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METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY
PUBLIC HEARING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2007
1900 MAIN STREET
SECOND FLOOR BOARD ROOM
10:00 A.M.

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2

P R O C E E D I N G S

(Meeting began at 10:10 a.m.)

MS. ALEXANDER: I'm about to call this public hearing into session. One of the things that we are doing this morning is to give the public an opportunity for some of your comments on the project in the proposed property acquisition. I have a list here, if there is anybody that wishes to speak or to make a comment during the hearing, if I can have your name on this piece of paper. Would any of you wish to say anything -- okay. I tell you what, if you put your name there and then if you decide later on you don't want to say anything, you can.

MS. SCARBROUGH: (Inaudible).

MS. ALEXANDER: Right.

MS. SCARBROUGH: I'm sorry, your name?

MS. ALEXANDER: I'm Paula Alexander.

MS. SCARBROUGH: I didn't recognize you.

MS. ALEXANDER: That's all you need to see. I try to maintain a low profile.

It is now -- I have ten minutes after 10 and I'm going to call this public hearing into session. My name³

is Paula Alexander. I am general counsel for the Metropolitan Transit Authority, and we've called this public hearing into session to review a proposed project for the construction and development of an intermodal terminal and the acquisition of property that we feel is necessary for development of that transit facility.

In accordance with the law, we published a notice in the paper of our intent to acquire a certain tract of land which is needed for the development of this particular project. The property itself is currently

owned by the C. V. Hardy Yards. It is located east of Main Street and south of Burnett Street in the John Austin Survey, and it consists of approximately 9.7 acres of land. And the intermodal facility is going to be constructed just north of the downtown area, and it is intended to be a multimodal facility that will allow the convergence of several different modes of transportation, bus transportation, guided rapid transit. There will also be some street convergences into this one central location which we hope will have a very positive impact on transit for the region.

I'm going to turn this over to Jim Gast who will make a very short summary of what this project involves, showing the public need and the public necessity for the property that we aim to acquire. At that time, if there

4

are any comments that any of you in the audience wish to make, you'll have an opportunity to do so. Typically, when we hear from the comments, we limit those comments to about three minutes, but we have very few people here in the audience so we might be a little more flexible in that regard.

So I'm going to turn this over to Mr. Gast for a short summary of the intermodal facility.

MR. GAST: Okay, this summary of the project facility on this particular property, the primary need for this particular property is for a transit center for METRO's local bus terminus and also a station facility for METRO's guided rapid transit service. That is to be constructed in two phases. In the short term, we'll be constructing four GRT stations

at the transit station, and we'll be constructing loading bays for METRO's local bus service. In the future, this facility will be expanded to a 14-bay facility.

The dark orange represents what's being built in the first phase. The lighter amber color is not expected to be built until another phase. A portion of the facility is also being used to make the public space that is functioning as a circulation means to all these transit services in the facility. You can see that in

5

green here. That is grade separated. That's 30 feet above existing grade and the METRO transit center is at grade.

Additionally, we are looking at a long-term consideration potential for a private bus terminal above this transit center. Those plans are in the conceptual stages. They are not in Phase I of the construction. If and when that private bus terminal is implemented, we'll have an upper level on top of this METRO transit center.

MS. ALEXANDER: Jim, I'm sorry, I did not announce your title, if you could let the public know exactly what your title is.

MR. GAST: I'm the project director for the intermodal terminal.

MS. ALEXANDER: If you could point out exactly where the property is located that we need to acquire -- or Michelle.

MR. GAST: It is approximately east of North Main Street and west of Chestnut Street. Actually I'll show you on this board. Here is Chestnut Street.

Here is Main Street. That's where the transit center is going to go.

There is an additional piece of property shown here that is being acquired, a piece under the (Inaudible)

6

that's being acquired for access roadway to the -- from San Jacinto, from the extension of San Jacinto to the Cherokee platforms. That's coming like this. So those are the -- that's the location of the transit center site and the location of the access road. Okay.

MS. ALEXANDER: Are there any public comments? Any statements from the public? Yes, ma'am, and you are?

MS. SCARBROUGH: I'm Daphne Scarbrough, and I'm curious if the funding is in place for this -- the funding for the acquiring of the property that is necessary to be able to (Inaudible) --

MS. ALEXANDER: Quite frankly, I'm not clear on the funding. So I wish I could give you more information on it, but I'm not really up to speed on that.

MS. SCARBROUGH: And one second thought, why is this 30 feet above grade? (Inaudible).

COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry, I'm not hearing this conversation.

MS. ALEXANDER: Can you speak a little louder so the court reporter can get your comments, and I think Ms. Scarborough has asked about the funding and I'm not clear on funding.

MS. SCARBROUGH: If the funding is in

7

place or if the funding is still in research?

MS. ALEXANDER: And I don't know. I don't know the answer to that.

Your next question was why a certain portion was not going to be at grade?

MS. SCARBROUGH: Why it's 30 feet above grade?

MS. ALEXANDER: And your -- and she asked again if it was because it's in a flood prone area? Mr. Gast has responded that that is not the case. That the reason why it is not being built at grade is to provide clearance for freight? Because the Union Pacific freight railroad tracks pass in that vicinity, the extra clearance is needed for their operations.

Are there any other questions or comments?

MS. HAMILTON: I'm Gayla Hamilton. In the second phase you were talking about, there would be an upper level for other buses. What types of other buses -- like Greyhound bus?

MR. GAST: Greyhound is one example of a bus facility that might use that terminal. There is no specific plans to say Greyhound will go there.

MS. ALEXANDER: Any other comments or questions? Can you state your name?

MR. MCKAY: My name is Ken McKay. In the
8
description of the project, I didn't hear any mention of the commercial site, commercial development, specifically the agreement with Hines to develop the commercial aspect of the property, and I'd like some clarification or explanation of that.

MS. ALEXANDER: I don't think there has
Page 6

been a final document with anybody as of yet.

MR. GAST: That's correct.

MS. ALEXANDER: We are hoping that there will be opportunities for further development and that they will be interested in that location because of the convergence of the multimodal system and the amount of pedestrian and vehicular and transit traffic that is there; but we are still in the early developmental stage at this point.

MR. MCKAY: So will additional property be taken so as to allow (Inaudible) --

MS. ALEXANDER: No, sir.

MS. HAMILTON: Gayla Hamilton again. On the roadway property --

MS. ALEXANDER: I'm sorry, our court reporter can't hear.

MS. HAMILTON: On the acquisition of the property for the roadway, what's the legal description of that property?

9

MS. FRICKE: Acquisition of the property for the roadway?

MS. HAMILTON: Well, that portion of the road that he was talking about, is it already an existing road or you're widening it?

MS. FRICKE: San Jacinto as it currently --

MS. ALEXANDER: She can't hear you.
Michelle Fricke.

MS. FRICKE: San Jacinto currently goes and terminates generally where I-10 is located.

MS. ALEXANDER: San Jacinto terminates

where I-10 is located.

MS. FRICKE: In order to allow traffic to move out of downtown Houston to extend San Jacinto further. That extension of San Jacinto is not a METRO project. It's something that the city or the county could undertake should they choose to do so. This portion of our acquisition --

MS. ALEXANDER: Could you speak up.

MS. FRICKE: This portion of our acquisition would lead to that proposed extension of San Jacinto, and in the near term should San Jacinto not be built up by others, METRO -- our buses up in this area will go underneath the railroad tracks and access the

10

site this way.

MS. HAMILTON: What is the legal description of that property?

MS. FRICKE: This is the map prepared by the surveyor. (Inaudible).

COURT REPORTER: The last sentence?

MS. ALEXANDER: Ms. Hamilton asked again for the legal description, and Michelle's response was that we don't -- that the map is available that will show the boundaries for that piece of property.

Okay, if there are no further comments or questions, I will declare this public hearing over. The time now is 20 minutes after 10. Thank you so much for attending.

(Hearing adjourned at 10:20 a.m.)

THE STATE OF TEXAS:

COUNTY OF HARRIS:

I, Lynda Marie Bryant, Certified Shorthand Reporter, in and for the State of Texas, do hereby certify that these proceedings were taken by me in machine shorthand and later transcribed from machine shorthand to typewritten form by me.

I further certify that the above and foregoing transcription, as set forth in typewriting, is a full, true and correct transcript of the proceedings taken to the best of my abilities.

Given under my hand and seal of office on this, the 16th day of January 2007.

Lynda Marie Bryant
CSR, RPR, RMR, CRR, CCP

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