

6th Street Viaduct Seismic Improvement Project Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting # 11

Meeting: with CAC Members

Meeting Date: 10/27/2011 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Location: Boyle Youth Technology Center
1600 East 4th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90033

Attendees:

Jennifer Martinez, Office of Councilmember Jose Huizar, CD 14
Shelly Backlar, Friends of the LA River
Joaquin Castellanos, Boyle Heights Resident
Tammy Ross, Boyle Heights Resident
Teresa Marquez, Boyle Heights Homeowner and Resident Association
Art Torres, Boyle Heights Historical Society
Vicky Torres, Boyle Heights Historical Society
Alma Karie, Interested Stakeholder
Kevin Break, Break Photography
Jeff Bugbee, Spilo World Wide
Stephen Knutson, Stover Seed
John McShane, Stover Seed

Project Development Team:

Uri Jimenez, City of Los Angeles
Bearj Sarkis, LADOT
Sam Wong, City of Los Angeles
John Koo, LABOE
Walter Quesada, Moffatt Nichol
Yoga Chandran, CH2M Hill
Jeff Bingham, Parsons
Victor Griego, DSO
Joanna Amador, DSO
Steve Thoman, IDC
Anne Kochaon, Parsons

Bearj Sarkis, LADOT(move below)

Steve Thoman, Dave Evans & Associates

Meeting Summary:

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting No. 11 was held on October 27, 2011 at the Boyle Heights Technology Center. Twelve CAC members and/or their representatives attended. The purpose of CAC #11 meeting was to provide an update on the progress of the 6th Street Viaduct Seismic Improvement project since the CAC #10 meeting in 2010 and to discuss the release of the final EIR/EIS document and its contents, including the preferred alternative, right-of-way impacts, and the mitigation program. The meeting also provided information related to the right-of-way acquisition process, formation of the aesthetic advisory committee, and the project schedule.

The meeting opened with a welcome and brief overview of the project by John Koo. John thanked the CAC members for their ongoing involvement and input on the 6th Street Viaduct project since 2007. John asked for self-introductions of those present at the meeting. After the round of introductions, the meeting proceeded with a PowerPoint presentation. John encouraged the CAC members to ask questions during the presentation. The following agenda topics were discussed:

- Final EIR/EIS Approval- Preferred Alternative and Mitigation
- Right of Way Acquisition Process
- Milestones to Certification process
- Architectural Enhancement & Design

John stated that the Final EIR/EIS was approved by Caltrans on October 5, 2011, and the Board of Public Works approved the recommendation for the City Council to certify the Final EIR/EIS on October 19, 2011. He commented that the Final EIR/EIS would go before the full city council in late November or early December for approval.

John then presented the information about the preferred alternative presented in the Final EIR/EIS; the traffic and right-of-way impacts, and key mitigation measures. John further asked Uri Jimenez, the Real Estate Division Manager of the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering to provide the information pertinent to the right-of-way acquisition process. Uri stated that the appraisal process would start around January 2012 and that each property owner would be able to participate in the appraisal to discuss distinct attributes/features that may not be evident to the appraiser. Uri also made available a City pamphlet on the right-of-way process to those present at the meeting.

John also presented the project schedule and informed the CAC members that an Aesthetics Advisory Committee will be formed so community members will have an opportunity to provide input on bridge aesthetic elements during the design phase.

The questions asked by the CAC members throughout the meeting are summarized below. At the end of the meeting, John asked each CAC members to speak out if they like any bridge type in particular. There were mixed responses, recommending both the steel-arch bridge type that looks similar to the existing bridge and the staff's preferred cable supported alternative. A number of the CAC members also said they want a bridge architectural style that is similar to the other LA River bridges.

Before concluding the meeting, John reminded the CAC members that the Cultural Heritage Commission hearing on the Final EIR/EIS for the 6th Street Viaduct project is scheduled for November 3, 2011 at City Hall in Room 1010 at 10:00 am.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Questions and Comments:

Questions, comments, and input raised by the CAC members and their representatives during the meeting are summarized below:

- A CAC member asked what the numbers shown on the traffic mitigation plan map represented. The project team clarified that they represent the intersections studied in the EIR/EIR.
- A CAC member asked about the boundaries of traffic study. The project team clarified that the traffic study was bounded by Central Avenue to the west, Soto to the East, 7th Street to the South, and 4th street to the north. Bearj Sarkis from LADOT stated that once the bridge is closed, the alternate routes are 4th Street and 7th Street. Motorists will be encouraged to use 7th Street Bridge rather than the already congested 4th Street Bridge.
- A CAC member stated that the bridge should not be widened because it would encourage people to speed up. Bearj Sarkis stated that the posted speed limit on the bridge is 35 mph and that will not be changed with the new design. He further added that the bridge alignment and cross section as in any roadway design are based on geometric features, such as vertical and horizontal alignments, line of sight, accidents and traffic volumes. Roadway designers do not base their designs on people who break the law such as speeding. He further added the bridge needs to be widened to meet current City/State standards. The motorists need to obey the posted speed which will not change from the current speed limit (35 mph). A CAC member commented that currently there is no signal at the intersection of 4th Street and I-5 southbound ramps. Bearj added that a new signal shall be installed at that intersection as well as at the intersection of 4th Street and 101 southbound ramps. In addition, the project will install a much needed new signal at the intersection of 5th Street and Central Avenue. Bearj also added that all these improvements including any signal modification such as adding left turn phasing at several key intersections will remain even after the bridge is completed.

- A CAC member commented that the bridge should not be replaced but merely retrofitted because the money could be used to improve the community in other ways such as patching potholes on the streets. Another CAC member stated that he wanted to leave the bridge alone in its current state. However, two others CAC members attending the meeting spoke in favor of building a new modern looking bridge.
- Shelly Backlar stated that the bridge replacement should be coordinated with the Los Angeles River Revitalization project.
- Stephen Knutson asked whether there was a relocation program that gave businesses incentives to stay in Los Angeles. Jennifer Martinez indicated that she would share this concern with Councilmember Jose Huizar's office.
- A question was asked about the length of time for the appraisal process. Uri said it could take about 60 days to prepare the appraisal report and a few days to provide an offer to the affected property owner.
- A question was asked about how long it would take to demolish the bridge. John said 9 to 12 months, but this would depend on demolition being a separate contract.
- A question was asked about restriction of weight limits on bridge traffic. Bearj explained that the viaduct would be designed to accommodate legal weight limits.
- A CAC member asked if the bridge is located on a fault line. The project team stated that the closest ones are the Puente Hills and the Whittier Narrows fault lines.
- A CAC member commented that outreach should be done for the CHC hearings and that the Council District should assist in disseminating that message.

CAC Members:

- Estela Lopez, Central City East Associate
- Shannon Buhmaster, Downtown Neighborhood Council
- Michele Arce, Boyle Heights Chamber of Commerce
- Arturo Torres, Boyle Heights Historical Society
- Victoria Torres, Boyle Heights Historical Society
- Rosalie Gurrola, Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council
- Elizabeth Blaney, Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council
- Arturo Herrera, Boyle Heights Neighborhood Association
- Tony Dominguez, Arte Calidad & Festival de la Gente
- Marcello Vavala, Los Angeles Conservancy
- Shelly Backlar, Friends of the LA River
- Ken Bernstein, Department of City Planning
- Edgar Garcia, Department of City Planning
- Teresa Marquez, Boyle Heights Resident, Homeowner Association
- Paul Habib, CD 14
- Jack Richter, Police Department Lead Officer, Arts District
- Carol Armstrong, Los Angeles River Revitalization Office
- Michelle Mowery, LADOT Bikeway Section

- Kevin Break, Break Photography, Business Owner
- Frank Gallo, Ranch Cold Storage, Business Owner
- Peter Khan, III, Cal Fiber, Business Owner
- David Knutson, Stover Seed, Business Owner
- Geoffrey Smith, Film LA, Business Owner
- Marc Spilo, Spilo World Wide, Business Owner
- Magnus Walker, Serious Clothing, Business Owner