

## **WCC General Meeting notes 05/11/16**

Anon – who is nurse living in Whiteaker is interested in launching a health committee. This will be discussed further at the board meeting and next steps can be reviewed.

Jan – brought up the 5<sup>th</sup> street Bike lane SE of Blair and the need for a yellow curb to keep people from parking in the bike lane. This appears to be resolved.

Brad – Announced there was a space in the Whiteaker Community Garden for someone to work this year. Please see Brad or Susan if you are interested.

Quiet Train Crossing – Two City of Eugene staffers came to give a presentation on the quiet train crossing project. Kerry Werner and Mark Schoening presented the information.

There are two panel members and two alternates on the train committee from Whiteaker.

The City is discussing the quiet train project with impacted residents and businesses.

The train operates between 90-110 decibels and lasts a total of 18 seconds in a series of short and long blasts for each crossing. There are 25 trains per day, of which 18-22 are freight and the remainder are Amtrak. This does not count shuttling trains back and forth from the depot or local trains to the grain millers, for example. The quiet zone rating is a permit and can be lost if enough issues are found after implementation. Freight trains through Eugene normally operate between 95-107 decibels and Amtrak operates at 106 decibels)

The ten crossings that are being looked at in this project are the busiest with 70% of the train nose occurring between Van Buren and High Streets.

The cost to bring a crossing up to the condition that would allow for quiet zone certification from the FRA (Federal Rail Association) is \$700,000 to \$1,000,000 for each crossing. There is also an ongoing \$9,000 per crossing annual maintenance fee the City would be responsible for paying to the railroad.

Quiet Zone Alternatives: There are three alternatives to quiet zone certification

1 – Double Arms

2 – Concrete Median (Lawrence, Lincoln & Van Buren could be eligible for this. A minimum of 60-80' is needed 100' is preferred length of the median – no driveways along this section)

3 – Close the street (currently proposed for Lawrence)

Pedestrian gates would also be added at Monroe and High due to the large volume of foot and bicycle traffic. All 4 corners would have additional lights/sound. Pearl and Jefferson would need pedestrian gates at \$400,000 as they are on bus routes. This was reviewed with the local blind commission as their clients use the bus heavily.

There have been discussions on how to help keep people off the tracks with approximately 7,000 feet of fencing beginning 500' north of the Chambers crossing being reviewed.

Revenue Sources: There are three revenue sources being reviewed

1 – New funding – A board measure for \$6.8 to \$7.4 million

2 – Existing – Riverfront Urban Renewal funds for Pearl, High and Hilyard (\$3,105,000)

3 – Redirected funds (if Urban Renewal funds are used as shown above, this would leave \$3.7-4.2 million)

- a. \$450,000 City funds redirected from the Bike/Road fund, which is funded at \$500,000 per year for improvement projects.
- b. \$700,000 local gas taxes from pavement preservation fund
- c. \$3,150,000 City General Fund.

A combination approach could be used where \$3,105,000 could be urban renewal funds and \$3.8 – 4.3 could be a bond measure.

Should the project move forward, the timeline for the project would be for it to begin in January 2017 and end sometime in 2020.

FRA certification

Quad Gates and medians guarantee quiet zone certification.

Other approaches are not guaranteed to get quiet zone certification. The City is still defining what that means and are still reviewing the issue of having people on the tracks.

The City may be subject to supplemental safety measures if an accident takes place. This does not impact quiet zone certification. Alternate Safety Measures may also be looked at if an accident takes place.

Average Daily Traffic (ADT) rating's = higher numbers are bad. Currently the City of Eugene has a rating at 32,000 for all crossings combined The Hilyard crossing is rating at 60,000 because an accident took place within 5 years. With safety improvements (gates/medians) the rating per crossing would be 7,000-8,000. An accident with one of the approved safety measures in place would not change the rating. The national average for crossings is 14,500. Once notified, the City would have three months to correct any deficiencies.

There are two other projects being reviewed in coordination with the quiet zone crossing project. The EWEB development area would like to open a new crossing. The Railroads require two existing crossings to be closed for every new crossing gained. The Hilyard and Lincoln crossings are currently proposed to be closed to support this. The other project is to add an additional track along the stretch between Lincoln and Pearl streets for an Amtrak train to stage overnight or allow for more passenger trains. This would require a switch to be placed likely at Lincoln which aligns with the proposed quiet zone and EWEB development projects.

Citizen input from the WCC meeting included:

People on the tracks between crossings. Social Services along the railroad need to be included in the plan as a risk/mitigation.

Concern for the projects that would be pulled from bicycle funds to cover the quiet zone if that funding was used.

There was mixed feedback about whether the current horns were or were not an issue and whether the quiet zone would increase livability in Whiteaker.

Impact on businesses if Lincoln were closed.

Gentrification and increases in housing / rental prices if the quiet zone was enacted and developers perceived this would generate opportunities for additional multiple housing units or increases in rent.