

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION
MINUTES OF JANUARY 7, 2009**

The meeting was held in Conference Room A at the Department of Public Works (DPW) Headquarters.

1) Call to Order

The meeting of January 7, 2009, was called to order at 9:15 a.m.

2) Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3) Roll Call

Present: Chair Robert Ringler
 Vice-Chair Thurston Reese
 Commissioner Guillermo Villalobos
 Commissioner Marvin Estey
 Commissioner Rhett Price
 Commissioner John Watkins
 Commissioner Praful Kulkarni

Also in attendance were the following:

Mr. William Higley, Deputy Director; Mr. William Winter, Assistant Deputy Director; Mr. Scott Schales, Assistant Division Engineer; Mr. James Chon, Senior Civil Engineer; Ms. Jalaine Madrid, Associate Civil Engineer and Ms. Irena Guilmette, Supervising Civil Engineering Assistant.

4) Approval of December 3, 2008 Minutes

The Minutes of the December 3, 2008, Highway Safety Commission (HSC) meeting were approved.

10) Unfinished business and general notes

Chair Ringler took the unfinished business item out of order due to the fact that Mr. Sinisha Kostich and his attorney, Mr. Dominic Trutanich, were in attendance at this meeting.

a) Citizen Appeal of Traffic Control Requests denied by Public Works.

New York Street between Ford Boulevard and McDonnell Avenue
Speed Humps

Appellants: Ben Rubalcaba, Sinisha Kostich and Dominic Trutanich

Chair Ringler informed Mr. Kostich and Mr. Trutanich that although their item wasn't on the agenda for this meeting, they could express any additional concerns to DPW Staff at this time. Mr. Winter stated that the Los Angeles Unified School District is currently working with the California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) on obtaining an encroachment permit for installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of Ford Boulevard at the New York Street/I-710 northbound freeway offramp. Mr. Winter stated that they had expected this encroachment permit to have already been approved by CALTRANS, but it still hadn't been approved. He anticipates that by the next scheduled HSC meeting, there should be an update on this encroachment permit. In the meanwhile, Mr. Winter suggested that pedestrians should be crossing Ford Boulevard at the traffic signal located at the intersection of Ford Boulevard and Cesar Chavez Avenue.

Mr. Trutanich asked Mr. Winter when this item would come back to the HSC. Mr. Winter stated that a technical study was still being completed and DPW Staff was still checking with Regional Planning regarding the purposes of the parking lots on the west side of Ford Boulevard near Cesar Chavez Avenue. Mr. Winter informed the HSC that a SYNCHRO presentation would be presented at the next HSC meeting that would visually illustrate how the intersections of Ford Boulevard at New York Street/I-710 Freeway offramps and Ford Boulevard at Cesar Chavez Avenue would work together to meet traffic circulation needs of the community.

Mr. Trutanich suggested DPW Staff consider time limit parking on the east side of Ford Boulevard instead of removing the parking completely. Mr. Winter stated this would be considered also.

Commissioner Estey requested that all business owners be informed of the upcoming HSC meeting so they could be involved in the process. Mr. Winter informed Mr. Kostich and Mr. Trutanich they would be notified via mail of the next HSC scheduled meeting when their item is placed on the agenda.

b) Time Capsule Update

Commissioner Villalobos informed the HSC that a time capsule had been obtained in which the HSC will be able to insert their artifacts.

He mentioned that the ceremony would be tomorrow, January 8, 2009. He stated that he would send an email invitation to the entire HSC informing them of the details of where and when the time capsule will be dedicated.

Ms. Guilmette informed the HSC that if anyone wanted to see the artifacts, including the pdf version of documents she had emailed them, these artifacts were on display at the end of the table.

5a) Citizen Appeal of Traffic Control Requests denied by Public Works.

- a) Wapello Street between Lake Avenue and Santa Anita Avenue
Speeding Concerns

Appellant: Brian Franklin

Ms. Madrid reminded the HSC of the Motions made by the HSC at the October 1, 2008, meeting:

- 1) The appellant was to determine whether the residents on Wapello Street are open to the idea of installing speed cushions (tables) on the condition that parking is prohibited on one or both sides of Wapello Street between Lake Avenue and Santa Anita Avenue.
- 2) DPW Staff was to reevaluate Wapello Street between Lake Avenue and Santa Anita Avenue to determine whether any additional traffic calming measures could be implemented.

Ms. Madrid informed the HSC that there are many possible tools used as traffic calming devices to address speeding and cut through traffic. She said possible tools would be:

- Enforcement/Radar Trailers
- Speed Cushions
- Center Medians
- Chicanes/Bulb-Outs
- Semi-Diverters
- Full Closure

Ms. Madrid presented the pros and cons of *Enforcement* as follows:

PROS

1. Good temporary public relations tool.
2. Serves to inform the public that speeding is undesirable behavior for which there are consequences.

CONS

1. Effects are not permanent.

Ms. Madrid presented the pros and cons of *Radar Trailers* as follows:

PROS

1. This tool can be effective when displayed and may improve effectiveness with multiple applications on lower volume streets (<600 vapid).
2. May be popular with residents.
3. Low cost measure.
4. Easily deployed.

CONS

1. Minimal effectiveness when device is removed.
2. Minimal long-term impact on travel speeds.
3. Requires staff time to & from location to location.
4. Subject to vandalism.

Ms. Madrid presented the pros and cons of *speed cushions*:

PROS

1. Reduces traffic speeds.
2. Potential to reduce traffic volumes.
3. Can be used to reduce cut-through traffic.
4. Self-enforcing with a minimal impact to on-street parking.
5. Minimum maintenance.
6. OK for fire trucks.

CONS

1. May impact emergency vehicle response time.
2. May transfer problems elsewhere.
3. Not aesthetically pleasing.
4. May cause vehicles to encroach into bicycle lanes.
5. Possible increase in noise levels as vehicles accelerate after traveling over speed cushions.

Ms. Madrid presented the pros and cons of *center medians*:

PROS

1. Results in reduction in speeds
2. Enhances pedestrian environment.
3. Helps safety when used on curved roads by reducing speed.

4. Can be evaluated on temporary basis first.
5. Can be landscaped.
6. Can be a "Gateway" feature.

CONS

1. May result in loss of on-street parking.
2. Moderately expensive measure if landscaped.
3. Center islands may be hit at night unless well marked.
4. May affect residential access to driveways.
5. Reduced lane widths not favored by bicycle users.

Ms. Madrid presented the pros and cons of *Chicanes/Bulb-outs*:

PROS

1. Volume and speed reduction possible if travel lanes are made sufficiently narrow.
2. Self-enforcing.
3. Provides opportunity for roadway beautification.

CONS

1. Must be designed to avoid drivers encroaching over centerline.
2. Reduces parking availability.
3. Can be expensive if landscaped.
4. Driveway access can be affected.
5. Potential for pedestrian/bike/vehicle conflicts.

Ms. Madrid presented the pros and cons of *semi-diverters*:

PROS

1. Potential to reduce traffic speed.
2. Reduces traffic volumes.
3. Can be used to reduce cut-through traffic.
4. Self-enforcing.

5. Landscaping is possible.

CONS

1. May reduce access for emergency vehicles.
2. Diversion to longer routes may cause inconvenience to and be opposed by affected residents..
3. May transfer problems elsewhere.
4. Can be expensive if landscaped.
5. Not suitable on transit routes.
6. Place pedestrians close to travel way.

Ms. Madrid presented the pros and cons of *full closure*:

PROS

1. Reduces traffic speed.
2. Reduces traffic volumes
3. Reduces cut-through traffic.
4. Self-enforcing.
5. Enhanced landscaping opportunities are possible.

CONS

1. May reduce access for emergency vehicles.
2. Parking may be lost at the cul-de-sac end.
3. Diversion to longer routes may cause inconvenience to and be opposed by affected residents.
4. Not suitable on transit routes.
5. Must be designed to provide pedestrian and/or bicycle access.

Ms. Madrid informed the HSC that while the previous slides offer various measures to mitigate problems associated with high traffic volumes and speeds on residential roadways, they vary in both cost-effectiveness and long term effectiveness.

In conclusion, Ms. Madrid stated that the existing traffic patterns and conditions on Wapello Street are similar to those of other comparable roadways in the unincorporated Altadena area which do not meet the requirements for consideration of the aforementioned traffic calming measures.

Commissioner Watkins stated that he has noticed that some of the chicanes he's observed in Pasadena do not appear to be a good idea and that he sees tire marks on the existing ones.

Mr. Winter mentioned one of the advantages of the chicanes is that they provide a shorter distance for a pedestrian to cross the roadway.

Commissioner Watkins also mentioned that from his field observations, he believed speed humps would not be ideal on Wapello Street due to the crown of the roadway.

Ms. Madrid informed the commission that from the data they had retrieved, it didn't appear that bypass traffic was coming from the Levine Development.

Ms. Guilmette informed the HSC that although Mr. Franklin was unable to attend this meeting, he had informed her that he had attempted to send a mailer to his neighbors, but had some difficulty making sure all the residents on the street had received the mail because not all the homes had permanent residents. Ms. Guilmette also stated that Mr. Franklin's intention was to obtain a petition for a one-way street, not for speed humps.

At that time, Chair Ringler stated that if Mr. Franklin wished to pursue a one-way street, that would be another traffic request that should be forwarded to Public Works and that that the HSC's order of business at this meeting was to evaluate the appeal for speed humps.

After listening to DPW Staff and considering Mr. Franklin's previous statements regarding speeding concerns via Ms. Guilmette, the HSC made the following motion:

- 1) Deny request for speed humps on Wapello Street between Lake Avenue and Santa Anita Avenue.

At 10:20 am, Chair Ringler called for a five-minute recess. The meeting resumed at 10:30 am.

6) Report on business other than appeals

- a) Auditor-Controller Report on County Commissions.

Ms. Guilmette informed the HSC that in lieu of the HSC preparing their own report for the County Auditor Controller's Sunset Review of the Commission, the Auditor Controller's office hired a private consultant, Arroyo Associates, Inc., to review 95 County Commissions.

Ms. Guilmette referred the HSC to page 128 and 129 of the report that provides the recommendation for the Highway Safety Commission. The Conclusion stated the following:

“Based on the available information, the report concluded that the Highway Safety Commission continues to fulfill important oversight and advisory functions for the county and its activities during the past three years were aligned with its stated mission and goals. For these reasons, the Commission is recommended to be maintained”.

Ms. Guilmette congratulated the HSC on their exemplary performance and congratulated them on their 2005-2007 attendance rate of 84%, which was very high compared to that of the other Commissions.

7) Public Comments on any matter not on agenda

There were no public comments on any matters not on agenda.

8) Reports from special committees.

There were no special committees announcements.

9) Special Orders.

There were no special orders.

11) New Business

Mr. Winter informed the HSC that the California Traffic Control Device Committee (CTCDC) was going to be discussing the issues of speed limits and how they are determined. Mr. Winter mentioned that the CTCDC would also be discussing Assembly Bill (AB) 1581, which may require bicycle and pedestrian detection at traffic signals. He stated this could mean retrofitting all the County Traffic signals.

Mr. Winter stated that he is considering submitting some verbiage to be added to the California Vehicle Code that would place the responsibility of entering a crosswalk on the pedestrian. He stated that as it stands right now, he believes the countdown traffic signal is a form of entrapment to the pedestrian. He stated that the California Vehicle Code states that a pedestrian may not enter a crosswalk when a traffic signal pedestrian head is flashing red.

He believes the countdown traffic signal is inviting pedestrians to break the law by entering the crosswalk when they may not have enough time to do so.

12) Date for next meeting announced and adjournment

Chair Ringler informed the HSC that the next meeting of the HSC is tentatively scheduled for February 4, 2009. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

A recording of the discussions held at this meeting is on file at Public Works.

Respectfully submitted,



IRENA GUILMETTE
Executive Officer
Highway Safety Commission

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