

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
COMMISSIONERS WORKSHOP
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 25, 2011**

A Commissioners Workshop of the Planning Commission, Parking and Public Improvements Commission, and Parks and Recreation Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, California, was held on the 25th day of August, 2011, at the hour of 6:35 p.m., in the Police/Fire Conference Room, at 400/420 15th Street, in said City.

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. ROLL CALL

Present: **Planning Commission:** Paralusz, Andreani, Seville-Jones, Conaway, and Gross.
 Parking and Public Improvements Commission: Stabile, Fournier, Vigon, Adami, and Silverman (Commissioner Adami arrived at 6:45 p.m.).
 Parks and Recreation Commission: Rothans, Hersman, Murray, and Nicholson.

Absent: **Parks and Recreation Commission:** Cajka, Manna, Taylor.

Staff Present: Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development
 Richard Gill, Director of Parks and Recreation
 Laurie Jester, Planning Manager
 Clay Curtin, Management Analyst
 Jack Rydell, Traffic Engineer
 Andy Harrod, Traffic Lieutenant
 Mark Mason, Traffic Sergeant
 Ariana Kennedy, Management Analyst

C. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Community Development Director Richard Thompson welcomed the Commissioners, audience, press, and outlined the meeting agenda. Director Thompson indicated he would moderate the meeting and the audience participation would follow the Bicycle Master Plan Presentation. Director Thompson explained the main purpose of the workshop was to collect input from the Commissioners and forward to City Council. The proposal will be presented to City Council at the November 15, 2011, meeting.

D. GENERAL BUSINESS

08/25/11-1. **Presentation by Marissa Christiansen, Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition South Bay Initiative Director, on the South Bay Bike Master Plan, Followed by Discussion and Comments.**

Community Development Director Richard Thompson introduced Marissa Christiansen of the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition.

Marissa Christiansen gave a PowerPoint presentation on the South Bay Bike Master Plan (Master Plan) and explained the Master Plan commits the City Council to move towards a more bike friendly future.

Ms. Christiansen then introduced **Veronica Flores of Vitality Cities**. Ms. Flores focused on the need for synergy between the South Bay Master Plan and the Vitality Cities Initiative: a focus on livability, walkability, and bikeability. She encouraged the Commissioners to adopt the plan.

Director Thompson asked for questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Andreani asked if pedestrian traffic was a factor in the Master Plan or if the focus was solely on bicycle traffic.

Ms. Christiansen stated the focus was to get bikes off sidewalks; however, mixed mode bike paths would have both bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

Commissioner Paralusz asked how the Master Plan addresses streets without sidewalks, like many in the tree section.

Commissioner Andreani suggested it may be more feasible to design bike lanes that allow bikes and pedestrians to both share the roadway.

Ms. Christiansen clarified that the bicycle lanes are the priority of the Master Plan, although, a buffer to separate cyclists and pedestrians could be implemented on larger roadways.

Joe Galiani, of the South Bay Bicycle Coalition and Vitality Cities, explained the Master Plan does not incorporate pedestrians but the Vitality Cities Initiative takes walkability into account.

Commissioner Adami asked Ms. Christiansen for clarification regarding the timeline and when the current grant funding expires.

Ms. Christiansen explained the grant funding ends in March 2012, and hopefully implementation of the Master Plan will begin in January 2012.

Commissioner Adami mentioned the City of Los Angeles recently passed a law protecting cyclists. He asked Ms. Christiansen if Manhattan Beach should pass a similar law.

Ms. Christiansen replied that the new law is very tough and suggested it is something to consider if Manhattan Beach has a similar history with hit and runs and accidents between drivers and cyclists.

Commissioner Paralusz asked for an explanation of the substance of the City of Los Angeles Ordinance.

Ms. Christiansen explained that if a driver tries to hit a cyclist or generally harasses them the cyclist may call the Police Department and have the harassment put on the driver's record.

Commissioner Silverman commented that the elimination of some parking (proposed in the Master Plan) could negatively impact some businesses.

Ms. Christiansen explained funding is the issue. Applying for grants and coordinating projects with street resurfacing is the most cost-effective route.

Director Thompson clarified that having the Master Plan in place would allow the City Council to build bicycle lanes when the funding is available.

Commissioner Nicholson asked if the Master Plan addresses the Greenline.

Ms. Christiansen acknowledged that the Greenline is addressed. It travels through Lawndale, Redondo Beach, Torrance, and there are a few parallel bike paths along 162nd Street and 170th Street and Grant Avenue down past the Galleria Mall. There are bike facilities that connect to each of those bike paths along the Greenline.

Commissioner Nicholson asked if El Segundo and the Greenline terminus in Redondo Beach were possibilities to link to bike routes in Manhattan Beach.

Ms. Christiansen explained that there is a facility that runs by the El Segundo station and around it. The Master Plan tried to connect to those stations.

Commissioner Conaway asked if there are any regional bike networks that connect to Malibu or downtown Los Angeles.

Ms. Christiansen explained that currently there is not a very well planned interconnected network of bike routes because each city has created their own bike plan. She mentioned the County of Los Angeles, the City of Los Angeles, and the City of Carson have just completed their own bike plans. Connecting to each of these plans will be easier because Alta Consultants has worked with each of the municipalities.

Commissioner Nicholson asked if there was any consideration for biking to a bus stop and placing a bike on the bus.

Ms. Christiansen explained that in the appendix that concept is identified and also addressed in the policy section and integration section.

Commissioner Adami asked if electrical bikes were taken into consideration while designing the Master Plan.

Ms. Christiansen explained that electric bikes are allowed on bike path but need to abide by the speed limit requirements.

Commissioner Adami shared that he believes electrical bikes will be in demand soon.

Audience Participation

Director Thompson asked the audience to keep their comments to two to three minutes each.

Kevin Post, Manhattan Beach Resident, shared his experience traveling on the train with his bicycle; suggested the separate pedestrian and bike paths are safer (he cited Long Beach as an example); suggested the more sharrows in place the more motorists and cyclists are used to them and behave themselves making it safer for all. **Mr. Post** also commented on the bike kiosks in Paris.

Joe Galliani, South Bay Bicycle Coalition Boardmember and Vitality City Bike/Walk Committee member, shared his support of the Master Plan. **Mr. Galliani** commented that safer and better connected bike paths will encourage residents to bike rather than drive short trips which cuts carbon, green-house gases, and has many health benefits. He also invited everyone to attend an event to raise support for the Master Plan and Vitality Cities Walkability program on September 24 on 13th Street at Morningside Street.

Jim Fasola, Hermosa Beach Resident, suggested utilizing the green path as a bike path because riding down Ardmore or Valley is tough due to the frequency of stop signs. **Mr. Fasola** expressed his support for the Master Plan and encouraged the Commissioners to do the same.

Bob Kaplan, Vitality City Committee member, shared his family would like to bike to Manhattan Beach but are worried about being hit by a car. **Mr. Kaplan** continued that safe venues for biking would be beneficial for businesses and restaurants throughout the beach cities and encouraged Commissioners to support the Master Plan.

Todd Dipaola, South Bay Bicycle Coalition Boardmember, explained the background of the Master Plan which has taken into account: problems with obesity, parking impacts, accident rates, the City's carbon footprint, and getting people out of their cars. The Bicycle Coalition looked at cities all over the world, applied for a grant, found seven cities to partner with, and hired Ms. Christiansen. **Mr. Dipaola** thanked the Commissioners for considering the Master Plan, expressed his hope that it does not take 20 years to implement and suggested it be a City-wide priority.

Eileen Kadowaki, a member of the Vitality City Bike/Walk Committee, urged the Commissioners to support the Master Plan.

Julian Kats South Bay Bicycle Coalition Board member and Hermosa Beach Public Works Commissioner, shared that four Hermosa Beach Commissioners created a bike plan a few years ago; the sharrows are the first implementation. **Mr. Kats** explained with all of the data collected in the Master Plan funding for additional projects will be more available and encouraged the Commissioners to embrace the Master Plan.

Alex Thorner, No Address Provided, suggested that with increased opportunities for bike sharing and adequate storage for personal use bicycles more cyclists will come and the Master Plan will be implemented. **Mr. Thorner** also asked if Ms. Christiansen had any innovative bike storage ideas.

Ms. Christiansen explained that Long Beach uses bike corrals that fit into one car parking space. Each car space can park 15 bikes and both Leadership Manhattan Beach and Leadership Hermosa Beach have installed new bike racks throughout each city.

Jim Fasola shared that every parking meter in Montreal has a metal ring that allows a bike to be locked to it.

Joe Galliani commented that the Master Plan has innovative storage ideas in the appendix.

Ms. Christiansen also explained that the Master Plan encourages owners of large businesses to provide showers, clothing lockers and bike parking.

Commissioner Participation

Commissioner Nicholson suggested deleting passage 1.4.6 on page 26 that suggests decreasing the number of parking spaces where bike parking is provided.

Ms. Christiansen explained the multitude of policies in the Master Plan. Each policy will be evaluated and implemented by each City, if feasible and appropriate.

Commissioner Nicholson expressed concern that the Master Plan could eliminate parking spaces if implemented as proposed.

Commissioner Gross explained that the passage on page 26 regarding parking begins with the word “consider” and concludes with the word “feasible” meaning it is non-binding. Staff purposefully changed binding language to allow City Council to make the decision regarding each policy.

Commissioner Seville-Jones confirmed the policy is an aspirational goal; when there are more people on bikes there will be a decreased need for parking spaces.

Commissioner Paralusz commented that the Planning Commission would have to consider allowing new businesses to reduce the number of required parking if bicycle parking is provided. She explained that it would not be feasible for this item to go into effect until behavior has shifted (more cyclists, less drivers).

Ms. Christiansen suggested the policy be demand driven and explained that the City of Los Angeles utilizes the policy as a development incentive.

Commissioner Adami mentioned that the City of Los Angeles is incentivizing bike friendly developments in downtown. Commissioner Adami also asked why a bike path to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) was not included in the Master Plan.

Ms. Christiansen acknowledged it is difficult to bike to LAX and did not recommend riding through the tunnel.

Commissioner Fournier stated that removing parking can become a contentious issue.

Director Thompson remarked that the policy requires more study, after the Master Plan is adopted.

Commissioner Rothans asked if the Bike Coalition consulted a municipal traffic engineer while drafting the Manhattan Beach bike paths, lanes, and routes.

Ms. Christiansen explained that the traffic engineer will be before construction. The Master Plan simply identified the locations, street width, and incorporated traffic volume study data.

Commissioner Conaway asked if the Master Plan presented is the final draft, or if there will be other opportunities to discuss the details of the Master Plan.

Commissioner Nicholson asked if the Commissioners will see the Master Plan again.

Director Thompson explained individual projects will come before commissions before implementation and he will continue to compile Commissioner comments in the coming weeks to include in the future Master Plan presentation to City Council on November 15, 2011.

Ms. Christiansen further clarified the Master Plan needs to be adopted by November in order to qualify for grants. She explained in order to keep eligibility for grants the Master Plan must be updated every five years. She asked that Commissioners focus on the broad picture.

Commissioner Andreani expressed her encouragement for a bike friendly community and shared her concern regarding the narrowing of streets. She suggested the City focus on recreational biking before commuter biking.

Commissioner Vigon shared his enthusiasm for the Master Plan and commented that Manhattan Beach has a deficit of bike lanes and pedestrian friendly streets (those without sidewalks).

Commissioner Vigon explained he drove the routes suggested in the Master Plan and noticed several miles do not have sidewalks. He emphasized the need to balance the needs of pedestrians and cyclists on those streets (he referred to Assembly Bill 1358, the Complete Streets Act) and suggested that a plan to reclaim encroachments over a 20 year period could solve the issue.

Commissioner Paralusz thanked everyone for attending the workshop and the Bicycle Coalition for the comprehensive Master Plan. She expressed her support for the Master Plan: from a health standpoint, bringing more commerce to Manhattan Beach, and increased property values. Commissioner Paralusz explained the devil is in the details; the next step will be how to implement the Master Plan in a realistic manner for Manhattan Beach. Commissioner Paralusz reiterated Commissioner Andreani's concerns regarding commuters, explained if Aviation Boulevard was more bike friendly she would commute on her bike, and thanked the Bicycle Coalition for their leadership.

Commissioner Seville-Jones commended the effort of the Bicycle Coalition, agreed with Commissioner Paralusz and expressed concern regarding the impact on the roadways. Commissioner Seville-Jones asked to what extent are we trading the benefits of the bike path with ability of cars to commute at a sensible rate. She also agreed with Commissioner Silverman's comments regarding parking impacts on businesses; expressed concern regarding the number of accidents in Manhattan Beach and pointed out that the Appendix highlighted public concerns with Valley/Ardmore and Highland.

Commissioner Murray thanked the Bicycle Coalition for the hard work, expressed her support of the Master Plan, and suggested that tonight the Commissioners embrace the Master Plan and address the details as we move forward and projects are implemented. Commissioner Murray commented that she is in the tourism industry and believes that a more bike friendly community would have a positive economic impact. Commissioner Murray supported the Master Plan but respected the concerns of other Commissioners.

Commissioner Gross commented that it was a privilege to be involved in the Master Plan and shared many, if not all, concerns that were expressed. Commissioner Gross explained the Master Plan is conceptual and defines the connecting points between the seven cities; everything with in Manhattan Beach is subject to change when City Council directs the Commissions to address each issue. Commissioner Gross suggested the Commissioners approve the Master Plan as is; recommended City Council approve and place the item on the Work Plan for next year and give staff and the Commissions a process where each issue is discussed in public before implementation.

Ms. Christiansen pointed out that chapter 2 in the Master Plan develops a 20-year Master Plan which gives City Council a frame work to come up with an implementation strategy that makes sense for the City.

Commissioner Adami explained the lack of bike lanes is embarrassing when he hosts out-of-town guests; recommended making the green belt bike friendly should be the first priority of City Council; and suggested bike awareness programs begin in the schools. Commissioner Adami also thanked the public for attending the workshop and expressed his support for the Master Plan.

Commissioner Stabile commented he was impressed by the street enhancement that can be achieved for minimum investment that was highlighted during Ms. Christiansen's presentation. Commissioner Stabile explained many of the improvements are achievable and have multiple benefits to the community.

Commissioner Stabile expressed his enthusiastic support for the Master Plan and explained the details and concerns can be and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis when dealing with specific projects.

Commissioner Conaway expressed his gratitude to the Bicycle Coalition and explained he does not feel the Master Plan is ambitious enough. Commissioner Conaway's concerns included: too few class one bike paths, no proposal for permanently closing some streets to all auto traffic. He encouraged the Commissioners to think big, adopt the plan, implement quickly, and use the Vista Street alley as an example of cyclists and pedestrians sharing the roadway. He explained his nine-year old daughter needs a safe way to get to school today.

Commissioner Nicholson shared he frequently rides his bike in fear of getting hit by a car and believes this is an opportunity to recalibrate bike transportation priorities and the City should engage the community in a serious conversation. Commissioner Nicholson expressed his pleasure with the Master Plan, applauded Ms. Christiansen and the Bicycle Coalition for their hard work.

Action

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Paralusz/Murray) to **APPROVE** the Bike Master Plan. Prior to the vote:

Commissioner Seville-Jones discussed the roads highlighted in the Master Plan; she objected to certain roads being included.

Director Thompson stated the details of the Master Plan will come back to City Council before it is implemented.

Commissioner Paralusz suggested that approving the Master Plan as a blueprint makes a loud statement to the community and City Council.

Commissioner Seville-Jones expressed concern that the Master Plan included Highland Avenue as a suggested bike route.

Commissioner Vigon explained that all routes are subject to change because the Master Plan is only conceptual.

Commissioner Gross commented that the Master Plan uses the concept of Highland Avenue, however, Ocean Avenue, Crest Drive, or another parallel street could be used.

Commissioner Nicholson acknowledged the details of the plan would get sorted out at the Commission level, perhaps with the Parking and Public Improvements Commission.

Commissioner Adami agreed the Master Plan is conceptual.

Commissioner Seville-Jones remarked that the Master Plan highlights specific streets as routes.

Ms. Christiansen mentioned that all routes are subject to a traffic engineers approval; each street has not been fully vetted and proposed routes would not be implemented if deemed infeasible during the study process.

Commissioner Seville-Jones restated she would not support bike lanes on Highland Avenue and further commented that it did not take a traffic engineer to see the street is too narrow to support high bicycle traffic.

Commissioner Stabile asked if anything at the meeting committed or bound anyone to do anything.

Director Thompson explained that by approving and recommending the Master Plan the Commissioners are stating their commitment to connectivity and a need for further study of the plan.

Commissioner Nicholson confirmed during the study process staff, commissioner, or Council may find that certain routes are not feasible.

Commissioner Adami clarified that for any capital project there is a Master Plan that outlines the ideas but is non-binding.

Action

A motion was MADE and SECONDED to **APPROVE** (Paralusz/Murray) the Bike Master Plan with the understanding that the routes highlighted in the plan require further study before implementation. Hearing no objection, the motion was passed.

E. COMMISSION ITEMS

None.

F. STAFF ITEMS

None.

G. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

ARIANA V. KENNEDY

Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

RICHARD THOMPSON

Community Development Director

DRAFT