



BETTER STREETS PLAN – Community Advisory Committee

MINUTES

May 7, 2007

1145 Market Street

CAC Members present: John Bela, Rosi Bustamante, Emily Drennen, Timothy Dunn, Alexandra Hernandez, Jane Martin, Jason Patton (chaired until about 6 PM) , Pi Ra (took over as chair) , Roger Rose, Nancy Strahan, Amy Tanner, Amy Tran

CAC Members absent: Rene Bihan, John Hirten, Jesse Lorenz

City Staff present: Adam Varat (Planning), Neil Hrushowy (Planning), Andres Power (Planning), Kris Opbroek (DPW), Ana Validzic (DPH), Cristina Olea (MTA), Bridget Smith (MTA), Peter Albert (MTA), Frank Markowitz (MTA)

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMITTEE MATTERS

- Minutes of April CAC meeting accepted
- New Member Welcomed: Alexandra Hernandez, filling youth/school seat. Alexandra briefly described her background and interest, as Prevention Program Coordinator for the Youth Leadership Institute, with special interest in the Better Streets Plan as an opportunity to get youth involved in health and safety prevention work.
- Report from Working Committee: Pi Ra reported on Working Committee meeting of April 16. Minutes of this meeting have already been distributed. There were a number of questions about the role of the CAC and what the BSP work products will be. The full CAC discussed some of the questions brought up at the Working Committee:
 - Several members indicated their desire to have the CAC issue some type of group approval and/or request for changes for key work products, rather than simply giving a set of individual comments.
 - Work products should be posted on the web site for review, along with more status report info. *More work products to be posted, with more status report info.*
 - Adam Varat indicated this would be acceptable to staff. Jason pointed to option for majority and minority opinions in the CAC by-laws.
 - The CAC is trusting staff to provide key work products, early enough in the process to incorporate CAC comments.

- The Working Committee can discuss the work product review process further at its next meeting, Monday, May 21, 5 PM, at the Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

2. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

- Ana Validzic (DPH) provided an overview of the elements of the BSP Round 1 outreach:
 - City Hall Kick-off meeting attended by about 200, the Mayor, department directors, with keynote by Dr. Richard Jackson on the public health perspective.
 - 4 District meetings with 20-40 attendees per meeting
 - Stakeholder Meetings coming up (e.g., Senior Action Network, with about 100 seniors, Lighthouse, Independent Living Resource Center)
 - Focus groups (monolingual Chinese/Cantonese already; Additional groups desired in Chinatown, Spanish-speakers, and African Americans)
- Consultant Jeremy Nelson of Nelson Nygaard provided more detail on Round 1, whose theme was “What Are Streets For?” (Now and Potentially in the future)
 - District meetings focused on more local issues.
 - There were numerous options for public input (on-line survey, meeting comment sheets, posting notes at District Meetings on “Streets that Work Well” and “Streets that Don’t Work Well.”, moderated question and answer periods for City staff, small groups discussion focused on the different roles of streets)
 - Comments concentrated especially on:
 - Greening (more landscaping and good maintenance)
 - Conflicts between transportation modes
 - Need to slow traffic, mitigate traffic impacts, improve safety
 - Safety measures already known (such as pedestrian scramble phasing)
 - Need to consider all users
 - Need to streamline permits (e.g., when residents want to put in street tree)
 - Need for more enforcement (e.g., paving over front yard or leaving trash cans)
 - Pocket parks valuable
 - Lively streets do not need to be beautiful
- Ana Validzic reported on survey results (with about 75, or half, analyzed)
 - High level of walking to restaurants, etc.

- The most important issues were, starting with most frequently cited: trees, greening, and slowing traffic. Places to sit also ranked high.
- The average age of survey respondents was 40 (female) and 42 (male), but minimal youth representation
- Data can be separated by residential area
- Frequent comments:
 - Concern about possible loss of parking and ideas about methods to avoid or offset parking losses
 - Desire to see City agencies working together
 - Concern about funding and implementation
 - Pedestrian lighting improvements needed
 - Safer crossings needed
 - Sidewalk obstructions and enforcement issues
 - Desire to see bike lanes separated from traffic –Staff note: There are limits on physical barriers between on-street bike lanes and traffic lanes. Of course, off-street paths are separated by definition.????fm to research
 - Homeless concerns- related partly to cleanliness and dogs, partly to humanitarian issues
 - Congestion pricing
- Ana discussed how staff can respond to above comments, with increased attention to:
 - Sidewalk obstructions, including construction
 - Coordinating enforcement
 - Self-enforcing designs
 - Clarify what we can fix and can't fix (homelessness)
 - Maintenance
 - Partnerships (potential for job training through maintenance programs)
 - Greening
 - Streamlining permit process
 - Encouraging public art
 - Institutionalizing inter-agency coordination
- CAC member comments/questions:
 - Can the outreach report be put on web? *Yes, it will be.*
 - Would like to see all the Best Practices slides on web site. *OK*
 - Outreach should address case studies of how the BSP will change street projects

- Too many “usual suspects” at meetings so far, although SAN meeting will have diversity and high attendance
- Next round focus more on active business districts (e.g., Mission and Valencia Streets or supermarkets), rather than just holding meetings in rec centers. *For 1st round, wanted to have neutral sites like rec centers, but next round will expand type of meeting places, and piggyback on standing meetings or active locations*
- Still important to meet with those who’ve been active on these issues for years.
- What was done for non-English-speaking residents? *Materials translated for kick-off, translators available for District meetings, focus groups will be primarily aimed at these people.*
- Public comments:
 - SOMA District attendance poor. Need to go through business districts and Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Services
- Staff thanks CAC members, especially those who attended District meetings. CAC members can get their organizations involved in outreach.

3. STREETSCAPE DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE

- Kris Opbroek (DPW) presented process and issues. She described the agencies involved in streetscape projects. Some of the issues include:
 - Aesthetics
 - Ecology
 - Maintenance
 - Agency Responsibilities
 - Funding
- CAC member questions/comments:
 - Can we stabilize maintenance funding annually?
 - What is the extent of repaving projects? *DPW repaves about 270 blocks annually (about 2% of city) . Half of San Francisco’s 12,000-plus blocks are inspected every two years. All streets are inspected at least every four years.*
 - Some repaving projects take 3 years or so from funding allocation to implementation.
 - What is the backlog of repaving work needed? *The backlog of repaving work is about \$400 million. Repaving projects are prioritized based on the pavement condition and such factors as: traffic volumes, bus/trolley and bike use, utility projects, and geographic equity. It is more cost-effective to repave before serious deterioration of the pavement requiring structural improvements.*

- Construction projects can create safety problems that need to be addressed
- Are there environmental/sustainability goals?
- Problem with utilities near corners blocking sight lines. *Better Streets Plan design toolkit should address this issue.*
- Rec/Park provides maintenance standards in layperson's terms on their website, what's acceptable. *DPW corridors program is developing such standards.*
- Need to have some minimum cleanliness standards clearly defined, so, for example, DPW absolutely required to clean up reported human waste promptly. *Maintenance will be a major focus area in the next few months.*
- Maybe area/street responsibility or financial incentives for good maintenance? *Better Streets Plan is trying to address problem that multiple agencies are involved, so impossible for one person to take responsibility.*