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CLARK COUNTY
WASHINGTON

RAILROAD ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008

4:00 PM -5:30 PM

1300 FRANKLIN STREET – PUBLIC SERVICE CENTER

6TH FLOOR – TRAINING ROOM #679

ROLL CALL:

Members Present:	Dick Carroll, Dick Clairmont, Scott Dalesandro, Bill Ganley, Richard Hanford, Rodger Lance, Lloyd Lycan, Melinda McLucas, Thomas Smith, Florence Wager, Dan Weaver
Absent Members:	John Allen, Jack Melton, Bart Phillips
Ex-Officio:	Will Pickering, Eric Temple
Public:	Dave Hurt (POV), Sue Lintz (NACC), Doug Auberg (BYCX), Lisa Goorjian (City of Vancouver), Sue Svendsen (Clark County Executive Horse Council)
Staff:	Fred Abraham, Carolyn Heinges, Mike Mabrey, Mary Beth O'Donnell

Agenda Item

Meeting called to order at 4:00PM

• Roll Call/Introductions

There were several guests today (listed above).

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Moved Dick Clairmont, seconded Richard Hanford, minutes approved as circulated. Voted in approval of minutes unanimously.

Communications/Announcements

- Dan Weaver read a letter that he sent to the BOCC requesting they send a representative to Washington D.C. in support of Rail Day and request for Federal funding for the railroad, to continue the momentum of the railroad. They are not planning to send anyone from the County and Dan expressed his concern about that. The BOCC plans to do their own lobbying.

PVJR Activities

- Eric Temple and Pat Boss are in Washington D.C. for Rail Day and were not available for a conference call. There is nothing to report from PVJR today.

BYCX Activities

- They are still involved in heavy maintenance on the steam engines, while doing a small amount of track work. Staging is going on during the next two weeks for track work to begin.

Status of County Activities

- Eric Temple and Pat Boss have expressed an interest in an excursion for the Legislators this summer. It would keep the railroad in the forefront of their minds. BYCX and PVJR could join efforts and make a nice trip for them. Fred will look into whether County funds could be made available to support the tour. Fred will keep Will Cahill apprized of plans as they evolve.
- **WSDOT Grant project:** A team meeting will be held this Wednesday, March 12. Cahill has been working to get a scope completed to present at the meeting. Fred is hoping to have the bid documents ready in the next few weeks. There are some issues with permitting for the culvert work. A surveyor will be going out on site in the next few weeks to determine the permitting requirements. On the Rye Junction portion, Fred has had a brief meeting with BNSF and they are asking for more details of why this runaround track design is the best option. Fred met with WSDOT management last week. The next step is to prepare an economic and business plan. The rehabilitation portion of the project is ready to go once the scope of work has been completed.

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- **Caples Road:** A track joint has come loose in the crossing but has been temporarily patched until a permanent repair can be done. Carl Oman is the lead from the County on the project. CBRR has contributed six 39'-0" pieces of 112# rail and tile plates and spikes for the repair. The County Public Works department will provide the manpower and equipment for the asphalt work, and a contractor will be hired to do the rail work. Clark County rail budget will cover welding the rails. The project should be completed by the end of April.

A safety issue exists at Caples Road Crossing due to an illegal access road onto adjoining properties. Fred is working to set up a meeting with the property owners, the County PA, and himself to discuss alternatives to this situation. There is a possibility of creating an access driveway through the adjacent private property that would not intersect the crossing as it does now. The other option is a new access road just south of the existing illegal access outside the limits of the crossing arms. Under the current conditions, the County is liable for any problems that may arise.

Beebe Property: The property has been cleaned up. DOE and Cary Armstrong have signed off on it.

Bloomquist Property: No update.

Railroad Resource Work Group (RRWG): The first meeting of this group will be March 18th from 6:00-8:00PM in Room 678 at the Public Service Center. The group is charged with reviewing zoning and development codes and helping to create design standards for the newly designated Railroad Industrial Land. Board members include Dennis Lagler, Dan Weaver, Sam Kim, Neil Chambers, Eric Temple or Pat Boss, Mike Cooke (County Sherri's office) and County Planners Oliver Orjiako, Marty Snell, Gordy Euler, and Fred Abraham. Mary Beth O'Donnell will be the office assistant for the group. The group may grow to add new members over time.
- **Handouts:** Federal Appropriation form reviewed. The County received confirmation of receipt prior to the deadline. The County is not likely to receive any funds this session but at least the name has been put in front of the legislators and familiarized them with the railroad. The appropriation request is dead at both the State and House level, but there may be some monies left from contingency funds projects (up to \$8.5 million) and if they come in under budget, the railroad might qualify for some of those funds. Representatives Haugen and Wallace responded to our letters with their support and we are looking ahead to the next session when we'll have a better chance at an appropriation.

Subcommittee Reports

- **Encroachments:** Lloyd Lycan has tried for three weeks to get together with Dave Gray but has had to postpone at least three times. Dave can save them a lot of time because of his expertise. Lloyd has rescheduled a meeting for next week to look at encroachments and take photographs to determine who the property owners are. Dick Clairmont and Tom Smith volunteered to help him.
- **Community Outreach:** John Allen was absent, but Fred reported on his behalf. John attended a recent NACC meeting and felt it was a successful outreach effort. In John's absence, Dick Clairmont will represent him at tonight's NACC meeting.
- **Web page:** Changes are being implemented to the railroad web page. Fred asked the board for their input on improving the web page and suggested a sub-committee of 2-3 people be formed to generate ideas. Rodger Lance, Scott Dalesandro and Richard Hanford volunteered. They agreed to get back to Mary Beth with their suggestions.
- **BNSF:** Fred would like to assign someone as the main contact/liaison from the RRAB to work with Fred on maintaining contact with BNSF. Call or email Fred if you are interested in this. It will be a month to six weeks before we're ready to make contact with them.
- **New Binders:** Mary Beth asked the board if they would like a 3-ring binder made up for them to keep their RRAB meeting handouts and notes altogether. It was agreed by all that this would be a useful tool. Mary Beth will assemble and distribute the notebooks at the next meeting.
- **Hwy 99:** Mike Mabrey, County Planner, presented information on the current revitalization project for Hwy 99. Team 99 was formed in 1999, made up of business owners and residents who wanted to see a change in the area. The project goal sets higher design standards than what the current code mandates, which is not design oriented. Mike has been working with

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Team 99 for two years on this. In April of last year the BOCC decided to make it into a sub-area plan, looking for solutions to crime, traffic, commercial property and its relationship to residential, taking a more global look at the four square mile area to establish a consistent theme and its own identity. Salmon Creek is the entryway on the north end and the railroad bridge provides a gateway for the south end. The plan calls for improvements to the appearance of the bridge, thereby improving the image of the area. The county hopes to have the bridge painted in the coming year. Eventually the county would like to lower the road beneath it to accommodate trucks passing under the bridge, which is currently height restricted, but that is way off in the future. Small improvements are needed before large ones can be made. In the long run, they are planning to further develop the railroad bridge with landscaping, a park or trailhead and improved pedestrian access. Right now it is a safety risk for pedestrians trying to walk along Hwy 99 under the bridge. The sub-area plan may propose a tunnel for pedestrians, or eliminate one lane of traffic and create shoulders on both sides. Mike showed an example of a bridge painted with pictures, which helps to deter graffiti, as a possibility for the railroad bridge improvement. The designs could be painted on panels and mounted, not directly painted on the bridge. There will be design criteria set, but at this point that hasn't been done. As another example, Mike cited the railroad bridge near The Quay, which was painted with the help of Vancouver Sign Company. They are willing to help again with this project. The project team has communicated with all neighborhood associations in the area and has received letters of support in return. Dan Weaver asked that the RRAB be kept informed of the progress so they can send a letter of support to the BOCC when the time comes. Mike asked for the approval of the RRAB at this time on the concept design, so they can move forward with their planning. No one was opposed to the concept as presented.

- **Rails & Trails:** Lisa Goorjian, City of Vancouver thanked the board for their support and gave an update on the project to date. A study was done to determine alignment of the trail over its 33 mile course (can be viewed on the website). An Open House was held on Feb. 26th and over 100 people attended, including the Mayor of Yacolt, City of Battle Ground PW Director, and a Fish & Wildlife representative. They were asked to vote on three different alignment options. Overall most people are supportive.

Phase I (to be built in the next 2 years) will consist of 5 segments with defined beginning and ending points, 3 segments would be on the northern line from Battle Ground to Lucia Falls. One segment would run from Molton Falls to Yacolt. The most popular was the Fairground Park to BG Lake State Park. Another segment from 199th St to Grace Ave. is within the budget. Currently the team is looking for additional funding. The BG Village developer is proposing to help build the segment from 199th St. to Grace Ave. Kim Rath from CBRR weighed in on which of the segments made most sense to build along the railroad right-of-way (the right-of-way varies along the trail). Areas from St. Johns to 199th St. must be looked at more closely and may or may not be on the railroad right-of-way. Lisa found no major problems being on the railroad right-of-way for the portions north of BG to Chelatchie. Comment forms are still available on the website, along with the results of the survey. The plan will be finalized and approved in the Spring of 2008. The Planning Commission will review and make their recommendation in the summer then ultimately it goes to the BOCC for their consideration.

Sue Svendsen, Clark County Executive Horse Council, reported the plan proposes equestrian use north of Battle Ground. There is an upward trend in horses in Clark County and the owners want more trails for riding. Concerns have been raised regarding interaction of horses with the trains. The horses would need to be acclimated first before bringing them onto the trail and exposing them to the trains. There could be side turn-outs along the trail to help with this. The horseman would also have to be educated on the liabilities. The most popular segment for horse back riding is from Battle Ground to Battle Ground Lake, then north to Moulton Falls. There is grant funding available for equestrian lands. Fred suggested that Sue get together with BYCX and PVJR to do a presentation and talk about horse use of the trail near the trains. A suggestion was made to post the train schedule at trail heads, but it is difficult to predict a set schedule. Riders are warned of the dangers of the sport and are cautioned about risks involved.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35PM.

