



Potrero Yard Neighborhood Working Group Meeting 12 Minutes

Monday, April 6, 2020, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting, Meeting ID: 440 684 1814 (Virtual)

Note – The meeting minutes capture the overall tone of the group’s discussion and is not meant to be an exact transcription.

Members Present:

Alexander Hirji
Magda Freitas
J. R. Eppler
Mary Haywood Sheeter
Alexandra Harker
Thor Kaslofsky
Roberto Hernandez
Brian Renehan
Jolene Yee

Members Not Present:

Claudia DeLarios Moran
Benjamin Bidwell
Kamilah Taylor
Scott Feeney

SFMTA Staff:

Rafe Rabalais
Adrienne Heim
Pamela Adams
Jonathan Rewers
Kerstin Magary

Other Attendees:

Rosie Dilger (consultant)
Abraham Vallin (consultant)
Mahmoud Abunie (consultant)
Diane Fischer (public)
Ronald Mitchell (SFMTA, Muni
Operator and Joint Labor
Management Board-DSC
representative)

Purpose of the Meeting

To discuss project updates, the scheduling of future meetings, hear RFQ/RFP informational presentations from Working Group members and receive public input on the RFQ/RFP in order to solicit a developer for the project.

Item 1. Welcome

Rosie Dilger welcomed everyone to the meeting. Working Group members shared their experiences on how to stay well under COVID-19 shelter in place orders.

Item 2. COVID-19 Updates

Adrienne Heim and Rafe Rabalais updated the Working Group on the SFMTA’s current state and the impact COVID-19 has had on the project.



Adrienne Heim: The SFMTA is planning to reduce the amount of bus lines in operation during the public health emergency to 17 core routes. As of Saturday, April 4 approximately 40% of our operators are out. Core services will provide access to essential areas such as grocery stores, clinics, and hospitals. Additional cleaning is being done for the buses and we're also conducting maintenance work inside the metro tunnels while the metro line service is suspended. Residential Parking Permit enforcement has been suspended at this time and the SFMTA will not issue tickets during mechanical street cleaning. Parking ticketing will still be enforced in other areas where curb space is needed for safe and health, and we will get normal service running throughout the city as soon as possible. We encourage everyone to visit [SFMTA.com/Covid19](https://www.sfmta.com/Covid19) for more information.

Item 3. Project Updates

Rafe Rabalais: Everyone has experienced tremendous disruption, we at the SFMTA are certainly aware of that . There has been a substantial decline in ridership and parking revenues. Despite the challenges presented by the past 3 weeks, the Potrero Yard project will remain an absolute high priority and continue with full speed ahead. Post COVID-19, San Francisco will have a greater demand on transit service and the need for a resilient bus facility has not changed.

Jonathan Rewers: You can hear more details if you listen in on the SFMTA board meeting tomorrow. The Potrero Yard project will continue to meet milestones during this time to make the modernization happen.

Rafe Rabalais: The technical and personal capacity at the SFMTA has been challenged by COVID-19. The overall project schedule will remain on task to get the bus facility built by 2026. We are still facing a very aggressive deadline for the project to move forward. Furthermore, from an outreach standpoint, COVID-19 has caused a two-week delay for the start of the next phase of community outreach. We will move intelligently and utilize these virtual resources to their fullest potential.

Item 4. Spring Outreach

Rosie Dilger: That is a great transition to our updates on Spring Outreach.

Adrienne Heim: I know that Working Group members have been working with their neighborhood groups to be engaged in different ways. We want to work towards the CEQA Scoping meeting and give people the overall sense that the project is not stopping and still moving ahead. The three tiers of engagement are "Sheltering in Place," "Social Distancing," and "Business as Usual." We know that San Francisco will be sheltering in place until at least May 1st. Right now, our best options for engagement are virtual tools and traditional media. The



SFMTA will continue to update the project page and will upload all materials and key information so that people can constantly be kept up to date. We're looking at other ways that we can spread news about the project while gathering input. Questions we're considering right now, including whether we should share information via newspaper or radio? Or both? We will do our best to resume our original outreach plan once shelter in place is lifted.

Rosie Dilger: What we've been doing now is putting together a comprehensive list of outreach ideas, for both print and virtual media. Let's open the forum up and ask the Working Group what outreach formats might work to engage the entire community. We'd love to hear what you're seeing that's working, and which ideas would help us continue to engage with the community. How about a virtual tour?

Thor Kaslofsky: Sounds good, would it be interactive?

Rosie Dilger: One idea is to use footage that we have and use that as a background in a webinar.

Rafe Rabalais: The idea for a tour would work best as a tool to introduce the people to the project and to sustain interest.

Rosie Dilger: We know we can do outreach via direct mail. We could mail collateral that directs community members to other engagement possibilities, such as webinars, telephone town halls, and potentially other platforms. We were hoping to promote these direct engagement opportunities through neighborhood groups as well.

Thor Kaslofsky: The project website is quite good already; I would like to see the website be more interactive. I think about 70% are getting their information about the project from the website.

Rosie Dilger: Yes, great feedback, we want to refresh the project page. We agree that we need engagement so people can interact with the material.

Thor Kaslofsky: We can possibly incorporate collateral via essential services, possibly food or food delivery.

Rosie Dilger: Yes. We must leverage our resources and try to get collateral into restaurants and vendors hands.

Roberto Hernandez: The SFMTA should consider using a cable car on wheels to make announcements using bullhorns. Postering or fliers could be a good strategy for distributing information.



Rosie Dilger: We will investigate all the avenues provided. We are considering doing print advertising on Potrero View, to promote or submit letters to the editor. Friends of Franklin Square might be able to distribute information via their distribution list. Using Next Door is another potential engagement platform. We can pull together a package on how anyone from the Working Group can share project assets on social media as we put them together.

Adrienne Heim: Many community events have been canceled, once we can get back to having small events, we can look to form partnerships to engage the community with the project.

Kerstin Magary: I can coordinate my contact at the Cable Car company to see if they are open to arranging efforts for the project.

Rafe Rabalais: We were hoping to have draft material for distribution to share during this meeting, we will storyboard a brochure as we shift to virtual engagement. Our goal is to present the community with specific substance for their input.

Item 5. RFQ/RFP Discussion

Rosie Dilger went over the RFQ/RFP homework and gave the floor to Magda for her presentation on 51 West in New York.

Magda: Let's look at [Via 51 West](#) in New York, This is a residential building with 700 units, about 1.5 times the size of the Potrero Yard project goal. It covers one full block, but one doesn't feel like it is a large building because of the design. The shape and how it interacts with the sun and adjacent buildings is quite important relative to the Potrero project.

The next building [Mission Rock](#) in SF. It has 255 units and there are plenty of outdoor areas and the design is also quite unique. This last building is a Garage Building in Mission Bay. The design avoids the boredom of large walls. It's like a piece of art and can contribute to visual decadence.

Rafe Rabalais: Thank you for pulling this together, as we move from the RFQ into the RFP phase, there is a real opportunity to include design guidelines for the project, and at this stage we welcome the qualitative aspect as we incorporate different characteristics that we want to see.

Rosie Dilger thanked Magda and emphasized how important it is to look at similar projects. Then shifted on to Alex's presentation.

Alexandra Harker: [BORNEO-SPORENBURG](#) project in Amsterdam; it has the housing coexisting with an active transportation use. It's still used as an active dock and water way, along with its industrial use, and now it includes housing at the top. This project will be different



approximately 40 units/acre.

from the Potrero Yard modernization as it's a low-rise building with much lower density at

There were a few takeaways from looking at this project. First is that creating landmarks is very important, given what a large block the Potrero Yard is working with. The project we see has these bridges that connect many of the spaces and we can incorporate similar in our project.

The second takeaway would be the importance of intentional negative space and green corridors on top of the bus yard portions.

Lastly, the third takeaway would be the variations in facades to break up big blocks using a strict palate of materials. I'm wondering if we could have one master architect set the materials and parameters, and then the Potrero yard could have smaller firms collaborate with the larger to ensure diversity in façade treatment. One more note, it would be great to have the building recognized as a landmark, for example people love the large neon sign atop the Hamm's building.

Thor Kaslofsky: Have we outlawed big neon signs in the city?

Rafe Rabalais: There are signage restrictions against large neon signs, but we have an opportunity to do something innovative because we are in a special use district where we could set our own standards. In the ongoing CEQA process and its technical studies, we examined a wind study and the preliminary analysis showed that signage could mitigate wind at the southwest corner of the building. This is a great opportunity to do something iconic.

Alexandra Harker: It can also be like the UCSF parking sign.

Thor Kaslofsky: One additional perspective is the façade facing Franklin Square Park will be prominent. We can consider that side to have something monumental as well.

J.R Eppler: I can briefly share a project which worked well from a design standpoint, and in terms of how it interacted with the neighborhood during construction. This is [One De Haro](#) project, the difficult thing about its context is that it's adjacent to a residential building. It addressed this by implementing a buffer area for loading to be screened off from residents and to be multi-use. Another key is how they contributed to the neighborhood with this big, green plaza. Another great thing is the way they communicate with the neighborhood. They send out weekly updates and they show where construction will occur, what the construction activities are, and remind residents about the schedule for the project. It is a great project and quite relevant to neighborhood communications.

Jolene Yee: I spoke with some of my colleagues in Colorado. They had a few good examples of transit projects that worked well with integrated housing. Denver has been working on a similar [mixed-use project](#) (RTD), and [Boulder has the Boulder Junction](#) project. Which is a multi-use



development project with an underground transit facility with housing, parking, and possibly a hotel on top. They also suggested for us to look at the [Alameda Naval Air Station](#) project, and the [Walnut Creek Transit Village](#) here in California, which is another project that has

integrated multi-use development. I believe the Walnut Creek Transit Village is for BART among other agencies.

Rafe Rabalais: Yes, BART is working with Walnut Creek and we will look into this project.

Jolene Yee: I was thinking a sky bridge to the park might serve as a great landmark as well as a safe crossing to the yard.

Rafe Rabalais: It is an interesting idea; we would have to connect with planning to see if it's feasible due to the design and elevation as that side of the facade would be pretty high above 17th Street.

Rosie Dilger asked if there were any more volunteers for today or May's meeting. Then proceeded to the next item.

Item 6. RFQ Subcommittees

Rosie Dilger explained that there are potential options for subcommittees such as the green space in Franklin Square and passed on next steps to Rafe.

Rafe Rabalais explained that the team just finished the first draft of an RFQ. Then emphasized that the RFQ rough draft isn't ready to be shared just yet and will be shared with the RFQ subcommittee. Adrienne Heim mentioned that Working Group members signed up for subcommittees via Google form and that 5 members have joined the RFQ subcommittee so far. Rafe Rabalais informed the group that people could still join subcommittees, including the RFQ subcommittee over the next few days.

Rafe Rabalais explained that the RFP release is scheduled for late summer, and suggested that while there are tasks at hand, anyone who would like to get started should send an email to him or Adrienne Heim. Adrienne Heim or Rafe Rabalais could then provide material to start receiving feedback on the content for the RFQ. Rafe suggested that a lot more feedback is required regarding the housing components of the project.

Rosie Dilger explained next steps as the project moves forward to a CEQA public scoping meeting which is highly technical. Then she asked if anyone from the public would like to comment.



Kate Rabalais thanked everyone for participating in the Working Group meeting during uncertain times with COVID-19.