



Van Ness Business Advisory Committee

Thursday, January 19, 2016

3:00-4:30pm

One South Van Ness, 3rd Floor, Civic Center Conference Room

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Meeting was called to order at 3:06 p.m.
2. No public comment was heard.
3. Minutes from the October 20 and November 17, 2016, meetings were approved by a voice vote.
4. SFMTA staff updates.
 - a. Project schedule.
 - i. Impactful construction in the median on Van Ness Avenue to prepare the roadway began Dec. 19, 2016.
 1. Expected to continue through March 2017.
 - ii. Utility work is expected to begin in April 2017.
 1. Work will move to the curb and begin on the eastern side of Van Ness at Lombard and western side of Van Ness at Sutter, moving south toward Sutter and Mission streets.
 2. Work is expected to begin on the opposite side of Van Ness in October 2017.
 3. Michael George asked where the utility work would be performed and whether the city would be taking ownership of the sidewalk from property owners.
 - a. The utility work will be done at the curb, including the far right lane and beneath the sidewalk in some locations. The city would temporarily take ownership of the sidewalk and return it to property owners when work in that area is complete.
 4. Michael George asked when a more detailed construction schedule would be available for the public.
 - a. A schedule is expected to be ready for the public in about four to six weeks.
 - b. Michael mentioned that, although he has daily loadings and unloadings, he needs to make bus commitments in May/June.
 - b. Finalizing permits.
 - i. All necessary permits for the start of construction are complete and current.
 - c. Construction update.
 - i. Construction in the median began Dec. 19.
 1. Removal of the median, including concrete curbs, trees and lead-contaminated soil has begun on the northern blocks of Van Ness.
 2. Night work has included the removal of the Overhead Contact System lines that power electric buses.
 - a. The Overhead Contact System on Van Ness has been turned off, but the lines on cross streets remain active.
 - b. Michael Koker asked whether any of the members had experienced the night work yet and what the noise levels were.
 - i. No members mentioned hearing any night noise.
 - ii. Staff said the current night work has been very quiet, but that future night work will include some tree removals.

1. Some large trees must be removed at night for safety reasons.
 - a. Includes blocks from McAllister to Golden Gate, Sacramento to Clay, Pacific to Broadway, and Union to Filbert streets.
 3. Michael George has noticed that commuter shuttles are continuing to use Van Ness Avenue, particularly at Union Street.
 - a. The Commuter Shuttle program has relocated all stops off Van Ness except at Van Ness and Union.
 4. Michael Koker said people have been illegally parking at the abandoned gas station at Union. People are blocking the curb cuts to the vacant lot. He wondered if this could be converted to a red zone or loading zone to provide increased parking.
 - a. Michael George said the commuter shuttles aren't pulling over far enough at Union and are blocking traffic. BAC members wondered whether this conversion could better accommodate the loading and unloading of passengers at Union.
- ii. San Francisco Police Department will be stepping up enforcement of double parking on Van Ness during construction.
 1. Businesses are encouraged to prepare as early as possible by reviewing their current loading zones, delivery schedules and anticipated needs.
 - a. Coordinate with contractor to relocate loading zones to side streets or alleys.
 - i. Patricia Klock asked whether the loading zone on Van Ness at Opera Plaza would be relocated to either Golden Gate or Turk.
 - b. If needed, businesses can apply to adjust the hours of their loading zones through the SFMTA.
 - c. Speak with delivery companies to let them know about construction and the best appropriate loading areas.
 - i. Michael Koker said the worst double parking offenders in his observations have been (in order) USPS, UPS, and FedEx.
 2. The SFMTA will continue reaching out to ride-hailing companies such as Uber or Lyft.
 - a. Michael Koker suggested that staff develop a business card for hotels to include in their check-in packages that encourage guests to call their car on side streets off Van Ness.
 - i. Michael George and Patricia Klock agreed that this would be a good resource for businesses.
 3. Michael Koker asked when the Lombard Street project was expected to begin.
 - a. The Lombard Street Safety Project will begin construction in late 2017.
 - b. Michael George asked what the scope of the project was.
 - i. The project includes a package of safety improvements for the corridor. Staff believes utility improvements will likely be included due to the city policy that states once a street project has been complete, the street has a five-year construction moratorium per city policy.
 1. Luis Meijas asked for clarification on the city's policy and how it related to private developments.
 - a. If necessary, private developments could perform work on the street, but would need to repave the length of the block when complete. Staff will confirm with Public Works whether this includes both

sides of the street or only the side where work is performed.

- d. Lighting on Van Ness Avenue.
 - i. Staff gave an informational presentation to the Historic Preservation Commission on January 18 related to the work done in response to the Board of Supervisors resolution urging the agency to seek an alternate design option for street lights on Van Ness.
 - 1. Commissioners were not enthusiastic about the alternate design options and said they would conflict with the Secretary of Interior standards and create false historicism along the corridor.
 - 2. HPC staff will submit a summary of the comments to Sup. Peskin.
 - 3. Luis Meijas asked whether the discussion of alternate options would continue and when staff would need a final decision by in order to stay on schedule.
 - a. Approvals would be needed by mid-February to allow time to place orders on materials.
 - 4. Patricia Klock asked why this wasn't included on the Notice of Public Hearing posters at the McAllister bus shelters.
 - a. These notices are to inform the public of action items before Commissioners. This was an informational presentation and the Commissioners were not asked to make a ruling on the design.
 - b. Staff promoted the hearing to the project's digital subscribers and direct contact with members of the Coalition to Save the Historic Streetlamps of Van Ness.
 - e. Polk Streetscape Project update.
 - i. The Polk Streetscape Project has resumed construction on North Point.
 - ii. Traffic signal upgrades on Polk Street will begin this month.
5. Union Street shopping signage.
- a. Merchants on Union Street expressed concern related to the removal of left turns from Van Ness and its impacts on their holiday sales.
 - i. Staff worked with Sup. Farrell's office and the Union Street Association to produce signs that would direct customers to Union Street shopping.
 - 1. This was a short-term solution for holiday shoppers.
 - 2. The removal of left turns was legislated and is a final condition on Van Ness.
 - 3. A meeting is being planned with stakeholders to identify possible long-term solutions.
 - 4. Michael Koker asked whether the signs would remain up.
 - a. The signs follow California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices standards for roadway signage, but were developed quickly in response to an immediate need from the community.
 - i. In line with the project goal of being a good steward to neighbors, but did not go through the normal channels or process.
 - ii. Michael Koker asked whether there was concern that this could open the door for all commercial corridors (Polk, Chestnut, etc.). He also mentioned there is directional signage to Fisherman's Wharf in the median on Van Ness at Lombard that did not look like it followed the state standards.
 - 1. Staff mentioned that they are looking at the scenario as an opportunity to work with merchants on other long-term solutions. There is some concern that too much signage on the roadway would create visual clutter, making existing signs less impactful or meaningful.
 - b. Public comment: Wendy Yu asked for clarification on where the left turns were removed from Van Ness.

- i. Most left turns were removed from Van Ness between Lombard and Mission streets. The remaining left turns are southbound at Broadway and northbound at Lombard and Hayes. The left turn northbound at Hayes is temporary and will be removed in May 2017.
6. Outreach update.
- a. Recent public engagement activities.
 - i. Presented project and construction overviews to Middle Polk Neighbors Association, War Memorial Board of Trustees and cultural groups on corridor.
 - ii. Staff began night noise notifications.
 - 1. Door hangers posted along the corridor 72-hours in advance of any impactful night work. Hangers include dates of the work and contact information for staff.
 - iii. Historic Preservation Commission hearing.
 - 1. At Nov. 18, 2015, hearing of Historic Preservation Commission, Commissioners asked staff to develop a unique bus shelter design for the McAllister Street boarding platforms and a long-term treatment plan for four of the existing trolley/light poles (two in front of City Hall and two in front of War Memorial Court).
 - a. Staff presented a shelter design that was less industrial and was more transparent, fading into the background and highlighting the Beaux-Arts features within the Civic Center Historic District.
 - b. Preferred long-term treatment plan includes the replacement of the existing concrete pole structure and the reuse of historic cast iron fixtures.
 - i. Patricia Klock asked why the Commissioners approved replicas for the identified four poles but cited it as a reason against the alternate design option presented earlier.
 - 1. Staff explained that the Secretary of Interior standards allow for replication when the existing structure is failing. The state of the existing concrete poles is beyond repair, so replicas are acceptable.
 - 2. Staff also mentioned that the replicated concrete poles would still use historic cast iron fixtures, while the alternate design options would be entirely new.
 - iv. 2016 in review and forecast for 2017.
 - 1. Though BAC members had discussed their 2016 highlights at the Nov. 17, 2016, meeting, staff presented additional milestones and achievements from the year.
 - a. See supporting document for specific milestones.
 - b. Outreach Calendar.
 - i. Office hours.
 - 1. Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00 p.m., and Fridays, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., at 180 Redwood Street, Suite 300.
 - ii. Historic Preservation Commission hearing for public art will be held Feb. 1, 11:30 at City Hall, Room 400.
 - 1. The San Francisco Arts Commission will present information related to the public art to be installed at select boarding platforms on Van Ness.
 - 2. Arts Commission is proposing installation at McAllister Street platforms.
 - iii. Meet the Expert event will be held Feb. 1, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
 - 1. Staff will discuss how large city projects like the Van Ness Improvement Project secure funding.
 - iv. Michael Koker asked whether the project had found funding to replace the entire sidewalk along both sides of Van Ness.

1. Staff has not yet identified funding for complete sidewalk replacement. Staff will provide an update at the next meeting regarding a deadline for this work.
2. Michael also asked how members of the BAC could assist in finding funding for the sidewalk replacement. Staff will provide members with district information and contacts at the next meeting.
- v. Public comment: Wendy Yu suggested several changes to the outreach materials she had seen for the project. She suggested larger font sizes on print materials such as the project newsletter and meeting agenda. She also suggested using bus stop alerts, Eventbrite and Meetup to promote events and changes. She said she was curious to learn more about the text messaging campaign and asked whether ambassadors used for outreach were multilingual.
 1. Staff thanked Wendy for her ideas and were particularly interested in exploring possible Meetup events for the project. Bus stop alerts and Eventbrite have already been used in the project's outreach and ambassadors used have been multilingual.
7. Next meeting – Thursday, February 16, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
 - a. March 16, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
 - b. April 20, 3:00-4:30 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 Business Advisory Committee.

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 Business Advisory Committee 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 Business Advisory Committee 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.