

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
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SPECIAL MEETING

Bicycling, Transportation, and Street Safety Commission (BTSSC)

Veterans Memorial Center Game Room

203 W. Fourteenth Street

Tuesday, October 27, 2015

5:30 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES

Commissioners: John Berg (Chair), Elisabeth Bourne, Daniel Fuchs, Amy Lee (Vice Chair),
Mike Mitchell, Raoul Renaud, Jim Skeen

Absent: Bossard, Fuchs, Waterman

Staff Liaison: Brian Mickelson, Assistant City Engineer / Transportation Manager
Brian Abbanat, Transportation Planner

Council Liaison: Brett Lee (absent), Robb Davis (alternate, absent)

1. Approval of Agenda

Agenda approved unanimously.

2. Public Communications:

Alan Hirsch commented that the agenda and packet materials were not made available early enough for adequate public review.

Matt Williams commented on activities occurring within the Finance and Budget Commission (FBC). Referenced a handout provided at the meeting of a new revenue measure projects list. Considers it mostly a “wish list” and believes the BTSSC should provide input on the list for the benefit of the FBC.

3. Draft Environmental Impact Report (“DEIR”) for the Proposed Nishi and Downtown/Gateway Innovation District (City Staff)

Katherine Hess gave a presentation on the project background. Seeking two outcomes from the meeting: 1) Comments on the DEIR, and 2) Comments on the merits of the project. She noted this is not a formal public hearing on the DEIR.

Background highlights:

- 41 • 2014: Received \$600,000 grant to conduct planning studies for the site. Resulted in three
42 alternatives. Received significant community input.
- 43 • Refined site plan due to comments (e.g. insufficient open space, excessive parking)
- 44 • Project overview:
- 45 ○ 650 residential units
- 46 ○ 325,000 sf Office / R&D
- 47 ○ 60,000 sf ancillary retail
- 48 ○ Potential for redevelopment of Olive Dr.
- 49 ○ Sustainability Implementation Plan consisting of 1) Design & location, and 2)
50 Transportation Demand Management program.
- 51

52 Commission Discussion

53

54 Commissioner Skeen inquired if reduced parking would result in fewer jobs and residents.

55 K. Hess responded parking is 10% below City standards and can be phased.

56 Commissioner Berg responded the EIR assumes a higher percentage of residents will be
57 students without cars.

58

59 Commissioner Renaud stated residential pricing is not within reach of Davis demographics.
60 Concerned about effect Cannery has had on contributing to Davis as “bedroom community”.

61 K. Hess responded rental apartments would likely be within range of students,
62 affordability of for sale condos are less clear.

63

64 Commissioner Watterson expressed support for the peripheral parking shown in the site layout.
65 Disappointed in building orientation. Thinks conservative estimates for car usage should be
66 used. Concerned about access from freeway.

67

68 Commissioner Mitchell noted connectivity infrastructure seems to be a wish list.

69 Commissioner Skeen added skepticism that existing and proposed infrastructure is
70 adequate to handle Nishi plus LRDP growth.

71

72 Commissioner Berg inquired about modeling assumptions whether they accurately predicted
73 traffic impacts on Fifth Street.

74 Roxanne Namazi stated a different model was used for Nishi, but the City is beginning to
75 collect data for Fifth Street to make those comparisons.

76

77 Commissioner Skeen commented that entrances and exits close to freeways results in off ramps
78 becoming a car stacking zone.

79 Brian Mickelson responded the Richards / I-80 PSR would reconfigure the interchange to
80 eliminate existing conflicts and increase off-ramp queuing capacity.

81

82 Commissioner Berg expressed support for the proposed street configuration and would like to
83 see it formalized in the DEIR, if possible.

84

85 Public Comment

86

87 *Matt Williams commented the EIR is addressing symptoms not the root causes. Project needs*
88 *market-driven solutions to reduce vehicles. Residential units should not come with free parking.*
89 *Parking should be rented, starting at \$300/month. BTSSC should take a strong stand.*

90

91 *Alan Pryor commented on flaws in the traffic analysis: 1)Underestimated existing conditions,*
92 *2)Underestimated conference center traffic, and 3)Used 2011 freeway traffic data. Could not*
93 *understand how the scenario with one access point would result in better traffic conditions than*
94 *the scenario with two. Stated there are enough discrepancies that this needs independent*
95 *analysis. Needs worse case rather best case scenario presented here.*

96

97 *Alan Hirsch commented:*

98

- *2000 parking spaces and how the additional trips would be accommodated.*

99

- *The report referenced the Bicycle Action Plan, but did not cite it and did not address bicycle and pedestrian impacts.*

100

- *Noted insufficient bicycle & pedestrian connections.*

101

- *Inquired if the traffic model was validated by anyone. Significant uncertainty in the model with considerable risk if inaccurate.*

102

- *Transit is inadequately addressed.*

103

- *Plan should call for shuttles paid for by developer.*

104

- *Lack of clarity to transportation solutions.*

105

- *DEIR doesn't give tools to analyze conclusions.*

106

- *BTSSC should recommend re-releasing the DEIR.*

107

108

109

110 *Tim Ruff, Nishi property developer, stated the purpose of the EIR is to receive and address these*
111 *types of comments. Regarding housing, he stated stacked flats average 1,300 sf, and 30% will be*
112 *under 1,000 sf. Comments made will make the project better.*

113

114 *Rodney Robinson commented:*

115

- *Project would be improved with removable bollards restricting vehicles to delivery, emergency, etc. This would relieve a lot of anxiety about the traffic.*

116

- *The DEIR underplayed the cumulative impacts of the hotel / conference center plus Nishi.*

117

- *Inquired about community gardens and who would have access.*

118

- *Believes property should remain farmland with community gardens.*

119

- *Stated nothing should move forward until the underpass is complete and operational.*

120

121

122 Commission Discussion

123

124 *Commissioner Renaud commented the project will likely impact I-80 in both directions. CR 32A*
125 *is often used as a relieve valve. Mitigation should include closure of CR 32A & RR crossing.*

126

127 *Motion (Mitchell, Watterson): Project must commit to a minimum of two entrances / exits: Olive*
128 *Drive and UC Davis.*

129 *Motion carries, 5-1 (Skeen dissenting: No cure for Olive Dr.*
130 *intersection).*

131
132 *Motion (Berg, Skeen): Description of road configuration is highly desirable and should be*
133 *incorporated to help mitigate traffic impacts. Motion carries, 6-0.*
134

135 *Motion (Renaud): Project will result in increased traffic on CR 32A in both directions, reducing*
136 *cycling safety. CR 32A & railroad crossing should be closed to vehicles.*

137 *Motion fails.*
138

139 *Motion (Watterson, Berg): Another, more extensive and inclusive study should be done as part of*
140 *the EIR combining the cumulative impacts of the Nishi Downtown /*
141 *Gateway and hotel conference center on Richards Blvd and Olive*
142 *Drive between the WB I-80 off ramp and proposed Nishi Downtown /*
143 *Gateway entrance.*

144 *Motion carries 6-0.*
145

146 *Motion (Renaud, Skeen): Project is not consistent with staff recommendation #1.*

- 147 • *Skeen: Question validity of numbers.*
- 148 • *Berg: We don't know what will actually happen to Richards.*
- 149 • *Renaud: Transportation Element is alternative transportation focused. Project reality is*
150 *a substantial increase in vehicle miles traveled.*
- 151 • *Berg: Too many uncertainties.*
- 152 • *Watterson: Would like to see more detailed schematic on multi-modal operation.*

153 *Motion carries (5-0-1, Berg abstention)*
154

155 *Motion (Renaud, Mitchell): Project does not appropriately meet Transportation Principle*
156 *approved for Davis Innovation Center(s).*

- 157 • *Mitchell: Too vague without commitments and more detailed plans.*

158 *Motion carries (6-0)*
159

160 **1. Adjourn**
161

162 *Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m. (Mitchell, Skeen)*
163