



MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION COMMITTEE (TCC)

David Gebhard Public Meeting Room
630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, CA
Thursday, February 26, 2015, 5:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chair Boche called the meeting to order at 5:31

ROLL CALL:

TCC MEMBERS

Hillary Blackerby
Cynthia Boche
Bob Burnham
Edward France
Susan Horne
Kathleen Rodriguez

Attendance

Present
Present
Present
absent
Present
Present

CITY STAFF PRESENT :

Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner
Kim Thaler-Strange, Administrative Specialist
Peter Brown, Mobility Coordinator

LIAISONS PRESENT

Michael Jordan, Planning Commissioner

PUBLIC PRESENT:

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

1. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Susan Horne spoke as a member of the community and a representative of COAST. COAST wanted to inform the public that they are the umbrella organization for a new concept for reducing traffic injuries and deaths called Vision Zero. The goal of Vision Zero is zero traffic injuries and fatalities on the transportation system. COAST hopes that the City and community will be able to assist in working towards this goal. This model is in effect in New York and San Francisco and has been successful. The plan is to find other partners and help craft a resolution to go to Council.

Michael Jordan stopped by to introduce himself as the new Planning Commission Liaison. He will be watching the meetings and encouraged the Committee to communicate with him.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

2. Approval of Minutes from the December 11, 2014, meeting where a TCC quorum was present.

Motion: Approve the Minutes from the December 11, 2014, Meeting.

Motion made Blackerby, seconded by Horne (with minor clarification)

Ayes: 5 Noes: Abstain: Absent: 1 (France)

REPORTS

3. Election of the Chair and Vice Chair

Mr. Dayton explained the tradition and process of selecting the Chair and Vice Chair.

Motion: Appoint Ms. Boche as Chair

Motion made by Burnham, seconded by Blackerby

Ayes: 5 Noes: Abstain: Absent: 1 (France)

Motion: Appoint Mr. Burnham for Vice Chair

Motion made by Blackerby, seconded by Rodriguez

Ayes: 5 Noes: Abstain Absent: 1 (France)

4. Bicycle Master Plan Update

Peter Brown, Mobility Coordinator, presented an overview of the Bicycle Master Plan (BMP) update. Mr. Dayton told the Committee that things were moving forward.

Mr. Brown explained to the Committee that there will be a more robust presentation to Council on April 7, 2015. The City's consultant team of Melendrez and Fehr and Peers are very responsive and professional. Our primary goal right now is to have a broad community outreach process that incorporates community preferences into the final BMP. He showed the Committee the draft BMP Website and the online survey.

He noted that Traffic Engineering staff have analyzed and categorized our baseline bicycle collision data, which completes one of the important initial tasks. The next step is to figure out categories of collisions and the locations and types of collisions. A big push with the BMP will be safety which is an important issue to the public and to the City Council. Staff will do three to five Neighborhood Summit meetings during CycleMAYnia in May, including two Summits in Spanish for Eastside and Westside residents. The meetings will be interactive with the community.

Mr. Brown showed the draft website, which will include a cutting edge media video presentation on what the BMP can do and what the public wants based upon interactive mapping. There will be a survey following the video. Additionally, staff and the consultants will be going to various community groups (a "Stakeholder Roadshow") and organizations to discuss the BMP and get input from all interested groups.

The Committee is welcome to give input on the survey.

Ms. Blackerby asked if the website will have a Spanish component. Mr. Brown replied that it would, but the video may only have subtitles.

Mr. Burnham thanked Mr. Brown for the presentation and asked how long a presentation to one of these organizations would last. Mr. Brown said it would be a 15-20 minute presentation, with the remainder of the hour for community input so that staff has ample time to listen to concerns, preferences and community desires regarding the BMP. Any and all community groups and entities are welcome to have a presentation.

Ms. Horne asked about some of the groups on the list. Mr. Brown replied that there are 50 -60 organizations on the list right now, that the list will be shown to City Council on April 7th, and he encouraged the Committee to add any groups they felt need to be involved. Mr. Brown said that the video will be available within the next two-three weeks, and the Mayor might add something about the BMP to her State of the City speech.

Mr. France arrived to the committee meeting at 5:41

5. Cliff Drive Community Engagement Process and Outcome

Derrick Bailey, Supervising Traffic Engineer, presented this item. The City is working on a potential traffic safety project on Cliff Drive. Mr. Bailey gave the background and history of this project and explained the grant opportunities and community outreach. In April there will be a call for grants for safety-related projects. Staff has been soliciting public input via community meetings. On November 5, 2014, the City hosted a public meeting, which can be seen on the City's website: www.santabarbaraca.gov/CliffDrive. The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) grant is a federal program that is administered by Caltrans. Any improvements in this corridor have to be based on a demonstrated collision history. Derrick gave background and history on grant opportunities and public outreach. Staff attended the November 5th community meetings and received input on what the residents want Cliff Drive to be like. The community supported bike lanes, changes to intersection configurations, preservation of on-street parking, lane narrowing etc., and SBCC also expressed the desire for improved safety near campus. HSIP improvements have to be based on demonstrated collision history. The City will be notified of their grant application results in summer 2016, and if awarded, construction would start in 2017, in order to be coordinated with the roundabout being built at Cliff Drive and Las Positas Road.

One complicated intersection is at Mesa Lane and Flora Vista along with the corridor down to the shopping center on Meigs Drive. There are two options for that area: Maintain two lanes with no on-street parking or go down to one lane and have room for a bike lane and a center turn lane. The community supported the latter option.

TCC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Mr. Burnham said that the majority of the project addresses roadway concerns, and asked if there was any priority or effort to look at sidewalk replacement or infill. Mr. Bailey replied that this is a federally funded project, and that the focus is the correction of safety issues rather than sidewalk infill.

Mr. Bailey added that when the City took over State Route 225, there was a long list of items that needed to be improved. There were no prospects of additional funding, and no available grants for those specific improvements. Mr. Burnham asked for clarification on the location of the dedicated right turn lane. Mr. Bailey replied that one option is to have the dedicated right hand turn lane onto Meigs from southbound Cliff Drive.

Ms. Blackerby attended the meeting in November and found it interesting. The presentation was well done and clear. She pointed out that one piece of this is to make it safer for bicyclists so that they wouldn't have to compete with cars. She appreciated the possibility for intersection improvements at Flora Vista. Staff is working with what's available but was curious as to why the median was put near Loma Alta Drive. Mr. Bailey said that no one knows why. Mr. Dayton asked Mr. Bailey to talk about future plans for the other side of Flora Vista – Mr. Bailey showed the area of Mesa Lane west of Flora Vista, going down the hill where the roundabout will be installed. There will be one lane for entry and one for exit. Staff is considering buffered bike lanes on the road adjacent to the curb. The BMP is a great forum for long term thinking for nearby bikeway improvements. There is also consideration of a traffic signal at the West Campus driveway of City College; however, this is not something that the HSIP grant would fund.

Ms. Rodriguez lived on the mesa. She is impressed with the community's desire to slow things down. This area is not a family friendly place to walk. Thirty years ago, Cliff Drive at sunset was deadly. It is important to have some safety measures on Cliff. She also asked how far staff goes back with the collision history. Mr. Bailey replied that it goes back 5 to 10 years. There is a possibility of a new pedestrian crossing.

Mr. France asked if a speed survey was done on Cliff Drive in 2011, and was there any change in vehicle speeds. Mr. Bailey replied that there were no significant changes. The prevailing speed was over 45 mph. He also pointed out that installation of the bike lanes would require the travel lanes be narrowed to 11 feet to allow for bike lanes and turn lanes. When the lanes are wider, drivers are more comfortable going fast. Mr. France clarified that staff is specifically talking about bike lanes. It sounds like this project will echo the voices of Mesa residents. He also pointed out that it is odd that the funds are distributed after the fact. He hopes that the City will look at road safety, and can match the safety efforts at SBCC and look at improvements on Loma Alta and alternative connections to the campus.

Ms. Horne pointed out that the underlying message is that the speed limit is too high. California Vehicle Code defines the speed limit and how to change it. The average has not gone down, but an article in the paper recommends that if everyone slows down then the prevailing speed would be measured lower. Mr. Bailey replied that the speed survey done per the California Vehicle Code says that the speed must be 45 mph. There is no flexibility for deviation.

Ms. Rodriguez suggested that if the lanes are narrowed and the modifications are completed, the speeds might slow down and then can be changed. Mr. Bailey said that a speed survey had to be done when we took over State Route 225. After the changes in that corridor the speed survey will be done again, and if there is a change in operating speeds, the City then has the potential to change it.

Ms. Boche echoed everything that has been said, and also wishes that the speeds were slower. She asked what could be done to encourage people to slow down. What kind of tools are there? Mr. Bailey replied that if the roads are narrowed, and bicycle lanes are added, the road characteristics change. It is not a good idea to use traffic calming on an arterial street; however, things like medians and trees can change the feel of the road. The amount of funding we can get for this project will not pay for anything more than paint. Ms. Boche supports this, but wants to know if the City can use more tools than just paint.

Mr. Burnham does not understand how speed surveys work and asked when it was that the City took over State Route 225. Mr. Bailey replied that the City took the street over in January 2014. Mr. Burnham asked if that would mandate a re-evaluation with new parameters. Mr. Bailey said that the City did a speed survey and measured speeds were similar to previous Caltrans survey.

Mr. France recalled that the state changed the speed limit percentile, and asked if there was any way to get close to 5 mph lower on the posted speed. Mr. Bailey pointed out that the 85th percentile hasn't changed. What changed in the California Vehicle Code was the ability to round the number up or down.

Ms. Boche said this was a great step in the right direction.

Announcement: A meeting is planned for March 26, 2014.

Chair Boche adjourned the meeting at 6:53 p.m.