

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
PARKING AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 23, 2008**

A. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Parking and Public Improvements Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, California, was held on the 23rd day of October, 2008, at the hour of 6:30 p.m., in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue, in said City.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Adami, Silverman, Gross, Stabile and Chairman Donahue.
Absent: None.
Staff Present: Danna, Stevenson, Zandvliet.
Clerk: Weeks.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 25, 2008

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Stabile/Adami) to approve the minutes of September 25, 2008 as written.

D. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

E. GENERAL BUSINESS

**North Manhattan Beach Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan
– Public Workshop**

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet presented an overview of the process for developing and considering the North Manhattan Beach Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan (NTMP). He verified that staff will document comments for the record, survey residents regarding their feelings and present recommendations to the Parking and Public Improvements Commission's (PPIC) consideration. Mr. Zandvliet noted that parking concerns expressed by residents are related to the constraints of the area.

Assistant Planner Danna advised that the PPIC's consideration of this item will require two meetings, with staff's recommendations tentatively to be presented to the PPIC on December 4, 2008 and the PPIC's recommendations tentatively to be presented to the Council on January 9, 2008.

Traffic Engineer Smith provided background information on the North Manhattan Beach NTMP, including NTMP actions in the area since 1983. She explained the study findings and offered input on the next steps to be taken by the PPIC. In answer to questions from the Commissioners, Traffic Engineer Smith explained how and when data was gathered and she affirmed the apparent lack of problems with regard to cut-through traffic and speeding in the area.

In response to inquiries from the Commissioners, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet clarified that Kelp and Gull Streets will be studied; that better traffic flow on Highland Avenue would help reduce traffic problems in North Manhattan Beach; that, except for 40th and 45th Streets and Ocean Drive, traffic counts for area streets are appropriate based on the number of homes, and that staff did not study traffic volumes in the area during summer.

Chairman Donahue noted that the purpose of this meeting is to obtain input, not develop solutions at this time.

Audience Participation

Chairman Donahue opened the public hearing at 6:50 p.m.

Ed Skiebe, 210 Kelp Street, contended that the data collected by staff is invalid. He read aloud his email explaining his thoughts dated October 21, 2008.

Lee Cosby, 117 Shell Street, voiced his concern over pedestrian safety due to speeding traffic, drivers not stopping at stop signs and drivers ignoring left-turn restrictions. Mr. Cosby recommended that a stop sign be installed at 43rd Street and Ocean Drive and he highlighted the need for additional enforcement in the area.

Niki Hoffman, 127 – 40th Street, commented on traffic from the El Porto parking lot backing up and blocking driveways on 40th Street and she agreed with the need for additional enforcement in the area.

Sean Capezzi, 212 – 40th Street, maintained that the core of the problem is the traffic flow from the El Porto parking lot and that traffic would be greatly improved if drivers could exit the lot onto Rosecrans Avenue. He pointed out that drivers enter the El Porto parking lot through the exit; that speed bumps should be installed on 40th Street; and that enforcement in the area should be increased.

Michelle Murphy, 4420 The Strand, suggested that a traffic officer be placed at the intersection of Rosecrans and Highland Avenues during rush hour. She expressed safety concerns over installing speed bumps.

Bruce Greenberg, 229 43rd Street, expressed his interest in traffic flow, parking and right-of-way issues in North Manhattan Beach. He recommended reducing the speed limit on Highland Avenue between Rosecrans Avenue and 45th Street to 25 MPH;

prohibiting left-turns on Highland Avenue through El Porto; creating additional street parking on several streets east of Highland Avenue; and making North Manhattan Beach more aesthetically appealing and pedestrian friendly.

Beverly Chereup, Ocean between 38th Street and 38th Place, commented on drivers ignoring the stop sign on 38th Street; the fairly accurate survey, except for traffic speeds; installing additional speed humps and the related issue of noise; pedestrian safety concerns due to speeding traffic; and the inaccuracy of the current speed limits on Ocean Drive.

Greg Cherup, 200 Moonstone Street, discussed the unique nature of the El Porto area; traffic illegally entering the El Porto parking lot and diverting from the lot onto Kelp; traffic sign issues; problems with heavy traffic on Ocean Drive between 3:00 and 8:00 p.m. on weekdays and during summer; and installing speed humps to reduce traffic speeds.

Justin Bychek, 201 Seaview, stated his safety concerns over the angled parking spaces at Ocean Drive and 43rd Street, as well as emergency vehicle access there; parking difficulties on Seaview and the idea of allowing residents to park in the El Porto parking lot; problems with drivers exiting the El Porto parking lot; heavy traffic on southbound Highland Avenue and the need for better signage; his objection to speed humps; and the need for additional enforcement.

Krista Skinner, 121 39th Street, expressed concerns about excessive traffic speeds and pedestrian safety and the confusing design of the El Porto parking lot exit. She entertained the idea of restricting left turns onto Ocean Drive from 45th Street.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet explained how traffic speeds and overages are calculated. He advised that speed humps are not part of the NTMP Traffic Calming Measures and that it is within the Commissions purview to make this area more pedestrian friendly.

Chairman Donahue closed the public hearing at 8:43 p.m.

Discussion

Chairman Donahue clarified that the PPIC and, eventually the Council, will hold additional public hearings on this item.

Management Analyst Stevenson addressed Mr. Skiebe's contention that the data collected by staff is invalid. She indicated that staff is considering additional traffic counts in the area.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet offered input on the lack of an exit from the El Porto parking lot onto Rosecrans Avenue and the barricades on Ocean Drive and 40th Street. He verified that, if necessary, additional traffic counts will be done according to input provided this evening. Mr. Zandvliet encouraged interested parties to submit additional comments to City staff.

Assistant Planner Danna verified that this item will be on the PPIC's agenda for the meeting on December 4, 2008 and he offered information about notification procedures.

Commissioner Silverman pondered whether additional enforcement would reduce traffic problems in the area and whether Ocean Drive could be blocked at various locations.

Lt. Harrod shared information on the difficulty of providing enforcement throughout the City due to the shortage of motor officers, particularly during peak traffic hours. He offered information on the effectiveness of barricades; the Traffic Bureau's goal to improve the quality of life with regard to traffic in North Manhattan Beach; and the idea of using message boards to help educate drivers.

Commissioner Stabile observed that there appears to be a systemic problem in this area that is primarily caused by the design of Highland Avenue and the high traffic volume on that street, as well as beach parking. He suggested that a fresh look be taken at the traffic problems in North Manhattan Beach and ideas entertained by Commissioner Stabile included re-installing spikes at the 40th Street exit from the El Porto parking lot; making some streets one-way; and blocking the entrance onto Ocean Drive from Rosecrans to 45th Street.

Commissioner Gross related his impression that a majority of drivers go straight out of the El Porto parking lot instead of turning like they are supposed to; that drivers pay better attention to larger barricades; and that traffic was reduced on Ocean Drive some time after the year 2000. Noting that he and another Commissioner live on Ocean Drive, Commissioner Gross explained that, while blocking Ocean Drive between 15th Street and Marine Avenue is inconvenient for residents, it has clearly reduced traffic and he agreed with Commissioner Stabile's idea of taking a fresh look at the entire area.

Management Analyst Stevenson explained that, as result of resident noise complaints about the spikes previously in the El Porto parking lot and their ineffectiveness, the spikes were removed. She advised that the Coastal Commission would take issue with blocking Ocean Drive.

Lt. Harrod related his understanding that new spikes which make less noise are now available, but they are expensive, and that drivers previously manipulated the spikes to exit over them; that, when 40th Street was one-way, residents had difficulty

exiting their driveways due to traffic back ups; and that the direction of traffic on Highland Avenue could be changed during certain times of the day.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet advised that the idea of installing a gate at the outbound side of the El Porto parking lot was considered, but there are maintenance issues associated with them; that it is not legal to block public access; that ideas such as making Highland Avenue one-way during certain times of the day will be explored; and that, depending on how quickly additional information is obtained, the PPIC's consideration of this item on December 4th could be delayed.

Commissioner Gross suggested that the public be apprised of any new ideas prior to the Commission's future consideration of them.

Commissioner Adami noted that six complaints from residents on Gull Street were received, but no one from Gull was present at this meeting.

Management Analyst Stevenson clarified that residents on Gull Street were notified of this hearing and that their complaints had to do with Ocean Drive.

At Commissioner Gross' request, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet explained that possible mitigation measures will be presented for the Commission's future consideration, after which residents will be surveyed about them.

Commissioner Gross recommended that input obtained from the survey include residents' opinions about barricades.

Relating concerns over emergency vehicle access in North Manhattan Beach, Lt. Harrod suggested that parking on some streets in the area be examined; that parking lines be painted to help the situation; and that the idea of allowing residents to park in the El Porto parking lot be examined.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet indicated that the Commission's future discussion of this topic could include traffic diversion ideas and which ones should be put before residents and that there is a provision for residents with permits to park over night in the El Porto parking lot, but they must remain there until the gate opens in the morning. He highlighted the importance of developing a clear policy to address residents' vehicles hanging over driveways.

Commissioner Stabile supported looking into means that would allow residents to park over night in the El Porto Parking lot.

F. COMMISSION ITEMS

1. Parking Meter Revenue and Traffic Violation Revenue Report

No discussion.

2. Commissioner Gross invited his fellow Commissioners to an open house on December 4th to view the Holiday fireworks on Manhattan Beach Pier.

G. STAFF ITEMS

1. Management Analyst Stevenson reported on the Council's recent consideration of the Commission's recommendations for the Downtown Traffic Management Plan, including that change machines were denied.

Commissioner Stabile voiced his concern that the Council received input about change machines from the Police Department, but the Commission did not.

The Commissioners held a lengthy discussion on the importance of having all available information prior to making recommendations to the Council.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet affirmed that staff will make a concerted effort in the future to ensure that input from other City departments is provided for the Commission's consideration and that an evaluation of the mitigation measures implemented in the Downtown area will be provided to the Commission after next summer.

Commissioner Stabile requested a monthly and year-to-date cash flow analysis for the parking fund.

Commissioner Gross related his understanding that the Council disagreed with escalating fines for parking meter violations and that they were concerned with drivers removing chalk placed on tires by Traffic Enforcement.

Lt. Harrod shared information about a new tire marking system that deposits chalk into the grooves of tires. He advised that removing the chalk is a misdemeanor and that the idea of using a scanner instead of chalk will be explored.

In response to a question from Commissioner Stabile, Management Analyst Stevenson explained that the Council did not act on recommended Implementation Measure No. 7 (Authorize the Public Works Department to install parking meters at locations approved by the Commission), which will be re-evaluated in the second phase of the DTMP.

H. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.