

APPROVED MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 2019

Chair Soules convened the meeting at 7:00pm.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Vice Chair Soules, Commissioners Johnson, Nachtigall, Kohlstrand, Weitze, Hans.

Absent: Commissioner Yuen.

Gail Payne, Senior Transportation Coordinator, introduced the newest member, Commissioner Weitze.

Commissioner Weitze provided a brief background about himself and why he wanted to be on the Commission.

Staff Member Payne announced that Commissioner Yuen was out because she recently had a baby boy.

2. AGENDA CHANGES

None.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

3-A AC Transit Proposed Line 96 Increased Frequency and Route Adjustment for Alameda Point, Community Meeting: Wed, July 31 at 6 p.m., Alameda City Hall and Public Hearing: Wed, Aug 7 at 2 and 6 p.m., AC Transit, 1600 Franklin St.: <http://www.actransit.org/public-hearings/>

3-B Transportation Commission Meeting: Wed, Sept. 25 at 7 p.m.

3-C Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) 2019 Trainings in September and October: register on Fire Department web page

3-D Upcoming Grant-Funded Bicycle Safety Education Classes:
<https://bikeeastbay.org/alamedabikeed>

3-E Travel Tips Workshop by the Center for Independent Living at Mastick Senior Center – Friday, Sept 13, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

3-F Tsunami Presentations: Thurs, Sept. 19 at 6:30 p.m. (boating community) and Wed, Oct. 30 at 6:30 p.m. (citywide) – City Hall, Council Chambers

Jim Strehlow said he wants to address electric scooters and bicycles misusing the bike lanes. He said that on July 4th, he was bicycling on Broadway when a car turned suddenly and nearly hit him. He wondered how many near misses happen because there is no reporting for that statistic. He told a story of a car using a bike lane in Oakland and creating a hazard, pointing to the confusing lane markings as the likely cause.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4-A 2019-7113

Draft Meeting Minutes – May 22, 2019

Commissioner Kohlstrand asked staff to review her comments on page 8 of 9, at the top, for accuracy.

Commissioner Kohlstrand motioned approval of the minutes as corrected. Commissioner Nachtigall seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5-A 2019-7114

Board Elections

Staff Member Payne introduced the item. The staff report can be found at: <https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4065041&GUID=92522B1C-5433-4A75-92C6-46086298E374>

Commissioner Johnson nominated Commissioner Soules as chair. Commissioner Kohlstrand seconded the nomination. The nomination passed 6-0.

Commissioner Soules nominated Commissioner Nachtigall as Vice Chair. Commissioner Kohlstrand seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0.

5-B 2019-7115

Discuss the I-880 Express Lanes

Staff Member Payne introduced the item. The staff report and exhibits can be found at: <https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4065113&GUID=AAD5A3EC-6AE6-45E4-9DD0-654529F301EC&FullText=1>

Barbara Laurenson, MTC, gave a presentation.

Commissioner Nachtigall asked how far apart the entrances and exits would be along the corridor.

Ms. Laurenson showed a map illustrating the types and characteristics of entrances and exits to the express lanes.

Commissioner Nachtigall asked if all buses, whether public or private, would be able to use the lanes toll free.

Ms. Laurenson said that all buses would be free.

Commissioner Weitze asked if Uber and Lyft vehicles with three total passengers would also be free.

Ms. Laurenson said that those vehicles would also be free.

Commissioner Weitze asked if consideration has been given to mandating Fastrak to eliminate cash lanes.

Ms. Laurenson said that conversation has not gone very far.

There were no public speakers.

5-C 2019-7116

Approve the Clement Avenue Safety Improvement Project Recommendations (Andrew Thomas, Director of the Planning, Building and Transportation Department) Outcome: Commission to provide recommendations

Andrew Thomas, Planning, Building and Transportation Department Director, gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at: <https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4065114&GUID=20E10C59-20AE-43AE-AF1F-F761759F89D7&FullText=1>.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said she did not feel like all three alternatives got a fair comparison, and that staff was advocating for one alternative. She asked what the advantage of the hybrid alternative would be.

Staff Member Thomas said the hybrid alternative eliminates fewer parking spaces and keeps the Park Street intersection the same as it is today.

Thaddeus Wozniak, project consultant from CDM Smith, said that if there is a decision not to use a two-way bikeway for the entire Cross Alameda Trail, there would have to be a transition somewhere. He added that if the hybrid alternative is chosen, the transition would be at Walnut and if bike lanes are chosen for the corridor, the transition would be at Grand. He said the hybrid option continues the two-way bikeway as far as possible in the areas where there are few driveways before transitioning to traditional bike lanes.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said Alameda has so few streets that trucks and buses can run on and that she is concerned that we are giving so much priority to bicycles on this particular street. She said option 3 puts more capital improvements into the street that would make it harder for buses to run in the future.

Staff Member Payne said that they discussed the Line 19 restoration with AC Transit and specifically chose Buena Vista to increase ridership with a wider catchment area. She added that Clement is a truck route and that staff prefers not to burden the truck route with a bus route as well.

Commissioner Johnson asked if the bike signal at Park Street would be on demand, or always active.

Mr. Wozniak said the plan would be to have detection so that the bike signal phase would only activate when a bicyclist is present.

Commissioner Johnson asked what would happen to the abundant power poles and lines along the north side of the street.

Staff Member Thomas said the higher voltage lines run along the northern side and they have been told by AMP to not expect to underground those lines. He said that there will be some poles that get undergrounded along the northern side with each new development, but the 115kv lines will stay.

Commissioner Nachtigall asked how option 3 would make it so that more street trees could be placed along the corridor.

Staff Member Payne explained how street trees could be placed in the striped visibility zones adjacent to the bike facility near intersections. She added that more detail would be included as the plans get further developed.

Commissioner Weitze asked what percentage of the project is already paid for.

Staff Member Payne said they have a federal grant for over five million dollars that will pay for 88% of the project.

Commissioner Weitze said that his research showed that trailered boats could only be nine feet wide without getting a wide load permit.

Commissioner Johnson asked for more information about the stop sign discussion that has taken place.

Staff Member Thomas said they would put in stop signs when it is warranted. He said the Alameda Marina project would result in some additional stop signs.

Mr. Wozniak said there would be two new four way stops at two new locations for access to the Alameda Marina project.

Chair Soules asked for and received confirmation that the parking loss counts do not reflect additional loading zones that may be added. She said that Clement may become a more attractive bus route as there is increased development in the area. She asked how the two-way bikeway would work with bus stops.

Mr. Wozniak explained the safety benefits of not having buses crossing bike lanes to access stops. He said a bus boarding island can be built where there is parking adjacent to the bikeway.

Chair Soules asked what the alternative truck route would be if it were not Clement.

Staff Member Thomas said that Buena Vista would be the alternate truck route. He said the City has been working with residents to move the existing truck route segments off of Buena Vista.

Chair Soules asked what the data were showing for safety on this corridor compared to other areas in Alameda.

Staff Member Payne showed the slide demonstrating the number and locations of collisions along the corridor. She said the wide lanes contribute to speeding and a disproportionate number of incidents. She said that there are fewer incidents being seen where protected bike lanes have been installed.

Chair Soules opened the public hearing.

Jim Strehlow said the key on page 5, figure 4 was not clear. He said adding street trees near Everett would make it very difficult for the businesses in that area. He said the current design is working fine. He questioned whether there are enough collisions to warrant such a major design change. He said he liked the shade he gets currently in the afternoon when riding on the south side of the street. He asked how many bike routes we need. He said there are alternatives, and he uses Buena Vista because it continues further east. He expressed support for option 1.

Shawn Throwe said he owns the only remaining boatyard in Alameda. He said four years ago they asked the board to not support this plan and the Commission agreed. He said he had 54 wide load trucks last year, up to almost 17 feet wide. He said truckers have options to go to other cities. He supported option 2 because otherwise his trucks would require police escorts. He said he never sees bicycles during the weekdays when his trucks would transit the area.

Jim Devlin said he chose to move to Alameda because he wanted a safe place for bicyclists and pedestrians. He said the streets are not safe for his son to ride on. He said the area is going to change with all the residential being added and those people will want to be able to navigate safely. He endorsed option 3.

James Falaschi, Alameda Marina, said they support the staff recommendation and look forward to working with the City to make it a reality.

Bonnie Wehmann said she supports option 3. She said she teaches kids how to bicycle safely and drivers get angry and impatient sharing the road with bicyclists. She said protected bike lanes provide the most safety.

Susie Hufstader, Bike East Bay, said she supports the protected bike lane. She said her partner test rode her commute to Berkeley today and said it was really hard and stressful having cars brushing by all the time. She said the Cross Alameda Trail is about a bigger vision that is safe, comfortable and continuous.

Pat Potter, Bike Walk Alameda, supported option 3. She said this option makes the most sense. She said they want to get 40% more people on bikes. She urged the commission to imagine what the street will look like in the future, not what it looks like today.

Norene Griffin shared some research about the health and safety benefits of protected bike lanes. She said this project is needed to meet the City's goals. She supported option 3. She said she does not let her son ride his bike in Alameda because it is not safe.

Suzanne Diers said her family owns property near Clement Ave where two boat related businesses operate. She said option 3 would make maneuvering boats more difficult, and that it was not necessarily the safest option. She said narrow streets do not make drivers slow down. She suggested putting the bike lanes through the marina property.

Gene Oh supported option 3. He cited studies that show increased economic activity when bike lanes replace space for cars. He said bike lanes reduce gridlock. He said adding protected bike lanes would help future proof Alameda for things like autonomous delivery vehicles.

Abraham Warner said he rides his bike a lot, but avoids Clement. He supported option 3.

Rich Cusimano supported option 3. He said he and his son were struck by a driver riding in what would be the option 2 bike lanes. He said they chose to come home that day on Clement because they used Pacific earlier and it did not feel safe. He said the protected bike lane would be the safest option and would get more people to use their bike. He said that under any option, that traffic calming would be critically important.

Zach Kaplan said he finds Clement to be the most conducive route to get to Park Street. He said he has never had a problem riding on Clement. He objected to option 3 because it puts cyclists on the wrong side of the street. He said this would be a waste of taxpayer money. He requested that if option 3 is chosen, that sharrows be placed in the traffic lane to remind drivers that bicyclists are legally permitted in the roadway.

Chair Soules closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Weitze said that multiple people have suggested this money be used for other uses, such as police. He asked if that is permitted.

Staff Member Payne said that this is a competitive federal grant that can only be used on this project.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said she is concerned about option 3. She said she does not want to hurt businesses along Clement Avenue. She said she supports better access for bicyclists and improved safety where we are able. She said she is not convinced that even the in-street bike lanes of option 2 would be the best on this street. She said she is concerned about the dimensions of option 2, though is leaning towards that option. She expressed worry about the serpentine alignment of alternative 3. She said she is concerned about the design of the Park Street intersection under option 2, asking why there cannot be a bike lane there.

Mr. Wozniak explained that the center line at Park Street is pushed really far to the south to accommodate turning trucks from southbound Park Street onto westbound Clement Avenue. He said the two-way bikeway uses unused space next to the northern curb in option 3.

Staff Member Payne said the situation is exacerbated because the lane that trucks turn from at Park Street is against the curb, where at many intersections there would be parked cars enabling trucks to turn from further away.

Commissioner Hans said he participated in the recent ride with Bike Walk Alameda and enjoyed hearing from business owners and seeing how option 3 would still allow trucks to complete their turns. He said he supports option 3 because it would be the safest alternative.

Commissioner Johnson said he was initially in favor of striped bike lanes, but hearing the comments and feedback from the breakout sessions he is now strongly in support of option 3. He said new families moving into developments along the waterfront will be looking for this type of facility and that it supports the City's goals.

Commissioner Weitze said the project is paid for. He said we are adding lots of people to that side of the island and no amount of new car lanes will fix the traffic issue. He said we need to get people out of their cars as much as possible. He supported the idea of providing continuity of bike infrastructure across the island. He said he cannot put human bodies between parked cars and moving cars and strongly supports option 3.

Commissioner Nachtigall said there will be lots of change in that area and the Cross Alameda Trail should have continuity. She added that she strongly supports option 3 as a way to get people out of vehicles. She supported the idea of adding sharrows to provide experienced bike riders an alternative.

Commissioner Johnson endorsed the idea of including sharrows in the eastbound lane.

Chair Soules asked what the difference might be in overall cost, and City contributions, between option 2 and option 3.

Staff Member Payne said they have not done detailed cost estimates for the different options. She said \$74,000 of City funds would be combined with Measure B and BB funds to fulfill the local match requirements.

Mr. Wozniak said that most of the costs would surround the sidewalk and bulb outs work. He said the cost differences between options are not that great.

Staff Member Thomas said that the local match funds from B and BB have to be used for transportation projects, and could not go to police or parks or other uses.

Chair Soules said making accommodations for businesses is very important for Alameda's jobs-housing balance. She asked if we have worked with Alameda Police to help coordinate wide loads and mitigate some of the impacts to businesses.

Staff Member Thomas said that staff can work more closely with different departments as more detailed plans are developed. He said 11 foot lanes are standard in business areas across Alameda and we need to figure out how to operate businesses in this corridor with 11 foot lanes.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said the industrial nature of Clement is different than a commercial district like Park Street.

Chair Soules asked if the bikeway could be smaller.

Staff Member Thomas said that the facility is already at the minimum width permitted.

Chair Soules asked if the idea of doing option 2 now and option 3 later was considered.

Staff Member Thomas said that having the new segments of the Cross Alameda Trail opening up to the west in 2020 will increase the need for this facility in the very near future.

Mr. Wozniak said the Alameda Marina project is beginning work and needs to know what type of facility the City wishes to have built along their project frontage. He said there is

also a timeline on the federal funds which means they will not be available in the future when the City is ready to change configurations.

Staff Member Payne said there are federal requirements that we keep anything that is done in place for at least 20 years.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to endorse option 3 with the condition that sharrows be included in the eastbound travel lane. Commissioner Weitze seconded the motion.

Chair Soules suggested including a bike counter with the bike signal at Park Street as a way to develop metrics and performance reporting on projects like this.

Staff Member Payne said that metrics are a citywide initiative that staff is working on developing.

The motion passed 5-1 (Kohlstrand opposed.)

6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

6-A *City Council Staff Report on Intersection Visibility Recommendations and Verbal Report on Council Action*

Staff Member Thomas gave an update on recent City Council actions.

6-B *Oakland Alameda Access Project: Informational Presentation scheduled for September 17, 2019 City Council meeting*

Staff Member Thomas previewed the topic which will be before City Council for discussion in September.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Soules adjourned the meeting at 9:38 p.m.