

March 7, 2012
CVCAC Minutes
Called to order 7:04

Todd Gettleman moved to accept minutes from the previous meeting. Linda Pillard seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

There was no correspondence or announcements at this meeting.

There was no public comment at this meeting.

Tom Brannon and Douglas Lange from CALTRANS District 3 came to present the plans for the Federal Highway Administration's upcoming HWY 16 safety study. The first presentation, which is by invitation only, will be on March 12th at the Esparto Community Hall. Invited representatives include the following organizations:

Esparto, Capay Valley and Madison Fire Departments; Capay Valley coalition; Capay Valley Vision, CHP, Yolo County Planning and Public Works; YDWN; Davis Bike Club; and the Sacramento Wheelmen Club. The Guinda Grange and the Rumsey Improvement Association will also be invited.

Federal Highway Administration will work on a new study which will provide a new scope in order to move forward with a new road safety project. A new round of meetings will be held before developing a new EIR.

Anne Rawlins inquired about what the format of the upcoming meeting will be. CALTRANS responded that there will be introductions; a CALTRANS presentation, public displays and a Value Metrics stakeholders rating opportunity.

A question was asked as to why the Federal Government is involved in a state highway project. Most of the design criteria and funding monies come from Federal organizations. Roughly 90 percent of funding is federal.

Gretchen Ceteras asked about whether the study would include current data, unlike the old studies which did not include data from the more recent highway improvements and inaccurately assessed the safety of the highway. She was assured that data for the upcoming study would include current accident data. CALTRANS acknowledged that accident data does not stand in perpetuity, and it will be looked at anew, in light of the somewhat recent highway improvements.

Gage Hutchens stated that data CALTRANS provided in the last round was inconsistent and seemingly incorrect. He wondered how it happened. Tom's guess is that there may have been different sets of data used for different parts of the study.

Anne Rawlins wondered if funding is in place for this project. 58 million was set aside for the last round, but only 8 million is allocated for the current project.

The baseline project included 8 foot lanes with 12 foot shoulders. Both CALTRANS staffers, who will be in charge of this project, admitted to never having been through a federal safety study. The Madison migrant camp is an area that needs a larger intersection. Tom Brannon does not see a higher alignment speed as a current direction. This is a major change in direction from that pre-judgment direction. Tom stated that the "strategy of the project we had before is no longer supported by the data that is out there."

Gretchen Ceteras asked "How did it get to the scale it got to with the protest and many meetings which were held in the community?"

Doug replied that CALTRANS uses a highway design manual and that design speed will give design criteria, admitting that people's input was secondary to alignment with design manual standards.

Has any thought been given to putting in another road just to the casino, asked Anne Rawlins. Tom replied that highway money comes in two favors: state trans program for new roads (STP) and State Hwy Protection Program SHP for bringing existing roads up to standards. The current and old scope has funding for bringing a road up to standard and not for the creation of a new road.

Safety index has roughly eight million dollars set aside for this project. This is for construction. Much of the support work has been done such as surveying.

Could you reconsider bypassing Esparto, asked EUSD School Board member Jane Stallings. Tom stated that CALTRANS could not do it with funds available because it cannot come from funds we have. It would be building a new state highway where none exists. That would require STP funding.

Paul Muller noted that a bypass was identified as a priority by the community in many of the previous meetings. Can we start that project, initiation of an Esparto bypass? Paul also noted that, at every community meeting a reduced scope was asked for and it's exciting to see that CALTRANS is looking at a scaled down alternative.

Is it the responsibility of CALTRANS to provide safe access to a development? Maybe a tunnel through the Capay hills could be reconsidered. There are STP funds available but there is a long list of projects. Any new project takes many years to get in the system and to complete studies. Waiting in line for funds takes time as well. If Walmart bought the migrant camp and built a Walmart, the county would do traffic studies and insist that improvements to get new traffic off the highway and back to the road be paid for by the corporation. This is not the case for the Tribe. As a sovereign nation, the local governments are not able to demand from them what they are able to demand from a corporation. The Tribe has been good partners with CALTRANS in being willing to fund projects along the road, noted Mr. Brannon.

Anne Rawlins wondered about the county requiring a park and ride lot with the original Casino expansion. Supervisor Chamberlain noted that that's not being discussed these days. Duane Chamberlain also noted that there was never a design standard for access to landowners fields to create the gradient to access fields in the rebuked EIR for the SIP.

Paul Muller commented that, based on the past there was not a good tack taken by CALTRANS to make safety happen. CALTRANS was blind to the suggestion that the road not be made into a race

track. Linda Pillard added that you have to get rid of the idea that CALTRANS knows best and ignores the local community.

Tom Brannon noted that last time CALTRANS was not going to examine any deviation from the manual rules. The designer of record is still on the job, but he eluded that deviation from the manual rules may be permissible this round.

Paul Muller noted that Yolo county flood control didn't feel included last time. Ellen Knolle stated there was not consideration for farmers in Madison during the last highway design phase. Anne Rawlins asked when a study can be completed. April 11th is the expected completion and presentation date for the study group alternatives. Then there will be an EIR. Paul asked if the past point judgments will be addressed? Federal Highways administration will be considering these, and Tom Brannon admitted that it would be in CALTRANS best interest to address all of them this time around.

Will we be able to get a copy of the accident statistics? Tom will check with accident safety division and try to have data at Monday meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30

Todd Gettleman