



CITY COUNCIL RAIL COMMITTEE FINAL MINUTES

Special Meeting
March 21, 2018

Council Member Fine called the meeting to order at 8:09 A.M. in the Community Meeting Room, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California.

Present: Fine, Kou, Scharff; Wolbach (Chair) arrived at 8:11 A.M.

Absent:

Oral Communications

Council Member Fine called for speakers for Oral Communications and said the time limit for each speaker was two minutes.

Stephen Rosenblum discussed the financial information in regards to the rail corridor. He referenced the Financing White Paper that was presented to the City Council Rail Committee (Committee) on November 29, 2017, which was produced by Economic and Planning Systems Inc. In terms of value capture that was referenced on the White Paper, he questioned the statement that said "a maximum of \$235 million from 2,000 housing units and 275,000-square feet of commercial property" when it discussed starter homes cost up to a million dollars at the present time. He suggested relooking at these numbers to understand what the actual amount was.

David Shen thanked the Committee for hearing the concerns from people who live around the Churchill/Alma rail crossing. He presented a petition that included 205 signatures for the community's preferences for the Churchill/Alma crossing. He was concerned about a notice from the City in regards to his neighbors' remodel of his home, yet he did not receive any notice from the City in terms of seizure of his home for a new rail corridor. The Committee needed to increase community meetings and added that he saw no mention of a pedestrian and bike underpass at Embarcadero as a viable option to consider.

Roland LeBrun referenced the High Speed Rail (HSR) Authority Business Plan and said they were proposing to extend Caltrain, which would shift the geographic center at about 10 to 15 miles south. The Committee needed to

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reach out to the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB) and offer the Council Chambers for future Caltrain Board Meetings.

Nadia Naik was not able to find all of the public comments on the website that were submitted to the Committee last time. She wanted to update the website so those comments were easier to find. Also, she wanted to find any feedback from the public that was received in regards to the Finance White Paper.

Agenda Items

1. Report on the March 6, 2018 Community Roundtable Meeting on the Trench and Tunnel Grade Separation White Paper.

Rob de Geus, Deputy City Manager gave a brief introduction of the Community Round Table and said the meeting was well attended. He commented that the first half of the meeting was to create awareness of the recent trench and tunnel white paper. The second half entailed listening to the public and getting their ideas, concerns and interests. Some public feedback was some were eager for the screening process to begin. Community members were interested in comparing ideas, narrowing the field of options and getting more information about feasible options. A recurring concern was eminent domain. Separately, North Old Palo Alto Neighborhood Association suggested closing Churchill. This idea gained a lot of support from the surrounding community. A second idea was to build a bike and pedestrian underpass at Embarcadero. In terms of the tunnel options, the deep bore tunnel had more interest from the community because of the lower construction impacts, the reduced noise and the recapturing of land. In regard to cost, getting cooperation from nearby cities for the deep-bore tunnel and addressing the one or two percent grade challenges, the community came back with solutions to overcome those challenges. Some solutions included monetizing the land above the tunnel, possibly receiving State and Federal funding or having the business community or Stanford help with funding. In regards to the trenching, there was less interest because of the cost, construction impacts and having to shoo fly impacts to Alma Street for a long period of time. Secondarily, there were the impacts on emergency vehicles. A partial trench had more interest from the community than a full trench. The community wanted to explore the option for East Meadow and the Charleston crossing. A partial trench took less property than some of the other options. Staff was going to continue to receive a lot of feedback; he reiterated that questions and

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answers raised were being posted on the Palo Alto FAQ page.

Stephen Rosenblum commented on the Round Table discussion and said there were not enough Staff present to answer community questions in a timely fashion. He did not think speaker Mark Christoffels was a good option since the Palo Alto Rail Corridor Project and the San Gabriel project had two completely different layouts and constraints; he suggested the San Francisco Central Subway Project. This project was more compatible with the Palo Alto Rail Corridor. At the Round Table discussion he noted there were 217 comments, 44 were pro-tunnel or trench and 7 were anti-tunnel or trench. He wrote down a list of some concerns that were voiced by the community.

Martin Bernstein came up with a potential funding option for funding the trench/tunnel. Four steps were Palo Alto had a lease agreement with the railroad property owner for the use of the air rights above the railroad right of way. The City of Palo Alto needed a lease agreement between the property developers for various size air space parcels. Developers then applied for planning and building permits to construct housing, retail and office buildings within the airspace parcel along an open space corridor. The City of Palo Alto then constructed the lease terms between the City and property developer so full cost recovery was received by the City for the cost of trenching or tunneling. He noted the diagrams on his handout which showed the amount that could be recovered with these proposed agreements.

Nadia Naik spoke about the Staff Report and said it did not apply to what the community was saying because many people at the Round Table meeting had many questions that did not pertain to trenching or tunneling. She did not think the community fully grasped the concept of freight and that freight had to stay in grade even if there was a deep bore tunnel. Additionally, she thought the community did not understand the funding criteria and how the City was coming up with costs and constraints.

Council Member Fine thought it was great to hear that more people attended the meeting and said it was important to involve as many people as possible. He agreed that a general public meeting was a good idea but that it needed to include more explanation.

Mr. de Geus stated there was no general community meeting scheduled but there was talk of setting one up.

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Council Member Fine encouraged the City Council Rail Committee (Committee) to read the comments because there were a lot of good ones. People were interested in a viaduct, tunneling and property impacts.

Council Member Scharff thought Martin Bernstein's cost recovery idea was very helpful and said it highlighted the impossibility of value recapture. He did not think the City owned the land above where the trench would be.

Council Member Kou understood from Staff's presentation that there were things the City was not able to accomplish and there were only a few options left to choose from. More information needed to be provided to the general public. She did not see a method that provided guidance to the residents about how the City was going to move forward; too much information was provided, and that meant it could come to nothing. In addition, she was not able to find any of the comments or questions on the website as well as the items that pertained to the Rail Corridor. She was not happy with the way public engagement was going.

Chair Wolbach requested Staff respond to freight and how it would still have to run on the surface if a deep bore tunnel was constructed.

Joshua Mello, Chief Transportation Official voiced that that information came from additional analysis of a deep-bore tunnel and consultation with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the freight railroads themselves.

Chair Wolbach wondered if that information was included in the prior tunneling analysis.

Mr. Mello commented that the assumption in that tunnel analysis was that freight would run in the tunnel. There needed to be a negotiation with Union Pacific about who has track rights to the existing corridor to allow freight to have the tunnel.

Council Member Scharff voiced that there would be no point in doing a tunnel if freight had to run on the surface and said that it did not make any sense to have that. Tunneling was not be an option if freight had to run on and not through the tunnel.

Council Member Fine began that there were two parts of a tunnel process. One was a tunnel with freight going through it and if that was possible then

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that was a potential. If the freight was on top of the tunnel then he agreed with Council Member Scharff that it was silly to have a tunnel at all.

Council Member Kou inquired if Staff had reached out to Union Pacific about freight.

Council Member Scharff had a discussion with them.

Council Member Kou acknowledged that it would be nice to have a report about that and said she had never heard anything about such discussions.

Chair Wolbach inquired if Council Member Scharff would tell the Committee about his understanding of freight through the rail corridor.

Council Member Scharff relayed that as of right now, Union Pacific and the Joint Powers Board (JPB) were negotiating the issues of frequency of freight trains but those negotiations would not be known for another couple months. The two bodies were also deliberating about a two percent grade for tracks versus a one percent grade and what trackage rights they were entitled to.

Chair Wolbach asked if Union Pacific and the JPB were considering removing freight from the rail corridor or if they wanted to remove it from the Palo Alto portion of the rail corridor.

Council Member Scharff asked that direct question and the two groups were still having those discussions. There may be Federal requirements to run freight that he did not know about. Also, Oakland and Redwood City really wanted freight at their ports.

Council Member Kou did not want to think of freight as a closed item since there were bodies still discussing that topic. She wanted to know if freight could be diverted to the Dumbarton Rail Station and if Dumbarton was going to be reopened; she desired more information on that topic.

Council Member Scharff thought the big topic for Union Pacific and the JPB was the one percent versus the two percent grade of the tracks in Palo Alto.

Chair Wolbach reminded the Committee that public speakers were allowed to speak after the Committee deliberated an item.

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Council Member Fine agreed with Council Member Kou that there needed to be more exploration done in terms of freight but that the Committee needed to be specific about what issues they were interested in. He wanted to understand if freight needed to continue or not in Palo Alto, what the opportunity cost was for the users of that system and if the Committee needed more clarity on the one percent versus the two percent grade in the trench. He asked who actually made those decisions.

Mr. Mello clarified that Union Pacific had freight trackage rights along the Peninsula, which was owned by the JPB. Union Pacific was currently working on getting a short line operator who would take over freight operations. There were negotiations occurring between JPB and Union Pacific about what the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the short line operator was going look like. Staff was not able to obtain and look at those negotiations. He asked Caltrain if they explored cost estimation on buying out Union Pacific; he noted that Caltrain had not done any work on that.

Council Member Fine stated that the City did not own the tracks or the land beneath the tracks and the City did not own the rights to operate on the tracks. In terms of freight continuing, the City needed to understand how freight affected the grade separation options.

Mr. Mello remarked that the design requirements around the one percent grade was when the rail corridor rose or went down, the grade was the amount of distance it required to get up or down to that new level. One percent required a long distance to reach the above or below grade level versus two percent, which was shorter. Currently, Caltrain preferred one percent but they offered some flexibility. Since Caltrain was going toward electrification, those electric trains were able to climb a steeper grade than diesel freight trains.

Council Member Fine asked Staff if the decision on one percent or two percent was decided by the State and the Joint Powers Authority (JPA).

Mr. Mello noted that it was a Caltrain design standard, which was a result of Union Pacific constraints but Caltrain was able to waive that.

Council Member Fine asked if it was only Caltrain who made that decision.

Mr. Mello relayed that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) had oversight over all the railroad operations in California.

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Council Member Fine said Union Pacific and Caltrain owned the tracks and the rights to run them but the CPUC actually made the decision about whether Palo Alto received the waiver for a two percent grade elevation.

Chair Wolbach asked to hear from the public again.

Ms. Naik reiterated the Committee's needs to receive more information on freight. She agreed with Council Member Scharff's comment that Caltrain and Union Pacific were in negotiations for a short line operator but there was a different reason behind that discussion. Union Pacific did not want to show anywhere in the State that they were running on an electrified railroad with freight because if they did, they had to change operations at Metro Link. To get around that, Union Pacific was getting a short line operator to run on Union Pacific's decided schedule and price. She said this was part of the State Rail Plan and that negotiations did not really pertain to Caltrain in terms of freight frequency. Freight played a very big role in determining what costs were for grade separations in Palo Alto.

Roland LeBrun asked the Committee to Google "Caltrain agreements", click the link for "JPB agreements" and read the agreement called "Deal Terms Sheet Related to Transfer of Rights and Responsibilities". He asked the Committee to convince Caltrain to convert all the searchable documents to PDF; Caltrain was not being transparent about the process.

Adina Levin, Friends of Caltrain reported on the freight topic and said most of the freight that came through Palo Alto came from the Port of Redwood City. This port contributed to a small amount of the Operating Budget for the city of Redwood City. If there was no freight, then this needed to be addressed in budget implications for Redwood City. If there were no freight trains running out of the Port of Redwood City, then more trucks were going to be transporting that freight through Redwood City. In terms of moving freight over Dumbarton, the tracks ran through neighborhoods in Menlo Park and North Fair Oaks. If freight were to run on the Dumbarton corridor, there would be more feedback from the communities in Menlo Park and North Fair Oaks, who did not want freight on those tracks.

Mr. Bernstein addressed Council Member Scharff's comment about the community buy-in if there was going to be tall structures in the right-of-way. He said the proposed Senate Bill 827 may bypass the City's local control on building height. Most of the places he suggested for higher structures were located Downtown.

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NO ACTION TAKEN

2. Receive a Report on the Initial Screening of the Master List of Ideas for the Connecting Palo Alto Rail Program.

Joshua Mello, Chief Transportation Official presented on the Connecting Palo Alto Rail Program master list of ideas and initial screening. The City Council Rail Committee had a more detailed scoring sheet in front of them but it was not included in the Packet. He discussed different types of grade separation and grade crossing improvements. There were four locations in Palo Alto that were being looked at for grade separation which included Charleston, Churchill, Meadow and Palo Alto Avenue, also known as Alma Street. Some ideas included multiple crossings combined, as a possible grade separation solution, and there were other Citywide options. There were several different ways to improve railroad crossings: 1) no change at all; 2) a closure option; 3) road under the rail; and 4) road over rail. The last three options pertained to the rail being moved to a new elevation. If this were the case this involved including the hybrid, the railroad and rail over road. There were also variations to some of the above listed options. For example, he suggested a closure could be completely closed to all modes or it could just be closed to motor vehicles. The first option was a road closure at the tracks; Palo Alto had an existing example of this at California Avenue where that crossing was closed. Pros of these options were safety improvement, no horn noise and Alma would be improved because it became a "t" intersection, which was lower in cost. The cons included increased traffic to surrounding streets and longer routes for bicyclists and pedestrians, which could lead to more trips. The second option was to lower the road for pedestrians and bicyclists under the track. An existing example of this was the Embarcadero under crossing. This increased safety, there would be no more train horns, improved traffic flow and this option had less of an impact on bikes and pedestrians. Cons were that this had a potential to increase traffic because of the improved conditions.

Council Member Scharff asked where the increased traffic came from.

Mr. Mello acknowledged that the Circulation Study determined that people would come from all over to use the improved grade separation crossings.

Council Member Scharff wondered if traffic would be thinned out on other roadways because the traffic was now using the improved grade separations.

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Mr. Mello said yes. The Circulation Study showed where the trips were coming from but the end result was where the corridor ended up with increased traffic. He explained that the option of lowering the road under the rail could result in significant eminent domain impacts because the road had to descend a great distance back in order to reach the desired elevation under the rail. There were also significant utility impacts, in terms of underground utilities and relocation. A third option was raising the road so pedestrians and bicyclists went over the tracks. An example of this was at San Antonio Road in South Palo Alto. Pros of this option were similar to the other options but a unique con was that pedestrians and bicyclist had a steep ramp they had to go up. This option had significant property impacts. The fourth option was a hybrid where the road was lowered slightly and the rail tracks were elevated slightly. An existing example was at University Avenue and Homer Tunnel. One pro for this option included property impacts could be reduced significantly because the road did not require a substantial distance back to reach its elevations. He said there was an example of a hybrid solution in San Carlos.

Chair Wolbach clarified that the example of San Carlos was not the Holly Street grade separation. The design raised some questions about berms and what hybrid solutions looked like but that was not specific to grade separation.

Mr. Mello elaborated on the description of the hybrid solution at San Carlos and said it could be a berm or a retaining wall that hybrids could be built on. A variation to the hybrid was a slight depress in the rail tracks and then slightly elevating the roadways. The fifth option was to lower the railroad tracks under the road. This option was presented in the trenching and tunneling paper. Variations included a deep-bore tunnel, a cut and cover tunnel or an open trench. One unique pro to the deep-bore tunnel was a very minimal construction impact. Cons were the entry points of the tunnel for the boring machines and the construction of the ventilation structures along the tunnel. A trench and the cut and cover option had a very significant construction impact. An additional shoo-fly track needed to be installed. There were major operations and maintenance issues. Caltrain and Union Pacific did not want to operate in a trench or tunnel and thus the maintenance and operation issues were up to the City to maintain. The sixth option was to elevate the railroad tracks over the roads so a berm, viaduct or retaining wall could be enabled. An example of this existed in San Bruno. Cons were visual impacts on the community and a shoo-fly track needed to be installed during construction. Pros were a potential for fewer property impacts. He said the City was trying to get to one preferred solution by

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December, 2018. There were thirty four ideas; this needed to be reduced to between four to eight ideas by June, 2018. It was not feasible to do an analysis of all thirty four ideas because of the cost of that analysis. Council decided on which of the four to eight ideas received a detailed analysis. The thirty four ideas came from the community outreach done in 2017 and 2018. There was a document being created that included all the public comments and Staff's response to those comments. At the Round Table discussions, the public was asked to identify their top three choices for grade separation options and this produced the thirty four ideas that were presented to the Committee. The criteria Council adopted on September 6, 2017 were grouped together into two tiers, which included four types of evaluation criterion: technical, financial, property and construction. He went over what was listed under these four criteria groups in terms of most important listed in Tier One and important but not as important, or Tier Two. Staff came up with three additional criteria that were applied to each crossing and grade separation option. He presented a diagram showing the criterion being applied to all of the thirty-four options and it showed which options Staff thought should be evaluated more thoroughly. Feasibility, finance-ability and constructability were major flaws that Staff applied to each of the thirty-four ideas. Staff planned to have all these findings confirmed by the consultant for accuracy. Based on the screening, some high scoring grade crossing options included the five road closure ideas.

Council Member Scharff wanted clarification on how widening University Avenue and doing an Everett Bike Plan were different ideas.

Mr. Mello explained that the ideas could be combined to reduce the number if the Committee wanted to go that route.

Council Member Scharff wanted confirmation that Staff planned to add a new pedestrian and bike crossing at Seale Avenue and not Churchill Avenue.

Mr. Mello replied that Seale Avenue was going to be a bike boulevard on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan. By doing the bike and pedestrian crossing at Seale Avenue, people had to go through the park and then connect with Stanford Avenue, which was another bike boulevard. Adding a bicycle and pedestrian path for kids at Churchill Avenue was another option also.

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Council Member Scharff had a bunch of questions from the community about why Staff was discussing adding a bike and pedestrian crossing at Churchill Avenue when the idea was to possibly close Churchill Avenue.

Mr. Mello explained there was an existing City project that ran from Castilleja Avenue to El Camino Real on the west side of Churchill Avenue. This project was for bike path improvements, even if Churchill Avenue was closed; there was still going to be a bike path that linked up to the Stanford Perimeter Trail.

Mr. Keene explained that this project also involved improving the right turn onto El Camino Real off of Churchill Avenue.

Mr. Mello explained that there was a separate project that was entirely federally funded to make safety improvements at the Churchill Avenue grade crossing. The next category that scored high in Staff's initial screening was the six hybrid ideas. There was a potential partnering option with Menlo Park to continue Menlo Park's project where the railroad was elevated slightly over Ravenswood and Oak Grove. Palo Alto was able to then continue to elevate railroad over San Francisquito Creek and then drop down right before the train station at University Avenue.

Council Member Scharff interjected that there were some bike and pedestrian crossings that were already part of the current Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan; these crossings should not be added to the grade separation options.

Chair Wolbach commented that the pictures on the slide were of Holly Street in San Carlos and San Carlos Avenue. He asked if the crossing at San Carlos Avenue was an example of a viaduct or a retaining wall.

Mr. Mello explained that it was a hybrid bike and pedestrian crossing under the railroad, to the left and the right were retaining walls and then the open area was a viaduct structure.

Chair Wolbach added that San Carlos Avenue went from berm to retaining wall to viaduct.

Mr. Mello agreed and moved onto no build ideas, which included doing safety upgrades to the grade crossings. One safety upgrade included quiet zones,

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which meant the trains only used their horn at the crossings. The crossings that scored well in the no-build category were Palo Alto Avenue, Churchill Avenue and Meadow Drive. Regarding rail under road ideas, which were the trench and tunnel options, he explained that the City had to receive a variance from Caltrain in order to do a two percent grade for a trench or tunnel.

Council Member Scharff inquired if the City was not able to get the variance from Caltrain, he wondered if the trench and tunnel options were be feasible with the constraints of the rail crossings.

Mr. Mello answered that they were not feasible if the City was not able to retain a variance from Caltrain to make a two percent ramp. Staff was not asking for any recommendation or decisions today from the Committee but wanted input from the Committee on any modifications they wanted to see.

Rob de Geus, Deputy City Manager noted the community was very interested in the screening process. Staff intended to have several meetings over the next month with some of the rail parties to go over initial scoring of the grade separation options. Staff also planned to hold more community meetings for greater awareness of these findings.

Stephen Rosenblum believed that the process the Committee was going through right now was premature. Staff's presentation was biased against the tunnel and trench option Citywide. He suggested hiring a consultant to take over the entire project to relieve other Staff who were overloaded with work. He supported the border to border tunnel which was left out of the presentation and thought a criterion that needed to be added was equability between neighborhoods.

Adina Levin, Friends of Caltrain commented on funding and financing for the options that were considered viable. She felt the community did not have all information about financing and funding and they did not really understanding what they were looking at. She wanted to see a community meeting that focused on financing and funding and how all the little parts were laid out.

Nadia Naik was not happy that the public did not receive the scoring report until today because another attachment released at this meeting said there would be sixteen options to be discussed at the next meeting (there were thirty-four). Somewhere there were options screened out without any weigh

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in from the public or the Committee. Staff amended the criteria and she believed there should be more added before the Committee and Council narrowed down the list to the four to eight options by June. Staff needed to go to Council with the full criteria to make sure nothing was missed and also to bring the Council a full Master List of ideas. Also, fixing the train stations to facilitate the expansion of Caltrain was a great idea.

Leannah Hunt appreciated Martin Bernstein's presentation about a possible funding source for the grade separations. The community meetings had stifled input from the community. She thanked Californians Advocating Responsible Rail Design (CARRD) and suggested the website be improved.

Jeff Brown thanked Staff and Council for starting the process to eliminate the options. The Citywide options were not feasible and he was glad they were taken off so everyone was able to move forward on options that were feasible. There was not enough thought given to maintaining neighborhoods in terms of the criteria that was used to narrow down the options. He wanted to make sure that people were thinking about the future and that if roads were closed they could always be reopened.

Roland LeBrun asked if Staff and the Committee were illuminating a twin-bore tunnel because it costs too much money; they needed to be patient. New ideas and technology were coming out that were able to cut the cost of time in half.

Council Member Fine thought it might be helpful to see all the options that may or may not be directly related to grade separation and have brief cost estimations for those ideas given. For example, he thought bike and pedestrian crossings needed to be included. All the symbols that were shown in the diagram needed to be the same and he suggested not having different symbols like checkmarks, full circles or x's. He wanted to know what the Committee thought about the estimated community support criteria. He asked Staff if the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was willing to grade separate all the options with the criteria, similar to what Staff did.

Mr. Mello responded that Staff asked the TAC to do exactly that. Staff asked the TAC to look for any issues that might be in the scoring and to weigh in more on each of the options.

Council Member Fine asked if the TAC planned on filling out the entire chart.

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Mr. Mello confirmed that the TAC was going to review Staff's scoring, identify any issues with the scoring and then give an opinion on each of the ideas.

Council Member Fine reemphasized that he wanted the TAC to do the same scoring sheet that Staff did. He agreed with Ms. Naik that the schedule needed to say thirty-four ideas and not sixteen and that the full matrix needed to be shown to Council first.

Council Member Kou suggested Council Member Fine make a Motion not to cut the schedule down to sixteen options and to present the full thirty-four ideas to Council.

Council Member Scharff remarked that the hybrid options were always superior to other options. He agreed that the Committee should get Council direction on whether to eliminate the full Citywide trench idea and a full Citywide twin-bore tunnel idea. The Committee needed to give specific direction to Council on which options they thought were most feasible and that made the most sense.

Mr. Mello responded that Staff was not asking for any action; Staff was showing the Committee the sixteen highest scoring ideas but Council was going to see the entire master list.

Chair Wolbach supported the idea of including language that did not cut the list down to sixteen but kept it showing the full thirty-four ideas. The Committee was not eliminating options at this time. He wanted the Committee to recommend to Council the most appropriate options. The San Antonio Road overpass option was a non-starter but having a bike and pedestrian crossing at Churchill Avenue was conceivable. He was unsure about closing Meadow Drive to cars but wanted more discussion about hybrid, berm and viaduct options, how they worked together, how to transition from one to another at different places and any overall information about those parts.

Mr. Keene answered that Staff did not have details in terms of viaducts, berms and hybrids and how they impacted eminent domain.

Mr. Mello added that there were some assumptions about property impacts for hybrid options but these options were not as severe as road over rail or some of the other options.

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Chair Wolbach agreed and said there was a lot of interest in understanding the hybrid solutions. He inquired about some clarity on what Staff meant in terms of constructability and the political framework.

Mr. Keene voiced that it meant working with all groups including Caltrain, Union Pacific and other local and State rail groups.

Council Member Scharff agreed with everything the Chair said and expressed to Staff that at the next meeting he wanted them to explain clearly what the hybrid looked like at Palo Alto Avenue and how that worked with Menlo Park's plans. He wanted to know what would happen to the light at Churchill Avenue if it closed. He also wanted to know exactly how much property would be taken, where that property was and what that looked like in terms of the sixteen options Staff was suggesting if a hybrid option were chosen. On Churchill Avenue, he wanted to see the bike and pedestrian tunnel made part of the options. In terms of closing Meadow Drive, his concern was traffic circulation. He was looking to see what four to eight options looked like so four would be one option for each crossing and eight was two options for each crossing.

Mr. Mello agreed that four would be one option per crossing and eight would be two options per crossing.

Council Member Scharff said one option for a crossing could be a combination of things, for example: close Palo Alto Avenue and the Everett Avenue bike and pedestrian crossing and to widen University Avenue. He requested some visuals of different options in future presentations.

Mr. Keene relayed that the purpose was to present the concept of taking thirty-four ideas down to sixteen and then down to four or eight. Staff only made recommendations and did not vote on anything. At the next meeting, the Committee was going to recommend consolidating to sixteen options. In April, 2018 Staff was hoping to bring the award of the new consultant and the contract to Council but there was no way the Staff could not be involved with the consultant. It was not an "either/or" situation. He agreed with Council Member Scharff that the Committee's role was to make a recommendation to the Council. After the Committee completed their work at the April, 2018 meeting, Staff planned on coming back to Council. Staff planned on coming back to the Committee every month with more detailed information.

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Chair Wolbach asked who was on the TAC team.

Mr. Mello answered the TAC was made up of Caltrain, Mountain View, Menlo Park, The Santa Clara Valley Water District, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD), Stanford, Palo Alto Utilities Department and the Planning Department.

Council Member Kou asked who represented Stanford.

Mr. Mello explained that it was the University's Land and that it was the Building Group who typically interacted with the City on planning projects; the TAC was comprised of mainly engineers and planners.

Mr. Keene voiced that the Land and Buildings Department from Stanford hospital project led that project. The new consultant was able to bring the visualization component but due to different grade crossing separations there was not going to be any until May or June.

Chair Wolbach requested more clarity on the stakeholder engagement process.

Mr. de Geus noted there would continue to be community meetings for the sake of awareness but there was going to be more "focus group" type meetings for people who were really engaged. Also, the new consultant had a whole community engagement expectation built into their scope of work.

Chair Wolbach thought it was important to have separate focus groups for the TAC.

Mr. Keene wanted the expertise from the community to convert comments into specific recommendations for the Committee and the Council.

Chair Wolbach agreed with Mr. Keene's and felt uncomfortable with how Staff and the City were judging funding feasibility.

Mr. Keene explained there was going to be more information on the challenges and opportunities on different funding and financing options. Also, Staff was working on their own, more in-depth, analyses on funding and financing options. Any ballot measures that required a vote from the community was not going to happen until 2020 or 2022.

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Council Member Scharff reiterated that in terms of the Committee schedule, they looked at Staff's sixteen grade separation options and then they planned on coming back in April, 2018.

Mr. Keene concurred about the schedule.

Council Member Scharff communicated that at the April meeting the Committee was going to make a recommendation to Council to go with sixteen options. Then in early May, 2018 Council was going to make their determination. The Committee was going to meet again in May, 2018 to try and narrow Council's preferred options down to between four and eight. He wanted buy-in from the Council and asked if Staff needed to have the schedule and process included in the Motion.

Mr. Keene noted that it was up to the Committee's discretion to add that to the Motion.

Council Member Fine agreed that the scoring needed to be more explicit by the time it came back to the Committee at the April, 2018 meeting. In conjunction with Chair Wolbach, he thought the financial information needed to be more flushed out and he asked Staff if they had any information on rail stations and where they fell into the plan.

Mr. Mello remarked that rebuilding the stations was best captured in the "funding feasibility" criteria.

Council Member Fine asked to add another column of what the expected station effects were projected for different alternatives.

Chair Wolbach continued that it should also include station rebuilds and that Caltrain or other agencies might provide funding for those rebuilds.

Council Member Fine restated the schedule and asked the City Manager to begin prepping Council on the rail project for the May7, 2018.

Ed Shikada, Assistant City Manager noted that there will tentatively be two Committee meetings in April, 2018. It was suggested to have the early April, 2018 meeting in the evening.

Council Member Fine was open to an evening meeting.

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Council Member Scharff relayed that two meetings would be helpful for City Council.

Council Member Fine was concerned about Council narrowing down the thirty-four ideas to sixteen when there were Council Members who have not been studying this project from the beginning.

Council Member Scharff suggested having Staff offer briefings to Council Members on the grade separation project so they could be informed.

Mr. Keene thought briefings could begin after the next Committee meeting. He agreed that a Staff Report was not sufficient enough to bring Council up to date on all information.

Council Member Kou asked if the community was engaged in the scoring of the thirty-four options on the table.

Mr. de Geus explained that Staff planned on going back to the community for their input. This was Staff's first attempt at scoring, it may need to be refined and there may be a need for more input.

Council Member Kou felt the Committee meetings needed to happen more than once a month. There needed to be a master schedule for the whole year that showed when the community meetings, Committee meetings and Council meetings were so everyone was aware. She asked Staff if the new consultant would be working with the Trench and Tunnel Study Mott McDonald had compiled.

Mr. Keene expected the new consultant to use and reference all the work done up to this point.

Council Member Kou asked if the new consultant was aware that the City used the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) process and the Community Engagement Process.

Mr. Keene believed the firm was experienced in rail decisions.

Mr. Shikada explained that Staff was not calling the process CSS anymore.

Council Member Kou asked for clarification.

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Mr. Shikada relayed that the consultant will be providing support for Staff and their primary goal was to get the Committee and Council down to one preferred alternative.

Mr. Keene noted that people have told Staff to stop calling it CSS because it is not really a CSS process. There was a lot of discussion last year on how the Staff, Committee and Council were able to engage the public.

Council Member Fine explained that last year the Council decided to do a modified CSS process and that was what was followed. He agreed with Council Member Kou that it needed to be very clear what process the City was using.

MOTION: Chair Wolbach moved, seconded by Council Member XX to recommend to the City Council that Staff considers the following points moving forward:

- A. To have greater clarity about freight;
- B. To have greater clarity about property takings resulting from hybrid solutions;
- C. To update the criteria;
- D. To make the scoring more explicit;
- E. More clarity and discussion about viaducts, berms and retaining walls in either hybrid or fully elevated scenarios;
- F. To clarify which bike and pedestrian paths are already considered in our Bike and Pedestrian Plan; and
- G. To consider stationary impacts as positives or negatives.

MOTION RESTATED: Chair Wolbach moved, seconded by Council Member XX to recommend to the City Council to ask Staff to consider the following points going forward:

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- A. To have greater clarity and information about freight and its influx and alternatives;
- B. To have greater clarity about property takings resulting from hybrid solutions;
- C. To update the criteria;
- D. To make the scoring more explicit;
- E. More clarity and discussion about viaducts, berms and retaining walls for both hybrid and for fully elevated options;
- F. To separate out the bike and pedestrian routes already envisioned;
- G. To consider stationary impacts, whether positive or negative; and
- H. And other comments made at this meeting and from the public.

Council Member Scharff asked Chair Wolbach what “update the criteria” meant.

Chair Wolbach stated if Staff wanted to provide additional criteria the Committee would welcome those ideas.

MOTION FAILED DUE TO THE LACK OF A SECOND

Council Member Fine explained that it would help Chair Wolbach’s Motion to clarify the part about freight and property. He wondered if the Committee could get a magnitude for that, separating the bike and pedestrian issues and the cost of those mixing and matching, and then explain the station plan effects. Three options that were not helpful were updating the criteria, making the scoring more explicit and the clarity on viaducts, berms and retaining walls.

MOTION Council Member Fine moved, seconded by Council Member Scharff to recommend to the City Council to ask Staff to consider the clarity of freight issues, property takings, separation of bike and pedestrian issues, and the station plans or effects.

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Council Member Fine stated that the Committee and Staff needed to tighten up the criteria and make it more explicit. The Committee raised a lot of good comments about pitfalls, such as freight and eminent domain.

Council Member Scharff agreed with Council Member Fine and said the things listed in the Motion were items that needed special attention.

Mr. Keene expressed that these were considerations to look at but did not need to be resolved before the next meeting.

Chair Wolbach agreed.

INCORPORATED INTO THE MOTION WITH THE CONSENT OF THE MAKER AND SECONDER to have the same introduction from the original Motion "To ask Staff to consider these points going forward."

Chair Wolbach articulated that if the Committee was saying that all options were on the table and viaducts were not actually an option, then they should be put back on the explored list.

Council Member Scharff recapped that all options were still on the table and if someone wanted something added to the list, they should attend the next Committee meeting and voice that.

Chair Wolbach remarked that viaduct options really have not been clarified and that Staff and the Committee were not able to make an informed recommendation on those options.

Mr. Mello declared that berms, viaducts and retaining walls were construction methods for a hybrid or an elevated rail system. In the description of how the hybrid was constructed, Staff was able to make that clearer.

MOTION AS AMENDED RESTATED: Council Member Fine moved, seconded by Council Member Scharff to recommend to the City Council to ask Staff to consider these points going forward:

- A. To consider the clarity of freight issues;
- B. Property takings;

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- C. Separation of bike and pedestrian issues; and
- D. The station plans or effects.

Ms. Levin thought that it was unhelpful if the planned bike and pedestrian crossings were removed from the spectrum. The community was going to have questions of connectivity if those were removed.

Chair Wolbach agreed.

MOTION AS AMENDED PASSED: 3-1 Kou no

- 3. Verbal Update on Interagency Activities.

Ed Shikada, Assistant City Manager expressed he and Council Member Scharff attended the February, 2018 Local Policy Maker Group for Caltrain. The meeting focused on High Speed Rail and the pending Business Plan that was going to be released.

Council Member Scharff relayed that the Business Plan was now released.

Joshua Mello, Chief Transportation Official explained that Staff will update the City Council Rail Committee on any details that were in the newly released draft Business Plan if it pertained to Palo Alto. There was a Technical Advisory Committee meeting last week and he had an updated progress report from Menlo Park and Mountain View regarding grade separation. Mountain View's was in preliminary design and environmental work; Menlo Park was going to their Council for decision on a preferred alternative for grade separation in April, 2018.

Chair Wolbach inquired if Staff knew where Sunnyvale was at in their process.

Mr. Mello did not know, but could get that information.

Council Member Fine knew Mountain View was closing Castro Street and asked if they planned on doing a bike and pedestrian crossing under Castro Street.

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Mr. Mello understood that Mountain View planned to depress the roadway under the railroad tracks at Rengstorff and then build a bike and pedestrian underpass with no vehicle access.

Council Member Scharff noted that transportation officials he recently spoke with in Washington D.C. said Federal money was more focused on rural projects and not metropolitan projects.

Adina Levin added that Sunnyvale was looking into a study on an underpass at Mary Avenue, closing Sunnyvale Avenue at the tracks and installing a bike and pedestrian crossing there.

Future Meetings and Agendas

None.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting was adjourned at 10:51 A.M.