



DRAFT MINUTES

San Francisco County Transportation Authority

Tuesday, February 14, 2023

1. Roll Call

Chair Mandelman called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Present at Roll Call: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, Stefani, and Walton (10)

Absent at Roll Call: Commissioner Safai (entered during item 4) (1)

2. [Final Approval on First Appearance] Approve the Resolution Making Findings to Allow Teleconferenced Meetings under California Government Code Section 54953(e) - ACTION*

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Walton moved to approve the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dorsey.

The resolution was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, Stefani, and Walton (10)

Absent: Commissioner Safai (1)

3. Approve the Minutes of the January 24, 2023 Meeting - ACTION*

During public comment, Roland Lebrun corrected the transcription of his public comment under item 12 at the January 24, 2023, Board meeting. The minutes stated that he did not support the Transbay Joint Powers Authority's decision to switch the high speed rail tunnel design from three tunnels to two, when he had said he did support it. Transportation Authority staff replied that they would amend the minutes to reflect this.

Commissioner Melgar moved to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Commissioner Watson.

The minutes were approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, Stefani, and Walton (10)

Absent: Commissioner Safai (1)

4. Community Advisory Committee Report - INFORMATION*

Kat Siegal, Vice Chair of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), reported that the CAC voted to re-elect Chair Kevin Ortiz and herself as Vice Chair for 2023, and they also welcomed new District 4 member Calvin Ho. She stated that the bulk of the CAC



meeting was spent discussing the Prop K grouped allocations that were also on the Board's agenda, focusing on the Quick-Build Implementation and J Church Muni Forward design phase funding requests. Ms. Siegal expressed Chair Ortiz's concerns with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) being behind schedule and his request for a comprehensive update on project delivery of quick-builds and a list of projects in the pipeline. She stated that ultimately the quick-build request was approved. On the J Church Item, Ms. Siegal mentioned concerns with some of the improvements raised by four public commenters, that were elevated by District 8 representative Rachael Ortega's concerns about a lack of community outreach. Ms. Siegal stated that SFMTA responded to these concerns, including noting that the request would fund additional community outreach, and the remaining six funding requests were approved unanimously. Ms. Siegal wrapped up her report by stating that the CAC also approved the State and Federal Legislation Program and received presentations on the Prop L Implementation Approach and an update on Slow Streets from the SFMTA.

5. Appoint One Member to the Community Advisory Committee - ACTION

Amelia Walley, Analyst, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Mariko Davidson spoke to her interest and qualifications in being appointed to the CAC.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Safai commented that he was excited to make a motion to appoint someone who was both a mother and active user of an electric bike for the transportation of herself and her children.

Commissioner Safai moved to appoint Mariko Davidson to the CAC, seconded by Commissioner Dorsey.

The motion to appoint Mariko Davidson was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

6. Allocate \$4,188,294 and Appropriate \$50,000 in Prop K Funds, with Conditions, Allocate \$1,179,000 in Prop AA Funds, and Allocate \$2,000,000 in TNC Tax Funds for Seven Requests – ACTION*

Lynda Viray, Transportation Planner, and Aliza Paz, Principal Transportation Planner, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Commissioner Safai commented on the J Church Muni Forward project and spoke in support of moving forward with the \$3 million request. He noted that his constituents have dealt with significant pedestrian safety issues along San Jose for many years and they have worked to push SFMTA to work with them on major J line improvements. He added that funding was crucial for corridor changes such as pedestrian safety redesign, robust infrastructure, traffic lights, and quick build projects. He said that there was a Mission Terrace neighborhood event for pedestrian safety on San Jose Avenue for Valentine's Day called Have a Heart. He supported the efforts of this community group in promoting pedestrian safety. Commissioner Safai acknowledged



sharing the J line with Chair Mandelman in District 8 and said he hoped to move the request forward because pedestrian issues along San Jose were neglected for a significant amount of time.

Vice Chair Melgar thanked the CAC for their robust discussion. She said these allocations represented a big investment in the southwestern part of San Francisco. She expressed appreciation for this work to increase bike and pedestrian safety. She expressed support for the J Church Muni Forward project as it ran along the border of District 7 and District 11 and was an important downtown connector for Sunnyside residents and City College.

Commissioner Preston asked if the Decarbonizing Downtown Business Deliveries Study was for bike delivery.

Deputy Director for Planning Rachel Hiatt responded that it was not necessarily for bike delivery, but bike delivery would be a possible approach that the working group could explore and recommend. She added that the Department of Environment was conducting a pilot to subsidize electric bikes for delivery. She said the Transportation Authority was in coordination with the Department of Environment and would be sharing the study with the working group.

Commissioner Preston said he was pleased to see the coordination with the Department of Environment as their pilot was underway. He stated that pilot efforts should be scaled as surveys showed a significant demand for electric bike delivery. He referenced a study where 70% of delivery drivers said they would use electric bikes but there were only 35 electric bikes being used. He said the neighborhood commercial corridors were clogged with delivery vehicles. He observed the relatively small \$50,000 and encouraged staff to be more ambitious in terms of expanding these types of efforts.

Commissioner Preston commented on the FY 23 Vision Zero Quick-Build Program Implementation (Part 1) project and recognized the scope of work for District 5 on Larkin, Leavenworth, and Golden Gate. He requested a response to the concerns CAC Vice Chair Siegal raised during the CAC Chair's remarks about why only six quick-builds were moving forward as opposed to the broader goal of 20 quick-builds annually in the Vision Zero Action Plan. He asked why there was a limited number of projects and why the identified work was not doubled or tripled.

Jamie Parks, Livable Streets Director at SFMTA, responded that the Quick-Builds identified aligned with the amount of TNC tax funds available for this particular allocation request. He explained that SFMTA worked to identify projects such as repaving or JFK Drive closure work. He said SFMTA staff looked for coordination opportunities that added up to the amount of funding available with the TNC tax. He explained that the Quick-Builds program used other funding sources like a general fund set aside for bicycle and pedestrian safety and a state earmark from Assemblymember Ting of \$1.5 million for a sloped quick-build. He said SFMTA looked for additional funding opportunities as well and recognized the need to continue advancing quick-builds faster.

Commissioner Preston asked if this item was limited by the dollars available and not by the capacity to implement.

Mr. Parks responded in the affirmative and added that their request was based on the



amount of TNC tax funds that was available for allocation.

Commissioner Preston asked what quick-build work would be completed at the JFK connections as it is at the intersection of multiple districts.

Mr. Parks responded that the purpose was to look at the connection between the JFK Promenade, Fell Street, Oak Street, and the Panhandle as the JFK connection was now closed to cars. He stated that there was a need for bigger capital investments, and said they were coordinating with San Francisco Recreation and Park. He said in addition to this coordination effort SFMTA was evaluating quick-builds to make the connection from the JFK Promenade to the Panhandle seamless. He said this would also connect with the extension of the Fell emergency bike lane into a permanent status and the Oak quick-build. He added that Oak quick-build work would start within a month and there was synergy amongst this work.

Commissioner Preston asked about the timeframe for the JFK connections work.

Mr. Parks responded that they would be working on the design process concurrently with the Oak Street quick-build. He said they were looking to begin design and outreach in March or April 2023.

Commissioner Preston commented that the intersection work was essential due to the permanent JFK closure. He said that people tried to navigate the end of the Panhandle illegally crossed over multiple lanes of traffic down Fell, and also turned from Stanyan. He stated there was an urgency to improve the weak link in the west of Divisadero east west bike travel. He expressed gratitude for SFMTA's work on these connections.

Chair Mandelman said he was not planning on voting against this request but said he had concerns. He explained that when he started on the Board of Supervisors, the J Church was the worst performing and least reliable Muni line. He previously asked the SFMTA to evaluate improvements, and this prompted about 1 ½ years of planning including community meetings, which led to some valuable ideas and some controversial ones. He said the controversial ideas included transit stop removal and consolidation, and the removal of parking. He said after the previous planning process SFMTA was asked about the benefits of the improvements that would be done and the response was that there would be two minutes of potential improvements but would include many disruptions. He added that SFMTA staff did not believe they could run the volume of cars into the tunnel as was done in pre-pandemic times and still reliable frequent service on the J. The Chair continued saying that SFMTA tried taking the J out of the tunnel, but it did not deliver the promised service on the surface to the great consternation of his constituents who rallied and advocated to have it put back in the tunnel. He said the J was back in the tunnel but had the worst service since his time on the Board with 20-to-30-minute wait times. He expressed frustration and said he has requested for over a year that SFMTA evaluate changes to make the J work, not negatively impact tunnel operations, and deliver more frequent and reliable service on the surface. He understood that SFMTA had staffing shortages and different challenges but said he was shocked that SFMTA wanted to start another conversation about changes to the J Church without a broader vision for the transit line. He requested to hear from SFMTA about the improvements were planned outside District 8 on the stretch of San Jose because there were dangers there that required improvement and wanted to know how much



of the \$3 million was being applied to that specific work and what other improvements would people see.

Felipe Robles, J Church Muni Forward Project Manager at SFMTA responded that there were two different aspects to improving the J Church to consider. He said the first aspect was the capital piece where funding would go towards improvements such as transit stop improvements and surface work on the line between Church and Duboce down to Balboa Park. He said the second aspect related to service and how the line operated on the street and in the tunnel. He stated that the \$3 million would be applied toward capital improvements and would address feedback from Commissioner Safai's Office. He said that a large part of this project was to evaluate pedestrian safety and transit reliability on Church and Market. He explained the current project was different from the 2019 project where SFMTA had initial discussions, received community feedback, and refined their designs. He explained the reason for returning to the project was due to a different perspective on Church Street, San Jose Avenue, and the Church and Market intersection. He continued by saying that his colleagues were conducting a separate parallel analysis of J Church service. He also added SFMTA would continue training and hiring operators while making operational improvements for the J. He said SFMTA were about 12 to 18 months away from a potential service increase option and would coordinate with Chair Mandelman's office on the service plan and any potential impacts.

Chair Mandelman asked if this investment was primarily about solving the San Jose and Church and Market problems and if Noe Valley need not worry.

Mr. Robles responded that a major aspect of the J transit stop improvements in the Noe Valley area included the same pedestrian safety issues that they heard from residents along San Jose Avenue. He said they were responding to the Board of Supervisors' request for SFMTA to make improvements to flag stops. He added this would allow people to get on and off the bus or the train without any parked cars or other obstructions in the street or without an active traffic lane next to the transit vehicle. He said that these improvements were also part of this project including the San Jose Avenue portion of the line as well as the Church Street portion of the line.

Chair Mandelman asked if there were any stop removals or moved stops planned in Noe Valley.

Mr. Robles responded that they did not have any stop removals in their scope. He explained their scope was preliminary but if there was community feedback on stop removal SFMTA staff could implement those in the future.

Deputy Director for Policy and Programming Anna LaForte noted with respect to the earlier discussion on the quick-build program, that staff was planning to bring an item to the Board in April to program additional TNC tax funds which could be used for quick-builds and that staff also planned to recommend funding for the residential application-based traffic calming program to enable a continuous cycle of concurrent evaluation of applications, design and implementation.

During public comment, Mark Norton commented on the J Church Muni Forward project. He was pleased to hear Mr. Robles confirm that there would be no removal of stops in this program. He said the elimination of the 29th and Church Street stop to save 15 seconds would be an accessibility issue. He shared a change.org petition



online that included 196 signatures from San Franciscans who opposed this elimination and he also brought copies of the petition with signatures. He added that the Noe Neighborhood Council also opposed the stop removal proposal. He said he hoped it would remain off scope or his group would rekindle opposition.

David Hooper from Mission Terrace commented that the pedestrian issue about the J line had gotten his neighborhood's attention since 2006 when the community worked with then Supervisor Gerardo Sandoval. He said they received one stop sign for San Jose Avenue at San Jose and Santa Innes. He continued to say that they would be having a Valentine's Day Have a Heart event to encourage SFMTA to increase traffic-controlled stops on San Jose Avenue. He explained the J line needed to increase its throughput and San Jose Avenue had timely arrival. His assessment of J Church service was that it was a subway issue, nothing he had worked as a train controller at Muni in Central Control. He added this issue has been acknowledged by SFMTA's Julie Kirschbaum and others at public meetings. He continued by stating that the list of what was proposed for the J was not created by the neighbors and that the only time there was leverage with the SFMTA or any city department was when there was money on the table. He appreciated the comments made by Commissioner Safai, Vice Chair Melgar, and Chair Mandelman and encouraged SFMTA to work with them.

Jodie Medeiros, Executive Director of Walk SF, expressed strong support for the Vision Zero Quick-Build Program Implementation funding request. She said the city made a strong commitment in its Vision Zero Action Strategy to bring safety improvements to the entire High Injury Network by 2024. She said while the City has made progress there were still about 50 miles of designated high injury streets yet to receive safety improvements. She said in reviewing 2021 and 2022 work the SFMTA had fallen short of its commitment with the number of quick-build projects completed and was not meeting this goal. She added that Walk SF and their partners were eager to understand the next set of quick-builds that would be brought forward to the Board. She noted the pause between the funding allocations Prop K and L and hoped it would not delay quick-builds in 2023. She said the Board should inquire how SFMTA plans to increase quick-builds. She said they have seen this program have positive results by implementing cost effective tools and encouraged the Board to ensure SFMTA has the resources to move faster and meet their goal of applying the toolkit on the entire High Injury Network by 2024.

Edward Mason commented on the J Church Muni Forward project improvement and explained this was the transit effectiveness program a decade ago. He said the J Church was no more or less reliable than other rail lines based on failure rates. He said subway delays materialize as surface delays and operator availability was a key element. He referenced a 2019 report that proposed 5% travel time saving. He commented that this work would be done for \$20 million and it lacked a cost benefit analysis. [Inaudible] He said community trust again was in jeopardy and the Board had a fiduciary responsibility.

Anastasia, a Noe Valley resident, said she appreciated being able to call in to provide public comment. She said the Board received a detailed letter on behalf of her community from Christopher Faust, President of Upper Noe Neighbors, to reconsider and abandon the J Church Muni Forward proposal. She said she attended the last CAC meeting and the project was up for debate. She explained CAC member Rachael Ortega from District 8 decided to move forward so the funds would be available to



study the problem further. She said the project would not achieve intended goals to reduce travel times, improve reliability along its service routes between Dubose and Balboa Park Station, and increase pedestrian safety, but would increase congestion, hinder trains and buses, and remove safe passage for pedestrians crossing Church Street. She added the project would likely have a negative effect on Upper Noe merchants on Church Street who were recovering from pandemic losses. She stated there did not seem to be any need for this project as currently described and it would be a waste of tax dollars.

Chris Faust, President of Upper Noe Neighbors, confirmed he sent a detailed letter to the Board. He said they were in favor of pedestrian safety measures and supported work along San Jose Ave. He said a concern of the J Church Muni Forward project was that the Church Street and 30th Street areas would have a negative impact on pedestrian safety by removing stop signs and replacing a traffic light at an intersection. He said Cesar Chavez and 24th Street could instead benefit from traffic lights and the J could be sped up. He said the traffic bulbs on 30th Street would divert from east bound on 30th Street and right hand turns would not be able to be made. He said this would hinder buses and the J Church.

Commissioner Safai moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Melgar.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

7. Adopt the Fiscal Year 2022/23 Transportation Fund for Clean Air Local Expenditure Criteria – ACTION*

Mike Pickford, Principal Transportation Planner, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Melgar moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Dorsey.

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

8. Approve the 2023 State and Federal Legislation Program – ACTION*

Amber Crabbe, Public Policy Manager, presented the item per the staff memorandum

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Melgar moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Engardio.

The motion was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

9. State and Federal Legislation Update - ACTION*

Mark Watts, Sacramento Advocate, presented the item per the staff memorandum.



During public comment, Eileen Boken, Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods spoke on her own behalf in opposition to the Transportation Authority's support for Assembly Constitutional Amendment 1(Aguilar Curry). She references that the Yes on L campaign spent \$1.5 million and the No on L campaign spent \$2,000 which made it noncompetitive. She stated that the money in campaigns creates an uneven playing field that this amendment would exacerbate that problem.

Commissioner Melgar moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Stefani.

The motion was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

10. Visitacion Valley Community Based Transportation Plan Update — INFORMATION*

Christopher Kidd, SFMTA Transportation Planner, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Commissioner Ronen shared her excitement for the project and spoke positively about how the study asked community members to prioritize projects and how it was conducted.

Commissioner Walton shared that he agreed with Commissioner Ronen.

There was no public comment.

11. Internal Accounting Report, Investment Report, and Debt Expenditure Report for the Six Months Ending December 31, 2022 — INFORMATION*

Cynthia Fong, Deputy Director for Finance and Administration, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

There was no public comment.

Other Items

12. Introduction of New Items - INFORMATION

There were no new items introduced.

13. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 a.m.