

TOWN OF CORTE MADERA
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION
OCTOBER 17, 2011
CORTE MADERA TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
DRAFT MINUTES

Commissioners Chair Barbara Becker
Present: Robert Czeck (arrived 7:10 p.m.)
 Ted Meyer
 Thomas Young

Staff Present: Dan Ring, Engineer

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Becker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Election of Commission Officers

M/s, Czeck/Young to elect Commissioner Becker as Chair.
Ayes: All

M/s, Czeck/Young to elect Commissioner Meyer as Vice Chair
Ayes: All

3. Open Forum for Non Agenda Items

Chair Becker noted there was an article in the local newspaper, Our Town, about the Commission. She suggested sending a letter to the editor regarding the importance of the work that the Commission is currently undertaking. Commissioner Young stated they could send a letter requesting some space on the editorial page. Chair Becker stated they should discuss this at the next meeting. She noted this would be a wonderful opportunity to educate the community. Engineer Ring stated the Commission might want to consider requesting a Council liaison.

Chair Becker stated she attended the Corte Madera Candidate's Night and one of the key topics was the recent Grand Jury Report. One question revolved around how litigation would eat into the reserves. She was concerned about the lack of knowledge about what the Commission is doing in terms of the Barrier Removal Implementation Plan (BRIP). Engineer Ring stated at some point the information will be transmitted to the Town Council and they will get better educated about the BRIP.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes of August 15, 2011, 2011

M/s, Meyers/Young, to approve the meeting minutes of August 15, 2011 as corrected.
Ayes: All Absent: Czeck

5. Old Business

- a. Tamalpais/Redwood/Corte Madera Ave. Overlay Project update

Engineer Ring presented a brief staff report. The project is complete but there is still a little bit of retention money for small items. There could be a few minor clean-up "repairs". The additional work that happened near the school and the Recreation Center was added on to the contract in order to keep the same contractor and not have to go back out to bid. The scope of the project expanded slightly. The one thing that is not resolved is the handicapped ramp near the Corte Madera Café. It is a difficult spot due to the cross-slope and the number of businesses. Coastland Civil Engineering has come up with a location but staff is

reluctant to go with it. It was originally scheduled to go right in front of the Corte Madera Café. He noted his issue might end up on the Exhibit "A" list. The project went well although there were some cost overruns mainly due to additional work that was identified.

b. Consent Decree- Exhibit A: report on work to date

Engineer Ring presented a staff report. He stated that the items that have been completed are highlighted in yellow. He pointed to a Powerpoint slide that highlighted the items that have been done along with photographs of the items. He noted there were locations where handicapped ramps were removed because staff could not find a way to make them comply. In some cases, another ramp was installed. Commissioner Meyer stated when they first started talking about barriers and improvements they decided that they did not necessarily need to take away a curb ramp when a barrier exists but is optional. Engineer Ring agreed and stated they decided to remove this one because there was an alternative way to get people across. Commissioner Meyer asked Coastland Engineering if, in a situation like this one, the Town would need to put in a sign indicating the other ramp should be used. Engineer Ring stated this decision was made by the Town and the Town Attorney as opposed to Coastland Engineering. Chair Becker noted removals were allowed. Engineer Ring agreed and stated it was an outcome of the process. Commissioner Czeck asked if there was any liability in leaving it in. Engineer Ring stated "maybe" but it was such a gray area that the "powers that be" decided to get rid of them. He pointed out an area where a driveway, sidewalk, and retaining wall were affected by building a new ramp. He noted that often times an improvement entails a lot of unintended work (tearing up concrete, etc.). He pointed out the following improvements: 1) a new ramp and stairway across the street from Serra Avenue; 2) a new ramp near Montecito Avenue; 3) the driveway to the Public Works Department office; 4) the ramp near the Public Works Department office; 5) a ramp near Town Hall; 6) a ramp near the Fire Station that had a complicated design in order to make the grades work; 6) a ramp at the corner of the Recreation Center which required the purchase of a new streetlight pole and pole for the traffic signal; 7) a new sidewalk in front of the Recreation Center; 8) a new driveway and sidewalk near the park; 9) new stairs and retaining wall at the back of the Recreation Center. He stated that was the end of the original scope of the project. Chair Becker asked if they had to remove any catch basins. Engineer Ring stated "yes" at numerous intersections because they went to a flat slope at the bottom of the ramp. They moved the catch basins "ahead" of the ramp so the water would not flood the ramps. Engineer Ring stated they then started adding on other Exhibit "A" item using the same contractor and designs by Coastland Engineering. He pointed out the following items: 1) the ramp at Eastman and Tamalpais (across from the Recreation Center); 2) a ramp across the street from the Recreation Center that included a "bulb-out" for the traffic signal pole; 3) several ramps by Neal Cummins School; 4) a ramp Monona at Madera that was done a while back; 5) gutter bridges at Monona and Mohawk; 6) a couple of ramps near the High Canal pathway and Hickory. Engineer Ring stated each one of the "dots" that represents an improvement is unique and has its own problems. The costs are on a case-by-case basis. Chair Becker stated the improvements in the hilly areas tend to be more expensive. Engineer Ring agreed but stated some on the flatlands could be expensive too. He noted the total cost of the improvements presented so far has been about \$750,000. He would eventually break down the BRIP vs. pavement items. Chair Becker asked for those figures before the next meeting.

Ms. Heidi Utterback, representing Coastland Civil Engineering, distributed some documentation regarding the remaining items. She noted they were shaded in gray. Engineer Ring referred to item #10 and stated it might be completed. Ms. Utterback referred to the item regarding "Gazebo seating" and noted it appears there it is in compliance. Chair Becker agreed. She asked if the step down into the gazebo was fixed. Engineer Ring stated the back of the gazebo was wheelchair accessible. Chair Becker stated they should indicate that staff does not see any problems. Engineer Ring stated this could be included in the report that the Town sends to the plaintiff. Chair Becker stated this should be in a separate area and not buried in with the other items.

Chair Becker asked for the slide showing the proposed location for the ramp near the Corte Madera Café. Engineer Ring pointed out the original location for the ramp and the parking space. The owners of the café were concerned about the loss of two parking spaces in front of the business. In addition, the benches would have been removed. Chair Becker pointed to an area that could be used for placard parking that

would be easily accessible to the ramp. Engineer Ring discussed the problems with this idea. Chair Becker asked if they were trying to install two placard parking spaces. Engineer Ring stated “no, just one”. He pointed to an alternate location and discussed the depth and length needed for loading in a passenger zone. They are thinking about making the spaces eight and one-half feet wide and rearranging the parking. He stated it is a very tricky spot. Chair Becker asked if placard parking had to be van accessible. Engineer Ring stated “yes”. Chair Becker suggested the area in front of the Corte Madera Café be turned into a one-hour parking zone. Commissioner Meyer stated there was a large parking lot across from the bus stop and he asked if there were any restrictions. Chair Becker stated it was a “park and ride”. Engineer Ring stated the lot on the north side is never full. Commissioner Meyer stated if a space is lost to handicapped parking then people could park one block away. He asked if they could install perpendicular parking into the stalls in front of the Corte Madera Café and reduce the width. Engineer Ring stated staff thought about that and there might be room because the lane line is out beyond the edge of the parking. They would gain some room and the ramp on either end would work. Chair Becker stated she was not in favor of that idea since that would put cars very close together. Engineer Ring stated it was more difficult to back out of a 90-degree parking space.

Chair Becker asked if they needed to submit a report to the plaintiff every six months. Engineer Ring stated it was once a year. He stated they were in good shape.

- c. BRIP (Barrier Removal Implementation Plan): progress report, discussion of path of travel routes

Engineer Ring presented a staff report. He referred to the map and stated the idea was to begin to prioritize the items for Coastland Engineering. Chair Becker stated they should have some general priorities such as looking at the flatlands before the hills, looking at the Madera Gardens down to Casa Madera, and looking at all the flatlands on the east side of Town (Bayside, the EAH site, Paradise Drive, San Clemente Drive, the flat areas behind the shopping center, etc.). They should put aside San Clemente Park and San Clemente School until the next meeting to see how the vote on the School Bond goes. Anything on the hillsides should be lower on the priority list. They should also identify major and non-major ending locations. This would include Town Park, Neal Cummins School, and Town Hall. The shopping center on Tamal Vista (Book Passages, etc.) was less important compared to the others just mentioned from a usage standpoint. On the east side they also have the Simon Ranch, the area behind Granada School, and Linear Park. From within the flatland area there could be two major classifications of major priorities. This would be based on usage. She stated they should try to finish the Paradise Drive area near the Ecumenical Association for Housing (EAH) Project so that residents have an adequate path of travel to the shopping centers. She referred to the new Mini Cooper Auto Dealership and stated they should also try to get as many of the driveways in that area completed as possible. Engineer Ring stated that would be a project unto itself and there might be some leftover funds from the Bayside Trail Grant. Chair Becker asked if the business owner would need to pay half. Engineer Ring stated the Town would probably just go in and get it done.

Engineer Ring stated they should talk about prioritizing the main routes- Tamalpais, Tamal Vista, Madera, etc. Chair Becker stated the map could be color coded with the following colors- orange, green, blue, and yellow. Commissioner Meyer asked that another color be used to designate the CalTrans right-of-way areas. Chair Becker mentioned that a former Commissioner has a problem navigating Lakeside Avenue. This individual would like the major path of travel to be Mohawk from Lakeside (on the north) down to Madera Boulevard to the south end of the shopping center. He also wants Monona to be a major path of travel. Commissioner Meyer stated he would consider this to be a major collector but not an arterial roadway. Engineer Ring stated there was a school in that area and it was near other pathways. Chair Becker stated she saw the rest of Lakeside and Birch as secondary to what would be primary in that area. Engineer Ring pointed out the Sandra Marker Trail and noted that Larkspur recently built an ADA accessible connection in that neighborhood. Commissioner Czeck suggested they identify all the paths first and then prioritize them. Commissioner Meyer stated this information should be coordinated with the Public Works Department’s Pavement Management Plan. Commissioner Czeck suggested that they also identify the key destinations and the paths of travel to certain areas of heavy use. Commissioner Meyer stated they also need to look at the bus stop locations.

Chair Becker stated the important paths of travel would be: Tamalpais, Mohawk, Tamal Vista, Mohawk, Lakeside, and Monona. Engineer Ring stated they should eventually assign priority numbers to each item. Chair Becker stated she would like to start with the Mohawk/Monona area.

Mr. Mark Oberfell, representing Coastland Civil Engineering, stated even though they create a program of fixing all the Town responsible items, the majority of which are curb cuts, they could still be more accessibility issues. Engineer Ring stated just because they are highlighting a route does not mean it would be 100% taken care of. The BRIP could result in some type of sidewalk program instigated by the Town. Chair Becker stated they need direction from the Town in terms of “making the ends compliant” but what is between the ends is not compliant since it is not the Town’s responsibility. She noted that sidewalks and driveways are the responsibility of homeowners.

Commissioner Czeck asked what part of Town would be considered the “flatlands”. Chair Becker stated it included Pixley, bound by Tamalpais Drive on the south, going up to the Sandra Marker Trail, and the area behind the small shopping center on Paradise Drive. She noted the priority should be installing curb cuts that would be used more frequently. Commissioner Meyer mentioned they should consider the areas with trailheads.

Commissioner Meyer summarized the discussion regarding priorities: 1) major arterials- Tamalpais, Tamal Vista, Paradise Drive; 2) areas within some of the major arterials or areas right off of the major arterials that they know are points of interest and could be grouped together; 3) an adjacent improvement that does not necessarily meet the intent of the code; 4) everything in the neighborhood areas that was not identified as a #2 or #3 priority that would be taken care of by the Pavement Management Plan. Commissioner Meyer asked if that would include curb cuts in that area prior to doing anything on Mohawk or Monona. Commissioner Meyer stated any item singled out, within a big enough cluster, would be a #2 or #3 priority. Chair Becker stated there was publicity value in some of the items that could boost the rest of the work. Commissioner Meyer stated some items would take a backseat to the major public thoroughfares where there are bus stops, etc. The collector streets should remain as #2 or #3 priorities. Chair Becker stated she would like to prioritize the Mohawk/Monona area which includes only four corners. Engineer Ring stated some of the items along a main arterial could be their own separate project funded by another funding source. Engineer Ring noted \$60,000 would only pay for two “real” ramps and four modified ramps. He stated they should think about getting the most “bang for the buck” for the majority of the population. Chair Becker stated the publicity gained from the work done in the Mohawk/Monona area was important since they will eventually need to go out for a bond measure. It would also show the Department of Justice that the Town is serious in making improvement. Commissioner Young stated providing access along the main thoroughfares would give them the most “bang for the buck”. Commissioner Meyer stated perhaps they could get funding from the Safe Routes to Schools organization. Chair Becker stated they should make it clear that they are looking at the paths of travel that could coordinate with the Safe Routes to Schools program. Engineer Ring noted that the Safe Routes to Schools program has nothing to do with accessibility. Chair Becker stated they were looking at usage. Engineer Ring recommended that they look at the main paths of travel whether they are the arterials or within the neighborhoods. Commissioner Meyer stated that anything they “put into the ground” could be used for publicity. Commissioner Czeck stated they should prioritize the areas that have “traffic” and he asked whether or not some areas did not have a lot of traffic because of a barrier. He asked how the paving projects were prioritized. Engineer Ring stated they evaluated the pavement and assigned a number according to the condition, potential failure rate, etc. They then create a color-coded map and decide on whether to pave, do a slurry seal, overlay, etc. Chair Becker asked if staff has a list of paving projects for Fiscal Year 2011-2012. Engineer Ring stated the Town received a grant to update the Pavement Management Plan and it would be completed in April. The current plan was done in 2008. Chair Becker asked if there were any projects planned between now and April 2012. Engineer Ring stated “no”. The source of funding for paving projects is Gas Tax Revenue, half of which now goes to ADA projects. The Town does collect Street Impact Fees but this revenue is geared more towards emergency repairs. The Town also gets about \$75,000 from Measure A that can be used on streets and paving project. It all adds up to about \$150,000 to \$200,000 per year for street work.

Chair Becker asked Mr. Obergfell and Ms. Utterback for feedback. Mr. Obergfell stated it was important to focus on the big picture but all the items on the map need to be fixed. They should begin by focusing on several large, general areas. Engineer Ring agreed. Chair Becker stated she would be in favor of the prioritizing the Mohawk/Monona area and Paradise Drive because that area would have good publicity value. Engineer Ring stated they would have \$60,000 to spend next year and he asked the Commission where it should be spent (one intersection-four ramps). Chair Becker stated the ramps should be put in at either end of Mohawk where it intersects with Lakeside. Engineer Ring noted there were no improvements at that location and Chair Becker's suggestion makes a lot of sense. Commissioner Meyer stated they should focus on the most frequently used paths of travel. Chair Becker stated one of the problems she has with Madera Boulevard is that there is no sidewalk on the street side (by the Town Center) and not a lot of people use this pathway. Commissioner Czeck pointed out that the intersection of Madera Boulevard and Tamalpais Drive was a high volume location. He would like to prioritize the main thoroughfares.

Engineer Ring stated he could bring the 2008 Pavement Management Plan Map to the next meeting. This could help to identify the high priority streets and help better define the task. He would discuss the map with Coastland Engineering prior to the meeting.

Commissioner Young stated he ran into an issue the other day regarding trying to get a wheelchair around a fire hydrant. Mr. Obergfell stated this could also be an issue with power poles which are extremely expensive to move.

Mr. Obergfell stated the Certified Access Specialist has been in the process of reviewing all the items listed in the 2002 survey delineated as priority #4 items (possibly infeasible due to technical hardship). He passed out some documents. The specialist also reviewed any items that were flagged as longitudinal slope sidewalk issues and the stairs/steps on Christmas Tree Hill. The first two pages of the document is an Executive Summary of the key issues. The other document pertains to proposed right-of-way guidelines. He noted that many of the sidewalks were flagged as non-compliant because the sidewalk had a greater than 5% slope. He noted many of these issues can "just go away". Chair Becker stated the sidewalks on the flatlands should be addressed. Mr. Obergfell stated the sidewalk should be fixed if the cross-slope is greater than 2%.

d. Bus stop at Town Hall: report on alternative provisions

Engineer Ring presented a staff report. He asked the Commission if they wanted to hold off on this improvement or possibly get a hardship exemption for not providing the larger loading/unloading areas. The City Manager and Public Works Director feel that they spent a lot of money on crosswalks and ramps and perhaps they should see how those work and add the bus stop as a BRIP item. Chair Becker stated the consultant originally came back with seven alternatives and the Commission did not like any of them since they were too expensive and would not work. The plaintiff ultimately made this item a major portion of his claim. The Town Council accepted the plan and then decided not to do it. She reiterated that it would not be used and should not be installed. Engineer Ring stated it could be included in the BRIP appendix. Chair Becker stated they have satisfied the plaintiff's demand for a path of travel from Menke Park to Town Hall. She would like to put the bus stop issue to bed. Engineer Ring agreed.

e. ADA parking space at Town Hall; report on compliance issues

Engineer Ring presented a staff report. He asked the Commission if they had time to look at the space along the side of Town Hall. It was designed as an ADA space but was quickly removed from circulation due to a design flaw that may or may not be fixable. Mr. Obergfell stated he looked at the space and felt it was a perfect spot for someone in a wheelchair with a rear-loading vehicle. However, it does not meet the ADA requirement as a van accessible space. Engineer Ring wondered if it should be returned as an ADA spot. Chair Becker stated there were two van accessible spots in the lower parking lot. Engineer Ring stated he would speak to former Planning Director Pendoley about the history of this particular space.

f. Code Enforcement: various sites

Engineer Ring presented a staff report. He stated staff sent out three notices regarding some vegetation in the public right-of-way. He noted there was no mechanism that allowed the Town to trim vegetation on private property. There is also no mechanism to fine the property owner. Chair Becker asked Engineer Ring to ask the Town Attorney how they can go about enforcing the code. Engineer Ring noted the Public Works Department has no enforcement powers. Chair Becker stated the vegetation is scratching cars and getting in the way of the street sweeping. Engineer Ring stated some homeowners associations would take care of the matter.

6. New Business

a. Member Recruitment

Chair Becker stated they need to continue to pursue membership recruitment and suggested they advertise on Patch and in the Twin Cities Times.

b. San Clemente driveway modifications: report on proposed work

Engineer Ring presented a staff report. He distributed some photographs of San Clemente Drive and noted the red dots depicted driveways that have not been taken care of. He pointed to two driveways that would be fixed by the Marin Mini Dealership. He pointed to a driveway/curb cut that does not lead to anything and could be removed. He pointed to the driveway down by the former Harley Davidson Motorcycle Dealership and explained how it could be fixed. Chair Becker asked who owned the property. Engineer Ring stated he was not sure. Chair Becker asked if the change in tenancy and a new occupancy permit would trigger the repairs. Engineer Ring stated he would find out. He pointed to the property at 45 San Clemente Drive and noted the repair would be a bit more difficult. Staff sent letters to property owners several years ago and the only response received was from the CHP. Chair Becker asked if these were a part of the BRIP. Mr. Obergfell stated some were in Exhibit "B". Engineer Ring stated there were some funds left over relative to the EAH project (Transportation for Livable Communities Grant) that could be used for these improvements. They have about \$100,000 left. Commissioner Czeck asked when the driveways were originally installed. Engineer Ring stated probably in the 1970's. Chair Becker asked staff to send letters informing the property owners that since the driveways were not being used the Town would be leveling the sidewalks and putting in curbs. Engineer Ring stated they could repair some sidewalks that are out of compliance if there is any extra money. Commissioner Meyer stated there was a drop-off on the outer edge of the sidewalk at the Home Consignment Center. He stated there should be a curb in that area. Engineer Ring stated he would send Mr. Obergfell a photograph of that area.

7. Commissioner Reports

There were no reports.

8. Future Agenda Items

Chair Becker stated the following items would be on the next agenda: 1) 2008 Pavement Management Plan Update; 2) BRIP progress report.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.