



TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

City Hall - Council Chambers
1000 San Pablo Avenue
February 26, 2015—7:00 PM

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Javandel.
2. **ROLL CALL. Members present:** Javandel, Del Rosario, Chomsky, Reeves, and McCroskey. Staff present: Lt. Geissberger, Bond, and Chavez.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES for December 2, 2014.** Minutes were approved with no change.

Motion McCroske/Reeves: Vote in favor: Javandel, McCroskey, Chomsky, and Reeves. Opposed: None. Abstained: Del Rosario. Motion passed

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT**—Reeves commented that her husband was in a very bad accident within 500 feet of her home. She said that the Commission voted to raise the speed limit on Cleveland and asked the Commission to really think about speeding when issues requesting the speed limit come for recommendation.

5 PRESENTATION

5-A **Police Report:** There were 13 collisions in January, 8 non-injury, 5 injury, 4 collisions were hit and run, 2 collision occurred on Marin. There was one was auto/pedestrian collisions and one auto/bicycle collision. The APD issued 126 citations and conducted 4 DUI arrests. Extra officers will be assigned the next day for targeting speed, red lights and stop sign violations in high pedestrian and bicyclist areas. Funds for this campaign were provided by the Office of Traffic Safety.

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

6-A 2015 Traffic and Safety Work Plan.

Bond presented the accomplishments for 2014. The City Council will review the Work Plan and one or more of the Commission members could attend the Council meeting. Council will change the updates to the Work Plans from one year to a two-year cycle. The purpose of the Plan is to help staff and Commission focus on the tasks ahead. Bond said that with the completion of the General Plan and its environmental review, comments on its Transportation Element are a key component of the T&S Commission Work Plan. Bond went through the 2015 items that need to be accomplished, such as the Marin Curtis SR2S project, the Buchanan Marin Bikeway Phase III, and the prioritization of the ATP Striping and Signage Plans.

Commission comments:

- The Alameda County Transportation Commission is currently conducting several regional transportation plans, is this something that is for the purview of this Commission? Chavez said that staff keeps the Commission informed, but it is when the plans bring concrete projects when the Commission input is needed. For instance, the Solano Avenue Complete Streets project is included in the Countywide Transportation Expenditure Plan.
- Could the Kains and Adams be prioritized? It does not seem to fit into any of the categories. Bond said that the Commission should add this project to the Plan if it wished to prioritize it.

Public comment. The following people spoke: Preston Jordan.

- Improvement to the Sidewalk Maintenance Program and consideration of funding mechanisms for sidewalk improvements and maintenance.
- Prioritization of striping and signage of the ATP projects
- Policy regarding citing individuals involved in traffic accidents.
- Inclusion of School Zones.

The Commission offered the following comments:

- The Police Department came back to the Commission and the report stated that when there was no citation, there should be an explanation as to why the officer made the decision for not issuing a citation.
- The Commission would like to add a policy advocacy position to increase the gas tax (street pavement) and to allow for speed enforcement through photo radar around school and residential areas. There is a high violation rate and PD officers cannot be everywhere. Letters could be sent to the Alameda County Transportation Commission and the state legislature.
- Track the development of the sidewalk maintenance program
- Add Kains and Adams bicycle routes to the Work Plan.
- Parking policy, including assignment of public parking spaces for car sharing and electric vehicle charging stations.
- Parking around schools, particularly at pick up and drop off times and how the parking around schools is handled.

Bond said that the Work Plan with the suggested changes will be consulted with the Chair for possible feedback before going to Council. Inform the Commission at a subsequent meeting.

Motion Reeves/Chomsky: Moved to approve the 2015-16 Traffic and Safety Commission Work Plan with the suggested changes and present it to the City Council for approval. Vote in favor: Chomsky, Del Rosario, McCroskey, Javandel, and Reeves. Vote against: None. Abstained: None. Motion passed unanimously.

6-B Information Report on Sidewalk Improvements at 715 Hillside.

Bond provided information on this informational item about the sidewalk improvements at this location.

6-D Traffic Calming Proposal for the Streets Adjacent for the El Cerrito Plaza Shopping Center.

Bond presented the staff report explaining the features of the conceptual plans. The introduction of 11 speed humps and 2 mini circles to slow down traffic. Installation of high visibility crosswalks and modification of some 4-way stop intersections. Installation of improved signage and installation of a right turn lane at San Pablo and Brighton. In addition, the installation of red curbs at the intersections in order to improve visibility. Some of the proposed raised crosswalks at the entrance of the side streets to El Cerrito Plaza are located in private property and staff did not want to proposed those components. Some of these improvements can be implemented in phases.

- The Commission pointed out that there was a mistake on the plans as Evelyn is a one way street, the white line should not be at the entrance.
- Is there a low-visibility crosswalk? Why not painting crosswalks everywhere? Chavez said that although crosswalks are great, they also give a false sense of security. If we overdo it, it may be too much. We want to do it in a way that alerts motorists of the pedestrian presence.
- Could parents drop off their children and go around the mini circles back to San Pablo Avenue. Chavez said that the block between San Pablo and Kains could have a drop off zone, in addition to the Masonic drop off zone.
- Why not adding stop signs at every intersection?
- A mini circle does not follow the same rules of the roundabout. It depends of the signage used. The mini circles slow traffic and dissuade trucks.
- The No Truck signs would be a change in policy so that APD could issue tickets.
- Is there any other parking loss in addition to the intersection red curbs? The south side of the first block between San Pablo and Kains will lose about three parking spaces to allow for the right turn lane.

Discussion was open to the public. The following people spoke: Steward Gooderman, Eleanor Moses, Lara Teitler, Joanne Miller, Gary Keck, Cathy Mattison, Ruth Gjerde, Valerie Williams, Lisa Schneider, Preston Jordan, and Charlie Blanchard. The comments were the following:

- Is the new striping reconfiguration between San Pablo and Kains going to affect the truck movement for the Goodwill Store? Use one double yellow line instead of two in order to facilitate the left turn from the Goodwill driveway.
- Prioritize pedestrian safety. Include raised crosswalks and conduct a photo voltaic study as the area is very dark at night. How about lighted crosswalks?

- What is the cost of this project?
- Include the area outside the Middle School to see if there is a spillover effects.
- Parents drop off their kids using both sides of the car. If you are introducing bicyclists on Brighton, please consider that this is happening now. Please include these improvements for the area of the Middle School.
- Eliminate the language beginning “in the event” because it constraints the City of Albany. In the future, it may be just appropriate to move in the direction to close the streets.
- Implement red zones on the near side of every leg of each approach.
- Around mini circles, there should be red curbs to both, near side and far side.
- Install a red zone on the north side of Brighton between Kains and San Pablo.
- Talbot is a slow route and the sharrow markings should be changed to bike boulevard markings
- At Cornell, an all 4-way stop is needed
- Install a cycle track between Masonic and the Middle School gate.
- The student drop-off area at Kains is not a good idea
- A lot of people stop at Cornell even though it does not have a stop sign now.
- Drivers coming from the Plaza run the stop sign. We need high visibility crosswalks there or a mini circle.
- Install continuous high visibility crosswalks—east and west.
- Would blinking lights be considered at Brighton and Cornell?
- We need to have a timeline to monitor the results of the traffic calming plan and for how long staff would continue to monitor. We hope that the plan will increase the use of active transportation.
- How about a raised crosswalk at Cornell in addition to high visibility striping.

The Commission had the following comments:

- Install a mini circle at Cornell. A mini circle there would make it harder for trucks to choose Cornell as a way out of the Plaza
- Leave the mini circle at Stannage, but make a note to install it at a later phase.
- Maintain 16 feet minimum distance between the edge of the circle and the nearest crosswalk
- Red curbs along the mini circle approaches
- Add striped bulb outs by the approaches to the circle
- On the Talbot contra flow lane, add “bikes excepted” sign by the “Do Not Enter” sign.
- Install a cycle track, or even a little contra-flow bike lane between the Ohlone Greenway and the Middle School gate with good signage.
- Monitoring should be done during the school year comparing fall to spring
- Could lights be added to Brighton Avenue? It is very dark at night and motorist visibility of pedestrians is compromised.
- The public alluded to the installation of raised crosswalks on Brighton Avenue. Would this be necessary in order to heighten pedestrian visibility? In-pavement pedestrian lights are expensive to maintain. Additional visibility could be added later, once the main components of the project are installed during the first phase.
- Prioritize speed humps along the 400 blocks and install the 500 blocks later
- Once these improvements are in place, people may drive on Garfield and the Commission may have to do calming on Garfield. These are issues that would come up later, but we must be prepared for this.
- Change the stencil for bike boulevard on Talbot Avenue.

Bond said that staff would bring back the changes at the next meeting along with estimated cost.

The mini circle should not have landscape on it because it would be more costly and it could obstruct pedestrian visibility on the far side. It is preferably to opt for mosaic decoration.

Chavez said she would conduct vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian turning movements at the intersections in the project area.

In terms of the language for the General Plan, it is recommended to eliminate the last phrase in order to have fewer constraints to move along with street closures, if the City had to go that way. Staff will bring the policy language next month for Commission review.

E. Buchanan Bikeway Phase III and Utility Undergrounding Project.

Chavez introduced Robert Stevens of BKF, project engineer responsible for design. She also presented the schedule of the project. Robert Stevens proceeded with the project component presentation. He said that the City had obtained an encroachment permit for the No Right Turn on Red and it was approved last fall. The project is proposed to shift the Arco gas station driveway to the east, away from the intersection. A stripe of hardscape will be installed to differentiate between the public and the private right of way. He said that one of the challenges of this project is to keep the cost down. He also said that previous comments indicated the inclusion of bollards to protect the bike lane transition, but he recommended against that because they get knocked down all the time and the cost of maintenance is high.

The Commission had the following questions:

- It seems that the flexible bollards would be a challenge for the adjacent properties between Stannage and Cornell are interfering with the private driveway movement in the eastbound direction. Robert Stevens said he would look at aligning the bollards better.
- Install the type of bollards that are mounted on curbs.
- Would it be possible to have a rolled curb along the segment of Marin Avenue west of San Pablo? In that way, bicyclists who would like to use the proposed bike lane in between the right turn and the through lane eastbound Marin would have an option. As it is presented, the only option for cyclists to access this on-street facility is to start at Jackson.
- Could you clarify the sidewalk width along the project? The green buffer between San Pablo and Kains should be reduced so there is more sidewalk space.

The discussion was open to the public. Preston Jordan and Gary Keck addressed the Commission. Comments were the following:

- The landscape strip at the gas station would help differentiate between the public and the private right of way.
- Why choosing the far side bulb outs as the alternative? Near side bulbs should be the alternative as we have to be sensitive to the operations of the street.
- The Traffic and Safety Commission passed on policy that favors perpendicular curb ramps, particularly on high volume streets. It seems that there are perpendicular curb ramps on the southeast side of the Marin/San Pablo intersection where it is most needed.
- Please put the sidewalk width on the plans. Width should be 5 feet as there is a tendency for vegetation to easily block 4-foot sidewalks. Albany should have a policy of implementing 5-foot wide sidewalks whenever possible.
- Indicate the door zone buffer on the sections.
- It seems that some of the bulb outs do not extend as far as they could. They should come as far as possible without encroaching into the cycling path.
- Try to do landscaping on the bulb outs
- In relation to the NRTOR. At one point, there was going to be a cycling signal there and a no right turn signal head. Chavez explained that the encroachment permit that the City got from Caltrans was for the interim design that was going to be implemented with the Phases I and II. The interim design includes the blank out sign and the NRTOR. The final design includes the bicycle signal phase and the directional arrows. Staff is contemplating whether it is cost-effective to wait for the final implementation of the signal features instead of installing the features of the encroachment permit obtained last fall.
- Narrowing traffic to one lane at Kains, would cause traffic to stall and a lot of people would be inconvenienced

The Commission had the following comments:

- Shave the median at Kains to better channel traffic through the intersection.

- Extend the bike box across the lanes of traffic
- Have consistency when showing the outer bike lane as a dashed line.
- The eastbound bike line on the Kains approach must be solid as there is no right turn.
- For vehicles traveling eastbound and trying to make a right turn onto Cornell, they would have to make it through the traffic flow lane.
- What is the rationale to make the far curbs optional when the near side ones seem more intrusive? In some cases, vehicles will have the option to encroach into the bike lane and buffer and that would allow other vehicles to pass on the left side.
- How does this design complement the Kains bike boulevard plan? One option would be to not let any traffic on Kains to cross Marin. Also, vehicles would not be able to turn left onto Kains from Marin.
- In terms of the bulb outs, the plans as presented may work. Chavez said that she would look at the data she has in terms of pedestrian intersection usage. Robert Stevens said that pedestrians are more visible from the near side bulb outs.

The west crosswalk of the Stannage intersection may be the preferred crosswalk if we prioritize the eastbound direction to be the far side and for the westbound direction the prioritization would be to have the bulb out on the near side.

In regards of the perpendicular ramp on the east side of the San Pablo intersection, there are physical constraints that prevent the construction of perpendicular ramps at that location.

6-F Report on Marin Curtis SR2S Project Design Amendment

Chavez reported on the proposed changes for the Curtis/Sonoma intersection. She said that she plotted the proposed bulb outs at the Marin/Curtis and the Curtis/Sonoma intersections for the fire truck to test the turns and the Sonoma/Curtis intersection is too narrow. Staff recommended implementing the alternate bid item that included a raised crosswalk on the north leg of the Curtis/Sonoma intersection. In addition, a speed hump is recommended between the Neilson and Peralta intersection. She said that a previous cost proposal to design the alternate bid items was in the neighborhood of \$9,000. This would be the approximate cost of the new proposed design amendment.

Discussion was open to the public. Joanne Miller, Preston Jordan addressed the Commission.

- Reconsider eliminating the red curb adjacent to 1490 Sonoma Avenue
- Consider prioritizing the south crosswalk of the Curtis/Sonoma intersection instead of the north sidewalk.

The Commission had the following comments

- The reason for the elimination of the south crosswalk was to bring the intersection together and eliminate unwanted motorist behavior.
- The northern crosswalk is widely used, perhaps as much as the southern crosswalk
- Chavez said that perhaps leaving the south side crosswalk as is and raising the northern crosswalk.
- It seems that raising the crosswalk on the south leg is more appropriate.
- In order to expedite the project, the best approach would be to leave the raised crosswalk on the north side and keep the southern crosswalk as is.

Motion Chomsky/Reeves: Moved to approve design amendment as recommended by staff, but re-introducing the crosswalk on the south leg of the Curtis/Sonoma intersection. Vote in favor: Chomsky, Del Rosario, Javandel, McCrosky, Reeves. Opposed: None. Abstained: None. Motion passed.

6-G Nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair

Chavez asked for nominations for Chair. Chomsky nominated McCroskey. McCroskey was initially nominated for Chair, but he did not accept the nomination saying that he had been Chair for three years in the past and that opportunity must be given to another member. McCroskey nominated Chomsky. No competing nominations were suggested.

Vote in favor: Chomsky, Del Rosario, Javandel, McCrosky, Reeves. Opposed: None. Abstained: None. Motion passed.

Chavez asked for nominations for Vice Chair. Reeves nominated Javandel for Vice-Chair. Vote in favor: Chomsky, Del Rosario, Javandel, McCrosky, Reeves. Opposed: None. Abstained: None. Motion passed.

7. Announcements and Communications-None.

7-A Albany Civics Academy - April 4-May 14, 2015. Sessions take place once a week for the established period of time. It would not matter if you miss one or two classes, but the City departments have fun showing their day-to-day work. It is useful in order to understand the different operations of City government branches

7-B The I-80 ICM Project—Chavez said that a public outreach video had been launched to inform the public of the project. The project will be implemented in 2016.

7-C Advisory Body Training Video Series

Chavez shared the upcoming outreach meetings for the Major Transit Corridors Study that AC Transit is currently conducting. Chavez said that she would send the link for the surveys and information that will be linked to the City website.

McCroskey asked why the Brighton Green Street project had not been discussed at the Commission meeting. Bond explained that it was a grant that the Public Works Department had obtained. Chavez said the Commission would look at the project in March.

8. Future Agenda Items

- A. In City Design Concept for Bus Stop Relocation for Solano and San Pablo—March, 2015
- B. Solano Avenue Hillside Traffic Calming—March, 2015
- C. Washington Avenue Traffic Calming—March, 2015
- D. Brighton Avenue Traffic Calming—March, 2015
- E. School Zones—April, 2015
- F. Electric Vehicle Charging Stations—May, 2015

A report about the accident that Reeves' husband sustained at Washington and Cleveland would be helpful for the Commission to evaluate the cause of the accident.

Have there been considerations to change the signal timing at Solano and San Pablo? The Complete Streets Plan suggested changes to the signal timing at that location.

9. Adjournment—Meeting was adjourned at 10:14 pm. Next meeting: March 26, 2015 at 7:00 pm