Downtown Business and Property Owner Meeting

DATE: July 8, 2009
ATTENDEES: Bob Melhorne, Carol and George Langlois, Tom Connaughton, Theresa Romero, Chuck Lyons, Judi Labeck, Kelly Cook, Aaron Burris, Angela Warren, David Walker, Steve Forster, Carolyn Decker, Cindy Gardner, Natalia Rieger, Chris Kell, Shell Sheldon, Steven Kershaw, Mike Sheldon, Jian Yng Tan, Kathy Sunseri, Linnea and Don Burden, Scott Campbell
STAFF: Ingrid Weisenbach, Tony Snyder, Kristin Hull, Mark Gervasi
LOCATION: Tillamook City Library, Copeland Room

Welcome and Introductions

Kristin Hull welcomed the group and briefly summarized the agenda. The purpose of the meeting is to gather input from downtown business and property owners about potential changes to Main and Pacific avenues, and about the concepts that have been developed to improve safety and reduce congestion on US 101 and OR 6.

The business owner meeting had been advertised through a letter from ODOT, an announcement in the downtown business owner newsletter, and a hand-distributed flyer. In addition, Tom Connaughton spoke with many business owners about this meeting.

Project Purpose and Overview

Kristin reviewed the timeline with the group and then outlined the problems the project was attempting to solve:

- Address traffic, safety and customer parking issues with changes to Main and Pacific.
- Address traffic congestion on US 101 and OR 6 in downtown Tillamook.

Lane Widening Options

Kristin then discussed the cross-section options noting that the purpose was to provide for 11’ or 12’ lanes to better accommodate large vehicles. She said that different cross sections could be used on Main and Pacific, that the decision was not limited to just one choice amongst the three. The three include removing parking, and two that maintain parking and narrow the sidewalks.

The group generally preferred option #3, narrow sidewalks on both sides. The group cited the following reasons:
• Provides for 12’ travel lanes which will provide the most comfort for drivers and those parking in downtown Tillamook.
• Provides for parking on both sides of Main and Pacific avenues.
• Includes narrower sidewalks which will not really impact businesses.

One participant noted that narrowing sidewalks from 12’ to 10’ could make it more difficult for customers to find a place to smoke outside that meets Oregon law of being at least 10’ from a doorway. Another participant noted a concern about the duration of construction and the impacts to businesses.

**Discussion of Concepts**

Kristin reviewed the 8 concepts that were developed with input from the public open house, Stakeholder Advisory Committee, and the Project Management Team. Six of the concepts have been set aside and the SAC recommended that two be carried forward. The group had an extensive discussion of these concepts.

Some participants preferred option C3 because it would not require removal of parking on 1st Street and would continue to route all southbound to eastbound traffic through downtown Tillamook. Many participants expressed concern about removal of parking on 3rd Street and asked if the improvements to the Slough bridge and 1st Street could be constructed without changes to 3rd Street. One participant suggested a pedestrian overpass across 1st Street.

The group was interested in replacing lost parking in an off-street lot. One participant explained that off-street parking would have to be constructed by the City of Tillamook with local funds since gas tax dollars cannot be used to pay for off-street parking. One group member proposed conditioning approval of the project on construction of an off-street parking lot.

Generally, participants agreed that the project is important and will be good for Tillamook. One participant noted that all designs need to provide adequate turning radii for trucks.

**Conclusion and Next Steps**

Kristin asked the group to note their cross-section preference on a sticky note to make sure that everyone’s viewpoints were expressed. All sticky notes confirmed a preference for option #3, widen roadway on both sides.

Kristin agreed to share the group’s input on the alternatives to study further with the SAC. The group generally could live with C3 if off-street parking was provided. The group was generally concerned that C4 would reduce traffic in downtown Tillamook providing less drive-by business.