

**BALBOA RESERVOIR COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
CITY & COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO**

**MEETING MINUTES**

Online Meeting

**Monday, May 10, 2020**

**6:00 PM**

Regular Meeting

**Please note:** For a full transcript of the meeting, refer to the video recording of the meeting available online at <https://sfplanning.org/project/balboa-reservoir-and-community-advisory-committee-cac#meetings>

**Committee Members Present:** Michael Ahrens; Christine Godinez; Amy O’Hair; Maurice Rivers; Mark Tang; Peter Tham; Jon Winston

**Committee Members Absent:** Brigitte Davila

**City Staff/Consultants Present:**

Project Team: Nora Collins, AvalonBay; Joe Kirchofer, AvalonBay; Brad Wiblin, BRIDGE Housing

Office of Economic and Workforce Development: Leigh Lutenski, John Francis

San Francisco Planning Department: Seung Yen Hong

SFMTA: Mark Dreger, Casey Hildreth, Jean Long

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

**2. Opening of Meeting (Action Item)**

## Approval of meeting minutes, meeting overview, and general updates

**Chair Jon Winston** reviews the meeting agenda and announces that June 14 will be the final BRCAC meeting. Jon asks members to discuss and approve the meeting minutes from the prior meeting, no changes are requested.

Motion: Approve minutes from the March 15, 2021 meeting

Moved: Mike Ahrens

Ayes: Ahrens, Godinez, O’Hair, Rivers, Tang, Tham, Winston; Noes: [none]; Abstain: [none]

**Supervisor Myrna Melgar** spoke about the community’s desire to continue the BRCAC and reported that she is working with the District 11 Supervisor’s Office to envision a broader area for a future community forum.

## 3. SFMTA Transportation Updates (Discussion Item)

**Mark Dreger** from SFMTA presents current information and status of the Frida, Ocean, Geneva Safety Project. **Jean Long** from SFMTA answers transit-related questions from the BRCAC and the public.

### CAC Discussion

- Amy O’Hair
  - Will there be an advance bike signal for cyclists traveling eastbound on Ocean past the Geneva turn? This is a difficult mixing area. Mark Dreger, SFMTA – We will consider this, possibly in tandem with a transit advance signal.
- Peter Tham
  - Will there be physical barriers to deter U-turns and other unsafe car movements, especially east of the pedestrian bridge on Ocean Ave? Mark Dreger, SFMTA – Yes, on Geneva. For the transit zone we need to see. Casey Hildreth, SFMTA – We will need to check with SFFD as there is a station nearby that could prevent adding physical barriers (because fire trucks may need the room to maneuver).
- Jon Winston
  - It’s impossible to ride a bike here, these are unprotected bike lanes so what would prevent cars from going in them? I’m concerned about busses coming down Geneva and making a right onto Frida, what about regularizing the intersection as per earlier studies? Mark Dreger, SFMTA - We studied this in the report but there are too many fatal flaws. There are bigger ideas that could be implemented in a longer term.

- When are we getting 4-car K trains? Jean Long, SFMTA – The boarding islands are too short and we would need to take out a lot of parking to expand them, so it's really a matter of politics and community will, not engineering.
- Peter Tham
  - What about more frequent trains? Jean Long, SFMTA – One of the challenges is that the trains are in a shared roadway with cars, which means a lot of stops. We know we need to plan and balance all the needs on the roadway.
- Maurice Rivers
  - How much would it be to expand the most heavily used boarding islands (you mentioned three) and eliminate the less used ones? Jean Long, SFMTA – We did something similar with the L Taraval by removing stops and it was a many year process.

### **Public Comment**

*Please note that these are transcriptions from the Zoom video recording and may contain errors.*

- Janice Li: I am Janice Li and I wear a couple of hats so I'm going to start with, first my BART hat and if you live in this area I probably represent you on the BART board. I was elected the Bart board in November 2018. BART is going to be reopening all of the entrances at Balboa Park station on May 15 and then we are going to reopen all station entrances on June 14. As a way to welcome riders back, we are increasing our service back to close to 100% service at the end of August. And to welcome you back, we are going to have 50% off all fares for the month of September, so please come back, please ride BART. So on the other hand I work at the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition as the advocacy director there. I would really echo a lot of what chair Jon said that this is a crazy intersection and it's a really dangerous location for biking and walking. I agree that we need to rethink how we use space, especially at a location where cars and driving has really shaped what the infrastructure looks like today, I would absolutely ask the SFMTA to be more ambitious. I am supportive of the quick build train treatments. I would eventually want to see more robust infrastructure here. There was a location where you should have buffer bike lane that really could be a protected bike lane curbside. Instead of paint and posts, it would really be nice to see real curbs and concrete that that's not that much more and you started to do quick builds that use concrete or Jersey barriers as K rails. Especially given the conflicts between drivers and large vehicles and people who bike and walk. With all the housing development going in we know that there's going to be more people biking and walking here. And so we need to accommodate and rethink how we use our space because I've been looking at this project, for I think like three four years, and that was after the Ocean Avenue corridor design study wrapped up so I'm glad that we're here, and thank you to everyone who serves on this committee.

- Supervisor Myrna Melgar: Thank you so much, I just wanted to echo some of the things that Janice said. I would, I beg the SFMTA to be more ambitious. So I think that, while we are touching this intersection, investing in it and having the community focused on it, this is the time. You know, build the longer island and if there's the political will to do it for the rest of Ocean we've already done this elsewhere. You know I forgot the Frida Kahlo intersection is by far the one that gets used the most where people get on and off because of city college. It makes sense to have that be the anchor and do everything else, and so the other thing I was going to point out is that in the map that you had you have the big box on Ocean Avenue for the bicycle but then the turning onto Frida Kahlo there's nothing there. And I know Chair Winston knows from personal experience that the people coming from the east turning right onto the freeway in cars present really a lot of danger to bicycles, making a left turn onto Frida Kahlo from Ocean and so right now in your in your quick build there's nothing there on the other side and I worry that we're not setting people up for more accidents as, as you know that happens, and so I would if you're going to do this quick build which I'm hoping, you will also coordinate with what's going on with city college, because we all have chimed in to their EIR. I hope that you pay attention to the safety of the bicycles turning left onto Ocean Avenue because that's the route that people take to go behind city college and on to San Jose avenue to go downtown, that is the route – Holloway, Ocean and then you know back behind city college. Thank you so much for all of this and let's work together to be more ambitious, because we really, we need to support the growth in this area.
- Christine Hanson: So I want to actually echo both what Jon and Supervisor Melgar just said, because it seems like it would really be good to make pedestrians and bicycles the biggest priority. And I'm really surprised that there isn't going to be a special light for the bikes, but there is going to be for the Muni. That just seems backwards. There could be a no right turn on red I don't think there is one now turning on to Frida Kahlo going east on Ocean, although if you do that, then you're going to have the backup on Geneva, because I know that gets that's a very weird left turn. I mean what we've all read is it's just going to be really hard and I think also don't discount the fact that a lot of your new residents may also be driving tesla's and parking them somewhere in the neighborhood so the number of cars may balloon as well. It would be nice to see Janice and Jon on the committee that does the next report because it sounds like you didn't have bike people, and I cannot imagine trying to navigate that intersection on a bike.
- Theodore Randolph: Well, first the quick builds I think they should go a lot quicker. I already enjoy some of the benefits when the number of rights turns from Ocean going on to Geneva, the number of turning lanes went down from two to one, and now that makes us so much more safer for me to bike eastbound on Ocean Avenue. And I am hoping these improvements would happen and would come more quickly than this. But about the buffered bike lane idea I think that's like only paints that doesn't seem like a very realistic type of safety improvement, you need something that people will

physically run into. Like maybe soft hit posts are pretty bad for getting people to start but, but these still better. The fire department really should get smaller vehicles. So about the K trains I'm thinking we really should not need to be asking for permission to do that, to remove parking spaces. The majority of the people have already said that we prioritize transit but our system gives the twisted idea of what is due process, gives so many veto points for gadflies to fill up the majority and I think this is not the right way to run the city. Those were my thoughts for now.

#### **4. Community Engagement During Project Implementation. (Discussion Item)**

**Leigh Lutenski** from OEWD provides an introduction to the topic of community engagement. **John Francis** from OEWD and **Nora Collins** from AvalonBay present slides about forthcoming community engagement that will occur throughout project implementation.

##### **CAC Discussion**

- Mike Ahrens
  - What about coordination with City College and their major development project? John Francis, OEWD – We have had one additional meeting with City College staff since the last BRCAC meeting. We're going to be meeting every other month. So far we have been sharing high-level schedule and mapping information. We certainly intend to continue coordination.
  - Is the Balboa Reservoir project a reality and will it get financing to move forward? Nora Colling, AvalonBay – Our financing plan is the same as it was when the project was approved. Since then, we've advanced designs for horizontal work and continue to commit dollars towards the project implementation. We're moving full speed ahead with the schedule that John presented today.
  - Why is the BRCAC sunseting? Leigh Lutenski, OEWD – The Supervisor Office is not present but I will make sure they get this question.
  - Where can someone sign up to receive updates? Nora Colling, AvalonBay – There will be a consolidated listserv that we will distribute information about as well as a dedicated website.
- Amy O'Hair
  - Regarding the noise and air quality measure, why will monitoring logs not be posted but only be made available on request? Why not make them freely available? John Francis, OEWD – Our plan for emissions and noise is to post those to the Planning Department's website. I apologize for any confusion. We will also look into the best way to convey air quality information.
- Mark Tang

- I agree with continuing some sort of CAC to address neighborhood issues. Regarding air quality, if there are particulate matter exceedances will the work stop? Nora Collins, AvalonBay – We have two pieces to the air quality plan, emissions and dust control. We measure our dust generating activity and may have to pause if the monitors indicate exceedances so that we don't impact air quality.
- Jon Winston
  - Will the Open Space Advisory Committee be sponsored by the developer? How would someone get on the committee and who would vet them? Including some at-large seats would be great. Nora Collins, AvalonBay – Yes, the OSAC will be sponsored by the developer. We want to ensure that we have representation from every neighborhood and the groups mentioned in our presentation. We will do outreach within these groups and determine the best way to set up the application process.
  - There is a definite need for ongoing community input in the many things happening in the area. It won't look exactly like the BRCAC but could be expanded to include the scope of the former Balboa Park Station Area Plan.

### **Public Comment**

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- Christine Hanson: John Francis said a couple of times that the planning during the beginning of construction and going through Planning Department will be consistent with the development agreement. But the development agreement that was approved by the Board of Supervisors doesn't include or reflect things like the easement agreement between City College and the PUC. Is there an amended DA where can we see that and if there isn't how do they adjust for those differences? Those meetings between City College and you guys have started. You said that staff was representing City College, could you be a little more specific, please. You guys have been actually talking not to City College, but their consultants and it does sound like they're talking engineers talking to engineers, which means not even City College engineers. Please know that there's no connection to City College community with those kind of types of meetings so there's not communication going either way.
  - John Francis, OEWD – One item you may be referring to is the alignment of North Drive which in the design guidelines is shown further south than the location in the easement agreement. We are working now to update the DA and approvals to reflect the northern alignment that is in the easement. In terms of City College we are working with Marion Lam and Alberto Vasquez.
- Tomasita Medal: Thank you, I was wondering, did you say that you just arbitrarily decide when to monitor the dust and that the dust is not going to be monitored on a constant

level Nora? Is it going to be monitored constantly so that anytime it goes over the allowable content that it would be stopped, or you just occasionally decide Oh well, we'll test it now.

- Nora Colling, AvalonBay – No, there will be consistent monitoring of the dust. I'm sorry if that wasn't clear before.
- Laura, Westwood Park: I hope the plan is not to have a lot of after hours construction. In fact, I wanted to ask, since this project is going to be being built for four or five years and its massive and it's in a residential area if y'all would just not do construction on Sunday, six days a week, your construction and then the whole area rest for one day because it's going be going on for years that was my only comment, thank you.
- Madeline Mueller: Yes, the last statement reminds me well it's very true of neighbors. College students do not come on Sunday. It's a really good day where it interferes with college activities and that's in the high school activities so everything goes into the mix . When Chris was talking about the new days it also involves some negotiations, especially with John Rizzo and the facilities committees, about the geothermal well systems and all of that, I don't know that's not in the original and there was again the famous North Road and if I'm hearing that it's moving south unilaterally last time you guys met there was a wrong slide that showed the north road going back to a position that had been totally voted against and it's not in the college's master plan, so I hope that is not going to be an end and the person is giving the slides at all old slide of course North Road will be essentially where it is now. So I hope I'm not hearing that there's some, as I say, sounded like unilateral attempts to break the master plan of the College.

## 5. General Public Comment

### Public Comment

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- Harry Bernstein: I'm just thinking about the PUC and City College have had a sometimes in a relationship sometimes been adversarial sometimes they're walking along the same road with different weapons of destruction. I don't know how to describe it, but there's three different periods I'm thinking about. One is the 1980s, when there was the attempt to build private residences in the South Bay, one was the Balboa Reservoir project that was approved last year, and the other one is 1550 Evans, which is a PUC-owned site that may or may not have a education building built or operated by City College. The problem is that when PUC has its assets involved, it goes into secrecy mode. There was the City College land use meetings and it had the PUC and only people from the mayor's office and the real estate department. And they would get together and look at the BRCAC meetings and say, well, we plan to do this, and then we got

surprised by these reactions. And how can we micromanage it, the next time to get the way we want to do, and they of course ended up with a you know complete strike in bowling terms and getting all the pins down getting everything that they wanted, but along the way they, again, they were private meetings with these City Hall and downtown and agency interests and City College and those were not revealed to the College community, for instance. Brigitte Davila who's on your committee didn't know about them, and the same thing seems to be starting now with the PUC because they want to get some \$30 million in bond funding from City College and it was a question of how they were going to do it, this also happened back in the 1980s, with the years of the so called reservoir wars. Okay, and just I don't know if I'm sick of it or not, but so predictable and it's not good for cohesiveness and trust. Some of the people in this meeting know exactly what I'm talking about.

- Jennifer Heggie: So the city has set some very aggressive climate goals, and so my question is has there been any change to the plan for using diesel backup generators? Diesel emissions are highly polluting and have a large impact on climate change as well. And then my second question is, will backup generators be associated with each building and how often do they need to be brought up to test them, thank you.
- Christine Hanson: I just want to reiterate that it's been the only place to actually put information out there, and even though it hasn't been a perfect experience at least it's been a venue and I think it would be really great if it could continue in some form. I'm sorry this is going back to the meeting, but the 24 hour contact, is that going to be somebody that is available throughout construction or just for the open space? And then in kind of a complete tangent when Harry was talking about the SFPUC, people may not be aware, but they have their own real estate division, so if you try, for example, to look up any information on one of their properties you can't. I can look up the information on my neighbors lots and everything I can't look up their information because they have their own special real estate division.

## 6. Close of Meeting