

**River Road Community Organization (RRCO) Executive Meeting
River Road Annex; September 21, 2009; 7:00 p.m.**

Board Members Present: Jolene Siemsen, Carleen Reilly, Becky Riley, Kate Kelly, Marilyn Mohr, Eileen Nittler, Beth Parsons, Jan Spencer

Members of the Public Present: Bruce Eveland, Savannah Crawford (ODOT transportation planner), Margaret Mazotta, Monte Riddle, David Roth (city of Eugene transportation planner), Russ Miller, Pat Reilly, Letitia Martinez

Jolene called to order. Introductions were done.

Public Comment:

Russ Miller lives on East Hatton, and over the past months has noticed a growing number of transients, assaults, drug paraphernalia and litter left, feces, smoking meth, dealing, traffic on the walking path. Last week, he and a friend went for a walk with a camera and took some photos of the trash. They were aggressively confronted by a homeless man, got photos of the trash. Russ went to the city and talked to Kevin Finney who got the sheriff's work crew out to clean up the site, and the cops cleared out the area. Margaret recommended neighborhood watch, and noted that the more often a place is used, the less likely it is to be squatted upon.

Carleen recommended working with the Hornadays to pretty up the path and Cadojen Park and its surrounding areas to make it nice. Russ is going to apply for a neighborhood matching grant to make it less attractive to transients. He will come back to RRCO with his proposal.

Margaret announced that 10-17-09 EPD is having a prevention convention from 1:00-5:00 at Sheldon. Free info and activities for kids and adults.

Monte is disappointed with the overlay seal done on River Road. It is dangerous for motorcycles, there are grooves that are difficult to navigate, and there are too many left turn arrows. Side streets are o.k. though. David says chip seals are louder and rougher than slurry seals. Chip seals are done on heavier traveled road and are cheaper. Monte asked who to call about setting lights (682-4800 says David is the number for signals).

Beth says watch out for Sgt. Ledbetter. She's gotten two tickets in six months for running yellow lights.

Public Presentations:

Savannah Crawford with ODOT spoke on the Beltline Improvement Project. She is the project manager, and was available to answer questions.

A brief overview: This is a 20 year facility plan, with the work focusing on improvements from Coburg to River Road, and the Delta, Division-River Ave. interchange. There have been two open houses--one in 2008 and one in 2009, so far. Problems noted were lot of traffic, road is outdated, interchanges are close, lot of crashes, lot of weaving in traffic.

One thing she's been hearing about is the VRC bridge. This was proposed once, about ten years ago, in the area near Razor Park. It is outside of this study area. This is the solution phase, hoping to wrap it up in April, 2010. Could look at other bridges across the Willamette within the

study area, increased capacity, technological advancements. Will start with identifying a variety of solutions, won't come up with one preferred solution, but rather options that need to go through environmental study that can last for years, then comes building, at least ten years out, probably longer due to lack of funding.

Jolene: One assumption is that demand for cars will continue to be strong. I like public transit and would like to see more emphasis on public transit.

Savannah: Good point. Other groups working on the project include Eugene, LCOG, ODOT, SAC (including LTD).

Jolene: Who came up with the assumption?

Savannah: A lot of policy makers are trying to answer that question. At that time, gas prices were higher, and there was more of a push. Also, there is improved technology that may impact driving. This is a worst case scenario.

Russ: Do you have plans?

Savannah: We have proposals but can't "plan" yet. We are still working at where to start.

Russ: Delta interchange. I feel like NASCAR.

Savannah: At the last meeting, it was clear that the high cost/ high impact option was not wanted.

Jan: What about the assumptions on traffic patterns? (He missed Jolene's comments).

Carleen: I wanted to follow up on Russ's comments. Nancy Nathanson was here and she mentioned some things she was working on the Delta.

Savannah: Short term improvements (\$2m to Delta for Intelligent Transportation systems, such as ramp metering) are in play. She is the project manager on this as well, so there should be little overlap or missing things.

Carleen: Well, Nancy is upset that nothing is happening.

Savannah: She was worried that we weren't communicating internally, but we are.

Carleen: Something about a "congestion ahead" sign.

Savannah: Yes, she's proactive. We weren't going to look at short term solutions until she pushed us.

Monty: Transition speed from Eastbound Beltline to Southbound Delta creates a bottleneck.

Savannah: We've heard comments and suggestions we can incorporate.

Beth: I know there will be a bike bridge over Delta Hwy. That should make bike transportation easier. David says \$6m for a bridge

Steering committee is commissions, LRAPA and city officials. Comments to Savannah or Eileen.

David Roth with the city of Eugene discussed the Lower River Road Concept Plan, and how it relates to transportation issues. He wasn't a part of the plan and development of the concept plan, but is open to questions, comments and concerns.

Becky: How do we move the plan forward to fruition? Are there incremental steps that can be taken to make small parts of the plan happen?

David: We can make incremental improvements. We are looking at pedestrian connections, crossings, safety. As to traffic signals--there are proposal to put in more--this is expensive--up to \$500K per intersections. (Hansen, Knoop and Elkay/McClure) Also, there are the proposed enhanced public transportation routes. What would drive a traffic signal would be increased density and more traffic. If you see more commercial activity or density, it could happen.

Jolene: Twenty years ago, the road was widened, and the speed was increased. Between Park and Hilliard is 7/10s of a mile. It is dangerous and difficult to cross RR, except at lights, and even then it can be a problem. A lot of people run red lights on Hilliard and Park. It wasn't

responsible planning to widen the road and increase the speed without putting in more signals. If we had budgeted it initially, even one every five years, we'd have them in now.

David: There is funding for one traffic signal per year for the entire city. You can get in line. Maybe there are additional solutions.

Kate: Pedestrian crossings at Knoop don't work. No one stops.

David: People should stop. This was an ODOT grant in 2006 to put in pedestrian refuges. They are mid block and drivers have to stop at mid block, lined cross walks. We have signs we can put up, and can try to enforce it, but right now in Eugene, it isn't as high a priority as it should be. As to flashing lights—we have recently installed these near Churchill on Bailey Hill Road, and we're planning on installing them in some other locations. The City is waiting to hear from ODOT about whether some excess funding from that project can be used for flashers at the River Road refuges.

Russ: There are turtle flashers in the ground as well to show where a crosswalk is. What's the cost of a refuge? Lower the speed limit--it's ridiculous.

Jan: In terms of "would another stop light help?" Yes, but so would slowing down traffic, so they can't accelerate as much between lights. As to a stutter light on Bailey Hill, I worry that the five lines at 50 mph is different than the 20 mph two lane at Bailey Hill. We would love to have the speed reduced on the road. The circular argument is that cars can drive safely at lower speeds or at 40, but this doesn't address the safety needs of peds and bikes.

David: It's challenging. It requires study. You have to be careful what you ask for—sometimes speed limits are increased. Also, if you don't have the enforcement, changing the speed limit may not do much. The state speed board in Salem approves the limit, and requires jurisdictions to do speed studies. The way the board works, it may increase speed limits if the studies show that people are driving faster than posted limits (as you have pointed out is the case with River Road).

Jolene: Are there exceptions?

Savannah: Yes, there are some.

David: We are starting the bicycle Master Plan update. It's a good opportunity to give us feedback about transportation concerns for peds and bikes. This is where the projects the city focuses on come from. RR is scheduled to be paved in 2012 from Railroad to Horn. That's a good time to do ped and bike improvements. If you can start thinking about what sorts of changes you'd like, let us know.

Russ: Radar guns?

David: Call me.

Marilyn: The Razor MUC area has been studied at length. You don't need to go study it again.

David: We do have to do it again to apply for grants. Do you want a slower speed limit or do you want people to drive slower, because a sign probably isn't going to do it.

Beth: Lower the speed limit and synchronize the lights.

Kate: Sixth and seventh are four lanes wide, but it's only 20 mph. People drive slowly.

Carleen: Marilyn has been trained to use the radar gun. You can take the training and use it with a partner. Also, what about EMX?

Becky: How do we get EMX rolling out RR? What is RRCO's role?

David: Most of the focus is on west 11th, but when that's done, they'll turn their attention to somewhere else, and RR is on the list.

Carleen: What about recycling asphalt?

David: We did that on River Avenue. He'll be the project manager for the ped/bike master plan.

Board Work Session:

Minutes for March, April, May, June, July, August needed approval. Marilyn made a motion to approve them all. Carleen seconded them. Unanimously passed.

Calendar update 2009-10. February meeting may be canceled, if RRR! is held. March is board elections.

Publication schedule: Need a postcard prior to October meeting, and add November and December meetings, not RRR. Eileen needs information on what to go on the postcard by tomorrow, September 22. Also, we can put subject lines on a postcard to steer people to the website. We have enough money to do a newsletter. We have to have four general meetings per year. October, RRR, March, need to plan for one more general meeting next spring. So postcards should go out four times, plus a couple of newsletters. Jan said that two NOs combined to make a newsletter and it was really great. The guy who did it, Steve Lamb, is extending to RR a page. Or we could combine with SCCO or Whiteaker. Jolene's sense is that we have a lot of interests, but not a lot of energy, so putting together a joint newsletter with SCCO, for example, would be better put off until next year. She will contact Steve, Jerry Finigan and Majeska Seese-Green.

Charter Discussion: Becky reviewed the 2006 and proposed changes, which she had previously emailed to board members. Jolene suggested we spend the week reviewing it electronically. If there are no problems, we'll send it to the city. It may or may not need legal review. They will review it, and then it needs to be ratified by neighbors at a general meeting. Jan: Article 3, the purpose of RRCO. I want to change it to add 'healthy' in front of development, and delete growth. Jolene: Once we've approved the final draft, we can post it on the website, announce it on the postcard, announce in general meeting for December. We can talk about the ways we are deficient in our charter in November.

Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan: Beth suggested that RRCO participate in the survey process, but not be involved with the City's pilot project. There will be an open house in October to talk about the neighborhood surveys and plans. RRCO may attend. Jan: Probably takes more energy than we have, but I like the idea that each of us writes a paragraph saying what kind of volunteer work or committee we have been involved with in the hood for the past couple of years, and then post it on the website. E-mail Jan with your paragraph this week. Marilyn would like to see a list of documents developed by or with RRCO compiled. We can post these things on the website. Everyone will commit to handing out ten surveys.

Carleen brought home a guidebook from Gold Beach and likes the idea of having a RR guide with advertisements. She asked if anyone else was interested in building up a business publication for the neighborhood that could be handed out at RRR, promenade, etc., with maps, parks, LTD, churches, businesses, social services, etc. in it. Beth--like the old service book we had. That would be handy to give out to newcomers. Carleen would want to sell advertising to fund it. It would take a team of people to inventory the business owners and get contact info. We'd need a team of people to contact them. She would like to have open dialogue with the business owners, especially those who provide essential services. Marilyn suggested a notebook with services to be out at RRR!

Meeting adjourned at 9:00.