CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)
PENINSULA CORRIDOR JOINT POWERS BOARD (JPB)
SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING
Dining Room, 4th Floor
1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos CA 94070

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 20, 2013


MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: J. Averill, T. Bartholomew, M. Bouchard, C. Harvey, R. Haskin, S. Petty

Chair Kevin Gardner called the meeting to order at 5:44 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
A motion (Levin/Tucker) to approve the minutes of October 16, 2013 was approved (Berk/Mills abstained).

PUBLIC COMMENT
Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said on October 19 Caltrain held the 150th Anniversary Celebration in Menlo Park and it was nicely done and enjoyable.

Pat Giorni, Burlingame, said Mark Simon, Executive Officer, Public Affairs, went to city council meetings last year and told the public that during this election cycle there was supposed to be legislation for a quarter-cent sales tax to get dedicated funding for Caltrain, but the only thing she has seen is Jerry Hill’s bill that said there will be no more than two tracks for high-speed rail (HSR). She said she encourages the CAC to encourage the Board and the legislators to get something so Caltrain doesn’t head off a fiscal cliff. She said Caltrain is the only transportation provider without dedicated funding in the Bay Area.

STRATEGIC PLAN (PLAN) UPDATE – Sebastian Petty
Sebastian Petty, Senior Planner, presented:

- This plan was developed in 2004 and it was a 20-year plan.
- The vision was to become the preferred mode of travel along the Peninsula corridor by providing passengers with a world-class travel experience, serve as a catalyst for economic development, and have a key role in regional mobility management.
- The 2004 Guiding Principles were:
  - Satisfy passengers and build ridership
  - Invest wisely in system improvements
  - Promote connections to other transportation systems
  - Partner with communities and broaden communications with the public
Improve long-term financial footing

- At that time average weekday ridership (AWR) was 28,000. The major events were the opening of the Millbrae Caltrain Station with Bay Area Rapid Transit service and implementation of Baby Bullet service. The key opportunities were Caltrain electrification, building an intermodal network for the region and a connection to the HSR system. There was not a full funding plan for electrification. There was no dedicated funding.
- Today the context has changed. Now AWR is over 50,000 and major events include the San Bruno Grade Separation Project, the $1.5 billion Caltrain Modernization Program and the commitment to the blended system with HSR. Caltrain still faces funding challenges.

Purpose of updating the Plan:
- Recommend looking out 10 years
- Key questions to address:
  - What do we want to become?
  - How are we doing?
  - What’s ahead of us?
  - What do we need to do?
  - How are we going to do it?
- Existing commitments include the Caltrain Modernization Program and the blended system.
- Project partners include staff, Staff Coordinating Council, Local Policymaker Group, the CAC, City Staff Coordinating Council, external stakeholders and the Peninsula Corridor Working Group.
- Staff will come back in spring 2014 with draft policies for discussions and produce a final Plan for adoption in July 2014.

Alex Sweet asked what the process is for public participation in addition to CACs. Mr. Petty said staff is conducting outreach by going to meetings that are open to the public and will schedule additional public meetings possibly through the JPB funding agencies’ CACs including the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, Friends of Caltrain in December and the spring, and the City/County Association of Governments or other San Mateo County meetings. He said staff is also considering a web presence and updates where people can submit comments. Ms. Sweet asked if it will be advertised on trains. Mr. Petty said staff will look into it.

Jonathan Berk said the vision is not even close to being satisfied and asked if staff ever thinks it can get to that vision, specifically the world class travel experience. Mr. Petty said that was the 2004 vision and is an aspirational state to continuously strive to. The new vision statement will include actions and will go from aspirational to something achievable and more concrete.

Cat Tucker said the JPB has been struggling with funding and there is still no answer. She asked how other states’ transportation providers are funded. Michelle Bouchard, Director, Rail Transportation, said there are many ways to fund organizations. She said joint powers authorities struggle with dedicated funding because the entities have their own transit systems to fund and it makes it difficult to make commitments to other
entities. Dedicated funding provides for day-to-day funding for operation, becomes a pool of funds for leverage, and provides the capability to exponentially advance the service. She said California does not have State funding services that are linked directly to the transportation like other states.

Ms. Tucker asked if the updated Plan will include the best solution or recommendation for funding. Mr. Petty said this Plan will provide a strategic framework of guidance and high-level policy and direction that will allow staff to pursue options.

Adina Levin asked if the plan will cover topics such as the vision for future service in the age of electrification because there are implications regarding frequency of the trains for the time of day and various models of service. Mr. Petty said this Plan will not have a detailed service plan for electrification but will include high-level information.

Ms. Levin asked if the range will include a set of capital projects that is not funded through HSR such as replacing diesel trains, level boarding, grade separations, and funding for the Downtown Extension Project, and she asked if that family of projects is expected to come out of this Plan. Mr. Petty said the Plan will need to address those things.

Ms. Levin asked what the Plan meant by Caltrain being a focal point for redevelopment and economic activity. Mr. Petty said the JPB realized the potential to serve as an enhancement to areas Caltrain serves and be an anchor for economic development in those areas. Ms. Levin asked if the JPB sees that as an ongoing strategic focus. Mr. Petty said it gets into issues like access, egress, land-use, and transit-oriented development. He said some of it gets out of the purview of the JPB authority but it is an area where there is a lot of opportunity for the JPB to benefit and participate in the development.

Ms. Levin asked what mobility management meant. Ms. Bouchard said it is the concept that the JPB is responsible for managing a network of services that get people from place A to place B and not the places in between. Ms. Levin said that is not a Caltrain-specific issue and there is room for improvement. She asked if that will be in the revised Plan. Mr. Petty said yes because it will help address the first- and last-mile issue and provide an opportunity to interact with other providers.

Public Comment
Lucas Ramirez, Mountain View, said it is unfortunate that funding is the limiting factor in these discussions and what he would like to see out of the Plan is working in closer partnership with other municipalities and other transit agencies formed along the corridor. He said council members have suggested corporate subsidies for Caltrain rather than relying on a countywide agency. He said Caltrain won’t get a lot of funding from cities but it could from other sources like transportation management agencies. He said it should be made a priority to work closely with other organizations that rely on Caltrain to meet their goals. He said grade separations is one area where it is critical that municipalities and counties work closely with Caltrain to identify opportunities for funding. He said if Caltrain played greater advocacy role it would help start the discussions that are critical in funding capital projects.
Jesse Cupp, Mountain View, said it would be great for Caltrain to work to reduce cars around Caltrain not just between stations and work with the Bike Share Program to reduce the amount of traffic. He said customer satisfaction would increase if Caltrain could add bike cars because during peak hours there are not enough spots for bikes. He said the more people who bike the less cars would be on the road and it would help with congestion.

Pat Giorni, Burlingame, said when the Plan was written it was looking at electrification, and it still remains the cornerstone of the vision. She asked what the plan is if Caltrain doesn’t electrify. She said the courts could decide the money for the bookends of HSR is not legal to electrify and could suddenly take away that funding. She said for safety sake the JPB should have a fallback safety net to keep Caltrain functioning in case this falls through. She said the reason Caltrain doesn’t have dedicated funding in this county is because it was never put into the Original or New Measure A. She said Santa Clara and San Francisco have never set up funding pool in order to pay their “modal share” every year. She said that’s why the last five years Caltrain was on the fiscal cliff and the other two counties never paid San Mateo County back for the purchase of railroad in first place. She said the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) only paid the county back pennies on the dollar. She said the CAC and citizens from the three counties should be impressing on the Board to get a dedicated source.

Doug DeLong, Mountain View, said Caltrain has doubled ridership over the last nine years between the last plan and now. He said if ridership was only doubled over the next planning period it would be over 120,000 riders a day, and maybe the number could be higher than that. He said he is not sure if Caltrain can deal with numbers like that. He said he hopes the Plan will look at a range of forecasted ridership and how it might be addressed. He said it might be possible to make trains one or two cars longer if the locomotive does not take up platform space. He said if you look at the number of riders on the weekday relative to the number on the weekends, they are about the same ratio as the number of trains on the weekday to the number on weekends. He said by not running more trains on the weekend Caltrain might be leaving business behind. He said there is a need for bike lockers and storage so bikes don’t become trip hazards when they are not properly parked.

Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said Caltrain needs more bike capacity and other capacity. Caltrain and HSR shouldn’t be limited to two tracks or only six trains per direction per peak hour. He said Caltrain has a bright future and people should not limit future Caltrain to constrained growth. He said Caltrain needs more trains on weekends. He said Caltrain used to do five-year plans or short-range transit plans and would update them every year and asked how they compare to the Plan. Mr. Petty said the MTC recently asked operators to prepare short-range transit plans after taking a break from them. It will be a 10-year outlook. Staff would like for them to both be adopted by Board. He said the strategy and policies will be in the Plan and quantitative detail will be in the Short-range Transit Plan (SRTP).

Chair Gardiner said the Plan is looking forward to electrification and asked to what degree it will be setting policies for the interim years. Mr. Petty said the policy would live
in the Plan and the SRTP is more of a numbers exercise. He said the Plan extends beyond electrification and would contain policies for both pre and post electrification. Chair Gardiner said the concern is what we do until electrification since Caltrain is bursting at the seams. He said he hopes policies will be put in place to address that as well.

Ms. Levin asked if there is going to be ridership forecast scenarios and discussions about how to address those needs at different ridership levels. Mr. Petty said staff is conducting ridership forecasts now as part of the environmental document for electrification and the draft will be released to the public in May 2014.

Ms. Levin said if there was a web tool to get riders’ input and some information on the train telling people to go online to a specific place to share thoughts it would be a nice pairing.

DISCUSSION ON GROUP DISCOUNT TO CODIFIED TARIFF – Rita Haskin
Rita Haskin, Executive Officer, Customer Service and Marketing, presented:
- Staff is proposing to adjust the Codified Tariff. The proposal is to make two amendments to the Go Pass Program. Go Pass is a program corporations sign up for and all their full-time employees working more than 20 hours a week have to participate in. The proposal will put in an option to allow companies to opt-in interns and part-time employees. The corporation will still have to pay the regular fare of $165, but it is still a bargain. The second amendment is to broaden the pass to residential developments. It is currently just for businesses.
- Another proposal is to provide a 10 percent discount to groups of 25 or more who participate in the Group Travel Program. The Group Travel Program allows Caltrain to preplan so staff knows when a big group will be expected and staff can operate more efficiently.
- Staff conducted a Title VI analysis and found that this does not have disparate impact on minorities or low income households.
- Information was put out on the website and notices were placed on trains.

Ms. Tucker said the 10-Ride Ticket was eliminated already but it was just removed from the new Codified Tariff. Ms. Haskin said it was eliminated three or four years ago in lieu of the 8-Ride Ticket due to validation issues so staff took this opportunity to clean up some of the text in the Codified Tariff.

Ms. Sweet said an organization called Transform works with developers to reduce their parking bill in exchange for transit passes. It is less expensive to buy lifetime transit passes than to build parking spaces. She said once the Board passes this there is an opportunity to set this up with developers. Ms. Haskin said staff worked with Transform and they provided information to developers about the Go Pass Program and the SamTrans Residential Pass Program.

Yvonne Mills asked if a minimum number will still apply to residential groups. Ms. Haskin said yes, the minimum is based on 84 people five years old and older in the complex. Ms. Mills asked if the vision is to go to homeowner associations or apartment complexes.
Ms. Haskin said new developments like the San Carlos Transit Village or apartment complexes.

Ms. Levin said data show residents with this type of pass drive 40 percent less than the average resident.

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT: DISCUSSION ABOUT THE CAC WORK PLAN AND QUESTIONS FOR UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS – Paul Bendix, Jonathan Berk, Cat Tucker**

Chair Gardiner said Mr. Berk was the only member to submit questions.

Mr. Bendix said the area the CAC can be most effective in is to address the confluence of issues such as the increasingly crowded trains, breakdowns and aging equipment, electrification beyond the ridership such as dealing with a difficult present and painting a picture of a more attractive future. He said people don’t believe in a rider transit future and can’t imagine what it will be like on a more modern, technologically advanced, smoother, quieter, more efficient system.

Ms. Sweet said communicating to the Board and to the public is an area where the CAC could be more effective.

Ms. Tucker said she has a distribution list of people in the south down to Gilroy. She forwards everything that is sent to her out to this distribution list and does that on her own to communicate as their representative. She passed out her e-mail address and told people she is their representative on the CAC and asked if they would like to be on the distribution list for updates about Caltrain.

Ms. Tucker said she would like to add to the question list some questions about conductor training. She asked what the current policy is in training the conductors. Conductors are not being consistent and they are not all saying the same message. She asked what the training guidelines are and if it is once a year. She said she would like some presentation in future about what that is.

Mr. Berk said there are tons of questions and at the last meeting the CAC narrowed it down to three single agreed-upon issues so they can get specific answers and feel as if they are doing something helpful for the people. He said the CAC should narrow down the set of questions they give to staff so when staff comes with answers the committee could propose changes.

Chair Gardiner said he proposes to put capacity on next month’s agenda to get an update and answer some of these questions that were posed by the committee. He said the following month could be incident response and communications.

Mr. Berk said they need questions about capacity not just bike capacity. He said the most important point about the Plan is the math doesn’t add up. He said trains are full right now, and in five years’ time is electrification and he wants to know what staff is thinking in terms of fixing capacity issues right now. He said the CAC should try again to do this process. He said they should pick one topic and submit questions.
Ms. Levin said she has some questions to add to the capacity subject. She said the average Caltrain trip is 20 miles and asked how many miles people go who travel on short trips and if there is a way to add standing space for those people. She asked if there is there a possibility to have a program to have employers shift their employee’s work hours to off peak hours. Regarding incident response, she asked when someone is standing on the platform, what is supposed to be happening with that person and what the role is of the automated system and the conductor to communicate issues to those customers who are waiting.

Ms. Sweet asked if there is a method of responding to emails and complaints. She said some correspondence receives responses but many don’t and she wants to know if there is a protocol to respond.

Ms. Mills said there is a limitation to the number of cars because of platform size and length of the rolling stock and asked if there has been any thought to adding an extra car and having the engine stop past the platform so the engine would not take up platform space.

Ms. Sweet left at 7:03 pm

Mr. Bendix said the first item under Plan in the list of questions addresses everything about capacity. Mr. Berk said to move that item under capacity.

Chair Gardiner asked if limited trains have unused capacity and if there is a way to persuade some passengers onto limited trains by adding more bike cars or adding Wi-Fi or other service.

Public Comment
Doug DeLong, Mountain View, said there were standees on the limited stop train he took to get to the meeting. He said the fastest and lowest cost way to increase capacity of this rail system is to throw all bikes off trains because dozens of seats are missing from every train because of bike racks. He said something more practical is potentially on weekends to run pairs of limited stop trains during peak hours so when trains that are more crowded could be split into pairs of limited trains and provide stops to all stations. That could also be done during weekday on some of the shoulder hours extending out of the peaks. This could increase capacity without having to buy more rolling stock. He said the short-term solution is schedule design if not to buy more cars.

Bruce Jenkins left 7:06 pm

Pat Giorni, Burlingame, said Caltrain is running 92 trains today. Caltrain Modernization limits the system to six trains per hour. She said now at peak commute hours Caltrain is running five and one-half trains, so it will be capped-off with one-half more train. She said she creates the bike bump report from correspondence and tries to be as impartial as possible. She said this month saw approximately 250 bumps. She said over 400 people in an online group are passing information about Caltrain online. She said she is seeing more and more complaints from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. mid-peninsula. She said bicyclists understand that sooner or later Caltrain will reach capacity and they accept
that gallery cars are probably at capacity. She said a letter in the correspondence packet is proposing a trial to put a third bike car on bombardier set by taking one set out of bullet service in order to use that car and replacing it with a gallery set. She said this is for consistency.

Ms. Mils left at 7:11 pm

Ms. Tucker said she would like to add a question about the transparency policy under the incident response and communications topic. She would like to know if the contract operator keeps track of bumps or complaints and if they are required to share information with the public.

Ms. Haskin said a presentation on the annual customer satisfaction survey that will provide a statistical balance to the complaints the CAC receives was scheduled for next month and asked if the CAC would like that presentation. Ms. Tucker and Mr. Bendix said they would like to discuss it at the next meeting.

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT – Kevin Gardiner

2014 Meeting Calendar
Chair Gardiner said the CAC Bylaws state that one CAC meeting per year should take place in San Francisco County and one meeting per year should take place in Santa Clara County. He said for a variety of reasons the Board and the CAC have not been following that stipulation. He said the pro is that it brings the meetings to other constituents; the cons are that there is a cost involved and attendance wasn’t improved.

Josh Averill, Assistant District Secretary, said the CAC stopped this practice in 2009. He said the Board stopped this practice at that time due to costs, the lack of increased attendance by the public, and the difficulty in finding suitable locations that are accessible to the public, meet ADA requirements, are near Caltrain, and are not expensive. He said when there is an issue or presentation that needs to be taken to the other counties, separate public meetings are held.

Mr. Berk said he votes to not hold the meetings in the other counties.

Mr. Bendix said this is a midpoint and seems to be most convenient.

Public Comment
Pat Giorni, Burlingame, said no other members of the public besides the few regular attendees ever attended those meetings.

A motion (Berk/Tucker) to approve the 2014 meeting calendar without meeting in the other counties was approved.

Appointment of 2014 Officer Election Nominating Committee
Chair Gardiner said the Bylaws state officers should rotate between the three counties and Santa Clara County is in line for the chair.
Ms. Tucker said it is hard for a Santa Clara County chair to go to the Board meeting during the day to represent the CAC. Ms. Haskin said the chair can assign someone to make that report on his or her behalf.

Chair Gardiner appointed Mr. Bendix, Ms. Tucker, and himself to be on the subcommittee.

Mr. Berk left at 7:25 p.m. Due to the lack of a quorum, the meeting was adjourned.

DATE, TIME AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING:
December 18, 2013 at 5:40 p.m., San Mateo County Transit District Administrative Building, 2nd Floor Bacciocco Auditorium, 1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, CA.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.