



**TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**City Council Chambers**

**1000 San Pablo Avenue  
September 22, 2016 – 7:00 P.M.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chair Del Rosario.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Present: Chomsky, Javandel\*, Reeves, McCroskey\*, Del Rosario  
Absent: None  
Staff Present: Aleida Andrino-Chavez, Transportation Planner  
Jocelyn Walker, Capital Improvement Program Engineer  
Jeff Bond, Community Development Director  
\*Arrived after Roll Call

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Minutes for the Regular Meeting of July 28, 2016**

Motion Chomsky/Reeves: Moved to approve the minutes of the July 28, 2016 meeting, as submitted.

Ayes: Chomsky, Reeves, Del Rosario  
Noes: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: Javandel, McCroskey

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**The following PUBLIC COMMENTS were offered by John Kartychak, Dennis Foster, and Amy Smolens:**

- Referenced the 15 mph speed limit on Washington and Solano and suggested the top of Taylor and Filmore Streets could also be designated 15 mph zones; concern for regulation of designated truck routes and the enforcement of truck bans on residential streets; and the Solano Stroll hosted by Albany Strollers & Rollers (AS&R) had provided bicycle valet parking at two locations for over 300 bicycles.

**5. PRESENTATION**

**A. Police Report**

Bond presented the Police Report.

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

**A. Conceptual Design for Combination Bus Stop/Parklet at 1201-1207 Solano Avenue**

Chavez explained that at the July 2016 meeting, staff had presented a report on a proposal to allow modification of existing bus pull-out on Solano Avenue for the installation of a parklet. (A parklet is the conversion of a portion of the roadway into a public area with distinctive urban furniture and landscape planters).

Chelle Putzer, Recreation and Community Services Director, described the partnership with the As You Wish Yogurt Shop, AC Transit, City of Albany, and Recreation and Community Services Department to create the parklet.

**The Commission requested the following clarifications:**

- Verified with Ms. Putzer that the Park and Recreation Commission had not yet reviewed the proposal; AC Transit had seen the plans; the drawings had not yet been engineered; expressed concern for the safety of the proposed layout; the proposed materials were wood and steel; verified with staff the recommendation to follow the parklet guidelines established by the City of San Francisco; and maintenance agreements with the owners/host would address the maintenance of the parklet.

Chavez described the comments offered by the Commission in July 2016 when the item had first been presented to the Commission, and highlighted the constraints involved.

**The following PUBLIC COMMENTS were offered by Amy Smolens and Preston Jordan:**

- Supported the parklet as a great idea for a community gathering place but expressed concern for the location and security of bike parking and requested a location to allow owners to visually monitor their bikes from the nearby businesses; supported the proposal and an appropriate location for bike parking.

**The Commission made the following comments:**

- A lot had been proposed for a small amount of space and the problem with locating bike parking was that too much room had been blocked off for other uses creating overcrowding and a lack of flow and connectivity (Chomsky); verified that the deck to the bus would be continuous, at one level, with an appropriate opening space for wheelchair access (Reeves); supported more bike parking; noted the bus stop was primarily a drop-off which could affect the design and open it up to allow additional, more visible bike racks; suggested the planters in the design were taking more space than they should; and supported the proposal and recommended that design review be provided by the Park and Recreation Commission to address the non-transportation related issues (Del Rosario).

The Commission supported the proposal and wanted to see it again at the 65 percent design stage.

**B. Ohlone Greenway Improvements and Sidewalk on the East Side of Masonic Avenue Between Solano Avenue and Washington Avenue**

At the July meeting, the Commission members requested to see plans for the improvements proposed for the Ohlone Greenway and adjacent sidewalk.

Chelle Putzer, Recreation and Community Services Director, described the partnership and the proposal for the Ohlone Greenway and adjacent sidewalk to provide an accessible, safe sidewalk

with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access. She explained that the Park and Recreation Commission had approved the plans as is.

Jocelyn Walker, the Project Manager, described how the sidewalk would be configured where it met the park and the bike path.

**The following PUBLIC COMMENTS were offered by Preston Jordan and Amy Smolens:**

- Supported the wider sidewalk, questioned the usability and necessity for the crosscut path towards Solano Avenue, and when told that would relate to the next phase of the greenway, suggested it would create conflict points for cyclists, and suggested a crosswalk would have to be painted on that path if heavily used; noted that AS&Rs could consider funding an adult tricycle for seniors when that phase of the project would allow access from the senior center to the greenway.

**The Commission made the following comments:**

- Commissioners supported the proposal but due to a number of concerns with the multi-use path related to bicyclists, Ms. Putzer stated the comments could be returned to the Park and Recreation Commission for consideration to remove the cement path from the plans.

Motion Chomsky/Reeves: Moved to recommend the City Council call for construction bids for the project with the additional recommendation that the southern diagonal path connecting the sidewalk to the multi-use path be removed from the plan. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes:	Chomsky, Reeves, Del Rosario
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Javandel, McCroskey

Given that Commissioners Javandel and McCroskey were not yet available, the Commission moved to Items D and F on the agenda at this time.

**D. Portland Avenue Pedestrian Safety Improvements at Intersections East of San Pablo Avenue**

In April 2016, staff presented striping and curb painting options to improve visibility and pedestrian safety at intersections on Washington Avenue east of San Pablo. As a continuation of this project, staff is exploring options to improve visibility and pedestrian safety along Portland Avenue. Some options may result in the elimination of street parking at the intersections; Chavez presented the proposed options, advised that notifications had been distributed, and only one comment had been received which was in support of the red curbs.

**The following PUBLIC COMMENT was offered by Amy Smolens:**

- Noted that red curbs had helped other neighborhoods and should help the neighborhoods involved.

**The Commission made the following comments:**

- Supported the proposal, supported the removal of red paint where appropriate to create one or two additional parking spaces to make up for some of what was being lost; (Chomsky); and recommended sticking to the parameters, especially to return parking where possible (Reeves).

Chavez suggested prior to removing the red paint there should be a volume survey to support the decision to leave or remove the red paint.

**F. Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) 2018 Comprehensive Improvements Plan (CIP) Call for Project Nominations**

The Alameda CTC has released a call for project nominations for its 2018 CIP. City staff is proposing to submit applications for funding of six projects including: the Buchanan Bikeway Phase III; the San Pablo/Buchanan Pedestrian Improvement project; the extension of the cycle track on the west side of San Pablo Avenue south of Marin Avenue; planning for safety and streetscape improvements on Upper Solano Avenue; Safe Routes to School improvements on Marin Avenue; and for the off-street bicycle facility connecting Pierce Street to Cleveland Avenue.

**The Commission requested the following clarifications:**

- Verified that federal, state, and regional funding would be involved; there was a funding gap; and approximately \$4 million would be needed for the current cycle of the phased project; recommended transit projects be included in the effort (Del Rosario).

The Commission moved to Item C at this time, with only three Commissioners present, although Commissioners McCroskey and Javandel arrived soon thereafter.

**C. Report on Results of Traffic Study on the 700 Block of Carmel and at the Intersection of Carmel and Washington Avenue**

Residents of the block have presented a petition form with the required signatures for the study. The results of a speed and volume survey and vehicle, pedestrian, and cyclists turning movements was presented by Chavez, who recommended two options for consideration; high visibility crosswalks with signage and an all-way stop control.

Bond explained that while there was some flexibility in how the standards were applied, whatever the City did would have to comply with the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

**The Commission requested the following clarifications:**

- Asked if MUTCD guidelines had historically been followed in the City of Albany, and Chavez advised that in some cases what had been done had overridden the guidelines, which actually changed every two to three years, although the Comprehensive Traffic Management Plan developed in 2000 had recommended a four-way stop at the intersection in question (Chomsky); asked if mini-roundabouts had been considered, to which Chavez noted that had not been proposed for that location given that funds were not currently allocated for such a project which could not be provided in a timely manner (McCroskey).

**The following PUBLIC COMMENTS were offered by Alexis, Rory, David Frank, a student read an email from the Assistant Vice Principal at Albany High School, Emelie, Julia Chang Frank, Aaron Frank, Sarah Wassor, Joan Williams, Amy Paulsen, Michele Ling, Terra Baer, Rachel Chatman, Cheryl Zipersteint, Florence Wahl, Esther Muh, Josh**

**Rotenberg, Chris Rockwell, Jason Gaines, Kristen Buppert, Midori Maeda, and Preston Jordan.**

- Several children spoke to the need for a four-way stop given that cars did not stop for children attempting to cross the street when walking to and from school; requested the highest traffic safety measure at the Washington and Carmel intersection for children going to and from school; offered a presentation to explain why the intersection was dangerous and had been designated for a four-way stop in 2000 that had not been implemented; asked for the safest option; presented the historical accident reports for the intersection; suggested that the lighting of the intersection should be improved and that a four-way stop should be installed, particularly since 1,200 high school students were a block away and there were many popular locations nearby such as Memorial Park and the aquatic center which generated significant traffic; stated a yield sign would not stop traffic like a four-way stop would; drivers did not have clear visibility of the intersection at times; shared the results of a survey of high school students related to crossing the Washington/Carmel Intersection who all supported the installation of a four-way stop sign; expressed concern for the accidents and near-accidents at the intersection; concern for the speed of traffic at the intersection; did not support a crosswalk without stop signs; and acknowledged the pedestrian and traffic counts justified a four-way stop sign.

**The Commission made the following comments:**

- Acknowledged the support for the stop signs but noted there were downsides in terms of air pollution, noise, and carelessness, with no guarantee of safety and emphasized the need for defensive walking and biking (Javandel); while not opposed to a four-way stop suggested some other alternative, such as a mini-roundabout, could be considered and urged parents to remind their children to walk their bicycles across the street (McCroskey); improve the lighting at intersections and asked about the effectiveness of raised crosswalks (Reeves); spoke to the effectiveness of raised crosswalks (Javandel).

Motion Chomsky/McCroskey: Moved to extend the meeting to 10:30 P.M. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes:	Chomsky, Javandel, McCroskey, Reeves, Del Rosario
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

- With respect to the false sense of security with painted crosswalks, suggested the same could be said of a four-way stop although they had worked elsewhere, concerned with the precedent setting nature of the request, and recommended approval since the intersection was different in that residents would have difficulty diverting their line of travel to avoid the dangerous intersection (Chomsky).

Chavez stated whatever was done with the intersection would have to eliminate parking at the corners.

- Supported the installation of stop signs since that could be installed quickly and cheaply and should have been installed previously, there was a need for improved lighting and tree trimming to improve visibility (Del Rosario); recommended the installation of temporary signs to identify the change so that drivers would get in the habit of using the stop signs (McCroskey).

- Noted that most of the stop signs in the Traffic Management Plan had been installed except for the one on Solano, and noted the location met the spacing pattern and if the warrants were met would be the basis for approving the four-way stop without setting a precedent for other locations, with signs to identify the change, 20 feet of red curb on the approach and departure, and potentially a high visibility crosswalk on Washington with simple crosswalks across Carmel (Javandel).

Motion Chomsky/Reeves: Moved to approve a four-way stop sign at Washington and Carmel with temporary warnings and red curbs as recommended, and when possible add high visibility crosswalks across Washington and standard crosswalks across Carmel, and explore improving lighting and tree pruning. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Chomsky, Javandel, McCroskey, Reeves, Del Rosario  
 Noes: None  
 Abstain: None  
 Absent: None

**E. San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street Complete Streets – Technical Advisory Committee**

The development of plans for the pedestrian improvements on San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street has kicked off and members were to be selected for the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to participate in the design process. Staff is in the process of reaching out to different agencies and local organizations to put together a group of stakeholders. The election of one member of the Traffic and Safety Commission to this group was recommended.

Commissioner Javandel volunteered to serve as the representative from the Traffic and Safety Commission to the San Pablo Avenue and Buchanan Street Complete Streets Technical Advisory Committee.

**7. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATION**

Commissioner Chomsky advised that he would not be able to attend the next meeting; Commissioner Javandel reported that he would be attending the North American City Traffic Officials conference in Seattle next week.

**8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- A. Washington Avenue Traffic Calming, September 2016
- B. Speed and Volume Survey on the 600 Block of Adams and 500 Block of Masonic, September 2016
- C. Brighton Avenue Traffic Calming (mini circles and striping)

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:30 P.M.