

MINUTES
MULTNOMAH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
NOVEMBER 13, 1990 MEETING

Chair Gladys McCoy convened the meeting at 9:30 a.m., with Vice-Chair Gretchen Kafoury, Commissioners Pauline Anderson and Sharron Kelley present and Commissioner Rick Bauman absent.

1. First Reading of an ORDINANCE Adopting the Multnomah County Bicycle Master Plan and Amending the Bikeways Plan Map of the Comprehensive Framework Plan Policy 33C

Chair McCoy read the proposed ordinance by title only. Copies of the complete document were available for those wishing them.

Transportation Division Bikeways Planner Ed Pickering presented the staff report and advised that passage of the proposed ordinance would result in adoption of the Bicycle Master Plan as a component of the County's Master Transportation Plan and amendments to Comprehensive Framework Policy 33C adding and deleting selected bikeways.

In response to a question of Chair McCoy, Mr. Pickering reported that staff has identified some potential providers to assist with funding for bicycle safety education and training programs.

In response to a question of Commissioner Kelley, Mr. Pickering advised that because it is a State route as well as a National Historic site, they have not determined whether the scenic highway can be developed in a way that changes its character. Mr. Pickering reported that shoulder bikeways can be added as the County repaves roads in certain rural areas.

In response to Commissioner Kelley expressing concern about the Plan not addressing problems or solutions with bikeways in the scenic highway area, Mr. Pickering stated that staff is not opposed to designating bicycle routes in the Corbett area if there is a demand for them and that staff would be willing to work with the Gorge people to come up with a comprehensive solution.

Commissioner Kelley advised she feels the Plan should state that the County is willing to start working on the problem of establishing an equitable coexistence between motorists and bicyclists.

Mr. Pickering reported the Plan proposes that a standing committee of volunteer citizens be established to provide input and guidance to the bicycle planning program and that the County be allowed to coordinate and facilitate a bicycle education and training program. Mr. Pickering thanked members of the Sauvie Island Bicycle Planning Taskforce and the countywide Bicycle Planning Taskforce for their many hours and viable input.

Chair McCoy added her thanks to the citizen groups.

In response to a question of Chair McCoy, Mr. Pickering advised the 2 citizen groups have completed their tasks and that many of them may wish to be appointed to a standing committee.

In response to a question of Chair McCoy, Mr. Pickering explained the 40 mile loop land trust group is dealing with a regional bicycle and hiking system and that the County's standing committee would be a component within that group which would insure input at the local level on developing the loop within the County and on developing a bicycle network on roads to connect to the 40 mile loop.

In response to a question of Chair McCoy, Mr. Pickering explained the Master Plan process is developed every 5 years and suggested that the standing committee could hear citizen input and make recommendations to the Board regarding interim additions or amendments to the bikeways map.

Commissioner Anderson stated she is convinced that gas tax monies which go to bicycle paths are well spent but that funding for off-road paths should come from bicycle licenses or recreational user fees.

County Engineer Larry Nicholas explained that 1% gas tax monies cannot be used for bicycle trails not connected or within the County road system right-of-way.

Commissioner Anderson moved, and Commissioner Kelley seconded, for approval of the first reading of the proposed ordinance.

Jim Vann of 21005 NW Sauvie Island Road, testified in opposition to the proposed ordinance on behalf of Sauvie Island Grange No. 840 and advised the Grange does not support putting a bike path along a 2 mile portion of the Sauvie Island dike.

In response to questions of Commissioner Anderson, Mr. Vann explained that he understands there is a proposal to build a bike path on the berm on the water side of Multnomah Channel which is part of the dike system; and described a berm.

In response to a request of Commissioner Anderson, Mr. Pickering explained there is a proposal in the Bicycle Capital Improvement Plan as to what type of facility would be developed on Sauvie Island Road but that the proposal in the Bicycle Master Plan merely designates the area for future development without specifying what that development should be. Mr. Pickering advised that the Capital Improvement Plan is not what is before the Board today, but whether the County wants to plan for bicycle travel on Sauvie Island Road. Mr. Pickering suggested that construction of a bicycle path on the dike would not remove any fill, reduce the flood-holding capabilities or affect the structural integrity of the dike and that it would heighten the bench.

In response to a question of Chair McCoy, Mr. Pickering reported the Sauvie Island Taskforce came up with other options and rather than making a specific proposal, those options were listed in the Capital Improvement Plan and that final determination is being withheld pending further information. Mr. Pickering explained that the Capital Improvement Plan is the vehicle by which the County budgets bicycle monies to develop bikeways and schedules construction and development of projects through a public process.

Jean Fears of 18143 NW Reeder Road, read and submitted the statement of Jane Brunner in opposition to the proposed construction of a bike path on the berm of the Sauvie Island dike.

Chair McCoy directed that Mr. Pickering review Ms. Brunner's letter and develop a response to her concerns prior to the second reading of the proposed ordinance.

Mary Schick of 16525 NW Gillihan Road, testified in opposition to the proposed construction of a bike path on the berm of the Sauvie Island dike and advised she is in favor of putting a bike path on Sauvie Island. Ms. Schick discussed areas of potential danger for bicyclists and expressed concern for waterfront land or irrigation systems on the berm side of the dike, advising she would support a gradual widening of the road in order to have a better bike path if it did not require expending a great deal of money or disrupt the livelihood of affected property owners.

Del Reeder of 24512 NW Reeder Road, testified in opposition to construction of a bike path on the berm of the Sauvie Island dike, advising the cost of construction would be too high compared to the number of people it would benefit.

Grant Johnson of 17505 NW Sauvie Island Road, discussed the lack of funding available for construction of bike paths and expressed concern that the Plan does not address maintenance funding for previously constructed paths. Mr. Johnson explained the steps necessary in order to construct a bike path on the berm of the Sauvie Island dike and on the Cornelius Pass Road and expressed concern over the amount of funding such undertakings would require, advising he does not believe the Plan is ready for the Board's endorsement.

Richard Roberts of Preston Thorgrimson, advised his law firm is legal counsel to the Sauvie Island Drainage District. Mr. Roberts discussed the powers and responsibilities of the District, stating the District should be a party to any planning processes which may affect it. Mr. Roberts advised that in 1974 the District Board of Supervisors adopted a policy in opposition to having bicycle paths within District easements and that in 1989 the policy was refined to indicate District easements should be used solely for repair and maintenance of District levees. Mr. Roberts requested that the District be included in processes concerning it.

Donna Matrazzo of 19300 NW Sauvie Island Road, Sauvie Island Bicycle Planning Taskforce member, testified in support of the plan to put a separate bike path along a 2 mile section of the Sauvie Island dike, stating it was more economically feasible than widening the dike road. Ms. Matrazzo cited statistics illustrating the need for bicycle safety for young and inexperienced riders.

Ken Larson of 17929 NW St. Helen Road, discussed traffic hazards on Cornelius Pass, expressing concern over the feasibility of constructing bicycle paths on Cornelius Pass and Sauvie Island Road and naming other roads he felt would be safer. Mr. Larson suggested that the funds necessary to construct a bike path on Sauvie Island Road would be better spent elsewhere.

In response to Vice-Chair Kafoury advising she wants some assurance that plans to specifically change Sauvie Island Road are not in the Bicycle Plan, and that the Board be clear about what voting for the Master Plan means in the context of the issues raised today, Commissioner Anderson reported that there are no specifics in the Plan and that she expects some input from the Board and citizens as to how and where a bike path would ultimately be constructed in the Sauvie Island area.

Commissioner Kelley expressed concern over the Plan's lack of information and commitment about the Gorge area.

The first reading of the ordinance was UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED. Chair McCoy advised the second reading is scheduled for Tuesday, December 4, 1990.

There being no further business, the formal meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

OFFICE OF THE BOARD CLERK
for MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By DEBORAH CROOKS