



Geary Community Advisory Committee

Tuesday, March 20, 2018

6:00 pm

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

Geary CAC Member Attendees

Sana Ahmed
Daniel Calamuci
Claude Imbault
Annie Lee
Charley Obermeyer
Victor Olivieri
Susannah Raub
Marian Roth-Cramer
Kevin Stull
Andrei Svensson

Staff Attendees

Liz Brisson
Kannu Balan
Colin Dentel-Post
Amy Fowler
Kim Le
Daniel Mackowski
Kate McCarthy
Sophia Scherr

Minutes

1. **Call to Order.**
 - a. Annie Lee, Geary CAC Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.
2. **Roll call.**
3. **Ice breaker activity.**
 - a. Members participated in a short ice breaker exercise.
4. **Approval of minutes — [January 16, 2018](#).**
 - a. Daniel Calamuci moved to approve the minutes. Kevin Stull seconded. The 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. Tom Barton asked if there were lessons learned from the Van Ness BRT project and how those will be applied to the Geary Project.

- 6. Presentation, discussion and possible action regarding Geary Rapid project development and delivery process (overview of phases of work – planning, environmental review, legislation, design, advertise/award, construction).**
 - a. Liz Brisson presented on the Geary Rapid project development and delivery process.
 - b. PowerPoint slides and accompanying handouts from all of the meeting's presentations are available at this link:
<https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2018/03/2018-03-20-gearycacmtg.pdf>
 - c. Susannah Raub asked when open houses would begin.
 - i. Liz Brisson clarified that community outreach would begin as soon as the federal environmental review is complete, and the open houses would occur before the SFMTA legislation phase.
 - d. Claude Imbault asked what the impacts of construction will be on Union Square businesses. He stated that property owners/businesses felt they didn't get enough info on the Central Subway project and asked what kind of outreach will be conducted for Geary Rapid.
 - i. Liz Brisson responded that much of the Geary Rapid project outreach will be modeled after the Van Ness Improvement Project outreach. Some of these outreach approaches include mailers, construction look-aheads, project phone and email hotlines, and regular events to inform the public. Staff would go into more detail on the Geary Rapid outreach plan for the construction phase at a future Geary CAC meeting.
 - ii. Kate McCarthy added that outreach tools that have worked for the Van Ness Improvement Project include office hours, text message subscription for updates, and door hangers for night noise. Project staff is also open to new ideas from this committee.
 - e. Kevin Stull asked about the possibility of the project not getting approved due to the current administration, and if that should happen, what the impacts would be on the project.
 - i. Liz Brisson responded that there is no substantive issue with FTA and that we are very close to receiving a Record of Decision (ROD).
 - f. Public comments:
 - i. Glenn Urban asked if a 2-year time frame is realistic for the project or if it will take closer to 3-4 years to complete.
- 7. Presentation, discussion and possible action regarding overview of Geary Rapid project design (project scope).**
 - a. Liz Brisson presented on the Geary Rapid project design (project scope).
 - b. Andrei Svensson asked about the length of the bus bulbs and whether this is to accommodate three-door buses. He also noticed that parking was not reinstated when a bus stop was removed on Fulton and asked whether that would also be the case for Geary.
 - i. Dan Mackowski responded that the length of the bus bulbs at Rapid stops is generally 130 feet to accommodate two 60-foot articulated buses. This length would allow both a Rapid and local bus to stop without blocking the crosswalk if they arrive at the same time, and for all 3 doors to be adjacent to the bulb. Since bus bulbs allow the existing curbside bus zones to be slightly shorter, parking would typically be restored unless there are localized constraints to make it impossible to do so.
 - c. Kevin Stull asked about the length of each bus bulb and if it is a standard length.
 - i. Dan Mackowski responded that at stops with both Rapid and local buses, the bulbs would measure 130 feet. If there are bus bulbs at local bus

- stops, then they would be 65 feet to accommodate just one 60-foot bus since the Rapid buses would not be stopping there.
- d. Kevin Stull asked about the 38 inbound bus stop that is being relocated from the Gough/Starr King Way stop to be in front of St. Mary's Cathedral and where the tour buses would park.
 - i. Liz Brisson answered that a meeting was held with St. Mary's Cathedral and they welcomed the stop moving to their side of the street.
 - ii. Dan Mackowski added that the St. Mary's Cathedral tour bus zone would be shifted east towards the intersection to accommodate the relocation of the 38 bus stop.
 - e. Claude Imbault noted that the diagram of bus stop changes showed the inbound Rapid and local bus stop remaining at O'Farrell and Powell in front of the Lids store at the near side of the intersection, but that he thought that bus stop was proposed to move to the far side of Powell.
 - i. Dan Mackowski responded that the bus stop relocation from nearside to far side is proposed to be implemented as part of the Powell Streetscape project. The new far side location would place it in front of the H&M store. It is generally preferable for bus stops to be located at the far side of intersections so the buses are less likely to have to wait for red lights.
 - f. Claude Imbault asked if re-paving of the corridor will be done in front of Lids. He noted that there is a dip in the street in front of the St. Francis hotel and that the concrete sinks under the weight of busses.
 - i. Dan Mackowski responded that there will be no full roadway repaving in the Union Square part of the corridor, but that a reinforced concrete "bus pad" will be added at bus stops to provide more support given that the heavier weight of buses generates more wear and tear at bus stops.
 - g. Claude Imbault noted that all the renderings were of daytime conditions and said it would be helpful to see nighttime renderings and how the streets will be illuminated. He added that the current conditions near the Peace Pagoda have poor visibility at night for drivers and pedestrians.
 - i. Dan Mackowski responded that the SFPUC is responsible for street lighting. PUC has recently upgraded their lighting fixtures along the corridor to LED as part of their conversion program. In addition, as a part of the Geary Rapid project, a photometric lighting analysis has been conducted at all intersections with traffic signal work to ensure that there would be uniform illumination across the entire roadway, and especially crosswalks (e.g. at Buchanan). In general, the street lights are designed for uniform illumination so that vehicles have better visibility and pedestrians do not walk through "bright spots" and "dark spots" which can make it harder for vehicles to see them.
 - h. Annie Lee asked about the number of lanes that will remain open during construction.
 - i. Dan Mackowski responded that generally construction contractors are allowed to close only one lane at a time. The contractors would have to request a special permit if there is a need to close multiple lanes or the entire street. An example of this would be the demolition of the Steiner pedestrian bridge, where the entire street would be closed during one long weekend.
 - i. Andrei Svensson commented that closing one lane during construction might be a good opportunity to show the road diet conditions.
 - i. Dan Mackowski responded that it is true that the reduction in lanes would simulate the road diet conditions, but since it wouldn't always be the curbside lane that gets closed, we probably cannot fully implement the

road diet before construction. This also provides the contractor flexibility. Once the contractor establishes their work sequencing, it may be possible to have the final lane closure roll into the final road diet, but it's too early to know now.

- j. Sana Ahmed asked if taxis would be able to use the bus lanes as well.
 - i. Liz Brisson responded that the red lanes would be designated as transit-only lanes, which means they can be used by both buses and taxis for the Geary Rapid project, where the red lanes are proposed on the side of the street. On the other hand, the Van Ness Improvement Project and Geary Boulevard Improvement projects have center-running bus lanes, so these lanes would be designated differently and only Muni and Golden Gate Transit buses would be allowed to use these lanes.
- k. Susannah Raub asked if the transit-only lanes would remain during construction.
 - i. Liz Brisson responded that the transit-only lanes would remain unless we need to close it down for construction-specific instances.
- l. Claude Imbault had a concern regarding the Buchanan crossing rendering that shows a white line intended for cars to wait behind as they wait for the traffic light to change, and its position relative to the traffic signals. He is worried that individuals driving along the corridor may overshoot the traffic signal.
 - i. Dan Mackowski responded that traffic signals in San Francisco and the U.S. are all located on the far side of the street as shown in the rendering. This rendering may seem misleading in terms of the distance that appears between the stop bar (white line), the crosswalk and the signals, but this is the typical positioning throughout the City. Red light compliance is very high with this general design, and this specific design at Buchanan adds extra signals and large mast arms to make the signals as visible as possible. Note that if a car were to go past this white line, then the traffic signal would not be visible.
- m. Charley Obermeyer asked how the flow of traffic and speed along the corridor in this area will be affected by the project, and if so, how big of a change there will be.
 - i. Dan Mackowski responded that the current average speed in the Japantown area is 35 mph and the goal is to reduce speeds to 30 mph or lower. Research and data have shown that there are huge safety benefits for every mile per hour of speed reduced. Geary Rapid project elements such as the reduction in travel lanes, bus bulbs and pedestrian crossings would all help reduce speeds in this part of the corridor.
- n. Andrei Svensson asked if the traffic signals could be timed to encourage slower speeds, and if construction will affect traffic signal priority.
 - i. Dan Mackowski responded that the corridor's traffic signal timing analysis is not yet complete but that the team has met with stakeholders to determine where it's important to time signals to discourage speeding. Transit Signal Priority (TSP) should help maintain reliable bus service during construction, but the exact extent cannot be determined until after the analysis.
- o. Public comments:
 - i. Tom Barton asked for hard copies of meeting materials.
 - ii. Glenn Urban commented that Muni buses must already be going faster than 35 mph in some parts of the corridor and that the safety changes described run counter to the project's goal to improve bus travel times.
- p. Daniel Calamuci asked staff to respond to Tom Barton's question.
 - i. Kate McCarthy responded that typically hard copy materials are not provided for meetings. However, if a member of the public wants these

materials, they can send an email to the project's email address and staff will provide them. All materials for the meetings are distributed via email and are posted online one week prior to each meeting.

8. Presentation, discussion and possible action regarding Geary Rapid Outreach.

- a. Liz Brisson and Dan Mackowski presented on Geary Rapid Outreach.
- b. There were no comments or questions from CAC members regarding Item 8.
- c. Public Comment:
 - i. Glenn Urban commented that the SFMTA should use signage to make it clear that bus-only lanes are also for business access like they do in other cities. He is concerned that without this signage, people will not understand the red lanes. He noted that he has brought this to the attention of the SFMTA and has yet to hear a response.

9. Presentation and discussion on near-term transportation upgrades happening soon along Geary corridor that are not a part of the Geary Rapid or Geary Boulevard Improvement projects.

- a. Liz Brisson presented on the near-term transportation upgrades happening soon along the Geary corridor that are not a part of the Geary Rapid or Geary Boulevard Improvement projects.
- b. Liz Brisson mentioned the recent stop relocations in front of CMPC that happened yesterday, March 19, 2018.

10. Presentation, discussion and possible action regarding Geary Boulevard Improvement Project.

- a. Kannu Balan presented about Geary Boulevard Improvement Project.
- b. Marian Roth-Cramer asked when outreach materials regarding Geary Boulevard Improvement Project will be available.
 - i. Kate McCarthy responded that the website sfmta.com/improvegeary has been updated. She added that the outreach team is currently developing a general flier about the project within the near-future and when ready, will roll out with CAC input.
 - ii. Kannu Balan also added that there are outreach lessons that the Geary team are learning from Van Ness and will apply to this project.
- c. Susannah Raub asked if bus stops will move before the project begins.
 - i. Liz Brisson responded that for the Geary Rapid project, proposed bus stop changes would be implemented during near-term improvements, anticipated in August 2018.
 - ii. Susannah Raub asked if there is a period to give feedback after a stop has already changed, if the changes are an issue for members of the community.
 - iii. Liz Brisson responded that SFMTA monitors the success of stop changes after implementation and may re-consider a change, if warranted.
- d. Kevin Stull asked if the website not being ready is due to the ROD.
 - i. Kate McCarthy responded that the website is up, but content details are still being added.

11. Discussion and possible action regarding upcoming meeting agendas.

- a. Next meeting is May 15, 2018, 6:00 p.m. at One South Van Ness Avenue, 7th Floor, Union Square conference room.

12. Adjourn.

- a. Kevin Stull motioned to adjourn. Andrei Svensson second the motion. The committee voted to adjourn the meeting by a voice vote at 7:31pm.