



THE CITY OF
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Councilmembers
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Josh Fryday
Eric Lucan

City Manager
Michael S. Frank

Design Review Commission Meeting

Location: Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue

December 16, 2015

MINUTES

Present: Beth Radovanovich, Chair
Marshall Balfe, Vice Chair – *arrived at 7:45pm*
Michael Barber
Joe Farrell
Patrick MacLeamy

Absent:

Staff: Hans Grunt, Senior Planner

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL:

The meeting was called to order.

APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA:

M/s Farrell/MacLeamy: 4-0-1(*Balfe arrived after vote at 7:45*)

PUBLIC COMMENT:

One member of the public submitted a handout to the Commission and stated that they have concerns with traffic safety of a center platform verses side platform designs for the bus transfer facility; the speaker then described the content of the handout, including: a memo from City Manager, Michael Frank, of January 6, 2014 discussing taking the Center Platform design to the Design Review Commission; a memo from Elizabeth Dunn directing the cancellation of a public meeting on July 9, 2014 and, instead, utilize the City’s web based program, Open Novato, to solicit input on the shelter’s design; a summary of the process to date regarding selection of the center platform – not dated; a letter from Tyrone Angel, Golden Gate Transit Safety Committee Co-Chair to the Marin Co. Transit District Board of Directors requesting that “...Marin County Transit, Golden Gate Transit and the City of Novato vacate the idea of the Center Platform Design...”, and a copy of a City Staff Report to City Council dated April 27, 2010, which requested that the City Council accept an update on operational characteristics at the downtown transit center.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. APPROVAL OF DRC MINUTES OF DECEMBER 2, 2015 (JF,MBar,MBal,BR,PM)

M/s MacLeamy/Farrell: 4-0-1 (*Balfe arrived just after vote at 7:45*)

PUBLIC HEARING: None

CONTINUED ITEMS:

**2. REDWOOD AND GRANT TRANSIT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (HG)
REDWOOD BLVD BETWEEN GRANT AVENUE AND DE LONG AVENUE**

Conduct a public hearing to consider the final design elements for the rehabilitation of the existing bus transfer facility on Redwood Boulevard, between Grant and DeLong Avenues, in Downtown Novato. Pursuant to the adoption of Resolution No. 41-15, the City Council previously found the project to be exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301, 15302 and 15332.

Senior Planner Grunt introduced the item to consider the final design elements for rehabilitation of the bus transfer facility, including: Etched glass shelter windscreens and real-time signage; Detailed landscape plan and landscape palette; Amenity details including trash cans railings; Pedestrian Crossing Barrier Rail Detail, and Bicycle parking detail.

Lauren Gradia, Director of Finance and Capital Programs for Marin Transit introduced the design team and thanked the Design Review Commission for their design guidance at four prior meetings and looked forward to their further input on the final design features being considered.

Paul Price, Consultant to Marin Transit provided a power point presentation including project operations and a design overview.

Ron Kappe, Kappe + DU Architects, continuing with the same power point, presented and described design details, including etched glass shelter windscreens and real-time signage.

Manual Contraro, Merrill Morris Landscape Architects and Planners, continuing with the same power point, presented plans for and described the landscape plan plant selection and arrangement to maintain views for safety yet be attractive and drought tolerant, incorporate existing redwood trees, landscaped bioretention, and details, including trash cans railings, pedestrian crossing barrier rail design and safety function, and bicycle parking.

Paul Price provided additional description of the hand rail design, and bicycle racks and their location pursuant to recommendations by the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

COMMISSION QUESTIONS

Commissioner Barber - questioned how ipe will be applied to the canopy ceiling – (Paul answered) drilled, screwed and plugged; what trees are removed – (Paul answered) 13 liquid amber, redwoods to be retained; landscape plan needs to be updated to reflect bike racks per the detail – (Paul acknowledged).

Commissioner MacLeamy - questioned use of such a limited amount of core-10 metal work at upper “neck” of canopy support columns, but ok with it; questioned the number and placement of trees within the north and south bound median strips per the revised landscape plan for bus driver sight visibility.

Commissioner Balfe - questioned visibility through frosted glass designs and columns – (Paul answered) will allow partial through views to aid overall security and the ability to gage activity on the opposing side of the platform.

Commissioner Radovanovich - questioned if the intent of the application of metal or copper is to let it naturally patina - (Paul answered) yes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – none.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Barber - accepting of proposed finish details presented; only concern is the placement and reduced number of trees within the medians to maintain views; suggested 48” box size to ensure higher canopy to maintain views and thus possibly allow planting of additional trees.

Commissioner MacLeamy – likes proposed finishes overall; agrees with Commissioner Barber that opportunities to introduce additional trees in the medians should be examined; questioned if there is an opportunity to revisit the ability to maintain an adequate vision triangle with the introduction of additional, larger (48” box) trees in the median planters to maintain a consistent rhythm of trees; would hope that the addition of added traffic signal control for crossing would also improve the opportunity to incorporate more trees; other than this issue of more trees, appreciates the final design changes and finish materials presented in response to the Commission’s past recommendations.

Commissioner Farrell –appreciates the project design team’s efforts and abilities including selection of final design elements; also questioned need for the limited application of core-10 metal, but ok with it; concerned that even the trunks of trees, as they mature over time, can cause a visual obstruction so their placement should be carefully considered.

Commissioner Balfe – supports the final design details presented; would like the design team to evaluate the ability to introduce additional trees within the medians.

Commissioner Radovanovich – likes the final finish materials and facilities presented; has concerns with retaining proper site distance for safety and remains cautious about adding in more trees to the median strips.

Commissioner Barber – believes larger trees with foliage maintained at a higher level should alleviate visual barrier issues.

Commissioner MacLeamy - would like to see the trees depicted in a sight analysis and/or site plan with necessary vision triangles to demonstrate limits or opportunities to add additional trees.

Motion/second, MacLeamy/Radovanovich, 5-0 to approve the final design elements for the rehabilitation of the existing bus transfer facility on Redwood Boulevard between Grant and DeLong Avenues based on the findings and subject to the conditions contained in the staff report prepared for the Commission dated December 16, 2015, inclusive of the following additional condition:

Added Condition:

An appointed subcommittee of Design Review Commission members Joseph Farrell and Michael Barber shall work with the Public Works Director or designee to examine and, if feasible, identify a landscape design that modifies or allows for additional and/or larger trees within the north and south bound median planter strips and incorporate them into final landscape plans prior to issuance of a City encroachment permit.

NEW ITEMS: None

PROJECT DESIGN WORKSHOP: None

GENERAL BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm