

APPENDIX 3

Town Council Minutes of June 20, 2012

2. **Bay Trail Gap Study** – Presentation of report providing recommendations to extend Bay Trail from Blackie's Pasture to East Strawberry Drive (Director of Community Development Anderson/Planning Manager Watrous)

Planning Manager Watrous gave the report. He said that in 2011, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) awarded the Town an \$85,000 grant to conduct a study to close a gap in the Bay Trail. He said this study sought to evaluate and develop engineering concepts for Class 1, 2 or 3 facilities to enhance service of bicycle and pedestrian traffic along the Tiburon Boulevard/Greenwood Beach Road/Greenwood Cove Drive corridor from East Strawberry Drive to McKegney Green.

Mr. Watrous said that the study was simply that; a planning study of the Bay Trail gap closure. He said that the area of the plan outside of the town's jurisdiction would have a separate review by the Marin County Department of Public Works and possibly by the Strawberry Design Review Board.

Watrous said that since November 2011, the Parks, Open Space & Trails (POST) Commission had held three workshops on the study and received testimony from neighbors in Tiburon and Strawberry. He noted that the action before the Council this evening was to simply accept the study and in future, he said the Council would have the authority to approve plans and make improvements, if it chose to do so.

The Planning Manager said that the POST Commission made specific recommendations about preferred options for each segment of the study. Councilmember Collins asked if the Council would be bound by any of these options by acceptance of the study. Planning Manager Watrous said that the Council would not be bound and could, in fact, even develop new options. He said the study was of a snapshot in time; also, that the Council was not being asked to make any final decisions tonight.

Mayor Fraser asked if the Council wished to make a different recommendation, other than one contained in the study, could it do so. Mr. Watrous said that the Council could do so and could thereby put the recommendation into the record.

Mayor Fraser asked if staff knew of any future funding or grant opportunities to implement the study. Mr. Watrous said that funding would more likely be available for the more extensive options that created Class I bike trails; he said this funding could possibly come from Bay Trail grant funds. Watrous said that Class 2 or 3 trails were unlikely and less likely to qualify for that type of grant funding.

Councilmember Fredericks commented that because the study had received funding from ABAG to study the Bay Trail gap closure, would the options presented in the study be eligible for this same type of funding. Mr. Watrous said that they would, and noted that the findings (in the study) would help the Town qualify for funding. He also noted that staff had not identified any other funding sources at this juncture.

Mr. Watrous introduced David Parisi, Alta Planning & Design, who had been hired by the Town to assist in preparing the study. Mr. Parisi, a resident of Mill Valley, said it had been his pleasure to work with staff and the POST commission in developing the study. He said that he had taken into account the input from neighbors who had attended and testified at the three workshops. He said the process had resulted in the solutions described in the study.

Mr. Parisi said that the scope of the study was from Blackie's Pasture to East Strawberry Drive; he said that some of these areas had been designated parts of the Bay Trail by ABAG. He said the objective of the study was to find ways to connect these areas into a unified trail. Mr. Parisi also said he had been asked to look at Tiburon Boulevard as a potential alternative to Greenwood Beach Road, as well as the heavily used segment between Greenwood Beach Road and Strawberry Drive, even though it is outside of the Town's limits.

In his power point presentation, Mr. Parisi reviewed each of the eight segments and conceptual design options for each. The description of each segment and option is fully delineated in the study, as well as the written staff report prepared by staff for the Council meeting.

Before the start of the public hearing, Councilmember Collins noted that some of the slides shown by Mr. Parisi in his power point presentation were not in the written report; he said it would be very helpful to include them for the record. Planning Manager Watrous said they could be added to the final version of the study.

Mayor Fraser opened the item to public comment:

1. Gabriela Placak, resident, Greenwood Beach Road (“GBR”) – asked some questions about parking in Segment 4, and asked how bicyclists would make a left turn at the intersection of GBR and Tiburon Boulevard; Planning Manager Watrous replied that this is where Segment 5 improvements might come into play; that the bicyclists would have to ride on the same side of the street as the [Presbyterian] church and make an immediate left; Consultant Parisi added that the intersection had not originally been designed to accommodate bicyclists but noted that the light had a sensor to recognize bikes; he said they used the left-turn [vehicle] traffic lane at the intersection to execute their turns; he also said other that improvements might include adding a crosswalk at that intersection. Ms. Placak also commented on Segments 3 and 4, said that if no parking were allowed in Options C&D there would be a total loss of 107 parking spaces; said this would not be a detriment to the neighborhood given that the road was used for overflow parking for events at Blackie’s Pasture, and for events at Audubon Center. Parisi agreed that there would be a loss of parking; also noted that the road seemed to have excess parking now which is why it was utilized by overflow parkers.
2. Bob Placak, GBR, agreed with concerns expressed by his wife about loss of parking; added that people from [as far away as] Congregation Kol Shofar parked on GBR; said that summer camps at Audubon Center needed parking on a daily basis; agreed that street was used for overflow parking for events at Blackie’s Pasture; said residents needed parking, too, for guests and visitors; said this was a significant issue and represented the loss of a third or half of existing parking; also discussed origin of overnight parking ban which he said was to prevent people parking their boats and trailers on the street; said it adversely impacted residents, as well; suggested changing parking regulations to 24 or 36-hour parking on street; also commented on suggestion for addition of sidewalk on “wrong” side of street from view; said people would walk where they wanted to and would probably gravitate toward the view; said that [the consultant] using Memorial Day weekend for a count of bicycle traffic resulted in a count that was highly unusual; said that only a quarter or a fifth of that statistic (over 1,000 bicyclists) was the norm.
3. Jane Howard, GBR, speaking for partner Jake Steinman, who works in the travel industry, said bicycle rentals was one of the biggest trends in the travel industry over the last 10 years and was expected to increase; said that the location of the Bay Trail is published in guidebooks and travel magazines; Howard said, in her opinion, the tremendous amount of bikes on GBR was unsafe and that the proposed changes would

draw even more to the area; noted the difficulty of getting out of her driveway; said the street had the feel of a country lane; said she would prefer to have bikes diverted to Tiburon Boulevard where there was no cross traffic; said that due to her house siting [on their lot], she could only park on the north side of the street and asked that parking on that side not be removed.

4. Lee Hwang, GBR, said he had a petition signed by most of the residents on GBR opposing the proposed changes to the street; said the proposed options represented a halfway measure; cited issues of safety, parking, environmental impacts, cost and funding; said if the Council was considering changes to GBR, it should conduct a formal traffic study and a formal parking study; he asked the Council to carefully look at the options and to consider a Class I bike lane on Tiburon Boulevard which would be more consistent with the Bay Trail Study objectives; said the Council could close the gap with much less money using Tiburon Boulevard option which would qualify for grant funding and would represent more bang for the buck; concluded by stating, "let's do it once and do it right."
5. Bruce Abbott, GBR, read and submitted a letter into the record; in summary, agreed that the area was auxiliary parking for Blackie's Pasture and that it was often reduced to a one-lane road; said navigation was unpleasant and that the assumed tranquility was deceptive; spoke of numerous bicycle accidents at the end of the street, of having lent assistance to bleeding cyclists; said that he was baffled by the POST commission's recommendations which he said were unnecessary and would primarily benefit people from faraway places; said that the designation of the street as a bay trail was an unreasonable burden to the residents of GBR; said if the Council wanted to make improvements, it should do it properly by creating a bikeway on Tiburon Boulevard.
6. Harry Heath, GBR resident since 1959, said that the Chair of the POST commission was a bicyclist and therefore biased; said the vote was 4-1 to recommend Segment 3 (he said the dissenting commissioner voted for Segment 8); said one commissioner stated he could not read the drawings; asked the Council to consider the needs of the GBR residents over bicyclists and tourists.
7. Alisha Oloughlin, Marin County Bicycle Coalition, said the coalition endorsed the study and the creation of safe bikeway and pedestrian ways for all people, young and old, of all abilities, in the County; agreed that there were no safe facilities in the GBR area but stated that only a small percentage would use Tiburon Boulevard (Segment 8) because of the high-speed traffic which was not safe for children; suggested keeping both segments (3 and 8) and implementing improvements over time; said she appreciated the Town's consideration of the Bay Trail and County Route 10 improvements; asked that the study be accepted in its entirety.
8. Chris Petrine, GBR, distributed a number of photos of parking along GBR; said there was a blind curve by his house that was dangerous; said he echoed the other comments of his neighbors but disputed the comment that bicyclists would not use Tiburon Boulevard as an alternate route; claimed some did so now; said he did not mind the "out of town" bicyclists but that other bicyclists rode far too fast; said he would like to see a Segment 5 connection to Segment 8.

9. Phil Richardson, GBR, also agreed with the comments of his neighbors; thought the idea of using GBR [a dead end street] as a gateway to town was ludicrous; spoke against the loss of a third of the existing parking spaces; said the proposed options did not improve safety and would create a more narrow street; asked why one would build a path on the side of a street where no one walked and that the neighbors would get 1,000 feet of retaining wall; said that Segment 8 was expensive but would result in a Class I trail.
10. Sidsel Moeller, GBR, said we love our neighborhood but wondered when the road [GBR] had become part of the Bay Trail; said the designation had resulted in increased bicycle traffic; said she would favor the use of Tiburon Boulevard (Segment 8) more.
11. Sylvia Wilkerson, GBR, asked the Council to decline acceptance of the study; said that safety was foremost and that the 2008 Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan called for a connection where practical of the Bay Trail to Tiburon Boulevard; said that the neighbors were not "NIMBYS" but rather were concerned about hazardous conditions; said she hoped the Council would endorse Segments 5 and 8.
12. Mr. Wilkerson, GBR, described the lengths that he and his wife must employ to get into their carport which requires pulling far out into the street to make 90-degree turns, sometimes being cut off by other cars, etc.; said that narrowing the street would only make it worse, said it was not a safe street and that the neighbors were unified 100% against the proposals; said they had attended three workshops but no one was listening to their concerns; suggested the addition of a barrier, similar to the one on the Golden Gate Bridge, on Tiburon Boulevard to address the safety concerns raised by some of bicyclists using that [proposed] route.

Mayor Fraser closed the public hearing at 9:15 p.m. and asked for Council comments.

Councilmember Fredericks reiterated that acceptance of report meant accepting a planning study, not "approving" it. Planning Manager Watrous agreed; he elaborated that somewhere down the line, if matter came before the Council, it would be in the form of a project or projects, subject to CEQA review and public hearings.

Councilmember Collins agreed that the study was an informational document; that when the Town wanted to start work on closing the Bay Trail Gap, it would again take public testimony on the specifics of the project. Collins said that safety was [the Town's] No. 1 priority at all times; said there was no harm in accepting the study at this time and that the Council could agree or not agree on the various components. He likened accepting the study to a "free throw" and said it would be useful to have this information for future reference.

Vice Mayor O'Donnell agreed with Councilmember Collins and said that the study should be used by the Town as a tool going forward. But he said he wanted to note for the record the importance of the improvements to Segment 5. He said this segment was critical.

O'Donnell said that the Strawberry area was heavily used by Tiburon families, especially those in the nearby Bel Aire neighborhood. He said the area was also very important to Tiburon kids who used the fields there for baseball. He said his wife drove all the way down

Tiburon Boulevard [from their home on the other end of town] to ensure that their son, who is a student at Bel Aire School, can get safely from school to the Strawberry area for Little League. O'Donnell said that his wife drives this distance because Segment 5 is unsafe; that even though it [Tiburon Boulevard] is a 45-mph zone, cars go 55 or faster. O'Donnell said that this was an important connection for the residents of Tiburon and needed the most focus, and vast improvement. He said that a Class I bike lane with a pathway and bridge seemed to be the most important element in the study to close the [Bay Trail] gap and to address these safety issues. The Vice Mayor said he would also like to see a "Segment 9" that would continue up Tiburon Boulevard to the freeway (Highway 101).

With regard to Segment 3, Vice Mayor O'Donnell said that he did not really like any of the options presented in the report and agreed with the residents that losing parking [on GBR] was not beneficial to the neighborhood. He said that adding retaining walls did not seem to be an effective solution. O'Donnell said the path should go along the Bay side because it was, in fact, the Bay Trail, and should include the Audubon Center, an important component of the Bay Trail. He said he was not sure how to best improve safety in that area; he said perhaps the addition of some striping or some other element could be considered. O'Donnell also said he was concerned about building Segment 8 if it were, in fact, not utilized. He said this would be a waste of public funds and needed further study.

Councilmember Doyle said that the study was a great start; said that there might even be some other options not stated in the report. He agreed with Vice Mayor O'Donnell that Segment 5 was currently "very scary" and needed a solution; said he had seen pedestrians, with baby strollers even, walking along in that area, huddling along the [unpaved] shoulder of Tiburon Boulevard. Doyle said that the consultants did a great job gathering the information but that for the neighbors, losing parking was a valid concern. He also stated that there would be other opportunities to discuss the proposal in future.

Mayor Fraser agreed with his colleagues that the study was a great document and could be accepted by the Council. He said he, too, was concerned about the proposed changes to GBR which would impact the road significantly. He said he agreed with the representative from the Marin County Bicycle Coalition that bicycle traffic would increase over time; he said that the Town should be cognizant of this fact.

Mayor Fraser noted that he and Councilmember Doyle served on a task force formed to look into resolving traffic issues on Tiburon Boulevard. He said that one idea the committee was looking at to ameliorate traffic was to get people out of their cars and onto bicycles and other alternative forms of transportation. But he acknowledged that there were concerns about bicycle rider safety (on Tiburon Boulevard, Segment 8); he agreed with Vice Mayor O'Donnell on the importance of improving Segment 5 for safety.

Mayor Fraser said that he had also served on the Town's Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee and that this area (Segment 5) came up time and time again as a very dangerous area; he agreed that this might be the number one priority of any changes in the future. He

suggested adding the report to the body of knowledge that was being developed by the Town. He said that it was important to listen to the neighbors, and agreed with some of their concerns, having lived in Greenwood Cove 20 years ago.

Someone from the audience asked whether Segments 3 and 8 could be considered “neutral” and not accepted in the report.

Councilmember Fredericks commented that it was valuable to have these segments in the report because if a choice had to be made, it was important to have all the information. For instance, she said if Segment 8 was chosen to divert traffic off of GBR, the safety issues identified in Segment 3 would still exist; she said the planning document represented a snapshot of the conditions at that point in time and was useful in that context, as well.

A suggestion was made that the minutes of the Council meeting might be incorporated into the report. Planning Manager Watrous suggested that the adopted minutes be added as an appendix to the report. Council concurred with this recommendation.

MOTION: To accept the Bay Trail Gap Closure study and to attach minutes of the June 20, 2012 meeting as an appendix.
Moved: Fredericks, seconded by Doyle
Vote: AYES: Unanimous

TOWN COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Fredericks invited everyone to MCCMC on June 27 which she said would be a joint meeting with Community United, hosted by San Anselmo at Jason’s Restaurant. She said the speaker was Joanne Speers of the Institute for Local Government who would speak on the effective use of technology in meetings.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Town Manager Curran reported on upcoming ADA work at Town Hall over the weekend and said that for all practical purposes, Town Hall would be closed on Friday. Curran also noted that the July 4 meeting was being cancelled due to Independence Day holiday.

WEEKLY DIGESTS

- Town Council Weekly Digest – June 8, 2012
- Town Council Weekly Digest – June 15, 2012