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Marin-Sonoma Narrows  
Policy Advisory Group



# Marin-Sonoma Narrows Policy Advisory Group

## Minutes

Friday, February 20, 2004

10:30 – 12:00 p.m.

Marin Civic Center

3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 329, San Rafael

Supervisor Cynthia Murray  
Marin Board of Supervisors  
Chair

Mayor Sharon Wright  
Santa Rosa City Council  
Vice-Chair

Vice-Mayor Peter Breen  
Town of San Anselmo

Mayor Pat Eklund  
Novato City Council

Council Member Michael Healy  
Petaluma City Council

Supervisor Mike Kerns  
Sonoma Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Steve Kinsey  
Marin Board of Supervisors

Vice-Chairman Tim Smith  
Sonoma Board of Supervisors

Mayor Pro Tem Bernard Meyers  
Novato City Council

Mayor David Glass  
City of Petaluma

Caltrans Contact:  
Ray Akkawi, Project Manager  
(510) 286-4925  
P.O. Box 23660  
Oakland, CA 94623-0660  
[Ray\\_Akkawi@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Ray_Akkawi@dot.ca.gov)

### 1. Introduction

Supervisor Cynthia Murray, Policy Advisory Group (PAG) Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed all of those present.

#### PAG

Cynthia Murray - Supervisor, Marin County Board of Supervisors	Present
Michael Healy – Council Member, Petaluma City Council/SCTA	Present
Mike Kerns - Supervisor, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors/Chair SCTA	Present
David Glass – Mayor, City of Petaluma	Present
Steve Kinsey - Supervisor, Marin County Board of Supervisors	Present
Bernard Meyers – Mayor Pro Tem, Novato City Council	Present
Peter Breen – Mayor, Town of San Anselmo/Marin County CMA	Absent
Pat Eklund – Mayor, City of Novato	Absent
Tim Smith – Vice Chairman, Sonoma Board of Supervisors	Absent
Sharon Wright - Mayor, City of Santa Rosa	Absent

#### MCCMA

Craig Tackaberry – Marin County Congestion Management Agency	Present
Art Brook- Marin County Congestion Management Agency	Present

#### SCTA

Suzanne Wilford- Sonoma County Transportation Agency	Present
Pat Siefers – Sonoma County Transportation Agency	Present

#### Caltrans

Ray Akkawi – Project Manager	Present
Saaid Fakharzadeh – Design Chief	Present
Yader Bermudez – Project Management	Present
Melanie Brent – Environmental Senior	Present
Yolanda Rivas – Environmental	Present
Bill Fleming – HQ Structures Aesthetics	Present
Sean Charles – Design Senior	Absent

### 2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 20, 2002

The minutes from the PAG Meeting on September 20, 2002, were approved.

3. **Project Update – It was requested that Item 4 be discussed first.**
4. **Structures Aesthetics Concept**

Presentation by Bill Fleming, Caltrans HQ Structures Aesthetics

Bill explained that an aesthetics concept for the entire corridor would cover Highway 101 from San Rafael to north of Santa Rosa. His presentation today concentrated specifically on the aesthetics of the Redwood Landfill Overcrossing just north of the City of Novato and its place within this corridor and within the Marin-Sonoma Narrows project.

Visual simulations of the Redwood Landfill structure showed a proposed box girder design supported by round columns (it was noted that they could also be square) and a sloped girder. The girder would be vertical on face and then slope down to the soffit. The deck would be approximately 5 feet deep and the overall structure would be approximately 16 feet high. The side surface of the structure could be embellished with a wave pattern, as was shown in the simulation, or a simulated rock treatment that might be preferable in a rural setting. A bicycle/pedestrian safety railing would be approximately 2 feet 8 inches high. Proposed retaining walls would also sport this aesthetics treatment.

The PAG Board asked whether the typical Caltrans chain link safety fence would be erected on the structure. The answer was yes.

Tom Krakow, DKS & Associates

As the consultant to the Redwood Landfill who is preparing the design drawings for the overcrossing project, Tom was asked to respond to specific questions from the PAG Board. Tom explained that in the northbound direction there would be approximately 500 feet of retaining wall that would begin at around 14 feet high and taper down. In the southbound direction the retaining walls are only 3 or 4 feet high. These barriers are necessary in order to retain the hillside, a safety and drainage requirement. Construction of the overcrossing is estimated to take 6 to 8 months with earthwork beginning in late summer or early fall of 2004.

Tom was asked about the removal of approximately 50 existing elm trees within State right of way and what his replacement landscape plan would look like. He explained that replacement trees would be planted in clumps (rather than in a straight line as they exist now) in order to give the area a natural feel versus a landscaped look. The PAG Board asked to see a copy of the landscape plan. Tom said he would supply one.

The Board also asked for reassurance that the Landfill Overcrossing would accommodate the proposed future Marin-Sonoma Narrows project. Tom asserted that there has been very close coordination between his firm and Caltrans engineers. Saaid Fakharzadeh, Caltrans, explained that the only modification to the structure that would be required to take it from a private facility to a State facility would be to widen the outside of the structure 4 feet on either side in order to provide for Caltrans' standard 8 foot shoulder widths. The addition of a pedestrian sidewalk would also be considered if it becomes a public street.

The PAG Board asked if the public could have input into the choice of the aesthetics treatment. Tom's staff replied that timing-wise they would need to have a final decision within the next 6 weeks in order to avoid delays to the Landfill's schedule. Caltrans agreed to set something up (perhaps at the next Novato City Council meeting).

Cynthia asked for a motion to accept the box girder/flared design of the structure with the surface treatment to be reviewed later. Motion was made and seconded. The design was approved.

### 3. Project Update

PAG Board Chair Cynthia Murray reported that the county (*both?*) has asked for \$60 million from the Federal government to fund at least one segment of the Narrows.

Yader Bermudez, Caltrans Project Management, presented a Marin-Sonoma Narrows project update. Yader reported that the Draft Environment Document (DED) will be released in June 2006 with a Final Environmental Document (FED) following in June 2007. He showed slides outlining the current project cost and funding details, the breakdown of the project limits by segment, the status of the environmental technical studies and the status of design efforts.

The PAG Board questioned the high cost of the project and the timing of the environmental document. Cynthia briefly explained that Federal approval of the environmental document is tied to the project's standing in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

### 5. Public Comment

Don Wilhelm – Is the rib design on the Carquinez Bridge structure the same as what is being proposed here for the Narrows? Because, it is ugly. Bill Fleming responded that it is.

Karen Nygren – What is the height of the barriers at the Redwood Landfill Overcrossing? Will this proposal effect the effort to get this corridor a scenic highway designation? The public likes the wall texture used at Lucky Drive.

Rick Freitas – He is concerned about the alternative to the Redwood Landfill interchange that is at Airport Road. He would like to see the Airport Road alternative dropped from further study. The Marin County General Plan found that there is no reason for an interchange to be built at that location. He would like the City of Novato and the County of Marin to comment to Caltrans to that effect. Wanted to know what happens to the overcrossing post closure of the Landfill. Saaid responded that there is an agreement between Caltrans, Marin County and the Landfill that addresses this issue. The structure would probably be used as a bike path if it isn't already being used as an interchange. Otherwise, it could be torn down.

Karen Nygren – Is the Redwood Landfill Overcrossing span greater than the width of the highway. She is concerned that past planning efforts have called for an 8-lane freeway here. Saaid explained that the overcrossing is being built to accommodate the Narrows project which proposes adding a third lane in each direction for a total of 6 lanes. To the south, from Highway 37 to Atherton Avenue, there are currently 3 lanes in each direction. In this location, the Narrows project proposes adding a fourth lane in each direction for a total of 8 lanes. But there are no plans to go beyond a 6-lane facility north of Atherton Avenue.

Don Wilhelm - Would like to see more visual aesthetic simulations.

Kim Danish – Asked about the status of the bike lanes included in the Narrows project.

### 6. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

The PAG Board suggested meeting again in late March or early April in order to get public comment on the corridor aesthetics plan.

### 7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.