

# MINUTES OF TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING OF THE CITY OF LOS ALAMITOS

REGULAR MEETING – November 12, 2014

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular meeting of the Traffic Commission was called to order at 7:00 P.M. on November 12, 2014, in the Council Chambers, 3191 Katella Avenue, Los Alamitos, Chair Emerson presiding.

## 2. ROLL CALL

**Present:** Commissioners:

Gina Biri  
Dave Emerson  
Javier Mejia  
Daniel Patz  
Johanna Schleuter  
James Wilhelm

**Absent:** Commissioner:

Richard Vardeman

**Present:** Staff:

Dave Hunt, City Engineer  
Bruce McAlpine, Police Captain  
Pamela Brackman, Department Secretary

## 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice-Chair Patz.

## 4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Emerson opened the meeting for Oral Communications.

There being no persons wishing to speak, Chair Emerson closed Oral Communications.

## 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None.

Commissioner Mejia requested a CD of the October 8, 2014 Commission meeting to review his commentary for corrections.

## 6. STAFF REPORTS

### A. REQUEST ONE-WAY ALLEY RESTRICTION

City Engineer Hunt began by saying the Traffic Commission has requested that a study be completed to consider making the alley north of Farquhar Avenue a one-way alley in order to improve traffic congestion at Farquhar Avenue and Los Alamitos Boulevard. Mr. Hunt stated that over 200 Public Notices were mailed to businesses, residents and property owners within 500 feet notifying them of the proposed one-way alley restriction. No replies or comments have been received to date.

A PowerPoint presentation was presented, illustrating the proposed alley, current vehicular conditions and surrounding businesses. Mr. Hunt summarized the area surrounding the proposed alley restriction. He stated that a vehicle count traffic study of vehicles going northbound and southbound along Los Alamitos Boulevard was completed on November 6, 2014. This study confirmed that twice as many vehicles travel southbound than northbound.

Mr. Hunt stated that making the alley one-way southbound will generally provide better traffic flow since it would produce a clockwise traffic flow (series of right turns) to/from Los Alamitos Boulevard instead of a counter-clockwise traffic flow (series of left turns). This would reduce traffic backup onto Los Alamitos Boulevard caused by vehicles attempting to travel northbound on the alley. In addition, the northbound cut-through traffic from northbound Los Alamitos Boulevard would become non-existent if the alley was made one-way southbound.

Chair Emerson opened the item for questions and comments from the Commission.

Vice-Chair Patz inquired where the beginning of the alley southbound placement was located, and the costs associated with making the alley one-way.

Mr. Hunt responded that the alley would begin going southbound half way down from the old CVS store, Flame Broiler and Great Dane Bakery. Two (2) large "One Way Only" signs would be posted at both ends of the alley, with additional signage in the middle of the alley. The approximate cost would be under \$1,000 for signage and installation.

Commissioner Mejia stated that he thought the Commission was going beyond what was first discussed on this item. He suggested that a possible first step would be the installation of a "No Left Turn" sign on the sidewalk at Farquhar, with a restriction of hours where no one could turn left.

Commissioner Wilhelm offered the signage, "No Left Turn", could be placed on a light standard then there would be no need to install a pole. Mr. Hunt suggested that the "No Left Turn" sign could be done in conjunction with a double yellow line.

Discussion ensued regarding sign installation.

Chair Emerson pointed out that there would still be a right turn, and suggested that a "One-Way" alley sign would have more effect.

Commissioner Mejia stated that the "No Left Turn" sign would still have people turning right. Commissioner Mejia inquired about a record of traffic accidents.

Mr. Hunt responded that a record of accidents was not researched.

Commissioner Wilhelm suggested that a stop sign, which would force the westbound traffic to stop at the alley, could expedite left turns going up the alley and conversely would make it easier for southbound traffic to make a left turn to travel east on Farquhar.

Mr. Hunt responded that a stop sign could cause traffic to back up on Los Alamitos Boulevard, resulting in more traffic violations and accidents.

Mr. Hunt stated that he was in favor of Commissioner Wilhelm's suggestion of "No Left Turn" signage, which would be a good starting point at this time. If the signage was determined to be ineffective, additional signage could then be added.

Chair Emerson suggested that a yellow line down the middle of the alley would alert drivers of the lane they should be driving in.

Commissioner Wilhelm stated that he is in favor of the suggestion of a one way alley restriction.

Motion/Second: Patz/Biri

Motion Failed due to a lack of a vote.

The Traffic Commission moved to create a "one way" alley restriction east of Los Alamitos Boulevard, north of Farquhar Avenue from the area shown on page 2 of 4, Agenda Item 6A, using recommendations brought forward by Staff.

Commissioner Mejia asked for clarification; did the motion include striping down the center?

Vice-Chair Patz responded that there would be no striping, since the alley will be restricted to a one way street.

Discussion ensued, including possible hazards related to a "one way" restriction.

Motion/Second: Mejia/Biri

Unanimously Carried: The Traffic Commission approved installing a "No Left Turn" sign with proper signage, putting striping in place the first 20 feet down the center line, and re-visiting the item if needed.

## **B. KATELLA AVENUE RESTRIPIING UNDER I-605**

City Engineer Hunt reported that Traffic Commission Chair Emerson has asked if Katella Avenue can be restriped so that the southbound 605 off-ramp onto eastbound Katella Avenue can have its own lane without merging with the No. 2 eastbound lane. Mr. Hunt stated that a dedicated lane for the southbound off-ramp going east on Katella Avenue will improve interchange traffic operation and enhance safety by eliminating short lane drops. Mr. Hunt stated that a goal of the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) was to have lane separation. He indicated that a portion of an existing dirt patch would need to be removed in order to widen the area. The total estimated cost of the project is \$179,500.

Mr. Hunt stated that the proposed improvement is within the State right-of-way, and an Encroachment Permit is required to grant permission to perform the proposed improvement. He stated that a future study by OCTA could potentially prohibit the improvement.

Mr. Hunt confirmed that all costs will be borne by Caltrans and OCTA if the City does not move forward with the proposed improvements, and waits for those agencies to perform the improvements. If the City proceeds with the project, Measure M and gas tax monies can be used for the project. Mr. Hunt stated that he could contact OCTA to determine if they could move forward on the project, and could apply for special funding as a separate project.

Discussion ensued regarding the proposed dedicated lane and funding needed for the project.

Motion/Second: Schleuter/Patz

Unanimously Carried: The Traffic Commission instructed City Staff to investigate possible financing from various agencies for the proposal as outlined.

## 7. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

City Engineer Hunt indicated a water main broken during recent alley work cost the Water District approximately \$23,000, but repairs were made on time. The project has been completed.

## 8. TRAFFIC COMMISSION INITIATED BUSINESS

Commissioner Schleuter

- New reflectors installed on Katella Avenue in front of the hospital have made the lines more visible. She inquired if reflectors could be installed at the right-hand turn lane on Katella and Wallingsford.

Vice-Chair Patz

- Thanked Department Secretary Ms. Brackman for contacting a property owner regarding having a tree trimmed.
- Inquired about the status of removal of the "No Left Turn" sign by the Post Office on Reagan Street. Members of the public have asked if the sign can be removed. The sign is located by the drop boxes. City Engineer Hunt stated that he would research the matter to determine what information he can provide.

Commissioner Biri

- Inquired about the status of the ad hoc committee for the parking meter pilot project. City Engineer Hunt responded that the committee has met three times, and is currently waiting for the parking structure to open and construction to be completed. The next step is to prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) to send to contractors who install the meters. Vice-Chair Patz stated that part of the parking meter pilot project is to hold Town Hall meetings to receive input from residents, businesses and interested parties. Mr. Hunt stated that it could possibly be six months before the project comes back before the Traffic Commission.

Commissioner Mejia

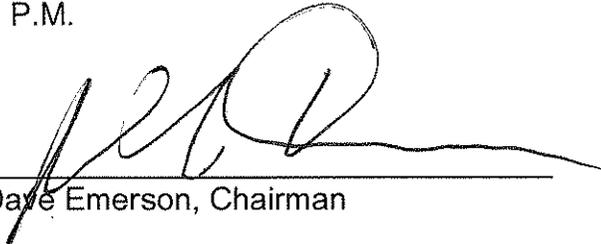
- Some illuminated street name signs on Katella Avenue are not functioning.
- Requested that the crosswalk located at Katella and Cherry be moved from the east side to the west side.
- Loading zone at Katella Deli seems to have helped. He has not observed as many trucks in the alley. Mr. Hunt confirmed that there have been no complaints related to this issue.

Chair Emerson

- The Holiday Dinner is scheduled for December 9, 2014, and RSVP's are due the day before Thanksgiving.
- There is no Traffic Commission meeting scheduled for the month of December.
- There are numerous Commission vacancies, and the deadline to submit applications to serve on a Commission is one week from today, on November 19, 2014. Chair Emerson encouraged recruitment.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The Traffic Commission adjourned at 8:25 P.M.



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Dave Emerson, Chairman

ATTEST:



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Dave Hunt, City Engineer