

**MINUTES OF THE
NAPA COUNTY TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL
REGULAR MEETING**



Wednesday, April 30, 2008
5:30 p.m.

I. Roll Call; Call to Order.

The Napa County Technical Advisory Panel met during regular session on April 30, 2008 with the following members present: Dennis Scherzinger; Dennis Rinehart; Vice-Chairperson Rolf Ohlemutz; Phill Blake; Barbara Stafford; Chairperson Bill Bennett; and Chip Bouril. Chris Craiker arrived during Item II, and Bob Zlomke was excused.

II. Public Comment.

Mark Lucas, Chair of the Bicycle Advisory Committee for the City of Napa, expressed concerns about the railroad crossings that will be modified on Soscol Avenue at First Street and Third Street. He spoke of Mike O'Bryon, Public Works Director, and Larry Pollard, Assistant Public Works Director, City of Napa, attending one of the Bicycle Advisory Committee meetings three or four years ago wherein they presented drawings related to the railroad realignment. Mr. Lucas suggested implementing concrete panels at the crossings and working on the approach so that bicyclists would come in at a 90 degree angle instead of at a skewed angle. Mr. O'Bryon stated he would go back to the Flood Control District, but no further information was received by the Committee. Mr. Lucas attended a Traffic Advisory Committee meeting in November 2007, also attended by Julie Lucido, Principal Engineer. Mr. Lucas learned during the meeting that asphalt would be placed at the crossings and not concrete panels. He later followed up with Mr. O'Bryon and Ms. Lucido, who both informed him that the Flood Project has the right to put the crossings back in the same existing condition. Mr. Lucas was concerned that the Committee was never informed of the decision to not use concrete panels and weren't able to come back and address safety concerns and that a \$45 million project funded by taxpayers should include a safety enhancement. Mr. Lucas stated he would appreciate it if this issue could possibly still be worked out. He added that placing signs at the crossings for bicyclists to get off their bikes and walk isn't the way to solve the problem and didn't represent the real law. He also stated that he knows of several people who have been hurt at the crossings on Soscol and that the City of Napa has been faced with lawsuits.

Tim Thulin distributed photographs of concrete panels and existing railroad crossings, pointing out the asphalt deterioration at the existing crossings. Mr. Thulin stated the benefits of concrete panels vs. asphalt would be durable surfaces that could withstand heavy vehicle traffic while maintaining an even crossing surface, thus reducing the possibility of cyclists being injured as well as saving on wear and tear of automobiles. He added that the most expensive cost to repair track and road surface would be more than the installation cost of concrete panels, which would also have a surface life expectancy of two to three times longer than other types of crossings. Mr. Thulin suggested attendees of the meeting to drive over and/or look at the crossings and ask themselves if this is what they want the City to do for them, and there is no reason to expect the crossings to be better maintained in the future.

Item II...Continued

Lou Penning recalled a fairly serious accident he had while riding his bicycle over railroad tracks on Soscol during a misty day wherein his bike slipped and he fell into the traffic lane, damaging his elbow and wrist and was unable to ride a bike for six weeks. Mr. Penning mentioned that Soscol is a Class 2 bike lane only during limited hours of the day, which poses additional dangers to bicyclists. He added that the raised tracks will be at a more acute angle than what is existing now, causing deterioration of an existing bicycle facility that has to be mitigated.

Muriel Fagiani questioned why the issue of the railroad crossings was being brought to the Panel now and what was expected to be done. Mr. Lucas stated they were requesting concrete panels at the crossings. Ms. Fagiani then asked if Item Nos. IV and V should be moved to the end of the meeting so that people could just disperse from the walking tour site rather than having to return to the District office to finish the meeting. Janice Killion, District Counsel, replied that there are certain rules to follow and that the meeting couldn't be adjourned and then continued in the field due to the possibility of further discussion occurring. However, the meeting could be adjourned in the field.

Jim Hench had the following comments for the walking tour (Item V):

- Look down over the bank on the southwest corner of the Third Street Bridge.**
- As you go towards the Hatt Building, the Corps put in rip rap but then stopped abruptly. Take a good look at this area.**
- There needs to be more signs for boat traffic to avoid going aground.**
- Why did the corps leave all those rocks on the bank? If a boat hits some of those rocks, it will be a problem and the rocks should be removed.**

III. Approve Minutes of the March 12, 2008 Special Meeting.
Minutes approved.

**BB PB CB CC RO DR DS BS BZ
X**

IV. Review of Hatt to First Street Revegetation – Addition of Marsh Zone Planting for Hatt to First Street in New Tulocay Creek to Third Street Bend Contract and Possible Finding of Consistency.
Rick Thomasser, Watershed and Flood Control Operations Manager, explained that the two planting contracts were combined due to the delay of the New Tulocay Creek to Third Street planting contract as a result of insufficient federal funding and also the recent completion of the Hatt to First construction contract. There were also some minor changes to the New Tulocay Creek to Third Street plans. The

Item IV...Continued

item was turned over to Jim Sullivan, Landscape Architect, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. (Also present from the Corps was Peter Broderick, Project Manager.) Mr. Sullivan went over the plans in the agenda packet and opened the item for discussion. Planting is scheduled to occur in the fall for riparian, willow, pole cuttings and upland zones and in the following spring for the marsh zones and the Hatt to First area. The Panel approved a finding of consistency with the intent of the General Design Memorandum and Community Coalition Plan.

**BB PB CB CC RO DR DS BS BZ
X**

V. Agenda Items for Future Meetings.

Member Ohlemutz inquired if the issue of the railroad crossings could be brought back. Julie Lucido, Principal Engineer, stated that replacing asphalt crossings with concrete panel crossings is considered a betterment. The railroad tracks are being raised as part of the Flood Project improvements and the Flood Project is obligated to provide equivalent accommodations and comply with all current building codes and standards for the railroad relocation construction. The concrete panels cost more and are considered an enhanced condition and therefore are not permitted by the federal and local funding sources for the Flood Project. The opportunity for a betterment does exist, but funding must be obtained from an outside source, which has yet to be identified. The Corps has been asked to include an optional additive bid item for concrete crossing panels that is not part of the base contract. In the event the funding source is identified, the Corps would have the ability to exercise the option at a future date. This item could be agendized in the future contingent on an identified funding source. The new asphalt crossings will be a slight improvement due to the new road base reconstruction and surfacing and a slight improvement in the skew angle at the North Soscol crossing.

VI. General Comments from the Panel. (This is an opportunity for Panel members to informally discuss items and ask questions.)

None.

VII. Confirm Next Meeting Date of May 28, 2008.

Meeting date confirmed.

VIII. Walking Tour – Hatt to First Street Construction Area.

A tour of the newly-reconstructed Veterans Memorial Park, river trail, and promenade took place.

IX. Adjourn.

**Adjourned to the next Regular Meeting of the Technical Advisory Panel on
Wednesday, May 28, 2008, at 5:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Flood
Control District Conference Room.**

BILL BENNETT
Chairperson

ATTEST:

JULIE LUCIDO
Secretary

By: GREG MORGAN
Supervising Office Assistant

KEY

Vote: BB = Bill Bennett; PB = Phill Blake; CB = Chip Bouril; CC = Chris Craiker RO = Rolf Ohlemutz;
DR = Dennis Rinehart; DS = Dennis Scherzinger; BS = Barbara Stafford; BZ = Bob Zlomke
Notations under Vote: N = No; X = Excused; A = Abstained