

SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR PLAN

(Continued from Page 1)

operating costs were all examined in the short presentation.

Marcia Leslie, of Far Southwest, was later interviewed by *The Post*.

"The consensus I've heard from neighbors," Leslie said, "is that they oppose self-driving cars, and buses, along 53rd. Shuttle service is the least offensive of the options, but still not popular.

"Metro keeps insisting there will be 1,000 people per day using 53rd to get from Barbur to campus," Leslie said. "According to residents along this stretch of street, this simply isn't true. Maybe a dozen people access PCC per day now, if that."

Metro planners say these options still depend on the results of the draft environmental impact study, the budget, and capital costs.

"Buses and shuttles are important," said committee member Arnie Panitch who represents the TriMet Committee on Accessible Transit, "but a single seat from start to finish is very important especially for the elderly, disabled or blind."

Editor's Note: Panitch was referring to a proposed single track along Barbur Boulevard between Portland State University and Barbur Transit Center which would have allowed TriMet buses and light rail trains to share the same roadway. Metro staff recommended against this in a November report, noting the added cost of \$53 million and the fact that buses and trains couldn't travel faster than 25 miles per hour on shared roadways.

Panitch asked if autonomous vehicles would operate all the time.

"Only during the college class hours," Bihn said.

The biggest committee concern of the autonomous shuttles was security. Bihn speculated that someone, perhaps a student, TriMet staff, or other person would be on these shuttles.

"Autonomous (shuttles) should not impact traffic, noise, or safety of the residents," Bihn said. "They will be electric and are much quieter than the diesel buses."

In an article in Consumer Reports (Feb. 28, 2017) Jeff Plungis wrote that the former Google self-driving car project, Waymo, has been tested on more than 2 million miles of roads.

Philip Koopman, associate professor of electrical and computer engineering at Carnegie Mellon University, is quoted as saying there's so much uncertainty around the technology that close to a billion miles of test-driving data is needed to ensure safety on roads populated with both human and machine-driven cars.

"Today's self-driving cars are sometimes described like teenagers," Prof. Koopman is quoted as saying. "It's relatively safe in limited situations, not nearly as safe as an experienced human driver."

Bihn commented that the project is not due to be completed until at least the year 2025.

"Technology will definitely improve by then," he said. "If technology fails when these are built, a driver would end up operating the vehicle."

Kathleen McMullen of Portland Community College said the college



In March, an autonomous shuttle demonstration took place on the University of Texas campus in Austin, Texas. (photo courtesy of Austin Tech Alliance)

wants the best transportation for all students.

Responding to a question about utilizing the existing PCC shuttle buses, McMullen explained that these are only used between the various community college campuses.

"We'll take this back to the administration," McMullen said. "We like the 53rd Avenue shuttle at this point."

"Why does this decision have to

be made now?" asked committee member Roger Averbeck.

Bihn said, "Not every detail has to be decided now, but it would be nice to be set on a decision before tracks are laid."

The next Southwest Corridor Plan advisory committee meeting will be held on July 10, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at PCC Sylvania, College Center building, in Fir, Elm and Oak rooms.

SPRING GARDEN PARK

(Continued from Page 1)

foreman of the landscaping company, Paul Brothers, Inc.

"The logs and boulders will be placed back in the sandbox area," said Paul. "We are aware of the issues in the neighborhood and are prepared to produce the best project we can offer."

According to the park bureau, a parking lot will not be built. Vehicle parking will be available along Dolph Court and Spring Garden Street.

Both streets will be improved by local improvement districts.

Sidewalks and storm swales will be placed along Dolph Court from the park west to 30th Avenue, near the fire station.

The park will be closed until construction is completed in six to eight months. The area has been cordoned off with a chain link fence.

"For safety reasons, we would ask that while construction is going on visitors should refrain from using the park," said Kennedy-Wong.

"We will be working hard to get the park and the street frontage improvements complete in anticipation for a late spring 2018 park opening."

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