



HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION

**Meeting Minutes
Monday May 16, 2022**

The meeting was held remotely through GoToMeeting

A. Call to Order/Introductions if necessary

The meeting began at 6:30 PM. In attendance were the following.

Benton County HRC commissioners: Nancy Taniguchi - Chair, Cody Hull, Paul Berg, Scott McClure

Benton County staff: Inga Williams, Associate Planner

Chair Taniguchi added the following to the agenda: Discussion of how do we get more people on the committee.

- B. Approval of March 29, 2022 Minutes** – The minutes will be held over for approval to the June meeting.
- C. Van Buren Bridge discussion** – May 4th Findings of Effect meeting. Notes were sent around by Comm. Freeman. See attached.
- D. Member discussion** – Comm. Hull suggested advertising in the Benton County Historical Society newsletter. Chair Taniguchi showed a copy of the latest newsletter with the call for new volunteers in it.

Chair Taniguchi brought up Jared Thayer, in the construction industry, and said she thought she would try to recruit him. Comm. McClure mentioned he had a possible candidate too. Chair Taniguchi mentioned that she thought the need for a resume with the position application was too onerous. Comm. Berg stated that he didn't remember it being too onerous.

Term limits have depleted our commission. Comm. Taniguchi suggested talking with the Board of County Commissioners and discussing the difficulty that the term limits are placing on the commission. Comm. Hull said that he has reached out to people over the year but hasn't been able to get a commitment from anyone. Says there is no interest. He agrees that the term limits have caused a problem.

There was some discussion regarding the personal vs. the impersonal touch.

No new ideas were put forth.

E. SOAP discussion

Existing: The Benton County Historic Resources Commission promotes the preservation of meaningful historic local sites and objects to enrich the present, inspire the future



Addition: and create a sense of community, we all have a history.

#1 – Inspire, Educate, Promote

#2 – Partner for Preservation

#3 – Preserve

#4 – Advocate

#5 – Networking

Add this topic to the next meeting for discussion.

Inga discussed the awards. Awards are being given to Jay Sexton and Toni Hoyman for the Grange, Roz Keeney for the Bridge, Larry Landis for volunteer service, the Historical Society for the Corvallis Museum, and Adrienne and Mark for Spectres.

F. How is 2022 Historic Preservation Month Going?

Comm. Taniguchi – would like to formally extend an invitation to come to our banquet. She asked Inga to send the invitation. About the award presentation – Nancy will be the presenter. We will ask one of the commissioners, probably the chair, to hand the awards to the recipients.

Ms. Williams gave an update on the month's program. Comm. McClure and Comm. Berg offered to help set up for the event.

Comm. Hull said he would bring cookies.

Comm. Berg asked that we do not use bottled water.

G. Items from the Public None

H. Items from the Commissioners

Comm. McClure gave an update on the Courthouse meeting. He was disappointed to see that the City was not interested in possibly occupying part of the courthouse. They were also trying to set up a live tour. No real change otherwise.

I. Items from Staff

No application from Comm. Sexton for the new Willamette Grange renovations yet.

For the next meeting, June 20th is a holiday so the next meeting needs to be rescheduled. The 13th looks ok. Meeting in person.

J. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.

Budget discussion – This topic was not discussed



**Benton
County**

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT**

Planning Division

Office: (541) 766-6819

360 SW Avery Ave.
Corvallis, OR 97333
co.benton.or.us/cd

Hello all,

Nancy is still the one-armed bandit, so she asked if I would send out to you the info that I sent to her regarding the meeting last week.

First thing you need to know, if you have any opinion on the mitigation, **action right away is needed**. Adrienne DeDona, the facilitator for the meeting on May 4, is collecting ideas **UP TO THE 15th of MAY**; Susan Juraz from SeaReach, the contractor they've hired to design the mitigation, will start sketches to be presented at the meeting on the 24th. SEND opinions to adrienne@jla.us.com by the 15th of May, according to what was said at the meeting.

I am considering copying my comments to Christine Hildebrandt, the ODOT project contact: christine.d.hildebrant@odot.oregon.gov, since my comments are not entirely about mitigation concepts.

Suffice it to say, there are a lot of gaps and holes in the story. I assumed since County HRC had not been on the frontlines, we were just a bit out of the loop and didn't have all of the information. Turns out, City HRC was similarly blind-sided by the mitigation. Roz, et al were pretty angry, and rightly so. Apparently none of the questions anyone asked or comments made, like the letter we sent after the meeting with ODOT last year have received replies. Furthermore, no additional input has been solicited, until now.

No official decision has been made to remove the bridge, supposedly. Yet they've obviously already committed considerable time and resources to the mitigation planning? It feels like a done deal. They aren't presenting any opportunity to comment, it seems, on the removal itself, just what happens when they do it. That doesn't mean we can't make our thoughts known, however.

I am attaching a summary of the notes I took during the meeting. As you will see, it was warm at times, which is no doubt why they hired Adrienne to moderate the meeting.

After reflecting on the meeting and the archaeological sites they are disturbing, possibly destroying, I went back through the documentation received from them to date. I did find the attached letter from Aug 2020 listing some potential resource sites. But SHPO at the time said they would not be affected? Tobin is now suggesting they will, but SHPO has signed off again because they are not eligible for exploration or protection?

I sent Tobin Bottman an email today requesting a copy of the redacted report on affected resources, and asking the following questions about the multiple resources he referenced in his presentation that were deemed 'ineligible':

- 1) Under which bridge construction scenario were these sites impacted? If no decision has been made as to which scenario is being built, how were the impacted sites determined? Were all potentially threatened sites under all scenarios evaluated? Some of the scenarios (EX. Jackson Ave Bridge Scenario) emphasize that multiple sites would be impacted in Corvallis, and that additional exploration would be needed.
- 2) How many sites were identified in total?
- 3) How many sites were identified in the Benton County jurisdiction?
- 4) Why were these sites determined to be ineligible? Who was the determining authority (SHPO? Tribes?)?



**Benton
County**

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT**

Planning Division

Office: (541) 766-6819

360 SW Avery Ave.
Corvallis, OR 97333
co.benton.or.us/cd

5) How many of the sites were settler impacts? How many of the sites were Tribal sites?

6) For any potential tribal sites, what Tribal authorities signed off on the impact/loss?

I'll let you know if I get a response.

I will be sending something to Adrienne, more along the form that Roz took, that the best mitigation is the bridge staying across the Willamette with a purpose, that the process has been unsatisfactory with spotty communication and no responses to questions or comments, that their own scenarios show the least expensive option is refitting the existing bridge, and that they seem to be destroying known archaeological sites without local stakeholders' knowledge of what those sites contain. All of this makes participating in a mitigation to design the ghost of the bridge and to venerate the history of the site a bit distasteful. I have no doubt that SeaReach will do a great design job, their work is beautiful. But it feels like we are being asked to consent to the destruction of the resources by being baited with pretty baubles.

I know David Harrelson said in his talk at the Heritage Conference that the Tribes had been approached about a design element for the new bridge, but I do also wonder if they have been appropriately engaged in the mitigation process.

Just my thoughts.

Tanya

Tanya Freeman

ponyproperties@gmail.com

541-990-8054

licensed real estate principal broker in the state of OR

Grounded Real Estate

989 B NW Circle Blvd

Corvallis, OR 97330

Summary of ODOT Mitigation Meeting May 4, 2022, via Zoom

Since I will be missing the May 16th meeting, I am sending out a summary. Attention is required prior to that meeting, if you want to have input.

23 in attendance, including 3 ODOT facilitators/staff, 2 from SHPO, 2 ODOT Historic resource staff members, 2 from Sea Reach, Roz, Bruce, Rebecca, BA. No one from OSU, Downtown Assoc (defunct), Linn Co HRC

ODOT-Historic Resources Mitigation Team Presentation

Chris Bell - ODOT HR

Three angles:

1)Archaeological

2)Corvallis Downtown Historic District (CDHD) - treating it like a district even though it is not, due to potential for eligibility

3)Van Buren Bridge

If bridge is removed, it will be comprehensively photographed and scanned, documents housed in Library of Congress, locally at UofO, info available for education. "HEIR?"

Built resources that could be affected by removal for historical context:

1)Beach barn (OSU rowing barn) - unaffected by removal of bridge due to distance

2)CDHD - primary effect is how to venerate after removal

3)Bridge -well, oops, it's removed!

Tobin Bottman - ODOT-HR

- Focused on archaeological investigations

- used SHPO database to identify using previous surveys

- area of interest overlaps with several sites present

- in 2019 archaeologist with Archaeology NW re-examined and did comprehensive survey. Evaluation determined all but one site was ineligible for nomination. Only site recommended was on east bank near the bridge, site of the community dump. Eligible for NHR, and contributes to the CDHD, and will be adversely affected. Site 35LIN842. OSME wrote a data recovery plan, did 2 excavations since 2019 on 1ft square areas. Need to do more of those to

delineate the site, maybe 20 more units. Then once delineated will do 1m squares to recover the materials.

4 Research Questions

- 1) horizontal and vertical site limits - can dump sequences be identified?
- 2) near the Ferry terminal, could anything be identified from the Orleans period?
- 3) economic and ethnic diversity?
- 4) remote vs local consumer goods?

Tobin is soliciting additional research questions.

Questions from attendees:

William Cook - Why are we discussing mitigation when nothing has been finalized? Why is removal a foregone conclusion?

Christine - Procedurally have finalized 2 FOE's, working on a 3rd. Programmatically, decision will come by the end of the summer.

William Cook - there has been no meaningful engagement with consulting parties for a year.

Susan Juraz - The work takes a lot of time, we want to do the research and be ready.

William Cook - wasn't aware a decision had been made to remove?

Susan Juraz - IF it happens, need to be ready with how to commemorate the old bridge.

Jennifer O'Brien - this is a targeted meeting to address commemoration from the consulting parties.

BA - who is analyzing the artifacts?

Tobin - UofO

BA - where curated?

Tobin - not decided, UofO is the main state curatorial society.

Roz - there were lots of comments and questions last year, but no response? Now the FOE's are done and closed with no responses to previous questions. What is the 3rd joint FOE about?

Tobin - The built environment does findings of fact and effect, but not done for the archaeological sites, so the 3rd will combine both built and archeological. There will be a

formal 30-day review on the 3rd FOE.

Roz - anecdotally asked about the impact of the Chinese.

Tobin - did identify Chinese ceramicware in the test digs, unknown how they got there at this time.

Interperative Process Presentation - Susan

- She was prepared to present 6 projects, Sea Reach has done projects in all 50 states.

- First example a trestle in Seattle that was removed. They had about a year to plan and implement. Used parts of the old trestle, and hope to use parts of the Van Buren bridge. They couldn't use the creosoted parts due to health hazards. Display was implied structure with extensive signage and a flip book. All of the text has to be developed. The stories need to resonate and be accurate. They like the stakeholders to "help" with developing text. The display covered one wall in a nearby historic building.

- 2nd example was the Chambers Bridge in Cottage Grove. Old covered RR bridge was reconstructed, had a play structure built to represent the special locomotive used there. Implied rail line on floor. (It is cool what they do!) Try to make it interactive and engage kids.

Questions from attendees:

Roz - loves what Susan has done

Susan - Some ideas for Van Buren: benches made out of the portions of the bridge; also parts used for exhibit stanchions; possible to build a gathering space, like a pavilion for music festival, there is lots of material in the bridge. Maybe use the pony truss as a specific unit. Play structure using uprights, although the openings are not goo size for hand or footholds. Maybe a working model of the swing mechanism for a museum. It could have taken up to 6 men to turn it. Create an experiential display. The bridge IS inspiring and WILL inspire. Just the construction alone - could have a series of videos on the engineering.

Adrienne then gave 40 minutes for presentation of consulting parties ideas. She made a virtual whiteboard with stickies. [We should have a copy of this.]

Roz - We just learned of this and had one week to prepare. Managed to hold a special meeting last night. Really hard to discuss mitigation. But consensus was that there needs to be a physical reminder or feature near location or in downtown - pony truss in the park? Would need City approval.

Other ideas from City HRC:

- OSU engineer - do series of videos on construction and operation, with history of the bridge.
- Educational kit for grade schools.
- Document/save the turning mechanism
- Give the turnkey to Corvallis

Patricia Benner - also loves what Susan has done in other locations. Information should be substantive. Emphasized a SHORT TIME FRAME to consider options. The consulting party experiences have been poor. ODOT NEVER got back to any of us after the last meeting a year ago. Wants to be sure the mitigation gives a sense of place. Likes idea of interpretive videos. Stressed the bridge is movable, and ODOT chose not to. Her fear is that we will have these 2 meetings and then no other input again. How about a committee formed to assist mitigation?

Susan - said she had wanted to reach out before this meeting, but did want everyone to be included.

Patricia stressed need for something at the river level, since many float the river.

Rebecca Landis - Mitigation is NOT consent! In a previous bill, funds were provided for moving the bridge upstream as a pedestrian/bike bridge. Idea has been disavowed by ODOT ever since.

BA - wants to endorse great ideas discussed, also wants to celebrate pre-history along the Willamette. Rename the new bridge a Kalapuya name? Include landscaping with plants important to the tribes - elderberry, camas, wapato? Are drought tolerant.

Bruce - consensus among City HRC - ask for a seismic upgrade pool to lobby on downtown's behalf, to upgrade structures downtown since we are losing a major resource.

Adrienne now offers FIVE MINUTES to discuss mitigation for downtown(!?!) [Allowed 30 minutes total in the agenda for consulting party input]

Roz - fund for seismic retrofit/loans/grants

- self-guided walking tour for downtown

Rebecca Landis - has ODOT considered the demise of the Downtown Assoc impacts? If trying to form a Corvallis Downtown Historic District, 51% of landowners (confirmed with Chris Bell) must approve the district. Why not do a multiple party listing, because otherwise, if there is not district, there is no mitigation?

BA - if all of the money designated is not spent on interpretive, can it be used for the Courthouse?

Adrienne - next steps

- there is a next meeting May 24th
- communication protocol - send all ideas for mitigation and interpretation to her
- collect ideas **UP TO THE 15th of MAY**; Susan will start sketches to be presented the 24th
- **SEND to adrienne@jla.us.com**
- thinks it would be too much to try to form a committee prior to the 24th meeting
- on the 24th, Susan will present some concepts, cherry picked from the ideas sent in to Adrienne

Roz - we waited a year to hear ANYTHING. Now, what is the goal? What is the process?

Chris Bell - MOMA codifies what actions are carried out to mitigate effects.

Christine - bones of MOMA drafted by early summer, signed by consulting parties late summer.

Roz - pinned them down more on these dates... made Christine say that end of June/early July for MOMA to be issued; end of summer to sign

- also asked about budget for the mitigation?

Christine - design (consultant Sea Reach), and everything = \$250,000

Roz/BA (tried to capture, sorry things were going fast) - ODOT once suggested paying \$900k for someone to take ownership of the bridge.

Christine - will answer why it [budget] is now less... at the next meeting.

Adrienne hurriedly closed the meeting citing respect for everyone's time and we could probably talk all night.