

City of Springfield  
Work Session Meeting

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF  
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD  
MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2008

The City of Springfield Council met in a work session in the Library Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, April 14, 2008 at 5:33 p.m., with Mayor Leiken presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mayor Leiken and Councilors Lundberg, Wylie, Ballew, Ralston, Woodrow and Pishioneri. Also present were City Manager Gino Grimaldi, Assistant City Manager Jeff Towery, City Attorney Joe Leahy, City Recorder Amy Sowa and members of the staff.

1. Continuation of Pioneer Parkway EmX 30% Design Corridor Review.

Mayor Leiken said that he had met with legal counsel and determined to recuse himself from further discussion on this item. Because the EmX route was planned to go out International Way, and his wife was regional manager of Liberty Bank, whose corporate offices would be built in Springfield on International Way, he had a conflict of interest due to the financial interest through his wife's employment. He turned the meeting over to Council President Lundberg.

Council President Lundberg presided over the remaining portion of the work session. She asked Transportation Manager Tom Boyatt to set the stage for the discussion during tonight's meeting.

Mr. Boyatt referred to Attachment A in the agenda packet with included the remaining key issues regarding this design proposal. On February 4 and February 19, 2008 the Council was presented with the EmX 30% Plans corridor review to highlight the proposed treatment of issues including but not limited to impacts to private properties, loss of on-street parking, and changes to the Pioneer Parkway and International Way corridors.

Due to time constraints several issues were not reviewed with Council and would be addressed at this meeting. These were station locations on Gateway and Harlow Streets and mid-block pedestrian crossings to provide enhanced access to curb-side stations on these two streets. Council also requested more information from LTD on property owner/tenant outreach and further assessment of options for the EmX crossing of the Rosa Parks multi use path. These remaining topics were highlighted on Attachment A to the AIS, and addressed in Attachment B, LTD Memo to Council, with graphics provided and referenced in additional attachments.

Finally, LTD and City staff had been working on the two ODOT issues related to provision of bike lanes on Pioneer Parkway East and modifying access for two downtown businesses, McKenzie Mist and Willamette Valley Awards. Attachment B, LTD Memo to Council, provided an update on this effort.

Next steps will be for LTD to submit 70% Plans to staff, iron out any final details, and then prepare a 100% Plan Set for City PIP approval. Construction is anticipated to occur in 2009 and 2010.

Councilor Ballew said she spoke with a business owner with a business at the corner of Q Street and Pioneer East. He did not like the EmX corridor, but his main concern was the impact construction of the corridor would have on the access to his business.

Councilor Lundberg asked if the overlay project the City was planning along Pioneer Parkway would be coordinated with the LTD EmX corridor project.

Mr. Boyatt said they were separate projects.

City Engineer Ken Vogeney said the overlay project would be a phased project, paving the northbound lanes first and the southbound second. The City was contracting with Lane County to coordinate the work with LTD.

Mr. Grimaldi asked what the duration of the overlay project would be.

Mr. Vogeney said it was scheduled to last about two or three months.

Mr. Boyatt said often the key was traffic control and additional signs showing access into businesses. That was a challenge with every project.

Mr. Boyatt said staff had worked with LTD on several issues that had been checked off so it felt like they were making forward progress.

Mark Pangborn, General Manager from Lane Transit District (LTD), began the presentation from LTD. He referred to the packet of materials that LTD had put together to make it easy for Council to follow. They also had a number of people in the audience that could answer many of Council's questions. He introduced Joe McCormack who was running the power point presentation. He also introduced Charlie Simmons, Project Manager (LTD); Graham Carey, Engineer for the EmX (LTD); Lisa VanWinkle, Assistant to the Project and Public Outreach (LTD); and Chris Hemmer and Jack Gonsalves, from Parsons Brinckerhoff USA.

Mr. Pangborn said all of the issues laid out in Attachment A were summarized in Attachment B, the memo from LTD. The first issue was the Business and Property Owner. LTD organized a special meeting for the business and property owners on International Way, which Councilor Lundberg attended. Each of the issues was reviewed at that meeting. His sense at the end of the meeting was that the attendees had a much better understanding of what was going to happen in front of their property and that the solutions addressed their concerns. He noted some of those concerns. He asked Councilor Lundberg if she remembered any other issues.

Councilor Lundberg said that she had felt the project had been done backwards to what she would normally consider a public process. Because of that, she felt that the people were resigned to the project and would try to make the best of it. She gave LTD credit for working to take this project that was already on paper and re-evaluate it to fit all the issues. She said this was such a huge project that had so many impacts. She agreed that at the end of the International Way meeting there were no additional issues and she hadn't heard from anyone with concerns. She felt the property owners were comfortable that the City and LTD would figure out solutions as

the project went along. There would be plenty of public process between now and the final design.

Mr. Pangborn said that during the construction phase of their first corridor on Franklin Boulevard, LTD worked very hard to be sure no business was ever cut off from access. They take that very seriously because even a day or two without access to a business could be detrimental to that business.

Mr. Pangborn said the next issue he would be discussing related to design items discussed at previous work sessions. The first was the EmX Path Crossing. He asked Mr. Hemmer to come forward to describe where LTD started on this design aspect and where they were now.

Mr. Hemmer said after the first work session, the design team took their original concept and made another run at the design. They evaluated three different concepts which were on display and also shown in the agenda packet in Attachment C, page 3, 4 and 5. He explained the three concepts and the advantages and disadvantages of each. Because of the issues with those three concepts, another concept was designed that LTD felt addressed the safety issues raised by Council at an affordable cost (Attachment C, pages 6 through 10). This concept was based on models in Portland, used with the Max system, and in New Jersey. At both locations, there were zero incidents involving the transit and pedestrians, and both had much higher volumes of pedestrian traffic. This concept included an S crossing alignment. This aligned the pedestrian and bicyclist's eyesight towards the crossing, rather than having to turn their head and neck to look for the bus. This alignment also shortened the distance the pedestrian had to cross. The curvature of the S crossing also served to slow bicycle traffic to a reasonable speed to allow them to look and assess the situation before crossing. Passive signage (additional reminders) was also added, including on pavement markings that would say "stop here" and "look before crossing". The final treatment to this crossing was an active treatment. This made use of the system already on board the EmX vehicles that could detect where the vehicles were in the system, and would activate a warning system with a "vehicle approaching" flashing sign, and a audible warning device. LTD also suggested adding a third treatment, a signal that said "walk" or "don't walk". That sign would also be used in conjunction with the traditional EmX signal that would tell the bus whether it could proceed or not.

Councilor Ballew asked how fast the buses would be traveling on this section of roadway.

Mr. Hemmer said they would be traveling at thirty to thirty-five miles per hour.

Councilor Woodrow asked where this section was located on the parkway.

Mr. Hemmer said it was approximately 100-150 feet north of the apartment complex north of F Street. The location was shown on Attachment D, page 2. Mr. Hemmer said the design team sat with City staff a couple of weeks ago to review this design. City staff made a couple of recommendations that had now been adopted into the design. The first was to relax the angle of the curvature to make it easier for bikes to maneuver. The second was to widen the crosswalk and the approach to the curb and to add a stripe to help mitigate any potential pedestrian/bicyclist conflicts.

Councilor Pishioneri asked whose responsibility it would be to take care of any graffiti on the signs.

Mr. Boyatt said that would be part of the right-of-way agreement. The responsibility would be that of LTD's, whether City crews did the work or LTD.

Councilor Pishioneri asked how much room it took for a bus to stop that was going thirty miles per hour.

Mr. Hemmer said about 300 feet for aggressive stopping. The bus could stop faster than that in an emergency, about 200 feet.

Councilor Pishioneri asked about the stopping distance if the bus was traveling twenty miles per hour. He thought perhaps this section could be a reduced speed area for the buses if needed.

Mr. Hemmer said the aggressive stop at twenty miles per hour would be about 200 feet.

Councilor Pishioneri asked about the striping and if they had thought about texturing the curbs.

Mr. Hemmer said they hadn't thought about a texture along that area, but that was a very good idea. They had looked at including some rumble strip or a different type pavement that would cause an audible or tactile feeling and warning for bicyclists as they approached.

Councilor Pishioneri said the signals looked like they were placed too far into the crossing and wouldn't be easily visible to the pedestrians and bicyclists.

Mr. Hemmer said that was correct. The final placement would be moved to a more appropriate location upon assessment.

Councilor Pishioneri asked if the auditory warning would be disruptive to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Mr. Gonsalves responded. He said the audible warning would be positioned at the pole and pointed down. Many of these signals were made to sound several decibels over the ambient (surrounding) noise, so would be louder in the daytime than at night. It could be self-adjusting. There would most likely be a verbal warning in both English and Spanish.

Councilor Lundberg asked about the texture and wanted to make sure it wouldn't be something that could cause a tripping hazard.

Mr. Hemmer said it would only be a change of material. Different materials had different noise and feel characteristics. It would not be raised in a way to cause a tripping hazard. This would be an additional feature, not a primary safety device.

Mr. Boyatt said there were many options that could be put into place.

Mr. Hemmer said it could be something as simple as a sequence of score lines in the pavement.

Mr. Pangborn continued with the design issues listed on page 2 of Attachment B. The next issue was Business Access on State Highway. Any time an ODOT facility was involved in a project, their rules came into play. One of those rules had to do with ingress and egress which affected two properties along the corridor - McKenzie Mist and Willamette Valley Awards. McKenzie Mist currently had two driveways on Pioneer Parkway East. ODOT had asked that the two driveways be combined into one. LTD and City staff had worked hard to push ODOT to consider a wider single driveway to allow easy access for trucks and cars.

Mr. Pangborn asked Mr. Simmons to report on Willamette Valley Awards access. Mr. Simmons noted that currently, Willamette Valley Award had a driveway on Pioneer Parkway West that allowed both ingress and egress. ODOT's first recommendation was to close the access completely and use the access off Main Street. There were a number of reasons that would not work for the property owner. LTD worked with the City and Mr. Hemmer had done an analysis of all the truck turn in and safety issues. LTD then went back to ODOT and recommended a right-in only turn on Pioneer Parkway West. They had heard today that ODOT approved that ingress. The owner had mentioned that he was considering redeveloping that property in the future. Part of ODOT and the City's process was that when redevelopment occurred, the access would be re-examined. The location of the ingress was pointed out by Mr. McCormack on the power point.

Mr. Pangborn said the next issue was that of Bike Lanes on Pioneer Parkway East and Pioneer Parkway West. There was currently a multi-use path in the middle of those streets that bicyclists used and LTD's position was that it was sufficient. LTD wanted to preserve as much of the median and grass as possible and adding a bike lane next to the street would take an additional foot of that greenway.

Discussion was held regarding the bike lane ODOT was requiring and the current multi-use lane.

Mr. Pangborn said LTD staff would continue to work with ODOT on this issue.

Councilor Lundberg said she would not approve the design with the bike path included.

Mr. Boyatt said his recommendation would be for Council to approve the 30% design without the bike lane on the street. That decision would be recorded and could be used in the continuing discussions with ODOT. It seemed unfair to hold LTD up on their project while this work continued with the State traffic engineer to try to come to a compromise. At their last meeting, Council directed staff to work with LTD to address that issue with ODOT. They were still working through that issue and would bring back any resolution to Council for their approval.

Councilor Ballew asked if Pioneer Parkway East and West were State roads.

Mr. Boyatt said they were. There was general agreement that someday the City would facilitate that transfer of those roads from ODOT to the City. There were still a lot of details to work out and would take some time.

Councilor Pishioneri asked what would happen if ODOT made a final determination that the bike lane was required and how that would affect the west side of Pioneer Parkway.

Mr. Boyatt said there appeared to be enough width on the west side from Centennial Boulevard to F Street. There were some ideas staff was considering for the section from F Street to Main Street.

Councilor Pishioneri asked if consideration had been made to time and merge the two EmX lanes so less green space would be taken if the bike lane was required. He said it would be similar to what was done on Franklin.

Mr. Boyatt said they had not gotten to that level in the conversation, but he would note that in case it came to that point.

Mr. Pangborn said they hadn't looked at that option yet because they still felt this was the best solution. They would consider that later if needed.

Councilor Wylie said when talking about this issue, Council needed to be clear that they did not want the additional bike lane, because there was clearly a bike/pedestrian lane in the middle of the parkways.

Mr. Boyatt said that Kristi Krueger, Civil Engineer for the City, reminded him that the bike lane requirement was layered with the design standard that required a shoulder. We currently didn't have a shoulder along the parkway. Discussions with ODOT included a five foot area that would be the shoulder and the bike lane. There were still discussions needed with ODOT on the design.

Councilor Lundberg said she was totally opposed to the additional bike lane. She could go forward with approving the 30% design without the bike lane knowing that staff would continue to meet with ODOT on this issue. It was always more difficult for bicyclists to be riding next to vehicles.

Councilor Ballew agreed that she did not approve the additional bike path.

Mr. Pangborn said the next issue was Betterments. He described some of the betterments listed on Attachment B, page 3. He highlighted the Q Street intersection. Although the EmX going through wouldn't affect the intersection, if they could help improve it through their project it would benefit everyone. He asked Mr. Hemmer to explain the intersection.

Mr. Hemmer described the Q Street intersection as it was today and some of the changes that had been made over the years. He described proposed changes to allow concurrent left turns on the parkways and additional lanes for other turns. These changes would improve wait times at the intersection for both traffic and the EmX. LTD would conduct a more detailed traffic analysis to identify other possible improvements to the intersection.

Councilor Pishioneri asked if a dedicated slip lane could be put in to turn east on Q Street from the northbound Pioneer Parkway. He asked if the angle of the turn from the offramp coming from the freeway onto Q Street could be made less sharp. He also addressed the right turn only lane on westbound Q Street and suggested that lane include the option of going straight. They could then have two lanes turning left at that signal.

Mr. Hemmer said they were evaluating how those two options performed regarding traffic improvements.

Councilor Woodrow noted the issues with that exit off the freeway.

Mr. Hemmer said he had received the draft results of the evaluations of those two areas and would be reviewing those with City staff soon to assess the cost benefit analysis.

Councilor Pishioneri asked if the left turn from eastbound Q Street onto northbound Pioneer Parkway was concurrent with the left turn from westbound Q Street onto southbound Pioneer Parkway.

Mr. Hemmer said due to the geometry of that turn that could not be remedied with this project, those turns could not occur concurrently. He explained and said any left turn there would be redundant to other options off of Laura Street.

Councilor Lundberg said she would anticipate that people would cut through the Walgreen parking lot as a short cut over to the Laura Street intersection. She noted the area beside the I-5 offramp on Q Street where pedestrians had cut a path through the grassy area to avoid the Q Street/Pioneer Parkway intersection.

Mr. Hemmer said that was correct, many pedestrians did use shortcuts.

Councilor Lundberg said those areas could maybe be used later to help with traffic and pedestrian traffic.

Mr. Hemmer said it was not unusual to take those types of shortcuts and make the route official if it didn't conflict with other traffic issues. Those shortcuts could also be blocked, but that involved materials that would need to be maintained into the future.

Mr. Pangborn said the last two issues related to LTD stations on Harlow and Gateway and the mid-block crossing. He referred to a picture in the power point (also on page 13 of Attachment C) showing the two stations. He noted that the bus would be traveling in mixed traffic along Gateway and Harlow Roads, similar to the bus route on Franklin Boulevard. He showed a picture of a curb-side station (page 14, Attachment C). He discussed the advantage of this type of station and some of the amenities at each station, including lighting on the underside of the covering. He said these stations had been easy to maintain, resistant to vandals and had good visibility.

Councilor Wylie said they were very safe and sturdy.

Mr. Pangborn said one of LTD's concerns that had been addressed in all their stations was safety, visibility and lighting.

Councilor Ballew asked if the lighting would be an issue for surrounding neighbors.

Mr. Pangborn said the station light would only be backlighting for the kiosk facing the road, and the under-lighting at the station which would be contained. There was also a small amount of

lighting on the cement to prevent tripping. Mr. McCormack brought up a photo of the station lit up at night as an example.

Mr. Pangborn said they had worked hard to put the stations at the appropriate locations for the riders as well as with safety in mind.

Councilor Ralston said he and Councilor Woodrow were still concerned about the Hayden Bridge Station and where it was located.

Mr. Pangborn noted the location of the nearest station in that area and the need, in LTD's opinion, for this station. When they moved stations to fit the EmX corridor, there were complaints that they had moved them too far apart. They tried not to leave too much of a space between stations and the Hayden Bridge station took care of that need.

Approximately 7:00 p.m.: Councilor Pishioneri left for the remainder of the meeting – excused.

Councilor Ralston said the roundabout would be an obstacle for people to get across to that station.

Mr. Pangborn said there was crossing that needed to take place.

Councilor Woodrow asked if there was traditional bus service on Hayden Bridge further east.

Mr. Pangborn said there was, but LTD didn't know what would happen with that traditional service. Once the EmX corridor in that area was complete, LTD would meet with the City to reconfigure the routes to best meet the needs of their riders.

Mr. Boyatt said LTD staff had discussed with City staff the need to cross connect the east/west travelers on Hayden Bridge Road.

Mr. Pangborn said that was correct and could be a transfer point.

Mr. McCormack noted that someone needing to go to the hospital that lived on the side of the road of the Hayden Bridge Station would need to ride the route all the way around because currently everything coming off Harlow went south. He explained further.

Councilor Lundberg said the population centers in that neighborhood were very densely populated and the Hayden Bridge station would be important. She referred to the Hawk signal in the packet. Mr. Pangborn said that would be discussed next. Councilor Lundberg said there wasn't any other station in the vicinity of the proposed Hayden Bridge station and it wasn't bad to get across the roundabout because traffic flowed better and there were more openings. It was safer now as a roundabout than it was as an intersection.

Councilor Woodrow said the issue he had with this station last time was that it was located farther south on Pioneer Parkway and there was no entrance at that location. He felt the location closer to the roundabout would be better.

Mr. Pangborn said LTD would be working on service in that entire area. He discussed the transfer in the Thurston area and the positive way it affected ridership. The increase in ridership meant they had to increase their service in that area.

A citizen in the audience, Mr. Mel Barnes, said they changed the route from every 15 minutes to every 10 minutes.

Mr. Pangborn said the final issue was the mid-block crossing. He said where there was a station, it was preferable to have a traffic light to allow people to get to the station as safely as possible. There were five places where there were stations but no traffic lights. At those locations, it didn't make sense to put in a traffic light, so mid-block crossings could be installed. These crossings would have a pedestrian refuge in the middle of the street. He referenced a photo showing the design LTD would use (page 18 in Attachment C). The sixth was the crossing on the Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) path. He asked Mr. Barnett to explain the issue at that crossing.

Mr. Barnett said the underlying issue was that the parkway was at high speed relative to the other parts of the EmX system where mid-block crossings were proposed. There was no crossing defined at this location (he referred to a photo – also on page 19 in Attachment C), but there was an informal crossing by pedestrians. About eight years ago, there was a fatality when someone came off the Rosa Parks path and tried to get to the EWEB path and was struck and killed. This was a 45 miles per hour segment of the roadway. There was justification for a crossing at this location.

Mr. Barnett outlined three options to accomplish the crossing: 1) to use a full scale traffic signal and have a pedestrian crossing associated with that traffic signal; 2) a Hawk crossing; or 3) a warning light that didn't require an action by the driver, but simply alerted the driver there was a pedestrian crossing present. By state law, the vehicle should stop for the pedestrian. He further discussed the Hawk signal. He said it was intended to provide a high level of protection for the pedestrian while diminishing the amount of delay for the driver. In addition, because of the nature of the Hawk signal remaining dark except when a pedestrian activated the signal, it tended to be something the driver was more willing to respect rather than a green signal that stayed steady green most of the time until a pedestrian activated the signal. The pedestrian would be detected, the lights would turn flashing yellow, steady yellow, and then steady red. The walk indication would come up for the pedestrian to start walking. Near the end of the light's cycle, the red lights would flash, still requiring vehicles to stop and warning the pedestrian to get through the crosswalk. If no pedestrians were in the crosswalk, the vehicle could just stop at the flashing red light and then proceed. This had been proven very effective in locations where it had been installed.

Councilor Ballew asked if it the signal was on a timer.

Mr. Barnett said it was a fixed time based on walking speeds, but the time could be lengthened if needed.

Councilor Woodrow asked for the location of the EWEB path.

Mr. Barnett noted the location of the EWEB path. He said he felt this signal was safer for the pedestrian because the light was only activated and lit when a pedestrian was ready or crossing.

Councilor Lundberg said she had tried to go out of her way to avoid putting a crossing on that section of Pioneer Parkway. The apartment houses were at the Safeway end and the EWEB bike path only had the back fences of properties and was not normally where someone would walk to get to the bus. The next biggest concentration of housing was at the townhouses, which had a separate crossing. Putting up a signal would just invite people to cross in an area that was inherently unsafe. It could also annoy drivers who like that long stretch of road with no stops. She wouldn't support this crossing. It wasn't far to the stop at Pioneer Plaza and Walgreens and there was plenty of time at that intersection for pedestrians to cross.

Mr. Barnett said he understood what she was saying. He noted that it did appear that people were crossing at this site. It was Council's decision whether or not to put in a signal. If they chose to put in a signal at this crossing, he would recommend the Hawk signal.

Councilor Lundberg asked if the reasoning for this crossing was to get to one of the stations.

Mr. Barnett said the reasoning for this signal was due to several factors: the area was already being used as a crossing, and the increased crossing distance from the Rosa Parks path to the EWEB path once the EmX line was constructed. They either needed to determine how to prohibit the crossing or find a way to address it.

Discussion was held regarding the use of the EWEB path and the dirt path shown on the photo.

Councilor Lundberg asked for additional information on the EWEB path and other paths in that area and where they went.

Councilor Ballew said that Council would prefer not to have a crossing in this location, but if one was needed, the Hawk signal would be the best choice.

Mr. Boyatt said LTD was fairly neutral on this issue. If possible, he would suggest that in the resolution that staff would bring to Council next week, this crossing treatment could be removed from the 30% Design discussion to allow LTD to move ahead. This issue could be brought back to Council once a final decision was made.

Councilor Lundberg said it made more sense to discuss this issue separately. The condition of the smaller path was in disrepair and people rarely used it. She agreed that it should be pulled from the 30% discussion and brought to Council for a future discussion.

Mr. Boyatt said they could leave a placeholder for this issue in the 30% Design.

Mr. Pangborn said LTD was neutral, but would do whatever Council felt was necessary.

Councilor Ballew noted the issues discussed tonight. She said the approval for the 30% design needed to note that Council did not approve the additional bike lanes along Pioneer Parkway. Staff and LTD had worked on the access management issues to get to this point.

Mr. Grimaldi said staff could bring back a resolution for Council consideration next week.

Councilor Lundberg asked if approval of the 30% Design needed to be conducted as a public hearing.

Mr. Grimaldi said it could be if Council chose.

Councilor Lundberg said she would prefer holding a public hearing before Council took their vote so citizens could provide input. Approval of this was very close to the final design and she would prefer it was in a public hearing.

Councilor Ballew asked Mr. Pangborn if that would fit in with LTD's time frame and would allow enough time for adequate notice.

Mr. Grimaldi said there would be adequate time for notice if it was brought back next week.

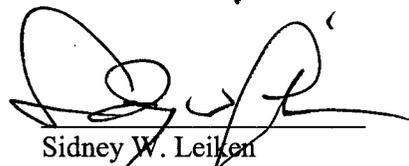
Mr. Pangborn thanked Council for going through this long process. There was still a long way to go and LTD would work very closely with City staff as they proceeded. They would bring additional issues to Council.

Councilor Lundberg thanked LTD staff for working hard to resolve the issues to date.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 pm.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa



Sidney W. Leiken  
Mayor

Attest:



Amy Sowa  
City Recorder