

From: rick.luttmann@sonoma.edu
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Remarks for Public comment, Jennings Crossing
Date: Saturday, July 17, 2021 6:38:07 PM

I am writing to the Santa Rosa City council in regard to item 2.1 on the agenda for Tuesday, 20 July, the Jennings Ave grade crossing.

It is beyond absurd that this crossing still hasn't been built.

It is beyond absurd that it should even be controversial.

No credible case has ever been made to NOT build it.

It is a vital crossing for school children -- who will surely cross there whether there is an "official" crossing or not. That will be more dangerous than a regulated crossing. Children are not going to walk all the way to the next street north or south to cross at a sanctioned crossing.

Neither are adults who need to get from their neighborhood west of the SMART track to businesses they patronize on the east side.

I strongly urge the SR City Council to apply for an extension of the time to build this crossing, given that it apparently cannot be completed in the time remaining on the permit.

-- Rick Luttmann

From: [JLDuncan](#)
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item 2.1
Date: Monday, July 19, 2021 4:44:01 PM

Special Meeting, July 20, 2021, Item 2.1

Mayor and Members of the Santa Rosa City Council:

I want to acknowledge and thank the members of the City Council for being steadfast in your resolve to keep Jennings Avenue open at the SMART rail line.

When the CPUC staff insisted that approval of the Jennings Crossing was conditional on closing one or two crossings in the West End or Railroad Square neighborhoods you took it the CPUC and won the approval without closing any other rail crossings.

You allocated the funds to build the crossing and authorized the City Manager to enter into a Reimbursement Agreement so that SMART would build the crossing with the City paying all the costs. The goal was that SMART was to build the crossing before the trains started running to save money and to avoid interfering with train traffic.

But SMART did not do so. Instead, it insisted that the City must first enter into an unrelated contract. Before this issue could be resolved, the disastrous Tubbs Fire struck Santa Rosa. When the City Council finally was able to meet with SMART officials about that issue, SMART unexpectedly took the position that it no longer supported the crossing because it was unsafe.

The City Council held a Study Session on the Jennings Crossing and unanimously expressed their commitment to building and reopening the Jennings Crossing with or without SMART. The City Council directed staff to take all necessary steps to move the process forward. Because the CPUC approval was going to expire, the City applied to the CPUC for a two-year extension of time to build the crossing.

SMART opposed the City's application for an extension but the CPUC rejected the arguments of SMART's staff and once again the City won CPUC approval. The CPUC stated that it expected SMART to comply with the Jennings approval and cooperate with the City to reach an agreement regarding the construction.

SMART disregarded the CPUC approval and did not cooperate with the City to reach an agreement. The City could not move forward in 2020 because of more wildfires, the George Floyd civil unrest and, above all, the Covid 19 pandemic.

I was heartened by the news that the City Council had applied to the CPUC on Friday for a two-year extension of time. Thank you for your steadfast resolve to reopen the Jennings Crossing.

James L. Duncan

Santa Rosa, 95401