

Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP) December 18, 2019 Special Meeting Summary

Subject

Connecting Palo Alto
Palo Alto Grade Separation Study

Meeting date and time

December 18, 2019
4:00pm-6:00pm

Location

Palo Alto City Hall
Community Meeting Room
250 Hamilton Ave, Palo Alto

Prepared by

Chantal C. Gaines, City of Palo

Meeting called to order at 4.00 pm

XCAP Member Attendees

Gregory Brail
Phil Burton
Tony Carrasco
Inyoung Cho (after roll call)
Megan Kanne
Larry Klein
Judy Kleinberg (after roll call)
Patricia Lau
Adina Levin (after roll call)
Nadia Naik
Keith Reckdahl
David Shen
Cari Templeton (after roll call)

Excused

n/a

Meeting Agenda Recap: The Meeting Agenda included:

1. Welcome and Roll Call
2. Oral Communications
3. Discussion: Update from Technical Working Group Regarding Review of New Ideas/Iterations with Volunteer Civil Engineers and AECOM
4. Action: Screen New Ideas and Decide if any New Ideas Should be Recommended to the City Council for Further Study
5. XCAP Member Updates and Working Groups Updates
6. Action: Update XCAP List of Questions
7. Staff Updates
8. Adjourn

There is video of the meeting presentations and the PowerPoint is archived on the Connecting Palo Alto website. They are not re-summarized below. Video link: <https://midpenmedia.org/palo-alto-expanded-community-advisory-panel8-12182019/>.

Oral Communications:

5 members of the public addressed the XCAP

Discussion and Action Items

Agenda Item #3: Discussion: Update from Technical Working Group Regarding Review of New Ideas/Iterations with Volunteer Civil Engineers and AECOM

7 members of the public addressed the XCAP on this item.

Materials for this Item:

- [Item 3: Technical Working Group Update re New Ideas](#)
- [Shared at Meeting: Updated AECOM Memo Related to Item #3](#)

Overview: There was a Technical Working Group meeting yesterday and reviewed the new ideas with the Retired Civil Engineers, Staff, and AECOM. The discussion was started on the new ideas as well as the existing alternatives.

There is an updated memo that was shared today that the Technical Working Group will use to summarize the meetings. The memo was prepared by AECOM.

Report Out Summary from the Technical Working Group:

New Idea Proposer	Summary of the Technical Working Group Discussion	Other Notes
Roland LeBrun	This concept is not a new design, but instead just a modification of the existing tunnel alternative.	There were differences in calculations between Roland and AECOM. There seems to be no fatal flaws in his design. If we do want to pursue the South Palo Alto Tunnel alternative, then we could go back and look at these calculation differences. It should not be done at this time is the general recommendation.
Tony Carrasco	<p>If the Council is willing to look at something that is more expensive, this can be considered.</p> <p>Side note: It is inappropriate to call the Kingsley design a 6-lane design. It is a 4-lane design with 2-turn lanes (not through lanes) which matters for description purposes.</p>	<p>There is no design fatal flaw for this concept based on the Technical Working Group design.</p> <p>The AECOM evaluation of the roundabout was looking at the more intense variation of Tony's concept. It was unclear from the previous proposal that Tony's concept was two different variations. (The two concepts clarified are: using the at-grade infrastructure as one idea; and the on-grade roundabout and building a new viaduct as the other idea/variation).</p> <p>In the concept, the viaduct proposed would likely land after Churchill and eliminate the Stanford Game Day station.</p>

Michael Price	The number of lanes is a discussion point. There could be merging issues due to this. There were concerns about turning radii for buses and emergency vehicles. The design was slightly modified as shown in the updated memo.	There are no fatal flaws on this one either. But there are some changes that are needed for the design to function better. There may be some property impacts in this concept and that needs to be further studied (residential properties as well as Caltrain Right of Way).
Elizabeth Alexis	There are potential property impacts in this concept. Going north on Alma, you would have to go right on Charleston and then use the roundabout to get to westbound Alma. There are property impacts for the roundabout and thus more research and dialogue is needed.	Cut through traffic could be an issue if drivers wanted to avoid the roundabout. The proposer wants to consider design speeds, etc. Drivers can avoid traffic lights which will help with traffic flow. There is still room for more discussion between the proposer and AECOM on this one. There are some additional considerations needed to be reviewed such as shoulder width and number of lanes in the roundabout.

Agenda Item #4: Action: Screen New Ideas and Decide if any New Ideas Should be Recommended to the City Council for Further Study

2 members of the public addressed the XCAP on Item 4.

Links to Item Materials:

- [Item 4: Screening New Ideas](#)

Overview: This item follows the previous item which summarized the different new ideas being discussed. This item (Item 4) is where the XCAP will vote on whether to move the concepts forward for recommendation to City Council or not.

Summary of XCAP Actions on New Ideas:

Proposal/Idea	Short Description of Concept	Those in favor
Tony #1 Variation	Close Churchill and remove everything now at Embarcadero and build a traditional roundabout at grade with a new viaduct. (short: demolition and build a viaduct).	Nadia Naik moved to take this concept forward to Council. Keith Reckdahl seconded. Passed. With the following votes: Yes: Brail, Carrasco, Kanne, Lau, Levin, Naik, Reckdahl, Shen, Templeton No: Burton, Cho, Klein Absent: Kleinberg

Tony #2 Variation	<p>Closure and do a full at grade roundabout with viaduct using the existing bridge.</p> <p>Also stated as: Close Churchill and take the existing bridge structure and add a viaduct. Use the existing railroad for a new road and some sort of roundabout structure.</p>	<p>Keith Reckdahl moved to take this concept forward. Larry Klein seconded.</p> <p>Didn't Pass. Yes: Burton, Carrasco, Klein, Shen No: Brail, Cho, Kanne, Lau, Levin, Naik, Reckdahl, Templeton Absent: Kleinberg</p>
Elizabeth Alexis	The Meadow/Charleston underpass concept.	<p>Keith Reckdahl moved to take this concept forward. Larry Klein seconded.</p> <p>Passed. Yes: Brail, Burton, Carrasco, Cho, Kanne, Klein, Lau, Levin, Naik, Reckdahl, Shen, Templeton No: n/a Absent: Kleinberg</p>
Roland LeBrun	Modifications on the South Palo Alto Tunnel dimensions.	1 XCAP member wanted to move this forward. No motion made.
Michael Price	Lower road at Churchill with other road changes.	<p>Keith Reckdahl moved to take this concept forward. Megan Kanne seconded.</p> <p>Passed. Yes: Brail, Burton, Carrasco, Cho, Kanne, Klein, Lau, Levin, Naik, Reckdahl, Shen, Templeton No: n/a Absent: Kleinberg</p>

Agenda Item 5: XCAP Member Updates

- 1. Item skipped. Just email your updates to staff.

Agenda Item 6: Action: Update XCAP List of Questions

- 1. Staff will share the list of questions online from the draft design charette (that never took place) in addition to the listed version you saw in the packet today.
- 2. From the Chair: In reviewing the questions the XCAP should be asking themselves: Are these questions that you NEED answers to in order to make your decision or are these just nice to know questions. Review your section and modify your list of questions. This item will come back in January.

Agenda Item 7: Staff Updates

1. January 8th works well for most XCAP members. We can narrow further meetings from there. The January 1 meeting is cancelled. XCAP will also meet on January 15. Staff will follow up further from there.
2. Staff will have Hexagon present their traffic analysis at one meeting and can follow up thereafter if needed. But the XCAP and the public should still prepare traffic questions ahead of time. Staff will need them by 5pm on December 23, 2019 and will share them with AECOM.

Adjourned at 7.05 pm

Next XCAP Meeting

Next Scheduled Meeting is January 8, 2020, 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Palo Alto City Hall, 250 Hamilton Ave, Palo Alto, CA