



Fanno Creek Greenway Trail

Hall Boulevard Crossing

Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #4
September 28, 2011 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Conestoga Center, Room 202, 9985 SW 125th Ave.

Meeting Summary

SAC Attendance: Mitch Cruzan, Barbara Chapnick, Jim Persey, Melissa Preston, Wendy Kroger, Cathy Stanton, Joe Blowers

SAC Absent: Chuck Pearsall, Lynne Fitzsimmons, Amber Wierck

Staff Attendance: Margaret Middleton (City of Beaverton); Walt Bartel, Angela Rogge (DEA); Steve Gulgren (THPRD); Vaughn Brown, Kelly Skelton (JLA)

Guests: Brian Walker, Terry & Willy Moore, Greg Cody, Ramona Crocker

Meeting Purpose

- Review public input on options
- Discuss final option improvement suggestions
- Select top two options
- Select SAC representatives and key messages to support recommendation

Welcome

Vaughn Brown welcomed everyone to the final SAC meeting. Vaughn reminded the group that the goal of this meeting was to have the SAC members select their top two options as their recommendation. He went on to clarify that there are four options still on the table - tunnel, at-grade crossing, bridge with ramps and bridge with spirals - being considered tonight.

Public Input Review

Vaughn reviewed the summary reports which compiled the results of the comment cards (both online and those turned in at the open house). The software processed the results by showing the most favored options with the lowest scores, which was a bit counterintuitive. After this meeting the summaries will be tweaked to show the most popular options as having the most points/higher ranking and posted on the website.

Open House Comment Cards:

- The tunnel was the most popular option according to those comments received at the open house. The bridge with ramps was second, bridge with spirals was third, and the least popular option was the at-grade crossing.
- A common theme that Vaughn gleaned from these comment cards, and comments heard at the open house, was concern about costs and the time it would take to construct many of the options. A common perspective was “I’d rather have a crosswalk in two years, than wait 5 years for a tunnel”.
- Wendy said even though people are concerned about costs, it is ironic the most popular option was the tunnel which is the most expensive option.

Online Comment Cards:

- The bridge with ramps was most popular. The tunnel was second, bridge with spirals third, and the at-grade crossing, again was last.
- Vaughn said he saw a lot of feedback indicating that the bridge with ramps was a more appealing approach than the spirals. Many are concerned with aesthetics, safety, visibility, and there was concern that the spirals are more imposing physically.

At this point Vaughn turned things over to the Committee to discuss what they have heard and start processing their recommendation.

- Barbara asked for clarification that the beacon will change (coincide) with the traffic light at Greenway. Walt and Jabra both confirmed.
- Walt clarified a previous conversation about warrants not being met at Creekside Blvd. This crossing does not meet warrants because the roads are not major routes. It would just allow a beacon as well, although beacons like this are currently not recommended for installation at intersections.
- Jabra said there will be increased traffic on Greenway regardless of whether or not 125th goes through. Mitch reminded the group that this conversation is just about car traffic, but pedestrian/bike traffic will increase even faster. He mentioned adding the countdown timers at crossings, as well as a countdown showing wait time and possibly avoiding people getting impatient and just darting across the road.
- Walt mentioned the additional schematic handout that he brought which shows the actual crossing distances for the at-grade option based on the storage length requirements for the dual left turn lanes.
- Joe Blowers asked why there is an island in the drawing, he questioned if it could even be built.
- Cathy said there is no way extra lanes on Greenway or Hall will alleviate back ups due to the serious lack of connectivity in south Beaverton.
- Barbara said she’d like to see changes made so that pedestrians and bikes can move as smoothly and directly as cars.

Public Comment

Terri Moore: Strongly urged the committee to keep the at-grade crossing for further study. This crossing has been a problem for a very long time, there have been many study committees, and we have to consider the likelihood for funding. This crossing should be thought of as a separate issue from the traffic on Greenway. No matter what happens with pedestrians there will be traffic problems in the future. The real cost should be the cost of an at-grade crossing, compared to spending millions on a tunnel or a bridge. Think about the TSP rules recognizing pedestrians as a viable mode of transportation. Keep in mind that Hall Blvd has a similar problem to many other crossings in the area, and this project will set the model for these future crossings. Keep the mid-block option, ask for it to be better refined, install ped activated signals with zebra patterned crossing and small curb extensions with cutouts for bikes. We need a practical, near term solution. Bridges are expensive. There is the issue of whether or not people will use them. The tunnel is fraught with environmental problems. Be pragmatic, reasonable and realistic. Maintain the at-grade crossing.

Greg Cody – Thinks the amount of negative input on the at-grade crossing means the committee should take it off the table. It will be blocked by traffic. He doesn't see how it can be avoided. As far as options are concerned, the easiest crossing is the tunnel as there is no climb. The ramps are the most direct bridge approach. The tunnel is most likely to be used, but safety is a different story. Ramps are a concern as well.

Brian Walker – With a bridge with spirals people will still cross at the road. With ramps you'll have people bombing down the ramp at unsafe speeds. The spiral is best of the bridge ideas especially if it can be built to prevent skateboards from hurting anyone. The at-grade crossing is going to get someone killed. The no-brainer is the tunnel. It is the safest.

Unidentified man – People will still cross at the street with ramps. He prefers a crossing that won't take too long.

Ramona Crocker– She was incredulous at first meeting that this issue is being resurrected. This planning and talk is a waste of time. The other day she observed the area for 20 minutes - 4 hikers ran across street, 2 bikes darted. Is that legal? *Jabra said yes because it's more than 150 feet away from the stop light.* As far as she is concerned this issue has been resolved and settled. It's a sore point with neighbors in the area who are frustrated with congestion at the corner. She is tired of this trendy push to accommodate cyclists even though they don't follow the same safety laws as motorists.

Cathy Stanton asked if the at-grade crossing price includes double turn lanes. *Walt said yes. Walt clarified that the evaluation criteria handout at tonight's meeting is up-to-date and corrected.*

There was some discussion about funding and where money will come from. *Margaret said there are sources and every few years new sources come up. Steve mentioned that the parks dept can use some of its bond money to fund projects that are being used to fix the trail system in the district.*

Crossing Options Selection

Vaughn moved the discussion onto the last topic of the night which was actually “voting” for two recommendations. He went around the table and had each committee member make a statement and then tell the group what their vote was.

Mitch Cruzan: Agrees with other comments about the at-grade crossing getting done sooner rather than leaving it as is or waiting a long time for one of the other options to be built. He doesn't like the bridge options because of aesthetics and thinks the ramps are dangerous.

Mitch's votes: Tunnel, at-grade crossing

Wendy Kroger: Said she agrees with Mitch, this committee's charge is finding a direct trail crossing as part of the regional trail system, and finding a solution for a crossing on Hall Blvd -- not solving issues at 125th. She said she doesn't like the bridges because they are overkill and ugly. She does not think that a future lane addition on Hall Blvd is this committee's issue to deal with.

Wendy's votes: Tunnel, at-grade crossing

Barbara Chapnik: Said she thinks that we are seeing a shift in our society. There are alternative means of transportation in this world and the reality is that society is changing and alternative transportation is important. She thinks this project is setting a precedent for the rest of Washington County. She still has concerns about the crossing being in the middle of a left turn lane.

Barbara's votes: Tunnel, bridge

Jim Persey: To him the at-grade crossing is just not safe.

Jim's votes: Tunnel, bridge w/ramps

Cathy Stanton: Disagrees with Barbara about setting a precedent for future planning in the area.

Cathy's votes: Tunnel, no second vote

Joe Blowers: Feels there is already a strong precedent for installing at-grade crossings but it doesn't make sense here, especially with double left turns. He has concerns about funding the other more expensive options.

Joe's votes: Bridge with ramps, tunnel

Melissa: Her initial thoughts were to go with the bridge - aesthetics can be fixed - with tunnel as 2nd choice. Feels like they never really addressed safety issues with the tunnel and who is responsible for maintenance. She agrees that the at-grade crossing is not safe.

Melissa's votes: Bridge with ramp, tunnel

Lynne Fitzsimmons vote via email: Tunnel, bridge with spirals

Vaughn summarized and said that the tunnel is the front runner but the votes for a 2nd option are close. Mitch commented that because the tunnel is so expensive maybe it makes sense to go with a cheaper, more immediate answer.

Barbara asked what happened if the tunnel goes through to committees and is selected, but is too expensive are they left with nothing?

Walt said after the two options are moved forward, the next round of study work will detail all of the costs associated with the project. Then the City of Beaverton and THPRD would begin looking for grants and other money to do the project. What's important is to document local support for the project so that they can compete for money. They will need to demonstrate the need and show the partnership of the agencies to better compete for the funds.

Barbara said she is concerned about choosing a cheaper 2nd choice for fear it will be chosen just because it's cheaper.

Mitch said he thinks the driving public could be trained to be safer drivers if the at-grade crossing was installed.

Jim pointed out that the large majority of the public voted against the at-grade crossing back in 2002. He also pointed out that public feedback at the Open House and online was very negative regarding the at-grade crossing.

Wendy said her constituents were concerned about the height of the bridge and safety at the at-grade crossing but education will help immensely. Trail users were most supportive of the at-grade crossing and tunnel options over the bridges which impact parks and the wetlands.

Vaughn asked if anyone wanted to switch their votes. Barbara was concerned about not listening to public and going with at-grade just based on costs. She changed her vote from at-grade crossing to bridge with no preference for approach.

Cathy asked if this committee will reconvene with further designs from DEA. Vaughn said this group will not come back together to meet again, but representatives will go out to their committees, boards, and City Council to share information and ultimately the THPRD board will make the final decision.

There will be another open house around February 2011 to show more refined options.

Final decision and closing comments

Vaughn summarized that the Tunnel was the favorite option with the Bridge as the 2nd favorite with undecided on approach but ramps more preferred than spirals.

Margaret Middleton from the City of Beaverton, thanked the committee for their work. She appreciates that everyone brought their constituent opinions to the table, sent emails, and did a lot of work on their own with thoughtful weighing of the options. Brad Hauschild said he appreciated that this committee took this project head on. There were no easy decisions and they look forward to having everyone stay involved.

Meeting adjourned.