



HIGH SPEED RAIL COMMITTEE

Special Meeting
August 24, 2010

Chair Klein called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m. in the Council Conference Room, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California.

Present: Burt arrived at 8:36 a.m., Klein, Price, Shepherd

Absent:

1. Oral Communications

Bill Warren spoke regarding upcoming key dates for High Speed Rail Authority (HSRA) meetings. He said the final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be certified at the next board meeting on September 2, 2010. Objections relative to submitted comments must be on record before the meeting.

Robert McGuinn spoke regarding the impact that High Speed Rail is having on the housing market in Pal Alto, as his house has been n the market and has not sold. He stated houses 2 blocks further away from the tracks are selling.

2. Approval of July1, July 15, and July 29, 2010 minutes.

MOTION: Council Member Shepherd moved, seconded by Council Member Price that the High Speed Rail Committee approve the minutes from July 1, July 15, and July 29, 2010.

MOTION PASSED: 4-0

3. Discussion of California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) Supplemental Alternative Analysis Report (SAAR).

High Speed Rail Project Manager, Rob Braulik spoke regarding the staff report and what Staff is asking of the Committee. He then went on to talk about potential for mid-peninsula stations in Palo Alto, Mountain View, or Redwood City. He stated that the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) would consider a California Avenue station if the City were to write a letter to HSR asking for their consideration. He reviewed that a University Avenue station would require a 3,000 space parking structure and what CHSRA would include as their costs. However, he stated they would not consider paying for parking. High Speed Rail Authority is asking cities to embrace Pedestrian Transit Oriented Districts (PTOD) in the area of the train stations in order to have a station within their city. He noted Staff has put out a Request for Quote regarding impacts on property values in the area of the railroad tracks.

Council Member Shepherd asked what the time frame was for responding to the Supplemental Alternative Analysis Report.

Mr. Braulik stated the City has to get a letter back to HSR by August 27, 2010.

Council Member Shepherd asked for clarification on what the letter needs to state.

Mr. Braulik stated that the response does not need to include whether Palo Alto would want a station within the City. The City needs to just respond to the Supplemental Alternatives Analysis (SAAR).

Council Member Shepherd asked what the next timeframe would be.

Mr. Braulik stated Council can postpone response to the SAAR. There is no deadline for response.

Council Member Shepherd asked if there is a deadline for response on the station.

Mr. Braulik answered that there was not a policy deadline.

Mayor Burt asked about the square footage of the station.

Mr. Braulik stated the total square footage would be 67,000 absent the parking spaces.

Mayor Burt stated CSHRA has no funding for parking, he asked if their assumption was that the City of Palo Alto would finance it.

Mr. Braulik stated CHSRA was under the impression cities would enter into private partnerships or find other means to fund the infrastructure for parking.

Mayor Burt said there were other factors to consider such as whether or not the station would reduce or induce car trips. They should also consider the impact having an additional station on the peninsula would have on Caltrain. Lastly, they needed to also focus on additional funds.

Mr. Braulik said Staff did have additional information on additional peak hour trips per day. Having a station in Palo Alto would result in about 1,800 trips per day.

Mayor Burt said he was interested in the net impact on Palo Alto and the sub-regions. He wanted to know if it would bring a net increase or a net decrease of automobile trips to the area if there is a station. He asked if having a central station would cause more people to drive into the City to get to the station.

Mr. Emslie said that Staff was of the opinion that having a station in Palo Alto would draw a significant amount of regional traffic to the area.

Mayor Burt said he would also like to know if it would net more regional car trips.

Mr. Emslie said it would.

Council Member Price asked how far along a traffic study was. She said she assumed that would be detailed in the project EIR.

Mr. Braulik said no detailed traffic analysis had been brought to Staff, they had only heard general numbers for peak hour trips.

Council Member Price said it would not be launched until this is sorted out. She asked about construction impacts. She said they were being asked to make preliminary statements without specific guidelines from CHSRA. She said they needed more information regarding the impact stations would have on the freight operations. She asked for information regarding the timing of the economic study.

Mr. Braulik said Staff had requested information on property value by mid September. We would expect them to have that done this fall. The report would be a detailed analysis on property value and an economic analysis. He

said it would include, assuming the Committee continued to explore the option of a station, impacts from traffic and construction.

Council Member Price asked about incentives regarding the station.

Mr. Braulik said that Staff would continue to pursue incentives.

Beth Bunnenberg spoke regarding the supplemental Alternative Analysis Report and a High Speed Rail train station. She felt a station was not right for the community. She spoke regarding the fact that many historic neighborhoods, landmarks, and homes were very near the tracks. She voiced concern about the high speed trains affect on these resources. .

Herb Borock said that the City should not offer response to the authority as it would not be compliant with the Brown Act nor City policy.

Irwin Dawid spoke of his support to a University Avenue station. He said he was concerned about the potential parking garage. He wanted to know how many parking spaces would be at the Transbay terminal and that should be used as a basis. He also spoke about the relationship of a potential station and the City's preferred tunnel alignment. Council should consider endorsing a possibility of having a neighboring community getting a station.

Bob Moss stated the best response is to say that the City will consider it, because there are too many unknown factors. Palo Alto had underused garages now which he suggested several floors of each could be used for HSR parking. Palo Alto should not consider a 3,000 space garage until the City sees the ridership that warrants it.

Nadia Naik with CARRD said the reason for submitting a response was that Redwood City and Mountain View already had meetings scheduled for September regarding this. She wanted clarification on Caltrain's role in determining the placement of a station. Palo Alto should discuss a California Avenue station and how it would impact University Avenue traffic. She asked how the station would fit in with the project phasing. She wanted to know what the burden for a University Avenue station would be and how it would affect Menlo Park.

John Litzinger, P.E., Associate Vice President, HNTB spoke regarding the design team. Meetings were scheduled with Redwood City, Mountain View and Millbrae in September. There will be different schedules for the train regarding which stations they stop at, they will not stop at every station on the route.

Regarding the timing for building the Stations, typically one would build the infrastructure for the rails and then the station.

Council Member Price asked questions about the San Antonio Station relocation.

Mr. Litzinger said they were not pitching a different location, beyond some fine tuning adjustments of the station to provide access from all four sides.

Chair Klein said the CHSRA was not asking Palo Alto take a position, rather they were requesting the City's guidelines.

Mr. Litzinger agreed.

MOTION: Council Member Shepherd moved, seconded by Mayor Burt, that the High Speed Rail Committee direct Staff to schedule a outreach meeting regarding the station question then bring that information back to the Committee before a recommendation is made.

Mayor Burt asked for clarification regarding the community meeting versus a study session.

Council Member Shepherd clarified that she wanted to hear a Staff recommendation on how to engage the community regarding a High Speed Rail Station in Palo Alto and bring that recommendation back to the Committee.

Mayor Burt clarified that Council Member Shepherd's Motion was for a community outreach session versus a study session. .

City Manager, James Keene said Staff bring some outreach designs back to the Committee.

Council Member Shepherd it would be better to further discuss this item when there was more time.

Mayor Burt said it was important to go through the exercise of the public outreach meeting, even if they were to have some preliminary inclinations regarding the station. He said the Motion didn't address how to review the guidelines and address the issues.

Council Member Price said she wanted to know when the Committee would see a presentation containing more information regarding the pros and cons, using the criteria established in the supplemental related to stations.

Mr. Braulik said that information would be sixty days or so out. They needed to quantify what the station means for Palo Alto. That analysis would be done through a report and brought back to the Committee with a plan for engaging the community.

Council Member Price asked what the purpose of the outreach would be prior to the report.

Council Member Shepherd said this could be vetted better after the Staff recommendation.

Chair Klein this was a recommendation to Council.

Council Member Shepherd said she wasn't suggesting anything go to Council yet. She wanted Staff to come back to the High Speed Rail Committee.

Council Member Klein said they were discussing a policy question for the Council.

Mayor Burt clarified that the Motion was to request Staff to report to the Committee with a plan for community outreach.

Chair Klein said that costs Staff time, which costs money, when what was needed was policy direction from Council.

Council Member Price said the Policy and Services Committee guidelines offer some flexibility for moving forward without first going Council.

Chair Klein said that was applicable when there were sensitive deadlines. He said it was clear that Palo Alto does not and should not want a station and City money should not be spent to do this. The City should be clear on their own policies. CHSRA has given us an outline of what they want. That is enough to make a decision. He said that Palo Alto did not have the land or money to build the required amount of parking spaces. He mentioned the additional car trips new parking garages might bring into the City. He said this was not his vision for the City and he did not understand how it might benefit the community. He said there were many other issues that should be considered first.

Council Member Price said it is irresponsible for the Committee to move forward without more information. She said they did not have enough information on the pros and cons. She said none of this was addressed in the Comprehensive

Plan so the feasibility was not determinable yet. The Committee did not have enough information to be thoughtful, she said. She said there could be variables to the project that might make it feasible.

Mayor Burt agreed with Chair Klein regarding the thought that a station would be unfavorable. However, he said further analysis was needed as it was a major decision and they needed to be responsible to the community.

Council Member Shepherd said she thought the community would rally for the deep tunnel. To her surprise they preferred cap and cover over the tunnel. With that learning, she said she did not want to make assumptions here, even though she had the same inclination as Chair Klein did.

Chair Klein added that he thought the Committee was doing what CHSRA wanted with these studies. He felt the City should send CHSRA a strong message.

MOTION PASSED: 3-1, Klein no

MOTION: Council Member Shepherd moved, seconded by Council Member Price, that the High Speed Rail Committee direct Staff to work with a Policy and Services Committee Member and the Mayor to respond to the letter by the deadline (August 27, 2010) if it needed to be responded to at all.

Council Member Price volunteered to work with the Mayor.

Chair Klein said he would vote no as direction for the subcommittee was not clear and it wasn't clear if a response was required.

Council Member Shepherd said they don't have to respond.

Chair Klein said it is an artificial deadline. He added that the only appropriate response was no response at this time.

Mayor Burt agreed regarding the deadline. He said it was not appropriate to work within that three day deadline.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: Mayor Burt moved, seconded by Council Member Shepherd to respond to CHSRA with an objection to the three day deadline as it does not allow for a proper analysis or meaningful response, furthermore, any future unreasonable, artificial deadlines will not be responded to.

Council Member Price asked if they were going to offer a timeline to the CHSRA.

Mayor Burt said they will responds when there is time to look at it further. It was important to communicate to them that the City will refuse to act on these artificial timelines.

Council Member Shepherd withdrew her original Motion.

Council Member Price clarified that it was her assumption they would respond at some point.

MOTION PASSED: 4-0

Mr. Braulik talked about track options as presented by the CHSRA; Aerial, at-grade and open trench. He said Staff was looking for a response from the Committee on a list of questions on the Staff Report.

Chair Klein said this conversation was going to take some time. He wanted to know if there were any other items on the agenda that would require action before they adjourned.

Mayor Burt asked about the phased alternatives

Chair Klein said there were a variety of alternatives.

Mr. Emslie this item was the most time critical as it required full Council Direction on September 13, 2010.

Chair Klein said that would be the driving force in determining how many meetings they would prior to September 13th. He said it was clear they would require at least one more meeting.

Council Member Price asked if the open trench option was higher at grade than other options, because of retaining walls and such. She said the materials made it seem that way.

Mr. Litzinger said he did not have the information to discuss that. He said he would bring back information through Staff.

Council Member Price said that the design objectives suggested that the open trench option was higher than burm and at-grade options due to retaining wall, drainage, etc.

Mr. Litzinger said the report was referring to the cost not the design objectives

Council Member Shepherd asked how confident they were with the cost estimates. She said they had been erratic in the past. She said she would like further information.

Mr. Braulik said CHSRA would proceed with 15% of design. He said these were preliminary numbers, and the best numbers available. Staff was not making assumptions regarding their accuracy. Firm numbers won't be available until February 2011. He said that Hatch, Mott, McDonald could perform a review but it would not be a detailed analysis. The listed costs do not include right-of-way costs.

Council Member Shepherd said she thought it was 35% of design. The alternatives for other communities that have dropped out of most options were based on costs. She said it was likely that Palo Alto will have the CHSRA preferred alternatives. It was critical to make sure the City was in the 90% ballpark and not 50% ballpark. Can that information be highlighted since at grade is one-third the cost of open-trench.

Mayor Burt said it did not include property acquisition cost, nor the diminishment of property value costs. He said an important community discussion on open trench with limited cover may be preferable to the community. Phasing is the most likely to occur although it is unlikely to have phasing on Peninsula. A two track at-grade system should be reviewed regarding impacts on traffic, safety and emergency response.

Mr. Emslie said he had not able to confirm if it were 6 or 10 trains per hour

Mayor Burt said it would be a phased two-track with some trenching with at-grade crossing. That needed to be analyzed.

Council Member Price asked for details on the construction impacts.

Mr. Litzinger said all that information will be included in the Draft EIR, scheduled for December 2010.

Council Member Price confirmed that there would not be an early release of any elements of the Draft EIR.

Chair Klein asked if it were common for cost estimates to not include land acquisition.

Mr. Emslie said that in freeway projects he was familiar with, land costs were given a line item.

Chair Klein asked why there wasn't an estimate on land acquisition costs.

Mr. Litzinger said that information was not available as the design had not determined yet. The cost estimates given were meant as comparison estimates.

Chair Klein said they had various rights of way estimated. He wanted to know why they could not estimate an 80 foot right of way and take specific properties.

Mr. Litzinger said they were working with various cities on alignment, land use sensitivity, they would move alignment so we don't have to take properties if possible. It was a process that was not so cut and dry.

Chair Klein said they said that about other estimates as well.

Mayor Burt said that in all other areas there were broader costs stated, the same principal should apply to property takings. He said members of the community had estimated various rights of way widths. That sort of range seemed consistent; several alternatives already existed for them to narrow the range

Mr. Litzinger said they would take that suggestion and try to use it. He said the problem was that property values change.

Mayor Burt said Palo Alto was being asked to respond without a major cost factor. Alternatives have been removed up and down the Peninsula due to costs.

Mr. Litzinger said the SAAR options moving ahead or fell away did not move away due to costs but rather feasibility.

Mayor Burt that was inconsistent with past statements.

Mr. Litzinger said he would not comment on what other members have said.

Council Member Shepherd said there was one property owner trying to sell a home, and others are locked in their homes because of this. She said they needed to move quickly going to 15% design. They should raise the right of way with that.

~~4. Discussion of draft High Speed Rail — Economic Development Analysis~~

~~5. Updates and Informational Items~~

~~—— Contract Budget Update~~

~~—— Legislative Update~~

~~—— Legislative Services Update~~

~~—— Property Value Analysis Request for Qualifications (RFQ) released~~

~~6. Discussion of draft letter from Mayor Pat Burt to Roelof Van Ark, Chief Executive Officer, California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA).~~

7. Future Meetings and Agendas

Mr. Emslie said they would potentially have to adjust the time for a September 1st meeting to avoid a conflict with the board meeting.

Council Member Shepherd suggested they meet on August 31, 2010.

Mayor Burt said he had conflicts with supplemental meetings. He said the 8:30 am meetings were difficult enough. Later in the day would be better.

Council Member Price agreed.

Chair Klein suggested they meet at 4:30 pm on August 31, 2010.

Council Member Shepherd how much time would be needed. If it was going to run over, the 30th might be better.

Mayor Burt start at 5:00 pm on 30th and 8:00 am on 9/2 would be potential options.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 a.m.