

May 9, 2007
City Council Community Service Committee Meeting
Oakridge High School Auditorium
Oakridge OR 97463
6:30 p.m.



MINUTES



CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Councilors Carina Schorer and Randy Dreiling called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Approximately 90 people total were in attendance.

INTRODUCTIONS

Councilor Schorer proceeded to introduce Ed Moore, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Senior Region Planner and the present Council and Planning Commission members. She reviewed the format that would start with a brief history and then a question and answer period with Mr. Moore. A general public comment period would follow with the reading of all written testimony. She stated that there would be a 3-minute time limit on each speech to keep the process moving along smoothly.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Ed Moore proceeded to give a history of the project in Oakridge as best as he knew based on the Highway 58 Refinement Plan and the minutes from all of the meetings that had occurred over the last few years.

Mr. Moore was able to answer over 30 questions posed to him. Among the more significant points clarified by Mr. Moore included:

1. Three-lane construction (one travel lane in each direction and a “twiddle”, a center turn lane) was more efficient in handling traffic movements than a four-lane (two travel lanes in each direction) highway.
2. Three-lane construction can handle the anticipated growth for the next twenty years.
3. ODOT will work with property owners for those businesses whose parking backs onto the highway.
4. If the business was established before 1951, the access may be grandfathered, i.e. maintained even though it was unpermitted.
5. If there is no City plan in place, then ODOT will control the project, whenever that project is done.
6. ODOT uses eminent domain only as a last resort if no accommodation can be reached for design issues.
7. ODOT will not place any more traffic lights in Oakridge.

There seemed to be an understanding that a lot of concerns will be addressed in the next phase of the Highway 58 Refinement Plan – the Access Management Plan. There was some discussion concerning the cleaning up of the properties that border the Highway 58 right-of-way.

There also seemed to be some areas where there was general agreement:

1. Beautify the main route through town.
2. Any design undertaken should not rely on the acquisition of property, but must utilize the existing right-of-way as much as possible.
3. Accesses and parking must be maintained and/or developed for the benefit of the business and the highway.
4. Because of the multi-modal nature of the highway, pedestrians must be addressed through both sidewalks and cross walks and bicycles must be accommodated within the limits of the design.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

After the question and answer period Mayor Hampton proceeded to read the written submissions that reiterated the feelings of many in attendance. Some were for the redesign, some wanted access management addressed, and others did not want any change in the design of the highway at all. Four citizens made public comments that were general in supporting a plan, but not necessarily the plan that was defined through the refinement process of the project.

ADJOURN

Councilor Schorer thanked everyone in attendance and adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:30 p.m.