

**APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2004**

1 **ROLL CALL**

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3 Time: The meeting was called to order at 7:10 by Chair Bronstein.

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5 Location: North Berkeley Senior Center.

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7 Commissioners Present: Bronstein, Curl, Pollack, Poschman, Stoloff, Wengraf, Wiggins,
8 Wrenn.

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10 Commissioners Absent: Tabb.

11
12 Staff Present: Homrighausen, Rhoades

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14 **ORDER OF THE AGENDA**

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16 No change.

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18 **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

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20 Public comment was taken following the presentation on agenda item 9, Presentation by
21 AC Transit on Bus Rapid Transit, as all comment pertained to that subject.

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23 **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

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25 No report.

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27 **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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29 Commissioner Wrenn reported that the UC Hotel/Conference Center Subcommittee will
30 report to the commission at the February 11, 2004 meeting.

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32 **PLANNING STAFF REPORT**

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34 Mark Rhoades indicated Dan Marks could not attend due to a meeting with CNA. Also,
35 the Commission was informed the City Council will conduct a hearing on a possible
36 development moratorium on University Ave. on March 16.

37
38 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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40 M/S/C to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2004 meeting (Poschman/Pollack).
41 Ayes: Bronstein, Curl, Pollack, Stoloff, Wengraf, Wiggins, Wrenn. Noes: None.
42 Abstentions: None. Absent: Tabb

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44 **FUTURE AGENDAS**

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46 The Chair commented that the University Avenue Strategic Plan is scheduled for
47 discussion on the February 11, 2004 meeting agenda.

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49 **PRESENTATION BY AC TRANSIT ON BUS RAPID TRANSIT**
50 **ALTERNATIVES IN DOWNTOWN AND THE SOUTHSIDE.**

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52 Commissioner Wiggins recused himself and left the meeting.

53
54 Greg Harper, AC Transit Director, introduced the project. Jim Cunradi, AC Transit
55 Project Manager, gave a presentation of options for BRT routes to be analyzed in the
56 EIR/EIS.

57
58 The Commissioners directed questions to Mr. Cunradi regarding speed of bus travel, size
59 of buses and bus stops, funding for the project, frequency of bus service, experience with
60 BRT on the San Pablo corridor, and why not all the alternatives requested in Draft
61 Southside Plan are proposed to be analyzed.

62
63 The Chair entertained public comment. John Caner spoke concerning potential diversion
64 of traffic onto neighborhood streets and effect on Telegraph Merchants. Wendy Alfsen
65 spoke concerning accommodating safe, comfortable access to the stations. Paul Vojta
66 spoke regarding impacts of reduced Telegraph capacity on the neighborhoods. Hank
67 Resnick spoke concerning accommodation of bicycles. Doris Moskowitz opposed a
68 pedestrian transit mall on Telegraph as her business depends on customers dropping off
69 used books. Marc Weinstein was concerned about a pedestrian/transit mall because the
70 used book and music stores depend on customers bringing the product to the stores.
71 Martha Jones asked that the Telegraph Avenue Association preferred alternative be
72 included in the EIR/EIS analysis, and commented that the loss of parking spaces would
73 not work. Andy Ross spoke in opposition to a pedestrian/transit mall. Brendan Heafy
74 spoke in opposition to a pedestrian/transit mall. Sarah Syed spoke in support of BRT and
75 improved bus service, and stated the AC Transit options should include analysis of the
76 options discussed in the work done on the Southside Plan. Ed Dougherty spoke in
77 opposition to the BRT project, indicating that reduced parking and access will be bad for
78 businesses. Roland Peterson spoke in opposition to a pedestrian/transit mall. Ken
79 Sarachan spoke in opposition to a pedestrian/transit mall, and commented that BRT
80 would not result in significant new ridership because UC provides free employee parking.
81 He suggested AC Transit should consider express service as a lower-cost option. Dana
82 Tsubota representing Munger Properties spoke in opposition to a pedestrian/transit mall
83 and asked AC Transit to evaluate impacts of BRT on business. She also asked that the
84 impact on Bancroft, an emergency access route, be analyzed, and that noise and pollution
85 impacts be analyzed. John English commented that AC Transit should analyze additional
86 alternatives for Telegraph south of the campus, and for Telegraph south of Dwight Way.
87 Jelani Dotson voiced concerns about shoppers' access and loss of the street's ambience if
88 fast buses dominate Telegraph. He stated that AC Transit should include the alternatives
89 in TAA's June 4, 2003 letter to Jim Cunradi, and that a fifth option, with no transit mall,
90 should be included. Andy Katz said faster transit is needed on the corridor, access to
91 businesses must be identified, traffic diversion into nearby neighborhoods must be
92 studied, traffic calming elements should be part of the project, and AC Transit should
93 consider eliminating parking just during the peak hour. Steve Finacom commented that
94 the EIR/EIS will have to quantify what a pedestrian/transit mall means. Dave Campbell
95 supported making Bancroft and Durant two-way streets. Doris Willingham expressed

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96 concern regarding the impacts on the neighborhood. Ruth Bird expressed concern
97 regarding BRT's effect on the Telegraph craftspeople. Craig Becker spoke in opposition
98 to a pedestrian transit mall. Helen Burke requested that AC Transit be involved in
99 planning with UC on the hotel/conference center project. Diane Stockler expressed
100 concern regarding BRT's potential impact on safety and crime issues.

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102 The Chair asked for comment from the Commission. The Commissioners made the
103 following comments, to be forwarded to the Transportation Commission:

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- 105 1. AC Transit should consider in Option 1, that on one side of the street there would
106 not be a dedicated lane, but there would be a traffic filter.
- 107 2. AC Transit should add a variant of Option 2 that looks at both Bancroft and
108 Durant being two-way streets, and indicate whether or not it could be a viable
109 option, explaining why or why not.
- 110 3. AC Transit should consider the Shattuck changes and the Southside changes as a
111 unified project rather than as separate projects.
- 112 4. AC Transit should consider a modified "no project" alternative to see where
113 benefits could be optimized. In other words, what benefit would be gained from
114 an "operational changes only" alternative, with no capital improvement changes?
- 115 5. AC Transit's analysis should take into account BRT's impact on the ambience
116 and urban character of Telegraph Avenue north of Dwight Way.
- 117 6. AC Transit is asked to address concerns raised about a pedestrian/transit mall's
118 potential for pedestrian/bus conflicts and safety. The response should address
119 potential conflict, as well as potential for BRT to reduce or mitigate conflict.
- 120 7. AC Transit needs to factor into its analysis the Draft Southside Plan policy that
121 Dana would be two-way and a bike route in the future.
- 122 8. AC Transit should assure that the EIR/EIS would not preclude Telegraph Avenue
123 Association (TAA) Alternative A from the workshop TAA held in September
124 2002.
- 125 9. The Planning Commission understands from AC Transit comments that the
126 environmental analysis will be conducted for the major components of all of the
127 proposed alternatives, and that after the environmental document is completed,
128 the final project may be different from any of the current proposed alternatives.
129 The Commission is concerned that this approach may not result in an adequate
130 assessment of the project that is ultimately proposed. The environmental work
131 must not preclude consideration of potentially superior alternatives.

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133 **ADJOURNMENT**

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135 Meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.