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– Page 5

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Work continues on retaining walls, trolley corridor north of the bridge

SELLWOOD BRIDGE

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Lying next to the Columbia River, two large spans are being readied for their trip down the Willamette to the Sellwood Bridge work zone.

Built at Thompson Metal Fab in Vancouver, each arch rib is about 300 feet long and weighs 400 tons. They are so heavy that a naval architect will need to develop the plan for loading them in sections onto a barge, to ensure the barge remains stable.

According to Mike Pullen, communication officer with Multnomah County, the spans are set to travel the river sometime in November.

Southwest Macadam Avenue (Hwy. 43) continues to have weekday lane closures. The outside southbound lane is closed weekdays (except from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.) between Taylors Ferry Road and the edge of the project south of the bridge. The contractor is working on retaining walls.

A northbound lane is closed weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. north of the bridge during exca-

vation and ground anchor installation for the retaining walls.

"We appreciate commuters' patience during the recent closure (May 13-16) and the delays," Pullen said.

Crews are building forms and installing rebar for the pier cap while this summer pre-cast girders will be trucked in and set on columns between the abutment and at the river's edge.

Work will continue on the slope that will support the trolley and trail corridor north of the bridge. It is being reinforced.

The Portland Water Bureau is in the process of installing a new water line on Southwest Miles Place. The line is part of street improvements for a section of regional trail between Willamette Park and the bridge.

Northwest Natural (the gas company) is also doing work on Miles Place. Street construction is expected to begin in early June.

Normal weekday work hours are 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Crews will work during the day on Saturdays for several weeks.

For more information, contact Mike Pullen at mike.j.pullen@multco.us and 503-209-4111 or visit www.sellwoodbridge.org.



Workers install girders on Bent 6 on the east side approach of the new Sellwood Bridge. (Photo courtesy of Mike Pullen, Multnomah County)



City of Portland staff members Joan Frederiksen and Denver Igarta along with Kay Durtschi, of Multnomah, discuss various options for the Southwest Corridor. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

Government officials receive input from community at Multnomah forum

SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR PLAN

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Decisions about the Southwest Corridor Plan are coming to a head for residents and regional planners. Meeting after meeting has been going on since July and finalization of everyone's input is due in early June.

Executives and elected officials of the major agencies and organizations involved attended a community forum April 29 at the Multnomah Arts Center to listen to community input.

Maryanne Fitzgerald of Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc., Portland Mayor Charlie Hales, Neil McFarlane of TriMet, Portland Transportation Commissioner Steve Novick, Metro Councilor Bob Stacey, and Jason Tell of the Oregon Department of Transportation all participated.

Tell reported how ODOT is short on money due to declining revenue and unreliability.

"It's so bad," Tell warned, "that Congress has to act before September to keep the current budget intact. The feds used to pick up 90 percent of the bill in the old days."

"High capacity transit is not enough," Stacy said. "We're putting emphasis on safety and pedestrians and bikes."

Novick said he is biased and explained how he lost weight while living in the D.C. area because the transit was so good. So good, in fact, that he didn't need a car.

McFarlane, a frequent bus rider, shared that his role is to protect

the environment, have frequent service lines, and to continue investments.

"I want to preserve livability," McFarlane said. "Congestion can't support the area as the region grows."

Mayor Hales thanked everyone for their participation. He summarized his past roles in the Hayhurst neighborhood and his work on the MAX Red Line.

"In those days, the process moved very quickly," Hales said. "Then bam, we had a rail line to the airport."

"But we realized we needed to engage everyone for success," he continued. "This particular corridor has its own challenges and geology."

According to Malu Wilkinson, Metro Southwest Corridor Project Manager, the draft recommendations for Southwest Corridor design options have been submitted.

Recommendations were based on the following: capital cost magnitudes, such as tunnels; impacts to the natural environment, including trees, parks, and watersheds; development/redevelopment potential; property impacts; traffic/bike/pedestrian performance, and transit performance.

Final input from the public will be on June 9, which is the anticipated date for the Steering Committee recommendation on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement phase. Metro Council action on Steering Committee recommendations is expected June 26. For more information, visit www.swcorridorplan.org.

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