



SILICON VALLEY RAPID TRANSIT CORRIDOR BART EXTENSION TO MILPITAS, SAN JOSE AND SANTA CLARA POLICY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, April 25, 2007

MINUTES

1. The Regular Meeting of the Silicon Valley Rapid Transit Corridor BART Extension to Milpitas, San Jose, and Santa Clara Policy Advisory Board (PAB) was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Vice Chairperson Blalock at the City Council Chambers, Milpitas City Hall, 455 East Calaveras Boulevard, Milpitas, California.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Tom Blalock, Vice Chairperson
Bob Franklin
Joe Kornder
Sam Liccardo
Bob Livengood
Gail Murray
Anu Natarajan
Madison P. Nguyen
Ken Yeager, Chairperson

Members Absent

Scott Haggerty

Alternates Present

None

Alternates Absent

James Fang
Patricia Mahan
Bob Wasserman

*Alternates do not serve unless participating as a Member.

A quorum was present.

2. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Michael T. Burns, VTA General Manager, expressed his appreciation and thanks to Thomas Margro, BART General Manager, for his support of the Silicon Valley Rapid Transit Corridor BART Extension (SVRT) project and wished him well in his retirement.

3. Minutes of August 23, 2006 and November 29, 2006

M/S/C (Murray/Natarajan) to approve the Minutes of August 23, 2006 and November 29, 2006. Member Kornder abstained.

4. Elect Chairperson for Calendar Year 2007

Vice Chairperson Blalock opened the nominations from the floor for the position of Chairperson of the Silicon Valley Rapid Transit Corridor PAB for the calendar year 2007.

M/S/C (Blalock/Natarajan) to close the nominations and elect Ken Yeager as the Chairperson for calendar year 2007 to complete the election process.

Vice Chairperson Blalock relinquished his seat as Chairperson and Chairperson Yeager presided for the remainder of the meeting.

5. Planning Progress Report

Marian Lee-Skowronek, Principal Transportation Planner, provided a report regarding the Planning Progress Report-April 2007. Ms. Lee-Skowronek reported that in January 2006 the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) published Guidance on New Starts Policies and Procedures that included proposed administrative changes to the program. Ms. Lee-Skowronek noted that the primary purpose of the changes would result in the reduction of uncertainties related to the project cost and design, funding, and the travel forecast.

Ms. Lee-Skowronek commented that VTA met with FTA in January 2007 and achieved a major milestone with the approval of VTA's travel forecasting model. That model can now be used for entry into the FTA New Starts program to compete for Federal funding and for VTA's Federal Environmental document. The project staff is currently running the approved model with plans to visit FTA in mid May to present the updated model. Ms. Lee-Skowronek commented that during the next several months the VTA modeling team will shift its focus based on FTA guidance to begin running sensitivity analysis on the assumptions in the model.

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

Ms. Lee-Skowronek reported that the Economic Impacts Analysis is a new criterion introduced into the New Starts program. Ms. Lee-Skowronek commented that a meeting with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will be conducted in May to discuss and review the inputs and methodologies in the Regional Economic Models, Inc. (REMI) model. The results of that meeting will be presented to the VTA Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) this summer. Ms. Lee-Skowronek commented that the next phases of work will include the evaluation of the economic impacts that result from the increased mobility, accessibility, and examination of the fiscal impact to local governments.

Ms. Lee-Skowronek noted that with regards to Station Area Planning, VTA and city partners have focused on developing long-term land uses for mixed uses of commercial and residential development. VTA staff is assessing the practicality of supporting the 2030 parking demands while identifying policy strategies to reduce the park and ride demands and further develop parking strategies in phases that are integrated with Transit Oriented Development (TOD). Ms. Lee-Skowronek stated that the conceptual planning exercise is helping to fine tune the location of transit facilities such as parking and bus transit centers in a manner that will maximize TOD.

Ms. Lee-Skowronek provided an update on the Warm Springs Extension (WSX). She commented that with the Record of Decision (ROD) on the Federal Environmental document, the WSX project team has regrouped and is moving forward. The focus is to solidify the project's funding plan and implementation strategies that best use available funding and contain project costs. Action has been taken at the WSX Policy Advisory Committee to expedite construction of the tunnel portion of the project to minimize construction and cost escalation. The extension is scheduled for completion in 2013.

Michael T. Burns, VTA General Manager, advised the PAB that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has proposed a plan to implement the State Infrastructure Bond funding and has identified a series of regional projects and programs that would receive funding. Mr. Burns commented that MTC has not designated funds in the proposal for the Warm Springs Extension project. Mr. Burns noted that VTA will submit formal comments to MTC requesting a modification of the proposal to include funding for the WSX.

Member Natarjan commented that the City of Fremont has commenced construction on the grade separation project at Washington Boulevard.

Thomas Margro, BART General Manager, commented that BART will also submit recommendations to MTC regarding the Warm Springs Extension project at the MTC May meeting. Mr. Margro expressed concern with the MTC proposed project list and fund allocations

On order of Chairperson Yeager, there being no objection, the Committee received the Planning Progress Report – April 2007.

6. BART Core Improvement Study-April 2007

Marian Lee-Skowronek, Principal Transportation Planner, provided a report regarding the BART Core Improvement Study-April 2007. Ms. Lee-Skowronek reported that in 2001, BART and VTA entered into an agreement to identify BART Core System Improvements to support the SVRT project. She commented that two studies were completed: BART Core Systems Impact and the Systems Integration Modification Analysis.

Ms. Lee-Skowronek commented that improvements included adding additional stairs in stations and upgrading central control and adding parking spaces at existing stations. With the completion of the analysis the data indicated that the extension would have a daily ridership of 83,600. However, the ridership estimate has been updated and it is now 25 percent higher. The change resulted from FTA guidance that increased the projection year from 2025 to 2030 and incorporated the use of the 2003 ABAG “smart growth” projections that assume aggressive growth in the vicinity of future transit stations and urban areas. In lieu of the higher ridership projections, a need may exist for additional improvements and new operational strategies to support the project.

Ms. Lee-Skowronek reported that the Core Improvement Study must be updated. The proposed cost of the study is \$3.7 million. VTA’s contribution is \$3.2 million and BART’s contribution is \$500,000. With a May 2007 start date completion of the Study is proposed for the end of 2008. VTA staff recommends approval from the PAB to move forward with the Study.

M/S/C (Blalock/Nguyen) to approve updates to the BART Core Improvement Study.

7. State Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Federal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Update

Tom Fitzwater, Environmental Resources Planning Manager, provided a report highlighting: 1) Public review of the Draft SEIR from January 19 through March 16, 2007 with 4 public hearings held in the cities of Milpitas, San Jose and Santa Clara; 2) Review of comments and concerns received from the public; 3) VTA staff response to public comments; 4) Circulation of Final SEIR-May 15, 2007; and 4) Final SEIR presented to Board of Directors-June 7, 2007.

Mr. Fitzwater referenced a letter from the HP Pavilion dated April 24, 2007 expressing concerns related to the parking around the HP Pavilion during construction and operation of the BART-Diridon-Arena Station. Mr. Fitzwater commented that correspondence has also been received from the San Jose Arena Authority and the Redevelopment Agency of the City of San Jose who expressed concerns regarding parking availability during construction and during operation of SVRT.

Mr. Fitzwater indicated VTA has scheduled meetings with the HP Pavilion to discuss concerns.

On order of Chairperson Yeager, there being no objection, the Committee received the State Supplemental EIR and Federal EIS Update.

8. SEIR Design Options

Tom Fitzwater, Environmental Resources Planning Manager, provided a report highlighting the Issue Summary Reports regarding Alignment, Facility and Station Design options that are addressed in the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR). The Summary Reports provide a description, criteria, and key issues for each option.

Member Liccardo took his seat at 3:24 p.m.

Mr. Fitzwater commented that the Design Options include: 1) Mission Boulevard/East Warren Avenue Alignment; 2) Dixon Landing Road Alignment; 3) Curtis Avenue to Trade Zone Boulevard Alignment; 3) Electrical and Communication Facilities Near Mabury Road; 4) Downtown San José Station; 5) Diridon/Arena Station and Alignment-Parking; 6) Diridon/Arena Station and Alignment-Transit Center; and 7) Santa Clara Station.

Member Livengood expressed concern with the Design Option 2: Dixon Landing Road Alignment Option. Member Livengood commented that the construction impact and design option will impede access to the north side of the shopping center on Dixon Landing Road. Member Livengood commented that the City of Milpitas cannot approve this at-grade option without more information and discussion regarding the impacts to neighborhoods and businesses in the area. Jack Collins, Chief Construction Officer, commented that a construction-staging plan would be developed and reviewed by the City of Milpitas to address impacts to the businesses and neighborhoods.

Mark Robinson, Deputy Director Construction, presented an overview of Design Option # 5: Downtown San José Station Entrance. Mr. Robinson stated that meetings are scheduled between VTA and the City of San José to discuss a recommended design option for the site.

Mr. Fitzwater commented that the Diridon/Arena Station and Alignment-Parking design options include: 1) Parking Structure Option (in FEIR) – This option would include a four level parking structure located west of the HP Pavilion with no surface parking; 2) No Parking Option – this option would provide no parking structure or surface lots at the Diridon/Arena Station.

Mr. Fitzwater commented that staff recommends the No Parking Option because it supports: 1) The City of San José staff's long-term planning efforts to extend downtown into the Diridon/Arena area; 2) BART's practice of not providing parking at downtown stations; and 3) Reduces project costs by \$40 million by not constructing a garage.

Member Nguyen expressed concern with the No Parking Option. Member Nguyen commented that convenient parking is necessary to encourage residents to use public transit.

Member Liccardo asked if alternative parking options have been considered for the Diridon/Arena Station area. Member Liccardo stated that he cannot support the No Parking Option.

Scott Knies, Executive Director San Jose Downtown Association, commented that the Association supports the SVRTC-Extension project but expressed concern that the proposed location of the crossover box in Downtown San Jose is not included in the SEIR.

Hans Larsen, City of San José, Deputy Director Department of Transportation, commented that the No Parking Option is a concern to the City of San José. Mr. Larsen stated that on Tuesday, May 22, 2007 the San José City Council will meet to discuss the No Parking Option issue and the Downtown San José Station-Design Options Issue Paper # 5.

Dennis Korabiak, San José Redevelopment Agency, commented that the Agency supports the SVRTC-BART Extension project. Mr. Korabiak expressed concern with the No Parking Option and suggested consideration of alternative parking options for the Downtown area.

M/S/C (Liccardo/Blalock) to approve SEIR Design Options for Mission Boulevard/East Warren Avenue Alignment, Curtis Avenue to Trade Zone Boulevard Alignment, Electrical and Communication Facilities near Mabury Road, Downtown San José Station, Diridon/Arena Station and Alignment-Transit Center, and the Santa Clara Station with the recommendation that staff from VTA and the cities of Milpitas and San José meet to discuss alternatives to Design Option #2: Dixon Landing Road Alignment, and Design Option #6: Diridon/Arena Station and Alignment-Parking.

9. Engineering Progress Report

Jack Collins, Chief Construction Officer, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Engineering Program Report highlighting: 1) Completion of Preliminary Engineering December 2006-under budget; 2) California Transportation Commission (CTC) approved \$364 million of State Traffic Congestion Relief Program (TCRP) funds for the SVRT Preliminary Engineering and 65 percent of design development; 3) VTA Board of Directors approved advancing engineering services to 65 percent design development and amended design consultants contracts; 4) 65 percent Engineering Phase started in January through March 2007 and is 7.4 percent complete; 5) Re-organized Project into geographic areas; 6) Architectural design themes for all stations presented to associated cities and stakeholders; and 7) Tunnel cross passage spacing established and Request for Variance (ROV) issued to BART for approval.

Mr. Collins commented that to facilitate management and reporting during the 65 percent engineering phase, the project has been organized into three geographic areas plus Project Wide Systems that include: 1) Northern Area; 2) Central Area; and 3) Western Area.

Mr. Collins commented that the approved Budget for the project is \$408.2 million with 78 percent incurred to date. Mr. Collins provided the Budget Summary highlighting: 1) Conceptual Engineering/EIR - 96 percent incurred; 2) Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR)-of-Way - 100 percent incurred; 3) UPRR Relocation-0 percent incurred; 4) Preliminary Engineering 100 percent incurred; and 5) 65 percent Engineering approved through June 2007- 11 percent incurred.

Mr. Collins thanked Mr. Margro for his insight and assistance during negotiations and creation of the Comprehensive Agreement between VTA and BART.

On order of Chairperson Yeager, there being no objection, the Committee received the Engineering Progress Report.

10. PAB Work Plan

On order of Chairperson Yeager, there being no objections, the Committee reviewed the PAB Work Plan.

11. Announcements

Chairperson Yeager thanked Mr. Margro for his support and hard work with the SVRTC-BART Extension project and wished him well in all his future endeavors.

12. ADJOURNMENT

On order of Chairperson Yeager, there being no objections, the meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline F. Golzio, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors