

Minutes of the
Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization

POLICY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, July 7, 2009, 2:00 p.m.
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 309
415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu, Hawaii

Members Present:

Senator Will Espero, FY 2010 Chair
Councilmember Gary Okino, FY 2009 Chair,
FY 2010 Vice Chair
Councilmember Romy Cachola
Councilmember Nestor Garcia

Councilmember Rod Tam
Representative Marilyn Lee
Senator Carol Fukunaga
DOT Director Brennon Morioka
DTS Director Wayne Yoshioka

Member(s) Absent: Councilmember Todd Apo, Representative Karen Awana, Representative Joseph Souki, Senator J. Kalani English

Guests Present:

Dennis Galolo (CM Cachola)
Robert Sato (CM Okino)
Glenn Soma (DOT, TAC)
Patrick Tom (DOT)
Jill Yamanouchi (DOT)
Mark Au (DTS, TAC)
Toru Hamayasu (DTS)
Scott Ishikawa (DTS)
Christine Absher (CFADAR, CAC)
Laureen Kukino (CFADAR, CAC)
Ronald Pike (CFADAR, CAC)
Louise Horio (Hui Kupuna VIP, CAC)
Rose Pou (Hui Kupuna VIP, CAC)
Darwin Hamamoto (LOTMA, CAC)
Shannon Alivado (LOTMA, CAC)

Dave Arakawa (LURF, CAC Chair)
Charles Carole (NB #10, CAC)
Tom Smyth (NB #13, CAC)
Dennis Egge (NB #18, CAC)
Rachel Glanstein (NB #18, CAC)
Maurice Morita (NB #18, CAC)
Rich Hargrave (NB #23, CAC)
Coby Lynn (NB #23, CAC)
Ken LeVasseur (NB #29, CAC)
Mike Golojuch (NB # 34, CAC Vice Chair)
Pamela Young (NB #35, CAC)
Steve Glanstein (resident)
Leona Pereza (resident)
Kevin Killeen(?) (resident)

OahuMPO Staff Present: Gordon Lum (Executive Director), Lori Arakaki, Marian Yasuda, and Pamela Toyooka

Chair Gary Okino called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. A quorum was present.

I. ELECTION OF FY 2010 CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Vice Chair Marilyn Lee nominated Senator Will Espero for the office of FY 2010 Chair; Councilmember Nestor Garcia seconded the nomination. Senator Espero was unanimously elected Chair.

Councilmember Garcia nominated Councilmember Okino for the office of FY 2010 Vice Chair;

Councilmember Romy Cachola seconded the nomination. Councilmember Okino was unanimously elected Vice Chair.

II. MINUTES OF THE MAY 28, 2009 MEETING

Councilmember Cachola moved and Senator Carol Fukunaga seconded that the May 28, 2009 minutes be accepted as circulated. The motion was unanimously carried.

Chair Espero brought up the Policy Committee's approval, at their last meeting, of the Overall Work Program (OWP) with the inclusion of the ferry work element. Department of Transportation Services (DTS) Director Wayne Yoshioka stated that DTS endorses this action. It would be useful to leave it on the OWP should DTS move forward with exploring different options. Also, there is still room on the OWP right now; it does not displace another work element.

III. CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

III.A. Certificates of Appreciation

The following CAC member organizations received certificates of appreciation for their commitment and involvement in the OahuMPO process. The CAC representatives present to accept the certificates are noted in parentheses.

- Citizens for a Fair ADA Ride (CFADAR) (Ronald Pike)
- Committee for Balanced Transportation
- Eye of the Pacific
- Hui Kupuna VIP (Louise Horio, Rose Pou)
- InterAgency COORDINATION Councils
- Land Use Research Foundation (LURF) (Dave Arakawa)
- Leeward Oahu Transportation Management Association (Darwin Hamamoto)
- Neighborhood Board (NB) #5 Diamond Head-Kapahulu-St. Louis Heights
- NB #10 Makiki-Lower Punchbowl-Tantalus (Charles Carole)
- NB #29 Kahaluu (Ken LeVasseur)
- NB #34 Makakilo-Kapolei-Honokai Hale (Michael Golojuch)
- NB #35 Mililani Mauka-Launani Valley (Pamela Young)

III.B. Amendment to the Bylaws of the CAC

Handout(s): Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws of the CAC for the OahuMPO (ramseyered version, as of July 7, 2009)

Chair Espero stated that, at the last Policy Committee meeting, it was decided that the bylaws would be amended to make it more stringent for an organization that has been removed to be reinstated. This action is an attempt to encourage regular, consistent citizen participation.

Councilmember Cachola moved and Representative Lee seconded that the Bylaws of the CAC, as amended, be approved.

In response to Vice Chair Okino, Executive Director Gordon Lum stated that item III.C.4. was mistakenly included in the version mailed to the Policy Committee members. The version handed out at today's meeting is the correct ramseyered version, which does not include this item.

A vote was taken. The motion was unanimously carried.

III.C. Amendment to the CAC Recommendations to the FYs 2011-2014 TIP

Handout(s): CAC Recommendations for the FYs 2011-2014 TIP (draft revision June 17, 2009); written public testimony

Executive Director Lum stated that the CAC had received a request from the Aliamanu-Salt Lake NB #18 to include a Salt Lake Boulevard widening project in their FYs 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) recommendation to the Policy Committee. At their May meeting, the CAC passed a motion to that effect. Therefore, the CAC is requesting that their amended recommendations be transmitted to Department of Transportation (DOT) and DTS for their consideration. Executive Director Lum also summarized the written public comments submitted to date. Councilmember Cachola thanked those in support of the Salt Lake project.

As a follow-up to the May 28, 2009 Policy Committee's acknowledgement of the CAC's Recommendations to the FYs 2011-2014 TIP, Senator Fukunaga noted that she has submitted an inquiry to DTS, asking whether or not they will be examining the feasibility of the direction reversal of Pensacola and Piikoi Streets (an item contained in the CAC's Recommendations to the FYs 2011-2014 TIP). She added that DTS' Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project (HHCTCP) will address this.

In response to Chair Espero, Executive Director Lum stated that the CAC decided to include a contrary view to a project, as well as comments in support of projects, in their recommendations. DOT Director Brennon Morioka stated that, in this type of exercise, the CAC should not only decide which projects they want included, but should also decide which projects they want deleted, since this needs to be a financially constrained list. This type of information is more valuable for DOT to receive than just receiving the projects the CAC want included. It is also valuable for citizens to experience this process.

Councilmember Cachola moved and Vice Chair Okino seconded that the Policy Committee acknowledge receipt of the amended CAC Recommendations for the FYs 2011-2014 TIP and transmit it to DOT and DTS for their consideration.

Testimony

The following people gave oral testimony in favor of the amended CAC Recommendation, with the inclusion of a Salt Lake Boulevard widening project: Rachel Glanstein (NB #18), Rich Hargrave (resident), Dennis Egge (resident), Steve Glanstein (resident), and Maurice Morita (NB #18).

The motion was unanimously carried.

IV. REVISION #13 TO THE FYS 2008-2011 TIP

Executive Director Lum gave a presentation on Revision #13 to the FYs 2008-2011 TIP. This revision would add three City projects, add one State project, delete 20 projects, add new phases to some projects, and revise the number of bus purchases. Executive Director Lum went over the financial plan and technical analyses (including the Congestion Management Process, detailed project evaluation criteria, technical evaluations, and Title VI and Environmental Justice (T6/EJ) analysis). In the T6/EJ analysis, average investment per capita for non-T6/EJ block groups was higher than that of the T6/EJ block groups. It was found that the two high-cost projects (S110 (Interstate Route H-1 Eastbound Improvements, Vicinity of Ola Lane to Vineyard Boulevard Off-Ramp) and C17 (HHCTCP)) in non-T6/EJ areas skewed the results. However, a closer examination showed that T6/EJ areas would have indirect benefits from these two projects. Executive Director Lum noted that DOT and DTS were asked to pay special attention to S110 and C17 when T6/EJ project-level evaluations are conducted. Executive Director Lum went over the recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee (to approve the revision) and comments received from the public and intergovernmental reviews.

Executive Director Lum also went over the status and changes being proposed for the Leeward Bikeway Project. Chair Espero stated that the construction of the project is expected to begin next year.

Director Morioka moved and Director Yoshioka seconded that Revision #13 to the FYs 2008-2011 TIP be approved. The motion was unanimously carried.

V. UPDATE ON THE HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT

DTS Deputy Director Toru Hamayasu updated the members on the Honolulu Rail Transit Project.

In response to Chair Espero, Deputy Director Hamayasu stated that: 1) it would be very realistic to expect that the project will break ground this year; and 2) the funding would initially be from the general excise tax (GET) collections.

In response to Councilmember Okino, Deputy Director Hamayasu stated that DTS has several economists constantly tracking and forecasting the GET revenues. Based on that, there will be a reduced amount of GET revenue. Therefore, DTS is looking at several different ways to fill that gap. First, a substantial contingency was built into the plan; though DTS will not rely only on that. Secondly, DTS is currently in discussions with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), looking into increasing the amount of New Starts funds. Deputy Director Hamayasu stated that he was in a meeting with the Mayor and the FTA Administrator regarding the increase in funds. The Administrator told the City to proceed with the project; he did not indicate whether the financial plan was good or bad, but he did not say to stop the project. FTA has a financial consultant review the financial plan; and FTA has passed DTS' financial plan. Thirdly, DTS is also looking at other sources of funding, such as stimulus funds. Deputy Director Hamayasu stated, with a very solid level of confidence, that DTS has a very strong financial plan.

Councilmember Cachola asked why the City is floating bonds, when DTS is supposed to be using the GET revenues. In response to Councilmember Cachola, Deputy Director Hamayasu stated that the City Council, in approving their 2010 City budget, authorized DTS the ability to

engage in a contract to float bonds; DTS will obtain future authorization from the Council to float bonds, when necessary. These are two separate actions. DTS does not intend to float bonds in the immediate future. DTS has a reserve balance of the GET that has already been collected, plus what is expected to be collected in the next four years; together, that will be used to do the early construction and the early work. When the GET funds have been expended, then DTS has the authority to engage in a contract to float bonds. In response to Councilmember Cachola, Deputy Director Hamayasu stated that, in the financial plan, the interest shown in 2011 is interest collected from the GET collected, rather than interest paid out for bonds.

VI. CAC MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

CAC Chair Dave Arakawa gave highlights of the one CAC meeting that was held since the last Policy Committee meeting. The CAC had: 1) heard a presentation made by Gensler London on transit-oriented development opportunities and challenges as they relate to the Honolulu rail transit project; 2) approved an addendum to its recommended list of projects for the FYs 2011-2014 TIP; and 3) approved the draft amendment to its Bylaws.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS (ANNOUNCEMENTS ONLY)

Chair Espero opened the floor.

Honolulu Rail Transit Project Questions and Comments

- Leona Perez asked questions about the rail funding and impact on the environment. Director Yoshioka suggested that Ms. Perez download the draft Environmental Impact Statement from the DTS' rail website; it should answer most of her questions. Ms. Perez also voiced her concern regarding the tax burden on citizens.
- Kevin Killeen asked questions about the utilities that need to be moved due to the construction of columns for the rail line, as well as a question about bike facilities. Chair Espero responded that he was sure that the City and State agencies would work all these logistics out in advance.
- Louise Horio (Hui Kupuna VIP) asked about emergency procedures relating to safely evacuating the disabled from the train cars and facilities. Chair Espero responded that those issues will be addressed and emergency procedures will be in place. In response to Ms. Horio, Director Yoshioka stated that accessibility to restrooms for the disabled is an Americans with Disabilities Act requirement. Also, the City's Bike Plan would be integrated with the rail plan; so, there will be accessibility for bikes onto the rail system.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m.