



**TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
City Council Chambers
1000 San Pablo Avenue
September 22, 2011 – 7:00 PM**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Chair McCroskey.
2. **ROLL CALL. Members present:** Anderson, Mazur, McCroskey, Miki. Staff present: Officer Chris Willis, Bond, Chavez. Commissioner Knapp arrived at 7:13 pm
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES for June 30 and July 28, 2011.** Minutes were approved with recommended edits in the July 28 minutes. Motion Anderson/Miki. Unanimous.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
George Fernofsky commented about the recent changes at the Buchanan/Jackson intersection. He indicated the narrow through lane on the north leg of the intersection on Jackson Street and the fact that westbound vehicles turning right onto northbound Jackson encroach onto the left turning lane as they turn. He suggested widening the through lane by taking from the other lanes or eliminating the southbound left turn lane. His other concern was the Marin/Buchanan merge and the lack of adequate signage alerting vehicles on Buchanan that they have to stop and yield to the oncoming traffic on Marin.

Miki expressed his concern about the Traffic and Safety Commission not being consulted in regard to the Hotsy Topsy taco truck issue. He said that the real issue was that the City did not have a truck ordinance and he would be interested in bringing up this issue at a future meeting.

Anderson said that he wanted a report from the impacts of the farmers' market on traffic in the surrounding streets. He had observed heavy congestion on San Pablo, Jackson, Adams and Madison and he understood that one of the conditions on the farmers' market operations in Albany was to conduct a traffic survey after its opening in May and that he had not seen it yet. He also said he had requested signage at Cleveland, Pierce, and Solano advising motorists that Solano was closed at the intersection with San Pablo. He requested including this issue in a future agenda. He would also like to address safety in general in light of a couple of accidents that had occurred that involved bicyclists.

Knapp expressed his concern about bicycle safety and if the Municipal Code included safety regulations or provisions that required bicyclists to abide by stop sign law or other controls to enhance safety on the streets in general and for bicyclists in particular.

McCroskey said he recently became certified in bicycle training and he was aware of the need for bicycle education in the City. He also announced the next Bike About Town event.

Miki asked if Masonic was being repaved and if the recommendations of the ATP would be taken into consideration. Chavez said the BART retrofit project would start on October 18 and the Public Works Department had decided to wait until the project is done in order to repave and implement the ATP recommendations, which is striping and signage.

5. PRESENTATION

5-1 Police Report

Officer Willis reported that in August 2011, there had been 15 collisions in the City: 11 non-injury and 4 injury collisions, 4 hit/runs with no injuries. 3 collisions had occurred on Marin Avenue and one was school related. There were 2 accidents involving bicyclists. One occurred at the intersection of Pierce and Buchanan. The Dartmouth/Kains accident was because the bicyclists ran a stop sign. Chavez mentioned she had seen a lot of close calls at the intersection of Ohlone Greenway and the side streets and that stop signs should be installed at every intersection on the Ohlone Greenway at every intersection. Miki said that enforcement should be exercised along the Ohlone Greenway. Knapp asked if the Police Department issued warnings or citations when those violations occurred. Officer Willis said that the APD issued warnings or citations depending on the situation.

The owners of 605 Stannage four-plex requested to speak under Public Comment. They requested to enlarge the driveway at their property so that one of their tenants could get out of her carport.

Eugene Hellwig of 1201 Brighton Avenue requested the Commission for a disabled parking space on the side of his property fronting Cornell Avenue. Miki asked why requests like these could not be resolved by staff without going through a formal public process. Miki would like to see a change in policy regarding requests for disabled parking.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

6-1 Union Pacific Railroad Public Safety Presentation

Chavez said that Peggy Lyda of Union Pacific had called off her presentation due to unexpected events. She requested a new date for making her presentation before the Commission. Chavez suggested inviting members of the PTA when the Union Pacific safety presentation takes place.

6-2 AC Transit Presentation on transit issues in Albany and relocation of the layover for Route 18 to 950 San Pablo Avenue.

Chavez introduced Robert del Rosario of AC Transit and the proposal to develop an Albany-Norh Berkeley Transit Plan. Del Rosario presented the advantages of developing a Transit Plan and went through the proposed outline for the plan. He said he would speak about the request to relocate line 18 bus stop after taking questions for this part of his presentation. Chavez said that staff and AC Transit would like to seek the Commission support for this proposal.

The Commission members had the following comments:

(Knapp) What is the plan for transit service west of I-80? Include transbay service in the analysis.

Meeting was open to the public.

Sol Strand, 555 Pierce Street said that passengers boarding Line 25 on Pierce Street heading to the Senior Center or the Library, had to make two transfers (to Line 72 and Line 18), but if you want to go the other direction, Line 25 is a straight shot to the Richmond postal distribution center. This segment of the route should be linked to a Richmond line and deleted from Line 25.

(Anderson) Reiterated what Strand said and added that the transit connection to Target was very important for Albany residents.

(Miki) Is the plan including service to Costco and Point Isabel? Have you considered having students on the Clipper card?

Robert del Rosario spoke about the second part of the presentation requesting the layover relocation for Line 18 from San Pablo and Monroe Street to 950 San Pablo Avenue in front of the Town Center. He said that this line had schedule adherence problems due to cumulative delays throughout the alignment of the route. In order to achieve better schedule adherence, AC Transit was proposing to relocate its layover and eliminate the segment of the line that serves UC Village as this location is served by Line 52. He said that in terms of the parking eliminated by the relocation, he had observed that parking demand is low there during weekdays, although he had not checked weekend parking demand.

Discussion was opened to the public. The following people spoke: Kris Akido, Victoria Chavez, Tina Harrison. They had the following comments:

- Concerns about visibility and safety at the Town Center driveway.
- Many users of the Center are people receiving physical therapy and some of them are disabled. - Having a bus parked right next to the driveway is a safety concern for people with mobility problems.
- A bus parked next to the driveway eliminates visibility of the Town Center from the street.
- The existing spot for the layover does not harm anybody.
- Consider eliminating some stops on the line to improve schedule adherence.

Anderson said that he opposed the relocation proposal.

Miki asked if there were other potential locations for the relocation of the layover. Del Rosario said that other locations considered were in front of City Hall or on Marin Avenue in front of the Fire Department.

McCroskey asked if the layover location needed bus pads and if AC Transit had data indicating the number of transit users at UC Village who would be affected by the change of service. He also asked if AC Transit staff had looked at the area of Jackson and Adams. Del Rosario said that as a rule of thumb they try to avoid laying over in residential areas.

Lubov said that it appeared to be a bus pad on Buchanan between Adams and Madison and could be a good place for a layover.

Motion Knapp/Lubov: The Commission fully supports developing a transit plan for the City of Albany. Vote was unanimous.

Motion Knapp/Mazur: The Commission voted to table the issue of the layover relocation to another session. An amendment to this motion was proposed by Miki and seconded by Knapp: Table this issue until research for the transit plan is performed and more analysis is completed. Vote was unanimous.

6-3 Update from staff for the proposal from the University of California for University Village Mixed Use Development.

Bond provided an update to the Commission on the status of the University Village project and said that he had done some research on case studies for bike tracks after the suggestion was made by the Albany Strollers & Rollers (AS&R). Bond introduced Kevin Hufferd of UC Berkeley who is managing the project.

McCroskey explained that the reason for the request was to make the commercial development more accessible for bicyclists because the way it is currently proposed would make bicyclists go around in the back of the development.

Miki referred to the City Ordinances and asked for clarification for the AS&R request. He said the Municipal Code allowed riding on the sidewalk if a person is under 16, except along Solano Avenue because it is a commercial street and there is a lot of pedestrian activity. Is there something in the Code that has this restriction beyond Solano?

Hufferd said that the development team for the project had met with the Albany Strollers & Rollers, AC Transit, and with consultant John Ciccarelli in regards to the suggested connection for bicyclists from Dartmouth Street to the proposed development. He said that the project is providing several amenities for bicyclists, such as raised tables, a signalized intersection with a protected left turn and perhaps the implementation of a bike box. He said that depending on the type of cyclist, there were two options: Cyclists could cross at Dartmouth and walk their bikes for approximately 120' or they can bike up to Monroe and make the left turn there. As that a lot of activity is anticipated for this new commercial area. There is a bus stop, senior population, and high pedestrian activity. He said that Ciccarelli did not support the idea of a bike track for that location because of potential conflicts with the bus stop.

The discussion was open to the public. The following people spoke: Sol Strand, Emilie Raguso, Robert Del Rosario. These were the comments:

The left turn on Jackson is too short for additional traffic generated by this project.

Where is the entrance to the Whole Foods development?

AC Transit does not support the installation of the cycle track because of safety concerns between bus patrons and bicyclists.

The Commission had the following comments:

(Miki) If the cycle track was proposed throughout San Pablo or throughout Solano and everyone understood that, he would support it, but we are only talking about 200' of cycle track. He would like to see a design and understand how this is proposed to work, but this proposal without seeing a design should not be recommended. Experience cyclers can negotiate the left turn from San Pablo to the entrance of the Whole Foods. Less experience cyclers should use the signalized intersection, walk the bike and access the development.

(Mazur) Persons over age 16 are not allowed on any sidewalk, but this is only enforced on Solano Avenue.

(McCroskey) Children under 16 and their parents are allowed to ride on the sidewalks in non-commercial streets.

(Knapp) Pedestrians and cyclists do not mix very well. He opposed having a cycle track adjacent to this very busy area.

(Miki) Cited Municipal Code Ordinance in Chapter 8-12.4b about riding on sidewalks.

(Mazur) Tenth Street is a bicycle facility open to cyclists, pedestrians, and supposedly to emergency vehicles. Hufferd said that he was not sure it would be open to emergency vehicles.

(Miki) Tenth Street should be open to vehicular traffic. Hufferd responded that the UC Village community did not support opening Tenth Street and that this discussion was part of a separate discussion with the UC Community. Bond said that this was part of when they drew the project limit line.

(Miki) The Commission should look the greater community of Albany and look at 10-15 years from now and no longer have the option

(McCroskey) At this point, he was not seeing a two way bicycle facility at this location unless the development is pushed back west, which is unlikely. While he would like to see a solution for an easy access for bicyclists, he would not recommend relocating the bus stop away from the proposed Senior Housing.

(Mazur) Why not parking the bicycle where the bike parking is proposed and walk from there? She parks her vehicle far away and walk. There is no problem with that.

Motion Knapp/Anderson: The Traffic and Safety Commission is not comfortable with allowing bicycles ride on sidewalk as this is not according to law. This does not preclude exploring opportunities to implement an on-street bicycle facility. Motion amended by Miki, seconded by Knapp to include after "bicycle facility" between Dartmouth and the creek. Vote 4 Ayes, 1 opposed (McCroskey).

Lubov left the meeting due to illness.

7. REPORTS

7-1 Report on status of the Active Transportation Plan. Chavez reported on the schedule of the Active Transportation Plan and that the Commission should expect the environmental work 30-day comment period by December 2011.

7-2 Report from Staff on the Proposal from the Stronach Group for the development of the second campus of the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab (LBNL) on the golden Gate Fields property.

Bond reported that the City had retained Fern Tiger and Associates to work with the community and extend her Voices to Vision process. The City Council voted to establish a Task Force to guide this planning process and provide guidance to the decision makers. Motion Anderson/McCroskey: Assign John Miki to become a member of the Task Force for the LBNL proposal. Vote was unanimous.

7-3 Report on Pierce Street Chavez said that Pierce Street was well underway and that the project is expected to be finalized by December, 2011.

7-4 Report on the Buchanan/Jackson SR2S project. Chavez said that this project was finalized, but that there were some concerns raised by the public regarding the width of the northbound lane on Jackson Street. She said that plans for restriping were being developed and that she would make them available to the Commission.

Motion Miki/Anderson: To continue meeting until 11:15 pm. Vote unanimous.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

8-1 Email from Tom O'Brien requesting a speed survey on the 900 block of Ordway and letter from Neil Fiore requesting speed survey on the 900 block of San Carlos.

8-2 Request for Disabled Curb parking at 1201 Brighton.

8-3 Email from Isabelle Leduc, Senior Center Supervisor requesting designation of a parking space for the senior van across the Senior Center. McCroskey volunteer to help with this issue. Chavez said that a parking occupancy map was needed in order to determine parking demand in the area.

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (Commission announcements or requests for future agenda items. No public comment will be taken on announcement of future agenda items).

- Washington Avenue Special meeting.
- Parking on Washington, Cerrito, and Polk Streets. Miki was unable to attend the September meeting. The Commission directed staff to reschedule the meeting.
- Active Transportation Plan Environmental Document (December, 2011).
- UC Village development (as needed).

Miki requested adding the issue of the intersection of Brighton and San Pablo for the December meeting. Anderson asked to add Bicycle Safety as a discussion item for a future agenda.

Miki would like to group all the Municipal Code ordinance changes that pertain to Traffic and Safety.

10. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 11:17 pm. - Next regular meeting: TBD

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