



City of Tigard

Tigard City Council Town Hall Meeting Notes April 30, 2013, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

- Mayor Cook convened the Town Hall Meeting at 6:30 p.m. Approximately 40 people attended the Town Hall.
- Mayor Cook welcomed everyone and asked the City Council members and attending officials to introduce themselves.

City Council attendance:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Mayor Cook	✓	
Council President Henderson	✓	
Councilor Buehner	✓	
Councilor Snider	✓	
Councilor Woodard	✓	

Staff Present: City Manager Wine, Assistant City Manager Newton, Senior Transportation Planner Gray, City Recorder Wheatley, Deputy City Recorder Krager.

Also present: Metro Councilor Craig Dirksen; State Representative Margaret Doherty.

SW Corridor Study

- Mayor Cook described the scope, timeline and status of the SW Corridor Study. Current phase of this project is devoted to receiving citizen input. No decisions have been made. Mayor Cook referred to the process followed for the City of Tigard. He referred to the Citizens Advisory Committee and the city's Comprehensive Plan. The Committee was asked to respond to the questions: What areas do you want to see grow? What areas do you want to see change? He identified the areas the Committee reviewed for possible changes or to remain the same.

- The SW Corridor plan is unique from previous plans in that the project began with a land use vision (identifying areas that have grown or have potential to grow) and determining how to get high capacity transit (HCT) where it is needed. Existing transportation infrastructure was identified and thought was given to developing connections. Previous transportation planning projects have focused more on the route and its construction rather than developing the land use plan and then creating the transportation infrastructure to best suit the needs of the types of uses.
- The type of high capacity transit (e.g., bus rapid transit or light rail) has not been determined.
- After the public input process, an environmental impact statement will be prepared and funding opportunities explored.
- Discussion followed on the pros/cons listed through the public process with regard to bus rapid transit (BRT) versus light rail when looking at up-front costs compared to long-term benefits.
- Comments from the audience and government officials during the discussion included:
 - Concern with getting transportation modes to jobs and services.
 - Concern that dollars spent on light rail would be wasteful – high costs, lack of flexibility, comparative low ridership.
 - Concerns about HCT corridors on existing neighborhoods.
 - Response to concerns about HCT impacts included a comment that experience has shown that the percentage of HCT ridership increases over a period of time.
 - There is a need to plan ahead and set aside right of way for a HCT corridor.
 - BRT or light rail each attracts a different type of riders.
 - Experiences on 99W were reviewed. Past studies show 50,000 vehicles per day travel on 99W.
 - Concerns expressed about the relationship between the City of Tigard and TriMet with speaker noting distrust of a viable future for TriMet citing recent financial difficulties.
 - Concerns with regard to the commuter rail, WES. Speaker noted TriMet is losing \$50,000 per month operating the WES system.
 - Question was asked, “Do we have to do HCT?” Could this money be better used on streets and trails?
 - Discussion held on leveraging funding with coordination among all levels of government agencies.
 - Notation made that HCT would fund system-wide improvements in and around the selected corridor to provide infrastructure for access to HCT and to mitigate impacts to neighborhoods.
 - Reference was made to our aging population and that increasing numbers of people need more transportation options. Current emphasis for future planning is to create a sustainable infrastructure in communities.
 - A member of the audience disputed that the older generation would want to ride light rail. The speaker referred to ramifications to neighborhoods and quality of life (including impacts on the school system). The Tigard community does not want to become more like Portland.
 - Representatives in opposition to light rail supported letting voters determine whether light rail should be pursued.

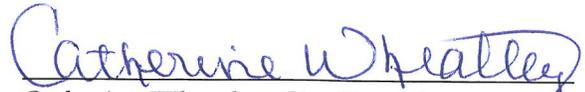
- A member of the audience commented on the discussion held so far and suggested that decisions should be based on data rather than anecdotal references to elicit support for one transportation mode over another.
- A member of the audience disputed the comment that primary users of HCT were low income. The speaker, who indicated she did not fall in the low-income demographic, said she and others find HCT especially attractive to travel to cultural events offered in the metro area to avoid traffic congestion and problems with finding a place to park.
- A speaker noted that Tigard is a suburban community; suburban environments do not support a light rail system.
- Metro's density requirements were discussed whereby areas within the urban growth boundary are to designate higher density areas and plan infrastructure improvements accordingly.
- Discussion followed on the disagreement whether Tigard-area citizens want the community to be reshaped from a suburban to an urban environment.
- A speaker spoke of concern about gas tax funding and how it is spent on projects other than for Tigard roads.
- There was a call from a speaker for officials to reject high density and to let voters decide what the city will look like.

Open Forum Discussion

- Walmart project in Tigard (comments offered are summarized below):
 - Officials were presented with a petition signed by people opposed to the Tigard Walmart project. (A copy of the petition is on file with the official copy of the meeting materials.)
 - Speaker outlined adverse impacts on local businesses and referred to the problems that would be caused with additional traffic congestion.
 - Discussion followed on whether citizens should have an opportunity to vote on approval of projects such as Walmart. Response from officials was that if a development, such as Walmart, complies with approval requirements, then there is nothing to present to the voters for consideration.
 - Discussion followed on the history of the parcel now being developed by the Walmart organization. The approved application was originally for a Target store. Target withdrew and Walmart stepped in to use the approved development application.
 - Discussion followed about potential options that might be available to address concerns with the Walmart project at this time.
 - Opposition representatives cited concerns with outdated traffic studies and unknown impacts to the surrounding areas. The public process followed was questioned with frustration expressed about the lack of opportunity to weigh-in on this particular project.
 - After discussion about what options might be available to address some of the concerns voiced, the mayor and council members entertained the idea of holding a study session dialogue with citizens to review options (with legal counsel input) the city might choose to pursue.

Closing Comments

- Mayor Cook invited citizens to attend his Fireside Chat meetings held on the second Thursday of each month.
- The next Town Hall meeting will be on October 29, 2013.


Catherine Wheatley, City Recorder

Attest:



Mayor, City of Tigard

Date: 9.10.2013

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