

April 11, 2010

To: Representatives of The Peninsula Cities Consortium => via e-mail

Rich Cline (chair) Menlo Park
Jerry Carlson Atherton
Christine Wozniak Belmont
Cathy Baylock Burlingame
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(this message is copied to the whole mailing list of the PCC as I have it)

The meeting of the CHSRA last Thursday has narrowed considerably the possibilities on how the train will pass through the peninsula.

- We now know it won't stop in San Jose.
- We know it will use the CalTrain corridor.
- We know it will go to the Trans Bay terminal in San Francisco.
- **We know it will require 4 tracks.**

Yesterday I sent an e-mail which I copy below .

The focus of that e-mail was to call attention to the editorial from Dave Price wherein he calls for a movement to revoke Prop 1A via a State proposition.

The PCC has established several committees. The PCC does not have a committee to explore changing or revocation of Prop 1A.

I am requesting establishment of a new committee to do exactly that. Would you please consider adding to the next meeting agenda an action item to establish such a new committee to explore changing or revocation of Prop 1A.

Just let me add this. The preferred alternative to tunneling the train has severe cost problems. All talk of such a possibility involves Cities having to pay in local funding for at least part of the extra expenses that would be involved. We are not talking a few million in local funding but hundreds of millions. As council members of our local communities, compare those costs to the relatively small cost in trying to revoke or change Prop 1A.

Sincerely,

Morris Brown
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This editorial from the Daily Post titled:

Letters won't stop the rail

which I attach and copy below may seem too extreme for many, but in my opinion it relates reality.

I have little to no hope for initiatives such as CSS, which at best might yield small changes for some local areas, but which will not produce a result that will change this project from being an utter boondoggle for the State and the Country.

The project should be evaluated on much more than local concerns. It should be evaluated on a State wide basis, where ridiculous ridership data, routing to satisfy strong political interests, and a myriad of other miss-steps have produced a project that caused a real High Speed Rail expert, Joe Vranich to state in testimony, it was the worst planned HSR project he had ever seen.

So, Dave Price, Editor of the Daily Post pens this editorial. It deserves much attention, and hopefully will start a movement to accomplish a task that is anything but easy to achieve.

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Letters won't stop the rail

If you want to stop high-speed rail, you have been told to spend the next month flooding Sacramento with e-mails and letters. The more letters we send, the greater the chance we will stop this train. Or so we are told.

Go ahead and write, if it makes you feel better. But our legislators and officials at the California High Speed Rail Authority are not going to read your letters. They're going to hire a PR person to skim them over and provide a canned response. Your letters aren't going to stop the powerful backers of this railroad (labor, engineering firms, land developers) from gutting the heart of Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Atherton, Redwood City, San Mateo and Burlingame with a monster wider, louder and uglier than Caltrain.

Instead of writing letters, let's take some serious steps to stop high-speed rail.

Go back to the ballot

Put the question back on the statewide ballot. A signature- gathering effort will cost about \$500,000, and the election campaign could cost millions more. So this won't be easy.

The campaign would have two themes:

High-speed rail, at a cost of \$43 billion, will take needed state funds away from other more important things like police, firefighting and schools.

The public wasn't told all of the facts about the rail before the 2008 election, and many of the "facts" at the time were greatly exaggerated, such as the projected ridership.

Bring out the lawyers

The Palo Alto area has some of the world's top lawyers and Stanford's law school. We need to form an all-star legal dream team of hundreds of lawyers working on a pro bono basis to stand up to the army of lawyers the state has to push this project down our throats. These lawyers could be:

Suing over every aspect of this project, and constantly demanding restraining orders and injunctions. The more litigating we do, the more likely we can stop this project in the courts. Environmental groups know how to do this better than anyone - let's see if they'll help us?

Going to bat for homeowners whose property the rail authority intends to seize through eminent domain. It's important to act fast because once the state has decided to take a property, it's gone, and the only issue at that point is how much money the homeowner will get.

Threaten their jobs

Let's create a political action committee to raise money and defeat legislators who back this project. Knocking off one or two pro-train or "done right" lawmakers will have more impact than a million letters and e-mails.

Legislators and the rail authority don't care how many letter we write. Its a big joke to them. Thats why theyre telling us to write. It will distract us as they push their project through. But they will care if their jobs are threatened. Lets hit them where it hurts.