



BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

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 6:05 p.m. by Chairperson Wadler, Auditorium, Building A, VTA, 3331 North First Street, San Jose, California.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Anna Brunzell
John Carpenter
Bruce Entin
Carl Hagenmaier
William Manry
Jerri-Ann Meyer, Alt. Ex-Officio
Thomas Muniz
David Simons
Jim Stallman
John Sullivan
Richard Swent, Vice Chairperson
Bart Thielges
Herman Wadler, Chairperson
Joe Walton

Members Absent

Norma Rome
Corrine Winter, Ex-Officio
Vacant
Vacant

Representative Cities

Town of Los Altos Hills
City of Mountain View
Town of Los Gatos
City of Los Altos
City of Monte Sereno
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition
City of Gilroy
City of Sunnyvale
City of Saratoga
City of Santa Clara
City of Palo Alto
City of San Jose
City of Campbell
City of Cupertino

Representative Cities

City of Morgan Hill
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition
City of Milpitas
County of Santa Clara

A quorum was present.

2. ORDERS OF THE DAY

Members Brunzell and Entin took their seats at 6:06 p.m.

Member Stallman requested that Agenda Item #7., Programmed Projects Quarterly Monitoring Report for July – September 2007 be moved from the Consent Agenda to the Regular Agenda.

M/S/C (Stallman/Walton) to accept the Orders of the Day.

3. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

There were no Public Presentations.

4. Committee Staff Report

Upon inquiry of Member Stallman, Chris Augenstein, Transportation Planning Manager and Staff Liaison, responded that there are no items from the County, thus, there are no “County items” under tonight’s agenda. Relative to the bylaws changes to allow the VTA BPAC to meet, adjourn, and reconvene as the County BPAC, Mr. Augenstein noted that staff is still working through the details.

Mr. Augenstein provided a brief summary of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Summit, noting that different scenarios were evaluated to determine which one can achieve the air quality goals. Mr. Augenstein noted that staff can provide the MTC presentation upon Member request.

Members Simons and Carpenter took their seats at 6:08 p.m.

Member Stallman requested updates regarding the bike element of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Mr. Augenstein responded that staff is gathering the project list and updating the Bike Master Plan. Staff anticipates completing the draft by mid-December 2007 for Committee review in the January/February 2008 timeframe. The target date for Board approval of the project list is March/April 2008.

Michelle DeRobertis, Senior Transportation Planner, provided a brief report noting the following: 1) The City of San Jose BPAC invited the airport staff at their November 2007 meeting to provide updates on the airport improvements. VTA staff intends to invite the airport staff to the VTA BPAC to provide the same update; 2) The I-880/Brokaw Highway Project will be forwarded to the BPAC after the survey is completed; 3) The Environmental Impact Report for the U.S. 101 Improvement Project Public Scoping Meeting will be held on November 15, 2007 in the City of Gilroy; and 4) Request to reconsider the design for the Tully Road Interchange from L-9 to L-7.

NOTE: M/S/C MEANS MOTION SECONDED AND CARRIED AND, UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Dan Collen, County of Santa Clara, reported that the Board of Supervisors appointed the Santa Clara County representative to the BPAC. The newly appointed member will attend the BPAC member after the VTA ratifies its appointment. Mr. Collen referred to Agenda Item #6., Minutes of October 10, 2007 and requested that the minutes be modified to note that he provided a report at the October 2007 BPAC meeting. His report included expressway pedestrian access safety concerns, pedestrian prohibition posting, and potential expressway pedestrian improvements funding source.

On order of Chairperson Wadler, there being no objection, the Committee Staff Report was received.

5. Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Wadler stated that Ex-Officio Member Winter would like to announce the following: 1) The Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC) general meeting will be held on November 8, 2007, 6:30 p.m. at Kapps' Bar and Grill in Mountain View, CA. The topic of discussion is improving the SVBC website to include a page for each city and county advocacy group. Volunteers per city are needed to post announcements and information in the improved website; and 2) The SVBC Christmas Party will be held on December 13, 2007 at the Palo Alto Train Station and all BPAC members are invited.

Chairperson Wadler noted that he will try to attend the November 2007 San Jose BPAC meeting as access to the Norman Y. Minetta airport is an important issue. He also reported that he will potentially be the Vice President for the Almaden Cycle Touring Club (ACTC) for 2008.

CONSENT AGENDA

6. Minutes of October 10, 2007

M/S/C (Walton/Simons) to approve the Minutes of October 10, 2007 with the modification noted by Dan Collen on Agenda Item #4., Committee Staff Report.

7. (Removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda.)

Receive the Programmed Projects Quarterly Monitoring Report for July-September 2007.

REGULAR AGENDA

7. Programmed Projects Quarterly Monitoring Report for July-September 2007

Member Stallman referred to Page 23 of 51, San Jose - Various Streets Rehabilitation, and expressed concern that the City of San Jose does not adhere to the optimum bike lane widths described in the Bicycle Technical Guidelines. He expressed concern about losing valuable space for bicyclists when roads are re-stripped.

Member Stallman referred to Page 39 of 51, Almaden Expressway Improvements, and stated that the comment “in preliminary design” may be inaccurate. He noted that in his knowledge, this project was already completed.

Mr. Collen responded that the project noted in Page 39 is a different project; and the project referred to by Member Stallman as completed is the project noted on Page 40, Almaden Expressway Bike/Pedestrian Improvements. He encouraged Members to inform the County of Santa Clara for any bike operational concerns along Almaden Expressway and the County staff will look into the concern.

On order of Chairperson Wadler, there being no objection, the Programmed Projects Quarterly Monitoring Report for July-September 2007 was received.

8. Presentation of the Caltrain Safety Enhancement Study

Mohamed Basma, Deputy Program Manager, introduced John Litzinger of HNTB. He noted that HNTB was hired to help VTA identify and prioritize safety improvements for Caltrain. Mr. Basma noted that the HNTB report is available to interested Members.

Mr. Litzinger provided a PowerPoint presentation entitled, “Consolidated Safety Study for Caltrain in Santa Clara County.” Mr. Litzinger reviewed the project overview and purpose, project alignment, study background, and the process used in the study. Mr. Litzinger briefly discussed the Safety Improvement Program, which include Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (PCJPB) Station Improvement Program, PCJPB Fencing Program, and the VTA At-Grade Crossing Safety Improvement Program. He also discussed the At-Grade Crossing Safety Improvement Program Elements, which include signage and pavement markings, roadway medians and gate system, concrete crossing panels, sightline improvements, pedestrian/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) sidewalks, gates and guardrails, fencing, advanced signal pre-emption, station improvements, and grade separations.

He provided explanation and visuals for the safety improvement program elements including the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (PCJPB) Standard grade crossing, pedestrian gate assembly, emergency swing gate, fencing, guardrails and tactile warning tile, safety path across tracks, signing and pavement markings, medians and crossing gates, extinguishable message sign, and Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) Compliant signs. He stated that the next step will be a development of a prioritization list of all the 38 crossings in Santa Clara County.

Upon inquiry of Member Walton, Mr. Basma responded that the project timeline for the whole program is approximately four to five years. Member Walton stated that the timeline should be shortened and the project should be expedited to prevent fatal accidents.

Member Thielges referred to safety at-gate controlled crossings and inquired how the conductor could cancel the sensor when necessary. Mr. Litzinger stated that it is an operational issue that staff could forward to Caltrain.

Member Stallman commented that the list provided is inconsequential. He noted that there should be a warrant showing that busy crossings should be grade separated. Mr. Basma responded that staff is looking for funding sources for grade separation at crossings. However, the crossing projects here in Santa Clara County are way down in the priority list for state funding.

Member Stallman inquired if the current double tracking project at South County includes grade separation or pedestrian crossing. He noted the importance of including these elements as the project is initially constructed. Mr. Basma responded that the current scope of the project does not include grade separated crossing for pedestrians or vehicles. However, it includes improvement of the crossing for pedestrian, bicycles, and vehicles such as gates, wider sidewalks, etc.

Member Stallman inquired about VTA's effort in ensuring that all train crossings in Santa Clara County are up to standard. Mr. Basma noted that the scope of the study only focuses on Caltrain and not the other train operations in the County.

Member Simons referred to the Mathilda Caltrain station, the existing pedestrian egress problems, and the upcoming improvements/development. He inquired if there is an opportunity for agencies such VTA and Caltrain to coordinate and work together to provide solutions to issues (i.e. extend sidewalks) during the development to save some money and time. Mr. Litzinger responded that there was an emergency pedestrian project that will guide people to cross safely.

Member Hagenmaier asked if the full report quantifies the benefits of this project and further asked how it will lessen the fatal accidents at the crossings. Mr. Litzinger responded that the implementation of the project would mean increased safety. However, not all could be avoided as some of the accidents that happened in the past were intentional suicides.

Ex-Officio Meyer inquired if there is an opportunity to provide input into the prioritization or implementation of the projects. Mr. Basma responded that staff could send to interested Members the draft implementation plan when it is completed.

Member Muniz stated that there are numerous developments in the City of Gilroy that could increase traffic and pedestrian volume. He stressed the need for improving the rail road crossings as streets are improved to accommodate the increased volume. Mr. Litzinger stated that this study identifies and prioritizes the crossings that need to be improved. He added that among the 38 crossings in the County, ten are already programmed. Mr. Basma added that the Caltrain double tracking project, which is currently in preliminary engineering, is also examining each of the crossings at the South County.

On order of Chairperson Wadler, there being no objection, the Presentation of the Caltrain Safety Enhancement Study was received.

The Agenda was taken out of order.

10. Election Process for Advisory Committee Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Stephen Flynn, Senior Management Analyst, provided a brief background noting that the election of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson involves a three step process: appointment of a nominating committee, nominating committee report, and elections.

M/S/C (Entin/Brunzell) to appoint Members Simons, Sullivan and Walton as the nominating subcommittee to identify Committee members interested in serving as the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson for 2008.

9. 2007 Bicycle Technical Guidelines (BTG) Update

Ms. DeRobertis asked Members to review the acknowledgement page to ensure that their names are spelled correctly. She added that a page of acronyms will be added to the BTG.

Member Brunzell noted that the spelling of her name needs correction.

Ms. DeRobertis noted that the following were added: Appendix E – Trail Design Checklist, Figure 9-1 - Right-of-Way Width Allocation for Typical Bike Path for moderate pedestrian volumes; Appendix A – Bicycle Transportation Policies and Statutes; and various visuals.

Member Walton congratulated staff for a job well done.

Member Thielges commented that he hopes to see Section 5.3 – Freeway Interchanges implemented as it is the most thorough study he has ever seen. He referenced Page 29, Warning Signs, and commented that the “share the road” sign is ambiguous and sometimes backfires for the bicyclist. He asked why a clearer sign that states, “Cyclists have full use of the lane” cannot be used in Santa Clara County. Ms. DeRobertis noted that it was an oversight, and it will be added on the BTG.

Member Carpenter commented on the following: 1) Noted correction on the Photo on Page 23, noting that it should be labeled as the “bad” grate; 2) Suggested that the speed limit for roads with speed bumps be clearly stated; 3) Commented on the safety issues related to using metal as material for bike racks; and 4) Referred to Appendix D – Bicycle Signal Head and expressed concern about the volume criteria. He noted that there will be no increased volume unless the signal heads are installed.

Vice Chairperson Swent referred to Pages 72-73 – Bikeways on Major Roads and noted that the bullet “For roadways with no parking and no gutter, centerline of symbol...” should be placed under VTA Best Practice.

Member Stallman referred to Page 23 and noted that the diagonal grate is preferred.

M/S (Stallman/Walton) to review and recommend that the VTA Board adopt the updated 2007 Bicycle Technical Guidelines with the exclusion of Appendix A, Section 1 – California Vehicle Code (CVC) be removed.

Member Stallman noted that the CVC text should be removed because it often changes.

Ms. DeRobertis commented that the BTG is a living document and any change to the CVC will initiate an update to the BTG.

Mr. Augenstein suggested leaving in the CVC sections. He noted that the BTG will be in a binder format and the BTG will note when the change occurred.

Member Sullivan concurred with Mr. Augenstein. He added that there are sections within the BTG that refers to parts of the CVC as it exist today.

Member Simon concurred that the CVC sections should be retained as part of the document. However, he suggested that there should be a “change” page either in front or back of the document that serve as an update list, which will clearly note which pages were newly inserted and which sections were updated. He provided a substitute motion that will include the text of the CVC sections and the change page.

Member Thielges suggested including in the final BTG document the recommended changes that the Committee has made at this meeting.

Member Stallman stated that he will agree only if the CVC section headings are retained and the text are excluded.

Member Hagenmaier commented that for the online version of the BTG, it may not make sense to incorporate the CVC text. He recommended that the online version only include the hyperlinks of the CVC sections.

M/S/C (Simons/Swent) on a vote of 12 ayes, 1 no, and 0 on the substitute motion to include the text of the CVC sections and include a “change” page in the document. Member Stallman opposed.

M/S/F (Stallman/Walton) on a vote of 8 ayes, 1 no, and 4 abstentions to review and recommend that the VTA Board adopt the updated 2007 BTG and that the online version replace the CVC text with hyperlinks. Members Brunzell, Carpenter, Entin, and Sullivan abstained. Member Stallman opposed.

NOTE: M/S MEANS MOTION SECONDED; M/S/F MEANS MOTION SECONDED AND FAILED.

M/S/C (Hagenmaier/Swent) 12 ayes, 1 no, and 0 abstention to review and recommend that the VTA Board adopt the updated 2007 BTG as presented, with the modifications noted at tonight's meeting, and include the "change" page. Member Stallman opposed.

OTHERS

11. BPAC Work Plan

Mr. Flynn noted that staff is working to incorporate the County BPAC.

Ms. DeRobertis briefly reviewed the items for future consideration, highlighting that she already sent an e-mail invitation to the San Jose Airport staff.

Mr. Collen suggested adding in the future items the review of the South County Circulation Study.

Upon inquiry of Member Stallman, Mr. Augenstein responded that the project list for the RTP will be forwarded to BPAC in the January/February 2008 timeframe.

Members Stallman and Simons requested that staff provide an explanation of the TIA process and that VTA staff contact City of Sunnyvale staff to provide a background on the Moffet Towers and Moffet Field developments and its impacts to bicyclist and pedestrians.

On order of Chairperson Wadler, there being no objection, the BPAC Work Plan was reviewed.

12. Announcements

Member Muniz announced that the City of Gilroy BPAC will hold its meeting on November 27, 2007.

Member Sullivan distributed the City of Santa Clara bicycle map to the Committee.

Member Thielges urged the BPAC Members to attend the San Jose BPAC meeting on Monday.

Member Walton announced that the VTA Board approved additional funds for the Mary Avenue Bridge project. Construction bids will be open on November 13, 2007 and completion is expected to be finished by 2009.

Member Stallman reported that the Blue Hills school road crossing is still closed. He also reported that Saratoga will be losing some of its bus service by next year but will have a new line that goes to the Winchester Light Rail station.

Member Entin inquired if VTA has data on bicycle traffic fines. He added that the Town of Los Gatos is willing to reduce the fines but the Town would like to examine cities' process. He referred to the ACTC complaint he reported the previous month and stated that the Camino del Cerro bridge repair will be completed Monday.

Ms. DeRobertis noted that staff has information on ordinances from Morgan Hill and Palo Alto and it will be forwarded to the Members.

Member Carpenter announced that the City of Mountain View BPAC will take action on the Bicycle Transportation Plan in December 2007.

Vice Chairperson Swent announced that the Amgen Tour of California Local Organizing Committee is planning an event scheduled for February 17, 2007. Vice Chairperson Swent noted that numerous volunteers are needed to support the approximately 50,000 expected attendees. He encouraged the Members to visit www.amgentourofcalifornia.com to visit the link for volunteers. He noted that the SVBC will have several bike parking areas at the event. Vice Chairperson Swent referred to the motorist education program at Marin City and noted that VTA should provide motorist education as well.

Ex-Officio Member Meyers noted that events for the SVBC could be found by visiting www.svbcbikes.org. She reminded the Members about meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 9, 2007 at Kapps Pizza in Mountain View and the Winter Party scheduled for December 13, 2007 at the Palo Alto Train Station. She encouraged all Members to participate.

Chairperson Wadler announced that the City of Campbell had a successful Oktoberfest last month. Chairperson Wadler noted that if he becomes the Vice President of the ACTC, he would like to see more bike safety and awareness. He urged members to inform him if they know of anyone who would like to be a guest speaker at the ACTC.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

On order of Chairperson Wadler, there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine F. Baltao, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors