

January 9, 1969

The Special Meeting of the San Anselmo Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman John F. West, at 8:00 p.m. on January 9, 1969 in the City Hall. Representing City Staff: Charles R. Leitzell, City Engineer.

1. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Heinecke, Moore, Perry, Tusler, West  
Commissioners Absent: Creighton and Gue

Chairman West explained this Public Hearing regarding the proposed widening of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard was being held at the direction of the City Council. He then asked the City Engineer to explain the proposals.

Mr. Leitzell said Whitlow, Hoffman, Albritton's alternate #1 proposed a minimum right of way take of 4 feet on each side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard from the Hub to Butterfield Road; in certain areas the acquisition would, of necessity, be on one side. This proposal will yield two 11 foot center lanes and two 13 foot side or gutter lanes with 3 foot planter strips and 5 foot sidewalks, for a total of 64 feet. In some areas of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard an overlay would be needed; some areas would require repair and reconstruction. Other areas would require removal of existing curb and gutter and providing new curb and gutter and drainage facilities.

The second alternate would be to acquire property along one side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard; move homes back or to a new location and salvage of lots, creating wide lots rather than deep lots, to obtain 100 feet of right of way. This would include provision for left turn lanes. If no left turn lanes were provided, then only 88 feet of right of way would be necessary. Mr. Leitzell said if this property were taken from the north side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, roughly the property acquisition would cost \$2,037,000. These figures were taken from the Assessor's Tax Role and may be as much as 10% low. He felt approximately \$375,000 could be salvaged as buildable lots. He said Urban Extension funds are available for right of way construction, but not for right of way acquisition. Every possible source of funding has been investigated, and Mr. Leitzell said this alternate appears not to be within the financial capabilities of San Anselmo.

Mr. B. J. Wood of 47 Yolanda Drive asked to have the second alternate explained as he came in late. He asked if there was a consideration of Yolanda Court on the Agenda. Mr. Wood said he was disturbed because he did not see a notice in the newspaper.

Mr. Leitzell said this meeting was advertised in the Independent Journal as a Public Hearing to consider the proposed widening of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard.

Mr. Franceschi of Yolanda Court asked the boundaries of the proposed widening, and was told the proposal was from the Hub to Butterfield Road on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard.

Mr. Miriam Grove, 40 Yolanda Drive said she did not feel the Commission should make a decision at this meeting since Commissioner Gue was absent and he has a personal interest. Mrs. Grove also said the south side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard could be used for widening purposes without moving any houses. She said her mother, who owns property on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, would be happy to dedicate to the City 15 feet of her property on the south side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard for right of way purposes.

Mr. David Bacigalupi, 56 Alder Avenue, thought it might be a good idea to have the Commission discussion first and then audience participation, since perhaps many of the audience questions would be answered before being asked. He also stated that he thought this whole matter had been settled when the meetings were held at Wade Thomas School.

Mayor Ragan, in the audience, stated that although Public Hearings had been held at Wade Thomas School, there had been no decision made. Mayor Ragan said that if interested civic groups wished to receive agendas of city meetings, if the name of the Secretary of the Group were given to the City Clerk and Planning Commission Clerk, Agendas would be mailed.

Mrs. Marjorie McDonald, 34 Florence Avenue said she had attended all of the meetings and had thought the matter settled. She said she was still 100% against any widening project. She said she will fight against any widening until her dying day.

Mrs. Wagner of Fern Lane said since there was a question of financial feasibility she did not understand why there was discussion about anything other than the proposed widening of 2 feet on either side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard.

Mr. Cecil Norton, 1437 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, said he felt to have Sir Francis Drake Boulevard a four lane roadway with no parking would be extremely hazardous for property owners on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard who find it necessary to back onto Sir Francis Drake Boulevard.

Mrs. Marjorie Hadley, 1405 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard said she felt the first alternative would not solve the problem of a route to the coast, that it was only a stop-gap measure and would create a genuinely bad parking situation, as well as ingress and egress for property owners on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard.

Mr. David Greenlee, III of Hillcrest Court said he uses Sir Francis Drake every day and would appreciate anything that could be done to improve the traffic situation.

Mrs. Sarah Nome, 77 Alder Avenue asked how many minutes could be saved on an average trip from Butterfield Road to the Hub. Mrs. Nome said she was not speaking as Secretary for the San Anselmo Homes Association, and it was the consensus of the Traffic Committee that no action should be taken at the present time until the County decides on a route to West Marin.

Mr. George Davison of 34 Foss Avenue said he had helped work out the first alternate plan. He said presently there is an 800 vehicle per hour per lane capacity. In the near future he felt the saturation point would be reached and there would be blockages, etc. He said alternate 1 would relieve the situation somewhat in that it would provide 2 lanes in each direction, less bus stops. He felt it would handle the situation for 3 or 4 years at the best. Mr. Davison said the relief was needed right now and the funds were available for the narrower widening, and this money would not be lost inasmuch as the lanes will still be there.

Mrs. Alice Stinchcomb, 50 Alder Avenue said she felt the City should consider the kind of place we are living in. She would like the Commission to think in terms of trying to slow the traffic down, retain the natural atmosphere of the community.

Mr. Franceschi said he felt it better to do any improvement all at once piecemeal.

Mrs. Grove asked if rapid transit had been considered. She felt Butterfield Road and Sleepy Hollow should be widened.

Mr. Majesky asked if anyone knew of a decision on Highway 17 as yet. He was told no decision was reached, but the Engineers had estimated that when a decision was made, it would take at least 10 years before the highway would be constructed.

Mrs. Hadley said it was too bad that there might eventually be no parking for the homes on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard--calm, serious thought should be given to the widening so it could be accomplished graciously. She felt it strange that only 3 residents of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard were present.

Mrs. McDonald asked if the City improved Center Boulevard if the State would then preempt it.

Mr. Leitzell said the State Highway people do not consider Center Boulevard or Sir Francis Drake Boulevard suitable for freeway purposes. He said further that problems exist: Presently there is a section of approximately 1 mile that has a peak capacity of 800 vehicles per hour. Last year there were 91 property damage accidents on this section, 22 injury accidents and 1 fatality. He said while San Anselmo has no obligation to provide for West Marin, until the State does something, Sir Francis Drake Boulevard is the only access to West Marin and people must continue to use it.

Commissioner Heinecke asked if with the minimum improvement there would be no parking 24 hours a day; he wondered if, during midday and mid-week and winter weekends, this would be necessary.

Mr. Leitzell said restricting parking only at certain times of the day is confusing to people and hazardous, and even at midday the present 2 lanes are used to capacity.

Mr. Heinecke then asked about reversible lanes.

Mr. Leitzell pointed out that besides being confusing to people, maintenance costs would be extremely high inasmuch as it would take considerable manpower to move the needed physical barriers each time during the day that the lanes were reversed.

Commissioner Moore said he felt the City might be trading one evil for another. He said the widening might invite deterioration of the property adjacent to the widening. He said to materially improve streets means stimulating traffic from other areas. He said within San Anselmo, getting through San Anselmo is not that difficult.

Commissioner Perry said he was not in favor of any development which would make San Anselmo a route to anywhere; however, we must recognize that we do have a traffic problem. He said he strongly felt a more logical approach would be to straighten out the inter-sections at the Hub and Bridge Street, and he felt this would relieve traffic without any widening.

Commissioner Tusler said the Commission did have a responsibility to give a recommendation to the City Council on the proposal. He thought Mrs. Stinchcomb made an extremely good point of why people live in San Anselmo, and whether or not the proposal would enhance the environment. He said a traffic study was under way presently by the County, and he would be reluctant to commit the City until this study was complete. He said he felt widening of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard would result in numerous requests for increased density, and this would not be desirable.

Commissioner West said some consideration should be given to what is considered a service area; provision should be made for local circulation within this area. Highway widening tends to generate traffic to use the improvement to its full capacity. The traffic circulation problem should be looked at as a balanced transportation problem. He felt the City should continue to support and press for balanced transportation. Mr. West said further the impact on the neighborhood should be considered--destroying frontyards and plantings. Undergrounding of utilities should be considered, and lastly, he felt the issue of 10 lanes of traffic through San Anselmo should be settled for once and for all.

Mr. Leitzell said his major function as City Engineer was to present facts to the Commission and to the Council; however, as a private citizen, he felt while the minimum section would provide for an increase in capacity, it is not an ultimate solution. If some form of rapid transit is developed, then perhaps 6 lanes would be adequate. He said there is going to have to be a by-pass built, and someone other than the City of San Anselmo is going to have to construct it. There is no money available at the present time for

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other alternates. He agreed that widening will tend to generate more traffic and tend to increase pressures for strip commercial or multiple zoning. He said while strip commercial zoning is not considered good planning, he was not so sure that strip multiple zoning would be poor planning. He said another alternate would be to widen Center Boulevard where the City already has a large portion of the right of way for 4 lanes. Provision for noise mitigation could be made with earth berms and planting.

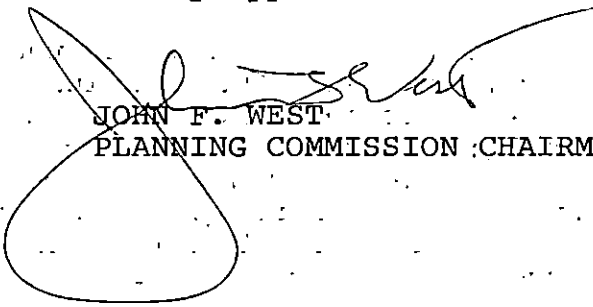
Commissioner Heinecke asked if it would be beneficial to improve the Hub and the "Little Hub" at Bridge Street.

Mr. Leitzell said he felt it would be, and would ease the traffic situation some, but not as much as the widening.

Commissioner Tusler said he believed all were agreed that whatever is done will have a long-range effect on the community. The impact of the development proposed for 4 moving lanes is not satisfactory in terms of overall welfare of the community. It was clear that there was not sufficient information in terms of impact on community, alternatives and firm cost figures to make a valid decision at the present time. He suggested a one-year moratorium. He felt an additional year would allow completion of the revised City Master Plan, release of the County Planning Transportation Study and study of the above available options on city environment.

Chairman West said he would prepare a presentation for the City Council; he asked if the Commission agreed that the Council should review a consideration of 10 lanes in the corridor. All of the Commission agreed 10 lanes through San Anselmo would not be acceptable.

At 12:25 a.m. Commissioner Perry moved, seconded by Commissioner Moore, that the meeting be adjourned; unanimously approved.

  
JOHN F. WEST  
PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIRMAN