

WCCTAC
West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes, 29 October 2010

Members Present: Janet Abelson (El Cerrito); Ed Balico (Hercules); Tom Butt (Richmond); Genoveva Calloway (San Pablo); Tom Hansen (WestCAT); Jeff Ritterman (Richmond); Roy Swearingen (Pinole), Vice-Chair; Joe Wallace (AC Transit). Absent: John Gioia (Contra Costa County); Joel Keller (BART); Maria Viramontes (Richmond), Chair.

Staff Present: Christina Atienza, Valerie Jenkins, Joanna Pallock, John Rudolph, Linda Young; Michael Rodriquez, Legal Counsel; Hisham Noeimi, CCTA.

Location: San Pablo Council Chambers, 13831 San Pablo Avenue, San Pablo, CA 94806

1. **Call to Order and Self-Introductions.** *Chair Roy Swearingen* called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m.
2. **Public Comment.** None.

CONSENT CALENDAR

ACTION: *Director Abelson* moved to approve all items on the Consent Calendar; seconded by *Director Balico*; and passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION: *Chair Swearingen* suggested that in the future, information-only items might be placed elsewhere on the agenda than under the Consent Calendar.

3. **Minutes and Summary of Sept. 24, 2010 Board Meeting**
4. **Summary of Oct. 14, 2010 TAC Meeting**
5. **Staff Report for Oct. 2010**
6. **2011 Board and TAC Meeting Schedule.**
7. **Update on Paratransit needs Assessment.**
8. **Student Bus Pass Program: (a) Allocation Request for FY 2010-11 Measure J Program 21b Funds; (b) Update on Transition to Clipper.**
9. **Approval of WestCAT's FY 10-11 Claim for Additional Bus Service Enhancements (Program 19b) Funds.**
10. **SB 375 Implementation Update.**

DISCUSSION ITEMS

11. Introduction to Complete Streets.

ACTION: The Board received the presentation, and suggested follow-up presentations on successful projects, and directed staff to monitor legislation requiring complete streets policies in the circulation element of general plan updates.

DISCUSSION: *Mr. Dave Campbell*, East Bay Bicycle Coalition, initiated a dialogue with the Board to focus attention on elements of streetscape design that are inviting. *Director Wallace*, *Director Abelson*, *Director Calloway* provided responses. *Mr. Campbell* suggested that the Board's answers indicate concepts that are important to complete streets, namely, an abundance of destinations, and easy walkability and bikeability.

Director Butt stated that he was appalled at the fact that the plan for a portion of Macdonald Ave did not include bicycle routes. *Director Butt* said a complete streets policy is supposed to require that when a street is rebuilt or repaved, it should be done as a complete street, to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists safely.

Mr. Campbell described design elements on 23rd Street, including 14' travel lanes, parking lanes, wider sidewalks, and new trees and lighting. *Director Butt* inquired why there are no bicycle lanes on 23rd Street, and asked why the travel lanes are necessarily 14' wide. *Mr. Campbell* said that planners need to sacrifice space somewhere – either travel lane width, sidewalk width, parking lanes, medians, two way left turn lanes, and/or bike lanes. A priority for the 23rd Street Plan was preserving sidewalk space and expanding sidewalks where feasible.

Mr. Alan Wolken, Richmond RDA, stated that his agency had worked for a long time with planners, the bicycle community, and county health services staff to determine an appropriate design for 23rd Street. An important goal in their efforts was to calm traffic, while allowing space for expanded sidewalks, and facilitating transit, emergency vehicle, and left-turn movements, and keeping parking which is important to the merchants.

Director Hansen said that the extra width is for a Class III bike lane, where the bike is side-by-side with the vehicle. A Class II lane requires a dedicated 5' bike lane. *Ms. Puja Sarna*, AC Transit, stated that buses are 10.5' wide including mirrors, and that a minimum lane width is 11' to allow a three-inch buffer on either side of the bus. *Director Wallace* noted that on San Pablo Ave in Albany and Berkeley, bicyclists cause problems for bus drivers, who need to change lanes to pass the bicyclists.

Ms. Aienza stated that West County is built out, and most street improvement projects are retrofit. Follow-up presentations may address successful examples in other locations that have done retrofits. Another item for follow-up is for staff to monitor the legislation that requires jurisdictions to incorporate complete streets every time they change the circulation element in their general plan update.

Mr. Campbell described the California Complete Streets Act of 2008, which requires complete streets to be considered in general plan updates; MTC's complete streets checklist that staff fill out when they apply for funding from MTC for street improvements; and changes in federal policy anticipated in the next transportation bill. *Mr. Campbell* noted that West County could become a national leader by creating a Working Group to develop a regional complete streets implementation plan.

Director Abelson said WCCTAC as an agency does not have the authority to implement street-level improvements. *Director Abelson* said the role that WCCTAC could play is educational.

Director Wallace stated that in his experience as a pedestrian, it's unfortunate that the concept of a walkable community is not being emphasized. Communities are falling into ill health in part because they're not walkable. It's comfortable to walk on Macdonald Ave, and the absence of cyclists is a benefit. Too often when pedestrians share their space with bicyclists and motor scooters, pedestrians are made to feel that they should get out of the way.

Director Butt said that he agreed with *Director Abelson*, and that WCCTAC does have a leadership role, perhaps educational, and that the message of complete streets is not reaching all departments in the cities of West County. *Director Butt* stated that throughout the country the most difficult obstacles to complete streets implementation are fire departments and old-school traffic engineers.

Director Balico stated his agreement with what *Director Butt* said about fire departments: for example, in Hercules's Bayside Project, the city had to make a number of compromises with the fire department in designing a walkable community. The fire department requires extra-wide street space to turn their vehicles, and additional fire hydrants that limit the developable right of way.

Director Balico noted that in West County, San Pablo Ave may be a project that WCCTAC can do together, in terms of connecting and coordinating modes of travel. *Director Balico* further observed that the health impacts of travel should be included in planning, especially the Safe Routes To School effort. The big picture of how a complete street should be designed must include tools for healthy communities and safe travel.

Director Abelson stated that details of making a project work for pedestrians are often overlooked, including space for wheelchair users to pass each other, and correct installation of curb ramps and ped crossing buttons, among other matters.

Ms. Nancy Baer, Contra Costa Health Services, stated that there is a Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Workshop planned for West Contra Costa on March 17, 2011. Contra Costa Health Services, Richmond Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee along with City of Richmond staff, are initiating the planning, but it is intended for all of West Contra Costa County, and WCCTAC sponsorship would be appreciated.

Chair Swearingen thanked Mr. Campbell for his presentation.

2. Richmond's Draft Bicycle Master Plan.

ACTION: The Board received the presentation.

DISCUSSION: *Mr. Kieron Slaughter*, Richmond Planning Department, presented the Draft Richmond Bicycle Master Plan, in accord with materials in the agenda packet and handouts. *Mr. Slaughter* stated that comments on the Draft will be received until November 19, 2010. Next steps include presentations to the Planning Commission for comment and to the City Council for adoption. *Mr. Slaughter* provided an overview of the map of the bike network, and noted its availability for download on Richmond's Planning Department web site. *Mr. Slaughter* reviewed proposed "road diets," roundabouts, and grade crossings.

On Macdonald Ave, *Mr. Slaughter* described an innovative potential treatment, namely a “super green sharrow lane,” i.e., a continuous green lane-wide path of paint on one of two travel lanes, indicating the priority for bicyclists while allowing use by motor vehicles.

Chair Swearingen noted the lack of time, and asked *Director Calloway*, who had questions about lighting on the Rumrill Bridge and the timing of street repairs on Costa Ave, to follow up with staff offline.

Director Butt expressed appreciation for *Mr. Slaughter’s* presentation, and stated that cities are not restriping streets while they are being repaved: for instance, Cutting Blvd, with all its width, might have been restriped with bike lanes. *Mr. Slaughter* said he understood and shared *Director Butt’s* frustration. *Mr. Slaughter* said that when he approached Richmond’s Engineering Department to show them that the 1984 General Plan called for Class II bike lanes, Engineering said it wasn’t part of their scope for Cutting Blvd improvements at this time, because departments are not coordinated in their planning and funding. *Mr. Slaughter* stated that greater communication among city departments is necessary for these plans to achieve implementation, and *Director Butt* agreed.

Chair Swearingen thanked *Mr. Slaughter* for his presentation.

13. Report on Transportation Demand Management Program.

ACTION: The Board received the presentation.

DISCUSSION: *Ms. Linda Young*, WCCTAC/511 Contra Costa, presented an overview of the TDM Program in Contra Costa, and provided information to the Board in accord with materials in the agenda packet and handouts. *Ms. Young* stated that TDM is an educational process in that the program attempts to modify travel behavior, and that such modifications are most effective when implemented through the workplace. *Ms. Young* described employer services, and outlined the Countywide Incentives Programs. *Ms. Young* also demonstrated the proposed new logo for 511 Contra Costa.

Director Wallace inquired as to the accuracy of some transit information on the 511 Contra Costa web site. *Director Abelson* noted that sometimes circuitous routes are actually faster.

Ms. Aienza suggested that TDM seems to get short shrift in transportation planning, and that follow-up or a future retreat may include the Board’s giving direction on how to elevate TDM. For a long time the funding has been through TFCA and recently through Measure J, but maybe the Sustainable Communities Strategy or the Priority Development Areas will be a mechanism on increasing the prominence of TDM.

Chair Swearingen thanked *Ms. Young* for the presentation and information.

14. Correspondence/Other Information

a. Incoming

- From CCTA: Items Approved by the Authority on Sept. 22, 2010

- From CCTA: Item Approved by the Authority on Oct. 20, 2010

b. Outgoing

- To CCTA: WCCTAC's Conditional Approval of I-80 CSMP
- To AC Transit: Comments on Draft State and Federal Legislative Advocacy Programs

c. Workshops/Conferences/Events

- Oct. 27-29, Pod car City Conference, San Jose City Hall
- Oct. 30, Town Hall Meeting with Senator Mark DeSaulnier, El Cerrito City Hall
- Nov. 4, Contra Costa Mayors Conference, Featured: Lisa Vorderbrueggen, CC Times, Hercules Community Center
- Nov. 4, Transit Sustainability Forum, MTC/ABAG Offices in Oakland
- Nov. 15-16, ITS California Annual Meeting, Berkeley Marina

15. WCCTAC Board and Staff Comments

a. Board Member Comments, Conference/Meeting Reports (AB 1234 Requirement), and Announcements –

- Chair Swearingen* asked the Board to review Item #14.b, WCCTAC's letter to CCTA concerning the I-80 CSMP, to make sure the sentiments expressed matched with the motion from the last meeting.
- Director Wallace* indicated that construction at the Richmond BART Station had made the station area dangerous for pedestrians and especially dangerous for wheelchair users, and asked that this particular concern be forwarded to BART soon.
- Director Abelson* said it would be useful to discuss with BART the impacts of its seismic retrofit project on local facilities including trails.
- Chair Swearingen* said there are other questions the Board may wish to ask of BART, and regretted that BART was absent from today's meeting. Ms. Atienza noted that WCCTAC's BART representative was attending the groundbreaking ceremony for the eBART facility.

b. Legal Counsel Comments and Announcements – none.

c. Executive Director Comments and Announcements – *Ms. Atienza* stated that she had recently made a presentation on the I-80 ICM Project to the West County Mayors' Conference, and that she had had an opportunity to meet *Mr. Art Dao*, the new Executive Director of the new Alameda County Transportation Commission. *Mr. Dao* expressed keen interest in the I-80 project.

16. Other Business

17. Adjourn. The Board is in recess in November. Next meeting is Friday, December 10, 2010 at 8:00 a.m.