



Public Works Commission

Regular Meeting
PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
Minutes
Thursday, May 6, 2004
North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Avenue

CALL TO ORDER: 7:03 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Broderick, Holland, Perry, Piercy, Prevo, Shumer, St. John

Absent: Commissioner Dacey

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tom Lollini, Assistant Vice Chancellor, U.C. Berkeley, stated that the commission process is almost complete for the Foothill Bridge project, except for going to the next meeting of the Transportation Commission. U.C. is requesting a “tentative resolution” from the Council at the earliest possible time, so that student funds are not unnecessarily expended on final design and engineering. He indicated that U.C. has been working with city staff for several years on street and safety improvements on both the north and south sides of campus and is participating in 50% of the costs of certain improvements, such as the Hearst/Oxford intersection. There is under an agreement signed by the Mayor for the NEQSS project. He pointed out that project costs for the bridge have increased by 22% to meet the highest seismic standards. Commissioners indicated that they would like to see “hardscape” mitigations in return for the air rights. In response to a Commissioner question as to why the neighbors are so very angry, he surmised that there’s a long history going back to Soda Hall and more. In response to observations that U.C. does not consider the neighbors, he pointed out that the design has changed considerably for them. Nevertheless, the bridge cannot be moved closer to La Loma due to lack of available clearances and that the entire housing project would need to be reconfigured.

Daniella Thompson, neighbor, expressed her opinion that an annual fee should be charged for the private use of the public air space. She added that we are dealing with cumulative impacts of U.C. growth and that the neighbors’ sense is that they are allowed to speak to U.C. but they are not heard.

Jim Sharpe, neighbor, pointed out that there is yet another encroachment being sought for Davis Hall and that he feels this should be downgraded to a Street Use permit. He also wanted to make it clear that he is under the impression that funding for the Foothill Bridge is from a State bond.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Commissioner Perry handed out information and further described the very informative series called the “Berkeley Lab Friends of Science.”

MINUTES:

March 4, 2004: In response to requested corrections by David Mandel of U.C., the Commission requested that the Secretary come back to the next meeting with specific language changes.

April 1, 2004: Under Action Item #4, delete “and report back.” The minutes were approved as amended (MSC Perry/Shumer).

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Foothill Bridge Proposal:

Secretary Egeberg explained that this was placed for action in case the Commission wanted to form an Ad Hoc Subcommittee or make other procedural determinations. He further explained the updated process for a conditional approval of a permit. It was noted that the Commission wants to see the Transportation Commission’s action scheduled for May 20, 2004, before considering its overall recommendation. Public Works Director Cardinaux feels that the City should proceed in a timely manner, and it was noted that U.C. is hoping that the Council could act before its summer recess. He suggested that the Commission could consider the value of the permit versus appropriate mitigations. The Commission expressed an interest in researching the values of air rights in other communities. Commissioners also expressed that its Council report should present its full rationale for its recommendation, rather than a mere “yes” or “no.”

The Commission reviewed the communications of the Public Hearing on April 29, 2004. A lack of dialogue with the neighborhood and sensitivity to the disabled community was apparent. It was also noted that there is no comparison with the I-80 pedestrian bridge. Also, the LRDP seems to be another example of not working with the public (City staff is not the “public”). It was finally noted that the Foothill Bridge is not a public facility, and its safety aspects benefit only students and not the general public.

The Commission then discussed the approach to preparing the Council report. It was felt that an analysis of the input from other commissions and from the public was not needed, and a recommendation could proceed. Director Cardinaux suggested that the report could just do that and not necessarily include a definite recommendation on the permit. The

consensus of the Commission, with the exception of one Commissioner, decided that individual Commissioners could take the lead on specific issues, such as pedestrian safety, disability access, public space for a private facility, open communication, design, alternatives, mitigations. A Special Meeting was set for Thursday, May 13, 2004, from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon to continue this direction.

2. Recommendation on Upper Sewer Laterals and Nonconforming Storm Drain System:

It was decided to finalize the policy as-is, rather than put in more detail, since staff in Public Works and the City Attorney will be doing so. The current version, as amended in the minutes of the last meeting, was adopted (MSC Perry/Piercy).

3. Discussion of City Manager's Report Regarding Frequency of Commission Meetings and/or Other Possible Cost Reductions:

It was agreed to support the Solid Waste Commission's recommendation and that the draft should be modified as follows: "We concur with your conclusion, including your recommendation that we continue to meet on a monthly basis." The rewritten version was adopted (MSC Piercy/Broderick).

4. Review of University of California's Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR):

No action was taken.

5. Support of Local Bond Measure for Storm Water and Creeks:

This item is being held over until the next meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

1. Sidewalk Integrity Discussion:

This item will be put on hold until staff may return with reconciliation with the General Plan.

2. Change in Report Format for "Past Public Works Commission Recommendations:"

The new format was noted and accepted.

3. U.C. Hotel Draft Report:

It was reported that nothing has changed in the draft report.

4. Brown & Caldwell Study on Rate Extensions for Sanitary Sewer Service and Storm Water Fees:

This report on sanitary sewer and storm water fees, which includes what the “fair share” contribution of the University of California should be, has now been finalized. The report documents data and conclusions previously presented to the Commission. It was so noted and may be further discussed at a future meeting.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

1. Commissioner Binder (June – Broderick & Perry)
2. Litter Issue Update (June – Dacey & St. John)
3. Street Lighting Standards (including maintenance)
4. Recommendation of Street Cleaning Program
5. Citywide Plan for future Rule 20A Undergrounding Funds
6. Standardization of City Street Lights
7. Public Works Commission Work Plan
8. Ad hoc subcommittee & liaison assignments (Quarterly – Jun, Sep & Dec)
9. Liaison reports (Quarterly – Jun, Sep & Dec)

ADJOURNMENT: 9:45 p.m.