

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH  
PARKING AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
AUGUST 19, 2008**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

The special meeting of the Parking and Public Improvements Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, California, was held on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2008, at the hour of 6:35 p.m., at Manhattan Heights, 1600 Manhattan Beach Blvd, in said City.

**B. ROLL CALL**

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

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JULY 24, 2008**

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Stabile/Silverman) to approve the minutes of July 24, 2008, with the following corrections:

Page 4, Paragraph 3           “Commissioner Gross noted that parent volunteer programs to help improve traffic safety at some other schools in Manhattan Beach have been unsuccessful; that Police enforcement is more effective; and that volunteers trained by the Police Department could be used. Mr. Gross pointed out that on-campus student loading/unloading areas appear to be great traffic calming measures and that all schools in the City should be encouraged to provide them. He suggested staff determine if they are effective enough for the City to financially assist the School District in creating them.”

**D. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

**Tom Courtney, 2417 Alma**, expressed concern over a parking spot near his home that was painted red without publication from the City. He requested that his concern be placed on the agenda. He noted that he had been told that it was painted for school safety. He believes there are alternatives.

Management Analyst Stevenson noted that she had received a voicemail from Mr. Courtney. She explained that the process for such requests takes up to 4 weeks for staff to evaluate and another 4 weeks to change. She explained that she had already met with the Grandview Safety Chairperson. Mr. Courtney needs to work with staff first to obtain an administrative decision.

## **E. GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **Evaluation of Traffic Improvements at Aviation Boulevard and 12<sup>th</sup> St and at Aviation Boulevard and 19<sup>th</sup> St**

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet introduced this item.

During the staff report, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet reviewed what had happened with this item at the City Council level. The City Council had requested that the notification for this item be expanded and brought back to the PPIC. As a result, 900 notices have been sent out for this meeting to allow an enlarged open forum for the public.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet reviewed the number of traffic collisions since the addition of the third lane on Aviation Blvd. He also discussed potential traffic safety measures, including prohibiting turn movements, peak hour restrictions, Aviation Blvd lane reduction, improving visibility at the intersections, designating 12<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> Streets as one-way streets, the addition of stop signs, and the installation of a traffic signal. He explained the potential impacts of these alternatives.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet summarized the original recommendation to City Council including prohibiting left turns from northbound Aviation Blvd to westbound 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets; prohibiting left turns from eastbound 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets onto Aviation Blvd; and all proposals for a limited time trial basis.

Commissioner Gross clarified that the City must do something to prevent accidents in these areas.

Commissioner Stabile requested Traffic Engineer Zandvliet to explain if the City Council had questions regarding the PPIC recommendations.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet responded that the City Council's concern was the size of the notice area.

A member of the audience asked if the number of accidents were more serious from left turns at Aviation to 12<sup>th</sup> Street or from Aviation to 19<sup>th</sup> Street. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet stated he did not know if the accidents were more serious; he could conclude that the accidents onto 19<sup>th</sup> Street were more complicated.

## Audience Participation

Chairman Donahue opened the public hearing at 7:00 p.m.

**Jane Mitchell, 1908 Harkness**, asked what happened to the idea to install a traffic signal at 19<sup>th</sup> Street.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet answered that it is still a possibility. He noted that the Commission recommended interim measures first to restrict turns and see the results. Due to the significant cost to install a signal, it would need to be budgeted and funded.

**Robert Hoersch, 1400 Faymont**, discussed his concerns with the traffic impacts with the potential changes, especially around the area of the Trader Joe's market.

Chairperson Donahue noted that the Trader Joe's area was part of the original considerations.

**Lou Bourgeois, 1159 Aviation Blvd, Magic Rainbow Preschool owner**, noted that Trader Joe's exits onto 12<sup>th</sup> Street. He believes proposed traffic improvements at 12<sup>th</sup> and Aviation would not affect the market or traffic in that area. Mr. Bourgeois commented on the "near misses" since August 2007. He considers 95% of the problem is the driver who is trying to cross five lanes of traffic by attempting a left hand turn at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Aviation.

**Nancy Paulikas, 2209 Manzanita Lane**, encouraged the commission to consider banning left hand turns into Liberty Village at 19<sup>th</sup> Street during rush hours only.

**Terri Sabosky, 2209 Harkness St**, agreed with the idea about restricting the left hand turns at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Aviation and feels a traffic light would be better at 19<sup>th</sup> St and Aviation.

Commissioner Silverman asked noted it would be good to restrict outbound traffic at 19<sup>th</sup> and Aviation between 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. with no inbound restrictions.

**Lynda Meisenholder, 1405 Lynngrove**, encouraged the commission to consider restricting left turns at 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Aviation from 4 to 7 p.m. or specific times only when most accidents occur. She does not believe that two traffic lights would be needed so close together.

**Diane Rich, 1904 Wendy Way**, was concerned that a traffic light at 19<sup>th</sup> Street would encourage too much traffic and increase accidents. She believes it would be best to restrict the left turns permanently or, at least, limit left hand turns during rush hours.

**Jim Box, 1201 Faymont**, considers that the cause of accidents is the institution of the third lane on Aviation. Visibility for the third and fastest lane is limited. He requested that the commission find methods to encourage traffic to slow down.

**Virginia Arenas, 1205 Faymont**, questioned why the third lane on Aviation was installed. She recommends that the commission have the existing traffic light that is northwest of Space Park at Northrop Grumman be moved a little bit north to resolve some of the traffic concerns. The signal need not be active 24 hours per day. Using an existing signal would save the city money.

**Katherine Austin, 1612 Wendy Way**, encouraged the commission that whatever is recommended as traffic improvements at 19<sup>th</sup> Street are the same recommendations for 12<sup>th</sup> Street. This way the impact is more equal. She counted 25 children under 16 years of age on her block. Safety is a very important concern. She suggests to limit turns at peak hours as the easiest and most cost effective.

**Martha Nakano, 1901 Harkness**, does not want to increase traffic at 19<sup>th</sup> and Harkness, which would happen with a signal at 19<sup>th</sup> and Aviation.

**Jane Mitchell, 1908 Harkness**, asked that the addition of the third lane on Aviation be explained. She was in favor of a traffic light, but now she believes that limiting the hours of left turns would be a fair compromise.

**Sam Barr, 2205 Wendy Way**, stated that his family has lived here since 1950. He suggests that the intersection at 19<sup>th</sup> Street needs a signal.

**Jeff Yakubik, 1612 Wendy Way**, suggests that the commission follow what the data indicates, including restrictions on left turns at 19<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets during peak hours, but not on weekends.

**Dale D. Gramaje, 1908 Harkness**, noted that people going down 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets are neighbors and residents – many of which are those taking children to the school. He stated that if people need to go through the neighborhood, they will do it even if there is no sign.

**Wilma Robinson, 1813 Lynngrove Dr.**, suggests that the City get rid of the third lane on Aviation and re-align it to allow for a right-turn lane. She feels this would be the best solution.

**Juliet Garaci, 2004 Harkness**, has three children and does not want traffic on Harkness to increase. She is not sure what the best solution is, but would like to allow left hand turns to continue.

**James Juo, 1604 Faymont**, stated he is intrigued with the idea of moving the signal north at the Northrop Grumman. He suggests that the problems stem from speeders and questions how the speeders can be slowed down on Aviation. Possibly,

there can be signs to inform the drivers of the upcoming intersections, similar to those used to inform drivers of upcoming cross walks.

**Barbara Heacox, 1808 Harkness**, suggests a sign to slow down southbound traffic on Aviation be placed on the other side of Marine Avenue due to schools. As another alternative, she recommends flashing lights during certain hours to help slow down traffic.

**Monica Noble, 2000 Harkness**, proposes installing a traffic light that includes a left-hand turn arrow or remove the third lane on Aviation and making the third lane into right-turn only.

**Lori Smith-Hillman, 2001 Harkness**, believes that the third lane on Aviation was added to alleviate City of Hawthorne traffic problems. She considers that third lane as the problem. She suggests eliminating left turns during peak hours.

**Bill Rich, 1904 Wendy Way**, considers that although it is more convenient to be able to turn left that it is a small sacrifice to pay for safety by prohibiting left turns and most cost effective alternative.

**Barbara Heacox, 1808 Harkness**, concerned with visibility and recommends that the 10-foot tall fence be moved at 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Aviation.

**Lou Bourgeois, 1159 Aviation Blvd, Magic Rainbow Preschool owner**, noted that the safety problems existed prior to the addition of the third lane on Aviation. He is not opposed to a right turn lane instead of the third lane. He believes that left hand turns to the north at 12<sup>th</sup> Street must be eliminated.

**Susan Downie, 1305 Faymont**, feels it would be ridiculous to disallow left turns into the neighborhood. She questions why the third lane was added to Aviation.

**Diane Rich, 1904 Wendy Way**, has lived here for 40 years and believes that before the third lane was added to Aviation, traffic safety was still a problem.

Chairman Donahue closed the public hearing at 7:50 p.m.

## Discussion

In response to Chairperson Donahue's request, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet noted that to the best of his knowledge, the third lane was added to Aviation as a joint effort with the cities of Hawthorne, El Segundo and Redondo Beach along with Los Angeles County. The project was fully funded by Los Angeles County. The purpose was to improve traffic capacity. By adding capacity along the arterial street Aviation, this would decrease the traffic loads on the residential streets of those cities. The City of

Manhattan Beach could consider initiating a reversal and remove the southbound curb lane along Aviation and replace it with a median. To slow down traffic, it is typical to use landscaping, medians, and narrowing lanes. Also, the City could add a sign to make drivers aware of the intersections coming up at 19<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets. To add landscape, cut back walls, re-purchase land, and add medians could cost more than installing a traffic signal, and would be a big capital improvement project.

Commissioner Stabile related that safety is the principal concern. The choices to be made must help the community in general. There are no universal solutions. Some small sacrifices may need to be made. Eliminating the third lane on Aviation is not feasible due to cost, traffic, and political considerations. Commissioner Stabile agrees that a traffic signal would increase traffic. He recommends the elimination of left turns onto 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets from Aviation as well as onto Aviation from 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets. This would be for a trial period of 6 months. If it works, it would be permanent. If it does not work, another solution can be considered, such as a traffic signal. He would also recommend that during the trial period, traffic counts be obtained on impacted streets, such as Harkness, to see if traffic is significantly increased.

Commissioner Silverman commented that that he regretted his prior recommendation and feels it should be amended to be more flexible by restricting left turns during peak hours and allowing turning during “off” peak hours. He further would like to hold off on installing the traffic signal to see what happens during a 6-month trial period. A traffic signal would be too costly on a trial basis.

In response to Commissioner Silverman’s question, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet explained that a good alternative to help drivers become aware of their speed is to install a sign with the speed limit, which flashes the actual speed of the approaching vehicle.

Commissioner Adami commented that restricting left turns during peak hours as suggested by one of the residents was a good idea. He asked Traffic Engineer Zandvliet if we can reduce the speed limit. He expressed concern for the residents regarding the safety for the people and their children, who are residents there. He suggests a trial period. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet stated that reducing the speed limit is not feasible.

Commissioner Gross queried how long would it take to install a traffic signal. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet replied that, after it takes 4 to 5 months to design, an additional 6 months to issue construction bids and obtain a contract. It would take at least a year before a new traffic signal could become operational.

Commissioner Gross noted that most speakers tonight were concerned with a prohibition of left turns all the time as per the original recommendation to City Council. A “right now” solution would be to restrict left turns at 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets, but to modify the restrictions to disallow left turns from 12<sup>th</sup> Street onto Aviation all the time; disallow left turns during peak hours from 19<sup>th</sup> Street onto Aviation, from Aviation to 19<sup>th</sup> Street,

and from Aviation to 12<sup>th</sup> Street. He would refer the determination of peak hours to the Traffic Engineer. Commissioner Gross recommended that during the trial period of no more than 6 months that the traffic data continue to be monitored including traffic accidents. He did not suggest a new traffic signal at this time as it would take a long time to process, but possibly consider it after the initial 6-month trial period.

Commissioner Stabile stated that restricting left turns at peak hours are a potential problem. Some people ignore restrictions. This may lead to an enforcement problem and to committing more Police Department resources to maintain effectiveness.

Chairperson Donahue relayed his concern that people may not be able to read signs in time regarding restricted left turns during certain hours. However, he believes that many who make left turns into the neighborhood are residents. Chairperson Donahue suggests restricting the left turns from 6 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 7 p.m., check accident rates, and revisit these improvements in 6 months. He noted that another traffic signal is not needed.

Commissioner Silverman noted his concerns with the visibility when making right turns from 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets onto southbound Aviation. He suggests perhaps using mirrors to improve the safety of these turns.

Commissioner Adami stated that the addition of a traffic signal should not be recommended because of the costs and a majority of the citizens are against it. He suggests that the left turn restrictions be from 3 to 7 p.m.

In response to a question from Commissioner Gross, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet explained that left turn restrictions could be "flexible". A suggested peak time would be from 3 to 7 p.m. The window of time could be changed if data reflected that 3:30 or 6:30 pm would be just as effective for traffic safety. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet recommended that outbound traffic from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to Aviation be restricted all the time; from Aviation into 12<sup>th</sup> Street, left turns would be restricted from 3 to 7 p.m.; and left turns restricted 3 to 7 p.m. both ways on 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Aviation.

Chairperson Donahue responded that flexible left turn restrictions would be confusing and he would suggest leaving the restrictions from 3 to 7 p.m. He concurs with full-time left turn restrictions from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to Aviation.

Commissioner Gross requested Traffic Engineer Zandvliet to address allowing left turns on weekends. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet stated that weekends could be exempted. He further noted that peak hours should be consistent and reiterated that 12<sup>th</sup> Street outbound left turns should be completely prohibited. This 24-hour prohibition would allow moving the right turn lane over and may provide better visibility at the 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Aviation intersection. The Traffic Engineer does not recommend restricting left turns during morning peak hours.

In response to Commissioner Stabile's query, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet noted that there are methods to obtain data and to monitor compliance to the time restrictions.

### **Action**

A MOTION was MADE (Gross) to:

1. Prohibit left turns from northbound Aviation Boulevard to westbound 12th and 19th Streets between 3 and 7pm Monday through Friday;
2. Prohibit left turns from eastbound 12th onto Aviation Boulevard at all times;
3. Conduct before-and-after collision history and traffic counts of potentially affected streets;
4. Conduct a follow-up study in approximately six months after installation of left turn restrictions

This motion was put to vote, but did not carry.

Discussion continued with the Commission agreeing to amend the motion to add the following Measure:

### **ADD**

- Add an electronic speed awareness sign with actual speed and speed limit on Aviation Blvd for south-bound drivers.

The amended motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Silverman and passed by 4 to 1 roll call vote with Commissioner Stabile dissenting.

Management Analyst Stevenson advised that the Council is scheduled to consider this item on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. Over 900 notices have been prepared to be mailed out this week for the September 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet explained that the left turn restriction signs could be installed fairly quickly after City Council approval. The flashing sign would require monies to be appropriated and would take longer to complete. Traffic Engineer Erik Zandvliet provided input on how to access the Council agenda item via the City website, at the public library or at the Community Development public counter.

Chairperson Donahue thanked the participants for attending the meeting and making themselves heard.

**F. COMMISSION ITEMS**

None

**G. STAFF ITEMS**

Management Analyst Stevenson noted that City Council approved all PPIC recommendations regarding American Martyrs School and Pacific Elementary School. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet noted that the next steps included work orders for signs and to get the information to the school parents before school starts. It is expected that this item will come back for PPIC review in 6 months.

**H. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.