

**MINUTES OF THE
PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
10th DAY OF DECEMBER, 2014 AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE
AMEDEE O. "DICK" RICHARDS, JR., COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1424 MISSION STREET**

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:00p.m. by Vice Chair Granath. Present were Commissioner Abelson, Commissioner Pendo, Commissioner Fisher, Commissioner Glauz and Council Liaison Mahmud arrived at 8:00pm. Staff present: Deputy Public Works Director Shin Furukawa and Public Works Assistant Leonna DeWitt.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Abelson led the pledge of allegiance.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Meeting of November 12, 2014.

Minutes approved as amended. (Fisher, Abelson 5-0)

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS – Items not on the agenda

Jane Schurmeister – 816 Orange Grove Place. She is concerned about the traffic on Orange Grove Avenue between El Centro and Monterey Road. She believes there is a possibility for a head on collision due to the oncoming traffic from the Altos and the narrowness of the street. She requested the Commission to drive by this area in the morning or afternoon to see how dangerous the street is.

Gary Coyne – 1033 Garfield Avenue. Mr. Coyne is a bicyclist who commutes to work and also rides for recreation. Mr. Coyne requested additional evaluation of the streets for bicyclists where the edges of the pavement are rated. He proposes a grading system represented by letters A through F with F being the worst. He is requesting the Commission to consider this idea at a future meeting.

Vice Chair Granath closed public comments.

5. COUNCIL LIAISON COMMENTS

Council Liaison Mahmud attended the Strategic Planning meeting for the League of California Cities of Los Angeles County. She stated it was a unique opportunity to provide input and protect the City's interest in transportation.

She commented she spent time reviewing the speed survey and in her opinion, without receiving confirmation from the City Attorney, that with respect to Grand Avenue, City Council was advised that the speed limit couldn't be enforced at 25 mph, which she believes is inaccurate. With particular findings you can legally conclude based upon a traffic study that a particular speed limit is appropriate based upon residential density, pedestrian traffic and bike safety.

She reminded the Commission regarding the public meeting for the Strategic Planning Session in February 7, 2015.

6. STAFF COMMENTS

Public Works Assistant Leonna DeWitt provided information regarding the Garfield Reservoir Community Open House scheduled for Tuesday, December 16 at 6:30 in the Community Room at the Library.

7. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

A. 2014 Engineering & Traffic Survey (E&TS)

Deputy Public Works Director Furukawa presented a follow-up to the discussion from the previous meeting on the Engineering and Traffic Survey, illustrated by PowerPoint slides.

The four segments to be discussed are:

1. Grand Avenue (Columbia Street to Mission Street) – posted at 25 mph, but previous E&TS recommended 30 mph; current E&TS recommendation is 25 mph.

Commissioner Abelson and Fisher recused themselves from discussing and voting on this matter and chose to speak as residents. Commissioners Abelson and Fisher left the dais to sit in the audience.

Vice Chair Granath opened for public comment.

Dr. Bill Sherman – 320 Grand Avenue. Dr. Sherman is a former Transportation Commissioner and recalled when the issue came before the Commission for recommendation in 2007. The Transportation Commission decided the speed on Grand should not be increased and the City Council agreed. The City Council and Commission understood the speed limit would not be enforceable by radar. Dr. Sherman believes the speed limit should not be increased.

John Fisher – 431 Grand Avenue. Mr. Fisher stated the current posted speed limit is 25 mph and 41% of drivers exceed that speed. The purpose of setting the speed limit is to advise law enforcement of the speed at which they should start enforcement. He stated if the speed is set at 25 mph then 41% of the drivers will be law breakers. If the speed is set at 30 mph then 10% of the drivers will be law breakers. As a resident, it is not unreasonable to drive at 30 mph. Mr. Fisher stated he is not taking a position on the matter, but noted to the Commission that it is a difficult decision.

Jamie Sobieski – 521 Grand Avenue. Mr. Sobieski started an email chain and received a lot of good information. He lives in a small tight community and speed limit matters. Mr. Sobieski believes if the speed limit is increased to 30 mph people will go 40 mph. It's a family neighborhood with a lot of kids and just outside of his house there was a head on collision that occurred caused by speeding. Mr. Sobieski wants his neighborhood to be protected.

Lisa Roa – 309 Grand Avenue. Ms. Roa agreed with all of the other speakers. She wanted to speak on behalf of her neighbor Katherine Kelly of 553 Grand Avenue. Ms. Kelly would like the speed limit to remain at 25 mph. It's a residential area and needs to remain a residential area.

Larry Abelson – 612 Hermosa St. - Mr. Abelson expressed concern about creating a speed trap. The E&TS data shows most people drive 29 mph or less. He is totally in favor of keeping the speed limit as low as possible because he lives in the neighborhood and wants to keep it safe. The purpose of the E&TS is to set speeds that do not burden motorists with

unreasonable laws and provide a clear indication of the maximum driving speed which is reasonable and prudent under typical driving conditions.

A motion was made to recommend a speed limit of 25 mph on Grand Avenue (Columbia to Mission). (Pendo, Glauz 3-0)

Commissioner Fisher and Abelson returned to the dais.

2. Monterey Road (Fair Oaks Avenue to Milan Avenue) – posted at 25 mph; 2007 E&TS approved a speed limit of 30 mph; E&TS recommends 30 mph. At the last Commission meeting a motion was made to expand evaluation of this segment to combine the stretch between Fair Oaks Ave. and Garfield Ave. due to similar roadway characteristics. The segment from Milan to Garfield has a speed limit of 30 mph and the traffic engineer, after considering the combined segments, recommends a speed limit of 30 mph. An email was received by a resident who lives in this segment and requested the speed limit to remain at 25 mph.

A motion was made to recommend a uniform speed limit of 30 mph for the segment of Monterey Road from Fair Oaks to Garfield. (Abelson, Pendo 5-0)

3. Fair Oaks Avenue (Monterey Rd. to Oak St.) posted at 35 mph; E&TS recommends 30 mph.

Commissioner Fisher stated the data shows no identified collision problems or conditions that are not readily apparent, so it comes down to the 85th percentile speed. Fair Oaks Ave. has three distinct characters from Columbia to the 110 Freeway; through the business district to Monterey Road; then a wide median to Huntington Dr. Since the traffic engineer recommends combining the two segments (Monterey to Oak and Oak to Huntington Dr.) then it's necessary to look at the combined data. One segment shows the 85th percentile at 29 mph and the other at 39 mph. If the speed limit is set at 30 mph for the two segments combined then 40.5% of the drivers will be over the speed limit. Generally, the speed limit is set so that 15% of the drivers are going faster. This threshold can serve as aid to law enforcement of who to target.

Commissioner Glauz commented driving north on Fair Oaks at Monterey the lanes are reduced from three to two. She is also concerned about school kids crossing the crosswalk on Fair Oaks at Lyndon and recalled a student being hit years ago near Pavilions.

Commissioner Abelson agreed with Commission Glauz and suggested the Commission should look into the removal of the unprotected crosswalk at Lyndon at some point in the future because there are protected crosswalks on Fair Oaks at Monterey Rd., Bank St., Rollin St. and Oak St.

A motion was made to recommend a 35 mph speed limit on Fair Oaks Avenue from Monterey Road to Huntington Dr. (Fisher, Abelson 5-0)

4. Huntington Dr. (Alhambra Road to Fremont Ave.) – existing speed 35 mph; recommend 40 mph.

A motion was made to approve the recommendation of a uniform speed limit of 40 mph on Huntington Dr. from Alhambra Rd. to Fremont Ave. (Abelson, Pendo 5-0)

B. Consideration of Traffic Study to Modify Medians on Monterey Road at Pasadena Avenue and at Via Del Rey

Deputy Public Works Director Furukawa presented background information on this item. A 2012 traffic count indicates 511 vehicles make left turn movements at the intersection of Monterey and Pasadena. Staff performed new counts that indicated half of that number made left turn movements at the same intersection during peak hours and 241 vehicles made left turn movements at Via Del Rey going into the Altos. The traffic study is estimated to cost \$1,500.

Commissioner Abelson raised two points: 1) No access to left turn pocket at Pasadena Avenue; 2) At Via Del Rey the left turn pocket isn't long enough and it creates an overflow. The recommendation would be to lengthen the turn pocket which means reducing the size of the median at the location.

Vice Chair Granath stated what is needed is a plan of what can be done at this intersection and a construction estimate, which can be submitted to City Council as a specific resolution to this situation. He is opposed to waiting for the road diet study to defer improvements to traffic flow.

Commissioner Fisher stated the traffic volumes are high and a rule of thumb for how long left turn pockets should be is one foot per vehicle. He suggested looking at how to improve the left turn storage/capacity when it's time to decide on the improvements to make on Monterey Road.

Chair Granath suggested moving forward with the incremental changes to experiment with and have more practical information for future use.

Commissioner Glauz has concerns about extending the left turn pocket at Via Del Rey because vehicles that are not able to get into the left turn pocket proceed to Orange Grove and make a U-turn.

Commissioner Abelson responded the reason is due to the long wait for the left turn at Via Del Rey.

Council Liaison Mahmud advised the Commission on the legalities of Fair Political Practices Commission and the 500 feet requirement. She will confirm with the City Attorney.

Deputy Public Works Director Furukawa stated Commissioner Glauz lives beyond 500 feet of the Via Del Rey intersection, and that both Commissioner Fisher and Abelson recused themselves from the vote on the speed limit on Grand Ave.

Commissioner Fisher inquired about implementing a left turn arrow at Via Del Rey.

Deputy Public Works Director Furukawa stated staff is currently looking into the cost for installation of a left turn arrow. Preliminary discussions have identified installation of a new mast arm on the median due to insufficient space on Monterey Road. The cost will be expensive.

A motion was made to recommend funding in the fiscal year 2015-16 budget to install a left turn arrow on westbound Monterey Rd at Via Del Rey and extend the left turn pockets on westbound Monterey Road at Via Del Rey and Pasadena Ave and resurfacing be included in that project whichever occurs first. (Abelson, Fisher 5-0)

C. Consideration of Traffic Study to Implement Left Turn Restrictions at Diamond Avenue from Monterey Road During Peak Hours

Deputy Public Works Director Furukawa briefly provided background information on this item. Staff conducted informal traffic counts during the am peak hours and 24 southbound left turns and 10 northbound left turns. In the pm peak hours 18 southbound left turns and 16 northbound left turns.

Commissioner Fisher suggested conducting a study that will document current conditions and delays and collision data. It's wise to have a study to show why this is being done. He believes anytime a restriction is being implemented there should be some justification for it.

A motion was made to recommend a traffic study to investigate the effects of prohibiting left turns from Monterey Road to Diamond Ave during the weekday am and pm peak hours and installing left turn pockets on Monterey Road at Meridian Ave both westbound and eastbound and the contract include a requirement that the traffic engineer appear at any hearing by this commission. (Abelson, Pendo 5-0)

Capital Improvement Project Update

Deputy Public Works Director Furukawa gave a brief update on the current Capital Improvement Projects.

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

No Commissioner comments.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Granath declared the meeting adjourned at 9:10p.m.

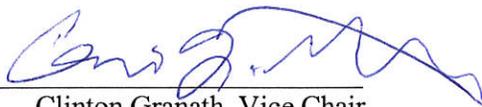
I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were adopted by the Public Works Commission of the City of South Pasadena at a meeting held on January 14, 2014.

AYES: 5

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:



Clinton Granath, Vice Chair