



School/City Liaison Committee

Summary Minutes

FINAL



School/City Liaison Committee Meeting

Wednesday, February 28, 2007

8:15 AM to 9:30 AM
Palo Alto Unified School District Office
Conference Room A
25 Churchill Avenue
Palo Alto

In Attendance:

City of Palo Alto

Larry Klein, Council Member
Bern Beecham, Council Member
Emily Harrison, Assistant City Manager
Steve Herrera, Palo Alto Police
Gayle Likens, Transportation Manager
Kathy Durham, Coordinator of Transportation Systems Mgmt
Steve Emslie, Director of Planning

Palo Alto Unified School District

Barb Mitchell, Chair
Mandy Lowell, Board Member
Jerry Matranga, Deputy Superintendent
Kathy Durkin, Manager, Auxiliary Services
Leslie Fiedler, Nixon PTA
Carol Anderson,
Penny Ellson, PTA

Handouts: All handouts can be viewed at the 25 Churchill

Traffic Safety/Safe Routes to School

PAUSD Resolution 2005-06.13 (Endorsing the Safe Routes to School National Partnership Consensus Statement)

Draft Presentation on Sustainable Schools

PAUSD Elementary "Usual" Commute Choice, 1994-2006

Meeting convened at 8:20 a.m.

1. Oral Communications: None

2. Approval of Barb Mitchell as Chair to the City School Liaison Committee

Ms. Mitchell moved to approve. Mr. Klein seconded. Motion approved 2-0.

3. Approval of Minutes from November 29, 2006

Ms. Mitchell moved to approve. Mr. Klein seconded. Motion approved 2-0.

4. Approval of Agenda for February 28, 2007

Ms. Mitchell moved to approve. Mr. Klein seconded. Motion approved 2-0.

5. Traffic Safety Update:

Ms. Likens handed out an agenda on current projects. Ms. Likens said staffs from both agencies have been working together on implementing phase 1 of the Charleston and Arastradero corridor project. They have been meeting on a regular basis with the stakeholder group, which includes all the neighborhood association representatives.

Phase 1 is the trial of the re-striping Charleston Rd. & El Camino and also included the reconstruction/reconfiguration of the Gunn High School/Arastradero intersection. The Gunn High School/Arastradero intersection is a permanent installation and the changes on Charleston Rd. are a 2 year trial.

Ms. Likens said the City had planned to schedule implementation of phase 2 which is the re-striping of Arastradero Rd. next summer, but the Utilities Department had scheduled projects at Arastradero Rd. and the Public Works Department recommended it would be better for those projects to be done first before paving. The Utilities Department is committed to work on its projects over the 2007-08 fiscal year. Therefore, the Arastradero Rd. re-striping has been deferred to the summer of 2008.

Mr. Beecham asked if these were gas, water, or sewer projects. Ms. Likens said there is an electric project near the intersection of El Camino, as well as and possible a sewer and gas as she recalls.

Ms. Lowell asked if the information presented had been presented to the Los Altos Hills residents on Arastradero. Ms. Likens said there will be a letter that will be sent out to the residential neighborhoods and the Los Altos Hills associations.

Ms. Harrison suggested that the District also send out information regarding the projects to the Los Altos Hills community. Ms. Lowell said when the City does their update to Council; the District will have something in writing that they will convey to the Los Altos Hills community.

Ms. Likens said the District is looking into converting a speed bump into speed hump at Gunn High School to make traffic move more smoothly.

Ms. Likens said Hoover school does not have a left turn into the school driveway along Charleston Rd. The traffic engineer will assess whether a left turn can be implemented to improve traffic.

Ms. Likens said they are looking into placing an enhanced protective crossing for pedestrians at Briones Park. Ms. Likens referred to a drawing on the white board which explained the scenario.

Ms. Likens said they are working on implementing traffic adaptive signals, particularly starting on Arastradero Rd. Data will be collected and they will work on this project over the course of the next few months.

Ms. Mitchell asked about the grant related to the Stanford Ave. and El Camino crossing? Ms. Likens said they have secured the grant and are waiting on the official resolution from the Valley Transportation Agency.

6. Sustainable Activities:

Ms. Durham handed out a resolution adopted by PAUSD and the City of Palo Alto on endorsing safe routes to school national partnership consensus statement. Ms. Durham hands out proposals that were put forward by the City's Green Ribbon Task Force to enhance school commutes and presented to City Council and are now under consideration. The City and the District are working together to increase sustainable commutes.

Ms. Ellson handed out a rough draft of a power point presentation on enrollment increase and trip reduction program. Ms. Ellson said she went over the presentation with Mr. Matranga and Ms. Durkin to ensure the District was thinking along the same lines. Ms. Ellson said we have done a good job maintaining the numbers of trips to our neighborhood schools considering enrollment increase but have been less successful at choice schools. It was discussed at a previous meeting that we should start working on a carpool matching program particularly where kids are

traveling longer to get to school and walking and biking are not an option. Ms. Ellson said they are looking into working on a trip reduction program in spring at one of our choice schools. Other carpool matching programs have been attempted at Ohlone: at the time there was a very active volunteer but when this person left, the numbers decreased. We also attempted it at Terman and there were good numbers but the numbers have dropped since. Ms. Ellson said they are looking into how they can maintain better carpooling numbers. Ms. Ellson is also looking into an opt-out program and someone who works at Google is volunteering to help generate some maps.

Ms. Ellson handed out the PTA letter sent to City/School Liaison Committee members and the School Board on January 9, 2007, which requested that the District please consider the school commute issue when looking into enrollment increases and identify any mitigation that might be necessary. Ms. Ellson said a concern the PTA Traffic Safety Committee had is traffic safety might fall through the cracks because of all the other issues. Ms. Ellson said they want to ensure the City is getting all the information they need in time to give the District a good and thoughtful response.

Mr. Matranga confirmed that one of the criteria as the attendance boundaries are studied is traffic safety and did speak to Marilyn Cook to see how we can get the participation of this group in looking at how to address the traffic safety issues.

Ms. Lowell said it would be useful if we could have someone knowledgeable with the expertise to discuss traffic issues.

Ms. Fiedler asked that if a traffic group is put together it would be helpful to include a representative from Stanford because they also have a lot of traffic issues.

Ms. Mitchell asked Mr. Matranga where you would time this in terms of numbers of scenarios that will be discussed at the next meeting. Mr. Matranga said there will be an Attendance Advisory meeting on the next phase and will be looking at what will be the planning around that process and how many scenarios will be looked at.

Ms. Mitchell asked if it's unfair to ask what the timing is. Mr. Matranga said it's not unfair but doesn't know the answer at the moment.

Ms. Durham asked for the Committee to view the last page of the power point presentation which referred to what they are planning to do for Earth Week. Ms. Durham said there will be a kick off festival called the "Step It Up Festival" April 14th and March 19 has been designated to be "Green Commute Day" to encourage carpooling especially for schools.

Ms. Durham said last year they had the kids write why they were coming to school by walking, riding their bike or other earth-friendly means on a leaf and place it on a tree. The idea is to encourage the schools to challenge themselves to not only do a one day effort but plan a way to have more volunteers. Ms. Durham points out in the handout how carpooling has decreased since 1996. Ms. Durham said they are making an effort to improve the numbers and will report back.

Ms. Likens said the Public Works Department will be holding a community meeting to unveil the plans for the “traffic safer to school walkway” along Maybell from El Camino to Juan Briones School. There are 2 projects that have been combined; one is the trial of traffic calming and safe routes to school along Maybell and Donald in conjunction to Bicycle Blvd. Ms. Likens said the plan is to place five speed tables along the corridor between Terman and El Camino and also some median refuge points that lead to the intersection at Columbe and Amarand and Columbe and Maybell. Ms. Durham said the second project is a new asphalt walkway along Maybell Ave. on the north side of Juana Briones School funded by a state grant. Ms. Likens said the project will move forward this summer.

Ms. Ellson said the PTA and Safety Traffic Committee would like to thank the Palo Alto Police Department for all its work with “Operation Safe Passage”.

Ms. Mitchell would like to pass on a thank you from the Hoover staff and parents to the Palo Alto Police Department for all its work.

Ms. Lowell also thanked the Palo Alto Police Department for all its help.

7. Future Meetings and Agenda Items:

Mr. Matranga said he and Ms. Harrison met to discuss city partnerships as a way to structure upcoming City/School Liaison Committee meetings.

Ms. Harrison said when the Library Advisory Commission met it made a number of recommendations to the City Council on how the City and the District can work together more effectively on library services; many have already been discussed at the City/School Liaison Committee meetings. Ms. Harrison said she and Mr. Matranga thought it would be appropriate to look at those recommendations again at the March meeting.

Mr. Matranga said at the April meeting the Committee will discuss emergency preparedness and the work that has been done between the District and the City. The Committee will also discuss the Sustainable Schools Committee efforts with energy conservation.

Mr. Matranga said there has been some initial discussion about the emergency operations center at the City. Ms. Harrison said the City needs a back-up emergency operations center if the Civic Center Emergency Operations Center is compromised, probably in an earthquake. Ms. Harrison said they have been looking for a location that is seismically safe that could also serve as the District’s back-up EOC to 25 Churchill. Ms. Harrison said Gunn looked like the most viable site at that point and are also looking at the use of a facility across the way in Menlo Park.

Ms. Mitchell asked about the Menlo Park facility? Ms. Harrison said it is the Menlo Park Fire District search and rescue center.

Mr. Matranga said in May the committee will be discussing traffic safety update and looking into the next school year and how traffic safety is being assessed with respect to the attendance areas.

Mr. Matranga said in June the Committee will look into the fields and recreation agreements between the City and the District.

Ms. Harrison said they will also have a budget check-in in May to make sure we don't miss issues and that property tax assumptions are the same.

Ms. Lowell said someone asked about converting one of the middle school fields to synthetic turf and would like to know if this will be discussed at the June meeting.

Ms. Harrison asked if it was Paul Losch from the Parks and Recreation Commission and Ms. Lowell said yes. Ms. Harrison said Paul Losch would like to speak to the committee about it and she will make sure it's placed on the agenda when it comes around. Ms. Lowell asked when that will be. Ms. Harrison said at our next meeting in March.

Mr. Klein said there is a lack of understanding in the general community about how much the two Library Systems. Ms. Harrison suggested inviting the Library Advisory Commission and maybe advertise the meeting a lot better than what we normally do. Mr. Klein said he would like to invite the members of the LAC and other members of the City Council. Ms. Harrison said we could invite the Board to a City Council meeting.

Ms. Lowell said at some point it was raised to have a City Council/School Board meeting so the community would be aware of what the issues were and who was taking care of what. Ms. Lowell said if we were to have a meeting with both boards together we should have some prioritizing in terms of what topics will be discussed.

Mr. Klein said it would nice to invite the Library Advisory Commission

Mr. Beecham said he would like to just bring the LAC because once we open it up to the Council then we open it to the Board and that would be a far different meeting, with a lot more background to it and preparation for our staff and ends up being something more than on libraries. Mr. Beecham said he would like the LAC to come to the next City/School meeting.

Mr. Harrison said the LAC will be invited to the next meeting to present its recommendations.

Ms. Lowell asked if we solicited questions from Council members and Board members and gave them to Ms. Harrison and Mr. Matranga to ensure those questions get addressed and reduce your roles as carriers of information. If there were questions that weren't addressed last year, is this a way we can get information to others?

Ms. Harrison asked if the Board had the LSMAR report and recommendations? Ms. Harrison said she will make sure they get the report and it may cause them to have

some additional questions that we might be able to work on before the meeting. Ms. Lowell said she is not getting the same level of questions that Mr. Klein seems to be getting.

Mr. Beecham asked about the emergency preparedness backup EOC. He had not heard about the center in Menlo Park. Ms. Harrison said she had just visited it last week. Mr. Beecham said it would be something the City and District can work together on to have a backup site.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.