

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
AND
SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY EMERGENCIES

Minutes

Thursday,
December 7, 2006
9:00 a.m.

City of Watsonville Council Chambers
215 Union Street
Watsonville CA

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Jan Beautz
Dene Bustichi (Alt.)
Gustavo Gonzalez (Alt.)
Randy Johnson
Dennis Norton
Ellen Pirie
Rich Krumholz (ex-officio)

Emily Reilly
Antonio Rivas
Andy Schiffrin (Alt.)
Dale Skillicorn (Alt.)
Mark Stone
Marcela Tavantzis

Staff Present: George Dondero
Luis Mendez
Yesenia Parra
Kim Shultz
Gini Pineda

Karena Pushnik
Tegan Speiser
Cory Caletti
Rachel Moriconi

2. Oral Communications - None

3. Additions or Deletions to Consent and Regular Agendas

Executive Director George Dondero said that there were add-on pages for Items 21 and 24 and replacement pages for Item 25.

CONSENT AGENDA (Schiffrin/Reilly)

4. Approved Draft Minutes of the November 2, 2006 Regular SCCRTC Meeting

5. Approved Draft Minutes of the November 16, 2006 Transportation Policy Workshop Meeting

POLICY

No consent items

PROJECTS and PLANNING

6. Accepted Status Report on Highway 1 Projects
7. Accepted Transportation Demand Management Analysis Status Report

COMMISSION BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

No consent items

ADMINISTRATION

No consent items

COMMITTEE MINUTES

8. Accepted Draft Minutes of the October 12, 2006 Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee Meeting
9. Accepted Final Minutes of the October 16, 2006 Bicycle Committee Meeting
10. Accepted Draft Minutes of the November 16, 2006 Interagency Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

INFORMATION/OTHER

11. Accepted Monthly Meeting Schedule
12. Accepted SCCRTC Staff Comment Letters on Draft Environmental Documents and Plans Prepared by Other Agencies
 - a. Letter to UC Santa Cruz Regarding Heller Drive Bike Lanes Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
13. Accepted Correspondence Log
14. Accept Letters from SCCRTC Committees and Staff to Other Agencies
 - a. Letter from the Bicycle Committee to the County Public Works Department Regarding Restriping of Bike Lane on Portola Drive
 - b. Letter from the Bicycle Committee Regarding the UC Santa Cruz Draft Bicycle Plan
15. Accepted Miscellaneous Written Comments from the Public on SCCRTC Projects and Transportation Issues

16. Accepted Handouts from Staff and Commissioners at Previous Regional Transportation Commission Meetings
17. Accepted Information Items
 - a. Local Transportation Sales Tax Measures - November 2006 Election Results
 - b. December 14, 2006 Rail Symposium Announcement from Friends of the Rail Trail
 - c. Community Traffic Safety Coalition FY05-06 Annual Report
 - d. Transportation Agency for Monterey County Meeting of September 27, 2006 - Excerpt of Minutes Regarding Rail Workshop

SERVING AS THE SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY EMERGENCIES (SAFE)

18. Accepted Information on the 2007 Freeway Service Patrol Procurement Process and Variable Tow Vehicle Fuel Cost

REGULAR AGENDA

19. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Pirie presented awards to outgoing Commissioners Norton, Keogh and Wormhoudt, commending them for their service and dedication. Commissioner Norton thanked the Commission, saying that he was glad to have served for eight years and that while there have been many accomplishments during this time, he hopes that the future will bring advancements to transportation in the rail corridor between Santa Cruz and Watsonville.

Commissioner Beautz arrived.

Commission Alternate Schiffirin and Commission Alternate Bustichi accepted awards on behalf of Commissioners Wormhoudt and Keogh respectively.

Commissioner Stone reported on the CalCOG delegates meeting held in late November. Mr. Stone said that the blueprint seminar showed exciting potential by coordinating water use, waste management and land use planning with transportation planning, but that there were also concerns, including the possibility of streamlining the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and making decisions regarding land use at the state level rather than at the local level. He said it was clear, however, that the state will be looking at blueprint planning for allocating funding in the future.

Commissioner Johnson arrived.

20. Director's Report - Oral Report

Executive Director George Dondero introduced Yesenia Parra, the Commission's new Administrative Services Officer.

Mr. Dondero said he recently attended the Focus on the Future Conference and would address the issues discussed during Item 25 regarding the Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA) project nominations.

21. Caltrans Report

Rich Krumholz, Caltrans District 5, reported on the status of current projects. Mr. Krumholz also said that approval was received from the architectural landscape division at headquarters for a plan to include trees and additional landscaping on Mission Street.

Mr. Krumholz said that Caltrans completed the California Transportation Plan and that copies are available.

Commissioner Tavantzis raised the issue of coordinating improvements needed by the SCMTD on Highway 152 with a Caltrans project which is scheduled to be constructed soon. Ms. Tavantzis said that the Metro submitted a separate encroachment application which was denied and is now working to get a change order with Granite Construction approved in order to expedite the work. She said that Metro is prepared to reimburse Caltrans and that if it has to go through a separate bidding process there will not be enough time to coincide the construction of the Metro's improvements with the Caltrans construction process thus adding costs to the Metro and inconvenience to the public.

Mr. Krumholz said he will check into the status of the encroachment process and whether Caltrans can accept payment for the change order.

Commissioners discussed ways to ensure that projects planned by local jurisdictions coincide with Caltrans funded projects. Mr. Krumholz said that working with the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee is one way to coordinate planning and that the critical element is to inform Caltrans as early as possible of projects being planned by local jurisdictions.

Commissioner Beautz asked for a written report on ways for Caltrans and local jurisdiction to coordinate work better.

Executive Director George Dondero said that it would help if the Regional Transportation Commission was invited into Caltrans planning, especially for State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP) project planning, early in the process and would like to send a representative to future Caltrans Project Development Team meetings.

22. Election of 2007 SCCRTC Chair and Vice-Chair

Commissioner Beautz said that the Nominating Committee agreed to nominate Commissioner Campos as Chair and Commissioner Johnson as Vice-Chair for 2007.

Commissioner Stone moved to nominate Commissioner Campos as Chair and Commissioner Johnson as Vice-Chair for 2007. Commissioner Pirie seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Johnson assumed the position of Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Commissioners thanked Commissioner Pirie for her two years of service as Chair.

23. Transportation Projects in the City of Watsonville - Oral Report by David Koch, Public Works Director, City of Watsonville

Maria Rodriguez, Principal Engineer for the City of Watsonville, gave a PowerPoint presentation on current transportation projects which have received funding from the Regional Transportation Commission. The projects, either recently completed, under construction or being designed, included improvements to Green Valley Road; the Watsonville Slough, Struve Slough and Harkins Slough Bridges; curb ramps at various locations; and Walker Street renovations.

24. Transportation Funding Task Force Status Report

Senior Planner Karena Pushnik gave an overview of the Task Force project milestones. She referred to the workbook comments and noted the local jurisdiction that would decide if these suggestions could be included in their transportation planning.

Fred Keeley, Convener of the Transportation Funding Task Force, provided a report about the completion of Phase 1, the on-going activities underway for Phase 2 and the status of the Draft Plan in Phase 3.

Mr. Keeley said he has been working every day with members of the business community, neighborhood representatives and environmental groups getting feedback on the data collected in the workbooks and on possible solutions. He said that most people do not understand transportation funding, where it comes from and the restrictions on how it is allocated.

In addition, Mr. Keeley said he is also working with other communities that have been successful in passing funding measures including Fresno County which will send a delegation next week to review the Task Force draft plan. He emphasized that he is not seeking comment on content but rather on the process, since it is important to introduce a document that would lead to a principled negotiation among disparate interest groups. He said that the initial draft of the plan is scheduled to be released in late January or early February and that he hopes to have a six week period after the plan is released for discussion to come up with a negotiated agreement.

Commissioner Beautz asked if a cost benefit analysis is being included in the plan.

Mr. Keeley explained different ways of measuring "cost benefit" analyses, saying that some people think that if 95% of the community makes trips in single occupancy vehicles then 95% of transportation funding should support highways and streets while others believe that following this logic only produces the same transportation system but on a larger scale. An alternate view is to find ways to reduce demand and pressures on an overused system. He said it is important to protect the existing system but also prudent to have a vision for the future, especially if the plan is looking 20-30 years ahead.

Commissioners discussed methods of reaching more people, including increased use of Community Television and whether it was time for a poll.

Commission Alternate Schiffirin asked staff to provide a breakdown of the population by jurisdiction showing registered voters.

Mr. Schiffrin moved to approve the staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

1. Receive a report on the status of the Transportation Funding Task Force (TF Task Force) project together with a presentation from convener Fred Keeley on project milestones including Phases II and III of the project;
2. Direct staff to forward summarized workbook responses by local jurisdiction or agency to the appropriate entities under a cover letter from the Regional Transportation Commission chair and TF Task Force convener and;
3. Receive the TF Task Force project expenses for FY 2005-06 and the approved budget for FY 2006-07.

with the added direction that the Commission continues to publicly support the Task Force. Commissioner Rivas seconded.

Commissioner Tavantzis expressed concern that sometimes local jurisdictions cannot respond to all of the needs summarized in the workbooks and asked if this item was for information only or a directive to local jurisdictions to implement the suggestions.

Commission Alternate Schiffrin added to the motion that the comments for the local jurisdictions are for information only.

The motion passed unanimously.

25. Proposed Nominations for Proposition 1B Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA) Funds

Executive Director George Dondero said that based on the discussion at the November Transportation Policy Workshop, staff submitted the entire Highway 1 HOV Lanes Widening Project for Proposition 1B Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA) funding, but learned that it was not going to score as a tier 1 project because Caltrans had concerns that the project would probably not be ready to go to construction by 2012 and because the project could not be fully funded. He said given the situation, having Caltrans nominate the Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes Project, which is expected to go to construction in 2010, seemed to be a more realistic choice. Projects nominated by Caltrans will likely receive more favorable consideration from the California Transportation Commission than projects

submitted independently by Regional Transportation Planning Agencies. He added that three second choice projects were also included in the staff report, although these projects would not be nominated by Caltrans.

Commissioners discussed whether the Commission should include all of the additional projects, if the Commission was required to prioritize them and how close to deliverability the second choice projects needed to be.

Rich Krumholz said that projects should have had at least a Project Study Report and ideally be in the Project Approval/Environmental Document phase.

Mr. Dondero confirmed that the projects would have to be prioritized. He added that the only reason to include second choice options was in the unlikely event that uncommitted CMIA funds became available for programming and Santa Cruz County had the opportunity to be awarded more funding than expected. Back up projects would need to be ready to go so as not to lose the opportunity for funding.

Commissioners continued to discuss whether to include the second choice projects or to hold off until more information regarding the acceptance of the Caltrans nominated project was obtained.

Commission Alternate Schifffrin said it would probably be best to approve the Auxiliary Lanes submittal and to defer the second tier projects until after the CTC decision in December. He moved to approve staff recommendations 1 and 3 that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

1. Request that Caltrans nominate the Highway 1 Soquel Avenue to Morrissey Boulevard Auxiliary Lanes Project to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA) funds. In the event that Caltrans does not decide to nominate this project, authorize staff to nominate the project directly to the California Transportation Commission (California Transportation Commission); and,
3. Approve the attached revised resolution to be submitted with the nomination for the projects:
 - a. Indicating the RTC's intent to secure additional funds that may be needed to fully fund the projects; and

- b. Committing to working with Caltrans to develop the Corridor System Management Plan.

and to defer the staff recommendation that the RTC:

2. Direct staff to nominate directly to the CTC one or two additional projects aimed at addressing mobility on Highway 1

until after the CTC meeting in December and to return to the Commission in January with recommendations regarding these additional projects.

Commissioner Beautz seconded.

Chris Schneider said that it is hard on Public Works staff to complete project applications in such a compressed timeframe and asked that the projects be submitted at this time per the staff recommendations. He reiterated that it would be beneficial if local jurisdictions were included in SHOPP project discussions at the earliest possible time in order to combine project resources.

The motion passed unanimously.

26. 11 a.m. - Oral Presentation by Assemblymember John Laird on State Legislative Items

Assemblymember Laird reported on the state budget and the impacts of the transportation ballot measures approved by voters in November. He said he had worked to restore spillover funds to public transit from the gas tax revenues and that it looks like there will be more money for public transit.

In response to a question from Commissioner Stone regarding streamlining CEQA requirements, Mr. Laird said that there is a push by the building industry to weaken CEQA regulations, but that he does not think the public will allow the legislature to proceed in that direction.

Commissioner Johnson thanked Assemblymember Laird for the report and his continued support for advancing the community's transportation projects.

CLOSED SESSION - Removed from Agenda

Commissioner Alternate Schiffirin asked if the Closed

Session could wait until the January meeting given the length of the meeting. Deputy Director Luis Mendez said that the items under discussion were not time sensitive.

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin moved and Commissioner Alternate Skillicorn seconded to defer the Closed Session until the January meeting.

The motion passed with Commissioner Pirie voting "no".

27. Conference with Labor Negotiators Pursuant to Government Code 54957.6

Commission Negotiators: Ellen Aldridge and George Dondero

Bargaining Units: Mid-Management Unit and General Representation Unit

28. Conference with Real Property Negotiator for Acquisition of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Property: Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line from Watsonville Junction to Davenport

Agency Negotiator: Kirk Trost, Miller, Owen & Trost

Negotiation Parties: SCCRTC, Union Pacific

Under Negotiation: Price and Terms

OPEN SESSION

29. Next Meetings/Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 pm.

It was announce that there may not be a December Transportation Policy Workshop meeting.

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for the **SPECIAL DATE OF THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2007** at 9:00 a.m. at the Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

Respectfully submitted,

Gini Pineda, Staff

ATTENDEES

Sandra Coley	Pajaro Valley Transportation Management Association
Chris Schneiter	City of Santa Cruz
Mark Griffin	AMBAG
Bill Comfort	
John Laird	California Assemblymember
Fred Keeley	TFTF Convener
Maria Rodriguez	City of Watsonville
Genevieve Bookwalter	Sentinel
Jennifer Calate	Caltrans
Rahn Garcia	County Counsel
David Koch	City of Watsonville
Patrice Theriot	City of Watsonville