



NW Bethany Boulevard Improvements
Project Focus Group Meeting #9 Notes

Meeting Date: August 11, 2011
Time: 5:00-6:35 p.m.
Location: Sunset Presbyterian Church

FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS:

Doug Alvarez	√	Paul Enriquez	
Debra Ashe	√	Bob McMillan	√
Hal Ballard		Charles Murphy	√
Chris Biggs	√	Steve Murray	
Ann Bryan (Amy Barton filling in)	√	Jeff Oberst	√
Robert Bueermann	√	Sandra Peterson	√
Stephen Collins		Norm Rose	√
Rob Saxton		John Hartsock	

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM:

Washington County			
Matt Costigan	√	Janet Wells-Berg	√
Brian Irish		Magdalena Campuzano	√
Howell Consulting			
Leslie Howell	√		
WHPacific			
Wayne Bauer	√	Ken Rehms	√
Sarah Heller	√		
Kittleson & Associates			
Wade Scarbrough	√		
Michael Minor & Associates			
Michael Minor	√		

OTHER ATTENDEES:

Approximately 20 others (see sign-in sheet for names); Mark Hirota, PB Americas

Welcome and Introductions – *Leslie Howell (Howell Consulting)*

Leslie welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the night's agenda. (Copies of the agenda were made available for the audience). Leslie reminded the audience that this is a committee meeting with time available at the end for public comments. The audience is asked to hold comments until then. Leslie reminded the audience that the Project Management Team would be available after the meeting to answer specific questions one-on-one.

Amy Barton will be representing Ann Bryan tonight.

Leslie reviewed tonight's meeting agenda. This will include:

- Design update; copies of the exhibits presented tonight were provided to each PFG member and will be posted to the project website
- Noise wall update
- SHPO update
- Bethany Overpass update
- Public comment period
- Next steps

Design Update – *Wayne Bauer and Ken Rehms (WHPacific) and Michael Minor (Michael Minor & Associates)***Road Design Refinements – *Wayne Bauer (WHPacific)***

Wayne walked through the project from south to north. He mentioned there was an alignment adjustment between the overcrossing and Bethany Blvd at the Collector-Distributor (CD) road. The design of the interchange will be discussed later in the presentation. One other addition is the inclusion of a multi-use path at the request of THPRD connecting their Waterhouse Trail from NW Cornell Road north across the intersection with Bronson Road and then extending west on Bronson Road approximately 1200 ft to where it meets the existing trail beneath the power lines. This was the result of discussions with THPRD to include this as part of their path system. Sidewalk was also added on the east side of the Bronson Road intersection to improve pedestrian circulation.

The design team met with the County Engineer to discuss sight distance requirements at Avondale Drive. As a result, that intersection geometry was revised to allow left turns out from Avondale Drive onto northbound Bethany Blvd. Left turns from Bethany Blvd into Avondale Drive were already included in the design. The County Engineer approved revising the sight distance standard.

The design team made profile adjustments between Telshire Drive and Ridgetop Lane to improve the sight distance for safety, while also minimizing pavement removal and impacts to side streets. The intersection at Ridgetop Lane is still a right-in / right-out configuration with no left turns allowed.

North of West Union, the landscape architect and project engineer conducted a site visit to review the trees. They found several trees can be saved by shifting the sidewalk location on the east side of Bethany to be behind the trees, and also for a section on the west side. Some trees on the west side cannot be saved. The revised grading will impact walls. (*This was later corrected to state "fence".*)

The PFG preference is to have the planter strip between the roadway and the sidewalk. Sidewalk locations were adjusted throughout the project limits to meet the preferred alternative.

The medians were reduced from 10' to 8' to provide and an additional foot (total of 2') of shy distance on both sides of the medians.

Question: Will the narrower median still allow for trees?

Answer: Yes, there is still enough room for trees.

Question: What are the profile changes between Telshire Drive and Ridgetop Lane?

Answer: The original design tried to save pavement and do an overlay. The revised design changed the profile resulting in excavating between 1'-1.5'.

Question: Will the road be gravel during construction?

Answer: No, the staging plans are expected to provide for two paved lanes of traffic (one lane in each direction).

Question: Is the profile going down?

Answer: There is a maximum of 1.5' cut from the existing profile. Right at Telshire Drive, the profile raises slightly to improve sight distance. This results in shorter walls on the west side and a small slope on the east side.

Question: At Avondale Drive, are you reducing the sight distance criteria? Is this a safety issue?

Answer: There are two guidelines for sight distance – AASHTO and Washington County standards. These differ slightly. With the County Engineer's approval, the less stringent standard will be applied. The difference in sight distance is approximately 440' vs. 350'. There is no safety issue with using this standard.

Question: What about the flashers at Telshire Drive?

Answer: We haven't ironed out that design yet. We are pursuing it with the County Engineer and looking into whether or not it will be allowed and if that location works.

Question: What is the multi-use path on Bronson?

Answer: We will discuss the multi-use path later this evening.

Question: What do you mean by walls north of West Union?

Answer: That was a mistake. "Fence" was meant instead of "walls".

Question: Did you change the sidewalk locations? Does that change the impact to properties?

Answer: No, the sidewalk just switched places with the planter strip. There is no additional impact to properties.

Question: What about maintenance of the planters?

Answer: The contractor is required to maintain the plantings for 1-2 years; then, County Operations Department is responsible. Some neighborhoods take over maintenance. Neighbors need to take the initiative on this if they are interested.

Question: What is the maintenance cost? Is there a water connection? What does the road look like if the Oak Hills Association does this and no one on the other side does?

Answer: Cost depends on what level of maintenance you want to do and what is in the planters. The landscape design will be prepared to try to limit the amount of long term maintenance. There will not be turf (lawn) to mow, etc.

Multi-use Path – Wayne Bauer (WHPacific)

Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District (THPRD) has a multi-use path that has a gap in this area. They have requested that the connection be added to provide a 10' path between Cornell Road and Bronson Road. This is being added as sidewalk along the west side of Bethany Blvd from Cornell Road to Bronson Road and then along the north side of Bronson Road west of Bethany Blvd.

The County will build the path as part of the Bethany project. The overall THPRD trail system connects this to the regional plan. This path connects the Waterhouse trails and Powerline trails across US26.

Question: Where is the bike undercrossing on US26?

Answer: There is none near Bethany. The Rock Creek undercrossing is on Highway 26, between Cornelius Pass Road and 185th Avenue.

Landscaping – Wayne Bauer (WHPacific)

Handouts were provided to the PFG members for two landscaping conditions. One condition includes a narrow planter strip with sidewalk behind the planter adjacent to walls, which is the majority of the project. There are areas where the existing 49' (half street) right-of-way width allows for a wider planter strip. This is on the west side, with one area on the east side. This provides space to move the wall and sidewalk and allow planting on both sides of the sidewalk. The narrower right-of-way limits landscaping options to ivy or vine plants adjacent to the wall. The landscape architects are working on the details of the design.

Question: For maintaining landscaping, the preference is one strip instead of two.

Answer: There is no turf to mow and the plants are designed to be drought-tolerant. Having the sidewalk next to the walls would give vandals a better opportunity, so we prefer to have vegetation grow and cover the wall.

Question: Where do the utility poles go?

Answer: We will discuss this in just a bit.

Illumination – Wayne Bauer (WHPacific)

We discussed the illumination options at the last PFG meeting. Since then, we have reviewed the design criteria and determined that the decorative poles will work. We are fitting the illumination poles and trees into the design. Examples of the type of lights to be used were provided in a handout.

Utility Relocations – Ken Rehms (WHPacific)

We met with all of the utility companies to discuss the project. We looked at the PGE overhead lines alignment to figure out where the poles can fit in and have the least impact to properties. The power lines will generally run along the west side of the road within right-of-way. No additional private property is required for this. If the lines stayed on the east side, anchors would likely be needed on private property.

The power lines start along the east side at the south end of the project, crossing Bethany Blvd near Avondale Drive. They run along the west side up to Telshire Drive, and then cross to the east to match into the existing power line alignment.

Other utilities are taking the opportunity of construction to relocate or upgrade their facilities. Tualatin Valley Water District will be replacing their 12" water line the length of Bethany Blvd., including extending it from Bronson Road to Cornell Road.

Question: Are we getting a replacement for water as part of construction?

Answer: Yes. TVWD has elected to make these improvements now since the County has a 5-year moratorium on utility improvements after construction of the street improvements.

Question: Show me on the map where the light poles and utility poles are?

Answer: The light poles are at the back of the planter strip to meet clear zone requirements. They will be in line with the trees. Utility poles will be behind the sidewalk within the existing right-of-way and primarily at intersection corners to reduce the impact to properties. With the existing poles on the east side, relocation can be completed on the west side and also avoid conflicts with the roadway construction.

Noise Wall Types – Wayne Bauer (WHPacific)

A handout was provided to the PFG members. The types of noise walls were refined to reflect the PFG preferences from the last PFG meeting and are shown in the handout. The handout also indicates where examples of this wall type are located locally. The color of the walls is undecided, but it will likely be earth tones.

Question: What is the technical name of this type of wall?

Answer: It is called a post and panel wall.

Environmental Update – Michael Minor (Michael Minor & Associates) and Wayne Bauer (WHPacific)

Noise Analysis / Wall Locations - Michael Minor (Michael Minor & Associates)

Michael provided a handout to the PFG members on noise analysis describing the methods of analysis and noise levels. If noise levels meet or exceed 66 dB, we are required to examine noise abatement measures, which is typically a noise wall.

Noise was measured at eight locations throughout the corridor, and was modeled at 72 locations. There are three pages in the handout that describe these locations. Michael analyzed the noise levels based on current project design drawings. He first checked the modeled values against measured values and found them to be within 1-2 dB, which confirmed the accuracy of the noise model. He discussed the spreadsheet handout, stating that the “red” cells were where the noise levels exceed criteria. The future noise levels with the proposed are around 5 dB less than they are now. Where walls are shown, the reduction is 5-12 dB.

Michael walked through the preliminary wall locations on the project.

From Sunningdale Drive to Oak Hills Drive, there is one continuous wall on the east side. The height of the wall is 8’ – 10’, based on surveyed elevations. The heights are not finalized until the retaining wall design is complete. For this analysis, we stepped the wall using 2’ height increments, which can be refined to 1’ increments once the project design is refined.

Between Telshire Drive and Ridgetop Lane, there is an existing retaining wall that could not support a noise wall, so none was considered. North of Ridgetop Lane, the backyard elevation is lower and the much of the traffic noise is from West Union Road instead of Bethany Blvd. The house at the entrance to Ridgetop Lane would not have the same level of noise reduction as other homes in the area because of the opening for the street. Constructing a noise wall to prevent traffic noise from NW West Union Road would not be cost effective. .

The house on the northwest corner of Bethany Blvd and Bronson Road is on a large lot, and receives traffic noise from Bethany Blvd and Bronson Road. If a noise wall were installed, it would need to wrap around the property to prevent noise from both roadways. A wall has not been included at that location either since it was not cost effective.

Walls along the west side of Bethany Blvd are from the current model range between 6'-10' in height. At Avondale Drive, along with most other intersection, the noise walls wrap around the corner to help prevent noise from flanking around the wall to the residences. South of Avondale Drive the noise wall is located on the property line.

Information on these walls will be in the noise report along with data and the analysis. Variations in wall heights will be based on site topography and features.

There are two outstanding design issues, one east of Bronson Road, as described and a second north of NW West Union Road. North of NW West Union Road no noise wall is proposed because the wall would not be cost effective. Any noise wall would need to run for a considerable length west on West Union Road and continue north on the west side of Bethany Blvd in order to provide the required noise reduction. Due to the length of the wall, it would not meet the cost criteria and therefore we were unable to effectively mitigate traffic noise at the condominiums north of NW West Union Road.

Question: Did you assume ground level noise?

Answer: The traffic data shows the vehicle types, and we used this for the analysis. Passenger vehicles and small trucks produce noise at the road surface, medium trucks, like UPS delivery trucks, produce noise at 4' above the road surface, and buses and heavy trucks at around 8' above the road surface.

Question: Where is the "ear" in the backyards?

Answer: It is 5' above the ground in the backyard. It does not mitigate for noise heard at the 2nd story level of homes. If the 2nd stories were mitigated, wall heights would be at a minimum, in the 16'-20' range with a very large foundation required to support them, however they would not meet the cost criteria due the added cost of constructing tall walls

Question: Will we see the 2 dB reduction upstairs?

Answer: With a 10' wall, you may see 2-3 dB reduction for upper floors. Breaks in noise walls for intersections reduce the overall effectiveness of the wall. Noise flanks around corners at the ends of walls. Therefore, the best reduction in noise is noticed at walls in the middle of the block.

Question: If a wall is over 10', can they go higher than that or is there no benefit?

Answer: We try to get to 7-10 dB reduction. After that, there are diminishing returns between increasing wall height and an increased reduction in noise. We will optimize heights during design, which could include an effort to level out the heights and make the wall more uniform. In this case, some walls may be slightly higher to even out the height along the wall.

Question: Is an 8' wall too expensive? Walls 26 – 30 are 6'-7' tall. Why are those shorter?

Answer: The criteria used allows for \$20,000 - \$25,000 per benefited house for mitigation at an approximate cost of \$20/SF for the walls. The walls are required to meet the noise reduction criteria and be cost-effective. Each house that is predicted to have a 5 dB reduction from the wall is considered benefited. Typically wall heights are reduced at intersections to improve sight distance and improve aesthetics.

SHPO Review – Wayne Bauer (WHPacific)

Wayne and Matt met with SHPO to discuss the Bethany Blvd project, review the SHPO process, and receive an update on the historic registration of the Oak Hills community. The design team is preparing exhibits as requested by the SHPO to assist in their permit application for the Bethany Boulevard Improvement Project. The SHPO will include the exhibits with the rest of the permit application and process the request. Wayne stated that the SHPO representative indicated that the overall SHPO process to consider the Oak Hills Historic Registration could take over a year to be finalized. *Note: Discussions following the meeting with the design team's consultant indicated that once submitted to SHPO and determined to be complete, the initial "Finding of Effect" document for the road project would take approximately one month to consider. This will be followed by other steps to prepare and process the application and any possible mitigation measures.*

Question: What do you mean that the SHPO process could take years? When will SHPO get the information from the design team?

Answer: We met with the SHPO in June. The SHPO asked for the information and we are working on getting it to them as quickly as we can. It is likely to be submitted to the SHPO within the next couple of weeks. The SHPO will make their decision and move on to the next steps in their process, which is outside our control.

County Land Use Review – Wayne Bauer (WHPacific)

WHPacific is preparing the Washington County Article VII application information to submit for the land use application in the next month or so. The application will be reviewed by County planning staff. There will be a public notice issued for the comment period. However, there will be no formal hearing. The City of Beaverton has a similar process that will be followed as well, in conjunction with the overpass project.

Bethany Overpass Design Status – Mark Hirota (Parsons Brinckerhoff)

Mark Hirota introduced himself as a consultant with Parsons Brinckerhoff and gave an overview of the Bethany Overpass design. He said that they are at the 30% design level. Recent activities have included geotechnical sampling and exploration, topographic survey, and wetland survey. The soil boring logs and lab testing were completed to obtain information to apply current design standards to the new bridge. Wetlands were delineated in Skyview Park and near the storage units. The design is being completed to avoid impacting these wetlands.

South of the bridge, the roadway section will remain the same as a 4-5 lane section. A multi-use path will be added along the west side, and the bike lane will be extended to Cornell Road. The design (load capacity) of the existing retaining wall near the building south of US 26 on the east side (former Chili's restaurant building) is unknown. As such, the design team is proposing to remove it and replace it with a new retaining wall.

The bridge will have 6 traffic lanes, bike lanes in both directions, a 10' multi-use path on the west side and a sidewalk on the east side. The widening will be completed to be entirely on the east side.

North of the bridge, the road transitions from 6 lanes to 5 lanes. A retaining wall is needed on the east side to stay out of the wetlands.

The design team is coordinating with THPRD for Skyview Park and the multi-use path, along with Clean Water Services, ODOT, the City of Beaverton, and various utility companies.

Mark gave an overview of the project schedule, stating that they are on track to be under construction in summer 2012. Construction is expected to take 9-12 months. Public involvement will be in the form of open houses and small group meetings. The project website will be linked from the Bethany Blvd project and is www.bethanyovercrossing.org.

Question: What are the small group meetings?

Answer: Those are meetings with property owners and businesses.

Question: Will the protective fencing on the bridge remain?

Answer: Yes, that stays, as we are not widening to the west. The newly widened side will have the same protective fencing as what is there now.

Question: What are the widening limits?

Answer: The bridge is being widened approximately 25' to the east. We will remove the sidewalk and bridge deck back to the eastern exterior girder and widen out from there. Striping will be replaced.

Question: Is the 25' all on the east side?

Answer: Yes, ODOT requires us to maintain at least the current clearance of 17' and that really move the decision to widen all to the east side.

Public Comment Period – *Leslie Howell (Howell Consulting)*

Leslie asked for public comment from those in the meeting audience.

Darla Castagno – I don't have much to say. I am anxious to hear from SHPO. I would like the report as soon as possible. I would like to know what's going to happen moving forward.

Response: This project is being reviewed by the SHPO. The County will notify the committee when the information package is provided to SHPO (expected to occur in the next couple of weeks).

Amy Barton – What are the costs of the whole project? What is the overcrossing funding?

Response: \$25 million in MSTIP funding. The overcrossing project is part of the MSTIP 3C funding and is included in the \$25 million.

Next Steps / Schedule – *Leslie Howell (Howell Consulting)*

Technical Activity – *Wayne Bauer (WHPacific)*

We are approaching the 50% design level and will be submitting the review package to the County over the next month. For this project, the right-of-way process will probably dictate the timeline. The right-of-way process is just beginning, with legal descriptions preparation starting soon. We will need to define construction limits as part of the design, which in turn define the right-of-way needs. The land use process is on-going. Construction is slated to begin in summer 2012. Right-of-way will be on the critical path.

Next PFG Meeting? – *Leslie Howell (Howell Consulting)*

As for the overall project, we are at PFG #9, which has been shown on the project schedule as the last PFG meeting. There will be an open house in later fall, likely October or November. The team feels they have received the input they were looking for from the PFG

Leslie asked the PFG members if they would like to hold another PFG meeting prior to the open house, or if they consider their work complete. A meeting prior to the open house would be primarily to update the committee so they get an advance look before the open house. The team does not anticipate any additional input needs.

Question: What is the plan for traffic during construction?

Answer: We are working on staging plans as part of the design. The contractor will prepare their specific plan. We will likely have a traffic staging exhibit at the open house. We will not be closing the road during construction, but will maintain two travel lanes. Mark's team will develop staging plans for the bridge work. There will not be night work on Bethany Blvd; however, based on ODOT requirements for US26, there may be some night work to construct the bridge. Utility work may be night work for the ease of construction and utility connections.

Question: Is there any other input needed from us as the PFG?

Answer: Probably not. We are adding the aesthetic information to the design, and the PFG has already offered input on that.

Question: Can we give input at the open house?

Answer: Yes, there will be an opportunity to provide input at the open house. Also, we can email the PFG members, if needed.

Question: We may still need to provide input on traffic during construction and on aesthetics. Will our input change anything?

Answer: The design elements are known. We are moving forward on the design details and refinement. At the open house, we will have more details to present, but nothing really new. Staging needs will go through the County review process. Ken provided an overview of the staging concepts.

The general consensus from the PFG members was that their work was complete, and there was nothing further to provide. The PFG mentioned that it is helpful to have information to share with their representative organizations. Email updates may be sufficient along with notification of when new reports are posted to the website. The PFG asked to be kept informed of the project status. Leslie mentioned that if something significant does change, we have the option to call another PFG meeting.

Leslie thanked the group for their participation and help with the project.

Conclusion – Matt Costigan (Washington County)

Matt thanked everyone for their involvement and providing input. When the community shows up for a project, it speaks to the Board of County Commissioners. Matt mentioned that he has two things to give to each PFG member. One is a certificate of participation, and the other is a seedling tree. Matt did not bring the seedling trees along with him, since he was not sure this would be the last meeting or not. He will get those to each PFG member later. (*In lieu of the seedling, a certificate to a local u-pick blueberry farm was sent to PFG members*).

There were a few final questions, and then the design team mentioned that they would be available for any one-on-one questions after the meeting.

Question: When will the noise walls go in?

Answer: They will be constructed early on after utility relocation is completed.

Question: When will homeowners be contacted for right-of-way?

Answer: It will be about 2 months before contacts will be starting. The agents will likely start near the overcrossing and work their way north.

Question: What type of sound walls and illumination were chosen?

Answer: Those were discussed at a previous PFG meeting. Exhibits are up front for viewing.

Leslie thanked the PFG members for their time and closed the meeting.

End of Meeting Notes

Next Open House: To Be Decided – October / November 2011