



# CITY COUNCIL and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY MINUTES

Tuesday, October 19, 2004  
7:00 p.m.  
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025  
Menlo Park City Council Chambers

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## **7:00 p.m. REGULAR MEETING** (Menlo Park City Council Chamber)

**ROLL CALL** – Duboc, Winkler, Collacchi, Jellins, Kinney. Council Member Collacchi was absent.

**STAFF PRESENT** – David Boesch, City Manager; William McClure, City Attorney; Silvia M. Vonderlinden, City Clerk. Various department heads and other City staff were present.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

### **A. COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS, VACANCIES AND REPORTS**

1. Two vacancies on the Housing Commission to fill un-expired terms. One vacancy is to fill an un-expired term that ends July 2005 and one is to fill an un-expired term that ends September 2007. The extended deadline for receipt of applications is November 1, 2004 at 5:30 p.m.
2. One vacancy on the Las Pulgas Committee to fill an un-expired term ending March 2005 (business member seat). The extended deadline for receipt of applications is November 1, 2004 at 5:30 p.m.
3. Commission Reports. - None.

### **B. PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS - None**

### **C. PUBLIC COMMENT #1 - None**

### **D. CONSENT CALENDAR**

*Council Member Kinney enters the Council Chambers.*

#### **Item pulled D1**

1. Authorization to terminate the Sand Hill Road Bicycle Safety Pilot Project and to restore the lane markings on Sand Hill Road between Santa Cruz Avenue and Highway 280.
2. Approval of a contract with the Ravenswood City School District in an amount not to exceed \$70,000 for the delivery of food services at the Belle Haven Child Development Center and authorization of the City Manager to execute the contract.
3. Authorization of the City Manager to amend a Professional Services Agreement with the Practical Solutions Group for an additional amount of \$30,000 resulting in a total agreement of \$55,000 for training and organizational development services.
4. Approval of Minutes for the City Council Meeting of September 14, 2004.

**M/S Jellins/Winkler to approve Consent Calendar items D2, D3, and D4. Motion carries 4-0 with Council Member Collacchi absent.**

#### **Discussion on Consent Calendar Item D1**

Council Member Kinney asked for clarification on why this project is being discontinued and Mr. Rahimi, Transportation Manager, explained that the cost was outweighing the benefits and the residents' response had been unenthusiastic. Mr. Rahimi explained that the original project recommendation came from the Bicycle Commission. Council Member Kinney asked additional questions about the safety of the road and Mr. Rahimi explained that there had been some improvements. Mayor Duboc made reference to a phone message from a resident stating that the automated speed limit sign in this area is often not operable. Mr. Rahimi offered to follow-up on this matter.

**M/S Kinney/Jellins to approve Consent Calendar item D1. Motion carries 4-0 with Council Member Collacchi absent.**

**E. PUBLIC HEARING - None**

**F. REGULAR BUSINESS**

1. Review of Grade Separation Feasibility Study findings and recommendations and consideration of further potential actions on the matter.

Kent Steffens, Public Works Director, presented the staff report explaining the purpose of the Grade Separation Feasibility Study, the background and staff recommendations. Mr. Steffens elaborated on the four options that were studied and he shared conclusions for each of these options. The four options considered were: trench alternative, overpass alternative, underpass alternative, and split alternative. Mr. Steffens covered each option and its pros and cons. He clarified that staff's approach was based on the question: "If there were to be grade separations in Menlo Park what's the best way to do it?" Mr. Steffens added that the current study aimed at providing more visuals than previous ones. He also elaborated on future timelines and funding options. He covered the implications of rerouting traffic at Encinal and Glenwood. Specific cost estimates for the various alternatives were not included, but Mr. Steffens discussed some general cost factors. He reiterated the staff recommendation, which is to continue studying the four options.

BKF Engineers representatives Dave Evans and Jan O'Flaherty made a joint presentation focusing on the findings relating to the underpass and the split alternative. A supplemental feasibility study for Ravenswood, Oak Grove, Glenwood, and Encinal Avenues was also presented. Mr. Evans covered each option and its level of impact on adjacent properties. However, Mr. Steffens reiterated that not every possibility had been explored.

Mr. Steffens referred to the Transportation Commission recommendation of creating an ad hoc committee with representatives from neighboring jurisdictions. He asked that Council involve neighboring jurisdictions to see if there is interest in pursuing this matter jointly and looking at a possible process, scope and time line.

Mayor Duboc announced that various Council Members from Atherton were in the audience. The Mayor invited Nick Watry to make a presentation to the Council. Council asked questions of BKF Engineers representatives relating to the trench option and its specifications. Other questions focused on the split alternative. Various Council Members inquired about the High Speed Rail and the bridges over the San Francisco Creek.

Walter Harrington and Jay C. Kuhre (President of William P. Young) explained that Nick Watry was unable to be present. Mr. Harrington referred to a letter he sent to Council and elaborated on details relating to a three-track solution from Encinal to the northern direction. Mr. Harrington spoke about a possible parking structure in the station area. Mr. Kuhre shared a presentation covering the building components for one of the options and Mr. Harrington outlined his suggested plan for the project on Encinal, which is an underpass. He suggested starting with a request for bids with a design build process excluding the loss of any parking spots. Mr. Kuhre agrees that this should either be a split or a depressed roadway scenario. He explained his solution, which is to build at grade and have the tracks commissioned and the underpass dug while the existing tracks are still operational. Mayor Duboc asked if this has been done before and Mr. Kuhre stated that it hasn't been built in this particular combination, but all elements have been built before for different purposes. Council asked questions about why this

should start north of Encinal and Mr. Harrington stated that this would probably be the only way Caltrain would accept this option.

### **Public Comment**

James Janz, Council Member for the Town of Atherton, shared concerns about cities not being islands and his preference is for cities to work together. Mr. Janz would like to keep certain proposals on the table so that all options are available and he hopes that affected cities will work together.

Jerry Carlson, president of the Atherton Civic Interest League, expressed hesitation with the electrification element. He asks that Council join in a united approach that will influence how the Peninsula deals with this issue in the next ten or 20 years.

Jack Ringham spoke about the number of trains that will cross this area in the future and he is worried about the High Speed Rail's impact in this area. Mr. Ringham explained that the final vote on the Altamont route would take place on November 10, 2004.

Rick Ciardella, representing the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce, expressed to the Council the fact that the Chamber supports further study of the matter, looking at land uses and various options. He supports a detailed study and the business community would like to have an active voice in the process.

David Montague agrees with previous public comment, but he believes the current study is based on assumptions that should be verified. He is a resident with no motives except an interest in doing what is right for Menlo Park. He believes there is a slant that favors the split level solution. He agrees with Mr. Harrington's approach mentioned above.

Frank Carney stated that he heard the same presentation at the Transportation Commission and residents were not happy with it. He has concerns with the bullet train coming from Los Angeles. He supports getting together with neighboring cities to promote a dialogue. He believes an advisory election is needed.

Steve Van Pelt understands how hard it is to make everybody happy. Mr. Van Pelt is in favor of the alignment of the High Speed Rail that would come from San Jose through Menlo Park to San Francisco.

Don Brawner stated that this project could be a disaster to this town and he hopes that all communities impacted will join forces to oppose. He believes this program is not about transportation but about development and his prediction is that real estate values will drop drastically and noise will increase.

Patrick Moore, with the Sierra Club, would like the Council to consider the freight traffic and how it will be reactivated with this project. Mr. Moore asked that all communities weigh in on this issue.

Milton Borg stated that he has property near the tracks and he has had no problems with the tracks. He stated that it is working out well because the train only stops for 30 seconds. He urges Council to keep the status quo.

### **Council Discussion**

Council Member Kinney opined that it is hard to tell if and when the High Speed Rail comes how much of a voice cities have and he stated that the longevity of this project should be a consideration because once in, it will be here for a long time. Mayor Pro Tem Winkler would like to have reflected on the record that Council submitted comments on the High Speed Rail Environmental Impact Report. Ms. Winkler asked about the level of the proposed grade and Mr. Kuhre answered that his figures are based on what is permissible by Caltrain. Council discussed the various options and how it is important to join forces with neighboring cities and possibly contact Sacramento representatives. Council also shared concerns that 138 trains could be going through Menlo Park and the impacts need to be looked at and considered.

**M/S Kinney/Jellins to have the Mayor (with the help of City staff) convene a meeting of neighboring cities and other community members, to find solutions that incorporate political multi-jurisdictional bodies. The motion includes making no recommendation at this point but meeting with other cities and possibly involving state representatives.**

Council Member Jellins believes that collaboration with various jurisdictions is important and he would like the City to keep momentum on this issue. He believes the options need to be explored and shared among all those affected. Mayor Duboc asked if the motion was clear and City Manager Boesch explained that the motion spoke to the third recommendation in the staff report. Mr. Boesch explained that staff would try and find a reasonable and cost effective way to convene these meetings, without being solely responsible. Mayor Pro Tem Winkler thanked all those who made presentations and offered options.

**Mayor Duboc called for the vote.**

**Motion carried 4-0 with Council Member Collacchi absent.**

Mayor Pro Tem Winkler mentioned that thanks to Council Member Kinney the City of Menlo Park would host a charrette in April 2005. Council Member Kinney responded that Dave Johnson, Business Development Manager, is organizing the event. Mayor Pro Tem Winkler suggested that the grade separation topic be brought up at the event.

Mayor Duboc declared a five-minute break.

2. Approval of a neighborhood outreach process for review of development in the Linfield/Middlefield/Willow Study area.

Tracy Cramer, Senior Planner, explained the elements of the outreach process and how community members and commission members are invited to participate. Ms. Cramer corrected an omission on page three of the staff report where the Housing Commission should have been listed.

Mayor Pro Tem Winkler would like to find out what kind of revenues could derive from this process. Council Member Kinney would like to have enough information on the various projects at the meetings when public input is requested. In his opinion this would allow for a comprehensive look instead of piece by piece. Ms. Cramer stated that the information that is readily available will be shared at the community meeting, she further stated that the purpose of the meeting is to get some basic direction on the uses people want to see in this area. Council Member Kinney shared concerns for those who will not be able to attend. Ms. Cramer stated that those who will not attend the meeting would have the chance of getting the information by requesting it from staff.

#### **Public Comment**

Frank Carney thinks the proposal by staff is a good one. Mr. Carney mentioned a candidates' forum hosted by the Linfield Neighborhood, and one of the candidates suggested placing medical use on El Camino Real. He agrees with that comment.

Don Brawner stated that he is surprised about the medical use on Homewood and how it seems to be a done deal. Mr. Boesch interjected and clarified that no such expression had been used by staff or has been a part of the discussion. Mr. Brawner acknowledged that Mr. Boesch was correct. Mr. Brawner believes that medical use in this residential area is inappropriate.

**M/S Kinney/Jellins to accept the staff recommendation. Motion carries 4-0 with Council Member Collacchi absent.**

3. Consideration of state and federal legislative items or items referred to in Written Communications or Information Items. Including decisions to support or oppose any such legislative.

**G. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION - None**

**H. INFORMATION ITEM - None**

**I. COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS**

Mayor Pro Tem Winkler acknowledged the Fire District for organizing a graduation ceremony for 150 residents who got certified on CERT (Community Emergency Response Team). Ms. Winkler thanked the Fire District and Police Department for their efforts towards this initiative.

Mayor Duboc reported on attending the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Las Lomas School. She enjoyed the event especially a collection of archival information dating back to 1904.

**J. PUBLIC COMMENT #2 (Limited to 30 minutes) - None**

**K. ADJOURNMENT – 10:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Silvia M. Vonderlinden, CMC

Approved at the Council Meeting of November 30, 2004.