

Transportation Commission Minutes: Wednesday, May 28, 2014

Commissioner Jesus Vargas called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Roll was called and the following was recorded:

Members Present:

Jesus Vargas (Chair)

Christopher Miley (Vice Chair)

Michele Bellows

Eric Schatmeier

Members Absent:

Thomas G. Bertken

Gregory Morgado

Staff Present:

Alex Nguyen, Assistant City Manager

Liam Garland, Administrative Services Manager

Virendra Patel, Transportation Engineer

Alan Ta, Assistant Engineer

Gail Payne, Transportation Coordinator

2. Agenda Changes

Commissioner Vargas explained that only Item 4B could be moved due to lack of quorum for Items 4A, 4C and 4D. Staff Patel stated that staff recommended moving Item 5A to a future meeting to allow for more review time.

3. Announcements / Public Comments

Commissioner Schatmeier announced a public hearing for the San Francisco Bay Ferry's fare program FY 2015-2020. The agency will hold a hearing on Tuesday, June 3 at the Alameda Main Library.

4. Consent Calendar

4A. Meeting Minutes – Special Meeting - Wednesday, December 11, 2013

4B. Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, January 22, 2014

4C. Meeting Minutes – March 26, 2014

4D. Meeting Minutes – Special Meeting – April 23, 2014

Commissioner Miley moved to approve Item 4B of the Consent Calendar. *Commissioner Bellows* seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4-0.

5. New Business

5A. Approve Park Street Pedestrian Safety Project

Staff Patel stated that the consultant was waiting to receive the evaluation for the northwest corner of Park Street at Lincoln Avenue in terms of radius and bulb out clearance. The final document was still in draft form.

Commissioner Vargas verified with staff that the Commission would review the remaining intersection.

Staff Patel said the intersections of Park Street and Buena Vista Avenue and Park Street and Pacific Avenue were approved by the Commission. The Commission directed staff to look at the northwest corner of Park Street at Lincoln Avenue and return to a later meeting for approval.

5B. Approve Parking Improvement for the Park Street and Webster Street Shopping Districts

Staff Garland and *Staff Ta* presented the report.

Commissioner Vargas opened the floor to public comments.

Rob Ratto, Executive Director of the Park Street Business Association, said the association was involved with this process and they are enthusiastic about the proposed signage. Furthermore, he said people generally complain about having to carry lots of change and they are enthusiastic about using their credit cards to pay for parking.

Commissioner Schatmeier said when looking at the demand coding within the parking demand maps, they seem to be all over the map. He noted that Park Street could be coded Green, Yellow or Red at similar times of any given weekday and he struggled to find a pattern that could establish an appropriate pricing strategy.

Staff Garland replied staff reviewed two Bay Area pricing strategies that could work in Alameda. The first strategy is based on San Francisco's model where there are three prices

within a day for every block and the final pricing pattern was a result of changes made within two years. The second strategy is based on Berkeley's model where the demand for parking is within the downtown. Therefore, two zones exist where higher priced parking would be within the core and then further away the parking rates are lower.

Commissioner Schatmeier said staff did not mention a parking revenue strategy for the City. He felt since there was no proposed parking rate increase on the horizon and the parking strategy's goal is to have two open spaces on each block, then how would that impact the parking revenue.

Staff Garland replied their goal is not to increase parking revenue. For example, in San Francisco there is an incentive to lowering rates on the lower demand blocks to encourage people to park there. He felt there was no revenue guarantee. He said when motorists use credit cards at the smart meters, they may tend to max out the meter's time, which could increase revenue.

Commissioner Schatmeier told staff that those surveyed about their parking behavior may not act on their preference, especially after the policy is applied.

Commissioner Bellows asked staff if motorists could view the cheaper parking meters' locations through signage or a map.

Staff Garland replied based on the San Francisco model motorists cannot tell.

Commissioner Bellows felt that would not work for people and she understood the parking garage rates being cheaper, but the on-street rate changes seemed peculiar to her. Also, she noticed the daytime (7 am to 9 am) parking demand maps would barely receive demand since most businesses are closed. Therefore, she felt the two open spaces per block concept during that time period was not relevant.

Staff Garland said that staff would measure the progress of the goal by measuring parking demand three hours of the day. Also, he felt based on the total number of blocks in the area, there would ultimately be a percentage of blocks coded Red and staff would want to improve those blocks.

Commissioner Bellows asked staff if their aim was to have two open spaces available per day, per hour, or per period of monitoring.

Staff Garland replied the parking blocks coded Yellow are about two open spaces per block and staff would like to turn all Red blocks to Yellow blocks. He mentioned that the collection of data from 7-9 am was a controlled data set to see when those areas are not busy.

Staff Ta replied on Wednesdays during one of the busiest parking demand periods, Webster Street is coded Yellow, so we are half way there. He also said the parking lot is coded Green.

Commissioner Miley stated that he would be interested in seeing increased parking rates, but he understood the phased approach. He commended staff for taking a comprehensive look.

Commissioner Vargas said the idea of electronic signage to guide motorists makes sense. He

noted that having this information accessible on a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) for passengers to guide the drivers to the parking spaces would be helpful. He also requested that staff come before the Commission at a later time to discuss the goals and overall smart meter policy based on input from the public and consultants.

Staff Garland replied staff would come back to the Commission and the City Council before April 1 of 2015 to say whether the pilot program has worked.

Commissioner Bellows asked staff how many smart meters would be installed on Webster Street and how many would be installed on Park Street.

Staff Ta replied 16 to 18 smart meters on each street, respectively.

Commissioner Schatmeier stated that there is a lot of free parking within proximity of Park Street. He noted that Broadway and Santa Clara Avenue have available spaces and are close to Park Street. Any decision affecting the parking rates and policies could be influenced by the proximity of free parking.

Staff Garland replied staff would review the next round of maps to see where people park away from Park or Webster Streets.

Commissioner Schatmeier asked staff if that is something they could look at as part of the pilot.

Staff Ta replied they would collect the data.

Commissioner Schatmeier told staff that he would like to see the maps displaying parking demand for metered spaces versus parking demand for free spaces.

Commissioner Miley moved to approve staff recommendations. *Commissioner Schatmeier* seconded the motion. The motion received 3 votes with 1 abstention. A lack of quorum on this motion prohibits it from being approved.

5C. Review AC Transit Line W

Staff Payne provided introductory comments and introduced *Becca Homa*, Planner at AC Transit.

Becca Homa presented the item.

Commissioner Schatmeier said the staff report discussed the difference of costs to run a Motor Coach Industry bus (MCI) versus other buses. He noticed that there is a significant difference in costs and when using MCI buses. Also, he saw Lines W and OX using MCIs and the conversion contemplated should bear the benefit and the frequency that would reduce overcrowding.

Becca Homa said if staff added another trip to increase the frequency, they would look at the highest number of standees. For example, they reviewed Lines C and F and the number of standees was in the 50 to 60 percent range. Ultimately, staff's goal is to balance their resources

accordingly. Furthermore, she stated that Line W received a couple of additional bus runs but at this point they have not seen the cost savings yet to add more trips.

Commissioner Schatmeier asked if there was data on the local trips received on the Line W.

Staff Payne replied 4 percent of the total trips are local.

Commissioner Schatmeier asked staff if the number of local trips varied by morning and evening.

Becca Homa replied she cannot speak of the morning versus evening, but she heard the demand for school trips in the morning tend to be high.

Commissioner Schatmeier said that was precisely what happened with the Line OX when they discontinued local passengers in the evening when it was not a problem. Yet, he said when local trips were restored it was restored in the evening without disruption. Staff should evaluate the problems and find out if they occur during the day or evening before discontinuing local passengers.

Becca Homa said she will take the feedback to staff. She felt some of the peak hours in the evening are still at capacity, but she will analyze the trip patterns and demand.

Commissioner Schatmeier replied the problem is not the issue with capacity, but with the local demand needed for Line W. He went on to say if there was demand in the morning for students but not in the evening, then the agency should be more selective.

5D. Review Quarterly Report on Activities Related to Transportation Policies and Plans

Staff Payne presented the report.

Commissioner Bellows asked staff about the application status for electronic bicycle lockers.

Staff Payne replied the application status is still unknown, but the Air District was evaluating it this week.

Commissioner Schatmeier stated he did not see the paratransit shuttle mentioned in the report.

Staff Payne replied omitting the paratransit shuttle was an oversight and she would add the shuttle to the list under transit plan.

Commissioner Vargas stated that on page 4 of the report one of the projects (I-880 23rd and 29th Avenue project) was briefed with the Commission. However, he was not sure if the Commission requested a briefing on the Broadway/Jackson multimodal project because that may be of interest to other Commissioners.

6. Staff Communications

6.A. Potential Future Meeting Agenda Items

- The next Commission meeting will be Wednesday, July 30th.
- Water Emergency Transportation Authority Parking Issues and Route Changes
- Approve Park Street Pedestrian Safety Project
- Potential review of the pedestrian safety program
- Broadway/Jackson multimodal project

Commissioner Vargas acknowledged the public petitions presented about areas of concern such as safety items. Staff is moving those items to the appropriate channels. He stated that if a Commissioner would like to see those items presented at the next meeting, then a request would be made at this time and then addressed during the agenda draft development meeting.

Commissioner Bellows requested that staff provide a status on the I-880/29th Avenue/23rd Avenue Interchange Improvement Project.

7. Announcements/ Public Comments

Jim Strehlow, Alameda resident, asked the Commission to request a thorough traffic study and fact finding document for Alameda Point. He explained that the current Alameda Point traffic study analyzed Webster Street and the needs for Alameda Point only. However, he suggested a broader study of all the access ways in and out of Alameda.

8. Adjournment

8:10 pm