

# CITY OF SAN MATEO

## Special Meeting Minutes

### City Council

**Tuesday, February 18, 2020**  
**Council Chamber 5:30 PM**  
**Special Meeting**

## CALL TO ORDER

### Roll Call

Present: Mayor Goethals, Deputy Mayor Rodriguez, Council Members: Papan and Lee  
Recused: Council Member Bonilla because of a potential conflict of interest involving his residence, which is located in the neighborhood adjacent to the location of the proposed parking track, because of the potential effect the Council's decision might have on the value of his property.

## STUDY SESSION

### 1. 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue Grade Separation – Parking Track Location Update

Public Works Director Brad Underwood, Casey Fromson, Caltrain Director Government & Community Affairs, and Rafael Bolon, Caltrain Project Manager, provided a presentation on the technical viability with the three-proposed community generated options for the parking (Set-Out) track locations. The Mayor opened the meeting to public comment.

1. Organized presentation from Chris Brousseau representing the Hayward Park neighborhood and their proposed locations for the track.
2. Organized presentation from the Universe of Colors preschool from Teacher Ella, Bry Myers, Stephen Floor, and Andy Curtis against option 27.
3. Christine Padilla, Build Up San Mateo County – spoke in support of child care and preschool facilities.
4. Cole G. Canafax – stated concern with Caltrain having permits.
5. Kevin Hearle, Ph.D. – stated Caltrain misleading with the facts.
6. Lisa Diaz Nash – stated the need for a dedicated EIR, concern with additional restrictions to current proposed sites, the need to look for additional sites and for more realistic cost estimates.
7. John Carlisle – stated the neighbors have not had a collaborative experience with Caltrain.
8. Pamela Campos, Build Up for San Mateo County – spoke about childcare needs.
9. Michael Nash – cited a need for better notification.
10. Rebekah Butler – stated there has been no meaningful public comment in this project.
11. Debra Genevieve – stated concerns with increased traffic in the area.
12. Josephine Christensen – stated Caltrain deliberately hid information.
13. Kaj Osterback – stated the residents are owed real drawing, real public review, real public comment.
14. Drew – stated corridor wide study is needed.
15. Tatiana Ermakova – stated Universe of Colors Preschool is a successful woman-run business.
16. Olabisi Clinton – stated concern with the school's \$200k loan for improvements.
17. Denis Lacasse – stated concern with the process.

Council asked follow-up questions from the public comment period and Caltrain staff responded.

Council provided comments:

Deputy Mayor Rodriguez stated his thoughts have not changed much since the last study session. He acknowledged he is not an engineer and wanted to be convinced that the other options could work but he hasn't seen anything that means that they could work. He would support having a third-party review given the history of this project. He acknowledged the lack of outreach from the beginning and concerns with a flawed EIR. He is in favor of studying Option 27 more closely and use some of the \$1.1 million that was set aside for the wall to find the preschool in a more appropriate location that is not in the public right-of-way.

Mayor Goethals stated he does not find it palatable to close down a day care center, preschools are a very high need in the community. He noted we have to work with Caltrain to make the train work well on the Peninsula. The parking track is going to allow for this service to continue and it needs to happen roughly in this location. These possible locations were a result of studying safety and function and he appreciates those principles. He understands there is not going to be a significant use. He fully supports a mitigation plan for this neighborhood. He encouraged Caltrain to work with the neighbors and ask them for aesthetic input for the wall. He acknowledged the neighbor's concerns and noted a consideration of Caltrain to work properly. He would support moving forward with the recommended location but with a firm mitigation process.

Council Member Lee stated she appreciates the entire community coming out as public input elevates any process. Her concern is the principle of doing the least amount of harm and doing the most good. She noted the CEQA analysis did not show any health and safety or property risks. There is very minimal harm and impact associated with this project. She noted there are a dozens of these set-out tracks up and down the Caltrain corridor. She also lives near the Caltrain station and tracks. She commented on the 100s of hours of staff time, Caltrain staff and engineering time already committed to this project. No further analysis will make any alternative viable and it is hard to justify delaying the process and adding additional costs. She noted the responsibility to all of the tax payers to maximize the value of every dollar. Going beyond this deadline will compile costs. More study will not lead to a different answer. She acknowledged there were things missed in terms of notification and transparency and also sees the things that were done to address that. She noted that she is very committed to ensuring mitigation measures.

Council Member Papan acknowledged that this is in Caltrain's right-of-way and the City has to do what it can within its purview. She expressed appreciation for the efforts put in over these last nine months as 30+ alternatives were explored in at least five public meetings. She noted the 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue grade separation has been 20 years in the making and is a \$100 million project of which the City is contributing \$12 million. Changing and delaying this would increase our costs 50% or more. We have a responsibility to be fiscal stewards for the entire community. She noted there would be restricted use from Caltrain. She noted the need for mitigation measures in a collaborative way and would like to weigh in on the process for mitigation. She noted this has been a very difficult decision; yet as fiscal stewards our hands really are tied.

Mayor Goethals will take personal responsibility to notify the neighborhood of mitigation meetings.

## ADJOURNMENT

The Meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.

APPROVED BY:

SUBMITTED BY:

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Joe Goethals, Mayor

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Patrice M. Olds, City Clerk