



## Geary Community Advisory Committee

Tuesday, January 21, 2020

6:00 p.m.

One South Van Ness, 7<sup>th</sup> floor, Union Square Conference Room

### Geary CAC Members

Sana Ahmed  
Daniel Calamuci  
Bri Caspersen  
Joon Choi  
Paul Epstein  
Richard Hashimoto (phone-in)  
Annie Lee  
Dina Mendoza  
Kevin Stull  
Andrei Svensson

### Project Staff

Daniel Mackowski (SFMTA)  
Amy Fowler (SFMTA)  
Sophia Scherr (SFMTA)

## Minutes

### 1. Call to Order

- a. Annie Lee, Geary CAC Chair 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 – [November 19, 2019](#)

- a. Bri Caspersen motioned to approve. Kevin Stull seconded the motion. Minutes were approved by a voice vote.

### 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. Public Comment: there was no public comment

### 6. Geary Rapid – Follow-up on Battery Electric Buses (BEB)

- a. Dan Mackowski presented on MTA's pilot program for Battery Electric Buses (BEB) in response to questions from Andrei Svensson.
- b. Andrei Svensson: Thank you for answering this. The one thing that stands out is that there are a lot of trolley bus routes that are part of the pilot program, I think that Muni should replace the diesel fleet first. I read that Vancouver transit is doing a similar program and they decided to phase out the diesel fleet first.
  - i. Dan Mackowski: Yes, Muni is doing a program similar to Vancouver; Muni bought the hybrid-diesel buses (starting in 2013) before the



- trolleys so will phase those out first once they reach the end of their useable lifetime. Many hilly routes happen to be for trolley routes, so we are testing how the batteries perform under those conditions through the pilot program. Only one pilot BEB would be on each route, so these trolley routes would still be mostly trolley buses.
- c. Paul Epstein: What is the source of electricity? Is there a cap on the amount?
    - i. Dan Mackowski: All the electricity used in our City's municipal facilities, including the Muni overhead system, comes from the Hetch Hetchy dam. I assume this would be used to charge the batteries but am not positive. I don't know the if there is an energy cap, but I think about 20% of the energy for the entire city is already coming from Hetch Hetchy so it seems there's capacity.
  - d. Kevin Stull: The trolley buses are connected to over-head wires correct? If the trollies are being phased out, will you also be removing the overhead wires?
    - i. Dan Mackowski: Correct, the trolleys connect to over-head power wires. I think Muni's plan is to eventually de-commission the overhead lines once a suitable alternative technology is proven.
  - e. Joon Choi: How much does an electric bus cost?
    - i. Dan Mackowski: I don't know the exact amount for the new BEBs, but the previous 60-foot articulated motorcoaches cost around \$1.2 million each and I'm assuming the BEBs would cost around this order of magnitude as well. The initial pilot buses may cost more, but I would expect the prices to come down once SF and other cities begin buying these in bulk.
  - f. Bri Caspersen: Are the trolley buses that connect to over-head power fully electric already?
    - i. Dan Mackowski: Yes, they are, and they are also powered by Hetch Hetchy electricity.
  - g. Kevin Stull: Are the BEB buses going to be housed in a central location with a charging station? Would there be charging stations at each end of the line?
    - i. Dan Mackowski: My understanding is that the Woods bus yard will be the first to house these pilot buses, but eventually all the yards will be updated and BEB buses would be stored at each yard. Our preliminary calculations predict that the BEBs won't need charging stations at the terminals of the lines and their charge should be able to last until returning to yard. The pilot program will help test this concept.
  - h. Andrei Svensson: Regarding the supply and funding of these new buses, is Muni bound by Buy America requirements? I also read about lithium and cobalt batteries and it questions whether lithium will be as available as oil in



the future? I think this should be something SFMTA considers since you are going to be switching your fleet to batteries that require on lithium/cobalt.

- i. Dan Mackowski: Yes, I believe we must comply with Buy America since some SFMTA funding is federal. Regarding the global supply of rare-earth metals, that is something I wonder about as well and know the pilot project team will consider these macro issues.
- i. Public Comment:
  - i. Tom Barton: Are the existing bus yards going to be converted to manage these new electric buses? How much will this cost?
  - ii. Dan Mackowski: Yes, the existing bus yards will be upgraded to accommodate this new fleet. In terms of costs, SFMTA can only determine the cost based on the pilot program and will evaluate as the pilot program unfolds.

#### **7. Geary Rapid – Project updates**

- a. Dan Mackowski presented on project updates.
- b. There were no questions or comments on this item.
- c. Public Comment: there was no public comment on this item.

#### **8. Geary Rapid – Implementation Update**

- a. Dan Mackowski presented an implementation update.
- b. Rich Hashimoto: I was surprised to see crews saw-cutting, patching the roadway and then a second crew coming back and re-saw cutting, it doesn't make sense to sawcut twice and seems like a waste of resources.
  - i. Dan Mackowski: I think our crews are doing work as efficiently as possible. You're correct, there were two crews that conducted work in the same area. The crews did fiber optic conduit work first, which is a two-foot deep trench and then sewer work which is 10 feet deep. In the Japantown area there is also water work currently underway which is four feet deep. At the end of the day crews need to restore the road conditions back so that buses and cars can travel; we cannot only sawcut once and leave the roadway open while waiting for all three utilities to be installed. Crews dig trenches for each utility and instead of putting permanent strips of concrete over each individual trench, they will replace all the concrete over all three trenches once they are all complete.
- c. Rich Hashimoto: I appreciate the project taking the Japantown community into consideration for the Steiner bridge demolition.
- d. Annie Lee: There's Kimbell Park and Hamilton Recreation Center next to the bridge, will they still be accessible during the demolition?
  - i. Dan Mackowski: Yes, access will be maintained during the demolition. Hamilton has an entrance on Post street and Kimbell also has another accessible entrance from Steiner Street. We will have flaggers, PCO's and others directing people to these entrances.



- e. Annie Lee: Traffic will be re-routed at Fillmore and Post by PCOs; how will traffic flow through Sutter and Scott?
  - i. Dan Mackowski: I will have to look, but the buses will need space to turn so we will temporarily move two parking spots to accommodate this movement. There may be a PCO there as well.
- f. Rich Hashimoto: There was an email floated around about the limited use on Fillmore for the demolition, can you elaborate which traffic will be allowed on Fillmore?
  - i. Dan Mackowski: The current traffic routing plan is that the buses would go from Geary to Post as part of re-route. With 60-foot bus turns, our traffic routing group thinks that we will need to restrict access on that street to local access only. These intersections would be monitored by PCOs, and there would be signage and flaggers to let people know that it is local access to the nearby business' only, including the Japantown Garage Annex and Kabuki Spa.
- g. Kevin Stull: Will the demolition be 24/7 work?
  - i. Dan Mackowski: Yes, crews would begin prep-work prior to the demolition weekend. At 7am on Saturday, crews would begin by putting steel plates and rock to protect the roadway, start the demolition at center of the bridge and then work their way out. Equipment-wise there will be four big machines, two on each side that start at center and work out from there. We expect that there will be minimal noise during this time, but they will need to use hydraulic tools (similar to jack-hammering) toward the end of the removal, which is louder. We're hoping this will be done before 10pm or even earlier. The contractor plans on doing an hour-by hour plan of operations and would work 24/7 to finish.
- h. Annie Lee: There are unhoused folks that live near bridge, are you contacting homeless services before closing the bridge?
  - i. Amy Fowler: Yes, we are still figuring out the best contact but that is something we are looking into.
- i. Andrei Svensson: Will this interfere with the Geary West contract?
  - i. Dan Mackowski: This is another reason why we want to get this bridge demolition done sooner rather than later. Part of the Geary West contract involves work at this intersection, such as a new crosswalk and restoring the Kimbell and Hamilton facilities, so we'd like the Steiner demolition contractor to be clear of this area before the Geary West contractor gets near there.
- j. Public Comment:
  - i. Tom Barton: Do you have a date on when the bridge will be demolished?



- ii. Dan Mackowski: We don't have an exact date, but are targeting end of April or May.

## 9. Geary Rapid – Outreach Update

- a. Amy Fowler presented an outreach update.
- b. Rich Hashimoto: I just want to re-iterate all the efforts that Amy and her team are doing regarding outreach during construction and for the bridge demolition.
- c. Kevin Stull: Perhaps also consider including an ad in The Chronicle?
- d. Kevin Stull: There is a Safeway that is close to the bridge demolition area, you should also reach out to them in case they have deliveries.
  - i. Amy Fowler: We've put together a list of different entities, such as hospitals and schools, in the area that we will be reaching out to, and we will add Safeway to our list.
- e. Andrei Svensson: Is there median that will prevent people from driving across Geary at Commonwealth/Beaumont? Would this be a new contract?
  - i. Amy Fowler: Yes, the median would be stretched out on either side so that cars cannot pass through the intersection.
  - ii. Dan Mackowski: The median work at Commonwealth/Beaumont would added as a change order as part of Geary West contract, if approved. Bulb-outs and conduit work are already part of the contract so they would be in the area working either way and it would be faster to install it this way.
- f. Kevin Stull: How many survey responses did you receive?
  - i. Amy Fowler: In total, we received a little over 150 responses.
- g. Andrei Svensson: Are the people that responded only the neighbors?
  - i. Amy Fowler: We can't verify 100%, but because we targeted a small radius around that intersection we believe the majority are neighbors. We sent out a mailer to addresses near Geary/Commonwealth/Beaumont and received many responses from this weblink right after these hit mailboxes. The survey questions also focused on activities at that intersection.
- h. Rich Hashimoto: Thank you to the Geary team for attending last week's Japantown CBD meeting.
- i. Kevin Stull: Regarding signage for the Buchanan YMCA, was the entrance to the YMCA still accessible?
  - i. Amy Fowler: Yes, the parking lot was still accessible during construction but drivers' view of the parking entrance was obstructed so we created the signage for them so that customers would know that they could still access the YMCA even though crews were working close to the entrance.
- j. Kevin Stull: Regarding the shelter in the Tenderloin slide, have you worked with SFPD to see if they can be more present?



- i. Amy Fowler: Yes, we are trying to meet with SFPD to see if they can do more monitoring of these hot spot stops.
  - ii. Dan Mackowski: We are also working with the Tenderloin CBD since they have connections with SFPD, cleaning groups and security groups, so that we can get the stops cleaned in a way that respects people who may be occupying them. It was a great meeting because there were multiple representatives working together to improve this bus stop.
- k. Rich Hashimoto: Can you check with Friends of Urban Forestry about the cherry blossom trees as a suitable tree replacement? There have already been cherry blossom trees planted and they aren't doing too well.
  - i. Dan Makowski: We had originally planned for another species that we believe will do well, but when we spoke to the community they stated they strongly wanted cherry blossom trees. I will circle back with FUF and the design team. Is there a good contact to work with to get this resolved?
  - ii. Rich: the Japantown Task Force Land Use/Transportation Committee.
- l. Andrei Svensson: Will we be getting any Geary Boulevard Improvement Project updates soon?
  - i. Amy Fowler: I'm hoping that we can include the Geary Boulevard Improvement Project as an item on the agenda soon, but there's been so much more happening with Geary Rapid relative to Phase 2 that we've been focusing on that. They are still working out preliminary design details on Phase 2.
- m. Public Comment:
  - i. Tom Barton: I will be at the Friday hearing, submitted my comment to the SFMTA board and plan on showing them pictures. I know I only have two minutes, but I am ready.

## 10. Adjourn

- a. Kevin Stull motioned to adjourn. Andrei Svensson seconded the motion. All approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 pm.