

Pleasant Hill BART Shortcut Path and Wayfinding System Project

Community Workshop #1

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Wallgraphic Summary

INTRODUCTION

On November 18, 2003, about 35 people participated in the Pleasant Hill BART Shortcut Path and Wayfinding System 1st Community Workshop. The purpose of this workshop was to identify the community's issues, concerns, questions and feelings about the proposed project.

John Cunningham, Transportation Planner for Contra Costa County, made welcoming remarks and gave a brief history outline of this project; that this project is a planning feasibility study only. Funds have not been allocated for construction of any shortcut path. John then turned the meeting over to the facilitator, Tim Gilbert of Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc. (MIG), who provided an overview of the evening's agenda. Cheryl Sullivan reported on the walking tour, held Saturday, November 15th.

Tim opened the floor to public input. As members of the community shared their ideas, Cheryl Sullivan recorded their comments on a large wallgraphic. Those comments are summarized below. They are arranged by general topics, and when needed additional wording is added [...] to clarify the comment. (Photoreduction of the wallgraphics produced at the workshop are provided at the end of this document.)

The workshop adjourned at 9 p.m. The 2nd workshop will be held on December 18th, Wednesday, from 7-9 p.m., at the Contra Costa Transportation Authority.

NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES

- Loss of parking
- Crime
- BART agreement [with resident] regarding gate and access limits – good barrier
- Trash from travelers
- Homeless, strangers
- Transients under canal
- Look at other alternative routes.
- Quiet neighborhood [will be affected]
- No sidewalks keep neighborhood quiet; no one goes up cul-de-sac now
- Fears of residents
 - Diminishes [property] value
 - No users after 7 p.m.
 - Response time in an emergency [it is slow now]

- Lighting
- Don't count on BART for maintenance
- Retirees and disabled live on Clemson [feel threatened by plan]
- At Briarwood:
 - No sidewalks wanted
 - Young families
 - Plan A destroys quality of life
 - Very safe now
 - Plan A exposes young families
- Get crime stats – compare with other situations
 - Police come to meeting

GENERAL COMMENTS

- Expand and improve notification to surrounding neighborhood
- Walking comfort [distance people will choose to walk]: 1-2 miles
- Bike comfort [distance people will choose to ride]: 5 miles
- Contra Costa Canal Trail experience
 - Fears didn't materialize
 - Transients left
- East Bay Regional Parks Trails closed/curfew
 - 10pm – Dawn
- Add a trail (A, B, or C options)
- [BART right of way originally] supposed to be a park
- Kids go to school via L J [Las Juntas]-M [Mayhew]-B [Bancroft]
- Societal goal to reduce dependence on car – the “B” path promotes this
- BART supports this study and was an applicant for this project
- BART also a plus for selling property
- Others have increased property values [when trail goes in]
- Lots of people walk to / from BART
- Lots of support outside of immediate neighborhood
- Path for pedestrians and bikes only
- Extra eyes on path

- If best for community, then do it
- Construction costs – enhance the existing conditions [instead of building new path]
- Existing [pedestrian and bike] routes too long – won't be used
- “B” is least intrusive
- Isolated route
- If [path is] walled [then it creates a] dangerous “alley” / “tunnel”
- People turn backs to crime – can't guarantee help
- Police won't be there [in time]
- Improve sidewalks no matter what!
- Evaluate landscape quality on both sides at Bancroft and BART tracks [within BART right of way]
- “B” has least objectionable impact

TRAFFIC ISSUES

- Traffic danger at Bancroft and Mayhew, Bancroft and David and Minert
- No public access past Clemson – gate to stay [entry to BART property]
- Pedestrian improvements needed at David and Minert
- Now: dangerous [bike and pedestrian] route from David – Bancroft – Mayhew... hedges and ADA problems, the lack of sidewalks is “unnerving”.
- Dangerous curve at Cherry and Las Juntas needs improvements:
 - Light [needed at] pedestrian crossing
 - Sidewalks and crosswalk
- Other options [offered]:
 - Option D – add sidewalks and bike lanes along Las Juntas, Mayhew, etc.
 - Option E – shuttle bus [between Bancroft and BART station]

QUESTIONS

- Survey done for BART u`ers?
 - Yes, basis for grant dedicated sheriff patrol
- Who has jurisdiction of BART and maintenance?
- Noise levels okay?
- Has BART Power & Way Dept. been notified?

- [There is a] dedicated sheriff patrol?
 - How many hours?
 - 40 hours a week
- [What is the] distance saved?
- What are the construction limitations for BART?
- When was this process started?
 - Pleasant Hill BART Specific Plan, 1998
- Is this a sure thing?
 - No – issues have to be addressed
- Who does this report go?
 - Will bring info to next meeting
- [When was there a] study of ridership?
- [What are the] current needs for ridership?
- There needs to be a new study to see how many people will use the trail
- BART R.O.W. originally had trail planned?
- Enough room for fence & BART the whole length?
- Fence on street side of trail?

WRITTEN COMMENTS

- The bridge on Bancroft that crosses the Walnut Creek Channel is too narrow, it should be widened.
- BART needs to do something about theft and vandalism of bicycles at the station. BART needs more bicycle lockers!
- The existing route works fine, I use it, my kids used it. We shouldn't waste any time and money on a new route.
- An improved, more direct sidewalk/path from Jones to the BART station would improve pedestrian access.
- The Briarwood Option (A) is the best alternative given the ease of the movements in the area of Cherry/Las Juntas/BART tracks. Options B or C has more difficult movements to make.
- Any path should somehow be landscaped and somehow integrated with the Iron Horse Trail.

- The existing trail under the BART tracks under Las Juntas floods and gets muddy, bikes get bogged down.
- Options A, B or C would diminish the safety of our neighborhood, increase fire hazard, result in vandalism, theft, loitering, and garbage dumping and reduce the aesthetic of the area.
- Improving the existing route is the most fiscally responsible.
- A bridge would reduce the aesthetic of the channel area.
- All of the proposed options come to a substantial expense to the taxpayers in the community. In a time of shortages and deficits we believe there are more fiscally appropriate alternatives to these proposed short cuts.
- The safety profile of the existing routes can be improved easily and this would not create new safety problems for residents of our neighborhood.
- The sidewalks along Bancroft and Treat allow bicyclists to ride, and there are crosswalks at all intersections. This appears to be quite a safe route with good lighting all along.
- We suggest the addition of a sidewalk to Iron Horse Trail and a bike path along Mayhew will address this problem.
- Lastly, we think the use of these proposed short cuts will be quite small, and the additional problems created for residents of our neighborhood far outweigh the supposed benefits for residents beyond Bancroft and David/Minert.
- Although none of the options are attractive, relatively speaking, Alternative B is superior as it impedes the least on homes.
- Option A results in the loss of property.
- The proposed crossing at Las Juntas is extremely dangerous and is at a turn or bend in the road. The risk to users of the short cut is substantial.
- There are no sidewalks for about three-quarters of the way on Briarwood Way and for all of the Cherry Lane section forcing the supposed users of this short cut into the street along with the automotive traffic.
- There is a significant slope at the edge of the Contra Costa Canal, which will require a great deal of construction work in the form of tie-backs and retainer walls to level the area for the supposed users of the short cut. This construction will be at great expense to the taxpayer community.
- The benefits of Options A, B or C do not outweigh the impacts.
- The courts (Clemson and Briarwood) are now safe and quiet, A, B, and C would change that by making it a major thoroughfare
- Homeless people will take up residence in unmanaged areas.
- Lack of upkeep of the paths is likely.
- Un-patrolled, unsafe trails will be a result of this of any new path
- Strangers in the area late into the night