

Approved Minutes
Transportation Commission Meeting
Wednesday, March 23, 2022

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361 codified at Government Code Section 54953, Transportation Commissioners can attend the meeting via teleconference. The City allows public participation via Zoom.

Legistar Link:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=898691&GUID=1B760242-2EF1-45E8-ACCF-FF6D360FB841&Options=info|&Search>.

1. Roll Call

Present: Chair Soules, Vice Chair Yuen and Commissioners Kohlstrand, Weitze, Rentschler and Nachtigall, Hans.

Absent: None.

2. Agenda Changes

None.

3. Staff Communications are as shown in the web link here:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5526058&GUID=18A99C1C-268C-42D0-A9E7-C0FFE25DE30C&FullText=1>

4. Announcements / Public Comments

None.

5. Consent Calendar

5A. Approve Meeting Minutes – January 26, 2022 (Action Item)

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5526059&GUID=2B71195C-701D-48D5-83BB-F5C6C031ABAF&FullText=1>

Commissioner Kohlstrand made a clarification about the 2 motions made on item 6A.

Commissioner Kohlstrand made a motion to approve the minutes with this amendment, Commissioner Nachtigall seconded the motion. A vote was taken by a raise of hands and the motion passed 6-0.

6. Regular Agenda Items

6A. Recommend City Council Approval of the McCartney Road/Island Drive Roundabout Concept

Gail Payne, Senior Transportation Coordinator, introduced this item and gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5526060&GUID=A32C24C9-287D-4F6B-81D7-9AE56F1E79DE&FullText=1>.

Mike Alston, Kittelson & Associates, also presented their findings. His presentation also included a video (31.09 minute mark).

Commissioner Clarifying Questions for #6A

Commissioner Weitze asked for clarification on the Roundabout Draft Concept. He wanted to know why there was a split in the bike lane. He cautioned against splitting the bike lane into the street by the shopping center.

Mr. Alston explained the design choices for the bike lane. He discussed other possible options.

Chair Soules discussed the roundabout vs. traffic light issue at this intersection.

Mr. Alston explained that the intersection did meet some signal conditions. A signal was feasible at this location and based on that they had created a signal concept for this intersection. Nevertheless, it did not offer the same operational and safety benefits that a roundabout would.

Commissioner Weitze asked for clarification on how often Kittelson & Associates did not recommend a roundabout at an intersection.

Hermanus Steyn, Kittelson & Associates, explained that Kittelson is a full-service transportation engineering firm that has worked on national guidelines for both roundabouts and traffic signals.

Public Comments for #6A

Steven Jones, who lives near the intersection, discussed how the traffic rarely backed up there and that the intersection was safe as it was now. He added that the intersection had only had two crashes in the last 11 years. He was concerned that a roundabout would cause crashes and encouraged the traffic light option with a push button for pedestrians.

Chris Miley, Bay Farm resident, discussed that something needed to be done at this intersection. He said there is confusion at the intersection and crossing all five lanes can be intimidating for cyclists. He wasn't sure if a roundabout was the right answer but it needed something.

Commissioner Comments and Discussions for #6A

Commissioner Rentschler discussed the many ways that roundabouts are beneficial and that an improvement at this intersection is needed. He was ready to make a motion and vote in favor of this project.

Commissioner Kohlstrand is in support of this project. She wanted to know if the bus would hold up traffic if it stopped there and how the roundabout would function with heavy pedestrian traffic.

Mr. Alston explained how the pedestrian traffic would flow.

Commissioner Weitze echoed the concerns about pedestrians crossing the roundabout. He also was worried if the data from the intersection was indicative of problem. He was pro-roundabout but saw this intersection as an edge case.

Commissioner Nachtigall had similar issues that had already been mentioned. She was pro-roundabout but was concerned about traffic backing up and pedestrians crossing. She discussed other safety improvements that could work at the intersection.

Vice Chair Yuen was also pro-roundabouts but still had questions and concerns about this plan. She questioned if this was the right solution but the wrong intersection. She discussed the backup she had witnessed at the intersection. She also asked what funding was available and wanted to know how it was allocated.

Staff Member Payne explained the allocation of funds and how projects were prioritized.

Commissioner Kohlstrand also discussed prioritization of projects and pointed out that Fernside Blvd., between High Street and Blanding Avenue keeps coming up as an area of concern.

Commissioner Hans, who lived on Bay Farm Island, discussed the frustration that this intersection had caused. He believed that a roundabout would improve the traffic flow and be safer for children who walked to school.

Commissioner Weitze asked if the city kept data on the amount of kids who walked to school vs. being dropped off.

Staff Member Payne discussed what data the city did have.

Rochelle Wheeler, Senior Transportation Coordinator, explained what data was available and what they could collect.

Chair Soules discussed the environment of Bay Farm Island and how this intersection had had some scary near misses. She also had concerns about queuing and when the merge of lanes would happen. She stressed the importance of education and understanding that the construction could be disruptive to the residents of Bay Farm Island. There was then a discussion about other intersections that would benefit from a roundabout while still addressing that something needed to be done at the intersection on Bay Farm Island.

Staff Member Payne listed other intersections that were being considered and how Transportation Impact Funds are needed to be used in east Alameda and Bay Farm Island.

Commissioner Weitze discussed the importance of following the data when it came to prioritization for funding.

Commissioner Kohlstrand made a motion to endorse the concept of a roundabout for this intersection with the expressed concern that as the design progressed additional consideration be given to the safest option for pedestrian crossing, lane transition and bus turnouts. Also for City Council to consider the prioritization of this project and other projects that would benefit the residents on Bay Farm Island.

Commissioner Nachtigall seconded the motion. A vote was taken by a raise of hands and the motion passed 7-0.

7. Announcements / Public Comments

None.

8. Adjournment

Chair Soules adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m.