



Van Ness Business Advisory Committee

Thursday, May 18, 2017

3:00-4:30pm

180 Redwood Street, Suite 300, 3rd Floor

MEETING MINUTES

1. Meeting was called to order at 3:11 p.m.
2. Public comment: Members of the public may address the Van Ness Business Advisory Committee on matters that are within its jurisdiction and are not on today's calendar.
 - a. No public comment was heard.
3. Minutes for the March 16, 2017, meeting were approved by a voice vote.
4. SFMTA staff updates.
 - a. Project schedule.
 - i. As of the beginning of April, the Van Ness Improvement Project is running two to three months behind schedule, depending on the phase of work.
 1. Much of the delays are due to wet weather conditions that have prevented work from occurring as scheduled.
 2. A subcontractor has not yet been procured for the upcoming utility work. Project staff is working closely with Walsh Construction and the City Attorney's Office to determine next steps to address this issue and minimize any schedule impacts.
 3. A subcontractor has been secured for the electric work, which means work on the electrical duct bank on the western side of Van Ness could begin before the water and sewer work.
 4. Luis Mejias asked whether the delays have impacted the anticipated end date for the project.
 - a. The anticipated end date remains the same. The contractor is exploring several options to recover any lost time throughout the remaining schedule.
 - b. Construction update.
 - i. Construction crews continue to work in the median of Van Ness Avenue. Remaining work to remove the median includes relocating Overhead Contact System wires and traffic signals. Once these tasks are complete, the median will be temporarily paved over so that traffic can be shifted over it in the coming weeks.
 - c. Lighting on Van Ness Avenue.
 - i. Staff is finalizing the detailed design for the spiral replica pole design.
 1. Once finalized, the spiral replica pole design will require approval from Caltrans.
 2. Luis Mejias asked whether staff could predict any concerns Caltrans may raise regarding the detailed design.
 - a. The spiral replica pole design includes a clam-shell base, which was not part of the originally approved modern pole design. Caltrans requires a specific length of clearance from the edge of the curb to the base of any structure on the sidewalk. The clam-shell base could infringe upon this space.
 3. Staff and the City Attorney's office have determined that no additional approvals are necessary from the San Francisco Arts Commission for the spiral replica pole design.

4. At their April 27 meeting, the Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit Community Advisory Committee adopted a motion to have project staff submit a formal letter to the Board of Supervisors to inform each member of the increased cost estimate and their concerns that the design lacks uniformity and conflicts with the mitigation measure outlined in the project's Environmental Impact Report.
 - a. Mitigation Measure M-AE-2: Design and install a replacement OCS support pole/streetlight network that (1) retains the aesthetic function of the existing network as a consistent infrastructural element along Van Ness Avenue, (2) assures a uniform architectural style, character and color throughout the corridor that is compatible with the existing visual setting and (3) retains the architectural style of the original OCS support pole/streetlight network. Within the Civic Center Historic District, design the OCS support pole/streetlight network to comply with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and be compatible with the character of the historic district as described in the Civic Center Historic District designating ordinance as called for by the San Francisco Planning Code.
 - b. Staff drafted a letter for approval by the Van Ness BRT CAC Chairman, Alex Wilson. Following approval, staff shared the letter with the remaining committee members before submitting it to the Board of Supervisors on May 15.
 - c. Luis Mejias asked whether there were any anticipated repercussions or impacts from the motion.
 - i. The motion and resulting letter to the Board of Supervisors provided information and context to the supervisors. No action from the supervisors was required.
 - d. Update on neighboring projects.
 - i. Polk Streetscape Project.
 1. Water work continues on North Point Street and will begin on Polk Street from North Point to Bay streets. Side sewer work will begin on Polk next week from Francisco to Union streets.
 - a. Weekend work is expected on May 20 and 21 at the intersection of Polk and Bay streets.
 2. Traffic signal upgrades along Polk Street are anticipated to be completed in June.
5. Outreach update.
- a. Double parking campaign.
 - i. The double parking campaign initiated by the Van Ness Business Advisory Committee will include palm cards, posters and table tents to encourage people to catch their rides on side streets instead of Van Ness.
 - ii. Project ambassadors will canvass Van Ness Avenue and speak directly with merchants. They will show merchants samples of each piece and survey them to determine demand and print quantities for each.
 - b. Recent public engagement activities.
 - i. Russian Hill Neighbors Annual Meeting.
 1. Staff presented project and construction information at the annual Russian Hill Neighbors meeting.
 - ii. Sunday Streets Tenderloin.
 1. Project staff attended Sunday Streets in the Tenderloin alongside Director Joel Ramos and Sustainable Streets Division staff. Project information was displayed on a 60-foot hybrid Muni bus. Children of all ages completed a scavenger hunt on the vehicle and Sustainable Streets demonstrated a parking protected bike lane at the booth.
 - iii. [Spring 2017 newsletter](#).
 1. The spring issue of the Van Ness Improvement Project newsletter was distributed electronically to more than 2,000 project subscribers and

posted on the project website. It focused on planned SFgo improvements for Van Ness and how the city is implementing smart technology on its streets to keep traffic moving more efficiently.

- iv. Meet the Expert: SFgo.
 - 1. Kenneth Kwong from the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency spoke about the planned SFgo improvements for Van Ness. The event included a brief walk from Van Ness and Turk to Gough and Turk to show an example of the changeable message signs planned for Van Ness.
- c. Outreach Calendar.
 - i. Meet the Expert event.
 - 1. The next Meet the Expert event will be held Wednesday, June 7, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
- d. Open for Business marketing program.
 - i. Jorge Rivas from Invest in Neighborhoods and Peter Lauterborn from Civic Edge gave an overview of the Open for Business program they have been developing over the last several months. The presentation included sample campaigns to generate ideas from committee members, an overview of the decision-making process for the program and a draft schedule for potential campaigns.
 - ii. Goals for the program include providing direct marketing support to businesses, developing materials to remind residents and visitors that businesses are open, and incorporating the distinct identity of the corridor.
 - iii. Other corridors/neighborhoods included in the program include West Portal, Castro Street and Polk Street.
 - iv. Peter asked BAC members how they would like to be involved in developing the decision-making process and what thoughts they had on the program as presented.
 - 1. Patricia Klock said Van Ness is a diverse corridor. She said there are hotels, restaurants, residential businesses, and more along the corridor. She felt like bringing in more businesses than the BAC represented would be a good starting point, but wanted to see a more narrowed focus for the program. She also wanted more details about elements of the program such as cost and required resources. She also felt that the Van Ness Improvement Project construction schedule wouldn't lend itself well to separate campaigns by business-type. She would prefer a different color scheme and branding design. Lastly, she suggested that the program educate merchants during the initial survey effort. She felt that pairing someone with project knowledge would be ideal.
 - a. Peter Lauterborn said the program is intended to be flexible and can be customized. This includes a corridor-specific campaign and any placement of materials and banners.
 - b. Patrick Hosfield agreed that a survey would be a great tool. He said it would be interesting to see the results because he was unsure how a brand would work for all of Van Ness. He felt the businesses on the corridor were too individual and separate to be united under one brand, but he was curious to see what programs could possible tie things together.
 - 2. Staff asked BAC members what would be most helpful to include on the survey to provide merchants with any necessary education on the Van Ness Improvement Project and/or the Open for Business program.
 - a. Patrick Hosfield said it would be helpful to provide case studies. He said an overview of similar projects that were successful elsewhere would be great.
 - i. Patricia Klock agreed that it would be a big help to provide an overview of success stories elsewhere.
 - b. Patrick Hosfield said it would be better to shift the focus of the Open for Business program to be more specific to the Van Ness Improvement Project as opposed to an introduction to marketing in general. He said to focus on a sense of urgency without fear,

as well as highlight ways businesses can best position themselves now to take advantage of the benefits the Van Ness Improvement Project will bring.

- c. Patricia Klock asked whether a draft of the survey could be provided at the June 15 meeting.
 - i. Peter Lauterborn said they would try to have a draft of the survey ready one week prior to the June BAC meeting so that the survey could be conducted in July. He said results from the survey could then be ready for the August meeting.
 - 1. Patricia Klock said it was important that the survey and results are collected before the start of the utility work. Any later would be too late.
 - d. Patrick Hosfield said the Open for Business program should avoid creating a working group separate from the Van Ness BAC. He said the program should be used to encourage more participation and engagement with the already-established committee.
6. Next meeting – Thursday, June 15, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
- a. July 20, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
 - b. August 17, 3:00-4:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Every agenda shall provide an opportunity for members of the public to address the Committee on items of interest to the public that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Committee.

Public comment will be taken for each agenda item after discussion of the item by the Van Ness Business Advisory Committee.

Privilege of Floor and Public Participation. The privilege of the floor shall be granted to any member of the public or officers of the City and County of San Francisco, or their duly authorized representatives for the purpose of commenting on any question before the Committee. Each person wishing to speak on an item at a regular or special meeting shall be permitted to be heard once per item for up to three minutes. The presiding officer shall be the judge of the pertinence of such comments, and have the power to limit this privilege if in the presiding officer's opinion the comments are not pertinent to the question before the Committee or the comments are merely reiterative of points made by previous speakers.

Presentations. After a presentation, the Van Ness Business Advisory Committee Chair will ask committee members if they have any questions and then will open the meeting to public comment. When members of the public ask a question of the presenter, presenters should not respond, nor engage in any conversation. First, the commenter should finish their commentary. After which, if the Van Ness Business Advisory Committee Chair or any committee member wants the presenter to respond to that question, the presenter will then respond to the Committee and not to the public.