**BHT Neighborhood Association**

**Meeting Minutes**

**February 17, 2010**

13 people in attendance (see attached attendance sheet).

The meeting was called to order at 7:10pm.

First on the agenda was Dr. Kuo Chang. He discussed the health risks associated with dirty power in the transmission lines (please see attached PowerPoint presentation by Dr. Chang).

Following the presentation there was a question and answer period.

Steve Garner asked if there were any studies currently underway regarding the health risks of solar panels. RESPONSE: It takes four years to publish results; probably 2012 will be the earliest they start coming out.

Bill Weber asked how Mr. Chang rates the discussions between he and ODOT (A. Hamilton). RESPONSE: Pretty good and honest although Alison says the solar highway project won’t increase our electric load.

Next on the agenda was Lynn Averbeck (Project Manager) and Ron Kroop (District Manager) for ODOT. Lynn is doing a feasibility screening for the project and believes it to be an ideal site for the project at this point.

She gave us an update on the status (see attached sheet). The highlights are:

1. No deal with PGE yet. Project won’t be funded or construction begun until at least 2011 due to lack of funding.
2. Feasibility analysis for site will be posted online by March 12th (ODOT solar highway website and City of WL website). Lynn said if we couldn’t show to PGE that this is a valid project/good site then the deal will be off, that’s why they are doing an independent study early, way before funding or construction.
3. ODOT Open House in WL is currently scheduled for March 31st regarding the March 12th published feasibility analysis for solar highway.
4. ODOT and City and working on permitting. There will be a City action with public notice and an appeals procedure in accordance with the City’s community development code. ODOT would like to meet with BHT neighbors on this topic prior to formally submitting this action to the City. The approval process would (in order) go through City Staff, then Planning commission and lastly City Council for a vote—NOTE: this is Lynn Averbeck’s assumed process and sequence.

Steve Garner asked if this project is the “Governor’s” baby? Lynn said “Well, yes, but it’s mostly Alison Hamilton’s baby.

Bill Weber said thank you for coming. He asked other than PGE’s (possible) lack of funding can anything else stop this? Lynn’s response was, “I don’t know”.

FIRE DANGER: Lynn spoke about the Fire danger and danger from the invasive species. She said ODOT can give permits or access to right-of-way for people to do things to a proposed 5 acre parcel (see attached map) above the solar highway project, which is next to BH houses. She gave us a paper showing us four possible options for BH neighbors bordering the project hill to take care of ODOT’s property in conjunction and cooperation with ODOT. She also gave us another paper with a possible list of partners to enhance the 5 acre parcel. Tod Tolan spoke about human causes of fire danger and the difficult access to fight them on that hill. Steve Garner spoke about the “electrical charge on the solar panels during all daylight hours” being a huge fire risk and hazard to firefighters. Frances Hannah will send the CA fire codes for solar panels to Lynn Averbeck.

Steve Garner asked about the “tree cutting” that occurred on ODOT’s property about 6 weeks ago by a neighbor. Steve said that it was his understanding that the trees were cut to prevent fire hazard. Ron Kroop (ODOT) said that was very unfortunate it became adversarial. The neighbor should have contacted ODOT PRIOR to cutting the trees. Since he didn’t there will have to be some agreement written up with restitution provided by the neighbor. Ron is hoping the money will go to a local tree organization (Friends of Trees) who will plant trees around the I-205 freeway, near the 10th Street exit.

Trail: The ODOT engineer (Bike Coordinator) prefers the trail at the bottom of the site, near I-205. However, this is a City of WL decision, independent of the solar highway project. There is no deadline for this trail decision. There might be an IGA between City and ODOT. Ken W. has told Steve Garner that ODOT and PGE prefer the lowest trail location option—between I-205 and the solar panels (even if the panels are not installed).

Bill Weber asked if the Solar Hwy still goes through will ODOT still have the “storage area” where the old Rest Area was? Ron Kroop said if the Solar Highway project gets approval they will move the stockpile equipment/surplus to the I-5/Wilsonville stockpile area.

Ron Kroop wrapped up our meeting saying he sees two unknowns:

1. Is the Solar Highway going in and Where/When?
2. Is the Trail going in and Where/When?

He suggested a small group of interested parties (WL Parks, TVFR, Ron Kroop and BH neighbors get together to work out the fire/security concerns would be a good idea. (See attached list of suggestions/resolutions from Lynn Averbeck).

Ron appreciates the work that the neighbors have done mowing the site. He had never heard any concerns about fire safety on that hillside and he’s been with ODOT for 11 years, with that hillside as part of the area for which he is responsible. Margaret Tolan assured him that she has been calling/writing letters for years.

Steve Garner pointed out that erosion (due to the instability of the hill from prior work when building the freeway) is of huge concern as well. Lynn Averbeck said we might be able to get a “bargain” from ODOT to gain joint agreement on the Solar Highway project.