



Geary Community Advisory Committee

Tuesday, May 21, 2019

6:00 p.m.

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

Geary CAC Members

Sana Ahmed
Brianna "Bri" Caspersen
Joon Choi
Paul Epstein
Lou Grosso
Richard Hashimoto
Annie Lee
Terilyn Love (called in)
Susannah Raub
Andrei Svennson
Kevin Stull

Project Staff

Liz Brisson (SFMTA)
Lulu Feliciano (SFMTA)
Daniel Mackowski (SFMTA)
Sophia Scherr (SFMTA)
Amy Fowler (SFMTA)
Meghan Daniels (PUC)
John Prete (PUC)
Eoin Condor (JMB)

Minutes

1. Call to Order

- a. Annie Lee, Geary CAC Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Roll call

3. Announcements

- a. New CAC Member Joon Choi was introduced to group

4. Ice breaker activity

- a. Members participated in a short ice breaker exercise.

5. Approval of minutes – [March 19, 2019](#)

- a. Lou Grosso motioned to approve. Terilyn Love seconded the motion. Richard Hashimoto abstained. Minutes were approved by a voice vote.

6. 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:
- b. Felicia Smith: Why isn't there a Rapid stop inbound at Leavenworth when there is one in this location outbound? I work closely with seniors and they are having difficulties because of the long walking distance between stops. The 38 local does not come frequently enough anymore so residents are forced to walk from Van Ness or Jones/Taylor.
 - i. Liz Brisson: Unfortunately, if we placed Rapid stops wherever there were requests for them, the bus would stop too frequently and not be Rapid. The 38-Geary local bus is scheduled to come every 8



minutes, but there has been an ongoing operator shortage that has led to missed runs and gaps in service. There is a new class of operators graduating on May 31 and will start working on June 1. Over the course of the coming months, we anticipate that service will get better and hopefully within a half a year, will be closer to normal frequency.

- ii. Daniel Mackowski: In an earlier phase of planning work, we considered moving the location of the inbound Rapid stop from its current location mid-block between Jones and Taylor to Leavenworth; however this option was not pursued based on outreach and technical challenges.
- c. Ken Koblenzer: I am a resident of the Richmond and I am interested in the Geary Boulevard Improvement Project. There have been numerous concerned Nextdoor posts regarding center-running bus lanes between Arguello and 34th Ave. and their effectiveness vs. side-running lanes, the removal of mature trees in the median, the impacts of construction, and local stop removals. The eastern location of the proposed transition between side- and center-running lanes has important stakeholders such as The Coronet apartments above the Institute on Aging, Chevron Gas station, and Roosevelt Middle School and there is concern that there will be issues with the bus transitioning between center- and side-running at this important intersection. What is the purpose of putting the center-running bus lanes out in the Richmond instead of installing them in congested areas where they are most needed?
 - i. Liz Brisson: There was a lengthy public process that considered the benefits and tradeoffs of both center- and side-running lanes throughout the corridor. Project approval for the current design occurred in 2017 at both the SFCTA and SFMTA Boards. Similar concerns were raised and considered prior to these policy-making bodies taking their action. There is a second, detailed level of approvals that still need to be given via the SFMTA board prior to implementation. This means that while the overall configuration of bus-only lanes is relatively firm, we still have some time to receive input regarding design details such as the design in locations where the bus transitions between side- and center- lanes. There would still be an opportunity to make modifications to the transition design during the current detailed design phase. You are correct, the stops for local and Rapid would be consolidated where the center-running bus lanes are proposed (there would be less stops for the local and more stops for the Rapid than today). This configuration creates a tradeoff, but was selected over another option that would have been able to maintain local and Rapid stops but would have included bus



passing lanes which would require greater parking removal. While there is less traffic in the western part of the corridor than in the eastern part, there is still a considerable level that contributes to slower/less reliable bus performance particularly as far west as Park Presidio.

- d. Tom Barton: I am concerned regarding the safety of the crosswalk at Geary and Beaumont/Commonwealth. It is difficult to cross at the intersection because cars sometimes don't yield. A system needs to be put in place to improve pedestrian crossings.
 - i. Liz Brisson: SFMTA would like to install a traffic signal in this location. However, the intersections of Geary at Beaumont and at Commonwealth are staggered, and the installation of a traffic signal would require restricting left turns from Beaumont and Commonwealth onto Geary for motorists. Therefore, in order to pursue a traffic signal, we need to have an outreach process with stakeholders that would be affected by this change, and if they are supportive, we could pursue adding this to the Geary Rapid Project. The project team is just looking into commencing this outreach work.
 - ii. Susannah Raub: Can a flashing light pedestrian signal be added to the crosswalk?
 - iii. Daniel Mackowski: That type of traffic control device is mainly used on lower traffic streets with fewer travel lanes and is not recommended for a high-traffic, multi-lane street like Geary Boulevard.
 - iii. Andrei Svensson: A possible consideration would be to shift the location of the transition between side and center-running bus lanes to here to facilitate the turn restrictions.
 - iv. Kevin Stull: Is there a sign before Beaumont letting drivers know that there may be pedestrians crossing?
 - v. Daniel Mackowski: There is currently a sign that states "Yield Here to Pedestrians" on the side of the roadway, but we plan on putting up new signs in the center median that also warn vehicles of pedestrians.

7. Geary Rapid – Water/Sewer contract update with SFPUC and JMB (contractor)

- a. Meghan Daniels (SFPUC) presented an update on the SFPUC and JMB water/sewer contract and answered CAC questions along with John Prete (SFPUC Resident Engineer), and Eoin Condor (JMB, contractor representative)
- b. Susannah Raub: Regarding the 8% and 15% completion progress for sewer and water work, is that on target?



- i. John Prete: The project schedule is on target. Construction started in January 2019 and is expected to be completed in December 2020. At this point in construction, there is no sense of delay.
- c. Kevin Stull: Are the project limits only on Geary? Were there any delays due to rain?
 - i. John Prete: The project limits are on Geary. Rain days are factored into the schedule and the contractor is allowed 21 rain days, but JMB has been able to work through the rain so far.
- d. Susannah Raub: What kind of water disruption will there be?
 - i. For most properties with water lines that are drawn from Geary, there will be a brief disruption in service to connect to the new main line. This work is typically done at night to minimize inconvenience. SFPUC will send an advanced notice to residents at least 48-hours prior to the work taking place. Some properties, such as hospitals, are “double fed” meaning that they can continue to maintain water service while the new service is established.
- e. Annie Lee: Is this contract on budget?
 - i. John Prete: Yes, the project is currently on schedule and on budget.
- f. Public comment:
 - i. Tom Barton: The Van Ness Improvement Project has had delays due to encountering underground infrastructure that they did not anticipate, have you had the same issues?
 - 1. John Prete: There is always the chance that we run into something that we aren’t aware of since we are replacing old brick sewer pipes. Crews have encountered some things that they didn’t anticipate, but nothing major. Because most of the sewer pipes we are upgrading are being installed in the same space as the existing pipes, the chances of other unknown utilities being above them is typically less.
 - 2. Eoin Condon: Agreed, there was nothing that we encountered that has stopped our work so far, but we don’t know what is underground until we begin excavation except for locations where we dig exploratory holes to confirm our assumptions.
 - ii. Annie Lee: the weekly construction updates are comprehensive and helpful for people that live on the corridor.

8. Geary Rapid – Implementation update

- a. Liz Brisson presented an update on construction as part of the Geary Rapid Project.
- b. Lou Grosso: The traffic signal change at Laguna has worked really well. When it first started there were delays and we thought it was due to the Cherry Blossom Festival, but since then, it has opened and traffic is flowing



well. However, the other signals in the area need to be readjusted as well to match and they seem to have gotten worse this month in May.

- i. Daniel Mackowski: There were traffic signal improvements made around this area on April 30 and engineers are still monitoring and tweaking so we appreciate that feedback.
- c. Rich Hashimoto: During early evening and weekend hours, I have observed a backup southbound on Laguna and the queuing spans to Post Street. I know that there were three parking spaces removed so that cars can turn right onto Geary, but there is a sign that says “No Turn on Red” which might have an affect on the traffic queuing.
 - i. Daniel Mackowski: We’ve gotten feedback regarding the traffic queuing and the “No Turn on Red” sign, and it is something we are going to investigate and re-evaluate.
- d. Susannah Raub: When will the real-time arrival sign be installed at the inbound Fillmore/Webster stop?
 - i. Daniel Mackowski: This sign is expected to be installed in 2021. The reason why there is a delay in activating the sign at this stop is that we need electrical wires in an underground conduit to connect to power and there isn’t a source of power nearby this location. The shelters and power are installed through SFMTA’s contract with Clear Channel, and at this time this extent of work is not included in this contract.
- e. Andrei Svensson: Does the Geary Rapid West contract include the scope of work needed to get power to this shelter?
 - i. Daniel Mackowski: Yes.
- f. Kevin Stull: When the signal changes at Laguna were implemented, did you have any Parking Control Officers (PCOs) there to monitor/ticket?
 - i. Liz Brisson: Yes, we had PCOs at the intersection during the first couple days to direct traffic. PCOs can’t give tickets for moving violations, but SFPD support was requested as they were able.
- g. Annie Lee: Why did the bid for the Geary East contract coming in so high over estimate? Is there a price breakdown?
 - i. Daniel Mackowski: We divided the work of this overall project into four contracts as a strategy to try to achieve lower bids. We never know the exact reason why the bids comes in high, but we’re hearing that it may be because the work would take place downtown where there are more pedestrians and traffic, narrower streets, and requirements regarding minimizing disruption. Since we got three similarly high bids, we don’t think that re-bidding would get a lower price and it would delay the schedule, so we are moving forward to not delay the project. The bids are broken down by specific bid items, so we know what the items with the highest cost



overage were. We are working on reducing costs and keeping the contracts within the budget and are planning to advertise the Steiner bridge removal contract within the next month.

- h. Andrei Svensson: I've heard that contractors are hesitant of leaving equipment in Downtown areas at night, which adds additional cost to bring the equipment in and out each work day.
- i. Paul Epstein: How much is the Steiner St. Bridge removal estimated to cost?
 - i. Daniel Mackowski: We are estimating it at around \$1 million.
- j. Public Comment:
 - i. Tom Barton: Are you still planning on installing the pedestrian crossing on the street level at Webster?
 - ii. Daniel Mackowski: Yes, it is still planned and would be implemented by 2021.

9. Geary Rapid – Outreach update

- a. Susannah Raub: Regarding ideas for the newsletter - I would be interested in learning about the process behind what seem like simple aspects of the project that are more complex in reality and what goes into making them come to fruition.
- b. Annie Lee: How frequent will you distribute newsletters?
 - i. Amy Fowler: Quarterly.
- c. Paul Epstein: How will the newsletter be distributed?
 - i. Amy Fowler: Every issue will be digital and distributed electronically, and every other issue will also be mailed to those within two blocks of the project corridor.
- d. Kevin Stull: Regarding topics for the newsletter – I think that interviews with Geary CAC members or highlighting others that are involved with the project would be interesting (e.g. non-profits).
- e. Public Comment:
 - i. Felicia Smith: I would like to receive the newsletters and project updates. I am also interested in updates on the project budget.
 - Susannah Raub: I agree and am also interested in the project schedule.
 - Richard Hashimoto: also agreed.

10. Adjourn

- a. Kevin Stull motioned to adjourn. Rich Hashimoto seconded the motion. All approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 pm.