

Transportation Commission Minutes: Wednesday, April 23, 2014

Commissioner Jesus Vargas called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Roll was called and the following was recorded:

Members Present:

Jesus Vargas (Chair)
Thomas G. Bertken
Michele Bellows
Gregory Morgado

Members Absent:

Christopher Miley (Vice Chair)
Eric Schatmeier

Staff Present:

Staff Haun, Public Works Director
Staff Patel, Transportation Engineer
Staff Payne, Transportation Coordinator

2. Agenda Changes

Commissioner Vargas said the Commission had not reached a quorum. So, they would vote on the Consent Calendar items in May. He also requested a moment of silence for the pedestrian killed by an auto on Otis Drive a few weeks ago. Moreover, he said he attended the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NATCO) meeting in Oakland and found that Caltrans embraced the organization's mission. Additionally, he reported that they were the third state to adopt the NATCO policies for transportation, bikeways and all modes.

3. Announcements / Public Comments

Jim Strehlow, Alameda Resident, referred to the last Commission meeting and the presentation on the I-880 project. He exclaimed that the project manager's only goal was to move people into Alameda. However, his goal was to ask the Commission to search for funds to assist the overlooked needs of Alameda commuters. Thus, he requested that the Commission ask for a Traffic Study along the 23rd and 29th at Fruitvale Avenue and High Street intersections. He felt the Commission should request a formal traffic study to consider movements into and out of Alameda. If Alameda County Transportation Commission decides against it then the City should fund it for their own purposes. Ultimately, he would like this topic included as a future agenda item.

Commissioner Vargas asked *Jim Strehlow* if he wanted the study to review the changes during

construction or after construction.

Jim Strehlow said if the study could happen soon and the numbers found after construction are worth acknowledging, then the City could ask for the problems to be rectified.

Commissioner Vargas replied that the Commission could look into inserting this topic into a future agenda item when they arrive at Item 6A.

Staff Payne stated that the Alameda Police Department will hold a pedestrian safety walk event on Saturday, May 3 from the two Alameda ferry terminals and ending at City Hall. She said that interested parties should register at the following link: <http://www.eventbrite.com/o/alameda-police-department-6132421551?s=22507629>.

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

5. New Business

5A. Draft Transportation Demand Management Plan for Alameda Point

Andrew Thomas, Alameda City Planner, presented and requested that the Commission provide recommendations for the plan.

Commissioner Vargas stated that a draft went before the Planning Commission recently. He wanted to know the draft's revisions and highlights since going before the board.

Andrew Thomas replied that the document was reorganized to show a clear and concise perspective as well as clarifying how the City would require new development to comply with the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) policy. He noted that the TDM policy was neither optional nor negotiable.

Commissioner Vargas opened the floor to public comments.

Jim Strehlow said he attended the Planning Board meeting and one of the board members said the contribution for the TDM did not seem to add up. He concluded that the average household would spend \$90 to travel from Alameda Point to Oakland or Berkeley via public transit each month. Thus, they should reach for the \$90 figure as a TDM tax. Moreover, he felt the alternative travel mode wish list was quite aggressive. Staff should think of residents' minimal needs for the plan to be justifiable.

Commissioner Bellows referred to page 4 of the memo, where a residence averaging \$370,000

market value would be required to pay \$3,000 a year plus \$200 a year. She felt the tax was fairly high and she wanted to know the foundation for choosing the value.

Andrew Thomas stated that the tax could be adjusted over time as they would do for any project. However, staff's challenge was balancing major operation and capital costs for Alameda Point. The easiest way to cover this heavy burden was to distribute the cost the best way possible.

Commissioner Bellows replied that she understood the need to pay for operation and capital costs. However, if a resident has a \$300,000 house and must pay the property tax and special TDM tax, there is no mechanism on how to cap the costs. Additionally, she found no information on how the fee was derived.

Andrew Thomas replied that the amount was derived from taking the total burden that the City would expect on a residential unit and each residential unit would pay for transportation and municipal expenses.

Commissioner Bellows replied so that is the gross burden for all public needs.

Andrew Thomas stated yes. The annual taxes are \$200 for the TDM plan and \$3,000 for municipal expenses for a residential unit totaling \$370,000.

Commissioner Bellows replied so instead of paying a 1 percent tax, residents would pay a 2 percent tax. Additionally, she remembered that there was an issue with the structure of the school tax, which was levied differently between businesses and homes. She wondered if the issue was relevant in this case.

Andrew Thomas stated that there is no legal issue because the City owns the land. Therefore, from a Planning perspective the City is the owner of the land and the City can impose certain conditions and requirements when selling the land to individuals who are aware of the proposed tax.

Commissioner Bellows wondered if there would be a tax cap on the TDM plan.

Andrew Thomas replied that the cap would work similar to a negotiation and the developer would agree to an assessment. He said once the special district is established, the City could reassess the area to see if the tax worked.

Commissioner Bellows asked if the assessed value decreased would the rates decrease as well.

Andrew Thomas said staff discussed this issue and *Commissioner Bellows* is correct.

Commissioner Bertken asked if the document becomes part of the environmental document.

Andrew Thomas replied yes, the plan becomes part of it.

Commissioner Bertken referred to the number of different policies for reducing vehicle miles

traveled and one is using the ferry. He viewed the importance of the ferry based on the current increase to ferry patronage and that has caused parking issues.

Andrew Thomas said that the ferry system was an important component to Alameda Point. The capital improvements to extend BART and the freeway system are more costly than extending the ferry service from Alameda to areas such as San Francisco and South San Francisco.

Commissioner Morgado asked about the timeframe for the total build out.

Andrew Thomas stated that the build out estimate is 20-30 years, but it depends on the economy and commercial development, which generally takes longer.

Commissioner Bertken wondered if the 80-acre development discussed earlier would be phased as each developer acquires land.

Andrew Thomas replied yes.

Commissioner Bertken asked about the specific infrastructure tax that is being levied on the taxpayer.

Andrew Thomas replied there are a lot of infrastructure needs such as the sea level rise perimeter, open space system and fire building. The City will have the developers pay their share for this detailed infrastructure.

Commissioner Vargas said he wanted to know the timing of the plan relative to the guidelines to be consistent with the plan's performance measures. He also encouraged the easiest and most effective options to be implemented to reduce vehicle trips. He also wondered if the plan does not meet the intended reductions could staff implement the plan citywide. The TDM plan should list the regional agencies that are included in the TMA, and should clarify it.

Commissioner Vargas called for a motion.

<p><i>Commissioner Bertken</i> made a motion to approve the item. <i>Commissioner Morgado</i> seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4-0.</p>

5B. Next Steps of the Federal Transportation Administration Grant Funds for Improving Transit Access to and from Alameda Point

Staff Payne presented the report.

Commissioner Bertken said last spring he was using AC Transit's Line W two days a week and he was annoyed by the lack of a queue lane along Webster Street north of Atlantic Avenue.

Commissioner Bellows asked if the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) monies had an expiration date.

Staff Payne replied yes there is expiration and they requested an extension. *Staff Payne* also explained that BART allowed an extension until December 31, 2015.

Commissioner Bellows asked if the queue jump design was currently under design.

Staff Payne replied yes it is under design and they have at least 65 percent of the construction drawn out.

Commissioner Bellows asked staff if the project would be fully funded.

Staff Payne replied yes. Also, she explained that *Commissioner Vargas* presented an idea which would give the queue jump lane the first in line for construction.

Commissioner Bellows asked staff about the Cross Alameda Trail and the timing of the construction.

Staff Payne replied the funds have to be used by December 31, 2015.

Commissioner Bellows stated that measure B monies typically are used within a couple of years. She wanted to know if the plan is fully funded or easily phased because the ultimate goal is to get the trail to Alameda Point.

Staff Payne replied yes.

Commissioner Vargas called for a motion.

<p><i>Commissioner Bellows</i> made a motion to approve the item. <i>Commissioner Morgado</i> seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4-0.</p>

5C. Transportation Grant Applications: Transportation Development Act, Active Transportation Program and TIGER

Staff Payne presented the report.

Commissioner Bellows asked staff if the budgeted amount for the Transportation Development Act (TDA) monies is not fully used for the project would the monies go back into the City's reserve.

Staff Payne replied yes.

Commissioner Morgado asked if the bicycle parking was in the form of boxes.

Staff Payne replied yes as well as bicycle racks.

Commissioner Vargas asked about the bicycle counts and wondered if the counts would be conducted by electronic devices or human counters.

Staff Payne replied that the project would go out to bid with a contractor and traditionally they have multiple individuals conducting the bicycle counts at each intersection for the turning movements.

Commissioner Vargas called for a motion.

<p><i>Commissioner Bertken</i> made a motion to approve the TDA item. <i>Commissioner Morgado</i> seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4-0.</p>

Staff Payne presented the remaining portions of the report.

Commissioner Vargas asked about the dollar amount for constructing the trail along the Jean Sweeney Open Space.

Staff Payne replied that they are in the middle of developing the detailed cost estimate, but the cost may go up to \$2 million for the total stretch. Furthermore, the cost includes the section near the Starbucks, which is tricky because it is a constrained space.

Commissioner Vargas asked if the funds are for studies or construction.

Staff Payne replied that the grant is for construction.

Commissioner Bertken asked staff if construction along the intersection is the next phase from what the Commission voted on regarding pedestrian safety and crosswalks.

Staff Payne replied that this would be the long-term solution of construction.

Commissioner Vargas asked staff and the Commission what could be done to increase the chances of receiving the funds. He acknowledged that if staff received letters of support from public agencies or other supporters that would help.

Staff Payne stated that they received support letters from Congresswoman Barbara Lee and various assembly members.

Commissioner Bellows felt staff should have a better chance of receiving funds because the application was submitted at a previous time and the grantors like to see persistence.

6. Staff Communications

6A. Potential Future Meeting Agenda Items

- Next Transportation Commission meeting will be held Wednesday, May 28
- Presentation on Line W by AC Transit
- Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA)
- Quarterly report
- Pedestrian Safety Program
- Voting on all Meeting Minutes

7. Announcements/ Public Comments

Jim Strehlow asked for funding to repair the bikeways and walkways approaching Bay Farm Island. Also, he announced the annual Bike to Work Day on Thursday, May 8 and Bike Walk Alameda will have Energizer Stations at various locations from 6:30 am to 9:30 am.

8. Adjournment

8:30 pm