

City of Palo Alto

Date: December 8, 2010

MINUTES FOR MEETING OF December 8, 2010Opening

The City/School Committee held a special meeting in the Council Conference Room at 250 Hamilton Ave, Palo Alto. The meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m.

* All handouts can be viewed in the City Manager's Office 7th Floor 250 Hamilton Ave.

City of Palo Alto Representatives Present:

Greg Schmid, Chair of Committee, Council Member
Nancy Shepherd, Council Member
Steve Emslie, Deputy City Manager
Rob De Geus, Community Services Division Manager of Recreation
Rob Braulik, HSR Mgmt Specialist

Palo Alto Unified School District Representatives Present:

Dana Tom, Board Member
Cathy Mack, CBO
Bob Golton, CBO and Bond Manager
Amy Drolette, Student Services Coordinator

Oral Communications

Golton said he wanted to take this opportunity to share how glad he was to be involved in the City School Liaison Committee and this group of 4 Committee Members and Emslie and Whitley. He said there was a very cooperative spirit.

Townsend said she echoed Golton.

Approval of Minutes –
October 27, 2010

MOTION: Townsend moved to approve the minutes from the October 27, 2010 meeting. Shepherd seconded. Minutes were approved 4-0.

Review of Recent City
Council/PAUSD Board
Meetings

PAUSD: Townsend said that the Mandarin emersion program got rolled into ongoing status. There were only 6 or 7 members of the community to speak to it and they were all in the affirmative.

Tom said at the meeting before last he brought up that they should have an agenda item about PAUSD's election cycle. He thinks it is very important that it be addressed. Townsend added that would be coming up at the next board meeting. She said PAUSD actually has a policy and they will need to look at own policy and see if they want to change it to see if they want to move to the same election cycle as the City Council.

Shepherd asked if PAUSD has contacted Liz Kniss about this since it was her initiative. Townsend said not as of yet but said they would do that and appreciated the suggestion.

City: Chair Schmid said there were a couple of items coming from City Council to report out on. There was a development project at the Council a couple of weeks ago and there was dialog and a Council Member asked about what impact this issue had on PAUSD. The development director said they didn't look specifically but is aware they need to do that because of a letter they received from the School Board and the City Attorney jumped in and said the City cannot look at the impact on schools on every project but can look in the general context. Schmid said he thought the letter was very helpful from PAUSD.

Chair Schmid said the other item to report out on was an issue Council voted on a couple of weeks ago was a LED neighborhood development amendment to the bldg code. It asks every development

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in the City that is over a ¼ acre to fill out a form impact the neighborhood. One of those criteria is the access to schools.

Shepherd said she is not sure how much say we have in actual LED Cal-green issues. A lot is state mandated that we have realigned our ordinances and zoning for. She said she attended the SB375 meeting related to schools. Barb Mitchell was at that meeting as well and as soon as the presentation was over they asked how some of the issues get resolved within our own district. After hearing examples from other districts, it appears Palo Alto is ahead of where most others are in collaboration with City/School relationship.

Update on Teen Mental Health and Trackwatch

De Geus said Project Safety Net (PSN) Committee continues to meet and are meeting tomorrow. A MOU has been prepared by the group from the 26 organizations involved in PSN. They were asked to define their commitment and put it on one page and they did that. The other thing they asked is that each member considers fundable modules with respect to the things they are going to do.

De Geus said there was a conference in Houston on the 41 Developmental Assets that was attended by staff and Teen Council. He said there were several thousand people there and 4 teens from Palo Alto were sponsored. There were as many adults as teens at this conference. It was a very good experience for the teens as well as himself and Drolette.

De Geus said the last thing he wanted to mention on this topic was the City Council will take some action on Monday, December 13 on the Developmental Assets. There is a resolution going before Council to support as a framework for all programs within the City. There is another resolution to support Santa Clara County Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention before Council for Monday as well.

Townsend asked for an update on Track Watch funding. De Geus said we are at the point to decide to end it since the funding runs out at the end of December or continue the program another 6 months. De Geus said there has been an uptake on activity at the tracks. There have been 3 incidents 2 of which the police took the students. The consensus of the group is to again extend the funding for the Track Watch program. There is a meeting scheduled with Jim Keene to discuss it.

Drolette said she had 2 items she wanted to share with the Committee. She said one of the items in the MOU is continued support of students, families and staff members in mental health. Last Thursday there was a breakfast with all the therapists on the list that the families, students and staff are referred to. What she found was when the counselors and school psychologists met with the therapists they were able to make more meaningful referrals for the students. She said it was very powerful and meaningful. She said some data from last year was there were 35 referrals and this year alone up to December there have been 65 referrals.

The other item Drolette wanted to report out on was 2 weeks ago she met with Ellen Wright, who is renowned for her grant writing work, as we pursue the extended service grant in 2011. At the last PSN meeting they were able to identify of the 22 strategies which one would be the focus or target and include in the Serve Grant in that the language and services have to be under intervention and not prevention. One of the obstacles will be how to prove an existing crisis. The original feedback was very promising but they made some recommendations as we pursue the grant.

Chair Schmid asked the timeline for the grant. Drolette said due to the nature of the grant there is no set deadline. For us to have the sustainability, this will be pursued in January.

Update on High Speed Rail

Emslie introduced Rob Braulik, HSR project manager.

Braulik wanted to give the Committee an overview of where we are with HSR. He said at the federal level with the recent election results there is going to be complete change in the House in terms of who the chair of transportation is going to be. Our federal lobbyist has indicated there will substantive

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changes to funding for HSR at the federal level.

Emslie said that is significant because HSR is dependent on a substantial amount of federal funding.

Braulik said at the State level the voters approved in 2008 a bond for about \$10 billion. Recently the HSRA has secured a \$715 million Railroad Administration funds to build the first segment of the HSR system. What they agreed to do is build a train segment from Borden to Corcoran. Those funds had to be allocated this year. They are under severe criticism for that decision. What that means is that they (HSRA) are putting their time, limited staff and resources into that Central Valley segment. What that means to Palo Alto is the peninsula cities have voiced severe criticism for the CAHSRA plans for the building segment along the peninsula. The primary reason is 3 track alternatives that are still under consideration which are aerial, at grade and open trench. In Palo Alto what Council indicated was at a minimum what they would accept is the open trench. The City of Palo Alto is Council communicated that they did not want a mid peninsula station in Palo Alto. They also communicated a vote of no confidence in the Rail Authority over a number of items. Braulik also said Council authorized staff to engage the services of a professional consulting firm. We just hired a firm called Economic Planning Systems out of Berkeley. They just started working on the property value and economic value analysis along the corridor in Palo Alto.

Braulik said there are 2 environmental components to this system. One is the program EIR and the other is the Project EIR. Council decided to join the cities of Menlo Park and Atherton to litigate on the Program EIR. The Project EIR work is underway right now. The Project EIR was supposed to be published in December and the agencies were going to have 45 days to respond. Now, according to staff although the HSRA has not officially announced this is it will not at a minimum be published until March of 2011. It is likely to be pushed out further but until the Project EIR is certified the HSR project cannot continue.

Shepherd said the build in the Central Valley does not include any trains, just tracks, and no trains.

Tom asked if that route was selected because it was the least controversial. Chair Schmid said he thought it was because it had a right of way. Emslie said the right of way was part of the reason why, topography was also part of it.

Shepherd wanted to add that the mathematical error that was made during the ridership study was one of the causes for the lawsuit the City has joined. The mathematical error was made in the actual calculation for the ridership made in the incremental steps that you build a ridership study on. Elizabeth Alexis initially discovered the mistake and was able to get the state to stop work on. The Berkeley institute of transportation has verified this particular concern with the ridership study. This brings in a lot more traffic. If they correct that error it will bring in 3 times what the calculation was.

Braulik said he strongly urged everyone to read a Peer Review that came out and is posted to the website at this link: <http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civica/filebank/blobload.asp?BlobID=22663>

He said there are 6 main bullet points to scan through that called out a number of questionable data if you don't want to read the entire report. The link to that report is: <http://www.bakersfield.com/news/local/x716461163/Peer-report-calls-for-thorough-reassessment-of-high-speed-rail-project>

* The "absence of a credible financial plan" has become a "critical concern" requiring a solution that balances the government's need for private-sector project investment with the private sector's need for more firm financial commitments from the government -- an issue the report calls a "chicken and egg" conundrum;

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* The rail authority needs to define more clearly what role various involved parties should play with regard to the project's ownership, construction, financing and general management. The report went on to offer five possible models to address the problem;

* Authority officials need to be more forthcoming about how they think the project will be affected by changing estimates of passenger demand, revenues, investment costs, operating costs and project timing;

* A legal opinion is required to distinguish the 2008 bond measure's prohibition on any public "operating subsidy" from the private sector's request for passenger demand or revenue guarantees;

* There needs to be greater recognition by the authority that resistance by private railroad operators could be "problematic";

* For cost and safety reasons, the authority needs to be clear about how much of the proposed 800-mile system would run at ground level versus through a tunnel or atop an elevated track.

Update on Cubberley

Golton said PAUSD has had 6 closed sessions on Cubberley at regular meetings and one open meeting. He can't report out on the closed session but during the open session PAUSD's interest is in accommodating enrollment because of the increased enrollment. The yields are increasing and being surprised by the number of children generated by these developments particularly at the elementary level. PAUSD has the need for growth and the City has been very supportive because PAUSD is an incredible asset to the City.

Townsend said at the next meeting on December 14 the Board there will be the report from the demographers Lampkopf and Gobalet.

Emslie reported out that since the 3 way meeting with Foothill/DeAnza, the City and PAUSD back in June there hasn't been a lot of action. The Chancellor and City Manager are in communications. They still remain interested in the 8 acres the City owns at Cubberley but there haven't been any substantive conversations on property basis or negotiations.

Chair Schmid said he'd heard informally that the Foothill /DeAnza were focused on the parcel tax and after the tri-meeting they pulled back and said to wait until the parcel tax was out of the way. He said he would anticipate we should hear something soon.

Chair Schmid said there is a parcel behind Greendale that PAUSD might be interested in. He asked if there was any comment on that. Emslie said a church which is now owned by Summerhill. Emslie said they haven't actually transferred title. The City has known for some time that that property was going to be on the market. The preschool will close and announcements have been made that they will close at the end of the year. Summerhill development has the property under contract. Shepherd asked what the zone was there and Emslie said it was PF (public facility) or SFR (single family residential).

It was confirmed after the meeting that the zoning for 525 San Antonio is R-1.

Shepherd said the 8 acres that the City owns are PF as well and wanted to ask PAUSD a few questions. She said it is undisputable that enrollment is going up. She asked when PAUSD was thinking of reopening Cubberley, 5 years or 10 years down the road or something closer. Tom answered there has been no discussion on the long, long term. Chair Schmid wanted to add a follow up. He said in 2014 the current lease with the City with the rest of the Cubberley property is up for renewal. He said that Shepherd articulated very well there is some infrastructure issues that need to be thought about and at some point the City has to address that. He said 2014 is strategically the date where some decision/clarity or a plan to come into action.

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Shepherd said she knows a full fledged high school can be built without the 8 additional acres. Tom said enrollment is growing and when. It has to be thought about at what level, elementary, middle or high schools to build out. Shepherd asked if there was a way PAUSD for better information to be communicated to the Council so the community can be prepared.

Chair Schmid wanted to toss out a notion. He said PAUSD is receiving substantial payment from the City each year for the Cubberley property in the UUT. He said it would make sense in the 2014 renewal that if PAUSD is interested in it that a portion would go into the maintenance of the facility.

De Geus said there was a Cubberley advisory group and the members would like to know what is happening with this as well so any information the District could give would be very helpful.

Future Meetings and Agendas

Shepherd said the SEA report comes out next month and Mike Edmonds will be bringing it to Council electronically first and then in hard copy sometime in January. There will be a study session at some point. She said she could have the link to the report and the date of the study session sent to PAUSD. Emslie said that the Auditor could report out to this committee at the January meeting.

Tom asked if Council change assignments at the beginning of the year. Emslie said yes and we alternate meetings back to PAUSD.

January agenda: set the tentative agenda for the year. Emslie said we will bring last year's calendar for reference to the first meeting and then bring Mike Edmonds to the first meeting to present the SEA Report.

Tom said he'd like to add the demographer's report to that agenda and if we don't have time, continue it to the February meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.