

CORONADO TUNNEL COMMISSION

Thursday, December 13, 2007

**Police Facility, 700 Orange Avenue
Community Meeting Room**

Minutes

1. ROLL CALL:

Attendees: Sut Clark, Art Osborne, Steve Clarey, Lou Smith, Margaret Pimpo and Darrell Sarich; Al Ovrom (City Council representative)

City Staff: Jim Benson and Ed Walton

Consultant: Brian Pearson, PB Americas, Inc. (PB)

Absent: Bill Huck and Rhonda Cruz

2. MINUTES: The November 15, 2007 minutes were unanimously approved.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: Mr. Clarey reported that he had done some research on the South Bay Expressway tolls and found that there are three categories of tolls, one of which is an \$81 discount for Chula Vista property owners (not renters). He said that trucks can save 30 minutes by using the expressway. The reason the discount applies only to property owners is that there was an assessment to support the \$160 million piece paid for by SANDAG. There is a website for additional information: www.southbayexpressway.com. He concluded that there is room for creativity with tolls and he sees opportunities for public/private partnership.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Update:

1. Project Report and Environmental Document (PR/ED):

- Draft Project Report and Draft EIS/EIR Review Status – PB released the original draft of the PR and the preliminary draft of the EIS/EIR in September. To date they have received City, Caltrans and FHWA comments and are waiting for the Navy's comments. The Navy needs to go up the chain of command so the documents can be officially signed. Based on today's PDT meeting, PB should get their comments in a couple of weeks. PB expects to have all of the comments (but may not have the Navy's) incorporated by the end of December and will ship them to Sacramento. Expected Navy comments are: (1) Concern about vulnerability and threat to their personnel driving through the tunnel; (2) Concern about the additional costs for the gate at the east portal even though this was their request; (3) Concern with traffic

backing up on I-5, although PB has demonstrated that if they process cars in their normal fashion this should not happen; and (4) Loss of parking at the west portal on NASNI. They may raise the issue as to why the City doesn't have an alternative that takes the portal off Navy property and onto City property. Direction from the City Council was not to incorporate this as an option as it would take some properties. The Navy still believes that TDM/TMS will solve the traffic problem, but unless they were to mandate this, it does not seem likely to result in reduced traffic.

Mr. Pearson said that he, Mr. Walton and Ms. Cruz attended a tunnel safety and security workshop in Irvine. There were many attendees from Europe. There was discussion about current designs where they have turnouts for disabled vehicles and crossovers to move vehicles from one tunnel to another. There are virtually no shoulders in European tunnels and, in fact, Caltrans is the only authority agency that requires shoulders. PB called Caltrans headquarters and spoke to an engineer who was open to having PB propose alternatives to shoulders if a tunnel alternative is chosen. This could reduce the cost by 25-30%. Caltrans will not guarantee that they will approve this, but they have said they will consider it. It would be up to the City to make the case. There are no national tunnel standards – it's done state-by-state now – but they are being developed. It would be Sacramento's call to make a design exception. I-710 is moving through the tunnel approval process and a feasibility study has been done.

It was learned at today's PDT meeting that there may need to be a paleontology study.

Mr. Osborne asked how long the EIS/EIR document is good for and Mr. Pearson said it would likely have a long shelf life because not much will change on Third and Fourth Streets. Mr. Pearson noted that FHWA will not sign the Record of Decision until a financing plan is in place. PMA is already lobbying for the "son of SAFETEA-LU" in 2010.

- Agency Coordination – Navy/Caltrans – Hopefully this will be resolved next week by the attorneys.

B. Funding:

1. Discussion of Project Financing Alternatives and Steps to Implement: Mr. Pearson distributed a handout titled "They Really Do Own the Road," about private companies that buy leases of public highways, bridges and tunnels. Mr. Clarey observed that the source of federal funding for infrastructure projects will be greatly reduced. It's going from an 80/20 split to 20/80.

2. Report from Subcommittee on Council Contacts: Mrs. Pimpo reported that Mr. Huck will be sending more information. Mr. Benson stated his availability to talk to the Subcommittee. He also said that Jim Schmidt, who had inherited promises left undone by Pat Brown to get the tolls off, is still involved. He was at a SANDAG meeting today and was talking about public/private partnerships. People's willingness to look for alternative ways of funding projects is out there.

C. Reports and Discussion from Commission Members or Staff on Current Issues:

1. Status of Third Street Gate Project: Mr. Walton said the project is still not complete. The Navy still needs to shift outbound traffic on McCain to the other side of the road to better line up with Fourth Street. Admiral Stockdale Road will be resurfaced because the old pavement markings are showing through.

2. Bulb-Outs/Signals Update: The City is still working with Caltrans. Caltrans and the City's consultant have been reluctant to do anything at Third and B because of the curve. Mr. Clarey asked how he could elevate this to a level of higher authority and Mr. Ovrom suggested writing a letter to the City Manager. The City met with MTS about the bus stop at Fourth and B; it may be moved, eliminated or one corner of the bus stop could be modified so a bus could park there, but not stick out into the street. Residents want landscaping at the bulbouts but if they won't maintain the landscaping the City would have to tap into water mains and each intersection would need a water meter. The City will talk to homeowners about maintaining grass. There has been about a 20% failure rate for trees planted on Third and Fourth Streets because residents have not fulfilled their promises of watering. Mrs. Pimpo said that trees block visibility for low-profile vehicles. She asked if the high school art teacher or Eagle Scouts could come up with hardscape projects and Mr. Clark asked if artificial turf could be considered.

Mr. Benson said that the signals have been designed. The City needs the signed agreement with Caltrans and the Navy. A Navy representative at today's PDT meeting said the agreement was in Admiral Hering's office for signature. The City hopes to have the plans by the end of the year to submit for a Caltrans encroachment permit. The plan is to go out to bid early next year.

3. General Information Update: Mr. Clarey asked if the City had heard anything on the supplemental EIS/EIR for the third aircraft carrier and Mr. Benson said that a response is months away.

C. Future Meeting Schedule: Thursday, February 14, 2008 at 4:00 p.m.

5. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting concluded at 5:20 p.m.

Approved:

Jackson S. Clark, Chairman