

MINUTES
City of Newport Planning Commission
Work Session
Newport City Hall Conference Room 'A'
Monday, July 9, 2012

Planning Commissioners Present: Jim Patrick, Gary East, Mark Fisher, Rod Croteau, Glen Small, Jim McIntyre.

Citizens Advisory Committee Members Present: Lisa Mulcahy, Bob Berman, and Bill Branigan.

City Staff Present: Community Development Director (CDD) Derrick Tokos and Executive Assistant Wanda Haney.

ODOT Staff Present: John deTar.

Consultants Present: Darci Rudzinski (Angelo Planning Group) and Sumi Malik (CH2M HILL).

Lincoln County Staff Present: Lincoln County Planning Director Onno Husing.

Chair Patrick called the Planning Commission work session to order at 6:00 p.m. and turned the meeting over to CDD Tokos.

A. New Business.

1. Discussion of the TSP (Transportation System Plan) element of the Comprehensive Plan. Tokos noted that included in the packets was an updated version of the changes to the TSP chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Also were updates to the functional classification maps, which update maps from the 1997 TSP. The relevance of these maps to the City is that is what determines how big those roads need to be; and for anyone developing, these maps are important to them as well. First, Tokos wanted to tackle the policies and then talk about the functional classification maps and the project list. Tokos recalled that there was a question raised about trying to visualize what we are talking about in the amount of traffic change from today to the end of the 20-year horizon. He said about 3.5 times the amount of traffic we see today will be occurring in the system in 20 years. He said that the South Beach site projects are intended to help address that. Tokos skipped forward to the policies on page 46.

Tokos noted that Goal 1 pretty much is the overriding objective we are shooting for to provide a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system. This means not only for vehicles; but also pedestrians, bicycles, transit, and Port and related facilities as well, consistent with our TSP. Tokos noted that there is a great deal of analysis that goes into preparing this. Our objective is to implement this plan. Tokos said that this chapter is a summary; not the full technical documents. It includes the 1997 TSP and all updates since then; the 2008 Local Street Plan from the north side, the 2008 Bicycle and Pedestrian update; Tech Memo 13, which is the technical analysis that supports the alternative mobility standard in South Beach and hopefully will be updated with another document and refinement plans that will be added; the 2010 South Beach Peninsula Improvement Plan; and the Coho/Brant Refinement Plan, for which the final document was just received from Cameron McCarthy. Tokos said all of those projects have been added into the TSP so the tables refer to the appropriate plan. As we continue to work with the summary document, we may have to go back and reference a specific project in more detail.

Policy 2 talks about the various elements. 2A gets into the street system and says that streets will be designed in accordance with the street design classification in the TSP. The City has done alternative ones (skinny streets) in some residential areas. Policy 3 talks about allowances for deviating from standards in areas and when alternative streets can be developed; like what is proposed in the Coho/Brant plan. Tokos noted that Policy 4 wasn't changed. That is a standard requirement we have to adhere to. The City has to make sure that development is not going to overtax the transportation system.

Policy 5 talks about the modifications to 101 in South Beach. It recognizes that the bridge is a constraint and is not likely to be alleviated in the foreseeable future. There is also language that it is the City's policy to continue to work with ODOT on trying to find a way to alleviate that. The bridge is a reason for the alternative mobility because the State recognizes that it is a constraint they can't deal with. deTar said it would be great if the State had funding to provide an additional bridge; but it doesn't, and the outcome becomes extremely restrictive on what development can occur. The alternative mobility standard allows the community to continue to develop. Otherwise the highway standards become restrictive and prevent development the community would like to have. deTar agreed the alternative mobility standard doesn't fix the problem with the bridge. Fisher said that sometimes a community has to say this is a severe and dangerous situation, and everybody should be looking at it. His concern is that if we continue reducing the standards, nobody is going to look at us. He said maybe we need to say this is an emergency; and people will look at the bridge. He said we will never have the money. Patrick said that the numbers will run out regardless by 2032 if Newport doesn't add a sole because it is the background traffic adding to the numbers. At some

point, the numbers will get bad enough that they have to do something about it. Fisher thought that “they” would be a small group like this one starting up. He said we just can’t ignore it because the more we alleviate the problem with words and put it off, the bigger it gets. deTar agreed that the bridge is going to have a lot more traffic trying to go across it than the capacity can accommodate. He said this is not just happening in his region, which consists of ten counties. He said there is the same situation underway right now in Salem with the Willamette River bridges. A major new bridge would need to double capacity across the river in order to accommodate the extent of development happening in west Salem. He added that the same circumstances are happening in Eugene, Springfield, Corvallis, and Albany. He said the costs for these solutions are enormous. He added that, as a State, we have not been willing to pay for what transportation needs there are. We have consistently decided not to do that. deTar said that, as he had noted before, the last gas tax adopted in 2009 became effective in 2011, and all that money is dedicated to projects that the Legislature selected to address problems that already exist. He said they haven’t kept pace with routine inflation, and we fell behind. Fisher said that the bridges deTar mentioned weren’t designed 80 years ago. The first earthquake we have, that bridge will be red flagged. He said that the Salem bridge was built to higher standards than this one here. He said the bridge was not built for handling today’s loads. We are way beyond what was designed for 60,000 pound loads with 125,000 pound loads going over it. The bridge is not capable of continuing that forever. Fisher would like someone to put a star on this problem saying they recognize it. McIntyre said that unless a City puts a moratorium on growth, there is a real problem with bridges and infrastructure to support growth. He said that in the case of a large corporation, they keep a reserve study saying they will need “x” amount of money for changes and set money aside. Otherwise, where is the money going to come from? That hasn’t been done here. We have to plan for it some way or cut down growth and then decide to set aside money until we get to a point where we can improve infrastructure. We recognize it is a problem; but we have to figure a way to resolve the problem.

Tokos said that what he hoped for is a commitment from the State to initiate planning work. They don’t have money to build it, but they have the capacity to start planning for it. That doesn’t require millions of dollars of investments up front. Eventually, money will have to come from the Federal Government emergency fund because of a catastrophic failure of the bridge. We don’t want to be at square one then. Small asked what keeps Newport from going ahead with that. Tokos said that we don’t have jurisdiction over those areas. We can do something on the Newport side, but it won’t meet state standards. We need them to be an active partner. Small agreed that we need them to be an active partner and not just shuffle numbers.

deTar said there was analysis done in 97 that talked about alternative crossing locations. Other locations can be eliminated and focus can be on the corridor. Then you can do an environmental impact statement (EIS), which is going to be very expensive. That EIS will look at traffic impacts including to downtown and in South Beach. It will be looking at the impact on the bridge, which is a historic property and on the national register. There will be a number of issues. He said it will be millions of dollars to go through that process. deTar said ODOT doesn’t have a function as a agency whereby they can put it on a list and say they are going to get to it as a planning project. He said there is not a long-standing list the City can get on and work your way to the top. There is no way for the State to establish that this bridge is any more important than Lincoln City, Albany, or Corvallis. The area commission establishes priorities on projects.

Tokos said that regarding the bridge, one thing the Commission may want to think about is making a recommendation to the City Council if this plan is adopted that they include a letter to the State Highway Commission that this is just an interim solution and that the State needs to start making as a priority work in planning for replacement of these facilities. He said this alternative mobility standard isn’t without value. The objective thing is recognition from the State that they don’t have the financial ability to achieve the standard highway standard we have in place right now. They need to accept there is going to be congestion that we can’t build our way out of. The City will be able to develop with more flexibility than we can with current State standards. Just talking about a method without bridge improvements is not without value. Croteau said we need to look strategically at this. He said that it seems the best way to get higher priority is to increase pressure on the bridge. Continue development in South Beach and make congestion so awful that the bridge would move up the list. He said he looks at congestion as a positive thing in the future of the bridge. Branigan asked that since it is the Legislature that decides where money goes and decides the priorities, if the City shouldn’t be pushing on our Legislators. McIntyre agreed that we need to lobby our Legislators. Tokos said we can certainly copy our coastal caucus the same letter we send to the Transportation Commission so that they are aware as well that, while this is an interim solution, serious planning for replacement of the bridge is needed. There currently is the capacity to plan for replacement once funding does become available.

Croteau asked deTar what other jurisdictions are doing. deTar said that Corvallis finished a study looking at other ways, but came back that a bypass is the only solution that would be feasible. They didn’t inject any promises. In Salem, they are finishing an EIS. That project has been ongoing for seven years. He noted that the environmental documents prepared for the Federal Highway Administration have a limited life. You can complete an environmental document and hope that lines up with funding to move ahead with the project. He said the planning aspects of it are that first you have to consider alternate routes for another place for the bridge or if alternate travel modes are feasible. At that point, it requires an EIS. The planning part can reduce the expense of that so that you are just working in one corridor rather than looking all the way up the Bay. That sort of analysis can be done to narrow the earlier work down to a preferred location. deTar said the 1997 study identified the location of the existing bridge as preferred. The other alternatives don’t change the demand on 101. People don’t divert.

Going off 101 is not what they came to the coast to do. He said you could build a bridge at another location, but it wouldn't replace the need for a bridge right here. That is why in the 90s, the conclusion was to build more capacity on the 101 corridor. Branigan said with the work that needs to be done, the whole thing will probably take the 20 years this document addresses. He said that, unless we start right now, 20 years from now we will be facing a much larger problem and have nothing in place. deTar said the City is saying everything it needs to say to those people that make those decisions. Tokos said the City will present this work we are putting together, what this doesn't accomplish, and what needs to be looked at beyond this certain amendment.

Tokos continued on page 47 with Policy 6, which is that the City supports the alternative mobility standard. Policy 7 talks about the need for a Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA). He said that once the Commission gets through the Comprehensive Plan, they will see a TIA section added to the comprehensive code. For the first time, the City would have real standards when it gets to a scale where we need to have detailed analysis and what that entails. He said this policy is the justification for a TIA.

Policy 8 gets at the issue of primary trips. He thinks this may still need a little work. He said the objective was to encourage certain types of development in South Beach, such as grocery stores and gas stations, which would allow people not to have to drive over the bridge. The intention was that there should be some accommodation for that. Tokos said he doesn't know if we have a clear standard for that in the proposal. deTar confirmed that certain retail and personal services uses were identified; like grocery stores less than 15,000 square feet. He said they are trying to work on the wording for No. 8. As he read it, he can't see what is really being called for. Tokos noted this is putting a policy in place for why it is appropriate for certain businesses not to be hit with trips they could be accounted for. It will be discounting a percentage because the business is located in South Beach and provides an alternative to driving over the bridge for those services. Branigan asked if the trip budget is discounted. Tokos explained that fewer trips would be accounted for that business because of the nature of the use.

Policy 9 talks about the trip budget and the need for staying on top of generated trips associated with growth. Policy 10 talks about engaging ODOT in a conversation about the bridge.

Section 'B' deals with the Pedestrian System Plan; and Section 'C' with the Bicycle System Plan. Some language was added that picks up that there are some bicycle and pedestrian improvements that are part of the system plan for South Beach.

Section 'D' talks about transit. The City needs to coordinate with Lincoln County Transit Service to improve the functionality of the transit system. The section doesn't have a table in it. Tokos is working on updating with Lincoln County Transit. There are still some common things. The City financially supports county transit. Newport is a hub for Lincoln County Transit Services; all traffic feeds into Newport. Lincoln County Transit is adding a 5-day valley transit. We want to add language about how to make that more robust and make that system more accessible for employers (HMSC for example with people coming from Corvallis) and for tourist-oriented retail. That would be the primary goal. It includes improving transit stops, which could involve having that conversation with larger retailers. Fred Meyer, for example, is installing a transit bus stop as part of their remodel. Branigan asked about 'D-5'; the City providing shuttle service. Tokos said that already exists with Lincoln County Transit. We do not want to provide any competition to that; just continue to be a viable partner with the County so that they stay solvent and continue providing service. Tokos said he would work on that language.

Section 'E' is about access management. Patrick wondered how realistic these things were. Tokos said it came out of the 2008 Local Improvement Plan. Tokos said something that may be unrealistic in the City proper but appropriate to keep in mind as we grow is to continue trying to combine accesses wherever possible.

Section 'F' regards a funding plan. 'F-1' is to employ whatever resources we have or combining them together. It talks about what those funding sources are. Outside funding sources shall be aggressively pursued. It leverages the Urban Renewal Agency. It recognizes that the City will probably have to extend the South Beach Urban Renewal District out an additional ten years to sync up with the State's funding. Otherwise, we have to shut down the South Beach URD about the time the State will have money to partner with us. The City has to look at extending the life of the district so we can use urban renewal funds when the State's funds are available. Tokos noted that the State is in the debt-retirement mode. There are bridge repairs they have to pay off, so it will be a while before they can come to the table as a viable partner.

Tokos wanted to briefly talk about the functional classification maps. There were three included in the packet. He noted that these were created by CH2MHILL with the City's assistance. Tokos began discussion with the north side (Agate Beach area) map. He noted that Avery and 73rd were added. They weren't on the original in 1997. This is where the waste transfer station is and a lot of our industrial lands. The biggest undeveloped industrial parcel is up there. Avery and 73rd are collectors where they tie into 101. At some point, 73rd Street would likely have a signal. 60th and Biggs to 55th is a carryover of what was in the 1997 plan. It is the collector for Agate Beach. He noted that where the dotted line is, the road doesn't exist there; homes are there. Further south, Oceanview is a collector. 36th and Harney is the north/south alternative to 101 that has long been in the TSP. 36th is a collector; and Harney is a minor arterial.

Map 2, downtown, shows Harney through there. It had to be identified even though we don't have all of the rights-of-way. It's not in the TSP, but there will be a road up there at some point. The collector system on the west side consists of Oceanview, which runs down through and connects with Spring, Coast, and Elizabeth. It is the scenic bike route. There is a connection between Oceanview and Nye that doesn't exist right now, but rights-of-way are in place. Tokos said he would show that as a dotted line. Major connections across are 11th, 6th, 3rd, Olive, 2nd, and Fall. 7th was added in the 2008 Local Street Plan; but it's not high priority where the dotted line is because some bridges will have to be constructed. On the east side, one of the major changes in the 2008 Local Street Plan just getting reflected is Avery shifting over to Benton as a north/south collector. It ties into coos and hits Olive. South of that, with the remodel of the City building and the redirection of 9th Street, it loops around City Hall tying into 10th, looping to 2nd, and up. Patrick said Tokos might as well dot the line by the high school. Tokos said he realized the school has the street closed; but it is still a street, and it's not known how long that arrangement lasts. It hasn't been finalized as a long-term solution. He agreed there is a conversation to be had, but Eads is a collector and handles a fair amount of traffic. With the 2008 plan, 1st Street was added as an east/west alternative on the east side. Patrick said maybe we should dot that one. Tokos said 1st Street at 101 would be a right turn only onto 101. Tokos said that the stuff along Bay is self-explanatory. Branigan asked if John Moore would be increased to a principal arterial. Tokos said it is a minor arterial, which is a pretty heavy classification for us. Patrick noted that where Abbey crosses 101 to extend onto Elizabeth, he recalled that there was supposed to be a light there. Tokos said he would take a look at it. He wasn't sure we want that there. Patrick said he thought the reason it was on Abbey and 101 was because of the hospital; rather than Fall and 101. Patrick said it was listed in there. Tokos said there is not very much on the east side. There is the future extension of 6th Street to tie into Newport Heights for further residential development in that area.

The last map is of the south side. Tokos noted that we really didn't have one in 1997. This is new. It picks up the minor arterial of Ferry Slip down to Ash. That Ferry Slip at 101 will go away. Ferry Slip will connect onto Ash. The system that has been talked about at recent meetings is shown by the dotted line where Abalone will be extended down to 35th. Ash Street south of 40th is shown by the dotted line. That will just serve commercial and industrial development on the north side of Mike Miller Park. Harborton will make a big connection between 40th and 50th. At some point 50th will be realigned to line up with the State park entrance. 62nd will loop down and be a connector to the south. Patrick asked if we should extend Ash to tie into 50th Street. Tokos said that would be tough because that would run through Mike Miller Park. He said we can't pull that off.

Tokos asked the Commissioners if the materials they had reviewed so far seemed to make sense. The consensus was that they do.

B. Adjournment. Having no further time, the work session meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Wanda Haney
Executive Assistant