



*American Public
Transportation Association*

Meeting Minutes

Streetcar and Heritage Trolley Subcommittee

James Graebner, chair

APTA Annual and Exposition
San Diego, CA
October 5, 2008

Jim Graebner called the meeting to order at 1:00pm and extended a warm welcome to members and visitors. Jim made note of the APTA Exposition as part of the APTA Annual meeting this year and encouraged members to take time to visit the show over the coming week. Meeting minutes from the San Francisco meeting were approved.

Track Recommended Practices – Jim Graebner / Martin Schroeder

Martin summarized the track recommended practices effort noting the seven groups that have been established by the Track and Noise/Vibration Technical Forum. These groups were established in an effort to break down the task into smaller efforts, with the realization in practical terms that there would be some level of overlap and interdependence between these groups. With regard to tight radius curves it was noted that work by TRB has been valuable, and APTA has made this report available on the APTA Subcommittee web site. Jim Graebner noted that he and Jack Boorse want to do more work in this area, but there needs to be a representative of the Streetcar committee on the TRB circulator subcommittee. Mark Walbrun volunteered for track standards and Chris Pagni has been coordinating on OCS. Cam beach mentioned the problem is not standards but guidelines.

High Cost of Vehicles and Planning for Streetcars – Stan Feinsod

Cam mentioned cases when streetcar orders are very high priced. Jim noted that we need to control costs and help agencies plan properly. Jim indicated that Stan Feinsod suggested that cities / communities need to understand how to decide about and plan for streetcars. Stan said, setting of standards has been good and there are a large number of streetcars planned. Stan further said that this subcommittee has an opportunity to bring streetcars to Dayton, Cincinnati, Columbus, and others. We need to find a way to bring interested parties into the discussion (application of this mode in cities and encouragement around U.S.). How to deal with small buys and buy America rules since most modern streetcars are being provided mostly by Skoda? Look at ideas on how to build interest in other properties. Stan will head up.

On the topic of high cost of vehicles, Martin noted that APTA is continuing its work to develop light rail procurement specifications with the intent of reducing purchase price. The procurement specification is addressing all areas of vehicle design as well as terms and conditions of the procurement. First draft is expected in first quarter of 2008. Martin continued to encourage the Subcommittee to stay involved and aware of the effort.

New Orleans Regional Transit Authority Update – Gary Landrio

Gary Landrio noted that NORTA has 35 cars for the entire system. Perley Thomas cars on Canal Street and St. Charles are up and running. Two new cars are under test. Every few weeks new cars are added. The group asked about how the ties had fared. Gary noted that they look the same - no apparent sinkage or repeated problems. Jim noted that NO is the oldest operating LR system, going back to 1831.

Light Rail and Joint Light Rail Conferences – Martin Schroeder

Martin introduced the Joint TRB / APTA Light Rail conference noting that there is a streetcar session that John Schuuman is moderating. The dates are April 19-21, 2009 in Los Angeles. The call for papers for the ATPA Rail Conference will be issued at the end of November. Update and track standards sessions are planned.

Railvolution – Cam Beach

Cam Beach asked about Railvolution and its niche. Gary said they have planned two streetcar sessions. Cam is somewhat concerned that the streetcar group may not be aware of what is being planned at Railvolution and further asked if APTA can assist here. Martin will help coordinate with chair. It was noted however that Railvolution is focused on TOD. But it was also noted that the subcommittee may wish to contribute to session development to encourage addressing issues such as rail investment and planning.

Streetcar Website – Jim Schantz

Jim Schantz was unable to attend the meeting, but Martin made note of the excellent work Jim continues to do with the website and encouraged those new and old to the Subcommittee to take a look at the wealth of information.

Irvine Guideway Update – Tom Perkins

Tom Jenkins made a detailed report on the proposed Irvine Guideway project. PB is the program manager for the project. Proposition 16 would direct \$127M for fixed guideway funding. The alignment is in Great Park in Orange County located next to the Spectrum and large entertainment center. The alignment is five miles circulator of modern streetcars and or modern transit. Will go design build and is eligible for federal funds but not new-start funds. Total cost would be \$300-\$400M. The decision on how to operate is not determined. There remains an issue with competitive procurements for modern streetcars because of the very limited number of suppliers. But the choice will be based on best value not lowest bid and will follow federal procurement requirements and buy America. Application of CPUC 143B calls for 2-g buff strength, but can apply for variance such as MUNI and San Diego. Another issue is street intersections of single cars at five minute headways. This is an important project worthy of near-term updating for the Subcommittee.

San Diego Update – Harry Mathis

Harry Mathis noted that MTS is not in a position to fund the San Diego project, but money out of

Port of San Diego and corporate support possible. Leading car is being refurbished through repainting program. There is consideration of improving and reinvigorating C-Street to add an auto through-lane. Currently there four stations on C-Street.

ACTION SUMMARY:

- Better coordination with Railvolution
- Keep eye on Irvine project
- Remain engaged in rail conference planning
- Coordinate streetcar outreach effort - Stan

NEXT MEETING:

Jim closed the meeting at 2:15pm and announced that the next meeting will be held in New Orleans, December 5-6, 2008. Sponsors are encouraged.

Respectfully submitted,
Martin Schroeder, P.E.
Staff Advisor