



Doyle Drive Environmental and Design Study

Doyle Drive Subcommittee of the Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting #15

Meeting Summary

date of meeting: 9/23/03

location: San Francisco County Transportation Authority

subject: Doyle Drive Subcommittee of the Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

attendees:

Doyle Drive Subcommittee Attendees:

Michael Alexander
William Alich
Max DelleSedie
Gene DeMartini
Paul Epstein
Vera Gates
Joan Marie Girardot
Tony Imhof
Redmond Kernan
Ronald Mulcare
Jackie Sachs
Patricia Vaughey

Doyle Drive Subcommittee Absentees:

Janette Barroca
Lindy Beasley
Rich Coffin
Becky Evans
Gloria Fontanello
Leo Paul Koulos
Michael Marston
James Maxwell
Roger Peters
Norman Rolfe
Kate Sears

San Francisco County Transportation Authority

Lee Saage
Paul Ward

Other Participants

Allan Jacobs
Dick Tilles, Presidio Trust
Rick Foster, NPS
Jared Goldfine, Caltrans
Abby Emadzadex, Caltrans
Keyhan Mogbrel, Caltrans
Nidal Tuqan, Caltrans
Dianna Waggoner, SF Bicycle Coalition
Robert McDonald, SF Recreation and Park Dept.
Mrs. DeMartini

Arup

John Eddy
Ignacio Barandiaran
Eugene Lam

MPA Design

Michael Painter

Parsons Brinckerhoff

Susan Killen
Gary Kennerley

Public Affairs Management

Kay Wilson
Kristy Ranieri

summary:

I. Meeting Purpose/Agenda Review and Minutes

Lee Saage reviewed the meeting agenda and purpose, and presented the minutes from the April 30, 2002 meeting. A completed action items list was distributed at the end of the meeting.

II. Project Status Report

Gary Kennerley, PB, provided an update on the major project activities of the last year.

III. Project Alternatives

Gary Kennerley, PB, provided an overview of the alternatives currently identified for study in the environmental document. Lee Saage gave a summary of some of the key issues raised by the community and agencies regarding the alternatives.

Tony Imhoff asked if the existing alternatives would be modified now that the parameters for Halleck Street have changed.

Lee Saage responded that modifications to the alternatives are not planned but could be done in the future. The historic resource staff is comfortable with the changes to Halleck Street because the New Parkway Alternative will prevent impacts to the historic batteries. The existing tunnel alternatives cannot accommodate the historic batteries even with the Halleck Street changes and that is why the changes are not planned.

IV. New Parkway Alternative

Michael Painter, MPA Design, provided background information regarding the inspiration and development of the New Parkway Alternative. John Eddy, Arup, presented an overview of the design features for the alternative. Allan Jacobs provided a synopsis of his evaluation of the New Parkway Alternative. After the presentation, the Subcommittee members provided questions and input on the alternative.

Jackie Sachs stressed that it will be important to accommodate the transit routes (Golden Gate Transit and MUNI) during construction and with the new alternative. The alternative should also accommodate the transit hub that is proposed. Jackie asked what will happen if the Authority's transit reauthorization proposition does not pass with the voters in November 2003.

Michael Painter responded that the Parkway Alternative offers a new intersection for buses near the Palace of Fine Arts area. The intersection will better accommodate the transit movements. The transit center in the Presidio is also included with this alternative. It was also noted that transit would not be affected during construction because it is required that the project accommodate transit in the same manner, as it exists today.

Lee Saage answered that if the voters reject the expenditure plan in November 2003 than the Doyle Drive Project will face serious funding consequences.

Joan Girardot asked for more information regarding the parking garage planned for the Palace of Fine Arts, specifically what is the purpose and need. She requested more details regarding the Doyle Drive and Marina Boulevard intersection. She does not support more lanes at this intersection. She stated that the team will have to approach the Board of Supervisors to change the city's general plan to accommodate more lanes at this intersection because the General Plan states that traffic must be diverted away from parks and Marina Boulevard waterfront area is a park.

Michael Painter responded that the underground parking garage at the Palace of Fine Arts is necessary because the Parkway Alternative crosses the existing surface parking lot. The proposed parking lot will be a one story underground garage with nine-foot high ceilings and will handle approximately 265 cars. The garage will be open air and the top deck will be of a similar elevation as the Palace of Fine Arts.

Michael Painter answered that the Doyle Drive and Marina Boulevard intersection is being designed to accommodate cars, bikes and pedestrians. The simple four-way intersection is still being worked on and more details and drawings can be provided at the next meeting.

Lee Saage responded to the question about the General Plan change, noting that the alternatives replace a direct freeway connection to Marina Boulevard with an arterial connection. The alternatives offer a balance and improve the existing connection.

Fred Rodriguez requested more information on the construction timeline because it seems too slow. Gary Kennerley explained the staging and complexity of construction that is required in a constrained area. The timeline cannot be shortened.

Redmond Kernan complimented the team on the refreshing new alternative. He asked for more information on the changes at Halleck Street, specifically how much is the road raised. He noted that the intersection east of Halleck Street and the intersection at Park Presidio look like a lot of 'spaghetti.' He noted that landscaping might improve these areas. He asked why the PX building needs to be destroyed. He requested that more details on the full design be provided at the next meeting.

Lee Saage responded that another Subcommittee meeting is planned soon. This purpose of this discussion is to have the Subcommittee support the continuation of study of the alternative. The answers to Redmond's detailed questions will be provided at the next meeting.

Paul Epstein concurred that the Subcommittee does not need to have answers to all of the design details tonight. He stated that he supports moving the New Parkway Alternative forward for more study. He asked that the transit center in the Presidio receive more focus in the future presentation. The Presidio needs to be better served by through transit.

Bill Alich stated that if the New Parkway Alternative is less expensive then it is a 'no-brainer' to move forward with studying it.

Vera Gates stated that she supports moving forward with future study of the new alternative. The alternative serves the needs of the Park and the neighbors while providing a gateway to the city and an appropriate arrival to the Golden Gate Bridge. The alternative creates a lot of opportunity to improve the travel experience for bikes and pedestrians as well. Vera requested that the intersections be discussed in more detail at the next meeting. She noted that there have always been too many lanes in the intersection designs. She asked if the warehouses could be removed or relocated from in front of the Palace of Fine Arts and also asked for clarification if the staggered roadway elevation during construction was included with this alternative.

Michael Painter responded that the staggered elevation is included in this plan. Vera noted that this is a brilliant construction idea.

Lee Saage responded that the warehouses are contributing structures to the Presidio as a National Historic Landmark. To move or relocate the warehouses in order to improve views is not an acceptable reason to change the historic contributing structures. There needs to be a very good reason in order to make a change. Also, the warehouses are the last ones remaining on the Presidio, which makes it an even more difficult issue.

Michael Alexander stated that he worked on the development of the New Parkway Alternative through his affiliation with the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR). He noted that a diversity of experts were brought together to come up with the new alternative. He said that the Circle Drive Option will require the removal of the YMCA pool, but the alternative will open up the triangle area considerably. He feels that the Circle Drive Option provides a more park like feeling. The Slip Ramp Option does not require the removal of the YMCA pool. He thanked the Subcommittee for their constructive input and questions.

Tony Imhoff noted that the Parkway Alternative offers good improvements thanks to the new flexibility around Halleck Street. He likes the elegant transition between the tunnels and Tennessee Hollow. He is concerned about the transition from Lyon Street to Richardson Avenue. He suggested that an underpass be considered in this area that will assist with taking traffic out from the new Lucas facility. He thanked the team for the improvements.

Max DelleSedie noted that the Parkway Alternative offers a refreshing look and contains some good ideas. He asked for more information on how the tour buses will enter the Palace of Fine Arts coming from the Golden Gate Bridge. He stressed his frustration regarding the need for the facility to accommodate a 45-mile per hour speed limit. As the facility operates now, the traffic is slow during rush hour and over 45 miles per hour during non-rush hour. He feels that the speed limit should not allow for design speeds to slow down and speed up. He requested that a blow-up drawing of the whole eastern area intersection and the Highway 101 interchange be provided at the next meeting. In general, the team should investigate what can be done to encourage slower traffic speeds.

Patricia Vaughey noted that the underground parking lot at the Palace of Fine Arts is not a good idea because the area experiences flooding. She also stated that the accidents in the eastern end of Doyle Drive continue to be a serious problem. She said that the designs offer a great improvement. For the Circle Drive Option, the team should not include the bulb at the end for buses. The neighbors have worked hard to work out a plan for buses that does not impact the neighborhood and she does not want to see the work undone. She would like more information on the proposed bus movements and more details on the intersection in general. For the Southern Entry Ramp Option, she would like to have more details; specifically what the proposed interchange would look like. She would like more information on the traffic leaving San Francisco from 19th Avenue to Vista Point and to the Golden Gate Bridge. She would like to know more information about the traffic lights planned for Richardson Avenue, specifically how many there will be and where they will be located. She noted concern for the transition from two lanes to one lane as it may cause accidents. She supports moving the alternative forward for more study.

Gene DeMartini would like more information regarding how Lyon Street will be used as a residential street.

Max DelleSedie noted that Palace Drive and Lyon Street south are residential areas. To put buses on these streets is unfair to the neighborhood. He suggested that a provision be made for buses to enter the parking facility directly to avoid traveling through the neighborhood. The same movement directly into the garage should be accommodated from the south entry as well.

Ron Mulcare provided a written comment that any alternative that removes parking at the Palace of Fine Arts/Exploratorium should include the construction of replacement parking underground. The same number of spaces, or more, should be provided.

Lee Saage thanked the Subcommittee for their comments and questions. He said that the team did a good job bringing the New Parkway Alternative to this level of detail. He noted that the alternative could be refined in the future. The Parkway Alternative has been determined to be feasible and the Authority, Caltrans and the Federal Highway Association will make the final decision about moving the alternative forward.

Lee asked the Subcommittee to vote whether the group recommends that the Parkway Alternative move forward for study in the environmental document. Redmond Kernan made a motion and Patricia Vaughey seconded the motion. The twelve present Subcommittee members (a quorum) voted unanimously in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

V. Review of Alternatives for Study in Draft EIS/EIR

Lee Saage stated that the Parkway Alternative includes many of the elements as the existing tunnel alternatives. He asked the Subcommittee to consider eliminating one of the existing tunnel alternatives from full study in the environmental document. At the next meeting, Lee will ask the Subcommittee to make some recommendations regarding this topic.

Redmond Kernan asked that the staff provide a recommendation on which alternatives could be eliminated to assist the Subcommittee in making choices.

VI. Overview of the Upcoming Study Process

Kay Wilson, PAM, provided a short overview of the remaining study process based on the study process roadmap that was mailed with the Subcommittee packet. It was noted that PAM would follow-up with the Subcommittee members regarding the next Subcommittee meeting. November 2003 is the target date for the next meeting.

Paul Epstein asked when construction of Doyle Drive would begin. Lee Saage answered that the earliest construction could begin is 2007.

VII. Public Comments

No public comments were offered.

Michael Alexander made an announcement. SPUR will host a presentation on the New Parkway Alternative on October 14, 2003 from 12:30 – 1:30 pm at the SPUR offices. The public is invited to attend and the Subcommittee will be receiving an invitation.

ACTION ITEM TRACKING CHART

MEETING DATE	ACTION DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE	DATE DUE	DATE COMPLETED
9.23.03	Provide a staff recommendation on which alternatives could be eliminated to assist the Subcommittee in making choices.	PB/ the Authority	10.15.03	TBD
9.23.03	Schedule next Subcommittee meeting.	PAM	Schedule in Early October for November	TBD

Distribution:

All Subcommittee Members
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Jose Luis Moscovich
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Kay Wilson
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