



BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Chairperson Wadler, Valley Transportation Authority, Auditorium, Building A, 3331 North First Street, San Jose, California.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Anna Brunzell
John Carpenter
Bruce Entin
Carl Hagenmaier
David Kobayashi
Bill Manry
Thomas Muniz
Norma Rome

Members Present

David Simons
Jim Stallman
John Sullivan
Richard Swent, Vice Chairperson
Bart Thielges
Herman Wadler, Chairperson
Joe Walton

Members Absent

Bill Reisinger

A quorum was present.

2. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

James Wightman, Interested Citizen, asked when the St. James Light Rail Station is scheduled to open. Chris Augenstein, Transportation Planning Manager and Staff Liaison, replied that staff will make inquiries and provide him with the date.

Mr. Wightman commended VTA for the walkway trails in the City of Santa Clara and recommended a bicycle trail be added.

Mr. Wightman stated that it is important to have bicycle racks at all of VTA's Light Rail Stations.

3. Committee Staff Report

Mr. Augenstein introduced Michael T. Burns, VTA General Manager.

Mr. Burns invited the BPAC Members to attend the I-880/Coleman Interchange ribbon cutting ceremony scheduled for Monday, September 18, 2006 at 10:00 a.m.

Mr. Burns stated VTA is hosting the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Conference from October 8 through October 11, 2006. Mr. Burns invited all interested Committee Members to attend the Conference. Mr. Burns requested BPAC Members interested in attending the Conference to notify Mr. Augenstein.

Mr. Burns stated that the APTA Conference Agenda can be found on APTA.com.

Member Rome took her seat at 6:08 p.m.

Mr. Burns noted that with regard to the Organizational and Financial Assessment, the contract has been awarded to the Hays Group and the first phase of the Assessment will be to review the available existing reports and materials as well as interviewing all of the Advisory Committee Chairpersons. The second phase of the Assessment will consist of interviews with VTA Board Members and stakeholders. Mr. Burns encouraged input or questions for the Consultants be provided to Chairperson Wadler.

Member Stallman referenced at-grade crossings in Santa Clara County and railroad crossings in South County and inquired as to VTA's process for evaluating them. Mr. Burns responded that the Caltrain Capital Needs Study Subcommittee has been formed and it is currently conducting a study with regard to prioritizing Caltrain Projects including at-grade separations. Mr. Burns recommended Member Stallman provide his input to either his PAC Member or to Mr. Augenstein. Chairperson Wadler stated that comments can also be provided to Michelle DeRobertis, Senior Transportation Planner, for inclusion in the Bicycle Plan. Mr. Augenstein stated that the Work Program provides the opportunity to identify all of the at-grade crossings for Caltrain.

Member Sullivan noted that currently a \$50,000 study is being conducted for extension of a tunnel to be built at the Santa Clara Station on the second track. Member Sullivan asked if VTA is conducting a similar study. Mr. Augenstein responded that VTA has a planning grant to study options of grade crossings but not specifically on extending the tunnel.

Member Brunzell took her seat at 6:16 p.m.

Member Muniz inquired about VTA's Plans for retrofitting existing bus stops in the City of Gilroy that is not currently in compliance with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). Mr. Burns responded that VTA is working with the Committee for Transit Accessibility (CTA) to compile an inventory of all of the bus stops and then identify which ones need improvements. Mr. Burns advised that VTA will continue with the process of identifying and prioritizing the bus stops but the funding sources would still need to be identified.

Member Walton asked about the plans for 2007 Bike to Work Week. Mr. Augenstein advised VTA will take the lead in 2007 and that VTA staff has a series of recommendations to forward to Mr. Burns for his review.

Chairperson Wadler expressed concern regarding the Coyote Valley Project. Mr. Burns assured Chairperson Wadler that VTA is actively participating in the planning process.

Mr. Augenstein reported that the Bicycle Survey for Bicycles on Light Rail Vehicles has been live for approximately one month and is hopeful that all of the BPAC Members participated in the survey. The survey was mailed out by the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC) and advertised on VTA's Take-One. Although the data has not yet been analyzed, most of the people surveyed indicated that sitting across from the bicycle racks on light rail vehicles is an impediment. Mr. Augenstein advised that the results of the survey will be discussed at the October and November 2006 BPAC Meetings.

Ms. DeRobertis, Senior Transportation Planner, read into the record an email from Yves Zsutty, City of San Jose Parks and Recreation Department:

“I hope you can spread the word to your BPAC Members and bicycle community City's Trail Program Website has been updated to include a great new feature.

There is now a Trails Closures link from the homepage that provides users with up to date information on closures due to maintenance or construction work.

Users will also find the site to have been reorganized to help in navigating between Program and Project-related subject matter.

We're looking forward to all of your feedback so that we can keep improving the website.”

Ms. DeRobertis reported that the Coyote Creek Levy Trail between Montague Expressway and SR-87 would be closed by the Santa Clara Water District from September 18, 2006 through September 29, 2006 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Ms. DeRobertis provided an update on the SR-237 north side Bicycle Path stating the survey work is complete and property boundaries are identified. An interdepartmental meeting has been scheduled to ensure that the various departments are all in agreement about how to best manage the site as well as the care and replacement of existing bicycle paths. Ms. DeRobertis noted that the path will cost \$800,000 and that to date no money has been programmed for this project.

Mr. Augenstein asked Member Thielges if he knows why the Guadalupe Trail is closed. Mr. Thielges responded that a short section south of Willow Street is closed to allow access to construction equipment.

Member Stallman responded that the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Mitigation Bicycle Path to the SR-87 between Coleman Avenue and U.S.101 has been padlocked shut by the City of San Jose since the opening of the freeway February 15, 2005. Chairperson Wadler stated that the San Jose City Attorney has been asked why the area has been locked and to date no response has been received. Mr. Augenstein stated staff will follow up on the closure and asked Member Thielges to also do the same.

4. Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Wadler introduced and welcomed new members Anna Brunzell, representing the Town of Los Altos Hills and Bruce Entin, representing the Town of Los Gatos.

Chairperson Wadler expressed concern that the County of Santa Clara has completed the restriping along Almaden Expressway and in doing so have thereby reduced the bicycle lane width and increased the vehicle lane width closest to the median.

Chairperson Wadler stated that Peter Kutras, Santa Clara County Chief Executive Officer, indicated today that the County of Santa Clara will be cutting costs and laying off staff. Chairperson Wadler stated he hopes that layoffs do not affect the County Roads and Airports Department.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Minutes of July 12, 2006

M/S/C (Simons/Kobayashi) to remove the Minutes of July 12, 2006 from the Consent Agenda and place on the Regular Agenda.

6. Minutes of August 9, 2006

M/S/C (Simons/Kobayashi) to remove the Minutes of August 9, 2006 from the Consent Agenda and place on the Regular Agenda.

REGULAR AGENDA

5. Minutes of July 12, 2006

Member Stallman referenced Page 6 of 10, Paragraph 9, and requested, “on” be replaced with “to benefit”.

Member Stallman referenced Page 7 of 10, Paragraph 9, and requested “lanes” be replaced with “racks” and US 101/Skyport be changed to “101 Skyport.”

Member Stallman requested that “Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC)” be changed to “City of Saratoga” on the last paragraph on Page 9 of 10.

Member Kobayashi requested removal of the word “two” located on the last paragraph on Page 8 of 10.

M/S/C (Stallman/Hagenmaier) on a vote of 13 ayes, to 0 noes, to 2 abstentions to approve the Minutes of July 9, 2006, as amended. Members Simons and Brunzell abstained.

6. Minutes of August 9, 2006

Member Stallman requested the following addition after the period of the last sentence on Page 5 of 10, “as was requested for the Central/De La Cruz project two years ago.”

Member Stallman referenced Page 9 of 10, Paragraph 5, and requested “a” be removed, “billion” be replaced with “million”, “s” added to the word undercrossing, and after steel, “corrugated steel tunnels like City of Davis has” be added.

Member Simons referenced Page 8 of 10, fourth paragraph and requested that the first sentence include “Draft EIR and Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) include the full length of the Sunnyvale Mary Avenue Corridor.” Member Simons also noted that he intends, “ in the design process to ensure pedestrian and bicycle access to VTA Light Rail Station on the Moffett Park Boulevard side.”

Member Carpenter requested that on Page 4 of 10, Paragraph 3, “and that a bicycle component be included.” be added at the end of the comment by “Member Muniz when he asked if any of the questions posed for the survey were related to bicyclists.”

Member Carpenter referenced Page 6 of 10, Paragraph 7, and requested the following revisions: “Member Sullivan advised that he received feedback from City of Santa Clara staff regarding their use of the term ‘roadway departures’ in arguments made against the removal of pedestrian prohibitions on San Tomas Expressway. The staff memo referenced two Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) documents, which state that 60 percent of highway fatalities occur because of roadway departures. Member Sullivan explained that the term ‘roadway departures’, as used in these documents, refers not only to vehicles leaving the travel lanes, but also to head-on collisions and other events occurring on the roadway. Member Sullivan advised that these two FHWA documents did not address pedestrian use of shoulders, and that pedestrian shoulder fatalities were less than 0.5 percent of all total California highway fatalities in 2004.”

M/S/C (Stallman/Simons) on a vote of 12 ayes, to 0 noes, to 3 abstentions to approve the Minutes of August 9, 2006 as amended. Members Brunzell, Swent, and Thielges abstained.

7. Countywide Bicycle Plan Update

Ms. DeRobertis provided a copy of a Memorandum dated September 13, 2006 regarding the Countywide Bicycle Plan Updates.

The Memorandum states that VTA is requesting the BPAC Members' assistance in updating the Santa Clara Countywide Bicycle Plan by reviewing maps previously provided that depict the existing bikeway network, including locations of bicycle/pedestrian bridges and tunnels. Ms. DeRobertis requested that BPAC Members also identify the following when reviewing the maps:

1. Correct the Existing Bikeway type indications, if necessary
2. Expand Bikeway Network
 - A. Identify new or modified cross county corridors to reroute a cross county corridor in the cities or add additional corridors. Ms. DeRobertis requested the cross county corridors be indicated on the map.

Ms. DeRobertis explained that the purpose of the cross county corridor is to:

- to provide connections between local jurisdictions, as well as adjacent counties;
- to serve the major-trip attractors in the County;
- to be part of a signed countywide bicycle network; and,
- projects to complete the cross county corridor network compete well for inclusion in the Bicycle Expenditure Plan.

- B. Identify new bikeway projects
 - Bikeways: Planned bikeway projects (under design, under construction, funded or in the BEP)
 - Bikeway Projects needed within the half-mile routes to transit zones or on cross-country corridor.
 - Bikeways Projects needed to be identified now before development eliminates their feasibility.

3. Identify needed over and under crossings to the major barriers to bicycle circulation such as railroads, freeways, creeks and rivers.

Ms. DeRobertis requested notification if any of the cities have any large bikeway projects planned so they can be included in the Plan in case funding ever becomes available.

Ms. DeRobertis stated it is her hope to provide a list of the cross county corridors to the BPAC at their November 2006 Meeting.

Member Entin asked if the Countywide Bicycle Plan is available on VTA's website. Ms. DeRobertis responded that the Plan is accessible on VTA's FTP site at www.vta.org/news/vtacmp/ and that staff will provide him, as well as all new BPAC Members with a hard copy of the Countywide Bicycle Plan.

Ms. DeRobertis advised that an excel spreadsheet and map was provided to each individual city for discussion and requested the information be provided to her by the end of September 2006. Member Thielges advised that the September 2006 City of San Jose BPAC meeting was cancelled. Mr. Augenstein requested that Member Thielges follow up to make sure the spreadsheet is filled out. Vice Chairperson Swent stated that while the Plan was discussed at the City of Palo Alto's BPAC Meeting, the spreadsheet would be completed at their October 2006 meeting. Ms. De Robertis extended the deadline to the middle of October 2006.

Chairperson Wadler commended Ms. DeRobertis for all of her hard work.

Chairperson Wadler asked if the Guadalupe Trail would be added to the Plan if the Trail remains closed and Ms. DeRobertis responded, definitely.

Ms. DeRobertis advised that the Cities of Santa Clara and Morgan Hill have already provided her with the requested information.

With regard to the schedule for the Bicycle Plan, Ms. DeRobertis advised that Chapter 1 will be discussed at the October 11, 2006 BPAC Meeting. That Chapter includes existing conditions, goals, and policies. A list of projects will be provided at the November 8, 2006 BPAC Meeting and a public draft will be provided by January 2007.

Member Carpenter asked when the Technical Guidelines issues would be addressed. Mr. Augenstein advised staff would provide the Draft Bicycle Technical Guidelines in either December 2006 or January 2007 for review. Member Carpenter asked if the Guidelines will be made available on VTA's website for review. Mr. Augenstein responded that once BPAC is provided with a draft copy, the Draft Guidelines will be posted on VTA's website.

Ms. DeRobertis addressed the Bicycle/Pedestrian Update Working Group stating that she will try to schedule another a meeting for the end of September 2006. The Bicycle/Pedestrian Update Working Group is comprised of Chairperson Wadler, Member Sullivan, Member Muniz, Member Simons (Alternate), Kevin Jackson (Interested Citizen), Ben Tripousis (City of San Jose), and staff from the City of Sunnyvale.

Jerry Grace, Interested Citizen, inquired if VTA has ever considered marking off bicycle lanes with orange cones, which might make bicycle lanes safer to use. Ms. DeRobertis responded that bicycle lanes made with orange cones are a temporary fix until real bicycle lanes can be put in.

On order of Chairperson Wadler, there being no objection, the Countywide Bicycle Plan Update was discussed.

8. Report from County of Santa Clara re: Countywide Projects

Paul Pascoal, Santa Clara County Roads and Airport Department Staff Liaison, provided a map to aid the discussion of projects.

Dan Collen, Santa Clara County Director of Infrastructure Development, stated the Bicycle Adaptive Signal Timing presentation provided to the BPAC at their meeting of July 12, 2006, is now available on County Roads and Airports' website. Chairperson Wadler stated that the video was shown at the Almaden Cycle Touring Club (ACTC) meeting.

Mr. Collen referenced Almaden Expressway stating that in Calendar Year 2004, the County of Santa Clara provided resurfacing between Branham Lane to Harry Road, minor widening in the median between Branham Lane and Cherry Avenue in the southbound direction as well as restriping to accommodate four southbound lanes consistent with the recommendations of the Expressway Planning Study, and restriping southbound under SR-85 that reduced the shoulder slightly.

Mr. Pascoal provided a report regarding Expressway Projects in Santa Clara County, Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements, Safe Routes to School Projects, Pedestrian Corridor Sidewalk Projects, Core Improvements, Pedestrian Projects, Funding Sources and responded to the BPAC's inquiries.

On order of Chairperson Wadler, there being no objection, the Report from the County of Santa Clara re: Countywide Projects was received.

9. Announcements

Vice Chairperson Swent, City of Palo Alto, reported that the first phase of the Charleston/Arastradero Project was completed on schedule and on time for the start of the 2006 school year.

Member Sullivan, City of Santa Clara, stated he reported last month that at the August 22, 2006 Santa Clara City Council Meeting, the Council would be discussing an alternate pathway along San Tomas Expressway between Monroe and El Camino Real but the item was not agendized because City staff has not completed their study.

Member Rome, City of Morgan Hill, noted that the correct dates for the Taste of Morgan Hill are scheduled for Saturday, September 23, 2006 and September 24, 2006.

Member Thielges, City of San Jose, reported that the City of San Jose is still working on the north/south bicycle route connecting the City of Morgan Hill to the City of Milpitas. Member Thielges recommended agendizing this item for a future meeting.

Mr. Thielges also reported that the City of San Jose is working on applying for a Bicycle Friendly City Application and will provide updates when or if the city gets awarded the funding.

Member Brunzell, Town of Los Altos Hills, stated the Moody Road upgrade, which is both for bicyclists and pedestrians, has commenced.

Member Hagenmaier, City of Los Altos, stated the City of Los Altos is in the process of completing design work for replacement of the Adobe Creek Bridge, which connects the City of Los Altos to the City of Palo Alto along the Hetch-Hetchy Aqueduct Right-of-Way.

Member Stallman, City of Saratoga, reported that the DeAnza Trail Environmental Impact Report (EIR) should be presented to the Saratoga City Council in the impending months.

Member Stallman noted that 11th Street in the City of Sunnyvale/City of Mountain View area has been torn out; and there is no access to the Moffett Light Rail Station from Lockheed. Member Stallman suggested that the addition of a bridge providing access for bicycles along Highway 101 on the Base side that is now boarded up could be near-term opportunities, which might want to be seized by member cities or VTA.

Member Kobayashi, County of Santa Clara, referenced the County's Adaptive Bicycle Timing presentation provided to the BPAC and stated that solicitation has been received from the City of Davis and City of Mountain View for additional information on the process as well as the needed equipment.

Member Kobayashi noted that one of the first items discussed in the Expressway Study would address the pedestrian element and that information would be forwarded to BPAC.

Member Muniz, City of Gilroy, reported that recently there were unfortunate fatalities that occurred along the railroad tracks in South County and emphasized the City of Gilroy's advocacy for addressing pedestrian and bicycle crossings along railroad tracks.

Member Muniz noted that Downtown Gilroy is undergoing renovation and renovations should be completed by November 8, 2006.

Member Muniz inquired the site to obtain a list or maps of designated County roads.

Member Muniz stated he is hopeful that BPAC can provide a list of Caltrain Projects from concept to the point of design and stressed the importance of the BPAC involvement in those processes.

Member Walton, City of Cupertino, advised that Ms. DeRobertis will speak at the City of Cupertino's BPAC Meeting.

Member Walton reported that preparation for the Bike Friendly City has commenced and recommended those cities that have not completed the process to do. Member Walton noted that with the completion of the process the city is recognized as a friendly place for bicycles and pedestrians.

Chairperson Wadler, City of Campbell, stated he requested the City of Campbell BAC to add Ms. DeRobertis to a future agenda.

Chairperson Wadler advised he will not be attending the August 2006 City of Campbell BAC Meeting.

Chairperson Wadler reported that bicycle classes are scheduled for the end of September 2006, which will be taught by John Brazil and the beginning of October 2006, which will be taught by the City of Mountain View, SVBC, and himself.

Chairperson Wadler stated that due to a Santa Clara County Sheriff who wants to crack down on bicyclists, he researched City Ordinances and there is no ordinance that restricts less than two abreast riders so it is legal to ride two abreast on the streets.

10. ADJOURNMENT

On order of Chairperson Wadler, there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gilda M. Grozdanich, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors