

# Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission

May 10, 2022

12:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

**PSC Commissioners Present:** Jessica Gittemeier, Katie Larsell, Oriana Magnera, Valeria McWilliams, Steph Routh, Gabe Sheoships, Eli Spevak, Erica Thompson; 1 open position

**PSC Commissioners Absent:** Johnell Bell, Jeff Bachrach

**City Staff Presenting:** Eric Engstrom, Donnie Oliveira, Arianne Sperry; Sharon Daleo (PBOT)

**Guests Presenting:** Steve Drahota

## Documents and Presentations for today's meeting

*Chair Routh* called the meeting to order at 12:32 p.m.

*Chair Routh:* In keeping with the Oregon Public Meetings law, Statutory land use hearing requirements, and Title 33 of the Portland City Code, the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission is holding this meeting virtually.

- All members of the PSC are attending remotely, and the City has made several avenues available for the public to watch the broadcast of this meeting.
- The PSC is taking these steps as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to limit in-person contact and promote social distancing. The pandemic is an emergency that threatens the public health, safety and welfare which requires us to meet remotely by electronic communications.
- Thank you all for your patience, humor, flexibility and understanding as we manage through this difficult situation to do the City's business.

## Items of Interest from Commissioners

- *Commissioner Larsell:* Can we hear about the different agenda items we're hearing about today and whether they're for our information or if they are for some larger context.
  - Donnie Oliveira: We are aware this is added context we will be providing for future meetings via Julie's preparation emails.
- *Chair Routh:* The BPS Internal Equity Progress Report has been pulled from this agenda and will be added at a future time.

## Director's Report

Eric Engstrom

- RIP2 hearing on amendments is on May 19 with a vote expected on June 1. Zoning Code changes effective July 1.
- Ezones vote at Council is on May 25. Zoning Code changes effective October 1.
- We are now looking at getting back to a true hybrid situation (with PSC members in the commission room, meeting/testimony still available via Zoom or in person) for the late July meeting. The timing is based on the 1900 Building being reopened officially to the public in mid-July. PSC members will also have the option to continue to participate via Zoom.
- Currently we are noticing that people can let us know if they need help with electronic access so the public can come to a City building if they want to watch or testify in a City building.

## Consent Agenda

- Consideration of Minutes from the April 12, 2022, PSC meeting.

*Commissioner McWilliams* moved to approve the Consent Agenda. *Commissioner Thompson* seconded.

The consent agenda passed.

(Y8 – Gittemeier, Larsell, Magnera, McWilliams, Routh, Sheoships, Spevak, Thompson)

## Waste & Recycling Rates

Hearing/Recommendation: Arianne Sperry

### Presentation

Arianne highlighted the annual results for residential rates collection. We are seeking the PSC's recommendation of the proposed rates to City Council, for their hearing on May 18.

Arianne provided background about the residential rates-setting system. Cost projections are applied to actual costs, not across the board to existing rates. Reduced operating costs can help reduce impacts of inflation.

This year's proposed rates are shown on slide 5. Rates are proposed to increase 1% for the most used service level (35-gallon roll cart). We are also proposing a 7% increase in the terrain fee. Information about rates over time, including information adjusting for inflation, particularly for the 35-gallon roll cart (most popular service level) is shared on slides 5-6.

We are committed to helping households find bins that meet the needs of their households (slide 7). And there are a few follow-up topics that Commissioners asked of staff at the briefing last month, which we can address at a future time:

- Electric collection vehicles.
- Advancing equity and diversity in the waste collection system.
- Culturally responsive waste reduction outreach and education.

City Council will consider rates at the May 18 Utility Rates hearing and will take effect on July 1.

### **Testimony**

- Beth Vargas Duncan, Regional Director for OR Refuse and Recycling Assn and PHA. The majority of PHA members are family companies, most of which are women-owned, which is a source of pride for us. Commitment has been seen through COVID, ice storms, heat waves. We are committed to this franchise system and working with the City. We partners to develop the driving diversity in training, from which we've trained about 40 people in the first year. We want you to know about these values and our commitment to serve the people of Portland. PHA are highly regulated by the City and are engaged in the annual rate review process. The process has a good system and transparency. We support the rate adjustments as presented today, and we ask PSC to adopt the rates as Arianne shared today.

*Chair Routh* closed testimony at 12:50 p.m.

### **Recommendation**

*Commissioner Larsell* moved to recommend the residential waste and recycling rates as presented today. *Commissioner McWilliams* seconded.

*Commissioner Magnera*: There was follow-up that was requested, and I am curious about when we'll learn more about the follow-up questions noted.

- Donnie: The topics that were requested require more staff, and to give the full story about these details wasn't realistic in this tight timeline we have. We have a much more robust program in the franchise review, which is coming up next year, when we'll be digging into these questions. The structure as of now is not as fluid as it may seem, so today is specifically about the rates.
- *Commissioner Magnera*: That is helpful for future rate hearings and updates.
- Arianne: The rate methodology is prescribed and laid out very specifically. We are still working on the process and timeline for the franchise review, but we will have more information this summer.

*Commissioner McWilliams*: We have labor hours to keep up with inflation, which I'm happy to see. And fuel costs are somewhat in our hands to do something about, so I want to elevate the conversation about EV collection vehicles to see how we can make changes for future costs.

*Commissioner Spevak*: It would be helpful for the PSC to provide input on the franchise process at the time where the input is relevant and helpful.

- Arianne: We did this with the guiding principles in 2017, which was very helpful.
- Donnie: If is the franchise review moment when we have more influence on things, and we can have those conversations with the PSC.

(Y8 – Gittemeier, Larsell, Magnera, McWilliams, Routh, Sheoships, Spevak, Thompson)

The motion passes. Staff will work to draft a letter on behalf of the PSC.

## Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge

Briefing: Sharon Daleo (PBOT); Megan McNeill (Multnomah County); Steve Drahota

### Presentation

Megan reminded the PSC about the background of the project and the originally preferred local alternative. We were asked to reduce the overall project costs due to many costs associated with COVID-19 as well as multiple projects in the region requesting similar funding.

We've spent the last year looking at ways to reduce costs, which we are publishing in a new EIS. This is currently out for public comment through June 13, which we'll share today.

Sharon introduced herself as the PM. PBOT is the lead bureau for coordinating City bureaus for this project. City staff are currently reviewing the new draft. PSC members shared their thoughts in a letter last fall, and we can help to coordinate this. Our next City Council meeting is in July, at which time we'll be seeking approval for the SEIS.

Megan provided background about the project and schedule. We started the project in 2016 with a feasibility study. The environmental review page is completing, and we have just published the SDEIS, with a final EIS planned by the end of this year. We hope to break ground as early as 2025, with a bridge open as early as 2030.

We started with a range of alternatives, published the preferred alternative in 2021 with refinements using a cost-savings lens and have published those refinements in the SDEIS.

The preferred alternative is the replacement long span in the same location as the current span. A particular feature that allowed this alternative to rise to the top is that on the eastside, the bridge spans over highly liquifiable soils to ensure it will be more resilient during an earthquake. This is a longer span structure over infrastructure that's already there (e.g. railroad, Esplanade), so we will continue to review options here. Preferred alternative refinements are shared in slides 9-14.

The project has had extensive public outreach around the work (slide 15).

The highlights of what the SDEIS focuses on are shared on slide 17. We are inviting anyone to comment on the SDEIS through June 13.

Sharon highlighted the connections to the Eastbank Esplanade, which was a concern the PSC raised at the last briefing. There will be 2 concepts developed to connect both the north and south sides of the bridge, looking at reducing redundancy. The consultant's work is underway, and we expect to see drafts at the end of this month with a preferred alternative at the end of the summer.

Next steps include presenting to City Council in July for the LPA and the work around the Eastbank Esplanade. The design phase will be a few years, at least through 2024.

Megan closed with key benefits of the project (slides 21-26).

*Commissioner Spevak:* It's refreshing to have this proposal, which I really support. How does the bike/ped access happen on the west side? And when you have 2 lanes going one way and a reversible lane, is there an expectation the lanes might shift based on commutes?

- Megan: We are deferring to make a decision on the connection until the design phase. It's unclear if TriMet will keep that stop open, so we are awaiting additional information until we decide. We are planning on upgrading the sidewalks so they are ADA accessible regardless. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, where it touches down today, will be the westside connection.
- Sharon: The traffic team looked at modeling and did analysis in looking into a reversible lane. The limited impact the single eastbound lane will have on the city street network, we opted to go with one lane eastbound and the two westbound. We do plan to continue to monitor the traffic once built. The reversible lane requires more infrastructure, so we will see how this proposed configuration will operate before changing/updating.

*Commissioner Magnera:* Thank you for the presentation, especially noting some demographics and outreach you did. Was outreach done outside the downtown area?

- Megan: We did outreach regionally, as far out as Gresham and Washington County. We had a community liaison program including outreach in 7 languages, to ensure we got input from many stakeholders. We have a public outreach summary report we can share as well.

*Commissioner Thompson:* My comment was similar to Eli's, wondering about the connection point at the west end. I understand some are in the design process, but I would advocate to consider what a truly accessible connection at that point is. Sidewalks are one option, but thinking about what may be allocated to improving connections is important. At what point will you be able to proceed into design for the preferred option, given the funding gap? And what does the crazy inflation environment and increasing costs do?

- Megan: We are fully funded through the design phase, which will start at the end of this year. With the remaining funding gap for construction, we are very aware of rising costs and inflation. We held a risk-assessment workshop to figure out what the County should include and anticipate about costs and set the not-to-exceed planning level. So the project won't rise beyond that costs, but we are looking at that to hold ourselves accountable. As the project moves forward into design, we would figure out ways to reduce the scope, which already includes a 30% contingency. So we feel confident in this number, even given uncertainties in costs.

*Commissioner Gittemeier:* I was curious about the various things in terms of environmental sustainability. When does that come into the process?

- Steve: In terms of our environmental commitments, some are within the Federal and State permits. We then have the city permitting process. And part of this is the commitment to the County's values and the environmental requirements of the features (e.g. green roads). So this is a balanced approach based on permitting and the County's culture as this is at the heart of the city, a hub of the downtown regional core of Portland. So there isn't reluctance, but we are looking at how we do this given all the constraints, weaving all the pieces together and all the interests that are at stake.

*Chair Routh:* I appreciate the difficulty of the urgency and of getting it right. When you introduce a hard barrier on one side, to the extent we can get closer to a 17' lane, I will decidedly support that.

*Commissioner Sheoships:* Thank you for this presentation and the questions that others have raised today.

*Commissioner McWilliams:* When can we expect a next update?

- Megan: When we will have new information around the Esplanade ramp concepts would likely be a good time... so perhaps in late summer or so. The next big decision will be on the east long span, which we'll be talking about with other City commissions, so we can brief the PSC on that as well – that would likely be spring of 2023.

## Adjourn

*Chair Routh* adjourned the meeting at 1:48 p.m.

Submitted by Julie Ocken