



City of Santa Barbara Planning Division

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

October 22, 2009

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Larson called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

PLANNING COMMISSION:

Present:

Chair Stella Larson

Vice-Chair Addison S. Thompson

Commissioners Bruce Bartlett, Charmaine Jacobs, John Jostes, Sheila Lodge, and Harwood A. White, Jr.

Commissioner Harwood White, Jr. arrived at 6:11 P.M.

Absent:

Commissioners Charmaine Jacobs and John Jostes.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION COMMITTEE:

Present:

Chair David Pritchett

Vice Chair Mark Bradley

Committee Members Hillary Blackerby, Keith Coffman-Gray, Edward France, Steve Maas, and David Tabor

Chair Pritchett left at 8:43 P.M.

STAFF PRESENT:

John Ledbetter, Principal Planner

N. Scott Vincent, Assistant City Attorney

Browning Allen, Transportation Manager

Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner

Steve Foley, Supervising Transportation Planner

Barbara Shelton, Project Planner/Environmental Analyst

Julie Rodriguez, Planning Commission Secretary

I. ROLL CALL

II. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:

A. Comments from members of the public pertaining to items not on this agenda.

Chair Larson opened the public hearing at 6:04 P.M. for Comments from members of the public pertaining to items not on this agenda. The following comments were made:

1. Lee Moldaver, Coastal Coalition for Sustainable Transportation, invited the public to the COAST Annual Award Ceremony next Thursday, October 29th, from 5 P.M. to 7 P.M.
2. Ralph Fertig, President, Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition, distributed a handout from the U.S. Census data showing that fewer Santa Barbara residents are driving to jobs and are shifting to alternative transportation modes.

With no else wishing to speak, Chair Larson closed the hearing at 6:09 P.M.

III. DISCUSSION ITEM:

ACTUAL TIME: 6:09 P.M.

WORK SESSION ON THE PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF THE PLAN SANTA BARBARA TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL

This will be the fourth in a series of Plan Santa Barbara joint PC/TCC meetings related to travel model development. The City's travel demand model is being used to evaluate the 2030 traffic ramifications of various land use and policy decisions being considered within the Plan Santa Barbara process and forthcoming Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). This meeting will introduce decision makers to the travel model results of the following DEIR scenarios:

- The Plan Santa Barbara project
- Alternative 1
- Alternative 2

The team will also be discussing the results of these scenarios in comparison to the existing condition and the 2030 "No Project" scenario.

The purpose of this meeting is to help get the public and decision makers understand how the City's travel demand model performs and to learn its advantages and limitations; also to understand the many questions that will arise with the presentation of this information. This will enable the consultant team and staff to draft a better, more articulate transportation section within the forthcoming DEIR, and ultimately help decision makers further refine and articulate the transportation vision and direction for Plan Santa Barbara.

Staff: Robert J. Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner

Email: RDayton@SantaBarbaraCA.gov

Robert J. Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner provided preliminary remarks and introduced Jeremy Nelson, Transportation Planner, Nelson/Nygaard; and Brian Welch, Fehr & Peers, who gave the consultant presentation. Also introduced were John Ledbetter, Principal Planner, Barbara Shelton, Environmental Analyst and Dan Gira.

Discussion was held regarding Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies as related to the alternatives presented; stand-alone analysis of policies and programs in comparison to cumulative analysis; and reduction in peak-hour commuter vehicle trips; the relationship of policies and programs to each other; the percentage of vehicle trip reductions based on the program's framework; and an explanation of deviation and assumptions used in the model. Also discussed was how the 101 freeway factored into the model; consideration of transit passes; public parking practices, such as commuter day passes; and trip generation rates throughout the model.

Dialogue was exchanged concerning the development of the alternatives presented; and intersection levels of service; city-wide comparative impacts of Alternative 2; Transportation Demand Management and the absence of recalibration to the model to account for impacts by changes in the economy.

Chair Larson opened the public hearing at 8:07 P.M.

The following people provided public comment:

1. Judy Orias, Allied Neighborhood Association, was concerned with the lack of information available and would like more time to address the information presented. Concerned with commercial employee parking and the effects on commercial businesses and to adjacent neighborhoods. Also concerned with zero paring requirements to the supply of ADA accessible parking. Would like to see survey of where commuters come from and their destination. Questioned if housing development would address commuter needs. Discussion needed on effects of these policies on residential quality of life and commercial health of the city.
2. Dr. Paul Hernadi, Citizens Planning Association, asked for additional time to respond to the consultant's presentation. Commented on discrepancies in the intersection levels of service.
3. Naomi Kovacs, Citizens Planning Association, submitted a written questionnaire of concerns to be considered by Staff and the consultant. Echoed request for additional time to submit written comments.
4. Kellam de Forest questioned the definition of commuter used in the study. Questioned how the model addresses commuters who start in Santa Barbara and work in other areas; such as UCSB or Cottage Hospital.
5. Cathie McCammon inquired when the public's questions would be answered. Asked for a copy of the consultant's PowerPoint presentation. Would like copies of the boader study made available. Questioned if pie charts reflected more than working residents in the downtown area.

6. Michael Chiacos, Community Environmental Council, felt that the model clearly shows that increased TDM improves all the scenarios. The CEC supports increased more robust TDM regardless of which scenario is chosen. Questioned whether the model could react to fuel price changes. Higher fuel prices combined with TDM would reduce traffic.

With no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 8:25 P.M.

Mr. Dayton addressed the public's request for additional time by stating that this discussion provides the public an early start in submitting input; the PowerPoint presentation will be made available on the PlanSB site; and the public's questions will be incorporated into the final report.

Discussion was held regarding the open-ended timing for public input to be included in the draft policy documents and Draft EIR. The next meeting with the Planning Commission will be on November 19, 2009 and will cover the Land Use Map. The Draft EIR will be ready in mid-February and revealed at an open house.

Commissioners and Committee Members made the following comments:

1. Committee Member Pritchett commented on the level of service table that showed 52 intersections under four alternatives and asked to identify a policy model, such as one that with a goal to decrease levels of service at intersections, to assist in choosing an alternative.
2. Committee Member Bradley would like to see the TDM package tried under different scenarios. Would like to see creativity used in the parking policy. Suggested looking at a maximum parking policy.
3. Commissioner Lodge was interested in knowing more about the number of commuters that come in from San Luis Obispo County into Santa Barbara and where they work.
4. Commissioner Bartlett felt that, like the Land Use Maps, the MODA boundaries should not fall in the center of streets. Consideration should be given to the parking policy and creative concepts.
5. Committee Member France inquired how the TDM fit in with the Circulation Element. Appreciated adding TDM to Land Use. Would like to see the Transportation and Circulation Committee take an aggressive take on the Circulation Element.
6. Committee Member Tabor was pleased to see the other half of the Circulation Element discussed. Recalled how the Farmer's Market was initially thought to have an effect on Carrillo traffic but resulted in less peak-hour traffic, exemplifying how sometimes less can be more.
7. Commissioner White inquired on the varied numbers reported for commuters coming in from the north and whether it was still 13,000 commuters coming in from the south. The MODA is the place where transit is convenient. Would like to see the map reflect where convenient transit exists in the city. Sees Highway 101 as a continual increase in commuters and sought clarification on the yearly increase.

- Suggested meeting with the Downtown Parking Association and Downtown Parking Committee would be useful in garnering participation.
8. Chair Larson would like to see the Presidio included in the maps. Inquired on the cost for each single use of the model.
 9. Commissioner Thompson appreciated the information presented and sees it as a starting point. Finds some of the results in the levels of service unacceptable and would like to identify realistic TDM options to add to the model to improve results.
 10. Committee Member Coffman-Gray agreed with Bradley and Thompson about providing additional TDM analysis with the PlanSB scenario or other alternatives. Would like to see how different housing scenarios, such as downtown housing, affect traffic. Feels that this is an optimal time to complete the Parking Master Plan parking along with PlanSB. Asked that copies of the PowerPoint be distributed in all City Meetings.
 11. Committee Member Blackerby echoed the concerns for commercial parking and felt that the idea of unbundling parking with residential is a great idea.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Larson adjourned the meeting at 9:11 P.M.

Submitted by,



Julie Rodríguez, Planning Commission Secretary

