



SFMTA
Municipal
Transportation
Agency

Geary Community Advisory Committee

Tuesday, January 16, 2018

6:00 pm

One South Van Ness, 7th floor, Union Square Conference Room

Geary CAC Member Attendees

Daniel Calamuci
Alison Cantor
Paul Epstein
Fay Fua
Louis "Lou" Grosso
Rich Hashimoto
Claude Imbault
Annie Lee
Victor Olivieri
Rose Priven
Susannah Raub
Marian Roth-Cramer
Andrei Svensson

Staff Attendees

Liz Brisson
Kate McCarthy
Kannu Balan
Hester Yu
Kim Le
Alex Snyder
Colin Dentel-Post
Phillip Pierce

Minutes

1. Call to Order.
 - a. Annie Lee, Geary CAC Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.
2. Roll call.
3. Ice breaker activity.
 - a. Members participated in a short ice breaker exercise.
4. Approval of minutes — [October 25, 2017](#).
 - a. Lou Grosso moved to approve the minutes. Annie seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.
5. Public comment: Members of the public may address the Geary Community Advisory Committee on matters that are within its jurisdiction and are not on today's calendar.
 - a. There was no public comment.
6. Presentation and discussion on Van Ness BRT.
 - a. Kate McCarthy, Public Outreach and Engagement Manager for the Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit Improvement project, presented on this item.

- b. Powerpoint slides and accompanying handouts from all of the meeting's presentations are available at this link:
<https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2018/01/2018-01-16-gearycacmtg.pdf>
- c. Paul Epstein asked how change-orders relate to the "Guaranteed Maximum Price" concept.
 - i. Kate McCarthy responded that sometimes change-orders arise as part of the project, such as the case of water utility. The guaranteed maximum price reduces the number of change-orders.
- d. Paul Epstein asked if the bus fleet on Van Ness would be electrified.
 - i. Kate McCarthy clarified the difference between the trolley and hybrid fleets. Van Ness has both trolleys and hybrids. Trolleys use the overhead contact system, and are the cleanest, electrified fleet in the City.
- e. Susannah Raub asked if the trolley buses would be able to run during construction.
 - i. Kate McCarthy responded that the center-running bus lanes would not be able to be operational until the overhead contact system and other infrastructure upgrades are in place.
- f. Claude Imbault asked if the City would be liable for basement issues in the course of construction.
 - i. Kate McCarthy responded that issues such as these will be addressed if they arise on a case-by-case basis. Project staff has surveyed the entire corridor, and she urged Geary CAC members to alert project staff if they are aware of any buildings with basements along the Van Ness corridor.
- g. Claude Imbault asked if there will be designated funding for BRT maintenance.
 - i. Kate McCarthy responded that agencies have responsibility for each of their assets, and they are clearly laid out and documented, including for each new asset associated with Van Ness BRT.
- h. Rose Priven asked how the City would know about how much to bid for construction manager/general contractor (CM/GC) jobs as opposed to Design-Bid-Build jobs. If the design is not done, how would a contractor know how much to bid?
 - i. Kate McCarthy explained that the City looks at various factors in selecting a prime contractor, including qualifications and price. The prime contractor who wins the CM/GC contract has a chance to adjust the cost of the project during negotiations of the Guaranteed Maximum Price before the contract is amended to include construction.
- i. Marian Roth-Cramer asked if there would be bike lanes on Van Ness Ave.
 - i. Kate McCarthy responded that there are no bike lanes on Van Ness. However, there are bike lanes on Polk Street that serves local traffic and runs parallel to Van Ness. Polk Street also has construction underway to improve bicycling facilities there.
- j. Susannah Raub asked if the new buses are low-floor like what it is today.
 - i. Kate McCarthy answered that the buses would be the same low-floor coaches that are being rolled out.
- k. Daniel Calamuci asked how the "open for business" program is going and how that may inform Geary.
 - i. Kate McCarthy answered that there have been robust outreach for the business program and that similar strategies would be deployed for Geary.
- l. Rich Hashimoto asked if there are liquidated damages built into the project.
 - i. Kate McCarthy responded that the Van Ness Improvement Project contract includes liquidated damages of \$50,000/day.

- m. Annie Lee asked why the project is delayed.
 - i. Kate McCarthy explained that there are a few reasons: First, the very wet winter last year. Second, there were issues securing a sewer and water contractor. Lastly, there is a greater extent of utility conflicts with the sewer alignment than was anticipated.
 - n. Public comments:
 - i. A member of the public asked for elaboration on the criteria for contractors.
7. Presentation, discussion and possible action regarding Geary Rapid project updates including planned Geary Rapid Open Houses. Reference document attached.
- a. Liz Brisson and Kim Le presented on the Geary Rapid project updates.
 - b. Susannah Raub commented that the feedback form only asks for people's favorite parts about the project, but not what people don't like. This comes off as leading and insincere, and she suggested adding a question about what their least favorite part is.
 - c. Rose Priven added that two of the questions are only yes/no questions and are confusing.
 - d. Susannah Raub commented that the color for the curb ramp on the draft project drawing is confusing because it is very similar to the color for general metered parking.
 - e. Lou Grosso commented that the drawings could use patterns, hatching, or numbers instead for people who have a hard time reading color.
 - f. Alison Cantor commented that the fact that there are both yellow and white color crosswalks are confusing and that there should be a legend for them.
 - g. Lou Grosso asked for clarification about the parking removal on the superblock spanning from Laguna to Webster.
 - i. Liz Brisson noted that there are parking spaces proposed for removal on this superblock. Parking supply was analyzed during the environmental review phase and found that because of the large amount of off-street parking such as in garages, the parking removed would not create a parking deficit.
 - h. Rich Hashimoto commented that during the prior stage of project work when he served on the SFCTA's Geary BRT CAC, he thought he recalled that back-in angle parking would be added to help minimize parking removal.
 - i. Victor Olivieri commented that the project drawing should indicate the parking garage entrances, perhaps by a symbol or number.
 - j. Claude Imbault asked for clarification about whether cars making southbound right turns from a side street onto Geary would be expected to turn into the solid red lane or whether these areas should be hashed instead of solid. He noted that at Union Square, drivers are confused about where and when they can merge into the hashed red lanes.
 - i. Hester Yu explained that in this scenario drivers would turn through the solid red lane. Hester Yu explained that if a vehicle was turning from a side street, it should turn into the vehicular travel lane. It is okay for a car to drive over the red lane to get into the travel lane but they should not stay in the red lane. A hatched lane indicates that it is okay to pass over and be in the red lane, like for right turns.
 - k. Rose Priven commented that the proposed conditions in the project drawing look confusing to her. She doesn't understand all the various symbols. The road condition looks simpler in the existing condition. She wonders about how members of the public will take in all the proposed changes when they look at the existing and proposed conditions in the drawing. The project drawing may need

to be simplified. She also wonders how the public can negotiate navigating the streets later with all the changes and if there will be signage.

- i. Liz Brisson confirmed there will be new signage implemented as a part of the project to inform users of new changes as well as additional traffic signs for clarity.
- l. Paul Epstein commented that the off-set crosswalks look great on paper, but are confusing to people.
 - i. Liz Brisson noted that there is a design reason necessitating the off-set crossing at Webster: It is needed in order to have safe visibility around the bridge columns.
- m. Marian Roth-Cramer asked if the new pedestrian crossings at Webster and Buchanan would be actuated.
 - i. Hester Yu responded that at the new surface crossing on Buchanan, the actuated signal would be timed for two signals. At Webster, there would be no actuation required, and pedestrians would get the walk signal without having to push a button and would be timed to cross in one signal.
- n. Daniel Calamuci asked if there could be a better way to call out the bus stop removal. The current project drawing erases bus stops completely from the proposed condition without any indication that there was formerly a stop there.
 - i. Liz Brisson noted that the text on the right side of the drawings calls out bus stop change. In addition, there will be a separate open house board focused just on bus stop changes.
- o. Daniel Calamuci asked if there would be a board to show what it's going to look like during construction. People are scared from watching the Van Ness BRT project.
- p. Daniel Calamuci asked what kind of space are being looked at which would inform what type of children's -activities are possible.
 - i. Liz Brisson answered that current plans call for two community meeting spaces to be used. One will be east of Van Ness, and one west. Among the criteria for the spaces include being large enough to accommodate all the boards, be indoors, and be ADA-accessible.
- q. Andrei Svensson commented that Richmond residents that drive downtown would be impacted by Geary going down to two general purpose travel lanes.
 - i. Liz Brisson noted that the environmental impact report analyzed traffic congestion and found that there would be fewer total intersections with high levels of delay with the project than without.
- r. Susannah Raub commented that there is a lot of detail in the project drawings. She suggested removing aspects that only the traffic engineers would understand but are not useful for the general public, for example some of the white hatching. Also, the bike lane symbol is used in the drawing but is not in the legend.
- s. Alison Cantor asked about the driveway that runs across the middle of the new Buchanan crossing bulbout.
 - i. Liz Brisson noted that the project can build bulbs that also allow for driveways.
- t. Fay Fua asked if it would be possible to have separate frames for the different types of mode users, such as pedestrians.
- u. Susannah Raub commented that the open houses seem to be located east, and asked if it would be possible to have a meeting in the Richmond.
 - i. Liz Brisson noted that the open houses are focused on the Geary Rapid project, so the locations selected are within the project limits between Market and Stanyan. However, project staff are happy to present to

- groups in the Richmond separate from the open houses and Richmond residents are also welcome to attend the open houses.
- v. Rose Priven asked about how the open house meetings will be advertised.
 - i. Liz Brisson noted that this was discussed at the last meeting. Notification activities include, but are not limited to a radius mailing, emails, social media, ambassador canvassing, and we also hope CAC members will help get the word out through their networks.
 - w. Public comments:
 - i. A member of the public commented that staff should use the first map in the project drawing as a general template and overlay it with each one about parking, buses, and so forth on parts of the second map. By the end of each part, it would make the map whole.
 - ii. A member of the public commented that the Webster pedestrian bridge would only be used as decoration once the surface pedestrian crossing is created. She said that she would never again cross the bridge if there is a surface crosswalk. She asked if staff had talked to people there about the bridge. She also commented about conflicts of the pedestrian crossing at Buchanan. She asked when her input would be captured aside from what she is saying here.
 - x. Claude Imbault asked what was the rationale for retaining the Webster bridge.
 - i. Liz Brisson responded that project staff engaged in a long process to gather extensive feedback about both the Webster and Steiner pedestrian bridges. Many Japantown stakeholders wanted to retain the Webster bridge because school groups in the area use it to cross large groups of children. While some stakeholders opposed removal of the Steiner bridge, there was more support for its removal.
 - y. Annie Lee asked if there would be a bar to inhibit people from going into the street at the Laguna inbound island bus stop. She noted that people might run into the street to catch the bus.
 - i. Liz Brisson responded that it would be similar to the current transit islands on Market Street and elsewhere in the City, but have continuous railings.
 - z. Fay Fua asked if there was data to show about boarding island conditions on Market Street.
 - aa. Susannah Raub commented that it would be great to have stats about the new features, how they work in other parts of the city, and how decisions were made.
 - bb. Annie Lee asked how long it would take for one to go through the boards.
 - i. Liz Brisson responded that the events will be drop-in over a couple hours so that people can come to find out about the project quickly and leave when they are ready.
 - cc. Claude Imbault asked if there will be note-takers at the boards.
 - i. Liz Brisson answered that the feedback forms are the primary way feedback is planned to be collected.
 - dd. Lou Grosso suggested writing out the description of proposed changes in paragraph form for those people who aren't good at reading visuals.
8. Presentation and discussion on related Geary transportation improvements (near-term upgrades happening soon along the Geary corridor that are not a part of the Geary Rapid or Geary Boulevard Improvement projects).
 - a. Liz Brisson summarized these transportation improvements per the presentation slides.
 - b. Fay Fua asked if the signal at the CPMC site would be longer for pedestrians.
 - i. Kate McCarthy answered that this would be implemented as part of the Van Ness BRT project, and it would have a longer timing signal.
 - c. Lou Grosso asked if the new traffic signal at Baker would be audible.

- i. Hester Yu confirmed that it would include Audible Pedestrian Signals.
 - d. Alison Cantor asked if there will be repaving at Baker.
 - i. Liz Brisson said there is generally not re-paving, but that there is re-paving planned on the segments with the worst pavement condition through the Geary Rapid project which is included in this part of the corridor.
 - e. Marian Roth-Cramer asked if the roundabouts coming into her neighborhood was part of this project.
 - i. Liz answered that it is a separate project.
- 9. Presentation, discussion and possible action regarding Geary Boulevard Improvement Project.
 - a. Kannu Balan presented on Geary Boulevard Improvement Project updates.
 - b. Paul Epstein asked when the federal environmental document would be complete.
 - i. Liz Brisson said that staff do not have total control over the schedule as it requires federal approval, but are currently projecting March 2018 completion.
- 10. Discussion and possible action regarding upcoming meeting agendas.
 - a. Kate McCarthy confirmed that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 20.
- 11. The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.