

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
PARKING AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
JULY 10, 2008**

The Special Meeting of the Parking and Public Improvements Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, California, was held on the 10th day of July, 2008, at the hour of 6:33 p.m., in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, at 1400 Highland Avenue, in said City.

A. ROLL CALL

Present: Gross, Silverman, Stabile, Adami and Chair Donahue
Absent: None
Staff Present Stevenson, Zandvliet
Clerk: Schilling

B. AGENDA CHANGES

None.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 26, 2008

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Silverman/Gross) to approve the minutes of June 26, 2008 with a correction on page 6, omitting Chair Gross and naming Donahue as commissioner and chair.

AYES: Gross, Silverman, Stabile, Adami and Chair Donahue.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: None.
ABSTAIN: None.

D. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

E. GENERAL BUSINESS

F. School Area Traffic Study – Robinson Elementary School

Management Analyst Stevenson introduced this item.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet presented the staff report and recommended that the Commission conduct a public hearing and vote to continue the initial traffic safety measures and implement the following additional measures for the area surrounding Robinson Elementary School.

1. Paint a white student loading zone and divided lane line in the existing turnout in front of Robinson Elementary School
2. Relocate existing school loading zone on Francisco Street easterly to the CDC gate and add an afternoon loading time between 2:30pm and 3pm.
3. Implement a regular and rotating police presence at Robinson School to enforce traffic laws.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet presented a brief evaluation and status report of the initial measures implemented at and around Robinson Elementary School and the effectiveness of these safety measures. He explained that he and staff conducted several follow-up field investigations. He also stated that the principal of Robinson Elementary School, Ms. Nancy Doyle, along with members of the PTA were very involved in all stages of the School area plan. He also noted that staff had met with them in April 2008 and that their comments and observations were incorporated in the analysis presented this evening. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet also commented that this was another example, along with Grandview Elementary School, that demonstrates the necessity of the three “E’s” – Engineering, Education and Enforcement, to make a traffic safety system work.

Discussion

The Commissioners asked the following questions of Traffic Engineer Zandvliet beginning with Commissioner Gross, asking about the number of police staff available to assist the schools in monitoring traffic around each school area.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet addressed each of the following questions. He noted that there were current staffing issues with the police department that didn’t allow a routine presence at the school, but this is an important issue to the police and they do the best they can with the manpower available. Management Analyst Stevenson reported that a fully staffed department would have six officers assigned to this particular duty but currently there are only three officers available. She also explained that Police Officers may be enforcing traffic in streets surrounding the school, where school staff and other parents may not be able to see them.

Commissioner Stabile expressed his concern about making a decision with no police representative available at this meeting. He also asked for clarification on measure #5 regarding the relocation of current loading zone on Francisco.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet expressed that it was the observation of staff and the school administration that the drop zone would better suit the needs of the students and parents if it were moved further east on Francisco.

Commissioner Silverman pointed out that the red curb needed to be painted along the drop off. He also stated that there was a tree that needs to be pruned over the drop off area.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet stated the curb was scheduled to be painted this summer and that he would look into the need to prune the tree.

Chair Donahue noted the lack of a parking schematic in the report.

Commissioner Adami referred to an email from Rob Osborne, former Management Analyst of the City, dated November 11, 2006, referencing the need for a crossing guard on both sides of the school.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet responded that the crossing guard study is still pending.

Commissioner Stabile asked if Traffic Engineer Zandvliet knew what the radius of students was around each school and what the average walking distance might be.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet explained that he did not have the figures in front of him but he would guesstimate $\frac{1}{4}$ mile.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet recommended that the next step for the Commission is to submit this request to City Council for approval and the appropriation of funds if needed.

A discussion ensued among Traffic Engineer Zandvliet and the Commission regarding the status of the current loading zones. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet expressed his feeling that they had improved traffic congestion and increased safety around the school during drop off and pick up times. He stated that there was a need for adult supervision to monitor the flow of traffic and keep it moving. He explained that parents had been given a hard copy of the rules the school and City would like observed at these times but there was a need to have them enforced. It was apparent to staff and school administration that those parents who were running late in dropping their kids off at school were the largest population of offenders.

Chair Donahue opened the item for public comment at 7:03 p.m.

Loretta Summer, 300 block of 11th Street, Safety Chair of Robinson Elementary School, expressed her concerns over finding parent volunteers to enforce the measures put in place around the school by the City. She has advertised in a number of different ways for volunteers and has had some response, however, most parent volunteers only last a day because the parents dropping off their children, especially those who are running late are so rude and offensive. The principal at Robinson doesn't want her staff to monitor traffic as it is not part of their employment agreement and she doesn't feel it is appropriate. Ms. Summer has checked with the other elementary schools and found that some use staff and some have volunteers.

Ms. Summer agreed that moving the loading zone east on Francisco would alleviate more of the congestion. She expressed the need for a crossing guard at Valley and Vista. She also noted that when there is a visible police presence at the school that the parents tend to obey the rules.

Richard Ackerman, 400 block of 1st Street, stated that 1st Street was chaotic especially in the mornings but also in the afternoon. He expressed concern over the traffic situation and the close calls between cars and pedestrians that he has witnessed during school

hours. He thinks that if the school would lock the gate to the school from the staff parking lot on 1st Street that a lot of the traffic would be eliminated on that street. Mr. Ackerman would like to request that the Commission consider parking restrictions on 1st Street during drop off and pick up times, eliminating parking on south side of street from Ingleside to Morningside.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet stated that he could survey the residents on 1st Street to see if they would support parking restrictions.

Henrietta Mosley, 400 block of 1st Street, voiced her concerns about the loss of parking spaces as there already is a lot of jockeying of cars because of street sweeping. She suggests that the presence of police on a routine basis and more control of the gates allowing access to the school would be a better solution.

Steve Kallenbach, 1100 block of N. Meadows, wanted to request a police, meter maid, some presence of authority at all of the schools.

Loretta Summer, 300 block of 11th Street, Safety Chair of Robinson Elementary School, expressed her concern about locking the gate on 1st Street and the possible deterrent it may pose on Wednesday, the day they encourage students to walk to school.

Public hearing was closed at 7:33 p.m.

Commissioner Gross recommended a variation on measure #12, that would encourage the City and school to work together to find the volunteers/staff to monitor the traffic.

Commissioner Adami supported the role of parent volunteers but would like to see a police presence at the school for 30 minutes in the morning, during the crucial drop off time.

Commissioner Silverman suggested that even the presence of an unmanned police vehicle may act as a deterrent for parent offenders.

Action

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Silverman/Adami) to present the three additional recommendations from staff to Council with the revision of #12 to include that Council have a dialogue with each elementary school to find a solution to monitor the traffic situation at each school and enforce the measures put in place, via parent volunteers or City staff.

AYES: Gross, Silverman, Adami, Stabile and Chair Donahue.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: None.
ABSTAIN: None.

2. School Area Traffic Study – Meadows Elementary School

Management Analyst Stevenson introduced this item.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet presented the staff report and recommendations noting that the residents and school staff were all active participants in the school area traffic study. He recommended that the Commission take steps to implement the following initial mitigation measures:

1. Replace missing traffic signs and street name signs.
2. Concentrate traffic and parking enforcement around the school campus on a regular basis.
3. Paint school crosswalks and markings on an annual basis.
4. Paint a white loading zone on the east side of the existing turnout along Meadows Avenue in front of the school during the AM drop-off period.
5. Install a new student loading zone on the east side of Meadows Avenue north of the main school entrance and modify parking restrictions on the west side of Meadows Avenue directly opposite the loading zone.
6. Pursue a capital project to construct an intersection bulb-out on the southeast corner of Meadows Avenue and 17th Street.
7. Paint new school crosswalks at the stopped intersection of Meadows Avenue and 17th Street on the east and west legs.
8. Paint new school crosswalks at the intersection of Meadows Avenue and 12th Street on the west leg.
9. Encourage the school to provide a formal program to enlist volunteer and/or staff supervision to assist student loading/unloading at main loading zones.
10. Encourage the school to implement a formal student car-pool and walking incentive program for both parents and students.
11. Prepare Suggested Routes to School map for distribution to parents.
12. Encourage the school to distribute traffic safety handouts regularly throughout the school year.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet noted that there were some requests of an urgent nature that were addressed in the Fall of 2007 such as better notification of cross walk as the hill crests on Rowell. He expressed the need for more loading zones to accommodate the 500 students at the school. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet also suggested that there be a more formal walking program established at the school, better signage, a police presence, and noted the limited parking for parents around the school.

Discussion

The Commissioners asked the following questions of Traffic Engineer Zandvliet beginning with the possibility of the installation of a temporary bulb-out on Meadows Avenue near 17th Street to assist in the use of the area as a loading zone, before spending funds.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet confirmed that this could be done.

Commissioner Gross asked if the residents on Meadow were aware of the desire to increase the loading zone area on Meadows.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet stated that the residents were aware of the recommendations and the possibility of increased traffic on Meadows.

Commissioner Silverman asked if all the recommendations for Rowell had been implemented.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet confirmed that they had been completed.

Chair Donahue opened the item for public hearing at 7:58 p.m.

Connie Harrington, Principal of Meadows Avenue School, supported the recommendation to create a loading zone on Meadows, north of the Administration offices. She said that the school had also engaged in the use of volunteers but that parents are so cranky in the morning that the volunteers don't last more than a day. She shared that they had used the members of Student Council to greet students and parents each morning but for health reasons and exposure to car exhaust discontinued the program, though she did feel that it helped to monitor the flow of traffic.

Ms. Harrington would like to see the school and City work with parent volunteers to establish a more formal training program and equipment for volunteers. She also suggested having a police presence at the school on a rotating basis a couple days a week during the peak drop off time of 8:00 and 8:15. Meadows does have a formal walking program, Foot loose Fridays that they encourage students and parents to participate in.

She stated that she was willing to try the loading zone in the front of the school again if they could assure a way to monitor the flow of traffic and not block 12th Street or Manhattan Beach Blvd. With the additional loading zone on Meadows she feels like this may work.

Steve Kallenbach, 1100 block of N. Meadows, complimented the City on the work they are doing to resolve traffic issues and safety concerns around the school. He agrees that the parents who are dropping off their children in the morning are rude and inconsiderate to the neighbors in the area. He has worked both with Ana and Eric to resolve traffic issues. He is in support of opening up the fire lane in front of the school at drop off time with the installation of a second drop off lane on Meadows, provided it doesn't block traffic on 12th Street and Manhattan Beach Blvd.

Tim O'Neil, 1300 block of 17th Street, said that 17th Street is solid cars during special events at Meadows and finds with so many large SUV's it is a hazard to go in and out of his driveway at these times. He has witnessed drivers running the stop sign at 17th Street north of Meadows. He supports the bulb-out on Meadows just south of 17th.

Richard Perle, 1400 block of Meadows, stressed that the worst time for traffic congestion is at drop off between 8:00 – 8:15 AM. He expressed his concern that it might be very difficult for the crossing guard to direct traffic at the crosswalk situated on Meadows directly across from the main entrance to the school if the fire lane is used as a drop off, and traffic is allowed to make left hand turns onto Meadows.

The public hearing was closed at 8:22 PM.

Commissioners held a brief discussion with Traffic Engineer Zandvliet and agreed that it would be a good idea to prohibit left hand turns going into and leaving the loading zone in the front of the school and to limit the use of this loading zone to afternoon pick-up only. The commission would like to add the installation of a temporary bulb-out.

Principal Harrington noted that the only official drop off site at Meadows presently is in the parking lot off of Rowell and that parents drop their children off on the west side of Meadows now, allowing them to run across the street. This poses a real safety issue.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet stated the possibility of using the loading zone as a short term parking site for kindergarten pick-up at the 11:00 AM slot. He also suggested the use of a blinking light on a cone to increase awareness of the crosswalk across from the main entrance to the school to drivers on Meadows.

Commissioner Gross would like to see Council involved in resolving early morning traffic problems that occur at all our schools. He suggested the use of the police auxiliary as an affordable authoritative presence at the schools.

Commissioner Adami would like to see a police presence at each of the schools during drop off times.

Action

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Donahue/Stabile) to present recommendations to Council with the following revisions; #4 the inclusion of opening the fire lane for afternoon pick ups on a trial basis in conjunction with the installation of a new loading zone on Meadows north of the main entrance to the school, #6 to include the installation of a temporary bulb-out on a trial basis, and the addition of #13, to include that Council have a dialogue with each elementary school to find a solution to monitor the traffic situation at each school and enforce the measures put in place, via parent volunteers or City staff, and #14 to prohibit left hand turns in and out of loading zone/fire lane on Meadows.

AYES: Gross, Silverman, Adami, Stabile and Chair Donahue.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: None.
ABSTAIN: None.

Management Analyst Stevenson commented that recommendations may be made to Council at the City Council meeting of August 5, 2008.

At 8:40 PM, there was a recess until 8:50 PM, when the meeting reconvened in regular agenda order with all Commissioners present

3. Consider Installation of Double Double Yellow Line Painted Medium on Manhattan Beach Boulevard and Manhattan Avenue in Downtown.

Management Analyst Stevenson introduced this item.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet presented the staff report and recommended that the Commission approve the installation of double double yellow lines on Manhattan Avenue from 8th Street to 15th Street. He explained that the installation would require the sandblasting of the current line and painting of the new yellow lines. He also recommended the addition of another set of double yellow lines on Manhattan Beach Boulevard from the Strand to Morningside, noting that the street is wide enough to allow them to paint an additional set of lines next to the existing double yellow lines.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet stated that technically it is illegal to cross the lines that are there at the present but the law is not strictly enforced. The double double yellow lines would offer more of a deterrent to drivers. He stated that the Police Chief supports the installation of the double double yellow lines as an inexpensive and effective way to enforce the law.

Management Analyst Stevenson estimated the approximate cost of the project would be under \$1000.

Chair Donahue expressed his opposition to more street painting.

Commissioner Stabile supports the installation of additional lines as a cheap and easy way to assist the police in enforcing the law.

Commissioner Gross shared the same concerns as Chair Donahue, not convinced that it would deter drivers from crossing the line.

Commissioner Adami agreed with the recommendation and the potential of safer streets.

Management Analyst Stevenson stated that drivers don't watch for pedestrians or bicyclists when crossing the line to park.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet informed the Commission that the double double yellow line signifies the restriction of crossing the line, and is noted as such nation wide. He believes the double double yellow painted median would improve driver's behavior, not necessarily prevent

it from ever occurring.

Commissioner Stabile reiterated his opinion that is an easy way to minimize U turns in the downtown area.

Commissioner Silverman asked if it could be done on a trial basis. He also asked if the Downtown Business Professional Association had any thoughts on the project.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet recommended that it not be done on a trail basis.

Action

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Gross/Adami) to present recommendations to Council.

AYES: Gross, Adami, and Stabile.
NOES: Donahue, Silverman.
ABSENT: None.
ABSTAIN: None.

G. COMMISSION BUSINESS

Management Analyst Stevenson handed out a flyer with information on the upcoming AB1234 Ethics Training Class that the City is offering and that Commissioners are required to attend.

H. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Patricia Schilling
Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

ANA STEVENSON
Management Analyst