

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

September 4, 2009

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE, held Friday, September 4, 2009 at the Merced County Association of Governments conference room, 369 W. 18th Street, Merced, California, was called to order by Chair Tom Grave at 8:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tom Crawley, Finance (arrived at 8:45am)
Kyle Ford, Citizen-at-Large
Mary Ford-Azevedo, Small Business
Tom Grave, Education
Aaron Hill for Scott Neal, Goods Movement
Richard Jantz, Economic Development
Melissa Kelly-Ortega, Citizen at Large
John Price, Citizen-at-Large
Ron Price for Hicham Eltal, Merced Irrigation District
Diana Westmoreland Pedrozo, Agriculture
Dean Wilson, Citizen-at-Large

MEMBERS ABSENT

Dennis Coté, Engineering
Adam Cox, Student
Dan Hultgren, Real Estate
Vacant, Construction
Vacant, Citizen-at-Large

OTHERS PRESENT

Matt Fell, MCAG
Lori Flanders, MCAG
Rod Ghearing, Merced County Transit
Rich Green, MCAG
Marjie Kirn, MCAG

1. Introductions

Marjie Kirn introduced Rod Ghearing as the new Merced County Transit Manager.

2. Oral Communications

Melissa Kelly-Ortega gave the following announcements:

- Census Bureau is looking for 2010 Census volunteers (1-2 hours per week). There is a meeting for volunteers on September 15, 2009, at the City of Merced Sam Pipes Room from 9-3 p.m.
- The Bicycle Advisory Commission will be conducting a count of bike racks sometime between now and October 27, 2009 and a bicyclists count on September 10, 2009 from 5-7pm and September 12, 2009 from 12-2pm.

- Richard Jantz provided the group a flier advertising the upcoming San Joaquin Valley Photographers' Gallery taking place September 14 – October 9, 2009 with a reception on September 17, 2009 from 6-9 p.m.

Dean Wilson commented that he is terming out as a member of the CAC in November 2009, and that the committee will need to recommended appointment of a replacement for the Air District Citizen Advisory Committee.

3 Minutes of the August 7, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

Richard Jantz commented that the Photo Gallery Contest for the Central Valley will begin September 14, 2009, not September 4, 2009 as stated in the August minutes.

Dean Wilson made a motion to approve the minutes amended of the August 7, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee meeting.

Seconded by Richard Jantz.

Mary Ford-Azevedo and Diana Westmoreland-Pedrozo abstained due to their absence from the August meeting.

MOTION CARRIED.

4. County-Wide Population Forecast Options

Matt Fell explained that staff is reviewing and updating regional growth forecasts for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). He commented that the forecast would be completed through 2050 to continue the long-range perspective that began with Blueprint.

Matt Fell explained that previous practice has been to rely on the latest Department of Finance Figures (DOF) projections for the Merced's county-wide population total and then work with local agencies (planning departments) to sub-allocate the totals to each area. Matt further explained that the DOF estimated the population growth for Merced County to increase by 18,000 from 2009 to 2010. Staff believes the increase is unlikely given the current recession and recent year to year increases (3-5 thousand per year).

Because of the unlikely projection, staff calculated an alternate forecast, using the ten-year growth rates implied by the DOF 2007 projections, but starting from a lower base population in 2010.

Matt Fell requested the CAC provide their comments on what method they prefer:

- Option A- DOF original figures; or
- Option B – Start with a lower base population for 2010 and use DOF projected growth rate for future years.

Dean Wilson, Diana Westmoreland-Pedrozo, Richard Jantz, Melissa Kelly-Ortega, and Kyle Ford each commented that they prefer Option B for a more realistic approach to future planning in Merced County.

Matt Fell commented that he would bring this item back to the October CAC meeting to show projected forecast by jurisdiction.

5. Proposition 84 Funds for Model Development

Marjie Kirn explained that the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) is responsible for allocating \$12 million of Proposition 84 funds. The funding is to be used for upgrading transportation and land use models by the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to be able to adequately respond to the requirements set by SB 375.

Marjie Kirn explained that the Sacramento Council of Governments (SACOG) has recommended the funding be allocated according to need, not a competitive grant process. She further explained that the San Joaquin Valley COG Directors recommended that the SGC use the SACOG funding distribution methodology and submit one application in the amount of \$2.5 million for the San Joaquin Valley MPO's.

Melissa Kelly-Ortega commented that it would be great if Merced County could utilize the I-Places (currently used by Kern and Stanislaus Counties) modeling in the future.

Dean Wilson made a motion to recommend the MCAG Governing Board concur with the San Joaquin Valley COG Directors recommendation regarding Proposition 84 funding distribution and modeling development.

Seconded by Diana Westmoreland-Pedrozo.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. MCAG GIS Users Group Report

Rich Green commented that Merced County Planning staff and Merced Data Special Services (MDSS) staff have agreed to work together to establish one "base map" that meets all jurisdictions needs and that they will be meeting once a week to ensure they are meeting the needs of the Merced County region.

Marjie Kirn commented that MDSS would continue to provide the same service it has provided for the past 15 years.

7. Consent Agenda

- a. San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Memorandum of Understanding, Budget, and Scope of Work-Revised 2009
- b. California High Speed Rail (HSR) Project Level Environmental Work
- c. Annual Pavement Management (PM) Report – Final
- d. Re-Determination of Air Quality Conformity

Dean Wilson requested item 7b-HSR be pulled for separate consideration.

Dean Wilson made a motion to approve items 7a, 7c, and 7d of the consent agenda.
Seconded by Mary-Ford Azevedo.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7b. California High-Speed Rail (HSR) Report - Final

Dean Wilson commented that the HSR has used the theory that they can use existing right of way (ROW) owned by the railroad. He commented that the railroad company(s) has not been contacted regarding the use of the ROW.

Marjie Kirn explained that the motion in front of the CAC today was to recommend the MCAG Governing Board approve MCAG becoming a participating agency on the San Jose to Merced section of the HSR EIR. Becoming involved will allow comments, such as Deans, to be presented.

Kyle Ford made a motion to recommend the MCAG Governing Board approve MCAG becoming a participating agency on the San Jose to Merced section High Speed Train Project EIR/EIS.

Seconded by Melissa Kelly-Ortega.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. Information / Discussion Only

- a. CAC Highlights – August 7, 2009
- b. Sign-up sheet for CAC representative to the MCAG Governing Board Meeting 2009
- c. MCAG Governing Board Minutes August 20, 2009
- d. Unmet Transit Needs Concept Report
- e. Fall Policy Conference

Chair Tom Grave recommended the next CAC meeting be rescheduled to October 9, 2009 due to the Fall Policy Conference taking place on October 2nd. The group agreed.

Marjie Kirn asked anyone interested in attending the Fall Policy Conference to register with Joy Gort.

9. Paperless Agendas

Marjie Kirn passed around a sign up sheet for those that wish to receive their agendas electronically.

10. Oral Report – Air District – CAC Report

Dean Wilson provided the following highlights from the most recent Air District Citizens Advisory Committee meeting:

- Arvin Edison Water District has given approval to extend the operation of the Arvin air monitoring station for a year.
- Valley Air has extended the financial assistance to businesses regarding fees. They can extend their payments for fees. Penalties for late or non-payment will be waived.
- New guidance is being looked at for the flag program at schools. Changes include sectioning off portions of each county that may have cleaner air than other sections. For example, Los Banos schools may have a clean air day while Merced does not.

- By taking a Healthy Air Personal Pledge, you can win a Hybrid Malibu vehicle.
- District has a Polluting Automobile Scrap and Salvage (PASS) Program, which is similar to the recent Cash for Clunkers. Can receive a rebate from \$1,000-\$5,000.

11. Oral Report – SB375

Melissa Kelly-Ortega provided an overview of a recent SB375 workshop she attended with Diana Westmoreland-Pedrozo. She provided each member a folder of information, which included the PowerPoint presentation provided at the meeting.

12. Oral Report – CAC Goals Report

Diana Westmoreland-Pedrozo provided a PowerPoint presentation that related the CAC's adopted goals to the Blueprint Smart Growth Principles.

Diana Westmoreland-Pedrozo recommended the CAC streamline their goals to align with the Blueprint Smart Growth Principles.

Marjie Kirn recommended the CAC focus their message.

Diana Westmoreland-Pedrozo, Richard Jantz, and MCAG staff will meet to discuss next steps.

Tom Grave asked if Dean Wilson would present his take on Self Help County Status/future at the October 2009 meeting. Dean Wilson agreed to the request.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE WAS ADJOURNED BY CHAIR TOM GRAVE AT 10:40 A.M.