

S/RRT/10

Decision 92 03 046 MAR 11 1992

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Application of the City of Montclair for
an Order authorizing construction of a
crossing at-grade between Monte Vista
Avenue and the track of the Southern
Pacific Transportation Company, Baldwin
Park Branch, P.U.C. No. BBO-516.08

ORIGINAL

Application 91-01-008
(Filed January 7, 1991)

O P I N I O N

The City of Montclair (Montclair) also acting on behalf of the City of Upland (Upland), requests authority to construct Monte Vista Avenue at grade across the tracks of Southern California Regional Rail Authority's (SCRRA) Baldwin Park branch line, in Montclair and Upland, San Bernardino County. The track was formerly owned by Southern Pacific Transportation Company (SPT).

The proposed crossing is part of the Monte Vista Avenue Extension project in both cities. The basic traffic circulation network within Montclair and Upland consists of an arterial grid. This project will open a "missing link" in this grid, by connecting two existing arterial lengths of Monte Vista Avenue. Recent expansion of the Montclair Plaza shopping mall, new on-ramps and off-ramps between Interstate Route 10 and Monte Vista Avenue, and a new Park-and-Ride rail transportation center south of the proposed crossing have increased the need to connect the discontinuous portions of this arterial street. In the future, Monte Vista Avenue will become the primary arterial connecting the planned Route 30 Foothill Freeway with Montclair, west Upland, and east Claremont, further increasing its importance in the arterial network. Opening the missing link will also bypass a detour now required of emergency and fire response equipment.

By Decision (D.) 88-03-074, dated March 23, 1988 in Application (A.) A. 87-09-004, the Commission granted authority to the City of Montclair to construct The Monte Vista Underpass at separated grades under the tracks of The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company's (AT&SF) Main Line. The authority to construct the underpass, which expired April 22, 1991, was extended for two years, to April 22, 1993, by Safety Division Resolution TED-34, dated March 5, 1991. The proposed grade crossing of the Baldwin Park Branch Line would be one-eighth mile north of the AT&SF Underpass, which has not yet been constructed. Both the underpass and proposed grade crossing are needed to connect Monte Vista Avenue into the arterial grid.

Montclair's consulting engineers investigated the alternatives of constructing an overpass or underpass at the proposed SCRRA crossing.

An overpass is infeasible because the rail transportation center, its parking lot, and the intersection of its access street with Monte Vista Avenue are all at the same approximate elevation as the SCRRA track. The station platform at the transportation center will be adjacent to the proposed crossing. Because of the minimum vertical gradients required for ascending and descending vehicular traffic, there are inadequate distances for construction of overpass ramps from the rail transportation center and the AT&SF underpass.

An underpass is infeasible because of the adjacent rail transportation center. An adjacent flood control channel also makes an underpass infeasible. Approximately 160 feet north of the proposed grade crossing is the San Antonio Wash. The wash consists of alluvial rock and gravel, lined with a rectangular cross-section reinforced concrete channel. It is impractical to construct a subaqueous tunnel under this flood control channel. With the proposed grade crossing, Monte Vista Avenue can bridge the wash with a box culvert of standard design.

SCRRA is the five-county joint powers authority created under Public Utilities (PU) Code § 130255. By 1993 SCRRA commuter trains will operate from Union Station in downtown Los Angeles to Moorpark (Ventura County), Santa Clarita (north Los Angeles County), Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. SCRRA calls its commuter rail system "Metrolink". Metrolink is the regional rail program mandated by PU Code §§ 130450 - 130455.

Responsibility for this portion of the Baldwin Park branch passed to SCRRA from member agency San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) on September 13, 1991. SANBAG and SCRRA member agency Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) had purchased the branch from SPT in 1990. SPT operates rail freight service along the branch, and by agreement can continue to do so during designated off-peak hours. SPT plans to abandon some of this freight service in the future.

Montclair is the lead agency for this project under the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), as amended, Public Resources Code §§ 21000, et seq. After preparation and review of an Initial Study, Montclair issued a Negative Declaration and approved the project. On August 1, 1991, Montclair filed a Notice of Determination with the San Bernardino County Clerk, which found that the proposed project would not have significant effect upon the environment.

The Commission is a responsible agency for this project under CEQA and has reviewed and considered the lead agency's Initial Study and Negative Declaration. It can be seen with certainty that there will be no significant impact on the environment, which can be attributed to the construction of the crossing.

Notice of the application was published in the Commission's daily calendar on January 15, 1991. On January 28, 1991, SPT filed a protest. By letter dated June 13, 1991 addressed to the Executive Director SPT withdrew its protest. SANBAG and

SCRRA were served with a copy of the application. By letters dated February 7 and June 26, 1991, SCRRA member agencies SANBAG and LACTC expressed acceptance of the proposed crossing. By letter dated January 8, 1992, SCRRA supported approval of the application.

The site of the proposed project has been inspected by the Commission's Safety Division staff - Traffic Engineering Section. The staff examined the need for the Monte Vista Avenue extension project and access into the rail transportation center. Staff also examined feasibility of grade separation and safety of the proposed grade crossing design. Staff, Montclair and Montclair's consulting engineers conclude that a grade separation is not feasible. SCRRA agrees with this conclusion. The proposed grade crossing would be fully protected with automatic flashing lights and gates. The staff recommends that the new crossing be approved.

The application was found to be in compliance with the Commission's filing requirements, including Rule 38 of Rules of Practice and Procedure which relates to the construction of public highways across railroads. A location map and details from the project plans are shown in Appendix A.

Findings of Fact

1. Montclair requests authority under Public Utilities Code Sections 1201-1205 to construct Monte Vista Avenue at grade across the track of SCRRA's Baldwin Park branch line, in Montclair, San Bernardino County.
2. Montclair is also acting on behalf of Upland.
3. The Monte Vista Avenue Extension Project is in both Montclair and Upland.
4. Control of the Baldwin Park branch has been transferred to SCRRA after purchase of the branch from SPT.
5. By letter dated June 13, 1991, SPT withdrew a protest filed January 28, 1991.

6. SPT, SCRRA and SCRRA member agencies, LACTC and SANBAG do not oppose construction of the proposed grade crossing.

7. The grade crossing is required for connection of Monte Vista Avenue into the regional arterial street grid, and access into a rail transportation center.

8. Construction of a grade separation is not feasible.

9. Public convenience and necessity require construction of the proposed grade crossing.

10. Public safety requires that protection at the crossing be four Standard No. 9 automatic gate-type signals (General Order (GO) 75-C).

11. Montclair is the lead agency for this project under CEQA, as amended.

12. The Commission is a responsible agency for this project and has reviewed and considered the lead agency's Initial Study and Negative Declaration.

13. This project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Conclusions of Law

1. The application should be granted as set forth in the following order.

2. There is no opposition to this application, a public hearing is not necessary.

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. City of Montclair (Montclair), also acting in behalf the City of Upland (Upland), is authorized to construct Monte Vista Avenue at grade across the Southern California Regional Rail Authority's (SCRRA) Baldwin Park Branch Line tracks at the boundary line of the Cities of Montclair and Upland, San Bernardino County, at the location and substantially as shown by

plans attached to the application and Appendix A of this order to be identified as Crossing No. BBO-516.2. This branch line was formerly owned by Southern Pacific Transportation Company.

2. Construction of the crossings shall be equal or superior to standard No. 8 of General Order (GO) 72-B.

3. Maintenance of the crossings shall conform to GO 72-B.

4. Clearances shall be in accordance with General Order (GO) 26-D. Walkways shall conform to GO 118.

5. Protection at the crossing shall be four Standard No. 9 automatic gate-type signals (GO 75-C) controlled by constant warning time train detection devices.

6. Construction expense of the crossing and installation cost of the automatic protection shall be borne by Montclair.

7. Maintenance cost of the automatic protection shall borne equally by both Montclair and Upland under PU Code § 1202.2.

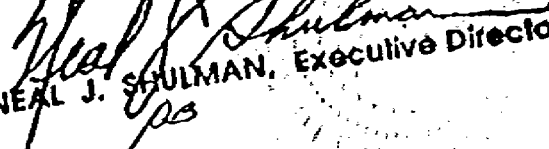
8. Within 30 days after completion of the work under this order, Montclair shall notify the Safety Division in writing that the authorized work has been completed.

9. This authorization shall expire if not exercised within two years unless time is extended or if the above conditions are not complied with. Authorization may be revoked or modified if public convenience, necessity or safety so require.

10. The application is granted as set forth above.
This order becomes effective 30 days from today.
Dated MAR 11 1992 at San Francisco, California.

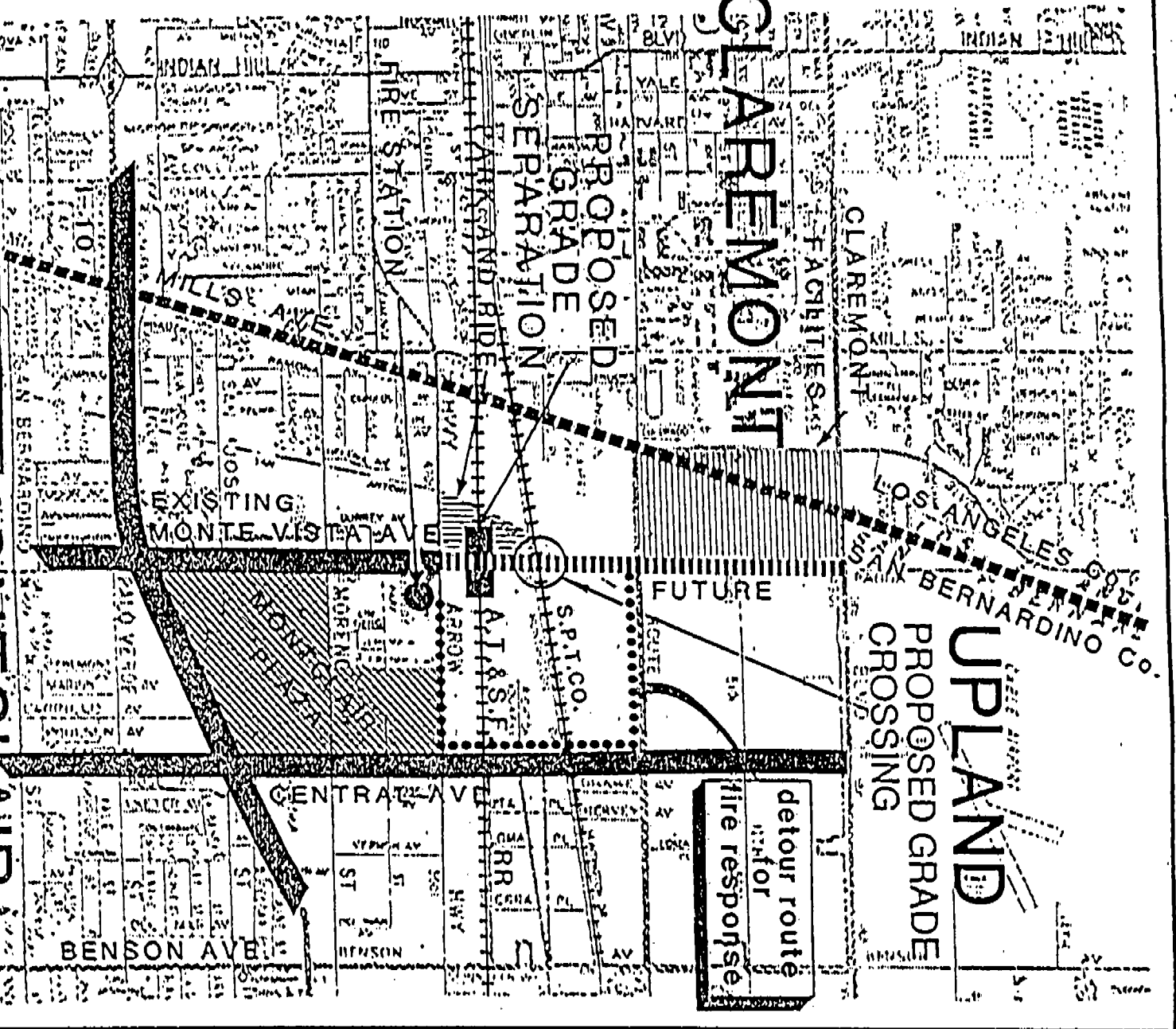
DANIEL Wm. FESSLER
President
JOHN B. OGANIAN
PATRICIA M. ECKERT
NORMAN D. SHIMWAY
Commissioners

I CERTIFY THAT THIS DECISION
WAS APPROVED BY THE ABOVE
COMMISSIONERS TODAY


NEAL J. SHULMAN, Executive Director

MONTE VISTA EXTENSION
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

CLAREMONT
MONTOLAIR



detour route
for
fire response

