

In the matter of:

SANDAG PUBLIC HEARING- CENTRAL AVENUE BIKEWAY

Public Hearing re: Central Avenue Bikeway

02/26/2018

Reported by: Rosalie A. Kramm, CSR # 5469

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2224 THIRD AVENUE, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, 92101

PUBLIC HEARING: CENTRAL AVENUE BIKEWAY

HELD AT: CHEROKEE POINT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BY: SANDAG

Transcribed by: Rosalie A. Kramm, CA CSR No. 5469

1 FEBRUARY 26, 2018 MONDAY SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

2 MR. SINNOTT: Good evening, Everybody. Thank
3 you for coming. My name is Terry Sinnott. I'm a
4 Councilman from the City of Del Mar and currently the
5 Chair of the SANDAG Board. It is my honor to be your
6 Public Hearing Officer for this public hearing on the
7 Central Avenue Bikeway.

8 Let me describe a little bit about how we're
9 going to proceed. The intent of this evening is to hold
10 a public hearing in compliance with the State
11 Environmental Law known as CEQA, or the California
12 Environmental Quality Act.

13 Many of you are probably familiar with it.

14 Staff's review of this project indicates it may
15 qualify as an exempt project under CEQA. Holding a
16 public hearing and preparing the traffic and safety
17 impact assessment are required before SANDAG can consider
18 approving a project as an exempt project from CEQA. I
19 think you saw some of the results of our study on the
20 easels.

21 Our transportation committee is anticipated to
22 consider whether the project is exempt from CEQA at its
23 April 20th meeting. If you are interested in providing
24 any comments regarding what you think this project -- if
25 there are any issues, concerns, comments, this is what

1 we're trying to do, is to capture those comments tonight.

2 If you are interested in providing spoken
3 comments this evening, what we would like you to do is
4 fill out one of these speaker slips, which I think are
5 either passed around or in the back. If you are
6 interested in providing comments, written comments, there
7 is a comment table at the back where you can write out
8 your comments about the project, and we'll capture those
9 as well.

10 And we have different interpreters who can
11 interpret if that is needed, also.

12 What we're hoping to do tonight is provide an
13 opportunity for you to speak about the project. That
14 would be comments, what you like, what you may have
15 concerns about, or anything that you think could make the
16 project better.

17 So we're not really prepared to respond
18 directly to your questions at this time, except I saw an
19 awful lot of discussion in the back when you were talking
20 to our project folks, and hopefully you got some of your
21 questions answered.

22 But we will respond to these comments. We will
23 first of all record them. They will become part of the
24 record, and the responses will be documented when this is
25 presented to the transportation committee.

1 There is a timer on the table. We think we may
2 not need it, but we would like you to limit your comments
3 to two to three minutes, so we can get everybody's in.
4 If you would prefer -- I already talked about written
5 comments. You can do that as well.

6 We also have a court reporter who is recording
7 your information, and if you would like to speak with her
8 after the session, you can do that, as well.

9 As I mentioned, written, spoken comments will
10 be collected at tonight's open house as well as written
11 responses. Those comments will be provided to our
12 transportation committee for their consideration when
13 they take action related to the CEQA compliance.

14 So that is kind of what we're about.

15 I will, then, begin calling people up. If you
16 can come on up, grab the microphone, and give us your
17 thoughts, and we'll get started.

18 Did I cover everything, guys, in the back?

19 Our first speaker is Sean Harrison. Give us
20 your name. There is a microphone.

21 MR. HARRISON: My name is is Sean Harrison. I
22 live in Kensington. I'm also the subcommittee chair for
23 the transportation subcommittee for the Talmadge Plan
24 Group. I've heard the presentation and several of the
25 design options and the current design option numerous

1 times. I've been to several stakeholder meetings in
2 regards to this. I've met with the residents along
3 Central Avenue, all the various stakeholders on several
4 occasions. I just want everybody to know we voted
5 unanimously for this project in its current design, and
6 we're here to support it. That's it.

7 MR. SINNOTT: Very good. Thank you very much.
8 I appreciate it.

9 Is Paul Jamason here?

10 MR. JAMASON: Yes. Hi. I'm Paul Jamason. I'm
11 a volunteer board member for Bike San Diego, and I also
12 live in Kensington. [REDACTED]. I also bike on
13 this route sometimes when I take the -- one of the two
14 rapid bus lines, either on El Cajon Boulevard or I-15.
15 And right now I have to bike the wrong way down the
16 streets, which is not good. I don't want to break the
17 rules or law, but it is not safe for me to bike on
18 El Cajon Boulevard. So to get to the bus stop, I bike
19 down, and if I see a car coming, I get on the sidewalk
20 and walk it. We have spent a lot of time both on the
21 centerline stations. I went to the grand opening this
22 weekend to for those and saw the El Cajon Rapid Bus,
23 another 44 million. So I think it makes sense. We have
24 made all these huge investments. Now, we have to get to
25 these things safely. I walk or bike there.

1 This is one way to do it in a safer way with
2 this bikeway.

3 Also, this area is slated for a lot more
4 density, which I support. We have a huge housing crisis
5 here, and to say everyone has to drive everywhere, that
6 is not going to work. We'll pack a lot more people in.
7 We need to give people choices on how to get around. I
8 walk and bike in the neighborhood as much as I can to
9 reduce the traffic impact. It is not safe to do so on
10 the cul de sac on Central Avenue. I think it would be
11 great if they can put it in.

12 You've got the freeway traffic and then it is a
13 double indignity that these folks have to cut through all
14 the cut-through traffic, over a thousand cars a day. You
15 have the freeway noise and the cut-through traffic. I
16 think a cul de sac would be great. Make it smaller so
17 you still have development on that site with the
18 housings.

19 Real quick, Vision Zero and Climate Action Plan
20 both call for safe routes like these. We need a
21 connecting bike network. We need to connect. The new
22 Bike Share Plan, a lot more people are biking with a bike
23 share. I used it this weekend. It is awesome. I don't
24 have to worry about getting my bike stolen again. I
25 support this project. Thank you.

1 MR. SINNOTT: Andy Hanshaw.

2 MR. HANSHAW: Good evening, I'm Andy Hanshaw
3 with the San Diego County Bike Commission voicing our
4 strong support for this Central Avenue Bikeway. Lots of
5 great input from the community, and lots of good support
6 for it. We support safe and connected bikeways.

7 In this case it is connecting communities, it
8 is connecting schools, it is connecting parks, and it is
9 connecting transit, all in a safer, calmer manner, and
10 all those ways to get more people biking and encourage,
11 as Paul said, in compliance with our Climate Action Plan,
12 Vision Zero, things that are very important to getting
13 more people on bikes and creating a safer environment.

14 So particularly I like the connection to the
15 SR-15 community bikeway so you can continue to go south
16 down to City Heights and make it a safer bikeway. And
17 then the east-west crossing, the other bikeways, excite
18 me, Orange, and Landis, that this kind of -- this is the
19 spine to that. It all just makes perfect sense to
20 connect in a safe manner to all these different bikeways.
21 We are building out a network here, all throughout the
22 region, and that is what is really important. We are
23 giving people transportation choices by connecting
24 networks of bikeways. This is what we want to see all
25 around. We strongly support it. Thank you.

1 MR. SINNOTT: Thank you.

2 Randy Van Vleck?

3 MR. VAN VLECK: Thank you for your time
4 tonight. My name is Randy Van Vleck. I'm the
5 Transportation and Planning Manager for the City Heights
6 Community Development Corporation. Since 1981 when the
7 organization was founded, advocating for the walking,
8 biking transit amenities along the SR-15 has been one of
9 our legacy projects.

10 So given that, the past year has been big. We
11 celebrated the opening of SR-15 commuter bike lanes, a
12 \$16 million investment; the centerline station
13 celebration last weekend was huge. And those are unique
14 investments in our community that we really want to
15 leverage.

16 Further down south along the SR-15 corridor, we
17 have Park De La Cruz down here with the new skate park.

18 All of those projects are part of the State
19 Route 15 planning process, and they are all called out in
20 a Memorandum of Understanding from 1983, and including
21 the centralized bikeway, which we really want to see as
22 one of the last pieces, infrastructure pieces of those
23 promises made over 25 years ago.

24 So it is really key that we move this project
25 forward. We are really excited to see it move forward.

1 We support the staff recommendation. We have
2 been participating throughout the process. We really
3 want to have a project that is really going to create the
4 safe streets that our community needs and deserves.

5 We know that City Heights has an inexplicable
6 amount of traffic crashes compared to other communities.
7 In the last -- we did a study called the City Heights
8 School Report and found in a span of four years 114 kids
9 were hit by cars while walking in school zones. That is
10 just the tip of the iceberg. That is just the reported
11 crashes.

12 Getting those complete paths that we need and
13 deserve is really key. We hope to see the project move
14 forward as soon as possible. We appreciate the 2019
15 construction date. Let's stick to that. We have worked
16 for this for a long time, from 1978 to 2018. City
17 Heights and Mid-City residents have been working on the
18 SR-15. That is too long. Sorry. Let's stick to the
19 construction date of 2019.

20 And then we -- in regards to the design, we are
21 supportive of all the design elements.

22 One of the big questions seems to be the cul de
23 sac on Central Avenue just north of El Cajon Boulevard.
24 We want to see the smallest cul de sac possible there.
25 The current cul de sacs are huge. I saw an elderly man

1 after the celebration, he went straight across which is
2 what I do, and he had to stand there and wait for the
3 right opportunity to cross. So let's get a small cul de
4 sac, land is scarce, especially in Mid-City. Let's not
5 have it be asphalt sitting there all day. We hope they
6 have the smallest cul de sac possible in that area and
7 allow the walking distance to the Boulevard Transit Plaza
8 to be reduced.

9 Thank you very much.

10 MR. SINNOTT: Adam Denbry.

11 MR. DENBRY: Adam Denbry. I'm here from Normal
12 Heights. I live on [REDACTED]. I rode to the event for
13 the opening of the bus line this weekend, too, and I had
14 never ridden down there before, and this plan addresses
15 the problem I had crossing El Cajon Boulevard from
16 Central. So that's really wonderful to see.

17 It looks like this plan connects perfectly with
18 the plans we've been shown in the Normal Heights
19 Community Planning Group, the Georgia and Meade bike
20 path. So I'm excited to see a project that we've spent a
21 couple of years looking at details about get continued
22 and branch into other communities that I don't have the
23 access to by bike that I would like to have right now.

24 And, I mean, I support everything, you know,
25 all the historic stuff that everybody else has said. I

1 don't want to repeat it.

2 But I did come across a City of San Diego 1980,
3 '81 budget recently, and in that budget is a
4 comprehensive bike plan. It is for a regional bike plan,
5 and the budget is \$124,000, I believe. So it's -- I'm
6 glad that, you know, 37, 38 years later, we're getting to
7 finishing that project and serving all these communities
8 together with one regional system.

9 So I support everything in this plan. Thank
10 you.

11 MR. SINNOTT: Thank you. Jim Barros.

12 MR. BARROS: Hi, I'm Jim Barros. I live in
13 Normal Heights. I bike this area quite a bit. In fact,
14 I rode here tonight. That is why I'm dressed in 14
15 layers. It is cold outside.

16 I'm speaking in favor of the project. It is a
17 long time waiting. I can speak for the Normal Heights
18 Planning Group, and I do Chair that organization and we
19 are certainly in favor of giving opportunities for people
20 to get around safer, especially because we have two
21 schools along this route, the elementary school and
22 junior high. I think it will be real important for them.

23 I do agree with the comments about the cul de
24 sac at the south end of Central. I think that could be
25 designed in a way that makes it easier to get through for

1 bicyclists and pedestrians.

2 I do however notice there is no comment or
3 information about any kind of outreach or public
4 information that will be available after the project is
5 in place or maybe just before. Many motorists don't know
6 what those markings are on the road, that looks like a
7 bicycle with the two slashes on them, and the no right
8 turn flashing light and the extra crosswalk space on
9 Adams Avenue. These are opportunities for motorists to
10 get confused, and if we can remove confusion, we will all
11 be a lot safer. I hope within the budget there will be
12 opportunities for outreach, not only to motorists,
13 bicyclists, and pedestrians, but the police enforcement
14 folks that doesn't know what is appropriate and what is
15 not, and do enforcement out there.

16 So thanks for this effort. Pretty cool. We
17 have a microphone and everything.

18 MR. SINNOTT: Thank you very much. Jake
19 followed by Margaret.

20 MR. SERBEL: My name is Jake Serbel. I live in
21 Kensington. I live off [REDACTED]. I live
22 close to the Terrace and Adams Avenue, and I am in full
23 support of this bike project. Driving down the Terrace
24 Drive there is -- there is no safe place for any
25 bicyclists whatsoever. One day you can count how many

1 bicyclists should have got hit, but thankfully everyone
2 is aware. I'm in full support of this to make it safer
3 for everyone to get around.

4 MR. SINNOTT: Thank you very much. Margaret
5 Loose.

6 MS. LOOSE: Hello, I'm Margaret Loose. I live
7 in Cherokee Point at [REDACTED], and I'm here to
8 address the gender imbalance in the speakers tonight.
9 No.

10 I am in favor of this project as well and
11 others like it. I'm also -- by the way, I'm not speaking
12 on behalf of, but I am on the board of the Cherokee Point
13 Neighborhood Association, and many of our conversations
14 have revolved around making our neighborhood, Cherokee
15 Point, more pedestrian and bike friendly. But I don't --
16 I am not speaking on behalf of them, but I'm part of the
17 board.

18 I'm excited to see a project that will help
19 connect our neighborhood by virtue of connecting to the
20 SR-15 route, help us eventually get to the trolley that
21 is proposed to be built. I work at UCSD, and it's a
22 long, complicated process to try to get there without a
23 car -- or with a car, frankly.

24 But I see this bikeway as another piece in
25 something that will allow me to get to Old Town and

1 connect with the trolley that could get me to work.

2 I am also pleased as someone who rides a
3 recumbent trike, it is parked outside, if you don't know
4 what I'm talking about, I'm also pleased to see some
5 attention in the draft plans to sharp turns, fixed
6 objects, narrow ramps that are not ADA compliant. Those
7 things benefit people like me who are riding vehicles
8 that you can't just pick up with one hand and turn.

9 So I'm happy to see -- I think that is
10 mentioned between Terrace and Adams.

11 I also like the idea of the bike lane for
12 uphill traffic between Landis and Wightman. I think that
13 is helpful for less intrepid cyclists in particular, and
14 those of us with -- who have a love affair with gravity
15 and are a little slower going uphill.

16 I have a question about -- which I know people
17 can't answer tonight. The no right turn on red,
18 blank-out signs are ingenious, because we always are
19 facing push-back from motorists. I do wonder if, like,
20 how blazing would they be? Will they get people's
21 attention, because a lot of times we're so accustomed to
22 making right turns on red, that even if there are
23 permanent signs there, people don't notice them. So it
24 would need to be something almost blinding.

25 But thank you for the effort here and the

1 presence and food and drinks, and I'm out of time. Good
2 night.

3 MR. SINNOTT: Thank you very much.

4 Do we have anybody else who would like to make
5 some comments regarding the project? Going once, going
6 twice. Okay.

7 We will close the public comment. We really
8 appreciate some of the thoughts that were put together.
9 There is an opportunity to continue, if you come up with
10 another comment, we're going to be here for at least
11 until 8:00 o'clock. And if you have some questions for
12 the project team or you want to put more comments in, you
13 can write them, and they will be included in the record.

14 We'll keep the public hearing open until 8:00.

15 I really want to thank all of you. Many of you
16 have been engaged in this project development for a long
17 time, and it takes an interchange of information and
18 joint planning in the neighborhood groups to really get
19 this to the point that it is. So I want to thank those
20 people who have been involved in project planning.

21 SANDAG folks who have been involved in this,
22 could you just raise your hand? Okay. So we've got
23 about half a dozen to seven people that have -- they have
24 been active in this area and working on this for a number
25 of years, and we appreciate all of that work, too.

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Rosalie A. Kramm, Certified Shorthand Reporter for the State of California, CSR No. 5469, do hereby certify:

That the foregoing was taken before me at the time and place herein set forth; that the proceedings were reported stenographically by me and were transcribed through computerized transcription by me; that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings taken at that time; and that I am not interested in the event of the action.

Witness my hand dated February 28, 2018



ROSALIE A. KRAMM

CA CSR NO. 5469