



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

MINUTES

Thursday
January 13, 2011
9:00 a.m.

Board of Supervisors Chambers
701 Ocean St
Santa Cruz CA 95060

1. Roll call

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 am.

Members present:

Greg Caput	Don Lane
Neal Coonerty	John Leopold
Ron Graves	Eduardo Montesino
Donald Hagen (Alt)	Robin Musitelli (Alt)
Randy Johnson	Kirby Nicol
Aileen Loe (ex officio)	Donna Ziel (Alt)

Staff present:

George Dondero	Luis Mendez
Gini Pineda	Yesenia Parra
Rachel Moriconi	Kim Shultz
Cory Caletti	Karena Pushnik

2. Oral communications

Jack Nelson distributed graphic illustrating melting glaciers in Greenland and said that as a result of global warming melting ice sheets in Greenland have caused drastic increases in glacial earthquakes. He asked Commissioners to keep that in mind when making decisions about transportation projects.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

Executive Director George Dondero said that there were add-on pages to Items 15 and 20. He noted that the recently updated Guide to Specialized Transportation Services was distributed to the Commissioners and that there are additional copies available for the public at the RTC office.

CONSENT AGENDA
(Graves/Leopold – unanimous)

MINUTES

4. Approved draft minutes of the December 2, 2010 regular SCCRTC meeting
5. Accepted draft minutes of the December 13, 2010 Bicycle Committee meeting
6. Accepted draft minutes of the December 14, 2010 Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee meeting

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS

7. Accepted follow up on the Monterey Bay Area Regional Blueprint Plan

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

8. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

No consent items

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

9. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
10. Accepted correspondence log
11. Accepted letters from SCCRTC committees and staff to other agencies
 - a. Letter from Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee to Santa Cruz Metro Transit District regarding the bus stop improvement plan
12. Accepted miscellaneous written comments from the public on SCCRTC projects and transportation issues
13. Accepted information items - *None*

REGULAR AGENDA

14. Commissioner reports-oral reports

Commissioners Nicol and Leopold welcomed newly appointed Commissioner Montesino. Commissioner Lane welcomed the Commission to the City of Santa Cruz Council for this meeting. Commissioner Caput arrived.

15. Director's report

Executive Director George Dondero said that RTC Commissioners, staff, and consultants have been working with Caltrans and the California Transportation Commission (CTC) staff to resolve any remaining requirements and conditions to receive the funding allocation to acquire the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. A CTC meeting will be held January 19th to determine if the funding will be allocated.

He said that AMBAG has notified both the RTC and TAMC that they intend to keep a higher percentage of federal planning funds, which are distributed by formula, due to increased work mandated by SB375. Since both the RTC and TAMC are also facing increased workloads due to SB375 requirements, both agencies will oppose this proposal. Executive Director Dondero communicated that he plans to submit a letter of opposition on behalf of the RTC. Commissioners requested copies of the letter that the RTC will send to AMBAG.

A meeting between RTC staff, Harbor High and Santa Cruz City school officials took place on January 5th to discuss possible alternatives to resolve noise issues regarding the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes project. Staff will continue to work with the school to investigate potential funding opportunities to address these issues.

Mr. Dondero noted that the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) meeting was rescheduled to 1/27/11.

16. Caltrans report and consider action items

Aileen Loe, Caltrans District 5, said that applications for FY 11-12 planning grants are due on March 30, 2011. A workshop explaining the program will be held January 25th at District 5 headquarters. More information is available at www.dot.ca.gov.

Ms. Loe noted the revised construction projects report format which includes a map of the projects currently under construction.

17. Presentation from City of Santa Cruz Public Works – Taken out of order after Item 19

Chris Schneider, Santa Cruz County Public Works, gave a presentation on recently completed and planned transportation projects within the City of Santa Cruz. Projects completed last year included road rehabilitation projects with funds secured by the RTC from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The City also completed the San Lorenzo River

multipurpose bike/pedestrian path under Highway 1 which used porous concrete to minimize drainage issues. Future projects include improvements to the Highway 1/9 interchange, roundabouts in the Wharf area, retrofitting of the Murray St bridge and safety improvements such as left hand turn pockets on Soquel Drive at Park Street.

Jack Nelson said that he supports “green” projects and mentioned that the City of Santa Cruz has a goal in its Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2020.

18. Highway 1 projects - status report – Taken out of order after Item 16

Senior Planner Kim Shultz said that progress on the Highway 1 projects is constant and steady. The Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes project has advanced to the 95% design level with the goal of securing all environmental permits and funding for construction to begin as soon as September/October 2011. The HOV Lanes project continues to progress with a target for release of the Draft Environmental Document for the Fall of 2011.

Commissioner Lane moved and Commissioner Alternate Ziel seconded to accept the report. The motion passed unanimously.

19. Sustainable Transportation Access Rating System (STARS)

Executive Director George Dondero reviewed the STARS process and its application to transportation projects. He emphasized that the STARS focus is to improve transportation accessibility, maximize cost effectiveness and cut transportation climate pollution and energy use. A list of 12 credits was developed over a ten-month period by the STARS Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for potential application to the Highway 1 corridor. The *STARS Pilot Project Application Manual* was developed by the STARS TAC and presented to the Commissioners for their review. If the Commission chooses to apply the credits to the HOV Lane project, the project could be submitted for STARS Pilot Project certification.

Commissioners questioned whether applying the STARS credits could interfere with the timeline developed for the project. It was noted that some of the recommended STARS strategies coincide with goals the RTC already has for the project.

Mr. Dondero assured Commissioners that applying STARS credits would be a parallel strategy to the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and would not interfere with the project timeline. He said that STARS would help quantify goals and that the RTC could be applying criteria as the project is developed.

He added that there have been discussions about doing something similar with the RTP update.

Jack Nelson said that he hopes that STARS and the EIR process will consider alternatives to highway widening as a means of providing transportation accessibility and that he doesn't think there is enough emphasis on alternative modes of travel.

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Lane seconded to accept the staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

1. Accept the STARS *Pilot Project Application Manual* with the 12 credits selected by the RTC-approved Technical Advisory Committee;
2. Authorize the Executive Director to execute a contract with the North American Sustainable Transportation Council for the purpose of applying principles, strategies and programs as identified through the STARS Pilot Project Application Manual to the Highway 1 corridor.

The motion passed unanimously.

20. Comprehensive Transportation Tax Swap Proposal

Senior Planner Rachel Moriconi reviewed the "fuel tax swap" approved by the state legislature in March. However, the tax was invalidated in the November elections with the passages of Propositions 26 and 22. These propositions reversed the "fuel tax swap" putting state funding for transit, local streets and roads, and highway projects at risk. A coalition of public and private transportation stakeholders developed a comprehensive tax swap proposal to address the impacts of Propositions 22 and 26 and provide the same level of funding for transportation projects as promised under the original "fuel tax swap"

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Coonerty seconded to approve the staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) support the comprehensive transportation tax swap proposal to address impacts of Propositions 22 and 26 on transportation funds previously established as part of the "fuel tax swap" (AB X8 6 and AB X8 9).

The motion passed unanimously.

21. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

The Commission adjourned into closed session at 10:45 am.

CLOSED SESSION

22. Annual Performance Review for Executive Director pursuant to Government Code 54957

23. Conference with Labor Negotiators Pursuant to Government Code 54957.6

Commission Negotiators: George Dondero and Yesenia Parra

Bargaining Units: Mid-Management Unit and General Representation Unit

OPEN SESSION

24. Report on closed session

The meeting reconvened into open session at 11:17 am. There was nothing to report.

25. Adjourn to special meeting of the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies

a. No agenda items this month

26. Next Meetings

The meeting adjourned at 11:19 am.

There is no Transportation Policy Workshop scheduled for January 2011.

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 3, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. at the Watsonville City Council Chambers, 275 Main St., Watsonville, CA.

Respectfully submitted,

Gini Pineda, Staff

ATTENDEES

Chris Schneiter	City of Santa Cruz Public Works
Mark Dettle	City of Santa Cruz Public Works
Les White	SCMTD
Bonnie Morr	UTU
Jack Nelson	Community member
Dan Herron	Caltrans
Rahn Garcia	County Counsel