Business community
Constituent Meeting

Public Involvement Task Force
June 12, 2003, SEUL offices, 35th and SE Main

Hosted by: Alliance of Portland Neighborhood Business Associations

Attendance: Don MacGillivray; Bruce Altizer, Gateway Area Business Association; Bri; Jean Baher, Division/Clinton Business Association; Ken Turner, APNBA; Pedro J. Ferbel-Azcarate, People's Food Coop/SEUL; David J. Weislogel, GBBA/APNBA; Roger C. Jones, Hawthorne Blvd. Business Association; Christopher Franiconis;

Facilitator: Nancy Chapin, Alliance of Portland Neighborhood Business Assocs.
Note Taker: Brian Hoop

Summary of major themes by the facilitator:
- ❑ Businesses support minimum standards and they should be published.
- ❑ Streamline public involvement process for efficient use of business time.
- ❑ Bringing people to table at earliest point is critical.
- ❑ Businesses want to know:
    - ❑ They have an ability to influence decision-making efforts.
    - ❑ They were heard by staff and Council.
    - ❑ That input was part of the decision, why it was used, why not used.
    - ❑ City needs to acknowledge intrinsic value and wealth of local knowledge.
    - ❑ Businesses want to strengthen their relationship with Council.
- ❑ Standards need to have language to hold bureaus accountable.
- ❑ Councilors should have advisory committees.
- ❑ Hold Neighborhood Association and Business Association representatives accountable to report back to organizational boards if they are representatives on city boards, commissions, CACs, taskforces, etc.

Brainstorm ideas organized into workgroup categories

Process Design and implementation
- ❑ Businesses need full disclosure and knowledge of traffic diversion and construction impact on business corridors. Notification needs to tell of whole process for paving streets; that it might be a multi-month effort so businesses can plan accordingly.
- ❑ Business Associations want early notification and to give input at initial vision point of major projects. Engage business when problem/issue/or opportunity is first identified to ask community to help identify solutions.

- Allow for public input throughout lifecycle of project.
- Often plans are compete and decisions have been made when input is asked for.
- Businesses want the ability to stop a project in its tracks. Business Associations want the ability to say no, have veto vote if it impacts them.
- Involve businesses thinking through timing of contracting and construction schedule, as well as identifying impact on business community.
- Provide adequate budget for traffic mitigation with signage for redirecting traffic, saying stores still open.
- Christmas moratorium on street construction needs to be across the whole city. Downtown not only area impacted by construction and loss of business.
- Provide better access to 5-year budget plans so business associations can know when projects affecting their geographic area are on a list.
- Councilors should have advisory committees.
- Bureaus should resolve issues with organized groups before going to council.
- Complete project summaries/evaluations in understandable language.
- Outline public involvement process in notices about projects, timelines, geographical impact, when input is allowed, what kind of input, when decision is being made, who is making decision, etc.

Education and skills training
- Define difference between basic maintenance projects vs. new projects, Capital Improvement Projects, etc. Even basic maintenance on a busy corridor impacts business profitability.
- Duplicate PDOT/PSU class on organizational structure and how decisions are made for other types of projects. Includes top bureau staff in curriculum.

Accountability and transparency
- Standards need to have language to hold bureaus accountable.
- Provide standards for how community can mobilize itself and veto a project such as through a referendum.
- Businesses need one place they can go to access info on projects to understand project timelines, geographical area impacted, what media is providing updates, timelines to provide input, etc.
- City staff who are present at public involvement meetings need to have some authority to make decisions to give process legitimacy.
- Hold Neighborhood Association and Business Association representatives accountable to report back to organizational boards if they are representatives on city boards, commissions, CACs, taskforces, etc.
- Provide feedback on how input was part of the decision-making process. Why it was used, why not used.
- Require bureaus to report to council of conflicts identified by community, minority report. For example, process for being able to tell council of impact of bureau decisions on business profit.

❑ Fund independent non-city person to write community report on key projects. Or support community to review and edit project reports and evaluations.
❑ Need to know names of project manager, who has decision-making power, that businesses and their organizations can check in with on regular basis.

Communication
❑ Too many emails, too much mail. Need to pick and choose acknowledging we may miss some key stuff. Need to streamline information and meetings.
❑ Use business trade journals. *Oregonian* may not be best media for business.
❑ Mailings need to be geographically defined.
❑ Have diverse outreach strategy: Send postcards, ads in local papers, door to door, email lists, door hangers, etc..
❑ Provide updates throughout the lifecycle of a project. Often businesses never hear about project for long lengths of time.
❑ Provide assistance and/or funding to disseminate information sent to Business Association presidents/land use chairs. Like neighborhood associations, BA's lack resources to get word out to members.
❑ Provide online centralized calendar with the lifecycle of a project and times for public involvement efforts, when to provide input, when decisions are made.
❑ Include Business Association links on those project web sites and calendars so people know where to go to connect with other community members.
❑ Show geographical areas impacted by projects on mailings and websites.
❑ Provide legible signboards at property of upcoming land use actions, bright red, big, multiple signs on block, identifiable logo. Current signs too small.

Other issues
❑ Balance Business Association engagement with neighborhood associations.
❑ Do not go through project if city not going to complete the work. Businesses want to know their engagement will impact decision-making, otherwise wasting their time. Recognize growing sense of frustration that going to City planning meetings does not matter anymore.
❑ Business Associations should get smart and hold organizational voice back until when it counts, before council.
❑ Businesses sense arrogance on part of city staff, that they know what's right for the City despite what community input may be.
❑ Create dialogues between bureaus and business associations about future opportunities for new urban areas and when existing URAs sunset.