



General Purposes Committee

Date: Monday, November 22nd, 2004
Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall
Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Derek Dang
Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt (5:15 p.m.)
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Rob Howard
Councillor Kiichi Kumagai
Councillor Bill McNulty
Councillor Harold Steves
Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:14 p.m.

1. RAV LINE OPTIONS

Pat Jacobsen of TransLink and Jane Bird, representing RAVCO, were present.
(Cllr. Evelina Halsey-Brandt entered the meeting at 5:15 p.m.)

Discussion ensued among Committee members and the delegation on the following issues:

- the necessity of having to close intersections along No. 3 Road to accommodate an at-grade system
- the feasibility of the possible deferral of the No. 3 Road component of the RAV project
- the 'real' cost of the tunnel and the relative costs being applied in Vancouver as compared to the costs being attributed to the Richmond component
- the height and location of an elevated guideway in relation to the sidewalks located on the east side of No. 3 Road

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- whether the RAV express ground level proposals had been seriously considered, and whether such a system as the Bombardier ground level proposal would be more expensive to construct for the No. 3 Road component than an elevated system
- the passenger projection figures being used by RAVCO and TransLink based on whether elevated and ground level systems were constructed
- the intent of 'peer review' and the role of Mr. Ted Hughes in that process
- the feasibility of placing an elevated system along Minoru Boulevard, and whether TransLink and RAVCO would consider this option
- the height of the guideway and columns of an elevated system
- the feasibility of only constructing that portion of the project from Waterfront Station to Bridgeport to the Airport, and not proceeding with the southern extension until an agreement can be reached on the type of system which Richmond could support, and whether funding for the Richmond component would still be available
- the rationale for the high cost of a hybrid system
- the increased travel time for an at-grade system if intersections were not closed; why an at-grade system would not work in Richmond; the rationale for requiring the construction of a concrete fence along the at-grade system when other similar systems throughout the world do not have such barriers
- the feasibility of constructing an elevated system on Garden City Road rather than No. 3 Road
- the economic impact which an elevated system could have on businesses on No. 3 Road, as well as shadowing from the guideway structure.

(Cllr. Barnes left the meeting at 5:39 p.m., and returned at 5:44 p.m., during the above discussion.)

During the discussion, Cllr. Howard circulated material to the Committee and asked questions of the delegation about the proposed elevated system as it compared to an at-grade system.

Mr. Gary Cohen, Past Chair, Chair of the Transportation Committee, and Florence Gordon, President, Richmond Chamber of Commerce, addressed Committee on the need for rapid transit in the City. A copy of Mr. Cohen's submission is available in the City Clerk's Office.

Ms. Gordon spoke briefly, commenting on the 20% per year increase in the number of vehicles over the past 34 years since discussions first began about the need for rapid transit in Richmond.

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The presentation concluded with Mr. Cohen urging the Council to support the construction of a rapid transit system into Richmond.

The following motion was then introduced:

It was moved and seconded

WHEREAS the City preference is to have an elevated system rerouted onto Minoru Boulevard at the soonest possible northern point.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Richmond City Council instruct staff to work with TransLink and RAVCO to determine the feasibility of the route on Minoru Boulevard, and report back at the soonest possible time.

The question on the motion was not called, as Committee members spoke either in favour of, or opposition to, the proposed motion. The comment was made that Council should support the RAV line construction from Vancouver to the Airport and ask TransLink to set funding aside until a determination had been made on what type of line should be constructed in Richmond.

Comments were also made by Mayor Brodie that if this Council wanted rapid transit in the City, now was the time to make that decision as any delay could effectively end further consideration. He expressed concern that the major funding agencies would not accept the proposal to delay construction of the Richmond component of the RAV project. Mayor Brodie also commented on the hybrid proposal and the apparent need to close every intersection along No. 3 Road north of Richmond Centre, and on the proposal to relocate an elevated system to Minoru Boulevard.

Comments were also made about the possible sacrifice of the liveability and economics of the City in order to obtain a rapid transit system.

As a result of the discussion, the following **amendment** was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That the main motion be amended by deleting the words "an elevated system" and by substituting the words "the RAV line".

CARRIED

OPPOSED: Cllr. McNulty
Steves

The question on the main motion, as amended, was then called, and it was **CARRIED** with Cllrs. McNulty and Steves opposed.

It was moved and seconded

That the City also examine the RAV line from the Airport to downtown Vancouver, with a separate Bombardier type ground level system travelling north/south down No. 3 Road.

CARRIED

OPPOSED: Cllr. Howard

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The meeting recessed at 6:53 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 4:35 p.m., on Monday, November 29th, 2004, with all members of the Committee present.

1. **RICHMOND-AIRPORT-VANCOUVER RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT (RAV) – MINORU CORRIDOR**

(Report: Nov. 28/04; File No.: 10-6520-02-01/2004-Vol 01) (REDMS No. 1363014)

Chief Administrative Officer George Duncan addressed Committee on the status of the RAV project, and Planner Brian Guzzi, explained the proposed alignment options with respect to Minoru Boulevard. Discussion then ensued among Committee members and staff on the proposed alignment options, and:

- the rationale for including the two alternative routes to Minoru Boulevard
- the establishment of the urban design committee and the provision of the proposed \$2 Million to the committee to further improve the integration of the guideway along No. 3 Road
- the creation of project teams to assess the feasibility of relocating the RAV line to Minoru Boulevard
- the changes which would be made to the proposed elevated guideway to reduce the width and resulting visual profile
- the timing of the completion of the review of the Minoru Boulevard alignment option
- whether the deferral of the Bridgepoint to Richmond Centre segment of the RAV line had been an option, and whether the other funding agencies would consider such a deferral
- the agency responsible for making the final decision on whether the RAV line could be constructed on Minoru Boulevard, and the City's role in the decision-making process.

Jane Bird, of RAVCO, accompanied by John Eastman, spoke briefly about the consultation process which would take place with the public along the proposed route. She then gave a PowerPoint presentation on the changes which had been made to the proposed design of an elevated guideway along No. 3 Road. A copy of the presentation is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

Discussion then took place among Committee members and the delegation on:

- the use of single and double tracks and the safety issues, if any, relating to the use of either or both of these options
- the width of the span of the proposed elevated guideway

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- the size of the proposed car as compared to existing Skytrain cars, and whether the size of these units would vary depending on a single or double track system
- the anticipated noise levels along Minoru Boulevard, if the RAV line was relocated to that route
- whether a single track system would be practical as Richmond's future population increased, and the ultimate capacity for which the system had been designed
- the rationale for suggesting that buildings could be integrated over, under and around the elevated guideway
- the number of stations which would be constructed along the Richmond segment, and the role of the City in the decision-making process with respect to the design of these stations
- the feasibility of having ground-level stations constructed without the massing of the existing Skytrain and Millennium Line stations
- the minimum height of the elevated guideway system
- the need to ensure that at the time of completion of the project, that the City view the RAV line as an improvement and an asset to the community in all forms, including function and design
- the feasibility of expanding the proposed system further into the City at some point in the future, and whether it would be compatible with other types of systems
- the need to ensure that the safety of the ridership on the trains and at the stations was paramount, and whether crime had been reduced at some of the newer existing stations
- possible property acquisition costs if the RAV line was re-routed to Minoru Boulevard
- the feasibility of incorporating an elevated guideway system with an at-grade system and associated parking structures
- the proposed Memorandum of Understanding and whether there would be any difficulties in having the Memorandum approved by the necessary agencies.

The delegation then left the table, and the meeting recessed at 6:08 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 6:40 p.m., with Mayor Brodie, and Cllrs. Dang, Evelina Halsey-Brandt, Howard, Kumagai and McNulty present.

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Mr. Bill Sorenson, 505 – 6611 Minoru Boulevard, read into the record, a petition signed by 666 area residents who were opposed to the relocation of the RAV line to Minoru Boulevard, and who indicated that if TransLink and RAVCO were not prepared to construct an at-grade system on No. 3 Road, then the project should be abandoned in favour of bus service on No. 3 Road.. A copy of this petition is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

(Cllrs. Sue Halsey-Brandt, Barnes and Steves entered the meeting – 6:42 p.m., during the above presentation.)

A discussion ensued among Committee members and Mr. Sorenson regarding the negative impact which he felt would result from the intrusion of the RAV line on area residents because of the appearance of the line, the loss of privacy, and a possible increase in crime. Mr. Sorenson confirmed in response to questions, that a majority of the residents on Minoru Boulevard supported the construction of an at-grade system on No. 3 Road. He stated that if an elevated system was constructed, every effort should be made to reduce the impact of the system on the surrounding properties.

Ms. Anne Brennan, 10735 Sandiford Drive, voiced support for an elevated system on No. 3 Road, and commented on the current traffic gridlock on No. 3 Road.

Mr. Bob Ransford, 5071 Steveston Highway, spoke about the proposed RAV line and 'artificial pressure' being placed on Council to make a decision without having the time to consider other options, and he urged Council to implement a 'cooling off' period. A copy of Mr. Ransford's submission is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

In response to questions, Mr. Ransford spoke about the integration of a tram system with an at-grade system as being an acceptable alternative. In response to further questions, he suggested that if necessary, construction should be delayed until after the 2010 Olympic Games.

Mr. Craig Yee, of 8340 Williams Road, spoke about the need for a rapid transit system, and in particular, about the proposal to construct an at-grade system and the safety issues which could arise as a result of this system. He also spoke about the business opportunities which an elevated system would provide to the City, and urged Council to 'do the right thing' and support an elevated system on No. 3 Road.

Mr. Mel Goodwin, Co-Chair, RAV Task Force, spoke in support of the recommendations proposed by staff. He expressed concern that an at-grade system would not provide a safe system for users and pedestrians, and urged Council to support the staff recommendations. In response to questions, Mr. Goodwin expressed support for the No. 3 Road option.

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Mr. Haslef, of 6631 Minoru Boulevard, spoke in support of an elevated system on No. 3 Road because of the feasibility of extending the system in the future. He expressed his opposition to the rerouting of the RAV line to Minoru Boulevard because of the large number of apartment buildings and the hospital facility which were located along this route, which would be impacted by the increase in noise and loss of privacy. He also spoke about the feasibility of constructing the RAV line over the Ebco building rather than acquiring the property.

Mr. Andrew Huige, President of the BC Aviation Council, congratulated Council on supporting the RAV project because it was critical to the future of the City's industrial base and to the City's future in general. He talked about the need for accessibility and connectivity to and from the airport; the airport industry in general and its development over the past years, and the need to sustain this major industry in the future to create the international gateway desired for Richmond. In response to questions, Mr. Huige spoke further on the opportunities which improved access to the airport would provide to the airport industry, airport employees, passengers and the City.

Mr. Peter Mitchell, of 6271 Nanika Crescent, urged Council to make every effort to pursue a rapid transit system for the City now and not in the future, and expressed disagreement with statements made by a previous speaker that the City should initiate a 'cooling off' period. He spoke about the needs of the City centre and the needs of the Steveston area residents and businesses as they compared to the future concentration of jobs and residents in the downtown core. Mr. Mitchell also offered a number of possible future options to connect a transit system from the outer areas of Richmond with the RAV line.

Mr. Richard Cook, of 4591 Heritage Drive, talked about the City's 98B Line and the length of time it took him to travel this system into Vancouver. He spoke in support of an elevated system along No. 3 Road rather than along Minoru Boulevard, and suggested that the area underneath the elevated system could be used to provide additional greenery, bicycle and walking paths. In closing, Mr. Cook urged Council to support an elevated system on No. 3 Road.

Mr. Dennis Coulter, TH4 - 6088 Minoru Boulevard, spoke in opposition to the possible location of the RAV line on Minoru Boulevard. A copy of Mr. Coulter's submission is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

Ms. Florence Gordon, President of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, stated that construction of the RAV line in Richmond would affect not only Richmond, but also other Lower Mainland municipalities. She spoke about the concern of other Chambers of Commerce that the RAV line would not be constructed if Richmond chose not to proceed with the construction of an elevated system. Ms. Gordon urged Council to vote to support the construction of the RAV line.

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Mr. Gary Cross, 8238 Saba Road, talked about the increased walking time for residents on the east side of No. 3 Road if the RAV line was relocated to Minoru Boulevard. He stated that while he supported the construction of an at-grade system, practicality had to be considered and suggested that to approve anything other than an elevated system would see the construction of a rapid transit system delayed for another thirty years. Mr. Cross urged Council to support the construction of an elevated system.

Ms. Madeline Bates, a resident of Regency Park Towers, spoke in opposition to the rerouting of the RAV line to Minoru Boulevard, noting that the line would be located very close to the Minoru Seniors extended care facility and to the many apartment buildings located along this proposed route.

Mr. Gary Cohen, Chair of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee addressed the Committee on the need for a rapid transit system in the City. A copy of Mr. Cohen's submission is on file in the City Clerk's Office. Mr. Cohen urged Council to support the staff recommendations.

Mr. Ben Caley, of 9560 Ashwood Drive, spoke in support of an elevated transit system on No. 3 Road, the need to move people in and out of Richmond in an effective, safe and fast manner, and the need to consider the needs of the future residents of Richmond. He urged Council to support the construction of an elevated system on No. 3 Road.

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That Council withdraw the City's formal request to TransLink (Council Resolution No. R04/21-5, November 22, 2004) to have the Richmond segment of the RAV Line (Bridgeport to Richmond Centre) deferred until more study can be completed, and advise the TransLink Board accordingly.*
- (2) *That the TransLink Board be advised that Richmond Council endorses the delivery of an elevated RAV Line to the City of Richmond:*
 - (a) *On the No. 3 Road alignment as contemplated in the SNC Lavalin/Serco Base Case scenario and outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); and*
 - (b) *On the basis that the TransLink and RAVCO Boards endorse the pursuit and adaptation of the RAV Line to the Minoru Boulevard alignment, if this option is determined to be feasible by the RAVCO Board after consideration of the recommendations of a Joint Evaluation Committee appointed by RAVCO, with 2 representatives from Richmond, as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).*

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- (3) *That staff be authorized to enter into the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (attached to the report dated November 28th, 2004, from the Chief Administrative Officer) between RAVCO and the City of Richmond.*
- (4) *That SNC Lavalin/Serco be requested to acknowledge their understanding of the content and intent of the MOU between the City and RAVCO, and to confirm their commitment to participate in the feasibility analysis of the Minoru Boulevard option.*
- (5) *That Council approve the Access Agreement and authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to amend the Agreement in the event that the alignment is modified to include Minoru Boulevard.*

The question on the motion was not called, as the following amendments were introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That the main motion be amended:

- (1) *in Part (2)(a), by adding the words “without reference to Minoru Boulevard”;*
- (2) *in Part (3), by adding the words “without reference to Minoru Boulevard”; and*
- (3) *in Part (4), by deleting the words “and to confirm their commitment to participate in the feasibility analysis of the Minoru Boulevard option”.*

CARRIED

OPPOSED: Mayor Brodie
Cllr. Barnes
Sue Halsey-Brandt
Steves

The question on Part (2)(a) of the motion was then called, and it was **CARRIED** with Cllrs. Barnes, Sue Halsey-Brandt and Steves opposed.

Discussion then ensued among Committee members on the rationale for adopting Part (2)(b) of the motion, and as a result, the following motion was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That the amendments to the main motion to delete reference to the Minoru Boulevard option, and the calling of the question on Part (2)(a), be rescinded.

CARRIED

OPPOSED: Cllr. Kumagai
McNulty

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The question on Part (2)(b) of the motion was then called, and it was **CARRIED** with Cllrs. Kumagai and McNulty opposed.

The question on Part (2)(a) of the motion was then called, and it was **CARRIED** with Cllr. Steves opposed.

The question on Parts (1), (3), (4) and (5) of the motion was then called, and it was **CARRIED**.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded
That the meeting adjourn (9:27 p.m.).

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Monday, November 22nd, 2004, and on Monday, November 29th, 2004.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

Fran J. Ashton
Executive Assistant, City Clerk's Office