

MINUTES OF REGULAR TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING

CITY OF LOS ALAMITOS
3191 Katella Avenue
Los Alamitos, California

September 10, 2014

1. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular meeting of the Traffic Commission was called to order at 7:04 p.m. on September 10, 2014, in the Council Chambers, 3191 Katella Avenue, Los Alamitos, Chair Emerson presiding.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS Biri, Emerson, Mejia, Patz, Schleuter,
Vardeman, Wilhelm

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER None

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

GUESTS: Joseph Alcock, Section Manager II
Long Range Planning and Corridor Studies
Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA)
Bo Burick, RFB Consulting
Trisha Keith, RFB Consulting
Sharriar Afshani
Ben Afshani

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Schleuter.

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

5. MINUTES

Corrections to the Traffic Commission Meeting Minutes of April 9, 2014 are as follows:

Page 4, Paragraph 6:

- Commissioner Emerson stated that he was concerned about the portion of the City south of Katella **“and”** was in favor of converting alleys to a one-way direction, and to make them a pedestrian walkway. This would establish a pedestrian and bike zones similar to what is **“proposed for”** on Los Al Blvd, by converting alleys to support the traffic. It's noisy and loud to walk along Katella. Add some aesthetic touches such as potted plants and benches. Create a nice, quiet space for walking and riding for the City's residents.

Page 5, Paragraph 2:

- Commissioner Emerson brought up that for the August meeting both himself and Commissioner Vardeman would be out of town, so the Commission **“might”** would be without a quorum. It was decided that the Commission would cancel the August 13th meeting and would reconvene on September 10.

Motion/Second/Abstain: Patz/Biri/Schleuter

Motion carried to approve the July 9, 2014 Regular Meeting with comments/changes as noted above. Commissioner Schleuter abstained due to her absence at that meeting.

6. **STAFF REPORTS**

A. KATELLA AT I-605

Joseph Alcock, a Section Manager specializing in Long Range Planning and Corridor Studies from the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), presented an update on the Measure M Project Study Report-Project Development Support (PSR-PDS). Mr. Alcock stated that the goal of the Project Study is to improve freeway access to arterial connectives.

Bo Burick from RBF Consulting gave a slide presentation that included some key issues of what the scope of the 605 Interchange project at Katella Avenue between Coyote Creek Channel and Civic Center Drive will entail.

A short Q&A session was opened to all the Commissioners.

Chair Emerson thanked the presenters for their time and effort.

B. RESTRICTED LOS ALAMITOS STREET PARKING ADJACENT TO LOS ALAMITOS PLAZA

City Engineer, Dave Hunt, stated that a letter was presented by Shahriar Afshani on behalf of the owners at 10900 Los Alamitos Blvd to the City, for restricted parking signage to be installed on the streets surrounding the Los Alamitos Plaza. Mr. Hunt recommended that the Commission allow Mr. Afshani to present his parking concerns, and for the Commission to provide direction to Staff on how to proceed.

Ben Afshani, a representation for the business owners of Los Alamitos Plaza at 10900 Los Alamitos Blvd., began by thanking the Commission for adding their parking concerns to the agenda and to Mr. Hunt in helping them prepare for their presentation.

Ben Afshani summarized that the objective is for the City to exercise its authority to regulate parking and install 2-hour parking signage in all yellow marked areas on the parking map presented. Ben Afshani stated that the issue is there is no signage whatsoever that limits parking time for vehicles. Theoretically, based on his interpretation of the City code, an operable vehicle could stay parked in a space for up to 72 hours. This leads to no parking turnover.

Ben Afshani continued that our customers, clients and tenants aren't able to easily access the property at the Los Alamitos Plaza to go about their business, for the parking spaces are being used up around the property for hours and hours on a daily basis. The areas indicated in yellow, as shown on the map, are street parking spaces that the Business owners would like to see the City install restricted parking signage. The blue areas designate where there is already regulated parking being imposed. The addition of restricted parking signage in the yellow areas would show consistent regulation throughout the heart of the City.

Mr. Hunt pointed out to the Commission that the areas in yellow on the map are the same areas whereas the Parking Meter Pilot Project (PMPP) is looking to install parking meters. Mr. Hunt explained that the parking meters would work in the same way as the restricted signage being requested except, that the City would receive revenue from the installation of meters. He added that the issue of installing parking meters may be brought to the Traffic Commission in approximately two to three months for review.

Chair Emerson opened the meeting to the Commissioners to ask any questions on this subject.

Commissioner Meija questioned where all the employees are parking in the Los Alamitos Plaza Park.

Ben Afshani responded that the employees have been parking at the main site. Notices are being given out that specifying if they do not move their vehicles, and park in the Annex parking location that their vehicles will be towed. Ben Afshani stated that the goal is to have parking spaces to be available to customers and clients of the businesses within the Business Plaza site. Signage with instructions on where the Annex parking is location has also been installed.

Commissioner Meija asked if there was a time frame as to how long the employees have been parking in the Annex parking lot and have there been any parking improvements.

Ben Afshani responded with they have been heavily cracking down to all the employees for about the last three weeks or so. But only began giving out information to employees to park in the Annex parking lot since around June.

Mr. Hunt added that the City has recently recognized more parking usage in the City owned lot.

Chair Emerson questioned what the point of the City owned lot was, for it seemed so random that the City owned it. Mr. Hunt explained that it was part of the Post Office when the City bought it, and it was excess parking that CSF didn't need, so the City decided to retained the parking lot.

Commissioner Meija asked if the Annex parking lot been underutilized before this time period.

Ben Afshani stated that the Annex lot has always been used at peak lunchtime hours. Shahriar Afshani explained that the main reason that this parking issue came about was from the parking abuse of the neighboring businesses, which impacted our tenants and customers. There was no parking between the hours of 7:00am until very late at night, for hospital employees parking during the construction of the Medical Parking Structure.

Shahriar Afshani stated that they decided to take control of their parking lot, by issuing decals for long term parking users to the tenants and employees. Also to allow them to use the Annex parking lot freeing up parking spaces in the Business Plaza. Shahriar Afshani requested the Cities help with time limit signage for on street parking. Cars now are being pushed out of our lot and now are taking up all the non signage street parking.

Chair Emerson stated that he drove around the site today, and didn't realize how much head in parking was in the areas shown on the map. He suggested the area next to Starbucks on the west side of Pine be added as a designated yellow area for signage.

Shahriar Afshani added that two hours is the preferred time limit, for it gives many customers enough time to conduct their business at the Plaza.

Chair Emerson added that the only problem he foresaw was the costs of the signage. Seems like the hospital should pay for the signs, since it was mostly hospital employees utilizing the street parking.

Vice Chair Patz expressed concern that if signage goes up in the yellow areas, it will push the people looking for parking off onto the other side of the street and into different neighborhoods. So potentially installing signage could be shifting the problem from one location to another.

Mr. Hunt added that the Parking Meter Pilot Project (PMPP) has been looking at trying not to pick an area and then end up with squeezing people into other areas to find parking. If one chooses a big enough area, which is controlled by major streets, most likely people won't go outside of that area to find parking.

Mr. Hunt added that the residential area already has in place restricted parking to the north of the yellow areas on the map, and is protected from any overflow parking.

Shahriar Afshani added that he believe that all the businesses in the surrounding area would have to address parking issues for its' customers and employees.

Mr. Hunt directed the Commissioners that the main objective is for them to understand what they want, and if they agree that we need to investigate the Business Plaza parking issue to direct him to prepare a Staff Report. Also, all the businesses within the Plaza would have to be notified of the areas to install 2-hour signage. A public meeting would need to be held, so other businesses can come in and express their concerns. After that, then the Commission has a discussion and can designate what areas on the map to provide restricted signage or choose to do nothing at all.

Motion/Second: Patz/Biri

A Motion to direct Staff to set up a public meeting to review the opportunities to set up 2-hour parking signage in all the yellow areas designated on the map. This to include the parking spaces in front of Starbucks on the west side of Pine Street near Starbucks unanimously passed.

7. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

- Mr. Hunt gave an update that all the 4-way Stop Sign plaques have been added throughout the City. He continued that the City's Traffic Engineer is working on the school Traffic Study, which should be concluded at any

time. Mr. Hunt stated that if he received the report in the next week or so he would send it out to all Commissioners.

8. TRAFFIC COMMISSION INITIATED BUSINESS

Commissioner Scheulter

- Requested again that intersection at Florista and Pine be evaluated for making a left hand turn. Mr. Hunt stated that this would be revisited.
- Several meetings ago she asked if Katella or Los Al Blvd/Seal Beach Blvd has been designated as an official evacuation route. Police Captain McAlphine stated that he was 99% certain that the City did not have any evacuation routes, for example if an earthquake was bad enough it would affect those named streets, and probably make them impassible. If a natural disaster were serious enough to evacuate, it would probably be recommended for all residents to "self evacuate."

Commissioner Wilhelm

- Has heard many complaints of the timing on the photo enforced westbound yellow arrow turn lane turning southbound onto Los Al Blvd at Katella. Wilhelm attempted to measure the timing himself the other day, and he only got to two seconds. Mr. Hunt explained that the light is set at 3.8 seconds and is 4 seconds going thru. Everyone that receives a red light ticket gets a video to review. Mr. Hunt added that the 4 seconds time interval has not been changed in the past four years, and the light is checked all the time for of all the complaints we receive.
- The new pedestrian crossing at Katella and Noel timing seemed reduced. Mr. Hunt stated that no pedestrian timing had been changed. The City has a firm that installs all the pedestrian crossing meters and they are timed and monitored with a computer program.

Commissioner Patz

- Extended his gratitude for replacing sun damaged residential parking signage in his area.

Commissioner Vardeman

- Expressed his concern that the businesses in the areas of possible parking meters installed be polled and to not charge an arm and a leg to park. Mr. Hunt stated that Community Development Director Steven Mendoza and City Manager Bret Plumlee have been and would continue doing outreach to the businesses affected. He continued that the City supported the idea of the monetary amount to be charged for parking would not be one that affects the comings and goings of people in the business areas.

Commissioner Meija

- Gave his appreciation to the painted curb loading zone at Lexington and Katella Deli, and added that it seems to be working to keep the trucks in the designated areas.
- Has noticed that many people are not stopping at the Stop sign coming out of the Joint Forces Training Base (JFTB) on Howard. He added that this Stop sign was on the outside of the Base and not inside, and was wondering if the City could phone the Base Commander for help with this. Mr. Hunt added that he could solicit the help from Councilman Grose.
- Requested the Cities street sweeping requirements for Apartment Row. Mr. Hunt stated that he would check with our Superintendent of Public Works on the requirements.

Commissioner Emerson

- Requested that the Selection, Rotation and Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Traffic Commission be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion/Second: PATZ/VARDEMAN

A Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 p.m.



Dave Hunt, City Engineer