

MEETING MINUTES

Project Name: CRC **Project No.:** 2733012004
Location: Clark County **Meeting Date:** June 24, 2008 **Time:**
Minutes by: Katie Clements
Attendees: **Company:**

Subject: **CRC Task Force Public Meeting: Hearing Testimony**

Henry Hewitt: I'm Henry Hewitt, one of the co-chairs of the Columbia River Crossing Task Force and Hal, the other co-chair, agreed early on that we would alternate who was going to chair which meetings and we would alternate meetings between Oregon and Washington but as it's turned out, the last several meetings have been in Washington. He told me it was my turn to chair the meeting so here I am. I'd like to welcome everybody and we do know that there's some problem on the I-5 highway on the Oregon side that's causing traffic delays and that people will probably be late in arriving, particularly those people coming from that direction. The reason for getting started is that at about 4:15 Gov. Gregoire is gonna call in and has a few words that she'd like to give with respect to the project and where we are and I think we at least want to be attentive for that for those of us that are here. In the meantime we'll get started with some of the formalities. Please turn off your cell phones. I've turned mine off and it tends to cause disruption with the technology if we leave the cell phones on. As always, our meeting tonight will be broadcast on CVTV and in Portland on the community media. You can watch the Task Force meetings on the internet through the link to the project (LINK). We have materials that have been distributed and we have a lot of paper tonight. Hopefully everyone either has a copy or can share with somebody who does. By way of background, we began this process in I think the February timeframe of 2006. I was asked to be co-chair and was told it would be a year and a half or two years of meetings, once a quarter. Well here we are more than 3 years later and my notes tell me this is the 23rd meeting, so that's more frequently than quarterly and longer than 2 years. Tonight we will hear a project update, get public input received on the DEIS, there will be time for public comments

We have people signed up and once again I would ask that you to be as brief as you can be and in any event we'll cut you off or have you close down at about 3 minutes so that we can get all the people that we have signed up in the allotted time and excuse me if I mispronounce names. The first person we have is Steve Citron.

Steve Citron: Thank you. My name is Steve Citron and I am a Vancouver resident. I am a PhD Engineer and a fellow of the Society of Automotive Engineers. I am concerned and my comments reflect an interest in congestion over the new bridge compared to the No Build option. So, very simply, one of the statements from CRC is that

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dialogue. That was one-sided dialogue. Then at that same forum there was this gorgeous display, slick, beautifully done, very expensive, and it gave me two options. It reminded me a lot of what my Mom did when I was little which was, “Do you want to here tonight or do you want to go there?” and what that’s called is manipulation. There should have been many options at that point during the forums instead of just two. And, it was very obvious what we should do: one was a big beautiful replacement bridge only slightly more expensive than a supplemental bridge which still has a lift. And so people were empowered because they were able to have choice. That was an extremely transparent manipulation. Then I went to another forum, and I was able to write on a card my concerns and then this very sweet lady got up and she told what my concerns were. That’s not what I call meaningful dialogue. There was no way for to have any interaction. That’s not what I call meaningful dialogue—that’s embarrassing. I have brought up several times the Orange County Grand Jury findings which nobody seems to want to look at and I’m not sure why. I gave them to the city council and I haven’t heard one comment back which was disappointing to me. What happened in 1999 which is exactly what’s happening now, except lucky for Orange County, they had a grand jury that they could go to and say “We’re really concerned because we don’t think that what’s happening is in the best interest of our community and we feel like we are being railroaded.” And so the grand jury went ahead as a disinterested third party, they looked at what was happening with light rail. What they found out, what I’ve said at every meeting, was that it does not decrease pollution, it does not decrease congestion, it’s a huge expense to people, and it is inflexible. Am I against mass transit, no way but am I against light rail in this instance, most definitely yes. But you are still proposing that. And I look at all of you and I can tell you’ve already made your decision and I can’t figure out why. It doesn’t make sense to me. I don’t see any research that backs up the decision for this. According to the grand jury, there were some things they wanted to recommend: one is that they have a disinterested third party from academia that will look at this and make decisions just based on the research. I would like for you to do that as well.

Jim Howell: I’d like to hands of everyone who came here by public transportation (No hands). I didn’t either but the first time I spoke to this group I believe oil hadn’t reached \$50 a barrel an here we are so there’s been quite a change in the world since this process started. I’d like to, if you’ll indulge an old man, pretend that we’re in the year 2030 having a reunion (I won’t be here) of this momentous last meeting of your group and think where would it be. This sprawling complex would’ve long been torn down replaced with a couple 20 story high rises. This parking lot would’ve been replaced by a bicycle-friendly neighborhood with condos, apts, and local shops right next to a park. 112th will have trolleys going by every 5-10 minutes, SR 14 will have light rail, but let me go on down the river to this site. And I agree there’s going to be a replacement bridge there which is going to be a heavy railroad bridge. The one that’s there built in 1907 is antiquated and only has 2 tracks and the rail system were going to need and could obviously never accommodate what we’re going to need in 2030 if you’re going to have say 50 roundtrips to Seattle per day and your going to need at least 4-6 tracks for commuter rail, probably a double-deck bridge. What will change is probably what Congress will do in the next session: a wholesale restructuring of the nation’s transportation policies and investment strategies. Freeways are no longer going to be #1. The federal government may cut their share down to 20% for old-fashioned freeways with railroad getting 80%. This might happen because of the oil situation and you’ve got to recognize that. There will also probably be a local bridge serving Hayden Island with light rail and bicycle, maybe even 2-3 bridges connecting to Portland from Hayden Island which won’t have anymore big box retail but will be a nice neighborhood and probably won’t even be connected to this freeway which will have less than 100k cars per day because of \$15 per gallon gas prices. So as you’re talking at this reunion you’ll be joking about how you used to complain about gas being almost \$5.