



Van Ness BRT Community Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 27, 2017

6:00-7:30 p.m.

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

MEETING MINUTES

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m..
2. Public comment (see policy on reverse): Members of the public may address the Van Ness BRT Community Advisory Committee on matters that are within their jurisdiction and are not on today's calendar.
 - a. No public comment was heard.
3. Minutes from the March 23, 2017, meeting were approved by a voice vote.
4. Welcome and introductions.
5. SFMTA staff updates.
 - a. Project schedule.
 - i. As of the beginning of April, the Van Ness Improvement Project is running two to three months behind schedule, depending on the phase of work.
 1. Much of the delays are due to wet weather conditions that have prevented work from occurring as scheduled.
 2. Catherine Tran asked whether any additional delays have occurred in the last few weeks since the data was captured.
 - a. The schedule remains mostly accurate, but a subcontractor has not yet been procured for the upcoming utility work. Project staff is working closely with Walsh Construction and the City Attorney's Office to determine next steps to address this issue and minimize any schedule impacts.
 - b. A subcontractor has been secured for the electrical work, which means work on the electrical duct bank on the western side of Van Ness could begin before the water and sewer work.
 3. Adam Mayer asked staff to clarify the bidding process for this work.
 - a. The bidding process for the water and sewer work is being managed by Walsh Construction and not a city agency. However, Walsh must comply with city policy in the process.
 4. Bob Lockhart asked why the schedule shows phases of construction overlapping, particularly preparing the roadway and utility work.
 - a. The schedule encompasses all work in a given phase including any restriping the roadway and shifting traffic.
 - ii. The left turn from northbound Van Ness onto Hayes is expected to be removed in August 2017.
 1. Randy Uang asked how Van Ness would look at Hayes without the two left turn lanes.
 - a. Staff will present visuals at a future Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit Community Advisory Committee meeting.
 2. Catherine Tran asked whether there were any planned changeable message signs to inform drivers of the elimination of the Hayes Street left turn.
 - a. Staff said changeable message signs will be used for this work. In addition to the current locations of these signs, staff is looking into placing a sign on Mission Street south of Cesar Chavez Street.

- b. Other outreach efforts for the removal of the left turn at Hayes will include providing wayfinding language and graphics on the project website.
 - 3. Bob Anderson has observed several illegal left turns on Van Ness since their removal in November 2016. He asked for information related to enforcement.
 - a. The San Francisco Police Department has the ability to enforce moving violations such as illegal left turns. Staff has notified SFPD of the persisting issue at several locations.
 - 4. Joanna Gubman has observed that traffic on Van Ness seems to be moving faster since the removal of the left turns.
 - 5. Bill Crissman asked whether staff could adjust traffic signal timing on southbound Van Ness, particularly at Hayes. He said traffic seems to back up at this intersection and an additional 10 seconds for the southbound green light could help address this issue.
- b. Construction update.
- i. Construction crews continue to work in the median of Van Ness Avenue. Remaining work to remove the median includes off-hauling soil and relocating Overhead Contact System wires and traffic signals. Once these tasks are complete, the median will be temporarily paved over so that traffic can be shifted over it during curbside utility replacement.
 - ii. Crews will also repair potholes on Van Ness between Mission and Lombard streets in the coming weeks.
 - iii. Catherine Tran asked whether project staff could develop an interactive map so members of the public could more easily see the work being done on a particular block.
- c. Lighting on Van Ness Avenue.
- i. Staff is finalizing the detailed design for the alternate pole design.
 - 1. Once finalized, the alternate pole design will require approval from Caltrans.
 - ii. Staff and the City Attorney's office have determined that no additional approvals are necessary from the San Francisco Arts Commission for the alternate pole design.
 - iii. Joanna Gubman asked whether the teardrop lighting fixture of the alternate pole design had the ability to direct light onto the street.
 - 1. The fixtures will still allow for the LED lighting to be directed onto the street and away from residences.
 - iv. Catherine Tran asked whether the alternate light pole design met the mitigation measure in the Environmental Impact Report about a uniform design because the approved modern poles will be used on Van Ness from Fell to Golden Gate. She felt this mitigation measure had equal weight as the measure cited by the Coalition to Save the Historic Street Lamps of Van Ness Avenue and should be considered.
 - 1. Don Savoie agreed and stated that having historic-looking poles outside of the Civic Center Historic District and modern poles inside didn't make sense and would look silly.
 - 2. Bob Bardell asked whether the mitigation measure was considered a requirement or guidance for design.
 - 3. Bob Anderson asked how the original modern poles were designed.
 - a. Project staff presented early designs to the San Francisco Arts Commission, who requested a modern design for the trolley/light poles on the corridor. Commissioners approved the original modern design for use along Van Ness.
 - b. Staff presented the design approved by the San Francisco Arts Commission to the Historic Preservation Commission, which has authority over the design of projects within the Civic Center Historic District. Commissioners wanted a modern trolley/light pole that would fade into the background and highlight the historic

architecture within the district. Commissioners approved the original modern design for use on Van Ness within the Civic Center Historic District.

4. Alex Wilson asked for an update on the cost estimates for the alternative pole design.
 - a. The engineer's estimate for the alternative design shows a \$2.3 million increase in cost compared to the original modern design. This estimate does not include staff resources spent on the redesign and only includes the cost for materials.
 5. Catherine Tran asked whether a funding source had been identified for the cost increase.
 - a. The additional cost will come from contingency funds for the project.
 6. Joanna Gubman asked how this cost compares with the original budget.
 - a. The original budget for the Overhead Contact System work included in the project is \$30.3 million. The budget for lights is \$13.3 million. The new estimate for lights is \$15.6 million.
 7. Don Savoie said he was concerned all the members of the Board of Supervisors had a complete understanding of the lighting on Van Ness. He said he didn't think they had information related to cost estimates or a lack of uniform design.
 8. The Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit Community Advisory Committee passed a motion to have project staff submit a formal letter to the Board of Supervisors to inform each member of the increased cost estimate and their concerns that the design lacks uniformity and conflicts with the mitigation measure outlined in the project's Environmental Impact Report.
 - a. Mitigation Measure M-AE-2: Design and install a replacement OCS support pole/streetlight network that (1) retains the aesthetic function of the existing network as a consistent infrastructural element along Van Ness Avenue, (2) assures a uniform architectural style, character and color throughout the corridor that is compatible with the existing visual setting and (3) retains the architectural style of the original OCS support pole/streetlight network. Within the Civic Center Historic District, design the OCS support pole/streetlight network to comply with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and be compatible with the character of the historic district as described in the Civic Center Historic District designating ordinance as called for by the San Francisco Planning Code.
 - b. Staff will draft a letter for approval by Alex Wilson, chair of the Van Ness BRT CAC. Following approval, staff will share the letter with the remaining committee members before submitting it to the Board of Supervisors.
- d. Double parking update.
- i. Staff has developed a campaign with the Van Ness Business Advisory Committee to tackle double parking issues on Van Ness. It includes palm cards, table tents and posters to distribute to businesses and residential buildings on the corridor.
 1. Randy Uang suggested distributing materials to large residential buildings such as 100 Van Ness in addition to businesses.
 2. Joanna Gubman asked whether Transportation Network Companies could distribute materials to their drivers. She also suggested these companies might want to create their own collateral or campaign around this issue.
 - ii. Public comment: Wendy Yu said the image used in the campaign shows a taxi cab, but they aren't the vehicles double parking on Van Ness. She said the campaign should be more explicit. She also said the campaign should not encourage people to hail rides on side streets instead of Van Ness. She said the campaign should focus on the use of loading zones instead. She also suggested

that members of the public could distribute the cards on windshields of double-parked vehicles. She said the Lyft hub in Potrero would be a great place to distribute the collateral as hundreds of drivers use the space each day.

- e. Update on neighboring projects.
 - i. Polk Streetscape Project.
 - 1. The Polk Streetscape Project continues to progress. Sewer replacement on Polk Street is ongoing from Bay to Lombard streets, while water work continues on North Point Street.
- 6. Outreach update.
 - a. Recent public engagement activities.
 - i. Union Street Association.
 - 1. Union Street Association was concerned that left turn removals were having a negative impact on their business, particularly during the 2016 holiday season. Staff met with members of the association to discuss possible longterm solutions as the removals are permanent and not a condition of construction.
 - a. Possible solutions include providing wayfinding language and images for merchants to use in their social media, newsletters, websites, etc.
 - ii. Meet the Expert event: Connect SF.
 - 1. [Connect SF](#) is a cross-agency effort to plan improvements for San Francisco 50 years in the future. Bradley Dunn presented information on the program and how agencies plan for the future.
 - iii. Russian Hill Neighbors Association Annual Meeting.
 - 1. Project staff discussed project and construction updates with Russian Hill neighbors at their annual meeting.
 - b. Outreach Calendar.
 - ~~i. Russian Hill Neighbors Association Annual Meeting.~~
 - ii. Sunday Streets Tenderloin.
 - 1. Project staff will be at Sunday Streets in the Tenderloin with a 60-foot hybrid bus on Sunday, April 30. Children of all ages can participate in a scavenger hunt on the bus and grab a Transportation Activity Book. Van Ness Improvement Project information will also be posted on the bus and Sustainable Streets Division will demo a parking protected bike lane.
 - iii. Spring 2017 calendar newsletter.
 - 1. The spring issue of the Van Ness Improvement Project newsletter will be released next week. The issue will cover smart technology, SFgo, the Transportation Management Center and more. The issue is digital and will be distributed to project subscribers and posted on the project website.
 - iv. Meet the Expert event May 3: SFGo ~~June~~
 - 1. Kenneth Kwong will discuss smart technology and the SFgo program. This Meet the Expert event will meet at Philz (748 Van Ness) and include a walk to discuss how these improvements are already being installed on city streets to help with traffic flow.
 - c. Public comment: Wendy Yu said the project team should use websites like Hoodline, NextDoor and Eventbrite to promote the project and upcoming events. She also suggested reaching out to coworking spaces and distributing the double-parking campaign materials during Meet the Expert events.
- 7. Member comment. Members of the Community Advisory Committee may address the Van Ness BRT project staff on matters not on today's calendar.
 - a. Alex Wilson asked how the Van Ness Improvement Project fit into Bay Area 2040.
 - i. Rapid transit improvements for Van Ness were included in the Four Corridors Plan, which also informed planning for Geary Bus Rapid Transit and Central Subway. Plan Bay Area 2040 is more focused on regional improvements and doesn't explicitly contain the Van Ness Improvement Project.
 - b. Randy Uang said the night noise door hangers would be better if they provided a description of the work being performed. He said this would better help set the expectation

of noise levels and impacts. He also said it wasn't explicit that people could call the phone number listed on the door hangers outside of business hours.

- c. Bill Crissman and Catherine Tran mentioned that back-up alarms were being used instead of white noise alarms in the early morning for the project.
8. Next meeting — Thursday, May 25, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
- a. June 22, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
 - b. July 27, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Every agenda shall provide an opportunity for members of the public to address the Committee on items of interest to the public that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Committee.

Public comment will be taken for each agenda item after discussion of the item by the Van Ness BRT CAC.

Privilege of Floor and Public Participation. The privilege of the floor shall be granted to any member of the public or officers of the City and County of San Francisco, or their duly authorized representatives for the purpose of commenting on any question before the Committee. Each person wishing to speak on an item at a regular or special meeting shall be permitted to be heard once per item for up to three minutes. The presiding officer shall be the judge of the pertinence of such comments, and have the power to limit this privilege if in the presiding officer's opinion the comments are not pertinent to the question before the Committee or the comments are merely reiterative of points made by previous speakers.

Presentations. After a presentation, the Van Ness BRT CAC Chair will ask committee members if they have any questions and then will open the meeting to public comment. When members of the public ask a question of the presenter, presenters should not respond, nor engage in any conversation. First, the commenter should finish their commentary. After which, if the Van Ness BRT CAC Chair or any committee member wants the presenter to respond to that question, the presenter will then respond to the Committee and not to the public.

MEMBER COMMENT

Every agenda shall provide an opportunity for members of the Committee to address project staff on items of interest to the public that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Committee.

Privilege of Floor and Public Participation. The privilege of the floor shall be granted to any member of the Committee. Each person wishing to speak shall be permitted to be heard for up to three minutes. The presiding officer shall be the judge of the pertinence of such comments, and have the power to limit this privilege if in the presiding officer's opinion the comments are not pertinent to the question before the Committee or the comments are merely reiterative of points made by previous speakers.