

Draft Compilation of Comments
for the Cross Alameda Trail Project
Summer/Fall 2014

Community Meeting – Monday, July 28, 2014

Gail Payne of Public Works Department presented a PowerPoint describing the project.

Questions and Comments obtained before and during the meeting were as follows:

Alameda Boys & Girls Club/School Access

- “I was wondering if this new trail will allow a much needed two way access driveway for the Boys and Girls club. The Woodstock school facility will once again house an K-5 elementary school and will no longer want parking and driving on its playground. I know when the Boys and Girls club was built this was not the concern since the building housed mainly AUSD district offices. Now that the strip is being developed I was hoping the driveway access from Ralph Appezatto would be considered for children's safety. I know that there is currently a drive way at the shopping center at the corner of Ralph Appezatto and Main Street. Please consider redesigning the access to the Boys and Girls club when designing this fabulous trail, I know the kids would love to use their bikes to access both the school and Boys and Girls club safely.” (Email on 7/11/2014 by Gretchen Finer)
- Design special access in Boys & Girls club, move the parking, and have school enclose trash area. (email by Jerry Serventi on 7/25/14)
- Please accommodate the schools and Boys/Girls Club so the kids can get in/out without too much car traffic. (Rebecca Heyman – Comment Card)
- As a citizen of Alameda & working within the Alameda Boys & Girls club for over 20 years, my concern is and has always been safety for kids. Under the current layout at 1900 Third St., there is only one entrance & exit by motor vehicle. Not only do our club parents use this roadway to drop off or pick up their children, but emergency vehicles use this roadway. It’s a blind roadway that carries tons of traffic. We currently walk our elementary school aged members from Ruby Bridges to the club but cannot even use this roadway to the dangerous roadway. We walk one block further to safely access the club by way of Brush St. (Mar Morales – Comment Card)

Amenities

- **Challenge Bike Trail:** Could consider a challenge bike trail. (Q & A part of meeting; Bill Delaney Comment Card)
- **Doggie Bags:** Provide organic, biodegradable doggie bags along the trail to encourage dog owners to pick up after themselves. (Phone call on 7/10/2014 by Stephen Gibson)
- **Fitness Stations:** Parcours fitness stations would be an excellent addition to the CAT, IMHO. (Bayport Blog posting by Jon Spangler on August 1, 2014) In my childhood I remember these “fitness stations” that were always fun and a good way to promote healthy exercise and stretching. Could be a nice addition to the walking paths. <http://www.fittrail.com/10station.html> (Bayport Blog posting by Lauren Do on August 1, 2014)
- **Gateway:** Need special design node as trail enters Webster Street to make a statement that there is something special at this point. (email by Jerry Serventi on 7/25/14); Would like to see a plaza that mirrors the College of Alameda plaza. (Daniel Hoy – Comment Card)
- **Lighting:** Concerns about the impacts on adjacent residents, if provided. Response: Lighting is not part of the project. (Q & A part of meeting)

Benches

- Regarding the cross Alameda trail, I would recommend senior friendly benches about every 1000 feet or so. As we get older, it is important to have a place to rest on a trip. <http://blog.aarp.org/2013/04/15/10-principles-for-creating-age-friendly-communities/> (email by Steve Gerstle on 7/23/14)
- Please no benches (Lidia Zaragoza, Summerhouse – Comment Card)
- No benches due to potential night time usage (Rebecca Heyman – Comment Card)
- One request is: Behind our home, could you kindly ensure no benches, nor congregation points? Reason being: Our master bedroom looks out over the proposed area. We would rather not have people congregate in the evenings, so close to our bedroom window. (safety & noise issues) (Email by Keith Weitzen – 7/28/14)
- Rest areas with benches are good for walkers. (Dorothy Freeman – Comment Card)

Connections

- **Appezato Pkwy:** The north side of Appezato Pkwy is difficult for bicyclists. (Q & A part of meeting)
- **Bruzzone Drive/Grisham Drive Connections:** Should connect to the small infill housing development streets. (email by Jerry Serventi on 7/25/14)

- **Crossings – West Campus Drive and Fifth Street:** Will need to modify traffic signals to allow access across Appezzato Pkwy at Fifth Street and West Campus Drive. There should be cross walks on both east and west sides of the cross streets otherwise you have to back track when you walking. Pedestrians do not like it having only one crosswalk such as at Poggi and are known to cross without it. Look at what happened at Webster and Central where the 4th crosswalk was finally put back last summer. (email by Jerry Serventi on 7/25/14)
- **Jean Sweeney Open Space Park:** Trail should match what is being proposed at Sweeney Park so it is consistent. (Dorothy Freeman – Comment Card); Would it be easier to secure approvals if similar designs & plants were used as Sweeney Park? (Bill Delaney – Comment Card)
- **Main Street Terminus:** Will the trail go all the way to Main Street or stop at the east side of the parking lot for Monkey Thai & Hometown Donuts? As the right-of-way gets much wider at this point, will the new trail follow the Esparanza Apartment fence line or will it stay constant of Appezzato Pkwy? Either can work but you will have an issue on how to design back to the Main/Appezzato intersection. I would say stay somewhat constant connecting thru the parking lot to Main Street. I would make a deal and relocate some of the parking in the lot so it is adjacent to Monkey Thai so a wider and more pleasant end is accomplished. (email by Jerry Serventi on 7/25/14)
- **Poggi Street Crossing:** Add east side crosswalk across Appezzato at Poggi and connect sidewalk on eastside of Poggi past/thru Summer House parking lot to trail. (email by Jerry Serventi on 7/25/14)
- **Summerhouse Gate:** Summerhouse property owners may be interested in a gate to facilitate access between Summerhouse and the Cross Alameda Trail. (Lidia Zaragoza, Summerhouse – Comment Card)
- **Webster-Constitution Access:** Concerns about access between Webster Street and Constitution Way. Response: This section is beyond the project limit. Ultimately, the Cross Alameda Trail will continue through this section. (Q & A part of meeting)

Cross Section

- The cross section should be flipped so the paths are “show cased” along Appezzato vs. tucked along the south border of the beltline. Probably will never need the “Transit Corridor” portion. (Daniel Hoy – Comment Card)
- What is this varying width space to be used for? Hopefully transit in the future such as a trolley or electric buses. Is there a future plan to deal with this extra belt line space and how it connects at Main and Webster and Poggi and Third? This area as shown seems almost void with 24 feet of bikeway, walkway and jogging path only separated by low shrubs. How about varying heights with trees, shrubs & ground cover. Do you need

separate walking and jogging trails? Can they be combined so there is room for more landscaping? If trails are not all weather then everyone will use bike trail. (email by Jerry Serventi on 7/25/14)

- Can walking zone be wider than six feet? I imagine people with dogs or families walking along this and they'd need more room. (Email by Cyndy Johnson – 7/28/14)
- The grade differential needs to be addressed as the trail is higher than adjacent properties at a number of locations such as Summer House and the apartments west of Third Street. You can either install a drainage system, let it drain onto their property or install a retaining wall and grade to bio swale. (email by Jerry Serventi on 7/25/14)

Landscaping/Trees

- Should add landscaping buffer between path and adjacent properties. (email by Jerry Serventi on 7/25/14)
- I like bioswale idea with trees and shrubs. (email by Jerry Serventi on 7/25/14)
- Place trees along walking zone so it's got summer shade. (Email by Cyndy Johnson – 7/28/14)
- Should consider future maintenance and plant drought resistant greenery. (Linda Cazares – Comment Card)
- There are visibility issues with the landscaping and should consider impacts on security. (Q & A part of meeting)

Separate Bikeway and Walkway

- My only comment is why do they need a separate bikeway, walkway and jogging path that together is 25 feet. That is a lot to maintain when you most likely only have 10-20 people use it each day. A 4 or 5 foot paved path would be fine like the one they have on Main Street. Just because you build it doesn't mean people will come and if they do come expand it later. I would ride my bike there or maybe walk on the path, but who in their right mind would jog there where everyone can see you. The park and rec department would be better off using their money to fix up what they already have or if they want it for this project put a hedge next to the fence in front of the storage units, Summerhouse, Atlantic Apartments and the ones further down the street. People complain about the fence at Bayport put along that strip, but you have nice hedges, plants and flowers to look at rather than garage doors. (Bayport Blog posting by Joseph on August 1, 2014)
- Concerned with over-engineering & looking like parking lot. (Q & A part of meeting)
- Need separate bike & walking trails & jogging path. (Dorothy Freeman – Comment Card)
- Do we need walk & jogging path to be separate? (Bill Delaney – Comment Card)

Miscellaneous

- **Concerns:** Gate, lighting, upkeep and trash concerns. (Lidia Zaragoza, Summerhouse – Comment Card)
- **History:** Jean Sweeney’s groundbreaking research on the Beltline RR yard led to the work on the Cross Alameda Trail (CAT) beginning in 1999-2000 or so. With funding from RTC, the Cross Alameda Trail Steering Committee (CATSC) was born a bit later, with representatives from Pedestrian Friendly Alameda and BikeAlameda (now merged into BikeWalkAlameda) joining Beltline Open Space activists and others to present the Cross Alameda Trail Vision Plan to the City Council and other community partners in 2004:

http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/whatwedo/TrailDART/Report_Cross_Alameda.pdf

Those of us who worked on the CATSC a decade ago are thrilled to see this progress: making the CAT a reality faces some major hurdles from property owners along Clement and Blanding as well as tricky toxic pollution from the shipyards and industrial plants that populated the estuary around World War II, but as the trail is implemented, the growing pressure on property owners to cooperate in granting Bay Trail access should help... (Bayport Blog posting by Jon Spangler on August 1, 2014)

- **Motorcycles:** How will you keep the motorcycles out? (Carol Gottstein – Comment Card)
- **Positive Comments:** This sounds super awesome – I’m excited! What a nice impression this/lovely path will make on the thousands of people who go to the antique/vintage fair the first Sunday of each month. (Rebecca Heyman – Comment Card); *I believe having this trail will benefit W. Alameda tremendously and bring more folks to our city.* (Jan Schlesinger – Comment Card)

Alameda Boys and Girls Club Focus Group Meeting – Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Gail Payne of Public Works Department presented a PowerPoint describing the project.

Project-specific Questions and Comments were as follows:

- **New school operations:** Alameda Community Learning Center and NEA - on Third Street at Appezzato Pkwy will increase the amount of traffic.
- **School Drop-off:** Want to know how the drop-off and pick-up of learners and Boys & Girls Club kids is going to occur safely. Learners will total 700 at the schools with 80 facilitators; parking problem exists; drop-off / pick-up issues. Parents need to stop and park for younger kids. Concern about kids' safety and being dropped off at the school; site does not cut it.
- **Ingress/egress from Third Street to property is dangerous; safety problem; engineering issues:** driveway on Third Street is not according to standards because it is too close to Appezzato Pkwy. Third Street driveway provides access for police and fire. It is marked fire lane – do not block. Want to know how this emergency access is going to be incorporated into the new plans. They do not want the City to close the Third Street driveway, and they need an alternative that is acceptable.
- **Improved Access to Appezzato Pkwy:** Want accommodation to get traffic to/from property such as direct access to Appezzato Pkwy. Fire lane cuts through the middle of the beltline property to Appezzato Pkwy. Want a street between Third Street and Poggi Street that parallels Appezzato Pkwy on the south side of the former beltline property for improved access to/from Alameda Boys & Girls Club.
- **Parking Issues:** Limited parking exists in the adjacent neighborhood and they cannot park on the playground. The Cross Alameda Trail will eliminate the parking for them. Want to know if they can park on the former beltline property on a temporary basis. No agreement exists between the City and Alameda Boys and Girls Club yet they currently are parking on the former beltline property, which is now owned by the City.
- **Site Construction:** In 2009, Alameda Boys & Girls Club had to go through the state architect to get approval to construct. Did not go through the City to seek approvals since it was Alameda Unified School District property. The interaction with the City was minimal. The Alameda Boys & Girls Club will provide a traffic control plan to the City. For construction, trucks were allowed to access Appezzato Pkwy directly. The Public Works Director had said that it was only for construction.

Alameda Community Learning Center/NEA Focus Group Meeting – Thursday, July 10, 2014

Gail Payne of Public Works Department presented a PowerPoint describing the project.

Project-specific Questions and Comments were as follows:

- **Parking issues:** The schools need to find overflow parking and need improved drop-off and pick-up locations. One option is to stagger start times at the schools.
- **School Drop-off:** Would like a school drop-off on Appezato Pkwy to the south of the bus lane and then would travel south to NEA/ACLC east of Third Street. NEA/ACLC would have representatives to keep traffic moving.
- **Open Space Priority:** Would rather have open space than two-way bus lanes. First order of priority is open space with combined bike/walk path and one bus lane. Second priority is separate bike/walk path and one bus lane. Like it being healthy for the community, proponent of public transportation.
- **Amenities:** Park benches and trees needed to the north of the bioswale in the bus stop area on either side of the bus stops. Boulders as sitting spaces similar to the new Main Street ferry terminal waterfront path. Make a kid friendly playground with a natural environment. Depending on boulder shape, can make it more of sitting space. Also, tree trunks could be used as a climbing space or sitting space. Provide a space for kids to play instead of getting into the bus lane.

Letter sent to City Manager John Russo by Patti Wilczek, Ph.D., Executive Director on July 25, 2014:

As the Executive Director for Community Learning Center Schools (the charter school management organization that operates Nea and Alameda Community Learning Centers) I wish to bring to your attention an extremely worrisome situation for the children attending both of our schools, as well as the Alameda Boys & Girls Club. All located at 1900 Third Street in Alameda, I believe that the current traffic and egress configuration are grossly insufficient for the more than 900 students and adults who will be entering and exiting our campuses daily --a situation that will only be exacerbated by the proposed Cross-Alameda Bike Trail.

At the present time, a single driveway provides access for Nea Community Learning Center (Nea), Alameda Community Learning Center (ACLC), and the Boys and Girls Club (BGC). In addition, Alameda Youth Basketball and the City of Alameda Basketball leagues utilize this campus adding to the already heavy use of this singular driveway for vehicular traffic.

The driveway, with its entry on Third Street near the R.A. Parkway, is a single-lane road on City property, adjacent to the old railroad right-of-way that parallels the school building from Third Street. Regular observations reveal that the traffic pattern in the area is extremely dangerous - particularly during times of heaviest use, such as morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up. I fear that it is only a matter of time until a child is injured, especially given that the drive includes two blind-spots.

Specifically, the issues requiring City remediation include:

- A blind right turn at the end of the existing school structure, which creating a dangerous condition for existing children.
- One driveway entering adjacent, high-volume properties, such that emergency vehicles would likely be hindered when responding to a life threatening event or fire emergency.
- A blind driveway, from which pedestrians are not visible when exiting the campus.
- The lack of a pull-out lane such that vehicles are out of the flow of traffic when dropping-off and/or picking up children.

As a long-time educational administrator, I am aware of the potential liability issues the City would likely face should someone be injured. Additionally, I am aware from personal observations that it may only be a matter of time until a child is seriously injured, or worse.

The currently proposed Bikeway Path Project on Ralph Appezatto Parkway shall exacerbate the above issues. While it is my understanding that Project staff is currently in the information-gathering phase, I would like assurances from the City that the issues expressed herein will be seriously considered and mitigated during this process. In the absence of any pull-out lanes to allow for safe, out-of-traffic dropping off/picking up of children, and given a circumstance where emergency vehicles' access to our campus will be hindered, I encourage the City officials to attend to the needs of Alameda youth by brainstorming creative solutions that better meet the needs of a broad base of constituents.

We simply cannot move more than 900 children onto and off of the combined ACLC/Nea/BGC site given the current situation -- and most certainly not if the current Bike Path is the plan executed by the City.

That said, we are working to identify ways we can mitigate this dangerous situation for our schools. Thus far we have agreed to:

- Have staggered start and end times for our programs to distribute traffic over a longer period of time each day.

- Meet with Alameda Police Department representatives to identify the best flow of traffic for drop-off and pick-up such that we create the safest possible situation given current limitations.
- We will be providing daily supervision of drop-off and pick up to help with overall traffic flow.

And while we do believe that implementing these changes will help, it will by no means be the solution we require to ensure safe traffic flow and an overall safe environment for our ACLC, Nea and B&GC children. This goal can be achieved only through a collaborative effort to find adequate solutions.

Finally, based upon my research of our State Approved Plans authored by the Department of State Architecture, it appears that the State has already approved an access point coming directly off the Appezatto Parkway. It is my understanding, however that this entry/exit is not reflected in the current presentation of the Cross-Alameda Trail Project.

I am bringing these concerns to your attention now, based upon the Projects' public meeting scheduled for this coming Monday, July 28, 2014. I wish, therefore, to formally place my concerns on record prior to this public forum/meeting for consideration. In addition, I request a follow-up meeting subsequent to this Monday's public discussion as a means of continuing the conversation with city officials.

Your timely attention and assistance is critical, and greatly appreciated.

Bayport Home Owners Association Focus Group Meeting – Wed., July 9, 2014

Gail Payne of Public Works Department presented a PowerPoint describing the project.

Project-specific Questions and Comments were as follows:

- Summerhouse **flags** are illegal.
- Legality of **dumping** woodchips?
- Drought tolerant and native **plants** are desired.
- **Landscape architect** is desired for the design to go beyond trees to improve the aesthetic and experience; would want plant material and ground cover to crowd out the weeds; ask for interns or a contest for landscape projects. There is an interesting architectural reference book called *A Pattern Language* by Christopher Alexander that is a planning guide on how we experience parks and places.
- **Maintenance:** Need to maintain the plants.
- Want **estuary paths** not paths through the City.
- **Main Street and Appezatto Pkwy corner:** Have the city claim eminent domain and take over more than the easement of these businesses. The start or end of the path as it meets Alameda Point would be dramatically improved.
- **Path Surface:** Look at new asphalt type products that are not petroleum based and allow water to permeate through it. A par course or other exercise station type product would be nice for the trail but that may be better left for the bigger park area.
- **Street Connections:** Specialty paving transitions where the paths cross the street, lighting and visibility so the trail can be used at all hours and be a safe place.
- Periodic **benches**.

Miscellaneous Questions and Comments

- **Bike access to the ferry:** Access path to the ferry on the east side is needed. Currently, you have to cross the street and cross back because there is only a path on the other side – west side - of the street.
- **Access to the tunnel:** general traffic congestion to the tunnel; significant congestion mainly on the Oakland side.
- First Sunday every month – **antique market** – could be managed differently; traffic problems on Appezatto Pkwy and Stargell Avenue blocking Webster Street at both intersections and blocks traffic all around the area. A few traffic officers at the main intersections would help minimize the non-residents blocking the intersections for the west end residents.
- **Riding through the tunnel** – filthy and dangerous; ridiculous that bikeway is two way.

BikeWalk Alameda Focus Group Meeting – Tuesday, May 6, 2014

- Want a **separate** bikeway and walkway.
- Want a **buffer space** between the bikeway and walkway.
- Concerns about the **Main Street terminus pinch point**.
- Want a **gateway entrance** feature.

College of Alameda (COA) Focus Group Meeting – Wednesday, July 23, 2014

Gail Payne of Public Works Department presented a PowerPoint describing the project.

Project-specific Questions and Comments were as follows:

- **Construction** also is expected to occur at College of Alameda in Summer 2015 on Buildings C and D: art, fashions and humanities. The COA will be moving faculty and classrooms to modular units parallel to Webster Street during construction. Will use parking lot as staging area in summer 2015.
- 7,000 **enrollment** – block scheduling will occur to keep the students on campus all day.
- **Wayfinding signs** to include College of Alameda. West Campus Drive on north side of Appezato Pkwy to have wayfinding signs.
- Overall **support** for the trail project.
- Could return to Colleagues and Conversations Campus Wide **Forum** to explain the project.

Recreation and Parks Commission Meeting – October 9, 2014

Gail Payne of Public Works Department presented a PowerPoint describing the project.

Project-specific Questions and Comments were as follows:

- Consider **lighting** in the future.
- Consider improved **school access**.
- Want **drought-tolerant plants**.
- **Commend project** – area is currently an eyesore.
- Want continuity and consistency with the proposed trail in **Jean Sweeney Open Space Park**.
- Want to ensure that **bus stops** can be added at a later date.
- Provide **wayfinding signs with distances** to potential destinations.
- Request private **companies sponsor** parts of the project to offset costs.
- Provide **speed limit signs** on the bikeway. Consider signs similar to the ones posted by the East Bay Regional Parks District on the San Francisco Bay Trail.

- Want project to encourage everyone to bicycle.

Transportation Commission Meeting – September 24, 2014

Gail Payne of Public Works Department presented a PowerPoint describing the project.

Project-specific Questions and Comments were as follows:

- Keep the **community engaged** in the early parts of the design process such as at 25 percent design.
- Develop **nodes** at Webster Street, West Campus Drive, Fifth Street, Third Street and Main Street.
- Include a **school drop-off zone** in the transit right-of-way, so pedestrian access would be possible off of Third Street.
- Provide **benches** every 1,000 feet to make sure the trail is fully compliant under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Make **right turns on Webster Street** possible with the ultimate transit design.
- Consider **school access** needs in terms of emergency access.
- **Do not squish the trail** under the southern boundary, especially with the trees near the Esperanza site within proximity to the donut shop. Along Main Street where the path goes on one side and jogs way over to the crossing, is not the way bicyclists move and the City should accommodate that mentality.
- **Upgrade intersections** to better accommodate trail users.
- Create **more open space** rather than parking on the proposed open space.
- Prefer **separate paths** for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Concern with pedestrians and bicyclists **not staying within their designated spaces** because just separating the modes would not control people from deviating such as what happens on the Bay Farm Island paths.
- Concerns that the **jogging path would be against the fence** yet understand the budgeting issues.
- A **new driveway for the Alameda Boys & Girls Club** would require cars headed west on Appezato to U-turn at Third Street to access the entry point. Right now, kids cross Appezato at Third to get to Ruby Bridges, there is a crossing guard at that site to facilitate safe crossings. To make it convenient for one site, it might end up creating safety problems for another site. It's an issue that the City should help the B&G Club and ACLC/Nea address, but perhaps there should be an examination of the ways that other schools that pull from geographically diverse populations have helped to mitigate their transportation impact. (Alameda Bayport blog on September 24, 2014)

- There is **no need for bus rapid transit** along this corridor. A regular bus line on the regular existing road is sufficient. I would rather see this as true open space with trees and plantings and (in my ideal world), a meandering dirt trail for trail runners and off-road biking. Per the existing plan, we would have mostly pavement: a paved walking trail, a paved bike lane, a paved jogging trail and a paved bus rapid transit, we will basically have a 70 foot wide strip of pavement. Too much pavement. I really think the cross-alameda trail here should be more of an extension of Jean Sweeney Park with trails (paved and dirt) through a natural area, rather than a big paved strip. (Alameda Bayport blog comment by Aaron Thies — September 24, 2014)

West Alameda Business Association (WABA) Board Meeting – July 16, 2014

Gail Payne of Public Works Department presented a PowerPoint describing the project.

Project-specific Questions and Comments were as follows:

- Webster/Atlantic gateway features are desired such as a plaza, arch or a monument that demarcates the business district and Alameda Point to create a more substantial sense of place. It should be similar to the plaza on the college side and could complement the college side with a seating area, artwork. If it is not included in this Cross Alameda Trail project then it would be helpful to work towards a vision. City staff should look at the Webster Street Visioning Plan (2011) to ensure that it is consistent with the overall themes. Needs to look like the users have arrived someplace so it should be a substantial terminus.
- Should be consistent with the Main Street park and trail area; consistent with Alameda Point.
- Consensus: prefer separate bikeway and walkway.
- Want it closer to Appezato Pkwy – closer to street edge. It is a shame to de-emphasize the trail from the roadway; want the bicyclists and pedestrians closer to the street.
- How many bus stops would there be?
- Trail users would need to use the bus stops so would need to hop over it.
- Place the trees in the buffer between the two asphalt paths.
- Design charette – draft design needs outreach to community with the consultant.
- Want to see detailed design.