

Transportation Commission Minutes: Wednesday, December 11, 2013

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)
Christopher Miley (Vice Chair)
Thomas G. Bertken
Gregory Morgado

Members Absent:

Michele Bellows
Eric Schatmeier
Sandy Wong

Staff Present:

Staff Payne, Transportation Coordinator
Staff Nguyen, Assistant City Manager
Staff Patel, Transportation Engineer

2. Agenda Changes

None.

3. Announcements / Public Comments

None.

4. Consent Calendar

4A. *Transportation Commission and Planning Board Minutes: Monday, September 30, 2013*

Commissioner Vargas called for a motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

Commissioner Bertken moved to approve the Consent Calendar. *Commissioner Miley* seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4-0.

4B. *Transportation Commission Minutes:*

Wednesday, October 23, 2013

Commissioner Vargas called for a motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

A quorum was not met, so the Commission will vote at the next meeting held in January 2014.

5. New Business

5A. Shore Line Drive/Westline Drive Bikeway Project Update

Staff Payne presented the report.

Commissioner Vargas opened the floor to public comments.

Rion Cassidy, resident of Bay Street, said he was here in part because he had become convinced that some things violate the public participation policy. He said the Commission approved the project in the past, but today he learned the way comments were handled in the early stages of the project were no longer allowed at this point. He felt that it is a violation. His argument is there are a lot of changes at the last minute and the term “bait and switch” came to mind. There was a community meeting and there were four different choices and cycle tracks were an alternative. His request was to table the decision until the community weighs in on the decision.

Commissioner Vargas asked *Staff Payne* what type of time is available before the decision is needed to lock in the funds.

Staff Payne replied staff would need to submit the construction drawings to Caltrans by January 13, which is a request to authorize construction.

Commissioner Vargas asked if there was time to make modifications on the existing illustrations.

Staff Payne replied yes.

Carol Gottstein, Alameda resident, said the whole project crammed a lot of stuff onto one road that cannot be widened anymore. She said 50 percent of the promised disabled parking spaces have been eliminated or changed and that is disheartening.

Commissioner Vargas asked if the ADA parking is an item that is delayed like the crosswalks or are they currently not feasible.

Staff Payne replied that the disabled parking is infeasible because the parking spots would only comply at eight feet in width whereas on-street parking widths along this corridor are only seven feet.

Commissioner Miley asked if staff made every effort to look at every intersection to see if disabled parking could fit.

Staff Payne said they reviewed every intersection and there are places on some side streets that are feasible, but they would be in front of a single-family home. So, they decided not to pursue these spots because it is inconsistent with the City's parking policy.

Commissioner Morgado asked staff if there was a list of reasons why they were doing this because there were problems with bicycle riders in the walkway and now there may be problems with pedestrians in the bikeway.

Staff Payne said the existing path still would be a multi-use path. The conflict point is at the crosswalk where pedestrians are crossing the street.

Commissioner Morgado said he found it interesting that the pedestrians are prohibited from the cycle track, but the cyclists could enter into the walkway because he does not want to see conflict arise.

Staff Payne replied that the reason staff kept it as is because there are different types of cyclists such as families who ride slower. However, she said staff could revisit the issue.

Commissioner Bertken explained that he was concerned with the traffic along the westbound side of the street and the fact that there are a lot of loading vehicles. However, he found staff made provisions for 17 loading zones or 51 parking spaces that would be eliminated in the daytime, but the City would provide parking on the other side.

Staff Payne replied that the provision said up to 17 loading zones and in those areas with loading zones there are condos and apartments. The City would provide 24/7 parking on the other side of the street. So, these areas have overall more parking. Additionally, the loading zones are designated from 9 am-5 pm, and the big demand for parking in that area is at night time.

Commissioner Bertken wondered if we are really substituting parking for loading zones. He wanted to know how many new daytime parking spaces would be available on the bay side.

Staff Payne replied they do not have an exact count yet but she would send *Commissioner Bertken* the exact number.

Commissioner Vargas stated it was not clear in the presentation whether the U-turn movements would be allowed.

Staff Payne replied that right now U-turns are prohibited and they will keep that as is.

Commissioner Vargas talked about the crosswalks and he said the Sand Beach neighborhood is sort of in the middle and he wondered if there is a way to include one crosswalk.

Staff Payne replied it was not a matter of policy, but a matter of the budget. She explained that staff could review the cost estimate and see if it is feasible to include one more crosswalk.

Commissioner Vargas commented about the bike box, he wanted to know if that works for a signalized intersection or for a stop sign.

Staff Payne replied it works for both. She said for the signalized intersection, the bikes are detected by video and that is how the signal is triggered to turn green. However, the stop sign is the right-of-way rule.

Commissioner Vargas asked about the costs going up and if staff was seeking additional new funds.

Staff Payne replied not at this time because staff believes they can do the project with the existing funds.

Commissioner Miley commended staff for finding a balance for all users of the area. Overall, the project would be an improvement from what we already have.

<p><i>Commissioner Miley</i> moved to approve staff's recommendation with addition that staff work on adding one of the eliminated crosswalks from the Fair Haven to Sunset area.</p> <p><i>Commissioner Bertken</i> seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4-0.</p>
--

5B. Detailed Summary of Transportation Demand Management Plan for Alameda Point

Eric Fonstein, Development Manager Alameda Point, introduced *Jim Daisa* of Kimley-Horn and Associates to present the report for Alameda Point. *Jim Daisa* presented the report.

Commissioner Bertken said some time ago the Commission reviewed a traffic analysis of the intersections in town, which was part of the environmental document. There were some areas that needed mitigation. He questioned if the illustration presented part of the connection from the traffic analysis that was done on the intersections or if these intersections that were showing some problems had to be mitigated.

Jim Daisa replied that the environmental impact report looked at the impacts of intersections and contained three different findings: 1. some solution could be done physically and operationally, but it would be expensive; 2. Transportation Demand Management (TDM), which has a goal target of reducing vehicular trips from commercial development by 30% and residential development by 10%; and 3. significant and unavoidable impacts. He felt there is a lot hanging on the TDM to reduce trips given that the estimate of trips.

Commissioner Bertken referred to the environmental document and said there are physical improvements that are going to need to happen even considering the TDM.

Staff Patel, Alameda Public Works, referred to the environmental document and he stated that if there is less than significant criteria and the physical mitigations are called out then they will be applied to the intersections. So, only the ones that are significant and unavoidable would be

infeasible to conduct the physical mitigation.

Commissioner Bertken said when you have long range goals there is a concern when accepting the environmental document.

Jim Daisa replied that if the physical or operational mitigations bring the number of vehicular trips down to less than significant, then it would be implemented early. However, he said if it was infeasible, there would be reliance on the TDM.

Commissioner Miley asked about item 9.4 under “Monitor and reporting” and wondered whether he could speak about consequences of failing to meet goals and to explain more of the background regarding the reductions.

Jim Daisa replied that they debated it during the joint meeting with the Planning Board and there were options for consequences of failing to meet the goal. He explained that one example could be the Transportation Management Association (TMA) could go before the City Council for a monitoring report and they would have to go to the Planning Board and revise their plans if they fail and that has a monetary impact for development at Alameda Point.

Commissioner Vargas wanted to know if the Transportation Commission would see the monitoring report, and requested that it occur more than one time per year.

Jim Daisa stated that the City Council may prefer that the Transportation Commission review it, and that it could occur every six months.

Commissioner Vargas said it was good to see sustainable communities and he felt establishing more live/work developments would require City policy to promote those types of land uses in that area or to provide a discount to minimize incoming and outgoing traffic.

Jim Daisa replied that we want to attract people who like compact community living, but he does not know if a policy is necessary and that may be difficult when we are still trying to encourage general development to establish here. He felt promoting the area to self selective people and companies who promote sustainable lifestyles was a good start.

Commissioner Morgado asked where in the United States are TDM programs implemented.

Jim Daisa replied that TDM is in many municipalities in some form or another. The City’s TDM is a robust program and even San Francisco has a TDM with a series of incentives. In Oregon, state law mandates trip reduction rules. The company Nike in Portland has a robust TDM program with shuttles, bicycle amenities and other incentives. TDM programs used to be voluntary, and now there are goals with consequences.

5C. Jean Sweeney Open Space Park Draft Master Plan

Amy Wooldridge, City of Alameda Recreation and Parks Director, presented the report.

Commissioner Miley said since the project is not funded what is the estimated full build-out cost.

Amy Wooldridge replied that she has not gotten an estimated cost, but she wanted to wait until she knew what the design would look like. She estimated that the project cost would be between \$5 to \$7 million.

Commissioner Vargas said he remembered going to some of the community meetings and the field visits. He asked if she could highlight the description of the 20-foot right-of-way dedicated for transportation.

Amy Wooldridge explained that there is a future rail right-of-way requirement since they purchased the land from the railroad. She said the agreement states that they had to allocate a 30-foot wide right-of-way for future transportation projects. For the next meeting, staff realized that they need to include that dedication on the next draft of the plan.

Commissioner Vargas asked if they are seeking input on that now.

Amy Wooldridge replied she is seeking input.

Commissioner Vargas said that there was an old building on the site and wondered if there is an opportunity to reuse the building.

Amy Wooldridge replied it is a storage building on the southeast corner and adjacent to the building is a small square building that will be converted to a maintenance storage shed. She said they plan to keep the exterior. The building was painted and the roof was fixed by the Church of Latter-day Saints. She is not currently including the building in the plans because the general concept is to create a concession building or rail history museum, but that is an expensive piece of the project and would be tackled last.

Commissioner Vargas asked if there was a first phase in mind if \$3-\$4 million were allocated to the project.

Amy Wooldridge replied the vision has a few key steps such as soil clean up. A grant was submitted and by February, staff would have a plan on how to start the cleanup process such as digging everything out and getting rid of the dirt or capping it, which is the cheapest option. Also, they need to insert the utilities (water, electrical, and sewer) and a key component is focusing on the Cross Alameda Trail and placing light fixtures. Afterwards, the fences would be taken down and staff would look at the open space that can be planted. Furthermore, when the design is in place then staff can start community projects piece by piece with the planting components. She then said the second phase would be to build out plazas, playgrounds, restrooms and other important amenities.

Commissioner Bertken mentioned that foundations could fund this type of project and the community utility could be broken up into pieces like the recreation areas and educational centers.

Amy Wooldridge replied that there are potential federal and private funding sources for transportation, open space, and recreation such as federal rails to trails.

Commissioner Bertken believed the plan is very professional and very fortunate to get an in-house member of the group.

Commissioner Miley asked if the right-of-way has to remain unused.

Amy Wooldridge replied that the rail right-of-way has to be located on something we can live without at some point. It should not be on the Cross Alameda Trail, and cannot cross major structures like the parking lots or restrooms.

Commissioner Vargas said communities do not want noisy facilities adjacent to their homes.

Commissioner Bertken asked if the rail right-of-way has to be identified at this time or is it just a commitment.

Amy Wooldridge replied it is the latter because there is no specific design and designation of this rail right-of-way.

Commissioner Bertken stated the placement tends to become a historical item that the City is essentially locked into doing. He felt it is better to recognize that fact and point out it is not a commitment.

Staff Nguyen said he was concerned that it is a rail line, so it can only curve and turn so much. Also, he felt we do not want to build facilities where we later may want to place the route.

Commissioner Bertken replied that we are locked into providing the design requirements and we do not want to lay it out now because in the future the location may change. He asked if there would be an easement on either side of the park.

Amy Wooldridge replied no, there is an agreement that the 22 acres has to have a 30-foot wide easement across it somewhere.

Commissioner Miley referred to the Cross Alameda Trail and wondered how it linked up on the western side along Constitution Avenue and Neptune Park.

Amy Wooldridge said staff is exploring the connections further especially due to funding. She felt the trickier issue is the eastern side because that is a dangerous curve and they do not have the outline of how to get people across the street in a safe way. Additionally, she said having

Boardmember Köster on the Planning Board was essential because he has information about the Del Monte development.

6. Staff Communications

6A. Staff Recruitment Update

Staff Nguyen said he would speak to Human Resources about recruitment, and he would provide that information to the Commission.

6B. Potential Future Meeting Agenda Items

Commissioner Bertken asked if a representative from the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) could come and present updates and plans sometime soon.

Staff Nguyen said yes possibly in January or February.

7. Announcements/ Public Comments

None.

8. Adjournment

8:35 pm