



**TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**City Council Chambers**  
**1000 San Pablo Avenue**  
**February 27, 2014 – 7:00 PM**

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1. **CALL TO ORDER** Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Chair McCroskey.
3. **ROLL CALL. Members present:** Javandel, McQuaid, Reeves, McCroskey, and Chomsky.  
Staff present: Bernardes and Chavez.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES for January 23, 2013.** Minutes were approved with one change.  
Vote: Unanimous.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

John C. resident of Talbot Street said that the bike route by the Buchanan Overcrossing needed wayfinding signage. He also said that the fence on both sides of the railroad tracks was cut again.

Wayne Shoup commented regarding the state of disrepair of the traffic circles at Posen, Peralta and Ordway. City staff should take a look at it.

Midori Tabata, resident of Oakland asked to take a look at the parking restriction on the Buchanan extension.

Amy Smolens referred to the vehicle/ pedestrian collision on January 21 when a driver failed to yield to pedestrians resulting in a child fracturing her leg. The driver did not get a citation and she would like to ask the police department about the citation policy. She said that as a community, we need to say that this was not acceptable

Joe Matera father of the child who was injured in the collision Amy referred to in previous comment said it was shocking to read on the Patch that there would not be a citation for the motorist. Chair Javandel said that it would be useful for the Commission to know about the citation policy and perhaps consult with City Attorney and find out if the City could change it.

**6 PRESENTATION**

**6-A Police Report**

No police report was presented at this meeting

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

**6-A Buchanan Marin Bikeway Phase III and Utility Undergrounding Project.**

Chavez introduced Donna Pontrello from PG&E, Staff Liaison for the Rule 20-A undergrounding project and Robert Stevens of BKF, the consultant firm working on the bicycle facility component of the project. Robert Stevens presented the proposal referring to comments received last year in June, about showing the improvements west of San Pablo, the inclusion of a buffer between the bike lane and vehicles on Marin Avenue, and a request to analyze the inclusion of a pedestrian/bike refuge at the intersection of Kains and Marin. This refuge is subject to further analysis as turning movements should be known before proposing a final design. The Commission members had the following comments:

Why not using the turning center lane between Kains and Cornell the same way it is used along the rest of Marin Ave.? It would allow residents to access their driveways. The planter boxes add beauty to the project but we have to be careful because the City does not have enough staff to maintain facilities. We have to consider this as we add features to the project. The merging bike lane by Cornell may need vertical barriers. The Commission referenced AS&R sent comments via email regarding the reduction of the gutter pan, consolidation of the gas station driveway, and the physical separation between the public and private right of way at this gas station. Could the width of the north sidewalk be increased? Staff and designer will have to look at the available right of way.

Chavez explained that the width of the gutter pan is a level of detail that cannot be shown at this level of design. In previous projects, the City has been implementing 1.5' gutter pans so they do not encroach on the bike lanes.

The Commission added the following comments: Why not implementing the NRTOR in the westbound direction too? This direction may not be as crucial as the eastbound direction because of the presence of the exclusive right turn lane.

The City could address the issue of parking on the public right of way at the Arco gas station with signage prohibiting parking on sidewalk.

Discussion was open to the public: The following people spoke: John Miki, a resident representing 1146 Marin Avenue, Amy Smolens. Comments were:

- Please try to preserve parking space at 1146 Marin Ave. (by the southwest corner of Marin and Cornell).
- Thanks to BKF for addressing all of the safety upgrades in the project
- Install bulb outs on the side streets off of Marin at Kains, Stannage, and Cornell to discourage turning at high speeds.
- Marin between Stannage and Cornell: vehicles are parked next to the sidewalk as there is no buffer between pedestrians and vehicles. Consider removing parking and providing planter strip.
- Could the planter strip between San Pablo and Kains be removed and trees be placed in tree wells instead?
- A driveway appears to be missing from plans at the duplex east of Arco Station.

Discussion was back to the Commission. Additional comments were:

The Commission had talked about adding bulb outs on the side streets, but the design does not show them. Robert Stevens explained that the project is currently over budget and that as a cost saving measure, some features would not be built.

Ensure that whatever we do with the refuge at Kains and Marin does not preclude the goal of facilitating the implementation of bicycle facilities on Kains and Adams. The turning movements at Kains and Adams would have to be taken into consideration to decide what type of median/bike refuge would be implemented at the intersection of Kains and Marin.

Do not bulb out for trees in between driveways because they represent conflict or vehicles exiting the driveway and visibility of oncoming traffic, cost, and drainage.

Chavez asked members of the public if they had questions regarding the undergrounding. Wayne Shipman of 1002 Talbot and another resident within the district spoke. The questions were

addressed by Donna Pontrello of PG&E and Phil Bayardo from the construction company on contract with PG&E. The questions were:

- Where are the other sheets of the undergrounding district? This is the sheet that represents the work to be done. The district map is final.
- Would all the poles in the district be removed? They would be replaced with aluminum poles.
- Who would be responsible and accountable for coordinating with the other utility companies? The City and PG&E? PG&E and the City.
- Who will be conducting the actual conversion at each property? PG&E.
- Who is going to remove the power pole in front of the properties? It will be done by the undergrounding project.
- How long will a home owner be out of service? Typically, 8 hours
- Why the pole in front of 1002 Talbot is not shown? Because this is just a boundary district ma, it is not a final design.
- What is the cost of an upgrade? The cost is on a case by case basis. You have to contact Donna Pontrello to set up a visit. The property owner receives a discount if it is done with the undergrounding project, so it is important for PG&E to know as soon as possible as the project will be designed in the next few months.
- What is the difference between the termination can versus the meter panel/fuse box? The meter panel or box is a steel box located on the side of the property. The termination can is a new junction box to be installed with the project. On the day of the switch over the underground wiring will be connected from the termination can to the meter box or panel and the elevated wires will be shut down.
- What happens to the street lighting? The City will be providing new steel poles for the street lighting.

#### **6-B Marin-Curtis Safe Routes to School**

Chavez provided background and described project. She introduced Atul Patel of TJKM and Paul Schneider of Siegfried Engineering, designers of the project. Paul Schneider provided details about the project. He said that they had received the comments from the AS&R regarding the width of the gutter pan and he did not see a problem in regard to accommodating this. He mentioned the lessons learned on the other intersection at Marin and Santa Fe with respect to drainage. He said that the next step was to develop a more detailed engineer's estimate.

The Commission has the following questions/comments:

- Has there been consulting with the School District? Coordinate with the School District as the curb ramps on Curtis will be modified. Will the curb ramps at Curtis and Sonoma be moved? The curb ramps at Curtis/Sonoma will be reconfigured and the lip will be eliminated.

The Commission open the discussion to the public. The following people spoke: David Well, John Miki, and Amy Smolens, Comments were:

- There is a tree at 1451 Marin and plans did not indicate whether this tree would be eliminated.
- What is the output of the flashing beacon?.
- Drainage coming down Curtis towards Marin is considerable
- Cyclists come down at high speeds southbound Curtis and the bulb outs may put them onto the path of traffic.
- Why not using in pavement pedestrian lights instead of the beacon?
- The bulb out at 1451 Marin may encourage parents to park at this property driveway.

- It would be good to have students involved in an art project for the sidewalk on east side of Marin Elementary..
- The sidewalk on the west of Curtis is too narrow. It should be wider or shifted to the west.
- Consider the installation of bollards at the southeast corner between the driveway and the pedestrian bulb out at the intersection of Curtis and Marin.
- At the intersection of Curtis and Sonoma, the stop sign must be more visible for northbound traffic.
- Could bulb out be added to the west side of Curtis at the intersection with Sonoma?

The Commission had the following comments:

- The distance between the two crosswalks is an issue at the intersection of Curtis and Sonoma. Vehicles speed up to try to get between the blocks of children at this intersection. Perhaps, bulbing out onto Sonoma Street is advisable. It seems that the fire hydrant may be an impediment, but it may be worth considering.
- Is the width of the new sidewalk 5 feet? If he project makes this sidewalk leveled with the ground adjacent to it, it would be a major upgrade because it currently drops at some places.
- What is the intensity of the flashing beacon? Why not the in-pavement lights? Because studies have shown that motorists yield rate is higher than with the in-pavement lights. Also, the lights maintenance is expensive.
- Could the beacon lights be directional? Can they be timed and turned off at night? These issues will be investigated with the manufacturers as they may have some mitigation measures like shields.
- Could the crosswalk on the south at the intersection of Sonoma and Curtis be moved to the north?
- We can narrow the street by bulbing out the west side of Curtis as there is no parking. A curb ramp could be installed between the trees.
- Stop bars could be added to stop signs.
- Install raised crosswalks
- Consider very carefully what is going on with drainage. This project represents an opportunity to solve drainage problems.

#### **6-C Exclusive on-street parking for City CarShare**

Chavez said that she had brought this item back to the Commission because City CarShare had provided new information and indeed, they were talking about having these parking spaces as Points of Delivery (PODs). The Commission had the following comments: Do we have information of the use breakdown at the UC Village? Do we have information that provides evidence that the program would be self-sustained through citations?

Discussion was open to the public. John Miki spoke in support for the car sharing PODs. He proposed starting with Solano Avenue at Curtis.

The Commission members provided additional comments:

- Berkeley does not have PODs on public streets
- It does make sense to wait for the parking studies
- install carsharing spaces where there is not much demand for parking. Since the concept now is a PODs, it makes sense to locate them closer to where people live.
- Include other carsharing companies. We have to be as neutral as possible and perhaps issue an RFP to see who wants to work in Albany. .
- How about Pierce Street?

- Solano/Curtis is a good location to start with the program.

The Commission asked staff to invite car sharing companies' staff to present their proposal at a future meeting. Explore whether BevMo and Safeway would be interested in dedicating one parking space for car share members. Bring the Solano Chamber of Commerce and the Solano Merchants Association into the discussion. The Commission had concerns about City staff time to manage the program.

#### **6-D Report on Speed Survey on the 900 block of Polk Street**

Chavez reported that she had conducted a speed and volume survey and that the results showed consisting speeding on the 900 block of Polk. She recommended putting this item in a future agenda to discuss next steps. She said that in terms of traffic calming funds, the City had some projects in line like the speed humps on the 600 and 800 block of Masonic and the 800 block of Santa Fe.

Javandel said that it seemed the data had two peaks because the average was around 25mph and the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile was around 30 mph. He said he would be interested in taking a look at the data.

Discussion was open to the public. Ingrid Allieson, Otto Stein, George Swaranoski, and Mary Seneca spoke. Comments were:

- Two girls were almost hit a week before the meeting.
- Traffic is a problem on the block.
- A new childcare center was opened and there is more traffic on the block. Parents are crossing the street with children on tow.
- The block needs speed humps
- After the speed humps were installed on Cerrito Street and the Buchanan/Jackson was reconfigured with left turns, there is more traffic on Polk Street.
- There are more children on the street
- This is an accident waiting to happen
- Can a renter sign the petition for the speed hump?

Chavez explained that the City had a form for the petition, but first, staff needed to locate the area where the speed hump would be installed. In the case of Polk, there is a hill and the speed hump has to be installed on the flat area.

Bernardes said that we had to follow the guidelines and look at the location of driveways. She also said that installing speed humps did not preclude people from parking, and that people should know that additional signage would be installed. Chavez said that a block captain should get the signatures and that she would like to put the item in a future agenda for discussion because she was not sure whether the City had enough funds for implementation.

The Commission offered the following comments:

From the aerial view of Google Maps, it seemed that 934 Polk was a good location for the hump. Also, there is a possibility to stripe the hilly area the same way the City is striping other blocks that did not meet the speeding criteria.

There was interest in moving to a more elegant solution to counteract speeding. Is there a way to design streets that are easy and comfortable to drive on without giving way to speeding?

The City had been cautious regarding the implementation of speed humps. Where did those near hit incidents happen? There was discussion about the location of crosswalks and the false sense of protection that makes pedestrians less cautious when crossing the streets.

Chavez said that the next step would be to give the neighborhood the petition, propose the speed hump location, and schedule the meeting

#### **6-E Report on Measure D Working Group**

Javandel and McQuaid reported about a matrix of options for Measure D. This item also ties with the Ad-hoc sub-Committee items. A report would be submitted to Council in May.

#### **6-F Report on research from the Ad-hoc Sub Committee on the updates to the Municipal Code.**

Chavez asked if she could organize the meetings of the sub-committees. She said that it would be good to develop some draft language for the ordinance and discuss it at the meetings.

#### **6-G Report on Washington Avenue Traffic Calming options**

Chavez reported that this item would be presented to Council in April and that possibly, a contract to design the bulbouts would be considered by Council in May.

### **7. Announcements and Communications**

**7-A Alameda County Sustainable Communities Technical Assistance program**—Chavez said the award letters would be sent out in March. The next step for City staff was to refine the scope of work.

**7-B City Advisory Body Conduct and Administration Policy**—Chavez would send the final Work Plan to the Commission members.

### **8. Future Agenda Items**

- A. Marin/Curtis SR2S Project Concept Design
- B. ATP Striping and Signing 65% Plans
- C. Buchanan Bikeway Phase III Design
- D. Electric Vehicle charging stations
- E. Kains and Adams bicycle facility concept.

Chavez said a discussion of 900 Polk would be considered in April. McCroskey said that there were some items during the Public Comment segment. One was the parking on the Buchanan Extension.

Posen Circle: what is the state of the curbs? Perhaps, we should make them taller or add reflectors for night visibility. These items may not need to go back to the Commission.

The Commission would like to ask the Police Department about the Citation Policy.

**9. Adjournment**—Meeting was adjourned at 10:04pm.