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STATE HISTORICAL BUILDING SAFETY BOARD

400 "P" STREET, FIFTH FLOOR
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814



October 11, 1993

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
1120 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: ROUTE 710, Long Beach Freeway Extension

SHBSB EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ATTENTION: Robert Remen, Exec. Dir.

Hon. Members of the Commission:

Presented herewith is a summary of the California STATE HISTORICAL BUILDING SAFETY BOARD (SHBSB) position on the subject Project, reflecting some 10 years of periodic commentary on this matter. As stated by our Board's representative at the Commission's public hearing in Pasadena, September 27, 1993, we regret that we are compelled to continue our opposition to the Caltrans' adopted 710 Route (the Meridian Variation) as indicated on the FEIS/FEIR, for the same reasons we have given in our communications over the last 10 years, namely:

1) The present concept poses an unacceptable, adverse impact on the established communities, historical neighborhoods, districts, sites and landmarks that are in the path of this proposed Project;

2) Further, within the criteria of our state statutes, the State Historical Building Code (SHBC - as found in the State Health & Safety Code, S. 18950-18961) this adopted route is fatally flawed and cannot be sufficiently mitigated to be acceptable, when reviewed under the preservation standards of the SHBC statutes.

3) The latest route variation, though marginally improved over the former schemes, still presents nearly the same destructive potential to the historic environment as the first Caltrans proposal of some 30 years ago;

4) We find that other possible alternative routes for this intended Project, which might preclude the destructive affect on the historic environment, have either not been seriously tested (to our knowledge) or have not been otherwise adequately documented; federal and state laws require that all possible alternatives be seriously considered to avoid adverse impacts to qualified historical properties. We find little or no evidence that such other alternatives have been explored. There appears to be little change to the Project Route over these past years other than a single-minded involvement with the orginal route, with little more than minor adjustments, and with no clear-cut, differentiated, seriously-studied alternative routes.

5) We continue to find that federal and state laws that govern this Project have been violated in both the spirit and letter of these statutes, specifically where it is required that the lead agency consult with and obtain the review of all applicable state agencies, as in the case of our State Board (SHBC, H&SC Div 13, Pt 2.7, S.18951, et seq, esp. 18961). Other federal laws and regulations that appear to have been breached include: NHPA, as amended '92; DOT, S.4(f); NEPA, S.102, last para.; DOI, "Stds. for Rehab": Dist./Neighborhood; DOI "Moving Historic Buildings," 1979). State laws that have not been properly followed include: Pub Res Code: S.5024 et seq; & Cal (Gov.) Exec Order No. W-26-92, etc;

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6) For those unfamiliar with the SHBC and its governing Board, this historic preservation program has been in existence since 1977; the SHBC became mandatory in 1985, with preemptory authority over all state and local authorities having jurisdiction over qualified historical structures "and their associated sites." The Board has regulatory and appellate powers in this field and first promulgated its regulations in 1979 (found in the Calif. Code of Regulations, Part 8 of Title 24) with Chapter 11 providing criteria for "HISTORIC DISTRICTS, SITES AND OPEN SPACES." This latest Project, as defined in the FEIS/FEIR, does not meet the criteria in the latter state regulations;

7) Calif. bill, SB2775 (Torres), was enacted in 1990, which provided the following relevant amendments to the SHBC Preservation Act, viz: The Board's current name was adopted, reflecting its duties with both historic preservation and public safety, the only such state body; the program was extended without term limits (i.e., indefinitely); the Board's composition was increased to include the DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (supposedly to provide a better channel of communication); and Section 18961 was amended to extend the Board's authority over any state agency that made any decision (for whatever kind of project) that physically affects a qualified historical property under the lead agency's jurisdiction. Further, this section also requires that that the given lead agency must obtain the Board's review on such a project, "prior to undertaking action..." For the record, Caltrans has failed to consult with with our Board to obtain our technical review on this Project (for the 10 years we have been requesting its compliance with the law) whether for historic preservation, public safety, disabled access or potential impact on "Historic Districts, Sites or Open Spaces." We have seen no plans, specifications nor even schematic concepts how the Department proposes to mitigate the potential impact of this proposed 710 Route on this alleged, largest collection of historic districts, sites and landmarks that are currently threatened by a federal/state project.

8) One final note: it should be mentioned that our Board's authority and responsibilities are not limited nor confined to review of EIRs; in fact there are no specified constraints on the type of projects to be reviewed. Accordingly, no matter what happens to the FEIR of this Project, the statutory requirement continues in force, namely that the lead agency must submit its Project in sufficient detail to our Board so that we can make an appropriate, technical evaluation, in compliance with the laws of California.

CONCLUSION:

In view of the above stated concerns, the FEIS/FEIR of this proposed Project might well be in legal jeopardy if challenged by an opponent, due to the apparent lack of compliance with both state and federal laws, codes and regulations that are applicable for this Project. Further, the SHBC statutes, "which occupy the field" (i.e., preempt it) mention historic preservation, restoration, rehabilitation and/or relocation, as well as historic districts, sites and open spaces. But the latter, unlike isolated, individual landmarks cannot be relocated nor re-created with integrity, once destroyed. There is, in effect, no genuine mitigation for the historic neighborhoods, districts and sites that are threatened by this Project. Once destroyed, the latter are irretrievable. Without, a comprehensive, detailed submission by Caltrans to our Board (as required by the spirit and letter of the law) a true evaluation of

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this Project's ultimate impact is not feasible. However, based on the very limited information available (indirectly, from sources other than Caltrans), preliminary conclusions on this Project might well be that: 1) The proposed 710 Route can not be sufficiently mitigated to be acceptable to this Board due to its overwhelming impact on the historical environment of this Project; 2) Accordingly, other less destructive alternatives must be seriously considered and ultimately one of these must be adopted, when reviewed in the context of historic preservation (as required by the SHBC standards, regulations and guidelines); 3) Such alternatives to be studied might include a new path outside the historic preservation impact area (whether to the west or east of the current, chosen right-of-way); 4) Another alternative that can be studied is deep tunneling under the adopted historical areas (not a cut-and-cover method, which is historically and structurally destructive to the sites and landmarks, but leaving them thus undisturbed); 5) A so-called "low build" approach that has been mentioned by opponents should be considered, providing it produces minimal damage to the historic environment; or 6) In the event no suitable project alternative can be developed to satisfy the historical preservation criteria given herein, then a "no-build," (i.e., no project) decision might be required; in that event, it should be noted that Caltrans still has the statutory responsibility to maintain the given historical properties under its jurisdiction, in accordance with the standards of the SHBC (i.e., "continuing use" maintenance), until such times that it releases custody through transfer and/or sales, etc. Please advise of your intent or if there are any questions.

We hope that this Executive Summary of our comments, based on the limited data informally obtained, via other non-Caltrans sources, will be of assistance in advancing the successful conclusion to this long-standing, controversial Project. We also hope that Caltrans will be more forthcoming and responsive in this matter than it has in the past, in the best interests of historic preservation and the public. Thank you for your courtesies in this matter.

Attached hereto is a bound set of exhibits and documents for reference, including the testimony of our SHBSB representative at the Commission hearing in Pasadena last Sept. 27th, with copies of past letters from our Board on this Project. Also included is a subject of transcending importance that concerns our respective agencies and the safety and welfare of all Californians, the Caltrans' "BRIDGE SEISMIC RETROFIT PROGRAM," and our comments of support on it.

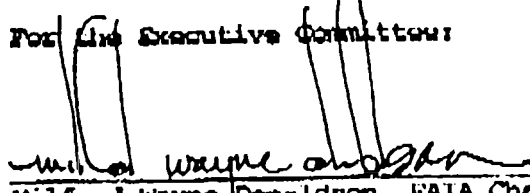


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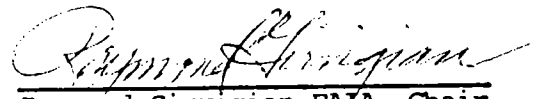
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Very truly yours,

For the Executive Committee:


Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA, Chairman
State Historical Building Safety Board

c: Federal Highway Administration
Office of the State Architect
SHPO
Caltrans
SHBSB Ex Com & Members


Raymond Girvigian, FAIA, Chair
Emeritus & Admin Law Advisor
SHBSB

Attachments: A bound set, entitled: "Testimony...to the Calif. Transportation Commission, -Sept. 27, 1993, Hearing in Pasadena, CA., including:

- a) Addendum, Oct. 04, 1993 excerpts:
"Fault-lines: Seismic Safety..." by W.P. McGowan,
California History, Vol. 72, No. 2, Summer 1993;
- b) Memo, Sept. 28, 1993, to SHBSB Chairman, noting Outline of
of Exhibits given at the 9/27/93 Commission Hearing
- c) Misc. Cal Trans Comm Hearing data, Sept. 27, 1993
- d) Transcript of SHBSB rep., Girvigian at 9/27/93 Hearing
- e) Copy of SHBSB letters to Caltrans: 1988, 1987, 1984 & 1983
- f) Excerpts: Caltrans report: "BRIDGE SEISMIC RETROFIT
PROGRAM," Jan. 1, 1991
- g) Copies of Cal. Codes relevant to g) above: Gov. Code 14052;
14526.25; St. & Highways Code 179.3 & 179.4.

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TESTIMONY

By

RAYMOND GIRVIGIAN

on Behalf of the

Executive Committee of the

STATE HISTORICAL BUILDING SAFETY BOARD

to the

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

September 27, 1993

Pasadena, CA

October 10, 1993

California Transportation Commission
1120 "N" Street
Sacramento, California, 95814

RE: ROUTE 710 (Long Beach Freeway Extension)

We oppose the completion of the Route 710 Long Beach Freeway Extension because it is an obsolete idea whose time has long since come and gone! Over thirty years ago, when it might have been useful as a transportation concept, the City of South Pasadena offered as its accepted solution the so-called Westerly Route in lieu of the bisecting Meridian Route. At that time, the Westerly Route would have traversed a relatively underdeveloped urban path that could have precluded the devastating project route adopted by, and stubbornly embraced by CalTrans and the California Transportation Commission for the past 30 years. The Westerly Route was not in itself ideal, and would have adversely affected many properties, historical and otherwise. But it was a possible area of compromise -- then.

We note that in a recent Los Angeles Times article on the Century Freeway, the City of Hawthorne, some years back, successfully negotiated to have that freeway by-pass it to avoid bisecting that city. Are some cities, like some people, more deserving than others? CalTrans could have skirted South Pasadena in the same way, but instead proposed to ruthlessly cut a fatal swath through the heart of our city. The Meridian Route, along with the half-century old Pasadena Freeway, (which incidentally has bisected South Pasadena for 50 years, but barely touches Pasadena), would be a death blow for us, if built -- essentially the end of a 100 year-old, multi-ethnic city of historical neighborhoods, outstanding schools and thousands of trees.

The CalTrans solution is no longer acceptable in today's environmentally sensitive political climate. Since the old Westerly route area is now irretrievably lost through years of urban development, a new transportation alternative is being proposed by South Pasadena that is cheaper, quicker, environmentally acceptable and could be an immediate job producer. The old "Transportation-Industrial Complex" had its day and had its chance back then, 30 years ago, and threw it away!

For those who still cling to the prehistoric concept of a Post-War, smash ahead, auto-choked concrete freeway of by-gone days, (a 1950's solution for the 21st. century) -- there are at least three, less destructive alternatives to consider:
1) a complete 6 mile, fully underground (but not a cut-and-cover) tunnel; or 2) a new Westerly Route along the Arroyo Seco,

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all the way to the 210 Freeway; or, failing that: 3) accept a no build, no project (and no solution) alternative.

But there is, however, another alternative that could be viable for at least the next 20 to 30 years and possibly beyond -- South Pasadena's "low build" solution, an optimum approach to integrate the latest in planning and the newly developing transportation technologies that can respect our mature developed neighborhoods and historical communities; it promises the least harmful impact to the established urban scene - without a new billion dollar freeway.

We must accept the reality of our times and adopt this reasonable alternative; in the process, we can save our communities, provide transportation relief - and create jobs now, not 20 years from now!

Very truly yours,


For the Girvigians, by Beverly Girvigian
South Pasadena, CA.

c: Senators Boxer & Feinstein
Rep. Moorehead, 27th Dist.
Federal Highway Administration
(Fed.) Council on Environmental Quality
State Senator Russell, 21st Dist.
Assemblyman Hoge, 44th Dist
South Pasadena City Council
National Trust for Historic Preservation

encl: copy, L.A. TIMES article, 10/10/93P

B & R Girvigian / P O BOX 220 / South Pasadena, CA 91031

After Decades of Debate, Century Freeway to Open

LOS ANGELES TIMES
Sun Oct. 10, 1993
page A-1

■ **Transit:** \$2.2-billion project has torn apart lives and communities but also brought job training and housing.

By NORA ZAMICHOW
TIMES STAFF WRITER

The Century Freeway, a 17-mile stretch of concrete running between Norwalk and El Segundo, opens this week, capping 30 years of bitter debate and leaving a dubious legacy: No freeway in the nation has cost more or created as much havoc.

The Century Freeway sliced neighborhoods in two, tore through well-tended homes and displaced about 21,000 people living in its path. It created a wasteland roamed by vandals, a place where bodies and sofas were unceremoniously dumped.

But the \$2.2-billion project also has given the communities some-

thing in return. It is the only freeway that has provided housing and job training. It also has employed more women and minorities than any other transportation enterprise in California.

But some question whether the benefits have come at too high a cost. They wonder if the communities decimated by the freeway's route will ever recover. And they speculate that in the future, projects with such tradeoffs might not survive.

"If we were starting today to consider whether or not to build the freeway, we might come up with another conclusion," said Martin Wachs, professor of urban planning and dean of transporta-

Please see **FREWAY, A38**

FREEWAY: Communities Ripped Apart by Road

Continued from A38

reached \$2.2 billion, which does not include the cost of building the 22-mile trolley—another \$720 million that will be paid by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Officials decided in 1987 to name the freeway after Rep. Glenn Anderson, who was instrumental in obtaining federal funding for the project. Most people, however, know it by its early name, the Century Freeway, which originated because at one time it was slated to run along Century Boulevard.

Long before the freeway's planned opening, some already were reaping the benefits.

Antonio Maceo, like many others, rented a house purchased by the state after the lawsuit halted freeway construction. Later, once disputes over the route were resolved, Maceo and others were allowed to buy their homes at bargain prices. Maceo, 63, a retired car dealer, said he bought a home valued at \$217,000 for \$50,000.

"Can you imagine getting all this for 50 grand?" said Maceo, proudly pointing to his blue three-bedroom home by the side of the freeway in Inglewood.

In hindsight, some urban planners say the freeway accelerated the deterioration of the communities but was not the sole cause.

"Changes were going on in soci-

ety—everyone agreed that some cities were negatively impacted by the removal of housing and the creation of giant swaths of barren land," said Joseph DiMento, professor of social ecology at UC Irvine. "But people were moving out for reasons other than the freeway."

Even officials from cities that

The Long Road to Completion

- **Mid-1950s:** Planning begins.
- **1972:** Litigation begins in a class-action lawsuit seeking a new environmental impact review; suit was filed by four couples living within the right of way, the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People, the Sierra Club, the Environmental Defense Fund, the Freeway Fighters and the city of Hawthorne.
- **1977:** The California Highway Commission adopts a modified "bell curve" route to accommodate Hawthorne, which opposed a route that would bisect the city.
- **1979:** The class-action suit is settled, and officials are required to relocate or build housing and adopt an affirmative action program to increase the involvement of businesses owned by women and minorities.
- **1981:** An amendment in the settlement calls for several features, including six lanes for general traffic and two car-pool lanes, 10 transit stations and park-and-ride lots for a rail line, landscaping and noise attenuation.
- **1982:** Freeway construction begins.
- **1983:** Housing construction begins.
- **1987:** Officials name the freeway in honor of Rep. Glenn Anderson, who was instrumental in obtaining federal funding for the project.
- **1993:** Freeway construction ends. Housing construction is scheduled to be complete in 1997.

Hawthorne Mayor Steve Andersen, who once belonged to the Freeway Fighters.

Andersen and others point to areas such as the San Fernando Valley and cities such as Monrovia that benefited from the presence of a freeway. Still, some are skeptical that the freeway will prove to be an economic boon.

"The preferred location these days is suburban location; jobs are moving out, people are moving out," economist Kleinhenz said. "To get development along the Century Freeway would to some extent be bucking a long-term trend."

Many experts say environmental laws make it far easier for communities and residents to block major projects such as the Century Freeway. Nor do all Angelenos believe—as many did in the '50s—that constructing a highway is the best solution to congestion.

"The social and economic costs—in terms of dollars and disruption to communities—are so high," said Wachs of UCLA. "There are real benefits to freeways. The key is to get them on the ground early in areas that are going to develop and not to force them through healthy, functioning communities."

Los Angeles' newest freeway, even transportation officials say, may be its last.

strongly opposed the project now tout it as likely to spur economic growth, revitalizing neighborhoods hit hard by the freeway construction and the recession.

"The real estate community and the business community in the last six months, and from now on, will perceive the whole corridor as a good place to purchase land," said