

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos CA 94070
Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor

MINUTES OF MARCH 30, 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT: B. Arietta, J. Bigelow, P. Dixon (Chair), J. Fox, R. Hedges, R. Hees, C. King, A. Mader-Clark, D. Maez, D. Mensing, A. Vargas, P. Young

MEMBERS ABSENT: L. Shaine, G. Zimmerman

STAFF PRESENT: S. Cox, H. Goode, J. Hurley, R. Lake, M. Lee, K. Rothschild

Chair Pat Dixon called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m. Austin Mader-Clark led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Doris Maez said, in the sixth paragraph on page 3 of 8, “She said the excise tax” should read, “Ms. Rothschild said the excise tax.”

A motion (Hedges/Bigelow) to approve the minutes of March 2, 2010 was approved with this correction.

Public Comment

None

ITEMS FOR REVIEW – APRIL 1, 2010 TA BOARD AGENDA

There was no discussion on the following items:

1. Approval of Minutes of March 4, 2010 - TA Item 3a
2. Acceptance of Statement of Revenues and Expenses for February 2010 - TA Item 3b

SamTrans Liaison Report – March 9, 2010 – TA Item 7

April Vargas referred to the applications for Lifeline Transportation Program projects in San Mateo County in areas with a high concentration of low income populations. She asked who determines project locations. She talked with a resident of the Belle Haven area of Menlo Park who is unhappy about the lack of bus service, bus shelters and benches. Director of TA Program Joe Hurley will provide this information to Ms. Vargas.

Rich Hedges asked if part of this improvement to bus stops is NextBus capability for mobile devices or from a home computer. Ms. Vargas said people living in low income communities may not have availability for this type of technology and the best answer would be availability of information right at the bus stop.

Authorizing Award of Contracts to Fehr & Peers and HNTB Corporation for On-call Transportation Planning and Program Support for up to \$1,500,000 for a Three-year Term - TA Item 10a

Executive Officer Planning and Development Marian Lee said \$1.5 million will be shared among three consultants that have been selected to provide on-call services for the Planning and Development department. Wilbur Smith Associates was awarded a contract at the February TA Board meeting. Two additional firms recommended to be approved at the April 1 TA Board meeting are Fehr & Peers and HNTB. Staff is asking the Board to authorize the Executive Director or his designee to administer a contract with Fehr and Peers and HNTB and to exercise up to two one-year options with a total maximum compensation in the amount of \$375,000 for each option term. The one-year options cap will also be shared among the three consultants. All services will be provided on an on-call basis. There is no guarantee of any particular amount of work going to particular consultants.

Randy Hees said there is a similar item on the Joint Powers Board (JPB) agenda and asked if this was a \$3 million contract from the three agencies that make up the San Mateo County Transit District. Ms. Lee replied \$1.5 million is just for the TA. There are separate caps for the JPB and SamTrans. The total combined amount for the JPB, TA and SamTrans is \$7 million.

Mr. Hees asked if this was the report several months ago that had three bids in the works and only one went forward. Ms. Lee said replied yes, and said Fehr & Peers and HNTB were the two bids in the works.

Mr. Hedges asked about HNTB's potential role. Ms. Lee said HNTB has planning consultants that can assist in the preparation of planning documents, such as the highway strategic plan and policy development.

Ms. Vargas said she worked closely with HNTB while on the CAC for the Devil's Slide Tunnel Project and found them to be especially good with constituent services and dealing with members of the public.

Ms. Maez said HNTB is the project engineer for the San Francisco to San Jose High Speed Rail (HSR) segment and Peninsula Rail Program (PRP). Ms. Lee clarified that Wilbur Smith Associates, Fehr & Peers and HNTB will support the TA and SamTrans. However, HNTB will not support the JPB due to an inherent conflict of interest resulting from their contract with HSR and the PRP.

A motion (Hees/Arietta) to support award of contracts to Fehr & Peers and HNTB for on-call transportation planning and program support was approved.

Mr. Hees said there is a high level of comfort with this selection process should be noted to the Board.

PROGRAM

Dumbarton Rail Corridor Project Update – TA Item 11a

Ms. Lee provided the following details on the project description, status and challenges:

- The project extends commuter rail service across the Dumbarton Rail Bridge from Union City in the East Bay to San Francisco and San Jose along the Peninsula during peak commute hours only.

- The project involves rehabilitating the Dumbarton rail bridge and activating the rail line and four stations.
- Union City will function as the key intermodal transit center that will provide connections to the Altamont Commuter Express, Capitol Corridor and BART. Three other stations will be located in Centerville, Newark and East Palo Alto/Menlo Park. Caltrain stations will be used when Dumbarton service reaches the Caltrain corridor.
- Funding agencies include the TA, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority, Alameda County Congestion Management Agency and the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority.
- Fifteen percent engineering design is complete; the administrative Draft Environment Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Report are complete; technical studies are complete and capital cost estimate and ridership forecast are updated.
- Challenges include funding and ridership.
- Capital cost is \$700 million in 2009 dollars with \$300 million in funding identified. Regional Measure 2 funding of \$91 million was loaned to another project but is to be paid back.
- Ridership is projected at 6,200 average weekday riders in 2035, which is a decline from a previous estimate of 12,000 in 2005 due to fewer commute-direction trips, fewer stops on the Caltrain corridor and changes in the travel demand model.
- The project scope revision analysis and funding plan are scheduled to be completed in 2010 and a schedule linked to HSR and the PRP. The project cannot advance without regional leadership and support. The administrative draft environmental document and public hearings will be finalized in 2011-2012.

Ms. Vargas asked about ridership projection changes in the travel demand model in 2035.

Ms. Lee said staff used VTA's forecast model and there is Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidance on how many riders are lost if a transfer is added, if you increase travel time. These are called constants and variables that are put into this model and the VTA had to make these modifications to meet FTA guidelines. This variable impacted the decrease in ridership. Ms. Lee said this variable did not have as much impact as the change in the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) projections, which included population and job changes. The other variable that affected ridership was the reduction of stops along the Caltrain corridor.

Barbara Arietta asked if there will be decentralized job centers in 2035. Ms. Lee said the 2005 ridership projections reflected conservative projections due to the economic downturn a few years before. If projections had been used from a few years before 2005, the numbers would have been more robust.

Ms. Vargas asked what support is needed to advance the project. Ms. Lee said it means money and advocacy. There are many projects in the MTC Regional Plan and this project is not near the top of the list for regional priority.

Ms. Vargas said projections indicated the majority of traffic would be coming from the East Bay to the West Bay. She asked if less parking would be needed to get people to BART or Caltrain in the morning. Project Advisor Howard Goode said the objective of this project is to get cars off the Dumbarton Bridge and University Avenue in Palo Alto, get these people on the train and then to their final destination, which will be primarily along the Caltrain corridor. The Dumbarton riders

will face the exact connection issues as Caltrain riders and this creates an additional reason for shuttles and connecting bus service.

Ms. Vargas asked if the expectation would be for riders to connect to Caltrain to points north and south. Mr. Goode replied yes.

Ms. Maez asked if riders would have to transfer to Caltrain and if the trains would be diesel units. Mr. Goode said, in the basic project description that was used in the environmental document, passengers would not have to transfer because the trains would continue on the Caltrain line both north and south. Mr. Goode said the project defined in the environmental document was diesel-pulled gallery cars.

Ms. Maez asked how this would interface with plans for Caltrain electrification. Mr. Goode said HSR may be in the West Bay and the Capitol Corridor and Altamont Corridor are in the East Bay. These are things that have evolved into different services than were assumed six to eight years ago when the project was originally framed. Staff will have to examine this issue in depth.

Ms. Maez asked what will happen at the 4th and King Caltrain Station and at the Transbay Terminal. Ms. Lee said when the project was defined the thinking was that even after Caltrain was electrified Caltrain could serve both electrified and diesel trains.

Jim Bigelow said Assemblyman Ted Lempert took State money twenty years ago and came up with a ridership projection, which showed about 4,200 riders a day. Mr. Bigelow said if one takes the number of cars using the Dumbarton Bridge 20 years ago and the number using the bridge today, and then looked at how many cars will be using the bridge in 2035, he could not understand how anyone could come up with 6,000 riders based on traffic loads that will be put on the bridge. He said if you consider transit oriented development along the East and West Bay areas and concentrate jobs near transit, he cannot understand how planners could come up with a lower number of riders. He said this is problematic because a fully funded \$129 million project is now up to \$700 million. Mr. Bigelow said the San Mateo County Transit District owns 11 miles of Dumbarton right of way across the Bay. He said it would be helpful if Caltrain could take some of the assets owned by the agencies that are part of this project, and if the costs increase to \$850 million, Caltrain should add in more of the value of the property for the 11 miles of bridge right of way

Mr. Bigelow said it may turn out with Peninsula Rail Program planning that Dumbarton Rail may not be able to come on to the Caltrain line and there may need to be a transfer station at Redwood Junction.

Mr. Hedges said regional leadership has to fight to get back the \$91 million because the Warm Springs BART Station, which will probably be populated by zero riders because of the closing of the NUMMI Plant, and is in the middle of nowhere with no plans for housing or other structures in the area. He said the focus of transportation in the region now is HSR with Caltrain and BART to connect into all three major airports.

Charles King asked how long it would take and what would it cost to travel from Industrial Parkway in Union City to East Palo Alto. He asked what would happen if a train derailed into the Bay.

Mr. Goode said service and fare structure would be similar to Caltrain service. He said the bridge design is primarily on trestle or on bridge that is enclosed so track is actually set on a roadbed and a derailment would probably result in the train just being off the tracks.

Mr. King was concerned about emergency service to the rail bridge. Mr. Hees said there was a bridge fire 10 years ago and Caltrain brought a special car stationed in East Palo Alto and the fire truck can ride out on the bridge.

Mr. Hees said Caltrain is proposing a waiver with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for non-compliant rolling stock that would work fine on Caltrain tracks, but across the Bay would be on Union Pacific or other tracks with compliant equipment. He asked if the plan was looking at a transfer station in Redwood City rather than running the equipment onto the Caltrain line if it's FRA-compliant and Caltrain is FRA exempt. Ms. Lee said plans for the Caltrain corridor are for both electric and diesel and compliant and non-compliant vehicles.

Mr. Hees said anything that runs beyond Newark has to be FRA-compliant because of track design. He asked if FRA-compliant rolling stock is in the proposal. Ms. Lee said staff will be doing due diligence in re-examining all these variables of the project.

Chair Dixon said she is in favor of HSR coming up the valley and across Dumbarton Rail into Redwood City with a system of dual lines.

Mr. Bigelow asked staff to respond to his comments on ridership projections made 20 years ago. He said Menlo Park is planning for the Dumbarton Station to be a bus terminal and asked if this was in the plan. Ms. Lee said she doesn't have an answer on ridership right now. There will be more congestion than predicted in the project design but one needs to consider the level of service to be provided. The current scope will provide one train per hour in the peak direction only during commute hours and staff will need to look at how service has been scoped out to see if we are tapping into the market and attracting those people. Staff is monitoring this.

Senior Planner Sylvia Cox said she is working with the city of East Palo Alto. The city has received station area planning money from MTC and is doing an analysis on whether a Dumbarton Rail station would work in their city. They are also working with the city of Menlo Park to see if they could find a station location between the two cities, so there is the possibility that there would be an alternate station site for construction.

Mr. Bigelow said Menlo Park has no interest in a rail station and only want a bus transit mode to service three industrial parks. He said the city is on the record, except for one council member, that staff is moving in this direction. He said the Belle Haven area in Menlo Park is underserved and needs better transit service.

Mr. King asked what type of transit work is being done at the four corners area. Ms. Cox said the city of East Palo Alto Planning Department is looking for a bus transit station and possible location somewhere in East Palo Alto. There could be transit oriented development at the new station site and would need some sort of shuttle to the downtown area.

Update on State and Federal Legislative Program – TA Item 11b

Government Relations Officer Kim Rothschild reported:

- The TA and Caltrain will be opposing AB 2121, which eliminates funding for HSR. This has not been heard in the Transportation Committee so there is no analysis on the bill.
- The gas tax swap was approved and Caltrain will receive \$5.1 million in July and \$4.5 million more in July 2011. The San Mateo County Transit District will receive \$5.2 million this year and \$4.6 million the next year. This also generates about \$350 million annually for agencies statewide, starting in FY2012.
- Congresswoman Jackie Speier requested FY2011 appropriations of \$500,000 for Caltrain fencing/signage in her district.
- Congresswoman Anna Eshoo is moving forward with appropriations for staff transportation needs for SamTrans and \$500,000 for Caltrain fencing in her district.
- The TA has an appropriations request of \$1 million for the San Bruno Grade Separation Project.
- The appropriation request process will be finalized in October 2010.

Chair Dixon asked if the \$1 million request includes purchasing property that was discussed at the April 1 JPB meeting. Mr. Hurley said the request was not limited to any specific component of the project.

Ms. Vargas asked if Assemblywoman Diane Harkey's motivation behind AB 2121 was because California is fundamentally bankrupt or because she was against HSR. Ms. Rothschild said Assemblywoman Harkey's fact sheet notes her concerns with public school funding and it is not fiscally responsible to incur indebtedness of \$40-60 billion for HSR. Ms. Rothschild said because the bill is new, there hasn't been much opposition or support to-date but she said Palo Alto has hired a lobbyist to track issues like this.

Mr. King asked about AB 2098 (Miller) and how cities like East Palo Alto could take advantage of the second round of stimulus funding because the bill would restrict allocation of the State portion of funds to projects in areas defined as economically distressed. Ms. Rothschild will get information for Mr. King.

Mr. Hedges said Assemblyman Jerry Hill introduced AB 2516, which will attempt to accommodate more people with disabilities within a half-mile of transit and help in travel training efforts, which will relieve the pressure on Redi-Wheels at a cost of \$40 in each direction. Ms. Rothschild said there has not been an analysis on this bill. It has been referred to the Committee on Judiciary because it is more of a housing bill and the TA doesn't address housing issues even though there is a link to transit.

Ms. Rothschild said she would provide CAC members with the staff report of the TA approved legislative program which outlines primary issues concerning budget and transportation funding, transportation program structure, climate change and air quality, PRP and projects delivery.

Mr. Hedges brought up the issue of dense building around major freeway hubs because of the untested levels of particulate matter that can affect the lungs. He said most testing has been limited to areas around ports where environmental justice movements are working.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR – PAT DIXON

Chair Dixon asked Ms. Arietta to provide an update on outreach for the Calera Parkway Project.

Ms. Arietta said there was some criticism regarding notification of the meeting. She said outreach plans were advertised for three weeks including a news article. Attendees didn't think their questions were answered in-depth; felt certain alternatives were being pushed out of the way and were trying to get information on environmental impacts.

Mr. Hurley said the intent of the meeting was to solicit questions and concerns from the general public and local agencies on what items needed to be included in the draft environmental document. He acknowledged Ms. Arietta's effort in disseminating information about the outreach through newspaper articles in the *Pacifica Tribune* and on the Riptide Web page. Mailings were sent to all people in the locality of the proposed project. The full Pacifica City Council attended the environmental scoping meeting. Earlier concepts considered to address the congestion problems included roundabouts, frontage roads, grade separation and a transit solution, and this information will be included in the draft environmental document under a section titled of alternatives considered but withdrawn from further consideration. The March 19 deadline for comments/concerns to be included in the draft environmental document has been extended indefinitely. Caltrans, the TA and the city of Pacifica will schedule additional public outreach through an information meeting to respond to questions and comments raised at the March 3rd environmental scoping meeting.

Mr. Hedges asked what situations were causing the congestion. Ms. Arietta said congestion around Vallemar School or a combination of school and congestion from south of the Devil's Slide area.

REPORT FROM STAFF – JOE HURLEY

- SamTrans is tasked with acquiring property interests for JPB projects and, at the March SamTrans board meeting, adopted a resolution of necessity to acquire certain properties associated with the San Bruno Grade Separation Project. Since that meeting, two properties have been acquired and the project is moving forward toward the required July 1, 2010, award date.
- The CAC received advanced notification of the call for projects for the local shuttle program, which will begin on April 1. The project timeframe includes solicitation of candidate projects, evaluation/determination and action by the TA Board at the July meeting.

Mr. Hedges asked if the Peninsula Congestion Relief Alliance is involved in the call for projects. Mr. Hurley said he believes they have been consulted. He said the decision was to continue to fund the current shuttle program consistent with the Implementation Plan and additional dollars would be made available for new shuttles through the call for project process.

- The JPB is seeking volunteers for its Bicycle Advisory Committee. Applications are due April 19.
- A groundbreaking celebration will be held for the Belmont bike/pedestrian overcrossing on May 12 at 1 p.m. at the Belmont Sports Complex on the east side of Highway 101. This item came before the TA Board in September 2009 for an allocation of about \$600,000.

Chair Dixon asked about a newspaper article, which discussed laying track for station access.

Mr. Hurley said the JPB is working towards development of a policy to encourage non-single occupancy vehicle access to Caltrain stations including shuttles, bikes and pedestrians.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Mr. Hedges said he was selected to a revamped 27-member MTC Advisory Committee. He hopes the new Policy Advisory Council can form ad hoc subcommittees and solicit people with expertise to serve on a subcommittee with the Advisory Committee.

Mr. Bigelow commented on three items:

- The California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) will be releasing the alternatives analysis for the San Francisco to San Jose segment on April 8 in San Jose at the county Board of Supervisors chamber at 9 a.m. The CHSRA Web site will post this information.
- The JPB will be taking action on three Caltrain electrification items at their April 1 meeting. If the three actions are taken, the environmental document will go to the State clearing-house for a 30-day period for final comments from the public.
- Caltrain is holding a public meeting regarding the San Bruno Grade Separation Project on March 31, at 6:30 p.m., at the Belle Air School at 450 Third Street in San Bruno.

Ms. Arietta said Assemblywoman Jackie Speier will be coming to the Sharp Park Golf Course in Pacifica on May 1 from 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. to discuss the Health Care Reform Bill.

Ms. Vargas said she appreciates the expertise, involvement and quality of the questions from the CAC.

Mr. King said the San Jose Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Santa Clara County Water District hired a consultant to conduct a water feasibility study for ferry services out of Alviso for regional transportation.

Ms. Mader-Clark commented on the NextBus item and said she rides San Francisco Municipal Railway (MUNI) fairly regularly and Muni has NextBus information on the bus shelters. This is very helpful in making use of public transportation much more pleasant.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the TA CAC will be held on Tuesday, May 4, 2010 at 4:30 p.m. at 1250 San Carlos Avenue, Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor, San Carlos, CA 94070.

Adjournment – 6:11 p.m.