

Winchester/Homeland Municipal Advisory Council

MEETING MINUTES

Date: April 13, 2017

Place: Winchester Community Center, 32655 Haddock Street, Winchester

Attendees:

Winchester MAC:

Andy Domenigoni, Chairman; Dirk Meredith, Vice-Chairman; James Horecka, Secretary; Jimmy Sheldrake; Jeff Logan.

Ex Officio:

Opal Hellweg, Legislative Assistant for Third District Supervisor

Members of the Public

Call to Order: Call to Order by Andy Domenigoni at 6:33 PM.

Approval of Agenda, with sequence adjusted to accommodate special guests early.

Motion to approve: Motion by Sheldrake; second by Meredith. Approved unanimously.

Approval of March Meeting Minutes:

Motion to approve: Motion by Meredith; second by Logan. Approved unanimously.

Guest Speaker: Ann Mayer from the Riverside County Transportation Commission.

Topic: The realignment of State Highway 79. Accompanied by Alicia Canon & Marla Dye.

Goal: Realign SH 79 from Gilman Springs Road to the Domenigoni Parkway, to a level similar to an "expressway." This has been in the works for over 15 years.

2002-2008: Field studies & technical reports. 2013: Circulate the Draft EIR/ECS. 2015: Recirculate portions of the Draft EIR/ECS. 2016: PA & ED approved, and Record of Decision issued. 2017: In January, RCTC adopted Responsible Agency Finding pursuant to CEQA. Then commenced a 30-day period in which citizens could file lawsuits. Important: NO lawsuits were filed against this project!!

Goals include: Improve traffic safety. Achieve operational efficiencies. Much of the route at present is a 2 lane road. It will become a four-lane expressway, with partially-controlled access (no driveways). The route chosen by Cal-Trans is "1Br." Cross section: Two lanes, median, barrier, median, two lanes.

In our area: Interchange at Newport; realign intersection, eastward & angled. Interchange at Domenigoni Parkway, the expressway passing overhead +28.5'. Bridge over Salt Creek & Olive +28.5', then bridge over Simpson Road +27'. Over Grand Avenue +30' in the interim phase; later, that would have access ramps (given need, improved avenue and funding). Bridge over Stowe Road +36'. The alignment then swoops west of the large Hemet Hills, which reduces the cut, avoids the cell phone towers and cultural resources.

Projected cost: \$1.52 billion. Construction being \$1.15b of that. PA & ED \$32M over 15 years. P&E \$104M. ROW acquisition, \$229M. The recession of 2008/09 hit hard on the funding: At present, there is no funding for this project. There is no funding to acquire ROW. Money is the key throttle to the project. The new tax on gas, etc., goes to "fix it" projects first; maintaining existing infrastructure. Other funding might be available, at the State & Federal level: Must apply and compete for such funding. SH 79 has the ED, etc. completed, and is approved, so this project has a better chance than others without an ED.

RCTC also owns Metrolink. RCTC owns the railroad through Winchester into Hemet & San Jacinto. Rails are a long-term goal. RCTC is aware of our aspirations. RCTC is in the process of doing a "Next Generation Rail Study," which may involve an alternative type of rail vehicle: Lighter in weight? There was a large grant for the Perris Valley Line; however, that program has now been eliminated (Federal, unfunded).

The floor was opened up for questions. Here is a sampling:

Q: Who does this project benefit? A: All. Primarily for safety and efficiency.

Q: The off/on ramps into Winchester are now down to two. What would it take to trigger the third? A: Money.

Q: Grand is a very important interchange. A: Maybe, but it is unimproved at present. Before RCTC connects to Grand, the road must exist and be ready to accept the traffic.

Q: Who asked for this? A: The County! Note well: "The Corridor Alignment is SET."

- Q: What about safety? A: Highway improvements greatly improve safety. Be advised that the population in Riverside County is expected to more than double. Riverside is presently the fourth largest county in the state, but may soon be the third or even second largest (in population).
- Q: Various questions about specific parcels. A: For specific questions about property issues, acquisitions, and other details, she will give the MAC webmaster contact info for RCTC, as well as a map.
- Q: Timing? A: Depends on money. Also: The project will advance in phases, geographically. Phasing will depend on traffic demands, materials, funding, etc. Our area will not likely be in the first phase.
- Q: Are more detailed maps available? A: Yes. See the RCTC website. See the Project website. Also: Call RCTC; a staff member can assist in getting specific information desired.
- Q: Various facets of the transportation bill recently approved by the State were discussed. However, the funds earmarked for five high-priority projects in that bill do NOT apply to this project, at all.
- Q: Land acquisition? A: Call RCTC. Remember: There's no money at present.
- Q: Where will the species habitat be? A: That depends on many factors; may not be anywhere near here.
- Q: Were other routes considered? A: Of course; many. Most ruled out for various reasons (fairy shrimp, e.g.).

Ms Mayer thanked the citizens of our community for our long-standing engagement in this project.

New Business.

- A. Winchester Community Plan Workshop at next Winchester/Homeland MAC meeting (May 11, 2017).

Old Business:

- A. General County update; Opal Hellweg, 3rd District Legislative Assistant:
- IHSS (In-Home Supportive Services for dependent adults and the elderly) was taken over by the State long ago. Got messed up. Now the State wants to give responsibility for IHSS back to the county, but not the \$44M. Riverside County has some 25,000 people reliant on IHSS. RivCo is working with CSAC, and with the State. Bigger cities & counties may litigate.
 - Fire contract, \$11M gap. Largest contract in the State. All are seeking ways to work within the budget available. A complex matter.
 - Board Agenda item 16.2: Approve the Community Plan for Winchester. County will provide \$987,743 to establish the Community Plan. Huzzah! There is a video of the Supervisor's meeting, which can be viewed on the County website. April 11th meeting, item 16.2, about 5 hours & 20 minutes in.
- B. Sheriff Department update; Sergeant Chavez reporting:
- Chavez said he has contact with five MACs. He said ours is best! (Awww.)
 - He gave updates on crime stats: March: 233 calls, 9 arrests. Up from Feb, significantly.
 - Various topics were discussed, including crime trends. Mail theft is rampant. Shooting for sport on property remains a concern for some. If things appear out of the ordinary, call it in, properly.
 - Chavez brought pamphlets, maps showing LEGAL areas to ride ATVs. He also stated that, if riding on private property, you must have written permission from land owner on your person & show if stopped.
- C. EMWD Updates, Kevin Pearson reporting:
- Governor Brown ended the drought on March 29th. EMWD is cohosting a water conservation festival in Murrieta. Phil Paule was in the audience. Current restrictions will stay in place: No wasteful use. The remainder is back to normal. Gregg Cowdery noted that Valley Wide has installed drought-tolerant landscaping here at the Park.
- D. Highway 79 Realignment update:
- See Guest Speaker, above.
- E. Land Use update:
1. Winchester Homeland Planning
 2. TTM 37119 (part of Winchester Hills SP 293) – Pending revisions.
 3. Winchester-Homeland General Plan Amendment #1207: Update
 4. Proposed K-1 Speed CUP 03733: No news.
- F. City of Hemet update; Jeff Logan reporting:
- Jeff Logan reported that there were no new issues of significance to our MAC.
- G. City of Menifee update:
- Andy Domenigoni & Jeff Logan still planning to set up a meeting with the new mayor & city manager.

H. Assemblywoman Melissa Melendez' Office:

- Brandon Webb represented Melendez. He covered various efforts and bills the Assemblywoman is championing, and others: He noted with dismay the bill for a proposed gas tax & vehicle registration fee hikes; Melendez & Stone voted against. AB 757 (women's defense) was killed. AB 536, Federal funding for counties within a sanctuary state; opportunity for individual counties to be considered separately, apart from what the State chooses to do. He announced upcoming events of interest (see their website). Including the Community Coffee, coming up on the April 21st at the Diamond Valley Arts Council (he left flyers).

I. Other Old Business:

1. None.

Open Forum:

1. City of Menifee, LAFCO Detachment matter: LAFCO ordered all to disregard all testimony from the January hearing. Apparently the Consultant allegedly made contributions to the LAFCO board. The next hearing is slated for April 27th. Anyone wishing to comment may do so in person at that hearing, or send their personal statement prior to the hearing (all following established protocols).
2. Dirk Meredith announced that the Domenigoni Ranch Charity Ride for Diabetes will be held May 6th. There will be the equestrian event, dancing, a big BBQ and more. Dirk expressed thanks to the Domenigoni Family, Riverside County and Third District Supervisor Chuck Washington for their support, noting that \$1.6 million has been raised via these popular events to date.
3. A small team announced that they intend to develop the northwest corner at Haddock & Winchester Road, into a commercial development.
4. The development at the corner of SH 74 & Winchester Road, by Mr. Alabassi, will celebrate its Grand Opening soon. From there, they plan to move forward with Phase 2.

Next WMAC Meeting:

The next WHMAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 11, 2017, 6:30 PM, at the Community Center. This will be a joint meeting with the Winchester Homeland Town Association.

Adjournment: The WHMAC adjourned at 8:33 PM.