

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT  
SPECIAL MEETING  
WORK SESSION ON EUGENE STATION

Wednesday, August 21, 1991

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on August 16, 1991, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, a special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District was held on Wednesday, August 21, 1991, at 4:00 p.m. in the LTD Board Room at 3500 E. 17th Avenue, Eugene.

Present: Jack Billings  
Peter Brandt, Treasurer  
Janet Calvert  
Tammy Fitch, Vice President  
Thomas Montgomery  
Keith Parks, President, presiding  
Phyllis Loobey, General Manager  
Jo Sullivan, Recording Secretary

Absent: (vacancy in Subdistrict 7)

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m.

**WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBER:** Mr. Parks welcomed Jack Billings to his first meeting as a member of the LTD Board of Directors, representing subdistrict 5. Mr. Billings had attended the June meeting as an observer, prior to his confirmation by the Senate.

**RESIGNATION OF BOARD MEMBER:** Included in the informational packet for the meeting was a copy of Herbert Herzberg's letter of resignation from the Board, due to his move out of Subdistrict 7.

MOTION **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Ms. Fitch moved that the minutes of the June 19, 1991, regular meeting and the July 17, 1991, regular meeting be approved as distributed. The  
VOTE motion was seconded by Mr. Montgomery, and the minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

**WORK SESSION ON EUGENE TRANSIT STATION:**

Ms. Loobey began the work session by reviewing prior Board discussion in which half-block sites were deemed to be inadequate for the District's needs in a transit station. The Board had directed staff to look for additional three-fourths-block sites.

Stefano Viggiano, Planning Administrator, presented information for the Board's review, as contained in an informational packet handed out at the work session. He explained that, in order to consider all possible sites, staff had reviewed every block in a six-by-six block area of downtown, basically bordered by 5th Avenue on the north, Mill Street on the east, 11th Avenue on the south, and Charnelton Street on the west. The 36 sites were shown on a map on page 5 of the handout. Staff were asking the Board to narrow the list of sites to four for further study.

Mr. Viggiano explained that staff envisioned two additional work sessions. The next one would be held in early fall, to develop a "program" for the station, including functions to be accommodated, amenities to be provided, the size of the structures, and the quality of construction. This would be a discussion of what the Board wanted to accomplish with the site, and how to do so, given cost and funding restraints. The third work session possibly would be held in December. At that time, the Board would be asked to determine the preferred site and a project budget, as well as to direct staff to seek public review and City of Eugene review and approval of the site. Board action to approve the site and direct staff to begin securing funding, acquiring land, hiring an architect, and conducting an environmental assessment, was tentatively scheduled for the March 18, 1992, Board meeting.

Mr. Viggiano then began discussing the detailed agenda on page 3 of the handout. He reviewed prior Board action and direction regarding the Eugene Station. In discussing timing for a decision, he stated that it would take four years from the time a decision was made to acquire a site until LTD would begin using the new Eugene Station, or from March 1992 until Spring in 1996. It appeared that federal grant funds would be available to cover 80 percent of the costs, so local match would be 20 percent, instead of the previously anticipated 25 percent. There was no discussion by the Board on these topics.

Mr. Viggiano also discussed the function of the station, stating that it would serve the heaviest concentration of employment in the metropolitan area. More riders travel to downtown Eugene than to any other single location in the community. One-third of the riders transfer at the Eugene Station, so it has to function as a transfer site as well as a destination point. Location is very important for riders whose trips end in the downtown area, but not so important for those who are transferring.

Mr. Viggiano highlighted a couple of the objectives for the station. It would be important for the station to meet projected 20-year capacity needs. A table on page 16 of the handout showed 20-year ridership and fleet size projections. Staff had used a conservative 2 to 4 percent annual ridership growth to determine that the station would need room for 23 bus bays at one pulse, or time when buses meet at the station to allow for transfers, plus three bays for layovers. The District currently used four pulses per hour, but staff planned to eventually move to six pulses per hour, which would increase the capacity of the station. It also would be important for the station to be not only a safe facility, but also to be perceived as a safe environment.

The factors to be considered in locating a site were also explained. They included size, location, operational characteristics (ease of transfers, bus access into, through and out of station, bus access to and from station through downtown area), and cost, as well as parking

and compatibility with adjacent uses. Mr. Viggiano explained that the cost estimates included only costs for the purchase of the land and construction of the pavement for the bus parking and passenger boarding area, and did not include any structures. The issue of how much to spend on shelters, the Customer Service Center, and other passenger amenities was to be treated as a separate issue in the next work sessions.

Staff had looked at 36 sites and eliminated 26 which had what they considered to have fatal flaws, such as those with historic buildings, those which were too small, etc. Ms. Fitch asked what the "Modified Butterfly" site was. Mr. Viggiano explained that the original Butterfly Lot was a one-half-block site, so was too small to fit the District's needs. However, if the development on the northwest corner were to be considered as part of the site, the site would be a little more than three-quarters of a block. Additionally, the original Firestone site was a linear three-fourths-block site, using property on both sides of 10th Avenue and requiring that 10th Avenue be closed in that location. The Modified Firestone site used three-quarters of the block between Oak and Pearl Streets and 10th and 11th Avenues. It would require removal of the Firestone and other buildings, but the telephone building would remain.

Ms. Calvert asked about the "teardrop" site previously considered. Mr. Viggiano said it was not being considered further because it was an on/off-street design, and did not meet the District's capacity needs.

Mr. Viggiano said that staff had developed a simple system to evaluate the sites, rather than the complicated evaluation process used by the Site Selection Committee last year. Four unweighted criteria were used, and given a score of one through five, with one being the most desirable and five being the least desirable. This system did not include all the variables which the Board might wish to consider about each site, but staff had wanted to use a simple system as an indicator to identify the strengths and weaknesses of particular sites, and to begin discussion with the Board. He explained that some sites met the 20-year projected capacity needs better than others. For location, a site's proximity, first, to employment, and, second, to retail development, was considered. He explained that people who used the bus to commute to work rode more regularly than those who used it for shopping trips. Life-cycle costing was important in considering operational features, because an operating cost incurred over time could offset an initial capital cost. Cost estimates included rough estimates of the costs for land, damages for parking, relocation of businesses, and the passenger platform and bus parking area. Although the estimates were rough, staff had tried to use the same sorts of "guesses" for all the sites, as a basis for comparison. Staff anticipated that the site's amenities could cost between \$3.5 million and \$6.5 million, but these costs would depend on what the District wanted to build on the site.

Mr. Viggiano used slides to show current photographs of the ten sites which were not eliminated. He then discussed the ratings of the sites, based on size, location, operational characteristics, and cost. The highest concentration of employment in the downtown area was located at 10th and Oak, so staff used that as a basis for comparing location of the sites. New development and employment appear to be moving to the east of downtown. A residential area west of downtown meant that retail and employment development would probably not move in that direction. The I-HOP (International House of Pancakes) site, #24 on the map, was considered to be in a good location because it was next to City Hall and within two blocks

of the federal building and the public services building. The Elections Lot, site #4, was rated a "3" because it was close to the Fifth Street Market area, but not close to employment.

Mr. Brandt said he thought site #36, called the "Pasta Plus" site, was rated too low in terms of location, since it was near Sacred Heart Hospital and medical offices, and between downtown and the University of Oregon (UO). He thought it should at least be rated a "3." Mr. Viggiano said staff had discounted it due to its distance from the University, since it was more than three blocks and that was not considered good walking distance for riders to walk to their destination, but agreed that Mr. Brandt had made a good point about the proximity to Sacred Heart Hospital. Mr. Brandt said he saw a lot of students walking from that area to the University every morning.

Ms. Fitch asked who used the parking on the Pasta Plus lot. Mr. Viggiano said that part of the lot was owned by The Register-Guard and used by its employees. Mr. Montgomery said it had also been used by SelectCare employees when they were housed in the U-Lane-O building, so U-Lane-O employees might also be parking there. Mr. Brandt said he was interested in this lot because there were no significant buildings there. Mr. Parks wondered if LTD would have to pay damages for parking at that site. Mr. Brandt thought it might not have to, if the parking were not code-required, and Mr. Viggiano said that an estimate for damages had been included in the cost. He added that even if the Register-Guard offices moved, the building was more valuable with the availability of parking nearby than it would be if there were no parking.

In considering operational characteristics, the IBM site, #6, was considered the worst, because of traffic flow problems. The I-HOP site was rated best in this category.

When discussing cost ratings, there was some discussion about the possibility of finding contamination from underground fuel tanks on the Elections, Pasta Plus, and IBM sites. In theory, contamination would affect the purchase price, depending on who paid for the clean-up. Mr. Viggiano explained that costs were estimated with an appraiser, based on his knowledge of the site, who was using the available parking, whether parking was required by code, etc. However, these were not in-depth estimates. The appraiser also could not consider whether there was alternative parking, just the damage to businesses if parking was eliminated. Mr. Viggiano added that parking damages only applied if the District went through eminent domain, not if the purchase were negotiated.

Ms. Fitch asked if staff had considered leaving one-fourth of a block in parking. Mr. Viggiano said that on the I-HOP site, for instance, the District may not need the property on the northwest side, and that could be used for parking. He was not sure how much parking might fit on one-fourth of a block, but it would be possible to have some parking there. Mr. Montgomery suggested providing some parking on the Pasta Plus lot for the Register-Guard, and mitigating the parking damages by giving group passes to employees. Mark Pangborn, Director of Administrative Services, added that ECO Northwest, a consulting firm hired by Architect Eric Gunderson, had said that the cheapest alternative for the Elections site, although not the best alternative for the area, was to put one-fourth of the block into parking to meet the code requirements for Station Square and the Fifth Pearl Building.

Mr. Gunderson added that all lots which were greater than three-fourths of a block had excess land, but many of the three-fourths-block sites had major development on one corner of the site. This development would be expensive to take, especially to turn into parking. Lots which did not have that kind of development were the Butterfly, Elections, Charnelton, I-HOP, Sears Parking, and Pasta Plus lots.

Mr. Viggiano said that the I-HOP site was the best site by a large margin, based on staff's preliminary rating. It was rated 1 or 2 in every category. There were several sites in the middle rankings, and the IBM, Modified Firestone, and Greyhound sites were determined to be the least desirable sites. Staff believed location to be a fairly important criterion. Staff rated the Elections site as the second-best, the Sears lot as third-best, and the McDonald Theater lot fourth. The theater itself did not take a full quarter-block, so that site would have some flexibility. The Pasta Plus lot would actually tie for second if it were rated higher for location, as Mr. Brandt had suggested.

Mr. Montgomery thought the I-HOP lot looked better and better, even if the Ferry Street Bridge came right next to it. He thought even a pedestrian overpass over the bridge ramp would be an option.

Mr. Brandt said the District should eliminate the Elections lot, because the retailers in the area were not going to let a transit station be constructed in the middle of their development. Ms. Calvert thought the Elections lot did not fit, in somewhat the same way the Butterfly lot did not fit, with current uses of adjacent property, as well as some of the other lots did.

Ms. Loobey explained that those were the kinds of issues that staff deliberately did not take into consideration. Rather, they used a straightforward consideration of the sites to begin discussion and hear the kinds of issues the Board would discuss about each site. Another such issue would be the fact that the Charnelton site would require the closure of Broadway Street, or the removal of Big Leaf Maple trees.

Mr. Billings asked about the Ferry Street Bridge and Agripac. Dave Reinhart of the City of Eugene explained that most of the Ferry Street Bridge options being discussed would have the ramps come down the way they currently did, to 6th and 8th Avenues and Broadway into Franklin. There might be some street widening in those areas, but it should not greatly affect the I-HOP site, or any others under consideration. Another option, or sub-alternative, would have off-ramps at 6th and 8th, but a new ramp where Agripac was currently located, and connections to Patterson and Franklin. That option would necessitate the relocation of Agripac, but the Agripac board had already stated it might like to relocate in northwest Eugene or the Santa Clara area. It would cost an extra \$10 million or so to construct this option for Ferry Street Bridge, including the relocation of Agripac. However, this option would allow further development on the northeast side of downtown. Mr. Rinehart added that the environmental impact statement for the Ferry Street Bridge options should be available by the end of the year. He said that staff were proposing the installation of a pedestrian and bicycle overpass at 8th Avenue. This might be an "imperfect" solution, but would allow pedestrians and bicycles to cross the Ferry Street Bridge ramp at that location.

City Councilor Debra Ehrman spoke regarding the Sears lot. She said she could not imagine the City Council considering selling that site while contemplating the library project, and the City's time line for the library had been lengthened due to the Eugene Decisions process. She said the City would have to either "string LTD along" or say no to the sale, because it would be more expensive for the City to replace the parking if the lot were sold. Ms. Loobey said that perhaps the library and transit station could be a joint LTD/City venture, including parking for the library. Mr. Viggiano said there was still a possibility that a parking structure could be built above or below ground, but UMTA would not pay for expansion parking. Ms. Loobey mentioned that parking above the transit station could work only if it did not cover the entire bus area, and design elements mitigated the noise and fumes problems that could occur with covered bus parking areas.

Mr. Viggiano explained that further research on the finalist sites would cost between \$10,000 and \$15,000 per site. Mr. Brandt and Mr. Billings thought the Board was ready to reduce the number of sites to three or four.

**MOTION** Ms. Fitch moved that the Board eliminate all sites marked in blue on the wall map (sites numbered 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 33, and 35 on the map on page 5 of the handout). Ms. Calvert seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Board members then listed their top three sites, not in priority order. They were as follows: Mr. Brandt--24, 36, 29 (I-HOP, Pasta Plus, Greyhound); Mr. Parks--24, 31, 36 (I-HOP, Sears, Pasta Plus); Mr. Montgomery--24, 36, 32 (I-HOP, Pasta Plus, McDonald Theater); Ms. Fitch--24, 36, 31 (I-HOP, Pasta Plus, Sears); Ms. Calvert--24, 36, 32 (I-HOP, Pasta Plus, Mc Donald Theater [which she labeled a "distant third"]); and Mr. Billings--24, 36, 32 (I-HOP, Pasta Plus, McDonald Theater).

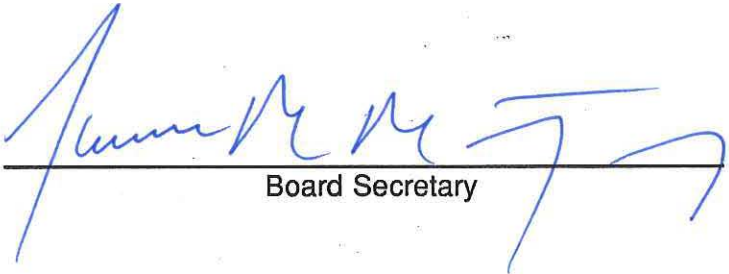
**MOTION** Mr. Billings moved, seconded by Mr. Brandt, that the Board direct staff to conduct additional investigation on the I-HOP and Pasta Plus sites. Ms. Calvert said she was concerned about finding problems, such as underground storage tanks, on one of the sites. Mr. Montgomery said that there was a possibility that some problem could be found on any site. Mr. Brandt said there were many influential people who attended the Baptist church across from the I-HOP site, and they would not stand for putting a transit station there and removing any of their parking. However, he thought it was a good site, and said that the District should consider these two sites further. He thought the Pasta Plus site was potentially not so controversial, and was good because it was close to Sacred Heart Hospital and downtown, and was in the direction growth would go in downtown.

Ms. Fitch asked if three sites might be better. Other Board members thought there would be controversy no matter how many sites were chosen. Mr. Pangborn said that federal grant money would be used for the further investigation, so local dollars was not a major issue. However, considering only two sites would allow the District to spend that federal money on other capital items.

VOTE

There was no further discussion, and Mr. Billings' motion passed by unanimous vote. Mr. Brandt commented that staff had made a thorough presentation, and that was what made the Board's decision so easy that evening.

**ADJOURNMENT:** This concluded the agenda for the evening. Following some general discussion of informational items, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:15 p.m.



Board Secretary