

1 ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT
2 COMMUNITY WORKSHOP ON REDISTRICTING
3 NORTH BERKELEY SENIOR CENTER
4 1901 HEARST AVENUE
5 BERKELEY, CA
6 OCTOBER 24, 2011, 7:00 PM

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8 LINDA NEMEROFF: Good evening, everybody. We're going to go ahead
9 and get started. I'd like to introduce Huaqi Yuan who is the Planning Data
10 Administrator in charge of developing our maps. My name is Linda Nemeroff. I
11 am the District Secretary at AC Transit and my office is coordinating the
12 redistricting process. Mr. Geller, and I'm sorry, I didn't get your name.

13 MARENA BROWN: Oh, Marena Brown.

14 LINDA NEMEROFF: Are you familiar with redistricting at all?

15 MARENA BROWN: No, Joe came to one of our Council meetings and he
16 was trying to make us aware of the process, so this is why I'm here.

17 LINDA NEMEROFF: Okay, so we'll just go ahead and do a quick
18 overview of the redistricting process and then I'll proceed to explain the plans
19 that we have available, and then of course, we'd love to hear your comments
20 about the plans. These two plans are not the be all, end all of the changes, so
21 any comments you have, or suggestions for improvement will be taken into
22 consideration and we'll propose those to the District's Redistricting Committee.

23 So, to get started, redistricting in its simplest form is the process of
24 equalizing the population in the District area of the five wards. And we do this
25 every ten years based on the census data. This is actually our third public

AC TRANSIT

1 community meeting. We have one more in Oakland on Thursday where we'll be
2 reviewing the plans for the Oakland area, but tonight we're going to be talking
3 about the areas of change between Wards 1 and 2 in Berkeley. And because
4 Ward 1 is landlocked in the northwestern portion of our District the only place the
5 boundary change can occur given the changes in population is within the city of
6 Berkeley.

7 So the timeline of activities coming up, I mentioned we're going to have a
8 meeting on Thursday, following that in two weeks from Wednesday our
9 Redistricting Committee is going to meet. Your outline says here they're going to
10 meet the first and second weeks in November, but the chair of that committee
11 has opted to just meet the second week. They're going to review the public
12 comment that's been received, and if staff feels that they need to go out and
13 develop additional plans to illustrate the public comment that we've gotten, we'll
14 be doing that and presenting that to the committee. Then, on November 16th, the
15 recommendation of the Redistricting Committee will be presented to the whole
16 Board where the Board is going to be asked to set a public hearing and to select
17 the plan or plans that will be the subject of that public hearing which will move
18 forward on the 14th of December. So, we're hoping after the December public
19 hearing the Board will feel comfortable and adopt a plan and that will be our plan
20 going forward for the next ten years, unless there's a reason for us to redistrict
21 again before that.

22 There are a number of laws that apply to the redistricting process. There
23 is the Federal Voting Rights Act, State Voting Rights Act, we have sections in the
24 Public Utilities Code governing transit district law which specifies the standard
25 we're supposed to follow in redistricting our ward boundaries as well as the

1 Election Code. We also do have a Board Resolution that was adopted in the
2 early 90's that sets forth the procedures for redistricting transit ward boundaries
3 and mainly it's equal population, taking into consideration communities of
4 interest, cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity and compactness of the territory of
5 the District, and topography and geography. In designing the plans we also take
6 into account city boundaries and census block and tract boundaries. The
7 Registrar of Voters precincts are developed based on tract boundaries so any
8 places in our District where a previous boundary was split off the tract or split a
9 block, we're trying to go back in and make corrections and make them more
10 whole.

11 The ideal population based on the 2010 census for the five wards is
12 284,743 people and in is a handout you received, there is a printout that basically
13 talks about the current ward boundaries and population deviation. Basically
14 what's happened is Ward 1 has experienced increased deviation by 2.06% and
15 Ward 3 has a decreased standard deviation by a negative 3.62%. So this means
16 that the relative overall range of deviation is 5.67% and this is the reason why we
17 need to adjust the boundaries, to make them as equal as possible because we
18 want that deviation to be as close to zero as possible. The judicial precedent is
19 not more than 10% deviation, and the common thought on it now is actually 5%
20 or less to avoid potential legal challenge on the boundaries that are developed,
21 but our resolution is more strict than that, it's as "equal as practicable" so we take
22 that as being as close to zero as we could possibly be.

23 Right now, I'm going to go over Plan 1. You have a copy of Plan 1 and
24 Plan 2. It should be a two-page map, and there were also packets that talk about
25 Plans affecting the other wards and you can pick one of those up if you need

1 one. It also has the racial statistics for each of the wards at the back. And if you
2 have any questions, I'll be happy to talk about them with you, but right now we're
3 going to focus on the Ward 1 – Ward 2 area of change. Plan 1 currently shows a
4 pink line. [point to the map] And this pink line represents the existing boundary
5 which runs along the City of Berkeley city limit until you get to Telegraph Avenue.
6 The proposal is to actually divert the boundary up through Sacramento Street to
7 Ashby and connect with Telegraph Avenue, making this area more contiguous,
8 more compact and streamlining it a little bit so we don't have the zig-zag in here
9 which does impact our compactness measure. That adjustment actually
10 represents, this area in here is 6,152 people that we're actually taking from Ward
11 1 and making them a part of Ward 2.

12 The other proposal, Plan 2, using Telegraph, which we all know, our
13 existing boundary here is in pink [pointing to the map]. Now this meets Bancroft
14 Way right before you get to Berkeley and goes around it and then up to Virginia
15 Street, just north of UC Berkeley. And what they did in the 2002 boundary lines
16 that were drawn, this tract here was split, this tract was this whole area, but they
17 just pushed this pink area because [inaudible] population. And the same thing
18 happened down here. This is a whole census tract and they actually split it
19 [inaudible], but now we're proposing to take the whole tract of both areas. This
20 top area represents an additional 1,131 people and this is roughly 4,500 people,
21 and this would make [inaudible] based on the fact that these are student
22 populations, faculty and student housing. There's residential on Cedar Street
23 here, but in driving around Berkeley, as Huaqi and I did, looking at what is on
24 each of these streets, Cedar Street has residential, but the opposite side of the
25 block has a lot of apartments, duplexes, things that we would view as students

1 living close to school. So, in trying to keep all the student population together
2 that was the option we put forth here. Huaqi, did you have anything to add?

3 HUAQI YUAN: Yes, basically that line here [inaudible] you see more
4 compactness and also from the split tract into a relative homogenous census
5 tract. In both cases, that means the whole tract. Because by census tract, they
6 are relative homogeneous in terms of social-economic status. So, we try to
7 move the population and at the time try to delineate in such a way that it follows
8 the census tract boundary so that relative communities of interest can be moved
9 into one district because they all belong to one census tract. And the population
10 movement here is around 5,600. So overall, the population deviation from the
11 current 5.67% into Plan 1 like 0.23% and Plan 2 is 0.27% which is maintaining
12 our same standard like last time, the consultant did it like 0.227 something. So
13 one plan is better than the last time and the other is equal to the last time. So we
14 try to keep it as close to zero as we can within the geography and social-
15 economic characteristics.

16 LINDA NEMEROFF: [to the audience] Are there any questions or
17 comments that you want to add. We'd really like to hear from the public that is
18 here, people who live in Berkeley and the surrounding area, what other
19 alternatives should we consider? What are there communities of interest other
20 than what we can obviously identify, that we should know about?

21 AUDIENCE: [Offered no comments or questions]

22 LINDA NEMEROFF: Well, that's our presentation.

23 HUAQI YUAN: The reason we said [inaudible] some relatives not that
24 difficult, even within the current boundary, like suppose we don't change
25 anything, the population deviation is still within the 5.67%. So we start at not a

1 very bad situation, we start at a very good situation. It means that [inaudible]
2 boundary last time so the population deviation, if we take the status quo for 2010
3 without changing anything, it is still 5.67%.

4 STEVE GELLER: Are there any people or groups that are objecting?

5 LINDA NEMEROFF: We've had very little public comment adverse to the
6 plan given to us, nothing in this area for sure. Our community meeting in
7 Hayward yielded some positive feedback in terms of some things that we should
8 look at, but other than that and I think, a comment from Alameda, we haven't
9 really received a lot of attention. And a lot of this has to do with the fact that we
10 are making minor tweaks to our boundaries. We don't have any significant
11 proposals out there that are going to move one city to another ward. We're just
12 adjusting where we have to adjust to meet this population balance we need to
13 make.

14 STEVE GELLER: Well, you didn't move me. It's exciting to think people
15 may get moved to another ward. [audience laughter]

16 LINDA NEMEROFF: This changes who you complain to, in terms of who
17 you deal with when there's an issue.

18 DIRECTOR WALLACE: Can I volunteer to give Cedar Street to Director
19 Harper? The whole street?

20 DIRECTOR PEEPLES: No.

21 LINDA NEMEROFF: No, you can't because in this plan, the current
22 boundary is unaffected in that area, and in this plan, it get's one side of the street
23 in here but it's very limited to a six block area.

24 DIRECTOR WALLACE: [inaudible]

1 DIRECTOR PEEPLES: I think in both plans you have the blocks that
2 complain most.

3 LINDA NEMEROFF: Yes.

4 LINDA NEMEROFF: Unfortunately, it's not very exciting stuff, it's not too
5 controversial.

6 CAROL BABINGTON: Not too sexy.

7 LINDA NEMEROFF: Well, I said that at the other meeting, but it's true.
8 Just very minor adjustments.

9 STEVE GELLER: Are there any objections from the government people?

10 LINDA NEMEROFF: Actually we have not heard any. We did do a very
11 robust public outreach campaign which notified all of the elected officials in the
12 area, community groups, chambers of commerce, advocacy groups,
13 newspapers, various ethnic groups and we have very little comment on the
14 plans. And we put this information on all our buses, so the information is
15 available it's just that it's not received a lot of attention. I happen to know there
16 was one, I think it was a media article that was done that basically said AC
17 Transit is proposing changes but they're all very minor and shouldn't impact
18 anyone. That maybe didn't help us create any excitement.

19 LINDA NEMEROFF: Well, we do have a written comment sheet. If you
20 want to fill it out, if you have any thoughts that you wanted to put down for us,
21 we'd be happy to take that. My email address is on the cover of the handout, so
22 if there's anything you think of after the meeting is over and say "Boy, I wish I
23 could have told them this while I was there", email us at
24 DistrictSecretary@actransit.org and we'll take a look at it and if you propose

- 1 some things that are certainly viable, we'll look at it and make sure the
- 2 Redistricting Committee is aware of it.
- 3 Thank you all for coming. Unless you have any other questions or
- 4 comments, we're done with the presentation.