

CORONADO TUNNEL COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, February 12, 2004
Police Facility, 700 Orange Avenue
Community Meeting Room

MINUTES

1. ROLL CALL:

Attendees: Sut Clark, Steve Clarey, Al Hollingsworth, Bill Huck and Art Osborne

Absent: Betsy Gill, Al Ovrom and Casey Tanaka (City Council representative)

City Staff: Jim Benson, Gail Brydges and Ed Walton

2. MINUTES: The minutes of the December 4, 2003 meeting were approved unanimously.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: Ms. Brydges reported that she'd received a phone call from Bill Berl, who had a meeting with Maria Bowie who now works for Representative Ken Calvert. Ms. Bowie told him that Representative Susan Davis was in a meeting where she queried the Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations on their position on the Tunnel. They indicated they were generally supportive. Ms. Brydges will receive minutes of that meeting.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Update

1. Project Study Report (PSR)

- Caltrans Action: The PSR is done; Caltrans has signed off on it. Ms. Brydges said that, to Caltrans, this is a project initiation document; it's means it's now "A Project."

2. Project Report and Environmental Documents (PR/ED):

- Scope of Work and Schedule: The City is still working on the contract with Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB). Ms. Brydges displayed the Draft Scope of Work; Caltrans is still commenting on it. It's very detailed and will be 80-100 pages. Brian Pearson will come to the next meeting and take the Tunnel Commission through the scope. Hopefully, it will be closer to finalization then.
- Fund Transfer Agreement - \$745,000 – Caltrans: The money is in place.

- Cooperative Agreement – Caltrans: Mr. Benson said this is getting closer to being signed off. The City Council has already approved it. Caltrans has assigned an engineer, Carl Savage, to the project. Mr. Hollingsworth wondered if 2008 wasn't optimistic for the environmental to come to a close and Ms. Brydges responded that she felt it was accurate. Mr. Benson explained that this project is not much different from any other project, as far as environmental. A Caltrans environmental person, Dave Nagy, has been assigned and he has been very positive. So has the rest of the environmental staff. The picture is getting bigger and more people are involved. Mr. Huck asked if the State budget crisis would have an effect on review and timing and Mr. Benson responded, not on timing, but it could in terms of State funding and personnel reductions at Caltrans. This is not a Caltrans project yet, so the City will be reimbursing Caltrans for their time processing this. Hopefully, the Cooperative Agreement can be finalized so the City can sign a contract with PB. PB cannot start work until this is finalized.
- Lead Agency Agreement – City/FHWA/Navy/Caltrans: This is a four-party agreement. The City is the lead for CEQA, the FHWA for NEPA, and the Navy and Caltrans are participants. Ms. Brydges wrote the agreement after researching others. It has been to the City Attorney. This does not have to be signed before PB can start work.

3. 2004 Transportation Appropriation Bill – \$500,000: Mr. Benson said the PR/ED is partially funded by this money.

4. Transportation Reauthorization Bill (2004-2009) – Request for \$20 Million: Mr. Benson reported that this is a six-year program. The basic thinking on the \$20 million is that if our money for design is not in the basic bill, it will be later. If the Senate version is passed, we have a greater chance of being in there. If the project is not in the six-year program, we can come close to finishing the environmental, but will lose some years and have to wait until the next cycle of TEA.

Ms. Brydges distributed a schedule that displayed work and milestones from 2004 to 2014. Mr. Huck wondered if there might be a reason to take the schedule to the left (a backward look) to indicate progress achieved to date. He commented that presentation is an important issue. It may be useful to have a schedule that is not so technical, but more for public information. Mr. Clark agreed and said that would show that the project isn't just beginning, but that we're well into it.

5. SANDAG Transnet Extension – \$25 Million – Construction Only: Mr. Benson said an ad hoc SANDAG committee is driving this and it's down to the fine tuning now. There are 14 counties or multi-county areas that are talking about half a cent sales tax measure (or increment thereabouts). This time, a 67% (2/3) vote will be required; last time it was 50% and received a 52% vote, but we have a lot more traffic now, as do San Diego and other counties. The Transnet

extension is crucial to Coronado as far as having this local share for tunnel funding acting as a match. The \$25 million is for construction, so if we don't get there, it will be available for someone else. But the foot is in the door. The voter polling seems to be more favorable in San Diego than in some other counties. This will be on the November 2, 2004 ballot.

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

1. Major Traffic Study (MTS): Mr. Benson said that work continues, but PB has lost their traffic subconsultant. PB is working on models and refining data collection. Part of the MTS will be to install permanent traffic counters. Caltrans counters count by the hour; it might be more meaningful to have counts by shorter increments. It seems to defy logic, but we have experience where there is an inverse correlation between traffic back-ups and peak hour traffic.

2. Semi-Diverter: The MTS will feed some of the EIR for the semi-diverter issue. Caltrans is the only organization that replied to the Notice of Preparation. The City wants to have good data that people can make a decision on.

3. Third Street Gate: This is the last year that Senator Feinstein is slated to be the ranking minority member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction. The City is trying to use its influence to get the gate project bumped up from '07 to '05. Mr. Benson said the City is still not satisfied with the preliminary design and how it matches up with the tunnel.

4. Congestion Relief Working Group (CRWG) Project: The City is working through the document with Caltrans and SANDAG to do the environmental on the signals. The City is also working on a drainage problem at Fourth and Alameda, so if a signal goes in there it can possibly be done as one project.

5. Airport Committee – Joint Use of North Island: Mr. Clarey said our local congressional delegation and both Senators have all written letters against the continued consideration by the Regional Airport Authority of using any San Diego military bases as a new regional airport, however, the letters did not address joint use.

Dick Scharff (in audience) said that predictions are that airline traffic won't return to pre-9/11 levels until 2016. This information came from his sister-in-law who works in that field.

C. Future Meeting Schedule: Thursday, March 11, 2004 at 4:00 p.m.

5. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

Approved:

Jackson S. Clark, Chairman