



**TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
City Council Chambers
1000 San Pablo Avenue
December 1, 2011 – 7:00 PM**

1. HOLIDAY TREATS

2. **CALL TO ORDER** Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair McCroskey.

3. **ROLL CALL. Members present:** Anderson, Knapp, Mazur, McCroskey. Miki was absent and excused. Staff present: Lt. Geissberger, Officer Peter O'Connor, Cunningham, Leptien, Chavez.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES for November 3, 2011.** Minutes were approved with no changes. Motion Anderson/McCroskey: Approve the minutes as presented. Vote: 3 ayes, 1 abstained (Mazur because she was absent for last meeting).

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ken Wan addressed the Commission regarding the new signal at Buchanan and Jackson not detecting bicyclists.

Peggy McQuaid asked the Commission to put on the agenda early next year the issue of parking spaces for people with disabilities on San Pablo and Solano Avenues and to include people with disabilities in the Commission discussions.

Anderson reminded the Commission that the elections for Chair and Vice Chair should take place in January. He would also like to put in a future agenda the issue of parking and safety around schools.

6 PRESENTATION

6-1 Police Report

Lt. Geissberger reported that in October 2011, there had been 21 collisions in the City: 11 non-injury and 10 injury collisions, 4 hit/runs. 1 collision had occurred on Marin Avenue, one (1) was auto/pedestrian collision and 3 were bicycle/auto collision. APD issued 121 citations and 18 DUI arrests.

He said that the APD had been recognized by the California Highway Patrol for placing second in DUI and speed enforcement, a program Officer Peter O'Connor had been working last year.

Mazur asked how many "parking on sidewalk" violations had been cited in the past month. Geissberger said that he would check, but that the enforcement is complain-driven. Mazur asked to be notified when APD start enforcing it on Washington.

Anderson and Knapp complimented Officer O'Connor.

McCroskey asked about the two accidents on Masonic involving a bicyclist and a group of pedestrians. Geissberger explained that the collision involving a cyclist on Masonic was because the cyclist did not stop because his foot got clipped, the first vehicle stopped, the second vehicle did not and hit the cyclist. The second accident involved five kids crossing San Pablo eastbound towards Taco Bell when a vehicle struck them.

7.0 DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

Chavez said that there had been a request to go through the Report Section first, but since there was a discussion on the Agenda Format Change (item 7-2), she suggested discussing this item first.

7-2 Agenda Format Change.

Chavez introduced the issue through a Staff Report prepared by the Community Development Director. Staff recommendation was to allow Commission members to discuss and receive public comment on all presentations, action items and reports, and to provide direction to staff on format of agendas and content of agenda packets. The Commission asked the public to speak.

Preston Jordan expressed his support for discussion of report items. Amy Smolens asked the Commission to give Hank Ibser the opportunity to comment when he arrived for the Report segment because he was under the impression that it would be discussed later in the evening.

The discussion was brought back to the Commission members.

(Anderson) The Commission cannot do anything on Report issues.

(McCroskey) Sometimes it is important to clarify to the public issues discussed on the Report section.

(Mazur) Comments on all items are welcomed.

(Knapp) Concerned about whether Reports is a waste of time because the Commission cannot do anything. In the past, there has been a tendency to let the Reports Section go on forever and the same comments are said over and over. As a result, meetings run late.

Motion Mazur/McCroskey: Implement a 6-month trial for report presentations with no more than 2 minutes per question.

Cunningham suggested that the public comment time be set at three (3) minutes in order to make efficient use of the timer. The motion was amended to allow a total of five minutes for discussion after staff presents. Vote: 3 Ayes/1 opposed (Anderson).

8 Reports

8-1 Share the Road Signage on Masonic

Chavez introduced Public Works Director, Richard Cunningham and Construction Supervisor on Contract, Greg Jacobs.

Cunningham said that Share the Road signs had been ordered and the City would be studying Fehr and Peers' proposal for the design of the sharrows location on Masonic. He said that Public Works had been dealing with the issue of passageway usage and the significant tension between cyclists and pedestrians.

The discussion was open to the Commission.

(Knapp) The 7ft. fenced path is intended for both, pedestrians and bicyclists, would not it be better to remove the fence and continue to restrict parking on the east side of the street?

(Mazur) Leave the fence only for pedestrians and bicyclists should use the street.

(McCroskey) There are different levels of cycling ability.

Cunningham said that the 7-foot fence was to allow a marginal buffer of one foot for bicyclists between the lane and the fence. The original idea was to do something similar to what Ohlone Greenway offered, but the problem was lack of space.

Discussion was open to the public.

In regards to the Reports section, Mazur said that it would have been helpful to poll the audience after each report item is presented and ask that people wishing to comment on the particular item, assemble in line by the podium.

Hank Ibser spoke about bicycle safety along Masonic Avenue and relayed the trauma that his young son suffered by the incident they were involved in when riding his bicycle with a trailer along southbound Masonic and they were hit by the car door when the motorist opened the door. His son had to be sent to the emergency room and had reconstructive surgery. He suffered a concussion. He thinks that motorists on Masonic Avenue should be more aware of the presence of bicyclists on the street.

8-2 Pierce Street construction project

Jacobs said that he estimated completion of this project by the end of January.

8-3 Speed Hump Installation on the 800 and 900 blocks of Carmel and 950 block of Ordway.

Mazur left the meeting during this report. Cunningham reported that the pavement work had been completed and was anticipated that the striping was going to be installed the following week. Jacobs said that he had been working with the residents whose homes were adjacent to the hump to identify location of the signage.

7. Discussion and Possible Action on Matters Related to the Following Items:

7-1 Review of Design Options and Cost Estimates for Improvements at the Intersection of Marin Avenue and Santa Fe Avenue.

Chavez provided background on the grant history and details of the grant application and introduced Randy Leptien for the presentation of the project implementation. Leptien said that on October 2010 the Commission reviewed the revised 65% plans. Revisions to this plan included retaining the westerly crosswalk, which required shifting the centerline to the east. This involved a significant amount of work which escalated the construction cost. Leptien introduced Geoff Rubendall to present the design options developed for this project. Option 1, which evolved from the last Traffic and Safety Commission revisions to the 65% plans, makes changes to the four corners of the intersection, but requires major changes to the southeast corner. The cost of this option is \$1.2 million. Option 2 was developed with the goal of saving construction costs. This option significantly reconfigures the northwest corner of the intersection while reducing the work on the southeast and southwest corners. It entails less grading, drainage and concrete work. However, this option requires the installation of an additional speed hump in the 800 block of Santa Fe Avenue. The Commission had the following questions:

(Knapp) Is loop detection included in Option 2? Would it be detecting bicyclists? Is it only one speed hump proposed on the 900 block of Santa Fe? Would the Curtis Street proposal be deferred? Would this project impact trees on Curtis St.? Leptien said that there is a possibility of another Caltrans grant for the Curtis Street sidewalk.

(Anderson) In Option 1, vehicles may back up all the way to Solano during commute times on the southbound direction. Is there going to be on street parking loss? How does the new speed hump impact traffic on the 900 block? Rubendall said that the southbound right turn would not be made at high speed. The design in both cases allows for a vehicle to stop and then proceed with the turn. In terms of parking loss, there may be a loss of 10-15 feet of on-street parking.

(McCroskey) Where would the dollars come from if the City decides to go ahead? Leptien said that most probably be Measure F 2006.

The discussion was open to the public. The following people spoke: Jonathan Knight, Sharon Caldeski (Crossing Guard), Preston Jordan, Amy Smolens, Swarna Matz, Nick Pilch. The following were the comments:

- Support moving forward with the project. It is important to have this project done by the summer of 2012. Keep in mind that although the 900 block of Santa Fe showed speeding, the volume was so high that according to policy speed humps were not recommended.
- Implement a left turn signal from Marin onto Santa Fe, install photo enforcement for red light violations. The bulb outs are going to create a safety hazard. The location of the No Right Turn on Red sign is wrong and is not visible to motorists.
- Strollers and Rollers support Option 2. The northeast and southeast corners have drainage inlets. Try to replicate what was done with the drainage at the intersection of Marin and Curtis. Install a green swale-vegetation area in the bulb outs. Eliminate the last parking space in the northwest side of the intersection. Install one through lane instead of a left/through combination because it is difficult to predict what the motorists in the oncoming left/through lane will do (northbound/southbound direction).
- Install loop detectors for bikes at the intersection and install inverted U bike racks.
- Is the project going to impact on-street parking on the southwest corner? It would be good to see the plans ahead of time. Appreciates being brought to the table as a state holder.
- Surprised that speed humps are being considered for an arterial street. Do not decrease the size of the bulb outs. It is better to have a long line of cars waiting to go through the intersection than to allow them to make a fast right turn.

The Commission discussed the item:

(Anderson) He would like to make sure that the Montessori school be notified of any upcoming meetings.

(Mazur) Is it possible to have a phased signal for the southbound left turn? Rubendall said that there will be permissive turns on Santa Fe, but protected left turns on Marin Avenue.

(McCroskey) The previous design included a 3 to 5-second leading pedestrian phase. He would like to make sure this is still included here. Would it be possible to allow northbound traffic to go first through the intersection? Rubendall said that the five second-pedestrian lead off is just enough time to keep the same level of service (LOS) at this intersection.

(Knapp) Would the bulb out on the northwest corner of the intersection is something that will be done? If the Commission recommends Option 2, would the City Council be concerned one way or the other? In San Francisco, some traffic signals are red on all directions while pedestrians cross the street. Would something like this be possible at this intersection during school bell times only? Chavez said that given the volumes on Marin Avenue, a scramble phase would not be possible at this intersection as it would deteriorate LOS on Marin Avenue and would bring it to a complete stall.

(McCroskey) He was concerned that the Commission is focusing on the project and not so much on the safety issues around school. The intersection of Sonoma and Curtis has serious pedestrian safety issues. He had asked in the past for a cost-benefit analysis in order to know which aspects or elements of the project to prioritize.

Motion Knapp/Mazur: Moved to recommend Option 2 to City Council including the revisions suggested at this meeting and to recommend the furtherance of the contract with AECOM. Vote was unanimous. A final design will be presented at the Traffic and Safety Commission meeting in January, 2012.

There was a request by a member of the public to have the presentation available on the City's website under the Agenda items.

7-3 Pace Car Program

McCroskey presented the item and said that he had gotten the information from the City of El Cerrito. El Cerrito implemented the program in October 2011. This program consists of signing up residents to pledge to drive 25 mph throughout the City. Each driver is given a sticker and this allows the participants to set the pace of the vehicles behind them when driving. The cost is between \$1,000 and \$3,000. There are different designs for the sticker. He asked the Commission what they thought of having a Pace Car program in Albany.

Chavez recommended inviting Yvette Ortiz to the June or July meeting in order to share the City of El Cerrito experience with this program.

9. Announcements and Communications-None.

10. Future Agenda Items

Next month include a report on the Safeway project and the elections for Chair and Vice-Chair. In regard to the Parking Management Meeting, the Commission would like the agenda to clearly explain the different kinds of parking proposals to be discussed.

Anderson said he would like to have a discussion about drop off areas around schools in February. Also, the issue of disabled parking spaces along San Pablo and Solano Avenues should be added as part of the Municipal Code amendments discussion scheduled for February, 2012.

Parking on Sidewalks: The Commission would like to receive a staff report about the proposed scope of work for consultant services that include Hillsdale and Gateview.

11. Adjournment—Meeting was adjourned at 9:44 pm.