



Minutes
Bel Air-Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council
Special “Virtual” Meeting of Planning and Land Use Committee
Monday July 21, 2025 6:30 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.

Name	P	A	Name	P	A
Robert Schlesinger, Chair	X		Jamie Hall, Vice Chair	X	
Robin Greenberg	X		Stephanie Savage		X
Nickie Miner	X		Leslie Weisberg	X	
Patricia Templeton	X		Ellen Evans	X	
Maureen Levinson		X	Stella Grey	X	
Jason Spradlin	X		Michael Kemp	X	
			Travis Longcore <i>ex officio</i>	X	

Vice-Chair Hall called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM and provided welcoming comments. Dr. Longcore led the flag salute, following which Vice-Chair Hall called the roll. Quorum was met. Robert Schlesinger arrived shortly after the presentation began, for a total of 11 members present and 2 absent.

1. General Public Comment:

There was no comment from the public on any topic within the Committee’s jurisdiction but not on the adopted agenda.

2. Presentation and Discussion Regarding Sepulveda Transit Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Report

Guest Speaker: Bob Anderson (Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association) See letters prepared by SOHA here: <https://www.shermanoakshomeownersassociation.com/transit>

Background: Full Text of Draft EIR is found online here:
<https://us.planengage.com/sepulvedacorridor/page/home>

Vice-Chair Hall related that a large Draft Environmental Impact Report has been published and Metro is asking for public comment on it. Dr. Longcore had suggested that we have a series of meetings to go over the project. The first meeting on the topic is this special meeting by the PLU Committee. Subsequent meetings will be done by an ad-hoc committee composed of members of both the PLU and Traffic Committee. The purpose of this is to educate people about the proposal, the alternatives, to receive information from stakeholders and to convey information to elected officials. He hopes to have those committee meetings on 07/28, 08/04, 08/11, and 08/18.

Vice-Chair Hall noted that the first meeting here this evening, will be on the nuts and bolts, what the project is, and what the alternatives are. The second meeting could be on community perspectives, the next, on educational perspectives, the fourth, a robust public hearing, and the fifth, deliberation of the ad hoc committee before it goes to the NC for consideration. We'll be inviting guests to these meetings. We want to be careful to note that while we are inviting guests, we are not endorsing the opinions of those we invite to speak. We would invite people who have more information than us.

Vice-Chair Hall introduced our first guest in this series, Bob Anderson of the Sherman Oaks Homeowner's Association (SOHA).

Mr. Anderson began his presentation by noting that there is so much information; he has been making comments on this before it started in 2015, and was making comments on Measure M. He noted that he got mad when Metro ignored his organization's comments. He has pulled a lot of documents through California Public Record Act (PRA) Requests, and spoke on his background and qualifications to discuss this. He noted that he knows a lot about procurement processes and has a technical background with dual degrees on Engineering from Berkeley. He noted that he understands this stuff pretty well.

He shared his screen to provide his Power Point Presentation. Some of his opening comments included that Metro started this in 2017-18, with six concepts, each with variations, for 25-27 concepts; narrowed it down to 4, which included some subways and some monorails. The red line and purple line are the only heavy rail trains. They can only go up a 6% grade; the Sepulveda Pass is 7%, they can't go up and over the hill so have to do a subway; whereas monorails are capable of going above ground, which makes them much less expensive; the light rail concepts didn't make it through the gates. When they came up for the scoping period of the EIR in 2022, they decided on 6 alternatives: three monorails and three heavy rails. Alts 1, 2 and 3 were monorails, went through pre-development contracts. ... They went to a company LA Skyrail Express, a consortium of several companies, who bid monorails to Metro and Metro selected them as one of the contracts. Skyrail bid one contract, Alternatives 1 and 3 for Metro; Alt 2 disappeared. The same thing occurred with Bechtel whom they got to design a heavy rail. They designed Alt 4 and 5, heavy rails; a lot of people say they are subways; 5 is a subway and 4 is half a subway. There are 6 alternatives. He asked what happened to the 6th and noted that Metro knew they had to look at a sixth alternative because they had studied it earlier and because of CEQA they can't just drop a concept so they got their own environmental contractor to design Alt 6 and evaluate it environmentally... They ended with 5 alternatives: 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6; 1 & 3 are monorails and 4, 5 and 6 are heavy rails. He described the alternatives on the various maps on screen.

Mr. Anderson noted that Alt 1 is completely above ground and is a monorail. All the alternatives go from the same place to the same place: The Metro E line that runs down Pico, formerly known as Expo line does not have a UCLA station; it goes up over the hill into the Valley and up into Van Nuys to the train tracks; makes a right turn and comes over here (pointing on the screen)...

Alt 3 is also a monorail that can go over the pass and does exactly the same in the Valley and pretty much through the pass but because UCLA wants a station on the campus - to get a train on campus, they have to have a tunnel; the other alts have some portion of tunnel. (Details provided). Alt 1 connects with UCLA. The monorail can stop at the Getty Center. The two monorails were designed by Skyrail, a monorail consortium. Alt 4 and 5 were designed by Bechtel consortium, both heavy

rails, which can carry a lot of passengers like the red or purple line along Wilshire. They are the only two heavy rails in LA County planned, and this would be a third one if they use heavy rail. Mr. Anderson provided a detailed presentation (not transcribed here). Mr. Anderson opined that there are 10 flaws in the DEIR package that are so serious he determined that we oppose Alternative 4; and, as to the other 4 alternatives, noted that there is too much wrong with each to support one and his group has chosen not to. He believes that the process is just too screwed up.

Vice-Chair Hall noted that we are not taking a position on these and opened the floor to public comment, giving each person 2 minutes to speak.

Public Comment: Steven Sann introduced himself as the President of Westwood Community Council (WCC). He thanked Mr. Anderson for his presentation. Mr. Sann explained that his council and the other 13 councils of WRAC endorsed two key principles, 1) saying to the Metro board, whether Alternative 1, 3, 4, 5 or 6, that alternative must have a station on the UCLA campus, and that Metro's study shows that a campus station would be the busiest station in the entire Metro system. He explained that the numbers show huge numbers for UCLA station. 2) They said to Metro, whichever alternative you chose must have a direct seamless connection to the Wilshire D Line (aka Purple Line) in Westwood Village, which would become the busiest station, which then knocks Alt 1 off the bat, because Alt 1 skips UCLA. The Village and would drop people off at the VA hospital property and they would have to get an electric bus and tootle up to the village and the campus. The remainder options have a station on the campus... He told everyone that they oppose Alt 4, it is massively unfair to say to their neighbors in the Valley that they don't get the same high quality transit as the Westside. They should not be short-changed. They wouldn't want a hulking structure hovering and also have to consider climate change, as the planet is only heating up. The people should not have to wait in the heat; they should have a nice clean station; Alt 4 should be off the table. Finally Alt 6, he agrees with Mr. Anderson, that it is ridiculous. Proposal should be for driverless automatic trains, 3, 4 and 5. He thanked Mr. Anderson.

Vice-Chair Hall opened the floor for deliberation by panelists. Miner asked 1) what is the eminent domain will be, to tear down to put this up? Mr. Anderson answered that there is quite a bit of eminent domain required on all the alternatives, for maintenance and storage facility, much in the more commercial areas than residential areas; the really bad one is Alt 4. He shared his screen, noting that they'll take out 9-11 homes, take a part of the hillside; pointing to all that will go; the most eminent domain of anything you'll see. There are charts of eminent domain in the DEIR. He showed the eminent domain of Alt 6. He noted that Alt 1 has no tunnel; Alt 2 has a small tunnel / monorail; Alt 4 & 5 tunnel diameter 43-1/2 feet; big but only has one tunnel; Alt 6 has two 20-foot tunnels and that this is the old way of doing it, one reason it costs more. He likes the route but thinks they bumbled it with procurement strategy. He noted that there is no eminent domain in Bel Air for Alt 5 but if you dig deep into the DEIR, you'll find in the area in between Sunset and Upper Stone Canyon Road, they'd have to put three modifications on the track to reduce the vibration levels. Mitigation methods, include special track mountings to reduce the vibration levels and noted that at that point in Bel Air, the tunnels are not very deep; 45-55 feet from the top of the tunnel to ground level...

Miner asked 2) what routes do these have that go underneath the Santa Monica Mountains, to which he responded Alts 4 & 5 and noted that the one thing that's good about the bigger tunnels to prevent blowing through, they put in vents; people worry about having eminent domain for vents. That

space above eliminates the need for venting. There are no vents for 3, 5 or 4. Asked 3) what is the escape hatch under the ground under the SM Mountains? If there is no vent, the vent is to take the smoke out? He noted that if there is a fire, you have to walk - five miles, an uphill climb; people will be walking downhill to Westwood. Using the old technology there is no room for vents.

Member Grey asked about what schedule concerns Mr. Anderson has, which he noted has to do with the budget. Talking 17 to 29 billion dollars to build one of these alternatives. If you look at Measure M, a cash mine, this is one of the projects and the budget is \$5.7 billion in 2015, escalate to \$20 billion. Half comes from sales tax. Metro gets \$4.3 billion a year for LA County for transit. All the rest of the money has to come from federal, state, county or city. Metro's budget a year is \$9 billion; if they only have \$4 billion allocated for Measure M, where does the other \$20 billion come from? What happens to the project if there is no money for this project (noting that he was a project manager, when he was an engineer doing work as a project manager) which they will build without knowing. He noted that they said that the schedules are not limited by funding. The funding gets longer, so how do we know how long the schedule is, the answer is we don't. He would double whatever Metro says the schedule is. Obsolesce over time discussed.

Member Templeton asked about public and private partnership (PPP) to which he noted that he has pulled proposals from PRA and went through them but the docs from the PPPs were redacted. Mr. Anderson explained the financing process, first 15 years the company builds and collects fares. However, Metro never explained how a PPP would work; so we have no idea what is going on with a PPP... It is fraught to say you might do something and not say how it will work. His gut tells him it isn't so great. He has asked them for five years to explain it and they won't. It drives him crazy. Alt 6 cannot be built under a PPP.

Templeton asked if Metro assigned the routes or Bechtel pick theirs to which he related his opinion - from what he heard: Skyrail bid Alt 1 with an option for Alt 3, but the one they won the contract on was Alt 1 Bechtel; bid Alt 4 only. They won. Metro realized they didn't have all the alternatives to analyze during the scoping period. They went to Skyrail asked them to do 2, dropped 2, doing 1 and 3. His story they went to Bechtel and said you've got to design Alt 5 and 6, but said well design 4 and 5 but not 6. He noted that Metro had 6 with no one to design it and couldn't do it under PPP.

He knows this is fact: They put in a clause for an optional pass, signed it Alt 6 to the ___ design. Then they realized that the PPP couldn't leak - had to create an administrative firewall, took a year to do, part of the reason the DEIR is three years late. It didn't get designed anywhere at the level of 1, 3 and 4 designed.

Vice-Chair Hall asked why Bechtel declined to design 6 to which Mr. Anderson noted that 4 & 5 are basically same route; when you get a completely different route, a separate design effort; probably didn't have the money to do it.

Hall opened the floor for discussion, and stressed that no vote will take place. Hall related that he wonders where the money will come from. Mr. Anderson noted that he has a video where he asked a Metro person that question, and their answer was it was too soon to think about funding. You have to make a selection first. They pick what they want because it was environmentally the best. They are using the EIR as a decision document.

Dr. Longcore responded that the purpose of the EIR is in fact to identify the environmental impacts of the project and asked him to highlight some of the areas of the analysis, interesting, problematic, surprising, and does he know people who are looking at it from a third party perspective, on the technical aspects of the environmental analysis or are there technical problems or issues on the analysis side. Mr. Anderson wishes he knew someone who can do that, noting that it's expensive to get someone to look at it. One of the considerations he has, for 4 and monorails is noise. He explained that they get an average noise. Most of us are bothered by the instantaneous noise not the average noise. The day/night/level, average it out, sound level meets the requirement but not for the person living in the apartment. The noise and vibration are very scary on this project. He wishes we could get a consultant to take a look at it. He noted that the DEIR is very descriptive, this is the requirement, and we'll do it to fix it. What scares him is the construction noise. They dig from the top down. The construction noise in the DEIR is often immitigable because construction can take years and years and years. Another place that he worries... then aesthetics, Alt 4, was evaluated, that it can't bother the view, they say the view of the mountain won't be changed; he worries about the homes. He mentioned the UCLA water main rupture and that the pipes are old. They had Bechtel present to the NC two weeks ago. Bechtel said "pipe?" That has to be looked at for 30 x the amount of water running through it than the Sunset Boulevard rupture had. He concluded that if you don't know cost, you don't know schedule. They have eminent domain maps but didn't tell the people ...

Hall noted that he has a lot of people in his network who are anti-monorail. Mr. Anderson's view is that he likes the monorail concept and explained that the reason it is happening in a lot of countries, you don't want to tunnel a lot of things underground; above ground where cars are already going, you can run cars under them. They are a little slower because they have to weave around things that are existing. He doesn't have a problem with a monorail. The original monorail was going to run down the center of Ventura Boulevard and suggested running it down the freeway. There wasn't enough room in the center. Now it's on the east side where there are homes, will require putting up sound walls. The construction methods they work at night and create the foundation for the columns at night so they don't have any freeway closures except in the middle of the night. They start building the track, and erect the columns... You can build it really quick if you have the budget to do that. Miner noted that digging caused cracks.

At 8:29 PM, Co-Chair Hall thanked Mr. Anderson and noted that the full BABCNC will vote on whether or not to establish an ad hoc committee; if so, we will have another meeting tentatively scheduled for July 28th to begin looking at "Community Perspectives." He thanked everyone for attending tonight.

Mr. Anderson added that has about 100 photos that he took and annotated each, volume, doc and page in the DEIR, and would be glad to share those with anyone, so that if you see something, it could help you find things out or find things you are interested in. He will share the files. It is out of the DEIR. This is largely intended to be an educational thing so we can participate in the DEIR public comment process.

Mr. Sann wanted to comment on the financial issues, noting that they have had similar questions. When they have asked this question, Metro tells us that literally every single project they've ever built they say they always build them in phases, standard operating procedure. The final stage of Purple... they built in stages, they received money from the Trump administration for phase 2. And

about a year later, they were able to apply for additional federal and state funds, which they received and allowed them to move forward with other stations. They how that is how every metro project is built. They are built in stages. As to federal funding, they would be going for federal funding not during this current presidential administration. They are not planning and not ready to apply.

It was noted that our upcoming full board meeting will be held in person for all who can be there. Come a little early; we'll have some sandwiches. Enjoy the sun, sky, before the meeting.

Good of the Order - None

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM as moved by Hall.

Next Regular PLU Committee Meeting - August 12, 2025 at 7:00 P.M.

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