



Balboa Park Station Citizens Advisory Committee
San Francisco City College Multi-Use Building, 55 Phelan Ave, Room 140
Wednesday, January 9, 2013, 6-7:30pm
Draft Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Nicole Agbayani, Rita Evans, David Mauroff, William Walker, Dan Weaver, Scott Falcone, Veronica Garcia, Robert Muehlbauer

1. Introductions & Administrative Items

Mari Hunter, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), called the meeting to order and made introductory remarks. CAC members introduced themselves. Ms. Hunter presented a proposed set of rules and procedures taken from the Geary Bus Rapid Transit Citizen Advisory Committee, including either electing a standing committee chair or having a rotating meeting moderator. The members indicated a preference for a standing committee chair, but preferred to defer the decision until the committee had a chance to begin working together. Dan Weaver noted that the chair should have final say on agenda items, in consultation with agency staff. The members nominated William Walker as Interim Chair and Dan Weaver as Interim Vice-Chair, without objection.

Ms. Hunter noted that a previously-appointed member Cathy Hickey had resigned and that her seat would be filled again.

Ms. Hunter noted that she would distribute minutes from this meeting, and make an effort to publicize this CAC meeting to interested community organizations in the area.

2. Overview of projects in the area

Tim Chan, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), presented information about BART projects in the station area, including a new, enclosed Eastside Connection walkway, a new accessible alighting area for the J/K light rail lines, and renovation of the existing station head house (also known as 'the bunker') on Geneva Avenue with a new elevator. Scott Falcone asked where the real-time information displays would be installed. Mr. Chan replied that displays would be installed by the station head house, on the south side of Geneva Avenue, and at the concourse level inside the station. Robert Muehlbauer asked what would be done about the 'pinch-point' for the walkway from San Jose Avenue along the J/K tracks. Mr. Chan noted that the SFMTA presentation would cover that subject.

Frank Markowitz, SFMTA, presented information about SFMTA projects in the station area, including the Balboa Park Station Capacity Study, pedestrian lighting and wayfinding, accessibility improvements, the Green Yard Re-Rail project, new canopies on the north and south sides of Geneva Avenue (to be discussed in more detail during the next agenda item), the J/K walkway pinchpoint removal project, redevelopment of the Upper Yard site, the new J/K boarding





platform on San Jose Avenue, proposed bus re-routing and travel time improvements from the Transit Effectiveness Project, and new potential M-Line terminus platforms.

Dan Weaver asked whether Light Rail Transit (LRT) on Geneva Avenue could be considered instead of Bus Rapid Transit. Mr. Markowitz noted that SFMTA has considered installing LRT tracks on Geneva Avenue but only as service tracks initially.

Robert Muehlbauer asked whether SFMTA was considering completely re-doing the J/K tracks, routing, and walkway, or just making changes to the existing walkway to remove the pinchpoints. Mr. Markowitz responded that SFMTA had looked at more extensive changes, like re-routing the K on San Jose Avenue instead of into the Green Yard, but that there were big challenges to any re-routing.

William Walker noted that getting from Ocean Avenue to SF State requires a transfer, which is inconvenient, and expressed a desire for more direct service through this corridor with less transfers.

Dan Weaver noted that the Balboa Park Better Neighborhood Plan suggested a freeway deck and understood that such an idea is infeasible. However, he noted that there were other ideas, including the goal of re-connecting the two neighborhoods divided by I-280, to provide more space for pedestrians away from autos, and to bring the streetcars and buses closer to BART. He wondered whether those ideas could be advanced and refined.

Rita Evans wondered whether the recommendations of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections project were underway. Mr. Markowitz noted that the Ocean Avenue pedestrian crossing had been completed, and that the wayfinding signage would be done in a few months, but that others, such as new signals, were still under consideration.

Mr. Walker noted that there are two train-pedestrian interactions on Ocean Avenue that are not signalized and wondered if that could be changed. He also wondered if a signal at Louisburg could be considered, given that cars and the 54 bus queue there during the morning rush. Mr. Markowitz noted that the new proposed signal at Howth could help address that.

Mr. Walker noted that SFMTA should coordinate with CCSF for wayfinding; CCSF will be installing wayfinding signage of its own and may be interested in using the same materials, etc. At the very least, SFMTA's wayfinding signage should include directing people to CCSF.

Camille Tsao, consultant to the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA), presented information on the Balboa Park Station Area Circulation Study, including the study goals, purpose, and preliminary ideas for potential circulation changes. She noted that the study's existing conditions report would be ready to share with the CAC in a few weeks. Scott Falcone asked what was meant by 'changes to ramp designs'. Ms. Tsao responded that, for instance, the fast-speed southbound I-280 off-ramp merge onto Ocean Avenue could be re-configured into a signalized intersection with a tighter turning radius to slow down automobiles exiting the freeway. William Walker wondered if the study would include queues at Phelan



Avenue and Ocean Avenue. Ms. Tsao confirmed that this intersection would be studied. Mr. Walker also noted that Fehr & Peers was currently under contract with CCSF to study campus traffic circulation on Phelan Avenue, and that the SFCTA should coordinate with that study. Dan Weaver asked if the San Jose/ Geneva intersection would be part of the study. Ms. Tsao confirmed that it would.

3. Presentation and feedback on Canopy Design

Rogério Bittencourt, San Francisco Department of Public Works (SFPD), presented information on the effort to install new canopies on the north and south side of Geneva Avenue, including preliminary designs. Dan Weaver asked whether lighting would be included, and where. Frank Markowitz, SFMTA, noted that his presentation included a map of lighting locations. William Walker noted that he liked the idea of moving the northside existing shelter against the BART headhouse, because it currently blocks pedestrian flows, and that he liked the open-ness of the southside canopy design. He asked about how real-time information displays would be installed. Tim Chan, BART, replied that the displays would not be possible in the existing shelters because of inability to supply power and electronic connection. Instead, they will be installed at the entrances to the BART buildings on the north and south side of Geneva, recognizing this was not ideal, but that other ideas, such as solar power with batteries, had not yet proved feasible. Nicole Agbayani noted that she liked that the southside canopy was open, but that the design does not seem to provide sufficient weather protection. She stressed the need for better weather protection. Mr. Bittencourt noted that, to provide better protection, the canopies either need a back enclosure, which on the south side would impede pedestrian flows, or a bigger roof area. Mr. Markowitz noted that the original concept was to install canopies similar to those on LRT rail platforms, but that there are some cost constraints for how large they can be. Mr. Bittencourt added that the team had considered a single canopy at one point, because that provided more flexibility, and more ability to provide architectural detail, but that there may be constraints regarding the need to retain the existing shelters. Scott Falcone echoed the comments on needing better weather protection. He also noted that the CAC should have a say about how to use the display space that is provided. Mr. Walker agreed. Mr. Walker also suggested that the canopies be designed to cover the whole plaza area, and that as laid out, the southside canopy does not provide any weather protection.

4. New Business

Mari Hunter, SFMTA, noted this item as the opportunity to suggest agenda items for future meetings. Chester Fung, SFCTA, suggested an item for 'assessing and prioritizing needs' as a way to determine how best to expend funds on new projects in the area. Ms. Hunter also noted that the Balboa Park Circulation Study should return with the existing conditions report and preliminary circulation concepts. Scott Falcone suggested a presentation on potential funding opportunities. William Walker suggested an item focusing on the San Jose/Geneva intersection, whose southwest corner seems dangerous for pedestrians. Dan Weaver suggested a presentation on the Upper Yard and the SFMTA's recent real estate study, including new thinking what do to with the Cameron Beach Yard. Another suggestion was an update on Transit Effectiveness Project recommended bus routing changes.



5. Next Steps

The group discussed frequency of next meetings. In a straw poll, members indicated a preference to meet bi-monthly, rather than quarterly, and set the time and date as the first Wednesday of the month, 6-7.30p, at the same location.

For next mtg, the group expressed wanting to hear about the Existing Conditions from the Circulation Study and agreed Ms. Hunter would communicate with Mr. Walker and Mr. Weaver to determine other mtg agenda items