

Transportation Commission Minutes

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Commissioner Kathy Moehring called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:04 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Roll was called and the following was recorded:

Members Present:

Philip Tribuzio
Jesus Vargas
Kathy Moehring
Thomas G. Bertken

Staff Present:

Obaid Khan, Supervising Civil Engineer
Gail Payne, Transportation Coordinator
Barry Bergman, Transportation Consultant

2. Minutes

<p><i>Commissioner Vargas</i> moved approval of the minutes for the June 22, 2011 meeting. <i>Commissioner Bertken</i> seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.</p>
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<p><i>Commissioner Tribuzio</i> moved approval of the minutes for the September 28, 2011 meeting. <i>Commissioner Vargas</i> seconded the motion. <i>Commissioner Bertken</i> abstained. Motion passed 3-0.</p>

3. Oral Communications – Non-Agendized Items / Public Comments

Jon Spangler gave a report on the west span of the Bay Bridge where paths are being planned on both the north and south sides. The cost is expected to be \$550 million, and is expected to be constructed in ten years. At a recent public outreach meeting for the project, 75 people attended. Mr. Spangler will forward more information.

4. New Business

4A. Presentation of Quarterly Report on Activities Related to Transportation Policies and Plans.

Staff Payne summarized the staff report.

Commissioner Vargas requested a briefing about the Safe Routes to Transit application.

Staff Payne responded that the funding source originates from bridge tolls in the Bay Area. The goal of the grant is to divert drivers across the bridges to become transbay bus passengers. TransForm staff stated that the funding cycle was really competitive. They liked the grant application, and stated it was well written and a beneficial project.

Commissioner Moehring asked if the communities that received the grant application were closer to the bridge.

Staff Payne responded that it was difficult to compete against projects that focused on higher-density areas. There is a feeling that suburban communities tend not to win as many Safe Routes to Transit grant applications.

Commissioner Moehring asked if there will be public meetings for the Shoreline Dr/Westline Dr bike lane project.

Staff Khan emphasized that the Shoreline Dr/Westline Dr bike lane project is going to have quite a bit of outreach starting in March 2012. Staff is waiting for Caltrans to authorize expenditures. Staff will bring this item to the Transportation Commission.

Commissioner Vargas wanted to know what the TSM/TDM measures are as a prelude to the upcoming Transportation Commission meeting.

Staff Payne stated that the measures are in five broad categories.

Staff Khan provided an overview of the TSM/TDM Plan purpose. The idea is that developers will be able to address trips generated by a development using a menu of TSM/TDM measures. The intention is to mitigate peak hour trips using the TSM/TDM measures.

Commissioner Moehring was pleased about obtaining the Gibbons Drive Safe Routes to School grant application.

Commissioner Moehring stated that the Mecartney/Island intersection is enormous and was interested to know if the City could improve it without grant monies. She admires how much effort staff puts into grant efforts. She wanted to know how much it would cost for traffic lights.

Staff Khan stated that this intersection has two lanes in each direction. This intersection could be signalized. If it is signalized then it could make a big difference. The City could use internal

funds for this project or could tap into developer funds on the basis of the new development in the area. He felt that it needs to be signalized.

Commissioner Vargas stated that he is interested in helping staff with brainstorming on this intersection improvement.

Staff Payne stated that local funds usually are used to leverage outside funds as the local match to help stretch the limited funds farther so that more areas of the city benefit from the limited funds.

Lucy Gigli, President of BikeAlameda, was impressed with the quarterly report and how it is shown. It makes everything clear. About the Shoreline Dr/Westline Dr bike lane project, BikeAlameda is hoping to have a lot of public input. They are hoping for a cycle track configuration – one that is similar to Fernside Blvd. She hopes that some of the analysis from this bike lane project could go into a cycle track concept.

Lucy Gigli, President of BikeAlameda, for the Mecartney/Island project, she urged the group to think outside the box in terms of traffic calming such as roundabouts or other kinds of things to help out huge intersections.

4B. Proposed Bus Stops at Maitland Avenue and Harbor Bay Parkway.

Staff Payne summarized the staff report.

Commissioner Vargas asked if there any ADA issues with the concrete pad broken by the tree on the north side.

Staff Payne responded that the concrete bus pad corresponds with AC Transit's template.

Commissioner Vargas asked if there are any maintenance issues pertaining to the tree.

Staff Payne stated that the tree well provided should be sufficient space for the tree to thrive.

Commissioner Bertken asked about the debris on the sidewalk in the photo.

Commissioner Moehring and Gail Payne answered that the debris are leaves.

Commissioner Moehring: It is nice to see that the City is installing bus stops. She stated that it would be nice if this item came as a recommendation to the City Council as opposed to already having been approved by the City Council and in the CIP.

4C. Draft Bicycle Facility Design Guidelines.

Staff Khan summarized the staff report.

Commissioner Moehring stated thank you to staff for placing the bicycle racks throughout the city in places that are well used.

Lucy Gigli – President of BikeAlameda – BikeAlameda has been working with the City on these guidelines for multiple years. BikeAlameda is happy with them, has had a lot of input into them and will be sending in detailed comments. The goal of the guidelines is to exceed the minimum to become a more bicycle-friendly city. For example, bike paths should be ten feet with two feet shoulders not eight feet. Bike lane widths should include how the parking lane is defined. The bike lanes are too close to the car doors so she wants to see this revised in the document.

Jon Spangler – Alameda resident and a League of American Cycling Instructor – He seconds what Lucy said. Alameda has every pre-qualification to be a world famous bicycle-friendly community yet the City needs infrastructure to match it. He had three points:

- 1) On the class I bike paths on page 4 – He would like to see 12 feet as the recommended minimum because these paths become multi-use paths. Twelve feet accommodates multiple conflicts, users, directions and speeds. Twelve feet should be the floor and should be the minimum for each side of the west span of the Bay Bridge. Golden Gate Bridge is ten feet and seems too narrow.
- 2) On Page 34 regarding in-street bike corrals, earlier in the year we had conversations about having them in front of businesses such as Stones Cyclery even on a trial basis. Park Street is going to need more bike parking due to the elimination of the parking meters along Park Street totaling about 100 de-facto bike parking spaces.
- 3) Class II bike lanes – such as Central Avenue between Willow Street and Oak Street is 5.5 feet – if you recommend an effective door zone of five feet between the bicycle tire and the parked car to allow for sudden doors to be opened, then need to place bicycle tire on the bike lane line on the Central Avenue bike lane. It says something about the current practice as three feet yet they are talking about changing it nationally because the average door on an SUV is four feet when open. Bicyclists need one foot between the door and the bicycle to ensure that the bicyclist is predictable and safe. He recommends an increase in the width of bike lanes and at least a four-foot door zone.

Commissioner Tribuzio asked about loop detectors and if they are the same as the ones at intersections for vehicles.

Staff Khan replied that loop detectors detect the metal of a car and staff increases the sensitivity to detect bicyclists. Cameras are becoming more common such as on Webster Street and eventually on Park Street to ensure better detection of bicyclists.

Commissioner Tribuzio asked about bicycle racks. The guidelines showed two kinds – U shaped and the ring kind. He questioned if it would be cheaper to use the ring kind for construction.

Staff Khan replied that the key is that the bicycle should be attached at two points.

Barry Bergman stated that the inverted U has become the national standard. It provides more support for bicyclists at two points. The labor is not that much greater than with the ring type. The City is recommending the inverted U as the standard; however, both types are considered acceptable.

Commissioner Vargas – The dialogue between BikeAlameda and the City is great to see. The goal is to make it a more bike friendly city. Developers can use it as the opportunities come up and so he likes the concept of the guidelines. In Spain, he saw some loaner bikes where individuals can borrow bicycles. Perhaps the City can include this item in the next revision. He has minor comments that he will share later. He asked about the timing of the revisions.

Staff Khan responded that January 6 is the deadline for responses; however, this time has been extended since staff will take this item to the January 19 Economic Development Commission meeting and to the Planning Board in February so comments are open. Staff will take the item to the City Council in March or April.

Staff Payne stated that staff is in contact with the Air District, which has a loaner bike pilot project. Unfortunately, Alameda is not a pilot study city yet possibly could be at future stages so staff is monitoring the project.

Commissioner Moehring – It would be amazing to have loaner bikes at the ferry terminals for the America Cup. Loaner bikes would open up the City for tourists.

Commissioner Bertken – It looks to be a commercial enterprise in Paris.

Commissioner Moehring – In Amsterdam, they are looking for a basic bike and they just need access.

Staff Khan discusses that the design guidelines addresses how to design a facility. It does not address how to design a program so the loaner bike program would not be appropriate in the design guidelines.

Commissioner Moehring – When it comes to the width of the bike lane, the City needs to look at the width of the street. We are limited by the width of the street. The bike lanes should be as wide as possible.

Commissioner Vargas asked if looking at the volumes could justify widening the facility.

Staff Khan – It is a good point, which Barry tried to capture. Around the waterfront, the City also would want a jogging path. We tried to find information from the United States. For vehicles, local streets could have 10-foot wide travel lanes. For collectors, we may want to have wider lanes with 11-foot lanes. Arterials should have 12-foot lanes. The speed of the car also should play a role because we do not want the drag of trucks to pull the bicyclist under the wheels. Barry and he looked at Harbor Bay Parkway with faster speeds. The street would need

wider travel lanes. Fernside Blvd. has seven to eight foot bike lanes since it has the space. It depends on the user and needs of the road. It is why we call these guidelines because staff needs to use judgment based on the street conditions. We do not allow less than eight feet for parking lanes. The streets are mostly 36 feet, which means two ten feet travel lanes and two eight foot parking lanes. We want to maintain at least eight feet of parking lane and see where we can increase the bike lane width.

Commissioner Bertken questioned if the guidelines will go to the Planning Board. He asked about having a public hearing on the guidelines. Once the City Council adopts the guidelines, then the staff follows the guidelines. Some items affect properties and developers.

Staff Khan replied that the entire document will go to the Planning Board. The TC is a public hearing because this meeting is following all the rules of a public meeting.

Commissioner Bertken – Usually the usual routine is to announce it as a public hearing.

Commissioner Moehring – BikeAlameda has discussed this document as a larger group even though only a few representatives are attending the meeting this evening. Obaid said that he would take the TC member recommendations to the next level.

Commissioner Bertken – He expressed concern that the meeting does not quite cover the ordinance details.

Staff Khan replied that some portions of the guidelines will become an ordinance such as parking ratios and those items would be separately dealt with at the Planning Board or the City Council.

Commissioner Bertken – He wanted to know which pieces would be subject to the City Council and would have more detailed review.

Staff Khan will announce the date of the Planning Board meeting. Two different actions will be taken by the City Council – to approve the guidelines and to adopt City ordinances on specific items in the guidelines for parking and shower requirements.

Commissioner Moehring – She wanted to know if the TC members will be making a recommendation to accept the guidelines.

Commissioner Vargas – He is fine with providing input over the next few months.

Commissioner Bertken – He wanted to know if this document will come back to the TC in a revised form.

Staff Khan – He stated that staff could bring it back as a second draft.

Commissioner Moehring – She stated that staff should bring back a second draft redlined copy at the January meeting.

Commissioner Bertken – TC is supposed to adopt policies.

Staff Khan – The TC member comments are captured in the meeting minutes. The TC comments will be used as the TC recommendations and then it will go to the Planning Board. Staff could keep the TC comments separate if desired. Staff is hearing that the TC will start meeting every other month starting next year.

Staff Payne confirmed that there will be a January meeting.

Commissioner Bertken made the motion to bring a draft redlined copy at the January meeting; *Commissioner Vargas* seconded the motion.

4D. Additional Bicycle Racks for Park Street

Staff Khan summarized the staff report.

Commissioner Bertken – asked a question about the legend.

Staff Khan replied that the drawings are meant for the detailed engineering design. The details to focus on are the bike rack symbols. The bus stations at Encinal Avenue and other locations may be able to have more bike parking.

Lucy Gigli – President of Bike Alameda – BikeAlameda did rush to walk down Park Street to see where to place additional bike racks. It ends up that potentially 35 to 40 bike racks along that corridor would be installed. BikeAlameda still is concerned about losing 100 parking meters and going down to 35 to 40 bike racks. BikeAlameda is not sure how the new bike racks are going to accommodate the bike parking. BikeAlameda would like the city to consider an in-street bike parking pilot program at some location that is convenient. It would take away one parking space for about ten bike parking spaces. Instead of plenty of bike parking, BikeAlameda is seeing a streetscape with less bike parking. BikeAlameda would like to see one or two of these in-street facilities in place along Park Street.

Jon Spangler – The net lose is about 100 bike parking spaces when considering the parking meters eliminated and the original 12 bike racks installed. The new 35 to 40 bike spaces would close about one half the gap. He made the same request to look at in-street bike parking. One of the locations is Stone Cyclery and the owner of the bar next door. The idea of the shared supervision would work in that location. He hopes that it will be looked at on Webster Street and Alameda Landing on its next round to the Planning Board.

Bonnie Wehmann of Board Member BikeAlameda, EBBC and League Instructor Certified – She expressed her concern about the bike racks. It seems so minimal. It would be great to convert parking spaces to in-street bike parking.

Commissioner Moehring – She asked if this issue has gone to PSBA.

Staff Khan – It is not impacting anything on the sidewalk or parking so it has not gone to PSBA.

Staff will take the item to PSBA if it impacts parking. If there is a high demand for bicycle parking, staff will work with Bike Alameda to define those peak demand times and then staff could do the analysis to provide appropriate supply of bike parking. Staff could report back from the fieldwork to determine what is needed. The concern is that the street sweepers cannot clean the in-street bike parking areas. The adjacent businesses would need to come to an agreement to maintain it.

Commissioner Moehring – She asked if there could be stickers redirecting bicyclists to additional bike parking around the corner by the Alameda Theatre.

Staff Khan – He has not seen this bike parking fully utilized.

Lucy Gigli stated that this parking is on Central Avenue, which is 1.5 blocks away and is inadequate bike parking unless it is for a more secure bike parking.

Commissioner Moehring – Most people only leave their bike for short-term bike parking needs. The City would need to talk to the individual businesses to get their buy-in on the front end. We know it benefits everyone; however, we want to have buy-in from the businesses.

Staff Khan – He agreed to have buy-in from the businesses.

Jon Spangler – The issue of bike theft has been on the rise in Alameda. One of the things that needs to happen is a public education campaign on the need to use a serious U lock and not a cable lock. He has a neighbor who has lost three bikes along Park Street within three months. He hopes that this is something that the Police Department, businesses and BikeAlameda could help with this effort.

Commissioner Moehring – Inverted U bike racks support the heavy duty bike locks because they allow bicyclists to use better locks. The old style of bike racks such as at Mastick Senior Center make it difficult to use the U lock.

Commissioner Tribuzio – I have not noticed bike racks at Mastick Senior Center. It would be advantageous to park bikes in a more secure location when leaving it for a full day. The problem is where to set up more secure bike parking. It could be a commercial enterprise. Revenues exist from parked cars yet the City is not receiving revenue from parked bicycles.

Commissioner Vargas – He had a question about the bike corral and if there is precedent in Alameda.

Staff Khan – Staff has proposed a bike corral in the guidelines. In-street bike parking exist in Berkeley. Staff looks for adequate visibility and adjacent businesses need to agree to keep it clean and maintained.

Commissioner Moehring – She likes what they do in New York where they extend the bus shelter for covered bike parking.

Pam Cargill of BikeAlameda – She mentioned the need for additional bike parking along Redwood Square near the post office. Another location for additional bike racks is by the Bank of Alameda in the alley. It would be better with inverted U bike racks. The current bike parking at this alley does not function well.

Commissioner Moehring – She questioned the safety in that alley.

Pam Cargill – She is not concerned about safety in that area because it is close to a well traveled area of Park Street.

Commissioner Moehring – She agreed about the need to look at these two locations for additional bicycle parking.

Staff Khan – He stated that he has discussed Redwood Square with Gail Payne and Lucy Gigli, and that we will see additional bike racks in the future at these locations.

4E. Estuary Crossing Shuttle Extension to Wind River.

Staff Payne summarized the staff report.

Commissioner Moehring – She stated that she feels it is a fabulous program.

5. Staff Communications

Staff Khan explained the Sunshine Ordinance. It will take effect in February 2012. There will be specific language that will be inserted onto the Transportation Commission agenda. Some of the key provisions include public access to information. Staff will be receiving training on it.

In January, staff will present Transportation Commission Bylaws Revisions, Revised Draft Bicycle Design Guidelines and the Alameda Paratransit Program. Commissioner Tribuzio has submitted his resignation. He has worked hard and staff appreciates his efforts.

Staff Payne stated that a new Alameda Unified School District representative will begin attending the Transportation Commission meetings.

6. Announcements

Commissioner Moehring stated thank you to *Commissioner Tribuzio* for all his hard work and thank you to the staff.

7. Adjournment

8:50 PM