



SUNNYVALE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes – March 15, 2012

The Sunnyvale Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission met at 6:35 p.m. on March 15, 2012 with Commission Chair Ralph Durham presiding. The meeting was held in the West Conference Room, City Hall, 456 West Olive Avenue, Sunnyvale.

ROLL CALL/CONSIDERATION OF ABSENCES

Members Present: Andrea Stawitcke
Angela Rausch
David Gandrud
James Manidakos
Ralph Durham

Members Absent: Cathy Switzer (excused)

Council Liaison Present: Chris Moylan

Staff Present: Kent Steffens, Director of Public Works, Department of Public Works
Jack Witthaus, Transportation and Traffic Division Manager, Department of Public Works

Visitors: Kevin Jackson, Horizon 2035 Committee member
Camie Hackson, Stevens Creek Neighbors
Robynn MacNeal, Safe Routes to School representative

SCHEDULED PRESENTATION

None.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Stawitcke announced that she would not be able to attend the April BPAC meeting.

Kevin Jackson discussed an upcoming Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition and City of Mountain View bicycle education seminar, to be presented in Spanish. He announced that the County/City Safe Routes to School project will be holding bike rodeos at Sunnyvale schools and announced that a bike ride is being planned for the Ponderosa School area on May 19, and volunteers are welcomed. The first rodeo will be at Ellis School on April 5. He announced a public meeting on the Draft Horizon 2035 Plan on March 15 at Fair Oaks Park. He announced bicycle events associated with the City Centennial celebration on August 25, and 26. He stated that he had contact with representatives of Apple and Google and that they were interested in bicycling initiatives. He announced that the City of Cupertino had received an American Council of Engineering Companies award for its Stevens Creek restoration project.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1.A) Approval of Draft Minutes of the February 16, 2012 Meeting
- 1.B) Approval of the 2012 BPAC Calendar Update

Item 1.A was pulled by Commissioner Gandrud. Commissioner Gandrud clarified that under Public Hearing item 3, he had stated that he was concerned that there could be liability to the City if there were significant adverse impacts from removal of on-street parking.

Motion by Manidakos, second by Stawitcke to approve the minutes as amended and accept the BPAC Master Calendar. Motion approved, 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kevin Jackson stated that with regard to the Pastoria Avenue bike lanes project, he believes that staff should make a case for residents getting by without on-street parking. He believes that staff recommendations should be made on engineering and policy judgment, independent of public input.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

- 1. ACTION: Transportation Development Act Article 3 Funding Recommendation

Chair Durham recused himself from the meeting on account of his residence' proximity to one of the proposed project locations to be considered for a funding recommendation. Vice-Chair Manidakos assumed the Chair's role.

Staff gave a report.

Acting Chair Manidakos indicated concern that the Sunnyvale Avenue/Old San Francisco Road was primarily to benefit auto traffic. He indicated support for the Duane Avenue bike lanes project.

The public hearing was opened. Kevin Jackson indicated support for the Duane Avenue project. He suggested two other candidate projects, placement of Bikes Allowed Use of Full Lane signs and funding for establishing no parking zones at signalized and stop controlled intersections.

The public hearing was closed.

Motion by Stawitcke, second by Manidakos, for a funding recommendation to rank the Duane Avenue bike lanes project first, Pedestrian Safety and Opportunities Study improvements second, and Old San Francisco/Sunnyvale Avenue improvements third. Commissioners indicated that they support the exclusive bike focus of the Duane Avenue project, that the Pedestrian Safety and Opportunities Study improvements were primarily curb retrofits that did not provide new facilities, and that the Old San Francisco Road/Sunnyvale Avenue project was too car-oriented. Motion passes, 4-0.

- 2. ACTION: El Camino Real Bus Rapid Transit Conceptual Engineering/Alternatives Study Recommendation

Chair Durham assumed the Chair.

Staff gave a report summarizing where the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is in their process to consider Federal funding for El Camino Real bus rapid transit (BRT) and why the City is being solicited for a position. Staff indicated that the BPAC should consider the project as a whole, and specific elements of the project alternatives, from a bicycle and pedestrian perspective. Staff stated that a community meeting would be held on April 17 at the Community Center at 7 p.m.

Council Liaison Moylan provided some history on the development of BRT planning and light rail development in Sunnyvale and Santa Clara County. At Council Liaison Moylan's request, staff explained that Federal funding requires that 50% of the project corridor be dedicated bus lanes, and that only Santa Clara has indicated support for dedicated lanes. Sunnyvale and Mountain View have not taken formal positions, but their support would be necessary to qualify the project for Federal funds.

Vice-Chair Manitakos expressed concern about bike space at station locations. He noted that 14' lanes at bulb outs would meet the VTA Bicycle Technical Guidelines. He presented an analysis concluding that 9 of 24 unsignalized crossings or turn pockets would be closed by a dedicated lane option, which would require detours of over 1 mile at some locations for cyclists to cross the street. He indicated he did not support dedicated lanes without provisions to maintain access across the street. He supports BRT with dedicated lanes if it is appropriately designed and implemented and maintains or addresses access across the street. He questioned the precision of detailed greenhouse gas and traffic projections.

Commissioner Rauch inquired about rider demographics. Council Liaison Moylan indicated that Alum Rock BRT users would be mostly transit dependent, lower income citizens, while El Camino bus service serves a more mixed demographic, including a high number of commuters.

Commissioner Stawitcke stated that the project would likely be a good thing for El Camino corridor traffic, but not good for bicycle access across the corridor, and may even discourage bicycle riding. She indicated opposition to bulb outs. She believes that the cities not supporting dedicated lanes should be encouraged to support dedicated lanes throughout the corridor.

Commissioner Gandrud asked for an independent analysis of the VTA's findings.

Chair Durham pointed to Tasman Drive bicycle and pedestrian impacts of light rail as an example of how dedicated lanes could become a barrier to travel in the City and a deterioration of bicycle conditions. He stated that the project should address the significant existing pedestrian safety issues on El Camino Real. He stated that El Camino Real is a major travel corridor accessing the entire Peninsula, and it needs bike lanes. He believes that off-street parking supply can easily absorb the on-street demand, and on-street parking should be eliminated to provide bike lanes. He questioned travel diversion statistics. He believes that bulb outs would need to be demarcated. He indicated that he does not support mixed flow lanes because of the lack of transit benefit.

The public hearing was opened. Robynn MacNeal indicated that schools for residents north of El Camino are located south of El Camino, and the roadway presents a major barrier for school kids to walk and bike to school. She asked for improved bike and pedestrian conditions to cross El Camino. Council Liaison Moylan indicated that at a recent forum a representative of the County Health Department had indicated that dedicated lane BRT would improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Kevin Jackson indicated that mixed flow and six lane alternatives did not provide transit, urban design, and bicycling benefits. He believes that providing dedicated lanes by removing a travel lane in each direction address all aspects of the roadways current travel problems.

The public hearing was closed.

Motion by Manidakos, second by Gandrud, to support a four lane plus dedicated bus lanes alternative with the provision that existing cross street access, particularly left and U-turn access at existing unsignalized turn pockets, is maintained for bicycles and pedestrians. Commissioners indicated that the spacing of signalized, full access intersections is so great that it necessitates crossings between the intersections, and that safe crossings for bicycles and pedestrians can address the current danger of crossing El Camino Real at mid-block locations. Motion passes, 5-0.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

- COMMISSIONERS ORAL COMMENTS

Commissioner Stawitcke inquired about Bike to Work Day.

Commissioner Rausch indicated that she would not be able to attend the April BPAC meeting. She inquired about noticing for the Pastoria Avenue bike lanes neighborhood meeting.

Commissioner Gandrud stated that he would not be able to attend the May meeting.

Vice-Chair Manidakos inquired about bike counts on El Camino Real, and the traffic volume on Pastoria Avenue.

- STAFF ORAL COMMENTS

Staff provided an update on developer-funded bicycle projects on Moffett Park Drive and Fair Oaks Avenue.

INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

1. BPAC E-mail messages and/or letters since circulation of the agenda packet of the January 19, 2012 meeting.
2. BPAC Active Items List.

Commissioner Stawitcke inquired about an email message about a sidewalk obstruction.

Director Steffens reiterated that there would be a community meeting on the El Camino Real BRT project on April 17 at 7 p.m. at the Community Center.

The Information Only items were accepted as submitted.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jack Witthaus
Transportation and Traffic Manager