that this service will not come to Oregon since a more critical need exists along the northeast seaboard.

Beth cited growth projections for the Pacific Northwest. In 20 years we could have an additional million people residing in the Willamette Valley. We need to be prepared and try for funding. Meeting attendees concurred that this is an interesting process and appreciated the opportunity to learn more and to take advantage of public input opportunities.

Connie Ledbetter cited concern over the timelines and stated that the routing was not clear for the Cascadia proposal which she described as visually confusing and cluttered.

Steve Wheeler stated that he liked the format and collaboration. The information provided by other entities will not be changed. However, Mr. McKillip will continue to update information gained from these presentations.

Mike Dahlstrom inquired on a regional a basis who else is collaborating with Tualatin. Mr. McKillip responded that Wilsonville, Lake Oswego, Milwaukie, Oregon City, Clackamas County, Portland, and Metro have all been in contact with one another. In addition, Mayor Ogden has been in touch with other mayors throughout the area to ascertain their level of interest. If we decide we don't want this service in Tualatin, we will let that decision be known to help enhance other positions.

Brad Perkins from Cascadia is co-chairing a committee and held a meeting in Salem to look southern end of the area. There has been lots of discussion about collaboration and coordination. Steve Wheeler concurred that Clackamas County is listening and learning and this proposal has been integrated into their Transportation System Plan. He senses that they are interested in it with mixed emotions. Sherilyn also confirmed that Oregon City has said that they wanted it and have incorporated it in their downtown plan.

Bethany Wurtz asked how we can help. Mr McKillip encouraged everyone to develop a list with their ideas, impacts, benefits, questions etc. so that we are not caught off guard and encouraged everyone to promote awareness. Councilor Beikman requested input to help identify new problems citing the issue when WES began service. Only at that time did we become aware of the noise created by the new trains. The idea for construction of a viaduct and re-routing the trains to eliminate at-grade crossings came from TPAC which created a positive impact by eliminating three railroad crossings. Candice Kelly commented that while the open house was vague, this presentation put everything into a great perspective.

Summary notes prepared by Carol Rutherford, City of Tualatin