

Transportation Commission

November 19, 2014

Item 4A

Action

Transportation Commission Minutes Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Commissioner Jesus Vargas called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Roll was called and the following was recorded:

Members Present:

Jesus Vargas (Chair)
Christopher Miley (Vice Chair)
Michele Bellows
Eric Schatmeier
Gregory Morgado
Thomas G. Bertken

Staff Present:

Alex Nguyen, Assistant City Manager
Virendra Patel, Transportation Engineer
Gail Payne, Transportation Coordinator

2. Agenda Changes

None.

3. Announcements / Public Comments

Commissioner Vargas announced that he recently visited Chicago and was able to easily traverse the city on a number of different transit modes.

Staff Payne stated that Assemblyman Rob Bonta will hold a Town Hall Meeting Tuesday, August 12 at the Alameda Free Library.

4. Consent Calendar

4A. Meeting Minutes – Special Meeting – December 11, 2013

4B. Meeting Minutes – March 26, 2014

4C. Meeting Minutes – Special Meeting – April 23, 2014

4D. Meeting Minutes – May 28, 2014

Commissioner Miley moved to approve Items 4.A., 4.B., 4.C. and 4.D. of the Consent Calendar. *Commissioner Bellows* seconded the motion. The motion was approved 6-0.

5. New Business

5A. Approve Installation of a Bulb-out at Park/Lincoln Northwest Corner

Staff Patel said the plan was originally presented to the Commission on March 26 and the project's consultant would present the report.

Joy Bhattacharya, Traffic Senior Project Manager, Stantec Consulting, presented the report.

Commissioner Vargas opened the floor to public comments.

John Knox White, Alameda Resident, said he supported staff's recommendations.

Commission Schatmeier said he was glad that a review of the intersection took place and he was glad staff was able to make improvements.

Commissioner Vargas moved to approve staff recommendations for Item 5A. *Commissioner Schatmeier* seconded the motion. The motion was approved 6-0.

5B. Review and Provide Comments on Ferry Terminal Access Issues and Potential Solutions

Staff Payne presented the report and introduced *Kevin Connolly*, Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) and *Becca Homa*, AC Transit.

Kevin Connolly, WETA Planning and Development Manager, presented the Alameda Terminal Access Plan results to date.

Becca Homa, AC Transit Service Planner, presented AC Transit's a potential change to Line 31 route to allow for it to serve the Main Street ferry terminal.

Staff Payne presented the next steps found on page 4 of the staff report and she requested recommendations from the Commission.

Commissioner Miley referred to page 3 of the staff report, where the last point made was for the WETA Board to adopt the plan. Thus, he wanted to know when the board would adopt the plan.

Kevin Connolly replied the board would adopt the plan sometime in the fall between October and November.

Commissioner Schatmeier asked *Kevin Connolly* to compare the Harbor Bay Ferry's ridership originating from Oakland and Alameda.

Kevin Connolly replied the total breakdown of Alameda-Oakland ridership is 51 percent of riders are from Alameda and 49 percent of riders are from Oakland. He went on to say that 70 percent of Alameda passengers board during the AM peak commute and 70 percent of Oakland riders board during the midday to late evening hours.

Commissioner Schatmeier wanted to know how many Harbor Bay Alamedans ride. He assumed that if there are 2,800 riders a day and roughly 1,400 a day are from Alameda, then roughly 70 percent or 900-1,000 riders are boarding during the AM peak commute.

Kevin Connolly replied roughly, there are 992 riders from Harbor Bay.

Commissioner Vargas opened the floor to public comments.

Lucy Gigli, President and Co-founder Bike Walk Alameda, explained that there are a number of issues that should be addressed within the plan. Firstly, she said creating a crosswalk from the O'Club to the west of the dog park would allow pedestrians to get from their vehicles to the terminal safely. Secondly, she said reducing the speed limit to 25 mph along Main Street would increase pedestrian and bicycle safety. Thirdly, she noted that improving bicycle access along Main Street could be done by constructing a cycle track on the west side of the street. However, she explained the only issue would be that cyclists would ride down Main Street, cross over and then go up the cycle track and then cross over again. Also, she mentioned the option of including buffered bike lanes within 0.2 miles of the stretch on the east side between Singleton Avenue and the ferry terminal. Lastly, she felt asphalt paving dominated Alameda Point and converting the last unpaved lot into a parking lot was not environmentally sound.

John Knox White explained that AC Transit Line 63 was eliminated due to low ridership because the bus could not make the scheduled route. He pointed out that the intended Line 31 re-route would inconvenience the Alameda Point Collaborative, which is a 214-unit transit dependent residence. Thus, he felt turning the existing service into a loop was detrimental. He requested the Commission to ask staff to conduct a ridership study to see the origin of Harbor Bay ferry riders.

Commissioner Bellows asked about enforcing parking restrictions on Adelphian Way. Specifically, she mentioned the solution of working with WETA and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) staff to enforce the two-hour parking on the landside of Adelphian Way. She wanted to know how BCDC could dictate how the City regulates parking.

Staff Payne replied the City was obligated to comply with the BCDC permit found under page 2 of the staff report. The BCDC prohibits parking on the Bay side, but short-term parking is allowed on the land side.

Commissioner Bellows asked staff how willing would BCDC be to let the parking requirement go.

Staff Payne replied that staff needs to work with BCDC to amend the permit.

Commissioner Bellows asked staff if the parking restrictions were enforced, where would ferry riders park.

Staff Payne noted that the landward side provides about 50 parking spaces.

Commissioner Miley asked staff if the neighbors around Adelphian Way were notified about potential changes to the parking regulations.

Staff Payne said residents have not been notified and all conversations are informal. Staff is disregarding the two-hour restriction for the time being.

Commissioner Morgado said he drove by the area around 4:45 pm and there was one parking space in the parking lot and no parking spaces along Adelphian Way. He asked why a two-hour limit would be implemented.

Staff Payne stated that BCDC works with the City anytime development is within 100 feet from the Bay. Their mission involves public access and making sure the view shed is visible, which may have triggered the parking restrictions.

Sergeant Simmons, Alameda Police Traffic Division, explained that in the last 6-9 months they have received a number of calls from residents about the landward parking side. Community members at the end of Creedon Circle asked them to lift the parking enforcement because of increased ridership and the number of cars encroaching within their neighborhoods.

Commissioner Schatmeier said enforcing the two-hour restriction on Adelphian Way would spark drivers to park in the surrounding neighborhoods. He mentioned that other cities have residential parking permits and that could be a solution for the area. He was also concerned that removing parking on Adelphian Way would lower ferry ridership. He noted that the curb coming out of Sweet Road onto Adelphian Way should be painted red since it is a fire hydrant. He does not think that BCDC would want ferry riders to decrease.

Commissioner Miley asked WETA about the ability to purchase the vacant lot adjacent to the ferry terminal to increase surface parking lot spaces. He wondered if WETA or the City approached the landowner about potential development.

Kevin Connolly said the vacant land was privately owned by the Lehman Brothers and the asking price was beyond their budget. They have talked to the owners and the solution may be to potentially lease parking spaces.

Commissioner Bellows asked WETA if they ever considered implementing a parking fee.

Kevin Connolly replied they discussed the idea and are willing to consider it.

Commissioner Miley stated that there are other lots along Harbor Bay Parkway and he recommended WETA review those sites. He suggested reaching out to the existing shuttle at the nearby business park to see if they could expand their service to reach the ferry terminal.

Commissioner Vargas stated that he paid more for parking in Chicago than San Francisco and in the densest areas motorists required a sticker. He asked WETA if there are sites where that scheme has been implemented.

Kevin Connolly stated that the city of Vallejo owns a number of open surface lots around the Baylink Ferry Terminal and they now charge for parking.

Commissioner Bellows asked staff if they looked at allowing for parking along McCartney Road.

Staff Patel replied no.

Commissioner Bellows asked if there was a way to accommodate parking along the road.

Staff Patel replied they could investigate to see if parking would be possible.

Commissioner Vargas mentioned that there was a park and ride on Island Drive near Doolittle. He then asked if the AC Transit bus that picks up at the park and ride could stop near the ferry terminal to accommodate additional ferry riders.

Becca Homa replied that Line #21 does stop at the park and ride and near the terminal. However, she felt few people were taking advantage of the service, but she could investigate further.

Staff Payne replied that the park and ride spaces were at capacity.

Commissioner Schatmeier asked staff who parked there and where were they going.

Staff Payne said the lot was owned by the City and charter buses utilized the lot.

Kevin Connolly replied Google runs five buses a day at the park and ride and Apple runs three.

Staff Payne replied that the Golf Parking Lot was a potential alternative; however, staff once executed the shuttle approach and only a handful used the service.

Commissioner Miley replied that all agencies involved should take notes and come back to the Commission with feedback and follow up to explore solutions. He would like to see the crosswalk idea reviewed to allow safe access when crossing Main Street.

Commissioner Vargas felt the Homeowner Associations from the adjacent communities should

also be contacted.

Commissioner Bellows needed clarification on the plan to acquire additional parking and how that would tie into the Seaplane Lagoon improvements and future service at Seaplane Lagoon.

Kevin Connolly replied that they are engaged with Alameda staff to look at the whole range of potential outcomes and variations. However, WETA's improvements are based on the short-term access study because they are not looking at making 20-year investments until they know the outcome of the Seaplane Lagoon Project.

Commissioner Schatmeier stated that he wanted to speak about transit access issues. When he worked in Marin County, he traveled using the Alameda-Oakland and Golden Gate Ferries. He explained that Golden Gate Transit had a long history of feeder shuttles to the Larkspur Ferry Terminal and no one used the service. Regarding AC Transit, he was disturbed with the 66 percent on-time performance rating and he was doubtful that eliminating the last trip on Line # 21 to serve the morning ferry riders was helpful. Moreover, he said staff should review the ridership gain if they are going to re-route Line #31.

Commissioner Morgado asked staff how far away was the O'Club lot from the ferry terminal.

Staff Payne replied that there are 138 spaces at the O'Club parking lot and noted that the staff report displayed the parking lot as the blue rectangle.

Commissioner Morgado stated that motorists usually park on the unregulated part of Main Street in the morning.

Staff Payne replied that was correct.

Commissioner Morgado asked staff how many people actually park there.

Staff Payne replied they saw the total number of cars parking on Main Street come from all over the presented map from West Midway to the west gate/Navy Way, and they were willing to walk to the terminal.

Commissioner Morgado asked staff if the City allowed people to park at the O'Club lot, would a crosswalk be present.

Staff Payne replied a crosswalk was not present and that was one of the requests presented by *Lucy Gigli of BikeWalk Alameda*. She said that the O'Club lot was used by the Park and Recreation Department.

Commissioner Schatmeier replied that his son had a wedding party at Rosenblum Cellars and they recently moved to Jack London. He does not know if the site has been replaced by a new tenant, but if not could the vacant parking spaces be utilized.

Kevin Connolly said that Bay Ship and Yacht is interested in leasing the space.

Commissioner Vargas referred to Spirits Alley and wondered if the AC Transit Line #31 extension could cover that area.

Becca Homa said during the last Commission meeting a few people requested service for the area. However, peak ridership occurs during the evening and weekend timeframe and service during that timeframe was expensive and long. She said that this was not a high priority service area.

Commissioner Miley asked AC Transit if they are looking at any specialty transit service to accompany regular service.

Becca Homa replied that AC Transit's Board approved the purchase of smaller vehicles so that may be a possibility.

Commissioner Vargas asked if there could be a modification of the loop if someone pushed a button near Spirits Alley.

Becca Homa replied the action was called flexible service and staff was looking into the option, but staff would have to address union and driver training issues.

Commissioner Schatmeier explained in the past WETA and AC Transit representatives talked about implementing bus service to and from San Francisco when the ferries turned people away. He also wanted to know if WETA used a contractor for the bus service. Alternatively, ferry riders could board AC Transit Line OX at the Temporary Transbay Terminal. He wondered if the 5:40 pm or 5:50 pm Line OX run could originate at the San Francisco Ferry Building then proceed to the Temporary Transbay Terminal.

Becca Homa replied that would be difficult because layover, restrooms and tour bus spaces would be an ongoing issue. Therefore, they would like to concentrate their operations at the Temporary Transbay Terminal.

Kevin Connolly said they contract out the backup buses. Regarding AC Transit and ferry service, WETA had conversations about a partnership between the two agencies and that was something they would like to see. Moreover, he mentioned that a regionwide Transbay corridor plan was enacted between AC Transit, BART and WETA for better integration between the entire system and establishing a partnership was an ongoing conversation.

Commissioner Bertken asked staff about the ability to change the dog park to a parking facility.

Staff Payne said a new dog park was in construction and overseen by *Amy Wooldridge*, Recreation and Parks Director. The dog park would be located in the new Estuary Park just north of Mosley Avenue.

Commissioner Miley commented on the fact that the City was responsible for the ferry infrastructure maintenance on the landward side. He wondered if that was standard practice or unique to Alameda.

Staff Payne replied that is unique to the City.

Commissioner Miley asked how much the maintenance work costs the City.

Staff Payne replied WETA reimburses the City for all maintenance work.

Commissioner Bertken asked WETA why the improvement of the pedestrian crossing at Main Street was not the responsibility of WETA.

Kevin Connolly replied that they raised the issue since the beginning of the effort and that it was not embraced by the City's Public Works Department.

Commissioner Vargas said the project looked like a candidate for a joint public partnership.

Alex Nguyen, Alameda City Manager, said he would like the Commission to come back in the fall to discuss the specific studies and present refined recommendations.

Commissioner Vargas stated that a special committee should be put into place to review the plan.

Commissioner Schatmeier offered to volunteer for the subcommittee and he stated that the Commission should express their requirements for the plan without committing them to a single solution.

Alex Nguyen recommended that Bike Walk Alameda be part of the subcommittee and requested that staff look into the number of people who could be part of the subcommittee.

Staff Payne felt that the subcommittee should sit down and include additions and deletions using the next steps part of the staff report as a starting point.

Commissioner Miley said regarding the potential solution portion, he would like staff to explore available surface lots around the area, include additional bicycle parking under WETA's responsibility and study the effects of re-routing Line #31.

Commissioner Bellows amended *Commissioner Miley's* statement to include staff to explore available on-street parking as well.

Commissioner Schatmeier replied that the solution should also exclude enforcing parking restrictions on Adelphian Way. He also supported reviewing the effects of re-routing Line #31.

Commissioner Bellows felt they should remove the signage that restricts parking on the landward side. She would also like the curb at Adelphian Way and Sweet Road painted red to prevent parking. Additionally, she would like to see the first elements of the BCDC parking issue combined because the parking agreement should be released.

Commissioner Morgado said he agreed with not citing motorists for parking and the City should work with WETA and BCDC to make that happen. He does not completely agree with removing the existing dog park, but if there was an alternative being built then it was not a big problem.

Also, he would like to make sure pedestrians and cyclists travel safely along Main Street.

Commissioner Vargas asked *Sergeant Simmons* for the speed limit along Main Street.

Sergeant Simmons replied 35 mph.

Commissioner Vargas felt that safety was an important issue. The Main Street pedestrian and cyclist crossing was high priority. Secondly, he said the Commission should work with the contract BCDC laid out since modifying the contract would be difficult. Moreover, he felt that parking restrictions were a revenue generator and if the City needed money then start giving tickets.

Commissioner Miley replied WETA should look into implementing parking charges within their parking lot.

6. Staff Communications

6A. Potential Future Meeting Agenda Items

The next Commission meeting will be Wednesday, September 24th, and potential items could include:

- Ferry Terminal Access Recommendations and Updates
- Northern Waterfront Development Projects
- Pedestrian Safety Program Update
- I-880/29th Avenue/23rd Avenue Interchange Improvement Project
- Proposed I-880/Broadway/Jackson Multimodal Transportation and Circulation Improvements

7. Announcements/ Public Comments

Jim Strehlow, Alameda resident, said two months ago he spoke about the I-880/Fruitvale Avenue construction and how the left turn lane onto Elmwood Drive had an unnecessary 20-second delay. Yet, he found that two months ago the City striped Fruitvale Avenue with an extra lane and that alleviated some of the traffic. However, he said a 20-second delay continued to plague Elmwood Drive and he would like the Commission to talk to City about this issue. In addition, he was upset that he spent the last several meetings asking for a survey of traffic conditions and recently found out that the City conducted a study for Alameda Point. Thus, he wanted better communication between departments and the Commission. Also, before attending the Commission meeting, he attended the Del Monte Warehouse Project meeting at City Hall West. He said a number of transportation issues were brought up, yet the issues are not being communicated with the Commission.

Commissioner Vargas asked the Commission if the Del Monte Warehouse Project should be included as a future agenda item.

Staff Payne replied the Del Monte Warehouse Project was located within the Northern Waterfront and that there are several developments in progress. She advised the Commission to

call this upcoming agenda item as “Northern Waterfront Development.”

Commissioner Schatmeier made the motion to include the topic within the existing future agenda items. *Commissioner Bertken* seconded the motion. The motion was approved 6-0.

8. Adjournment

8:55 pm