CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)
PENINSULA CORRIDOR JOINT POWERS BOARD (JPB)
SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING
Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor
1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos CA 94070

MINUTES OF MARCH 20, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT: P. Bendix, J. Hronowski, B. Jenkins, A. Levin, D. Lindsey, Y. Mills, A. Sweet, C. Tucker

MEMBERS ABSENT: K. Gardiner

STAFF PRESENT: J. Averill, R. Bolon, M. Bouchard

Vice Chair Adina Levin called the meeting to order at 5:46 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Public Comment
Roland LeBrun, San Jose, said on page four, the Union Pacific System is supposed to be “VETMS,” not “VTMS.” He said in that same paragraph, the blocks are a length of track, so it should not read “feet,” not “square feet.”

A motion (Bendix/Jenkins) to approve the minutes of February 20, 2013 as amended was approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Jeff Carter, Millbrae, said he noticed testing was being done on the Predictive Arrival/Departure System (PADS) with the visual display boards and asked for a progress report on the system and when it will be put into full use.

Doug DeLong, Mountain View, said he was happy to see PADS being tested and it is encouraging to see progress being made on the Signal Optimization Project. He said PADS will be a tremendous asset to Caltrain.

SAN BRUNO GRADE SEPARATION PROJECT (R. Bolon)
Project Manager Rafael Bolon presented:
- The project goal is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicular/pedestrian traffic at crossings between Interstate 380 and San Felipe and San Bruno avenues.
- The tracks will be partially raised, and the crossings at Angus, San Mateo and San Bruno avenues will be partially lowered.
- Three pedestrian-only underpasses will be added.
- An elevated station will be built between San Bruno and San Mateo avenues.
- Total construction cost is $147 million which includes two contracts: box culvert construction and grade separation construction.
The project should be completed in December of 2013.
Photos of the construction progress were shown.

Bruce Jenkins asked what the lightweight material is. Mr. Bolon said it is made up of cement concrete, sand, mortar, and a chemical propellant.

Mr. Jenkins asked what the walls are made of. Mr. Bolon said they are pre-cast concrete panels with a rock finish.

Alex Sweet asked why a grade separation is being done in San Bruno. Mr. Bolon said these are some of the most dangerous crossings on the west coast of the United States.

Yvonne Mills arrived at 6:05 p.m.

Paul Bendix asked if there were cheaper options at one point or if this was the only viable option. Mr. Bolon said this was the only viable option because of the number of external constraints such as the elevation of Interstate 380 and the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) tunnels underground. Mr. Bendix said when improvements are built in an urban area where options are limited, the expenses are going to be high.

Chair Levin asked if noise measurements were taken before construction and if an after-construction comparison will be made. Mr. Bolon said measurements were taken at different heights and distances. He said the amount of noise goes down in this configuration. He said the noisiest element of a train comes from the horns, and since there will no longer be a need for horns over at-grade crossings, the noise level will decrease.

Chair Levin asked how she can follow up on those noise measurements after the project is completed. Director of Rail Transportation Michelle Bouchard said staff will report that to the committee when the testing is done.

Chair Levin asked if underpass flooding was looked at. Mr. Bolon said to mitigate flooding there are pump stations at the impasses and the box culvert and the storm sewer lines along 1st Avenue have been upgraded for extra capacity to hold runoff rainwater.

Chair Levin asked what will be done with the shoofly tracks when the project is done. Mr. Bolon said the shoofly tracks currently go through the location where the new platform will be built, so the shoofly tracks will be removed as soon as possible after elevating the regular tracks in order to complete the construction of the platform.

Chair Levin asked if bicyclists have to walk their bikes at the pedestrian-only crossings. Mr. Bolon said one of the crossings will be for pedestrians only, but there will be several bike and pedestrian crossings and there are bike lanes in the vehicular underpasses.

Chair Levin asked if the windscreen was from community feedback or from the design. Mr. Bolon said both.
Cat Tucker asked how the cost estimate compares to actual costs. Mr. Bolon said most bids came in under the engineer’s original estimate.

John Hronowski asked when the tracks will go on the elevated platform. Mr. Bolon said May, but the trains will still use the temporary station until the second half of the platform is built.

Chair Levin asked what the time was from groundbreaking to completion. Mr. Bolon said the Board authorized the Limited Notice to Proceed in August of 2010 and completion is scheduled for the end of 2013.

Chair Levin asked if there is a signalized intersection to exit the parking lot. Mr. Bolon said there is no need for one based on the layout of the streets.

Chair Levin asked if there will be a bike loop detector. Mr. Bolon said he is not sure if the loops will be sensitive enough to detect bikes. Chair Levin said if there is a loop detector for cars it should work for bikes and the pavement should be marked.

**Public Comment**

Doug DeLong, Mountain View, said BART awarded a design build contract for the San Francisco Airport extension and the contractor did not give BART as-built drawings that matched what was in the ground, so BART did not give Caltrain correct information for construction. He said this project had to do redesign as a result. He said he hopes BART will pay for this because they were grossly negligent in the management of their construction contract, and this cost Caltrain millions.

Roland LeBrun, San Jose, said every presentation he has seen on San Bruno had four tracks and he wants to know what changed, when it changed, and why it was changed. He said unless there are siding tracks at the station to allow bullet or high-speed trains go through, there is a problem. Some lawyers are suing the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) stating the blended system will not work, and if stations are designed like the San Bruno Station, those lawyers are right and will win and it will cost $700 million of Proposition 1A funds. Mr. LeBrun said he met the BART engineer and he said Caltrain is not telling the truth about the $14 million cost overrun on the San Bruno Grade Separation Project, and that Caltrain knew exactly what was there and what they had to do. He said quiet zones can be done without grade separations.

Jeff Carter, Millbrae, asked how many tracks can be put on this project and where the tracks are going to go if high-speed rail (HSR) has to expand to four tracks. He said he would like to know where passing tracks are going to be. He said this is a pleasing-looking design. He said he advocates grade separations over quiet zones due to safety. He asked if the crossing at Linden Avenue will be looked at for a possible grade separation.

Andy Chow, Redwood City, said he believes the original plan called for four tracks but only two are going to be built due to funding. He asked what planning would have to be done and what elements might have to be rebuilt if there is funding to add the two other tracks.
Ms. Bouchard said the original plan with HSR was to make this area a four-track area. She advised not to confuse this project with the blended system which is looking at options where adding additional tracks would make sense for various reasons. She asked Mr. Bolon to explain what would happen if San Bruno was a chosen as a place to put four tracks in.

Mr. Bolon said the platforms are being built in such a way that if four tracks are authorized for that station, only relatively minor changes would need to be made to accommodate them.

Mr. Bolon said this grade separation was built for safety reasons, not to make it a quiet zone. The fact that the noise will be reduced is an added benefit.

Chair Levin asked if San Bruno is being considered for passing tracks. Ms. Bouchard said there are several locations under consideration.

Chair Levin asked if there was a cost overrun due to missing information from BART. Mr. Bolon said this project is significantly below the engineer’s estimate. He said there is not a cost overrun. There was a significant change order issued because of the incomplete as-built information from BART.

Chair Levin asked if there is merit to asking BART to pay for the costs associated with the change order. Mr. Bolon said staff has a positive relationship with BART, and BART gave staff the best information they had, although it was incorrect, but staff worked around it.

**CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT – A. Levin**

No report.

**STAFF REPORT – M. Bouchard**

Ms. Bouchard reported:

- Average weekday ridership is up 11.8 percent over last February.
- Year-to-date average weekday ridership is up 11.3 percent over last February.
- Annual counts are coming out and will be presented at the April JPB meeting.
- Extra service was provided for the World Baseball Classics.
- A total of four fatalities have occurred this year. Staff is looking at how well service was recovered and passengers were notified.
- Real-time information will be fantastic for service delays. For major disruptions, the system will need to rely on people in the control center. The system will be going live mid-May.
- The Signal Optimization Project is to install intermediate signals to allow block lengths to be shorter. This will help allow trains to get closer together and keep them moving and on time.
- The Gilroy open house event is this weekend and is gauged towards trying to develop a more robust Gilroy ridership market.
Chair Levin asked for an update on the Fiscal Year 2014 budget. Ms. Bouchard said a budget proposal is taken to May Board for June adoption.

Mr. Bendix asked if there is an update on the wheelchair bridge redesign. Ms. Bouchard said she signed a contract today with a fabricator and they will be moving forward with work and it will take two to two and a half months for fabrication. This design will positively lock the ramp to the train car.

Chair Levin asked if there is any news about conductor behavior regarding bike incidences. Ms. Bouchard said each incident that has a customer service problem gets investigated. Usually de-escalation training is provided to conductors.

Public Comment
Roland LeBrun, San Jose, said he is pleased the lengths of the blocks are being shortened to 3,000 feet, but 1,000 feet is the recommended length and this is how up to twelve trains could be run each hour with just two tracks. He said two fatalities occurred in the same place on the Guadalupe River Trail which crosses the train tracks. He said Caltrain was supposed to replace the Guadalupe River Bridge but this is not happening. He said he is going to do whatever he can to make it happen.

Chair Levin asked if there is an update on the status of a Guadalupe River Bridge replacement project. Ms. Bouchard said she would have to consult with the engineering department.

Chair Levin asked what the benefit of the signal system is. Ms. Bouchard said the study was commissioned many years ago and identified several locations along the right of way where the practical signal system headway was the greatest. She said in some places the headway is five minutes. Headway is how close trains can follow each other. A train will see signals to indicate how close it can get to the train in front of it. She said this signal system is designed for freight trains so there are long signal blocks, but the passenger trains are following these signals. The project will install intermediate signals in between the existing signals to allow passenger trains to travel closer together.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS
Ms. Sweet said there has been an update to the bike policy that says bikes cannot have permanent baskets attached. She said as bike connections become more popular there needs to be a larger scheme with bike parking, bike share, and flexibility for bringing bikes onboard to address the need.

Chair Levin said she feels that additional examination of this topic is needed and it should be put on the agenda for discussion.

Ms. Tucker said she thought policy decisions like that would be taken to the CAC or the Bicycle Advisory Committee.

Mr. Hronowski said his understanding is that the path on Coyote Trail ends on one side of tracks and begins on the other side, and since there is no crossing people cross the
tracks. Ms. Bouchard said it can be looked into but not to jump to conclusions about the circumstances.

**DATE, TIME AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING:**
April 17, 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 7:09 p.m.