

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 5, 2014**

This meeting was held at the Department of Public Works, Annex Building, Traffic Management Center.

1. Call to order

At 9:30 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Recited.

3. Roll Call

Present:                   Chairperson Thurston T. Reese  
                                  Vice Chair Greg Knapp  
                                  Commissioner Marvin Estey  
                                  Commissioner Guillermo Villalobos  
                                  Commissioner John Watkins

Absent but excused: Commissioner Rhett Price  
                                  Commissioner Robert A. Ringler

Also in attendance were the following:

Dean Lehman, Assistant Deputy Director; Guita Sheik, Principal Engineer; Arnel Dulay, Senior Civil Engineer; Dan Quintana, Senior Civil Engineer; Tommy Muttaraid, Associate Civil Engineer; and Irena Guilmette, Supervising Civil Engineering Assistant.

4. Approval of August 6, 2014, Meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the August 6, 2014, Highway Safety Commission (HSC) meeting were approved.

5. Citizen Appeal of Denied Request by Public Works

a. Denial of appeal to install a curve advisory sign at 24675 Pioma Road.

Appellant: Bill Mercado

Mr. Muttaraid informed the HSC that Mr. Mercado contacted Public Works requesting us to reinstall the 20 mph curve advisory sign near his residence at 24675 Piuma Road in the unincorporated Topanga Canyon area. Mr. Mercado believed the curve advisory sign was still needed at the curve. Mr. Muttaraid informed the HSC that Piuma Road at Mr. Mercado's residence is a local street that generally runs in an east-west direction. Piuma Road is 20 feet to 24 feet in width with one travel lane in each direction, separated by a double-yellow centerline, with centerline rumble strips. There is a posted speed limit on Piuma Road of 35 mph. The Design Section of Traffic and Lighting Division had been working on the traffic design of Piuma Road as part of another road design project. This section was in charge of updating the signage and striping plans for Piuma Road, which included removing any unnecessary signage. The actual work was completed by Willdan Engineering, a consultant engineering company. Willdan Engineering determined that the existing 20 mph curve advisory sign approaching Mr. Mercado's driveway was not valid according to the ball banking data and, as a result, it was recommended the curve advisory sign be removed. Mr. Muttaraid stated that in the 5-year collision history between January 1, 2009, and December 31, 2013, there were four midblock collisions on Piuma Road and no collisions within 1,000 feet of the subject driveway. It was also determined that there was no specific recurring traffic collision pattern to the other four midblock collisions. Traffic data taken at this location between June 19, 2014, and June 22, 2014, indicated there were 220 vehicles per day with an average 85th percentile of 40 mph. A radar speed check taken June 18, 2014, indicated an 85th percentile speed of 44 mph.

Per the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices 2012, Section 2C.07, "If a horizontal alignment sign is required, recommended, or allowed, the sign installed in advance of the curve shall be a curve (W1-2) sign. If an engineering study, i.e. ball banking, reveals a 5 mph difference between the study and the posted speed, it would be recommended and if 10 mph or over, it would be required." A ball bank reading taken on June 18, 2014, at the subject curve indicated the comfortable speed for driving westbound through this curve was 30 mph. Due to these readings, it was recommended a 30 mph advisory curve sign be posted at the curve and that the existing driveway be relocated to increase sight distance. Mr. Muttaraid stated that the installation of the 30 mph curve advisory sign was proposed to Mr. Mercado, but he did not like that idea and proposed the 20 mph curve advisory sign instead.

After hearing the testimony of Public Works staff, Commissioner Estey asked Mr. Muttaraid how far is it when driving westbound on Piuma Road before you can see Mr. Mercado's driveway. Mr. Muttaraid replied it is 150 feet. Commissioner Knapp asked Mr. Muttaraid if that factor was considered in the evaluation and Mr. Muttaraid said no, that they were ball banking the curve, not measuring sight distance to a driveway. Chair Estey asked how long ago the original sign was installed. Mr. Mercado stated it was about 18 years ago.

Mr. Mercado provided his testimony and stated that the California Driver's Handbook states that a driver needs 210 feet to stop so that you could see 100 feet ahead. Mr. Mercado stated a 20 mph advisory curve sign was installed May 21, 1996, and that it was installed because of a former HSC decision. Mr. Muttaraid stated that he suggested a 30 mph advisory curve would be more accurate at this location because that is the "comfortable" speed that was measured from the ball bank reading at the curve. Mrs. Mercado stated that when the original sign was installed, there were fewer motorists on the roadway. She also stated that on the opposite side of her driveway, there was an embankment nearby. Mr. Dulay informed the HSC that the sign was posted for the curve and not the driveway. He also stated the only way to accommodate the issue they are describing is to relocate the driveway. Ms. Mercado stated that the California Driver's Handbook stated that at 35 mph, it would take a car 210 feet to react and bring it to a complete stop. Commissioner Villalobos asked if there were any traffic collisions at this curve, and Mr. Muttaraid said there had been none. Mr. Quintana stated that the background of this project was that Piuma Road was being redesigned and, as a result, all the curves were being ball banked by Willdan Engineering to determine whether the existing signs were appropriate. The County then reviewed the consultant's data and determined that the sign at this curve should be removed. Mr. Mercado stated that the sign was removed January 16, 2014. Mrs. Mercado mentioned that there were also propane trucks and trash trucks that stopped unexpectedly in the roadway in front of their property and motorists may not have enough time to stop. Commissioner Villalobos asked Public Works staff if a side road symbol sign would be appropriate at this location. Ms. Sheik stated that a side road symbol is not typically used in advance of a private driveway. Commissioner Estey asked Public Works staff if there were any other signs that could be posted in advance of the Mercado's driveway. Mr. Dulay stated that a side road symbol sign would be confusing to a motorist. Commissioner Knapp stated the survey only looked at the curve and, due to the location of the appellant's driveway, other considerations should be made. Mr. Lehman stated that Public Works does not

currently have records indicating why the 20 mph advisory curve sign was installed in the first place. Mr. Mercado asked why Public Works could not just install the sign, and Ms. Sheik stated that the intent of the 20 mph advisory curve sign was for the curve and not the driveway. She also stated that ball bank measurements are retained and risk management cannot use design immunity if wrong advisory signs are posted. Mr. Mercado asked what the fastest speed recorded was going through this curve, and Mr. Muttaraid stated that there was one motorist going 52 mph and two motorists going 51 mph. Mr. Lehman suggested a flagman be placed out when a propane truck comes out since it only fills the tanks every 3 months. Chair Reese asked Public Works staff if some kind of compromise could be reached for signage at this location. Commissioner Estey suggested traffic calming be used at this location. Mr. Lehman indicated that traffic calming is not used on a rural roadway. Commissioner Watkins suggested a flashing beacon at the curve.

Commissioner Knapp made a motion to approve the appellant's appeal to install the 20 mph curve advisory sign approaching 24675 Piuma Road. The vote went as follows:

Chair Reese:	No
Vice-Chair Knapp:	Yes
Commissioner Estey:	No
Commissioner Villalobos:	Yes
Commissioner Watkins:	No

The motion did not pass.

Commissioner Estey made a motion for Public Works to evaluate all possible warning signs or other traffic control devices that could be used at the westbound curve preceding the property at 14675 Piuma Road and return their results at an upcoming HSC meeting. The vote went as follows:

Chair Reese:	Yes
Vice-Chair Knapp:	No
Commissioner Estey:	Yes
Commissioner Villalobos:	Yes
Commissioner Watkins:	Yes

The motion passed.

The HSC took a break at 10:50 a.m. The meeting resumed at 11:10 a.m.

- b. Denial of appeal to install multiway stop controls and/or marked crosswalk at the intersection of Allen Avenue at Oakwood Street

Appellant: Bruce Allen

Ms. Guilmette informed the HSC that Mr. Allen was sight-impaired and that he was going to participate in this meeting via telephone-conference call. At that point, she called Mr. Allen via telephone and placed him on speakerphone so that he could hear the proceedings and participate in the meeting. At this point, Mr. Muttaraid introduced himself to Mr. Allen and began his presentation and informed the HSC that Mr. Allen made a request for a marked crosswalk, but the request was changed to multiway stop controls at the intersection of Allen Avenue at Oakwood Street located in the unincorporated area of Altadena. Mr. Muttaraid explained that Allen Avenue is a north-south roadway that forms an offset intersection with Oakwood Street and is a 30-foot-wide local roadway that is currently stop controlled at Allen Avenue. The nearest traffic signals were located at Washington Boulevard, which was 1,800 feet south of the intersection and at New York Drive, which was 1,100 feet north of the intersection. The 5-year collision history between January 1, 2009, and December 31, 2013, indicated there were no intersection collisions reported at the subject intersection. There were 12,521 vehicles per day at the subject intersection and manual traffic counts were taken on June 11, 2014. They indicated 18 pedestrians crossed Allen Avenue in the 12-hour period between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. During the hours of 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., there was an average of four pedestrians per hour crossing Allen Avenue. During the highest peak-hour of the intersection, no pedestrians were observed crossing Allen Avenue. The County performed a multiway stop analysis, a traffic signal warrant analysis, and a flashing beacon analysis at the subject intersection, and none of the warrants were met for all three analyses. The speed data indicated motorists were speeding on Allen Avenue and the speed data was forwarded to the Altadena office of the CHP for appropriate speed enforcement. Mr. Muttaraid concluded his presentation by stating that neither multiway stop controls, traffic signals, nor flashing beacons were recommended.

After hearing the presentation, Commissioner Estey asked Mr. Muttaraid if any school-aged children crossed this intersection. No students were crossing. Mr. Allen stated the speed limit is not being enforced and that motorists are

traveling 60 mph to 70 mph on Allen Avenue. Mr. Allen stated that he did not believe the CHP were doing their job. Commissioner Estey asked if a radar trailer had been deployed at this location. Ms. Sheik stated that a radar trailer had not yet been deployed. Mr. Lehman indicated that the speed measurements indicated the 85th percentile speed on Allen Avenue was 38 mph. Mr. Allen stated motorists were driving 80 mph. Commissioner Knapp stated that a radar speed trailer could help control speeding at this location. Commissioner Villalobos asked if there was a limit line and that he noticed all the side streets were stopped at Allen Avenue.

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve Public Works' denial of multiway stop controls at the intersection of Allen Avenue at Oakwood Street and to have a radar speed trailer deployed on Allen Avenue at Oakwood Street.

The motion passed unanimously.

6. Report on Business Other Than Appeals

Crossing Guard Update

Ms. Guilmette stated that during the 3-month period since our August 6, 2014, HSC meeting, Public Works studied two sites for crossing guard services. Of the two sites, one was recommended for new crossing guard services and the other was denied due to not meeting the minimum criteria for crossing guard services. Also, Public Works is currently evaluating seven new locations for crossing guard services.

The total number of locations with crossing guard service is 209. Please note that the total number of crossing guards employed by the Los Angeles County Office of Education for these 207 locations is 215, which is due to some locations being served by more than one crossing guard.

7. Public Comments on Any Matter Not on the Agenda

None.

8. Reports from Special Committees

None.

9. Special Orders

None.

10. Unfinished Business and General Notes

None.

11. New Business

None.

12. Date for Next Meeting Announced and Adjournment

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for January 7, 2014. The meeting was adjourned in memory of Fernando Felix at 11:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



IRENA GUILMETTE  
Executive Officer  
Highway Safety Commission

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