

March 14, 2013

Mr. Tom Nolan  
Chairman of the Board  
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency  
One South Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: Questions for review at the forthcoming North Beach neighborhood meeting

Dear Mr. Nolan:

The following questions are the Attachment to the letter dated March 14, 2013 announcing the North Beach neighborhood meeting on March 26, 2013. Please have the SFMTA staff and consultants research and answer each one, and return the answers via email to Aaron Peskin ([aaron.peskin@earthlink.net](mailto:aaron.peskin@earthlink.net)) by March 20, 2013. Thank you. We will review the answers and ask questions at the meeting if additional clarification is needed.

The questions are categorized by the four parts of the proposed meeting agenda.

**1. Impact on the North Beach neighborhood**

1. Does SFMTA have plans to work at the Pagoda site during the America's Cup from July through September 2013?

2. Describe the plan for dealing with the soil that will have to be removed from the Pagoda site during the construction of the retrieval shaft. Will it be trucked away immediately, or stored temporarily on or near the site? How many cubic yards of material will be handled in this manner? How many truckloads will be required to remove the material? What are the truck removal routes? If it is necessary to temporarily store excavated materials at a location near the Pagoda site, please identify the location and state the size of said location.

Has the owner of the affected property given approval to have his land used in this manner?

3. Will the construction of the retrieval shaft be conducted entirely within the Pagoda property lines? If not, describe in detail what will be done outside, and include a description of each activity, the area that will be involved, and the time involved in each activity.

4. Why is SFMTA claiming that the retrieval shaft must be complete and ready to use before the TBMs get to North Beach? What would prevent the TBMs from being simply stored in the completed tunnels until the shaft was completed?

5. With the Pagoda option, how will the 300-foot long "tails" of the TBMs be extracted: lifted out in North Beach, or withdrawn through the completed tunnels to the Harrison Street Portal?

6. Why is SFMTA planning to construct a 45-foot wide by 49-foot long retrieval shaft to accommodate two cylinder-shaped TBMs, each only 22 feet in diameter by 35 feet long?

7. How will the TBMs themselves be removed from the extraction shaft? Will they be removed intact or will they be dismantled in whole or in part before being removed? By what routes will the TBMs be transported from construction site.

**2. Project costs, especially as they affect SFMTA operations.**

8. What effect will diverting \$9.15 million from SFMTA funds to pay for the Pagoda extension have on bus service in North Beach?

What Muni operations will be affected thereby?

9. The project is currently budgeted at \$1.6 billion, a budget that according to the FTA's 2009 risk analysis, could easily be exceeded by \$400 million or more. Given the federal and State of California's long standing refusal to help pay for Central Subway project overruns, how and from what local source would San Francisco raise the funds required to cover overruns?

10. Once the Central Subway is in operation, SFMTA has indicated it will cut bus service along the Stockton corridor. Since the Chinatown station is at the halfway point, how will the remaining half of this busy corridor be served? Since the current Muni 30, 45, and 8 bus lines run along the Stockton corridor and serve Fisherman's Wharf, North Beach, Cow Hollow, and the Marina, how will a reduction in service affect passengers to these areas?

11. What is the cost of each cutter head and shield disposal option including:

(a) removing the cutter heads and shields by crane in North Beach — including the cost of the 4,000+ feet of required extra tunneling, the cost of construction of the retrieval shaft and the treated zone, the cost of demolishing the structure(s) on the Pagoda property, the cost of the use of the Pagoda property for the time involved, etc.;

(b) entombing the cutter heads and shields in an out-of-the-way location in North Beach — including the cost of the 4,000+ feet of extra required tunneling;

(c) removing the cutter heads and shields by crane in Chinatown;

(d) entombing the cutter heads and shields in Chinatown below the path to North Beach; and

(e) dismantling the cutter heads and shields and removing them via the construction tracks and Harrison Street portal.

12. What is the cost of tunneling from Chinatown to North Beach? In 2007 Mr. Funghi estimated the cost to be \$70 million. What is the current estimated cost of the North Beach "add-on"?

13. What is the cost of each 22-foot diameter by 35-foot long cutting head and shield and what is the estimated post-construction resale value of the two cutting heads and shields?

14. What is the cost of constructing the retrieval shaft and the related "treated zone" on the Pagoda property? Provide an itemization of the various costs that make up the total cost of the retrieval shaft and the treated zone, including engineering, labor and materials. What is the total cost of demolishing the structure(s) on the Pagoda property? Provide an itemization of the various costs that make up the total cost of demolishing the structure(s) on the Pagoda property including engineering, labor and materials.

15. Since SFMTA and Planning Commission staff view the Pagoda option as being an “insignificant” variation of the mid-Columbus extraction option, why aren’t Central Subway project funds being used to cover the extra cost involved? In view of the fact that Mr. Funghi has described a contingency within the \$1.6 billion total project price of \$330 million and stated that all contracts to date have come in at or below the Engineer’s Estimate, why are SFMTA funds, as opposed to Central Subway project funds, being used to cover the extra cost of the Pagoda option?

### **3. Effect of construction on nearby structures**

16. What incursions under abutting properties will be necessary to adequately protect the retrieval shaft from active soil pressures?

17. What specific professional analysis has SFMTA obtained that indicates that none of the adverse consequences outlined by Lawrence Karp P.E. will come to pass?

Does the estimated \$9.15 million cost of shifting the extraction site from the middle of Columbus Avenue to the Pagoda site include an adequate allowance to cover all possible subsurface and lateral bracing contingencies. If so, what is the amount of this Pagoda contingency reserve?

18. What other provisions has SFMTA made for the possibility that some or all of Mr. Karp’s predictions will come to pass? Will damages emanating from inverse condemnation proceedings, if any, be covered by insurance, borne by the contractor, or be the responsibility of the City and County of San Francisco?

19. North Beach has at least one instance of a structure damaged by unstable soil conditions, the North Beach Public Pool. In 2006, structural renovations were required due to subsoil erosion which damaged the pool shell, at a cost of several million dollars. The water table and soil conditions beneath the Pagoda are similar, and in fact were responsible for a theater development project in 2000–2001 going well over budget because of the high cost of foundation work. Both projects had to deal with underground streams and high water tables. Why does SFMTA feel they will be more successful at building on unstable soil and high water tables than were the engineers in these other two instances?

### **4. Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) extraction options**

20. Based upon past discussions and testimony, it appears that extracting or otherwise disposing of the TBMs in Chinatown rather than in North Beach would both save the project between \$70 and \$90 million and reduce neighborhood disruption. Under the circumstances, why does the SFMTA regard it as so important to remove the TBMs in North Beach rather than disassemble them near the Washington Street Station for withdrawal along the tunnel construction tracks to the Harrison Street portal, or entomb them below the track level just north of the station?

21. In recent months there have been many instances of where SFMTA spokepeople have given answers to legitimate questions that do not adequately address the points.

At various times we have been told that:

- (a) TBMs could not be removed in Chinatown because “the level of the trackway was too deep.” (This is not true; cranes with longer cables lift greater distances.)
- (b) TBMs are “not designed to be disassembled or cut up and removed along the completed tunnels.” (They may not have been designed with that in mind but it’s done all the time all over the world.)
- (c) TBMs cannot be buried in Chinatown because “they would prevent or impede a future extension of the line.” (If the TBMs were buried and entombed in concrete at a level below the anticipated future trackway, they would impede nothing.)
- (d) TBMs cannot be buried in Chinatown adjacent to the subway because “that would involve negotiation with the property owners for easements or takings.” (Since the impact would be low to non-existent, this would not constitute a significant problem.)

Please respond to the points above, and provide more detail to explain why SFMTA cannot use more effective tunneling techniques that are common throughout the world, and which would make TBM extraction or burial in Chinatown much less costly and disruptive.

22. There have been a number of instances where SFMTA spokespeople have used references to “past in-house studies” or the decisions of “policy-making bodies” with respect to the Chinatown vs. North Beach options for dealing with the TBMs post construction. However, despite requests, the SFMTA has not produced the studies or identified the policy decision makers. For instance, during the February 25, 2013 Board of Supervisors Land Use Committee meeting, Supervisor Chiu asked Program Manager Funghi why the Chinatown extraction option had been rejected. Instead of answering the question, Mr. Funghi stated that the Chinatown option had “recently been presented to and rejected by a Policy Board.” Which policy board was this? Did this board solicit public input? Please give the name of this board, and a reference to its archive of public input. In addition, explain why the SFMTA to date has failed to produce the study that Mr. Funghi claims was conducted in the 2006 to 2008 timeframe that allegedly concluded that a North Beach solution for the TBMs was preferable to a Chinatown solution.

Sincerely,

Lance Carnes, on behalf  
of Meeting Sponsors

cc: Edward D. Reiskin, SFMTA Director of Transportation  
Roberta Boomer, SFMTA Board Secretary  
David Chiu, District 3 Supervisor