

Midcoast Community Council

*An elected Advisory Council to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
representing Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Princeton, and Miramar*

PO Box 248, Moss Beach, CA 94038

www.MidcoastCommunityCouncil.org

Len Erickson, Chair
Michelle Weil, Vice Chair
Claire Toutant, Secretary
Barbra Mathewson,
Treasurer
Dan Haggerty
Dave Olson

Minutes for Special Meeting of July 29, 2020

Call to Order (7:05pm)

All Councilmembers present. 20 community members present. Meeting held remotely via Zoom due to COVID-related restrictions.

1. Public Comment & Announcements

Gregg Dieguez noted that the County has accepted 1.6 million dollars from the developers of Big Wave for improvements associated with that development. He suggested that county officials have said that there is not a standard way to calculate the amounts of this type of fees. He would like direction in how to pursue this.

Michelle Dragony noted that the bike/pedestrian bridge on the Coastal Trail in Miramar has been abruptly closed due to its deteriorating condition. Trail users are directed to a section of Highway 1 which has limited shoulder space.

Cid Young asked for information about the costs which would be borne by the developers of Cypress Point.

Dave said that the filing deadline for candidates for the MCC in the November election is August 7, and that only one person has pulled papers so far.

Claire asked whether proposals for hardening the shoulder used as a bridge detour were likely to take place. It was reported that Caltrans opposes this.

Dan said that the bridge was known to be problematic and that planning should have been more proactive.

Len agreed that there was not adequate notice of the bridge closure and that the situation deserves more attention.

2. Study Session on Connect the Coastside with special emphasis on Moss Beach

Community Comments

Cid Young, Moss Beach

- Living in Seal Cove and coming out of Cypress each day, it's "hell" to go North.
- Moss Beach is deficient in turn lanes or acceleration lanes.
- If the County doesn't have any money for improvements, she'd prefer that they put turn lanes like Montara has.

Dan Haggerty, El Granada

- Wants to remind everyone that the effective speed through Moss Beach and Montara is ~60mph. He doesn't advocate for driving that fast, but it's common when there are no cars to enter highway.
- To reduce it from 50 to 20mph is going to create enormous backups.
- The community will lose break spaces between platoons of cars on highway that are used for cars to enter highway, so it will be almost impossible to enter the highway safely.
- Wants a clear communication to the community of the pros and cons of each option:
 - 1. Roundabout
 - 2. System that is reading the cars on the highway and knows when to let cars

Michael Prieto

- Has recently been in Fairfield, and roundabouts tend to work best on streets that don't have heavy traffic.
- Roundabouts are not designed for highways.
- Would be in favor of signals.

JQ Oeswein

- Intersection control evaluation for Cypress Ave. didn't include an assessment of acceleration lanes. Haven't done an evaluation for California Ave.
- Acceleration lanes and smart signals should be assessed for both intersections.

Gregg Dieguez, Montara

- Agrees that we need a study. Off the cuff he thinks that a smart signal is better and an acceleration lane is even cheaper, but you don't make decisions off the cuff.
- Lived in Massachusetts and Europe and knows people who were killed in a roundabout at wet weather at night, and another friend who had a significant car crash. All were sober and young.
- Thinks the speeds of people who travel is too fast.
- In the traffic study, the ratio of traffic on Hwy 1 to the side streets was 14:1.
- Traffic calming 100% of the traffic for 1/15th of it is "madness".
- At 1/7th the cost, a smart signal seems like a better alternative.

Len Erickson, El Granada

- If we look at any form of control, that process takes years. Assuming it takes 4-5 years, we should consider a combination of acceleration lanes and/or medians in the interim.

- Also would like to look for something that can be done sooner for pedestrian access.

JQ Oeswein

- Agrees with Len, there are things we can do that are less expensive yet effective.
- Main drive has been safe crossings, not just signal control and roundabouts.

Kimberly Williams

- Would like speed limit in Moss Beach to be lowered to 45mph.
- Speeds keep increasing, some newer residents and visitors drive 70mph, which is scary whether you're on a bike or in a car.
- Supports the option of roundabouts. Hwy 1 is a rural highway, not a major thoroughfare. There is a roundabout in Fort Bragg that is similar to what we would have here.
- Also supportive of Hawk signals. Does not support stoplight.

Cid Young

- Highways in Sedona, AZ have roundabouts that work well.
- Roundabouts save fuel.
- Regarding pedestrian safety, there are a lot of inequities between Montara and Moss Beach. Turn lanes and lights. Moss Beach has one, Montara has six. In support of more lighting on highway at night.

Chuck Bell

- Question on Carlos and Parallel Trail. Would that involve closing Carlos to through traffic? Answer is no.

Dolores Silva

- Traffic is much worse during commute time when school is in session. The idea of school buses hasn't been brought forward.
- Currently Carlos Street is very popular for both pedestrians and bicyclists. The Parallel Trail is not very pedestrian friendly, and she is worried about that here. She thinks there should maybe be a bicycle trail on the highway. Currently there is not enough traffic on Carlos that you would need that.

Dan Haggerty

- Looked at the Arizona example through Google Maps and saw that is a 25mph thoroughfare.
- Whatever is done through Moss Beach, Caltrans will use their standards.
- Lighting is important, imagine a freeway-lit corridor through Moss Beach. There are other methods of lighting the road that would not destroy the

rural feel of our community. We should look into that and explore options with the County and Caltrans. Does not like the bright white LEDs.

Kimberly Williams

- Enjoys looking at stars. SMC is inadequate at complying with Dark Skies Initiative, but wants to make sure that we are compliant. Wants to keep bright lights out of this area.

Dave Olson, El Granada

- In favor of roundabouts over signals. With signals, once traffic stops, it takes a while to get going again. If there is no traffic load, adding 15 seconds going through Moss Beach is not a problem.
- Big fan of lowering speed limits.
- If we have a roundabout at each end of Moss Beach, he suspects left turn lanes will go away.
- Safety at intersections with signals is not great. Better than stop signs, but very dangerous in terms of collisions.
- There are a number of roundabouts on California highways that have a faster speed limit. With the lower speed limits, that won't be a problem.

JQ Oeswein

- Nice to have memorandum (dated 7/14) on differences between buildout and constrained 2040 forecast.
- Sewer and water systems are going to be overburdened, and we will exceed the number of connections that they can support in either scenario.
- We should not do traffic changes to support buildout, since it is not realistic.

Gregg Dieguez

- Agrees with JQ, we do not have the water and sewer capacity for buildout.
- Agrees with lowering the speed limit to 45mph.
- For safety, roundabouts have to be lit. Will need to compromise on night sky with roundabout.
- If downstream from roundabout, you will have a difficult time getting out. Roundabout traffic will be continuous.
- Lived through three roundabouts in 1.5 miles in Massachusetts, and they had to pull one of them out.

Marcia Yeates, Moss Beach

- Supports reducing speed limit in Moss Beach.
- Supports lowering lighting so we can maintain night sky.
- Supports acceleration lanes.

Cid Young

- Wants to know how much the mitigation fees are for Cypress Point, and how they will be assessed.

Ann Rothman, Moss Beach

- Has some concerns about the roundabout:
 - Speed at which fire trucks would be able to get out to the highway and respond to calls.
 - Worried about endangered species (frogs) in the ditch. Has video.
 - Concerned about lighting as roundabout would need to be well-lit.

Dan Haggerty

- Every time a car has to go to the roundabout to turn out on Hwy 1, it will slow traffic.

Dolores Silva

- Wants to know how this will affect emergency vehicles.
- What is the future of Hwy 1?
- Is neither for or against roundabouts, but is worried that the costs will be exorbitant, especially considering the sewer lines along the highway.
- Supports the reduced speed limit.
- Heard that there was consideration of speed limits on Carlos Street, but that doesn't make sense to her.

JQ Oeswein

- One of the documents on roundabouts mentioned that you don't do a roundabout where there are manholes or where underground access is needed.
- On Cypress Avenue, there are several sewer caps, but it was not noted in the intersection control evaluation.

Dave Olson

- The consensus is that moving sewer lines out of the way will be minor cost.
- It is true that roundabouts require lighting, but signals also require lighting, possibly more than a roundabout.

Cid Young

- Would not mind a lower speed limit.
- Carlos Street has amber lighting, maybe that could be moved closer to highway.
- Have been 3 fatalities on Airport Street, and will need lighting.
- Would like lower speed limit.

- Do not put Park and Ride at end of Etheldore. Space is wetland and they couldn't build a community center there. Maybe they could use the extra parking lot at the top of Seton Coastside.
- No emergency evacuation plan for Coastside.

Harold Herman

- CTC has 2 or 3 roundabouts on Hwy 1, remembers cost estimates of \$6-7M which doesn't include land cost.
- Water and sewer will need to be rerouted.
- Agree with Cid's comments about evacuation route. Additional population with Big Wave and Cypress Point will create bottleneck.
- Has recently visited Lake Tahoe, situation at roundabout was not as the video showed.
- Carlos Street extension into 14th / 16th Street – MWSD recently replaced the sewer main along Hwy 1, and when you extend Carlos, it will need to be redone. The cost was about \$1-1.5M.

Kimberly Williams

- Does not support parking lots, especially a Park and Ride in Moss Beach at Etheldore. Would encourage additional visitors, invite litter and require more lighting. Also there are foxes and wildlife there. Does not think they are necessary.
- Does not support paved lots, since they cause more runoff and pollution. A lot is said about catchments but they are not maintained well. Surfrider is looking at how parking lots can be water-permeable.

JQ Oeswein

- Park and Ride is part of Samtrans improvements that is meant to get people out of their cars.
- Maybe what we really need is school buses to get kids to school.

Dan Haggerty

- Understands the community sentiment about Park and Rides. Would never advocate for a large parking lot. Should be smaller lots, spread out, well landscaped, that fit into community.
- Our highway is in desperate need of the ability to make a u-turn. People often make a right turn when they want to make a left turn and then turn around at the next intersection.
- Small parking lots would create the ability for people to go through the parking lot and turn around.

Claire Toutant, Moss Beach

- Opposes Park and Ride lot in Moss Beach. Park and Ride lots are effective when they are at a natural point of where different commute paths intercept. It doesn't make any sense in the proposed location.

Cid Young

- Not in favor of Park and Rides, but suggests Seton Coastside upper lot.
- Existing paved lots or streets, like Los Banos Street in Seal Cove, could be alternative.
- People should meet at their house or somewhere close by.
- Supports bringing back school buses, but thinks CUSD will be opposed.

Kimberly Williams

- Making a u-turn is a problem anywhere from HMB to Pacifica is a problem, and she can't support the idea of a parking lot just for that.
- Seton parking lot is full or overflowing most days. Has been working with them on litter issue.

Gregg Dieguez

- Agrees with everyone with opposition to Park and Ride.
- Received letter this week from transportation engineer questioning the idea of mass transit due to COVID, which could be with us for several years.

Dave Olson

- Opposed to Park and Ride. Reason for proposal is carpool line, not mass transit.
- School district can't afford buses. They tried to get parents to pay for it a few years back and that didn't work out. Samtrans did add #18 bus for school hours, but is cash strapped and likely won't do any more.
- Roundabouts are designed with apron in middle for emergency vehicles and large trucks.

Dan Haggerty

- Agrees with concern about Park and Rides. Would need to be relatively close to bus stops. Worth small trial, but no big lots.

Len Erickson

- Would like to see a way to quantify visitor traffic when considering parking lots.

Gregg Dieguez

- Why are some things out of scope? (Airport Blvd)

Ann Rothman

- Kelmore Street has never been mentioned in any studies. Why not? What are the plans for that street?

Cid Young

- Goal 3 on CTC Executive Summary, but no money for it.
- Maybe they should build a paved pathway north of Cypress Point so the kids could walk to Montara safely, so they don't walk right along the highway.
- They need to build a trail for bicycle that connects with HMB's multimodal trail.
- Bus stops need to be clean, well-lit, covered, and have trash cans.

Dan Haggerty

- Need to enable cars to get on highway safely.
- The other half of that equation is pedestrians crossing the road.
- Pedestrian underpasses are the only tax dollar investment that will actually improve the situation. There are many examples, including one in Southern California, one in Pacifica North of Rio del Mar used for connecting golf course, some for wildlife crossings that are large enough for humans to walk under including one for \$1M in Truckee area.
- Responded to Len's question of how many should be built with "let's start with one".

Cid Young

- As a female, is not a fan of underpasses. Wouldn't use them as they seem scary.
- On Goal 4 of CTC, they said they wanted to reflect character of Coastside. Doesn't want any stoplights north of Harbor and doesn't want any money spent on Grey Whale Cove before they spend money on the community.
- Traffic coming through Montara is very major, and there is not enough parking at Montara Beach. They should provide more parking. Good alternative to Grey Whale Cove. People will park in neighborhoods if there is not enough parking.

Kimberly Williams

- The more we open the roadway to more traffic, the more traffic we will have.
- Would like the priority to be a focus on biking and walking.
- All the CTC discussion has been on development. Would like more emphasis on conservation, wildlife, preserving the rural character, etc., and not on development.

- Not anti-development, but thinks it will take a lot to slow county on this.

JQ Oeswein

- Concerned about inconsistent numbers in CTC Report. Example on table 16.
- Noticed in memo from Joe LaClair inconsistent data in tables 3 and 4.

Dan Haggerty

- Loves this area, wants to retire here and be able to afford property tax bill.
- Concerned with process, feels like all the background work has been omitted.
- Agrees with Lennie Roberts' concern that there has been a failure with the breakout system. Individual comments were filtered out.

Claire Toutant

- Wants to make sure we don't close comments prematurely in this meeting in case people want to speak about areas other than Moss Beach.

Dave Olson

- Agrees with Claire. CTC is not just about the highway. Anything about it is fair game during this meeting.
- Transit alternatives of various kinds are critical if we want to avoid getting 2-3 more cars on the road for every unit that is built.

Cid Young

- LCP 2.53 adopted in 2011 calls for a CTMP for development. Wants the answer from Joe LaClair on whether they have been collecting "in-lieu fee". Dave Olson says no, they have not been collecting fee.
- Is also in favor of alternate forms of transportation.

Dan Haggerty

- Understands that sidewalks are important in some areas, but is concerned that the roads are too narrow.
- Thinks that curb and gutter along Highway one is absurd.

Rob Carey

- Wants to improve pathway on East side of Hwy 1 between 14th and 16th Street.
- Wants feasibility study for installation of pedestrian underpass in Moss Beach. Thinks it would have lower impact than overpass.

Michelle Weil, Moss Beach

- In support of roundabout. Lives in Seal Cove and turns out onto Hwy 1 on Cypress. A roundabout there would provide a way for people in Seal Cove and Pillar Ridge to safely get out onto the highway.
- Not a fan of signals at all. Going South through signals in El Granada and HMB can take 30 minutes during commute hours.
- Roundabouts also allow pedestrians to cross the highway.
- Agree that it is a small inconvenience for people coming from the South to have to slow down, but it's a small price to pay.
- Sometimes it takes 5 minutes to turn left out of Cypress Ave.

Dan Haggerty

- Whoever is in the roundabout will have right-of-way.
- Studies have showed that high-speed collisions are reduced but low-speed collisions increase.

3. Future Agendas

August meeting **canceled**

Future topics to include Miramar bridge, Financial Report, ZoneHaven evacuation planning, intensive coordination with Caltrans about intersection control

Adjournment 9:15 pm