

Expanded Community Advisory Panel (XCAP)

January 20, 2021

Summary - Regular Meeting (virtual, through Zoom)

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Present: Gregory Brail, Phil Burton, Tony Carrasco, Inyoung Cho, Larry Klein, Nadia Naik, Keith Reckdahl, David Shen, Cari Templeton

Absent:

2. Staff Updates

Chair Naik shared that the updated Fact Sheet and Matrix were included in the XCAP Packet.

Ripon Bhatia, Senior Engineer, added that if the XCAP approves, those two documents will be forwarded to the editor.

Chair Naik commented that the letter from the Palo Alto Council of PTAs (PTAC) was received and was filed under the public comment section in the Packet. The letter will be included in the Appendix of the final document.

3. Oral Communications

Roland LeBrun updated XCAP on the happenings of the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA). The Chief Financial Officer and General Manager of VTA have announced their resignation. The VTA Board has appointed Supervisor Joe Simitian to the Board with Supervisor Otto Lee as the alternate. Vice Mayor Pat Burt may also be joining the VTA Board as a replacement for Mountain View's former Mayor Jon Mcalister. In terms of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), an expedited application was submitted and the submittal included \$2 billion of Measure A funds. Those funds have already been allocated to other projects.

4. XCAP Member Updates and Working Group Updates

[This item was heard with Item 5]

5. Writing and Editing Final Report

Chair Naik disclosed that she sent out a memo that listed all the edits that she made to the documents.

XCAP Member Shen asked if a vote is needed to finalize the document.

Chair Naik mentioned that the agenda did not notice the item as an action item, but when the final draft comes back from the editor, the XCAP will meet and conduct a

formalized vote to certify the report. She moved on to summarizing her edits starting with the Executive Summary.

There was agreement among the XCAP to approve Chair Naik's edit for the Executive Summary.

Chair Naik moved to the Glossary and the proposed changes to it.

XCAP Member Reckdahl inquired if Valley Water should be specified.

Chair Naik confirmed she had defined Valley Water in the report. She moved to the introduction for Chapter One.

XCAP Member Klein gave an editorial edit.

XCAP agreed with Chair Naik's edits for the introduction of Chapter One.

Chair Naik moved to Chapter Two and shared her edits with XCAP.

XCAP Member Burton shared that he had comments regarding Chapter Two under the Measure RR section. He questioned a sentence that stated that Caltrain is the most efficient railroad.

Chair Naik explained that it has to do with their farebox recovery.

After discussion, the XCAP agreed to a newly written sentence.

Chair Naik moved to Chapter Three and the section regarding XCAP Member Carrasco's concept of a roundabout that was rejected by Council.

XCAP Member Carrasco clarified that a Viaduct has many options for the ground surface and a roundabout was one option.

Chair Naik explained that the insertion of the Ideas submitted by XCAP to City Council but Rejected section memorialized that XCAP had submitted a roundabout concept and that it was not accepted. In the Appendix is where the benefits of a Viaduct were listed.

XCAP Member Klein advised inserting the words, Viaduct with a roundabout, to make it more consistent.

There was consensus among the XCAP to make that change.

Chair Naik moved to the Churchill section which included AECOM updates, XCAP Members, and Staff suggested changes.

XCAP Member Shen suggested removing one of the footnotes because there were two that referenced the meeting minutes.

XCAP Member Klein announced that the language regarding the Viaduct and its height was confusing.

XCAP Member Carrasco advised using the top of rail measurement because it is a very precise measurement.

After discussion and some wordsmithing, the XCAP came to a consensus on how the sentence should read.

XCAP Member Cho asked why the Viaduct is listed first in the Churchill section.

Chair Naik explained that the order in the document followed the order in the Matrix.

XCAP Member Cho wanted to see the order reflect what XCAP discussed first and she remembered that XCAP discussed the closure first for Churchill Avenue.

Chair Naik emphasized that the entire report is structured to reflect the order of the Matrix and moving things around would require moving many things around in the document.

XCAP Member Cho argued that the first option will be what most people read and for that reason, the closure option should be listed first.

XCAP agreed to move the closure option before the Viaduct section for Churchill Avenue.

Chair Naik indicated that she wanted to put more images into the document and the images would only be images that were shown to XCAP through their work. XCAP Members agreed.

XCAP Member Carrasco requested if his Viaduct diagram could be replaced with a cleaner version and XCAP Members agreed.

Chair Naik reviewed several suggestions and edits which XCAP Members agreed with under the Churchill Avenue section. She suggested clarifying longitudinal encroachment under Caltrain right-of-way impacts for Churchill Avenue.

After discussion XCAP agreed to change it to permanent encroachment inside Caltrain's right-of-way for the Closure plus Mitigation Option. For Partial Underpass design, XCAP agreed to remove the word longitudinal.

After discussion, XCAP changed Chair Naik's suggested language regarding the explanation of Table 1 and Table 2 - Alma and Churchill Grade Separation Alternatives.

Chair Naik requested an update from Staff regarding the December 7, 2020 letter from Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD).

Philip Kami, Chief Transportation Official, restated that the letter is considered the final letter and he was unsure if the school district would be sending a signed letter.

XCAP included a reference to the school district's December 7, 2020 letter under Other Information.

Chair Naik moved to the Summary of the Majority Opinion.

XCAP Member Cho felt that the Minority Opinion is too long. Key points she raised were that traffic will go to Embarcadero and less traffic will be at Churchill which caused unfairness. The other point was that there are several problems with the Hexagon Report. She felt that an approach of solution and suggestion is more powerful than negative language.

XCAP Member Klein disclosed that the folks responsible for drafting the Minority Opinion had agreed to not change the language of the Minority Opinion as well as the Majority folks would not change the language in the Minority Opinion. He felt that decision had already been made and that it didn't make sense to debate it again.

XCAP Member Templeton agreed that the Minority Opinion was too lengthy and it referenced material that were not included in the discussion. She expected to read what happened in the meeting.

XCAP Member Reckdahl emphasized that the purpose of the Minority Opinion is to help folks consider whether the decisions made are the correct decisions. The Minority Opinion is not a historical recollection of what happened at the meeting.

XCAP Member Templeton restated that materials are referenced that were not discussed with XCAP and she could not distinguish what happened in the meeting and what materials were added later.

XCAP Member Brail felt the same way as XCAP Member Templeton did but for the History of the Underpass Alternative Section. He agreed that the Minority Opinion is long.

Chair Naik disclosed that there was consensus to move the History of the Underpass Alternative Section to the Appendix.

XCAP Member Shen felt that over half of the language listed in the Minority Opinion could be listed in the things to look at in the future sections.

XCAP Member Templeton felt uncomfortable saying in the Minority Report that Staff's work was not acceptable in terms of the traffic study.

XCAP Member Klein suggested including XCAP Member Templeton's and Cho's opinions regarding the Minority Opinion to the Majority Opinion.

XCAP Member Burton explained that the dissenting folks were disagreeing with the majority on the scope of the study. He felt that words were being magnified beyond their significances.

XCAP Member Cho agreed that words were being magnified beyond their significances.

XCAP Member Reckdahl understood that the Minority Opinion is not trying to discredit the traffic study and he agreed that the way the Minority Opinion is written, it reflected that discreditation inadvertently.

Chair Naik clarified that the minority members were not comfortable with supporting the closure of Churchill with the information that was presented. The idea was that the minority members felt the traffic study was bad workmanship.

XCAP Member Shen disclosed that the Minority Opinion, as written, created a feeling that the minority members were disrespectful of Staff and the work they've done and that the minority members are not favoring the traffic report at all.

Mr. Kami was concerned about trying to discredit a traffic study from one of the more respected groups that do traffic studies in the area.

XCAP Member Templeton did not want the Minority Opinion to undermined the document as a whole.

Chair Naik asked Mr. Kami for more information regarding extending the traffic study beyond the year 2030.

Mr. Kami disclosed he would have to investigate it, but felt that quoting words from a Staff member that has not been with the City for over 6-years in a document was not appropriate.

Chair Naik confirmed she would remove the factually incorrect language.

XCAP Member Carrasco summarized that the Minority Opinion is too long and too defensive.

XCAP agreed that the subcommittee remove any intense, dramatic, and polarized emotional language from the Minority Opinion and bring it back to the next meeting for full XCAP discussion.

XCAP Member Shen wanted to know what the minority group wanted to have come across in the Minority Opinion.

XCAP Member Burton answered that for himself, he voted against it because there was not enough information and he felt uncomfortable shifting the traffic load cost from one neighborhood to another.

XCAP Member Carrasco was uncomfortable using 2030 data to do a project that will last 100-years. He wanted to see a study that projected past the year 2030 but he acknowledged that it will be a very difficult projection.

XCAP Member Reckdahl viewed a document as something that folks can use in the future to see exactly why the minority group dissented at the time the vote was taken. He voted no because he felt the underpass needed more work, the traffic studies had indicated that folks on Embarcadero would endure more traffic, and Level of Service (LOS) predictions were rough.

Chair Naik struggled with the fact that the traffic study did not explain what the network impacts would be overall along with other smaller issues.

XCAP Member Carrasco suggested moving the language regarding a traffic study that predicted past year 2030 to the lessons learned section.

Chair Naik agreed that anything that reflected where each side is trying to convince the other did not reflect the XCAP process.

XCAP Member Brail disclosed that he did not like that the document mentioned that no decision was made by XCAP because there needed to be more information, but he acknowledged that the information would never come to fruition and he accepted that.

XCAP Member Klein agreed with XCAP Member Brail that there will never be perfect information and that has been a problem throughout the process. He did not think saying in the document that there needed to be further studies helped decision-makers.

Chair Naik stated she needed more information regarding changing the time horizon in the modeling, network impacts, measure LOS on the newly made intersections, the historic Embarcadero underpass, and moving the bicycle and pedestrian tunnel closure to the Churchill intersection before she could decide on the closure of Churchill. She suggested that XCAP Member Reckdahl, Burton, and herself rewrite the Minority Opinion. Also, that the Majority Opinion break off into two groups and draft suggestions that should be made to the Minority Opinion and/or draft additional rebuttals to be included in the report.

XCAP Member Templeton suggested that Majority Opinion members and Minority Opinion members intermingle and work together.

Discussion took place and there was consensus that XCAP Member Reckdahl, Burton, Templeton, and Chair Naik would work together to redraft the Minority Opinion. XCAP Member Klein, Cho, Carrasco, and Shen would work on edits to the Minority Opinion.

Chair Naik continued with her edits and disclosed that she added XCAP Member Carrasco's opinion at the bottom of the Minority Opinion regarding the Modified Viaduct.

XCAP Member Klein understood that there was consensus to move XCAP Member Carrasco's opinion to the Appendix.

XCAP Member Carrasco agreed with XCAP Member Klein.

Chair Naik suggested that the suggested edits XCAP Member Klein had sent to XCAP Member Carrasco regarding the Modified Viaduct be discussed offline. She continued with her edits.

XCAP Member Carrasco was concerned with the words enhanced experience in the An Enhanced Experience for Cyclists and Pedestrians in the Churchill Section.

Chair Naik suggested that the Majority Opinion group discuss it in their meeting.

XCAP Member Brail felt that a tunnel was a better experience and that is why he voted in favor of the alternative.

Chair Naik moved to the Charleston/Meadow section of the document and reviewed the edits.

XCAP Member Brail felt the sentence discussing the phasing video in the Underpass Process and Considerations for Charleston/Meadow was too abrasive.

XCAP Members were in consensus to remove that sentence from the document.

Discussion continued and XCAP Members agreed with all edits made by Chair Naik.

Chair Naik moved to the Safety Chapter and the XCAP agreed with her addition of a sentence regarding design details. She moved to the Appendix and summarized her edits. She moved to the document that XCAP Member Reckdahl had drafted regarding his position on the trench.

XCAP Member Reckdahl shared that only minor changes had been made.

Chair Naik advised XCAP Member Reckdahl to send the document to Staff who relayed it to all XCAP Members for review.

Chair Naik moved to Lessons Learned and summarized her edits to the section. She requested that XCAP Members review the section and submit any edits for discussion.

The XCAP agreed to continue the public comment period to the next XCAP Meeting.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 P.M.