1. Introductions

Chair Bottorff called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members present:

Ed Bottorff
Kristen Petersen (alternate)
Sandy Brown
Randy Johnson
Greg Caput
Andy Schiffrin (alternate)

Zach Friend
John Leopold
Virginia Johnson (alternate)
Cynthia Chase
Mike Rotkin

Staff present:

George Dondero
Luis Mendez
Yesenia Parra
Sarah Christensen
Ginger Dykaar
Cory Caletti

Grace Blakeslee
Shannon Munz
Fernanda Dias Pini
Joanna Edmonds
Tommy Travers

2. Oral Communications

Mark Mesiti-Miller, Friends of the Rail and Trail, reported that attendees of the March 14, 2018, Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce Business Expo event frequently inquired about the status of the rail-trail, and most were excited to hear that the project will be breaking ground soon in the City of Santa Cruz. Mr. Mesiti-Miller also commended Commissioners, RTC staff, and the City of Santa Cruz for steadfastly moving forward with this project.
Brett Garrett, Santa Cruz County resident, advocated for the RTC to give greater consideration to Personal Rapid Transit (PRT). Mr. Garrett clarified that PRT provides the best transit system, the lowest long-term cost, safety, convenience, and fastest service. It has a minimal footprint, is quiet, and it allows for any use of the rail corridor. Mr. Garrett stated that technology changes rapidly and that according to studies, a train in the region would be too expensive and not feasible.

Sally Arnold, Sierra Club of Santa Cruz Transportation Committee, reported on the March 8, 2018, Trail with Transit session, a forum where people who already support the trail, people who oppose the project and experts in the field discussed uses of the rail corridor. Ms. Arnold reported that they received over 200 questions and although not all questions were answered, the attendees felt the information provided was informative.

Michael Saint, Campaign for Sustainable Transportation (CFST), recommended Mr. Steve Raney, the Executive Director for Joint Venture of Silicon Valley’s Smart Mobility project as an expert on the ‘last-mile’ as it pertains to mass transit. Mr. Saint also invited Commissioners to the Transportation Justice Conference on Saturday, March 17, 2018.

Brian Peoples, Trail Now, stated that Trail Now is focused on using the resources available to the community today, that the rail corridor has been unused for years and that community members wish to use it as an alternative mode of transportation. Mr. Peoples encouraged the Commission to keep focused on getting the corridor open.

Gail McNulty, Greenway, stated the need to address congestion issues on Highway 1 and create meaningful, equitable, sustainable solutions. Greenway is in favor of transit options that can coexist with a greenway and is in favor of rail-banking.

Corina McFarlane, Live Oak resident, stated that the rail corridor is a complicated issue and that there seems to be a misunderstanding of facts, and asked the Commission for a platform or forum where the facts get flushed out for a greater public understanding of the issue.

Jack Nelson, CFST, reported on the Transportation Justice Conference and on a petition to the City of Santa Cruz Council to accept a plan to offer free bus passes to all Downtown Santa Cruz workers. Mr. Nelson also expressed gratitude to the organizers of the Santa Cruz Sierra Club event and stated that the Sierra Club has a long-standing policy supporting public transportation and rail transit as part of a sustainable transportation future.
Marilyn Schultz, La Selva Beach resident, commented that it took an hour to get from La Selva Beach to Downtown Santa Cruz and she would have probably used a trail if it were available. Ms. Schultz believes that a trail would foster many positive effects in the community, such as healthier citizens and tourist revenue.

Ryan Sanataro, Santa Cruz County resident, discussed the health benefits of cycling and stated that he supports a divided transportation corridor.

Dan Bruney, Aptos resident, discussed parking issues for passenger rail users. He stated that parking space is limited, and train riders would have difficulty parking. He is also unsure of how the corridor will accommodate a continuous trail along the rail. Mr. Bruney commented on the potential effect that a high-speed rail in residential areas would have on the region’s tax-base.

Will Menchine, Santa Cruz County resident, expressed that Greenway proposes using the rail corridor for a general purpose roadway, wide enough for two lanes in each direction and a separate sidewalk. Mr. Menchine stated that this vision is fundamentally different than the idea of “trail-only,” and asked for a greater exchange of ideas to solve the region’s transportation issues and to decide on the best use of the corridor. Mr. Menchine asked the RTC to be transparent and consider what the Greenway vision would do for the county.

Larry Grant, Aptos resident, encouraged the RTC to consider the trail concept, stated that he noticed very low bus and train ridership, but the trails are full of people enjoying the environment.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

Handouts were distributed for Items 5 and 6.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*No consent items*

**REGULAR AGENDA**

4. Santa Cruz Branch Rail Right-of-Way Preventative Maintenance

Sarah Christensen, Senior Transportation Engineer, introduced the preventative maintenance program that RTC staff developed to carry out maintenance operations on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. RTC staff plans
to hire on-call maintenance contractors to support the RTC with addressing the various needs along the corridor.

Commissioners discussed: nature of consultant contracts; suggested creating a process that would give residents a response timeline to a report; a mobile app that allows reports to include geolocation and photos to facilitate report assessment; timeline of bridge repairs resulting from the 2017 storms, especially the Rio del Mar bridge; how RTC would address homeless encampments in the corridor and graffiti abatement contractor.

**Brian Peoples**, Trail Now, supports the direction of the preventative maintenance program and advocated leveraging the county’s public works group in maintenance efforts. Mr. Peoples also stated that the twenty trestles in the rail corridor are valuable resources and believes that the RTC should survey high-risk trees that might endanger them.

**Gail McNulty**, Greenway, thanked RTC staff for creating this program that will assist homeowners who live close to the corridor. Ms. McNulty stated that most issues on the corridor are due to its current disuse, and stated that many of the current issues would dissipate as soon as the corridor is utilized. She noted that studies have pointed to a relationship between communities with a greenway, a decrease in crime rates, and an increase in economic vitality. Ms. McNulty urged the RTC to not put any more money into railroad infrastructure before the completion of the UCS.

**Barry Scott**, Santa Cruz County resident, commented on the security issue of the corridor and stated that a train would be equipped with a video camera that would provide an automatic, paid for, an integral system that would monitor the corridor. Mr. Scott believes that the best solution for the corridor would be transit plus a trail.

**Marilyn Schultz**, La Selva Beach resident, commented on the cyclical nature of graffiti abatement and how it needs to be regularly maintained.

5. Unified Corridor Investment Study – Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Information

Ginger Dykaar, Senior Transportation Planner, presented information on existing bicycle and pedestrian trails in Santa Cruz County, Monterey County, San Francisco Bay Area and beyond, as a point of reference for evaluating the various trail projects on the rail corridor. All scenarios being evaluated as part of the Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCS) include bicycle and pedestrian trails.

Commissioners discussed: if the trail evaluated in the UCS would allow for both cyclists and pedestrians on a uniform basis throughout the corridor;
how trail usage measurements do not differentiate between transportation and recreational uses.

**Brian Peoples**, Trail Now, stated that Trail Now conducted an insurance evaluation for the rail and trail scenario and concluded that no private entity would be able to obtain insurance for such a trail due to the potential risks. Mr. Peoples asked the Commission to consider calling the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line, the Santa Cruz Coastal Trail.

**Will Menchine**, Santa Cruz County resident, thanked RTC staff for the concise list of local trails, inquired about the Monterey Coastal Trail widening specifications, and if any of the projects discussed in the UCS were designed for bicycle-class transportation.

**Gail McNulty**, Greenway, thanked RTC staff for their work and stated that the scenarios presented do not portray an approach to solutions that could be fully funded by bonded Measure D funds and implemented in the near term. Ms. McNulty encouraged the RTC to focus on the fastest, most realistic ways to achieve the stated UCS goals and recommend that the RTC study places like Davis, California and Boulder, Colorado. She also stated that most people in the county want a trail, that few understand the challenges of building an effective trail next to the existing rails, and that people should become aware of the disadvantages of leaving the tracks in place.

**Brett Garrett**, Santa Cruz County resident, asked if the paved width numbers included the space for a buffer and if not, that he would like to know those measurements.

**Jack Nelson**, CFST, appreciated the information provided describing the four scenarios studied in the UCS, and he hopes that there will be a decrease in carbon footprint, among not just those scenarios for the rail corridor, but for the overall transportation system, once the study is completed.

**Mark Mesiti-Miller**, FORT, thanked RTC staff for the UCS because the data it provides is a tremendous resource.

**Christy Granier**, Seascape resident, stated that the trail would improve the lives of county residents, add to the region and that a train will not address transportation issues, is not sustainable, and is not a realistic alternative.
6. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

Public Comments:

**Gail McNulty**, Greenway, asked the RTC to move carefully with negotiations with Progressive Rail (PR) and to secure a clean future for the county. Ms. McNulty stated that many members of the public would oppose negotiations with PR.

**Brian Peoples**, Trail Now, supports a contract with a rail operator for freight business south of Lee Road and a plan for the RTC to leverage the ability to work on the rail corridor north of Lee Road as a rail operator. Mr. Peoples recommended for the RTC to remove the tracks and to use the corridor as a gravel trail.

**Brett Garrett**, Santa Cruz County resident, stated that it appears to him that PR’s primary interests are things like frac sand and crude oil.

The RTC adjourned to closed session at 10:54 a.m.

**CLOSED SESSION**

7. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATOR pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8
   Property: Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line
   Agency Negotiator: George Dondero and Luis Pavel Mendez
   Negotiating Parties: SCCRTC and Progressive Rail
   Under Negotiation: Price and Terms

8. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-ANTICIPATED LITIGATION. Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9 of the Government Code

9. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6
   Commission Negotiators: George Dondero, Yesenia Parra, Lozano Smith Attorneys at Law
   Bargaining Units: RTC Association of Middle Management (RAMM) and Community of RTC Employees (CORE)
OPEN SESSION

The Commission reconvened in public session at 12:15 p.m.

10. Report on closed session

Nothing to report

11. Next meetings

The next TPW meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 19, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. at the RTC offices, 1523 Pacific Ave, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 5, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. at the County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Fernanda Dias Pini, Staff

Attendees:

Barrow Emerson       METRO
Barry Scott           Santa Cruz County Resident
Brett Garrett        Santa Cruz County Resident
Brian Peoples        Trail Now
Christy Brune        Santa Cruz County Resident
Corina McFalane      Santa Cruz County Resident
Dan Bruney           Aptos Resident
David Van Brunk      Santa Cruz County Resident
Diane Sandman        Ham’s
Gail McNulty         Greenway
Hal Stanley          Santa Cruz County Resident
Jack Nelson          Sierra Club
Jay Hicks            Santa Cruz County Resident
Kate Giberson        Ham’s
Kerry Coffey         Santa Cruz County Resident
Larry Grant          Aptos Resident
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<td>Marilyn Schultz</td>
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<td>Campaign for Sustainable Transportation</td>
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