

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
PARKING AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
February 23, 2012**

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 February, 2012, at the hour of 6:35p.m., in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue, in said City.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Vigon, Fournier, Silverman and Chair Stabile.
Absent: Adami
Staff Present: Madrid, Rydell and Mason.
Clerk: Schilling.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Silverman/Vigon) to approve the minutes of January 26, 2012 regular meeting with the following amendments;

Commissioner Silverman wanted to clarify that on Page 4, he asked the question regarding carpooling twice because he was concerned with children that live too far from the school that cannot be expected to walk to school.

D. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

E. GENERAL BUSINESS

2. Aviation Boulevard Bicycle Lane Preliminary Engineering Study

Chair Stabile asked clarification from staff regarding expectations of the PPIC Commission and what role the Commission will play in the process in reference to the Aviation Boulevard Bicycle Lane Preliminary Engineering Study.

Management Analyst Madrid explained that it was the Commissions role to provide input on the plan and to establish recommendations for Council's consideration. She went on to say that the project would actually be broken into segments and they would like comments and recommendations from the Commission on each segment, for example, if the Commission determined that further study was required in one area or if additional funding was required for some aspects.

Chair Stabile suggested that the PPIC Commission be given a more detailed analysis of the project before it was finalized.

Traffic Engineer Jack Rydell added that though what would be presented to the Commission tonight is a well done study, staff doesn't support the proposal at this stage. He stated that the project would require extensive public in-put/out-reach, there are four jurisdictions that are involved in the project and this is just the first step in what will most likely be a long process.

Chair Stabile asked for direction in how the Commission should view the project as it will be presented this evening.

Lauren Nakano with Beach Cities Health District speaking on behalf of Vitality City expressed their excitement in moving forward with making the South Bay Cities more movable, walkable and bike friendly. Aviation Boulevard Bike Lane is a very important project to Vitality City as it provides a corridor that crosses through all three cities of Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach and Hermosa Beach. She mentioned that there are ten schools in the same group of cities that have launched the Walking School Bus Program, five of the schools are Manhattan Beach elementary schools.

Ms. Nakano stated that they support staff on this project and thanked them for beginning this journey and is excited about the process continuing.

Management Analyst Madrid introduced Michael Moule, Consultant from Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates, Inc to present the Power Point presentation.

Consultant Moule presented his Power Point presentation to the members of the Commission. He initiated by briefing them on the fact that the presentation they were about to see was a general overview.

Consultant Moule explained that the South Bay Bicycle Master Plan included a route connecting Aviation Boulevard and Marine Avenue for bicyclists in the area. Aviation Boulevard is a major spine in connectivity for South Bay bicyclists. Once the Aviation Boulevard bike lane is in place this will allow connections to other cross streets to become more viable.

Consultant Moule presented a number of photographs of bicyclists along the Aviation Boulevard corridor. He shared photos of bicyclists riding on sidewalks, in the street, riding in the opposing lane of traffic, etc. This is not only a huge danger to the bicyclist Mr. Moule explained but also to pedestrians and motorists. He noted that there are portions of Aviation Boulevard where pedestrian walkability is limited because there were no sidewalks in place, or the sidewalk was too restricted by power poles or overgrown landscaping.

There was a list of benefits provided by Consultant Moule regarding bike lanes;

1. Bike lanes allow bikes to travel at their own pace.
2. Bike lanes allow for good operation by cyclists.
3. Bike lanes allow motorists to be more aware of bicyclists especially as bicyclists grow in number.
4. Bike lanes provide space for pedestrians to walk if needed.
5. Bike lanes provide a buffer from cars along a street.
6. Bike lanes allow for a larger turning radius for cars.
7. Bike lanes provide a space for cars to pull over in the event that they have mechanical problems.

Consultant Moule also prefaced his presentation with the fact that their goal is to maintain as much street parking as possible along Aviation Boulevard as well as left hand turning lanes and allow the service of the same number of motorists. He stated that there was no in depth studies on these items, only preliminary as this is what was requested of the study.

The area to be reviewed by the City of Manhattan Beach includes Aviation Boulevard from Artesia Boulevard through Rosecrans Avenue. He addressed Aviation Boulevard in three sections indicating options that would be available for each of these segments. There are challenges/modifications involved in each aspect, some areas more in depth than others. Consultant Moule also asked the Commissioners to keep in mind that there are four cities that will have to buy in to this project and that each city is responsible for specific areas along the artery of Aviation Boulevard.

Consultant Moule remarked that the most challenging area along Aviation Boulevard within Manhattan Beach lies between 9th Street and 11th Street. Along this segment they have a several options that can be considered a). retain parking would need to lose the left turn lanes or would have to restrict parking and keep the left turn lanes b). eliminate parking however the business show a lot of traffic during the day c). blend a & b which would allow you to retain 4-5 parking spaces but restrict left turn lane d). create a shared lane or e). remove streetscape and widen street four feet.

Commissioner Fournier asked for clarification on "shared lanes". Consultant Moule responded by describing a shared lane as a lane that is put in place on the downhill side of the street that is shared by bicyclists and motorists alike.

Chair Stabile commented on the fact that more responsibility for the difficult changes appears to be between Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach with Redondo Beach bearing the majority. He went on to say that the city limits rest in the middle of the street so there would have to be a buy-in by both cities in order to accomplish the expected goals. Chair Stabile added that there is some grey area on Aviation Boulevard near 11th Street as to where the city limits are.

Traffic Engineer Rydell responded that all the cities involved will have to agree on the changes to be made as each of the cities will be impacted in some way.

Another item was discussed regarding the raised medium at Manhattan Beach Boulevard and Aviation Boulevard being changed out for one that is just designated by bumps/lines in order to get the bike lane in. This discussion led to accessibility of safety vehicles at the intersection.

Commissioner Fournier suggested removing the six inch curb for the turning lane and replacing it with a three inch curb which would allow for safety vehicles to cross.

The presentation continued by Consultant Moule with examples of how a bike lane could be implemented along the entire route of Aviation Boulevard from Manhattan Beach Boulevard to Rosecrans Avenue. At the completion of the Power Point presentation there was discussion among the Commissioners;

Commissioner Silverman suggested a field trip. He said it was difficult to picture all of the changes that were provided in the Power Point presentation and felt a need to physically visit the sight.

Chair Stabile asked if the schedule for the bike lane would conflict with the schedule for the Sepulveda Boulevard Bridge widening project.

Chair Stabile also questioned the safety of crossing two lanes of traffic to make a left from Aviation Boulevard to Marine Avenue when heading southbound to get to the Green Line station. It appeared to him to be very dangerous.

Consultant Moule said he could envision bicyclists making that transition in a safe fashion.

Chair Stabile next asked about the cost break down on page 44 and available funding sources.

Consultant Moule said that an upcoming grant was a possible source for funding the project but a call for projects has not been released. He believed the applications for this money would be due soon and the City should be prepared to act on it.

Commissioner Vigon asked if cyclists have a choice to ride outside the bike lane and ride in the traffic lane. Consultant Moule responded that there is a California law which requires that cyclists use the bike lane unless it is dangerous to do so. Moule added that there were some other exceptions for example a cyclist could use the left turn lane to make a turn.

Commissioner Vigon expressed his concerns that this may cause confusion to motorists if there is a bike lane and cyclists are expected to use it, a motorist wouldn't expect to see a cyclist in traffic lane.

Chair Stabile opened the floor to public comment at 7:23 p.m.

Tang Nguyen, Westminster, CA – Owner/operator of beauty salon on Aviation Boulevard in Manhattan Beach agrees that the bike plan is a beautiful plan for our City but in his opinion, when you make a plan like this you need to ask for public opinion. If you make a plan for the bikes, keep the bikes along the ocean. Aviation Boulevard is a very busy street, it doesn't allow for cars to get out, adding in bike lanes will narrow the lanes for motorists. If Aviation Boulevard was close to High School, it would be a good choice for students to use it but it's not that way, we need to think about the resident's opinion in Manhattan Beach. Mr. Tang stated that he has owned the salon on Aviation for 12 years and there is very limited parking for his business– he accepts what you do with parking but need to listen to residents, if you lose parking, it will impact businesses, there are few cyclists and many motorists, and for the Commission to not make decision for the few but for whole.

Chair Stabile thanked Mr. Tang for attending the meeting tonight and sharing his thoughts. He affirmed that there will be more meetings in the future and said that he would welcome Mr. Tang's comments.

Nick Bhanji, Redondo Beach, CA - Owner/operator of a dry cleaning business on Aviation Boulevard in Manhattan Beach for 26 years expressed his concerns about implementing a bike lane along Aviation primarily because of safety concerns. He cited that there are many accidents on Aviation Boulevard near his business without a bike lane. Mr. Bhanji estimates that motorists travel in excess of 40 miles per hour and the street is narrow. He added that Aviation Boulevard is very busy and is used as an alternate route instead of Sepulveda Boulevard. It is very dangerous as motorists travel between 45 – 50 miles per hour noting that there is only one signal between Artesia Boulevard and Manhattan Beach Boulevard. Mr. Bhanji stated that it is not practical to install a left hand turn at Rattan, that there is a blind spot at bottom of hill and the street is not lit well. Motorists already have to look for other cars and now they will have to look out for bikes. Mr. Bhanji said that if you install a median, it will prohibit motorists from turning left into the businesses on the west side. Businesses and residents lose value if a "no left turn" prohibition is implemented. He expressed his concerns for businesses, cyclists and pedestrians.

Commissioner Fournier shared Mr. Bhanji's concerns about northbound traffic on Aviation Boulevard near the curve and downhill section of the road near 9th Street. He feels it is a dangerous area for a U turn or left turn.

Mr. Bhanji interjected that there were two children killed at Aviation and 2nd Street 10-15 years ago and that is what prompted the installation of a traffic signal at that intersection.

Commissioner Fournier asked if Mr. Bhanji would support the bike plan if it didn't include Aviation Boulevard, if it didn't include the two block area between 9th

Street and 11th Street, and if the bike lane were diverted through the residential area between 9th Street and 2nd Street?

Mr. Bhanji responded that he would be in favor of the bike lane if it is done safely. He asked what would happen if they take away parking and widen the street at 9th Street, he doesn't think the project could be completed for the estimated cost shown on study. Mr. Bhanji emphasized his concerns about what may take place at 9th Street or at Nick's bar in Hermosa Beach at Aviation and Grant Avenue, and as one approaches Pacific Coast Highway – which are all very busy intersections. He has many concerns about the safety aspects of the project and about the businesses along Aviation Boulevard. He suggested that the bike lane be placed on on Vale Street as a straight through thoroughfare.

Ms. Nakano explained that the Vitality City and Beach Cities Health District support the livability/bikeability plans and suggests looking at the overall well-being the plan brings to the cities. She cited that studies show that bike lanes generally prove to be a traffic calming measure; it makes drivers more aware of their surroundings and does have a calming effect. Ms. Nakano also stated that in some cities it has been found that bike lanes encourage retail business, increase retail sales because it provides a corridor that people want to travel.

Chair Stabile closed the Public Hearing at 7:42 p.m.

Chair Stabile invited comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Fournier thanked everyone for all the work that has been done so far. He stated that the two block area between 9th Street and 11th Street on Aviation Boulevard would be the most impacted, that access is very important to the businesses, and how the City accommodates the businesses is a major concern along with the safety concerns on Aviation Boulevard. Commissioner Fournier thanked the business owners for attending the meeting tonight.

Commissioner Fournier then addressed a question regarding cost to Consultant Moule, and if the project could be completed with the estimated \$582,000.

Consultant Moule stated that the project could be completed within the estimated budget, he explained that the majority of work is in restriping the street, there is few changes related to utilities and the stretch north of 33rd Street in the City of Hawthorne is the only area that would require the street be widened per the current proposal.

Commissioner Vigon thanked the consultant from Nelson/Nygaard and the representative from Beach Cities Health District as well as the business owners for their contributions to the meeting. He asked if it might be possible to by-pass Aviation Boulevard and use a residential street for the bike lane between Artesia Boulevard and

Marine Avenue along Aviation Boulevard. He cited safety concerns for use of residential areas.

Commissioner Fournier reiterated the fact that the bike lane would include four cities which may encourage more people to ride their bike to work or to the Green Line station.

Traffic Engineer Rydell commented that the recently adopted Bicycle Master Plan does include alternate routes in Manhattan Beach; however Aviation Boulevard is a street that flows through all four cities.

Commissioner Silverman echoes Commissioner Fournier's thoughts concerning parking and access to businesses. He could justify a bike lane downtown bringing more retail business to the area but the businesses on Aviation Boulevard need motorists to have access to them. He stated that small businesses work hard and make a big contribution to our City. He stated that we need to make certain that the Bicycle Coalition will not do anything to negatively impact the retail businesses.

Commissioner Vigon agreed that most people are going to be driving to the businesses along Aviation Boulevard as opposed to riding a bike.

Commissioner Silverman requested that the Consultant double checked the cost estimate to make sure the estimates are accurate.

Consultant Moule stated that there is always a chance for change but most likely would only impact the City of Hawthorne. He stated that the estimates for relocation of utilities would be for four light poles, one power pole and 4-5 drainage gates, which are really minimal changes to utilities.

Commissioner Silverman reiterated that no one wants to be blindsided by costs.

Chair Stabile stated that this is a complex project, involving four entities working together, lots of moving parts but considers this to be a good starting point. He emphasized that there is a lot to consider if the project moves forward and expressed his gratitude to all who participated this evening. Chair Stabile feels that safety, traffic flow and parking are the main priorities.

Commissioner Fournier asked if he could address Consultant Moule once more. He suggested that the Consultant take a slow drive along Aviation Boulevard and assess the dangerous areas, blind spots along the route. Commissioner Fournier shared that he has driven that route for more than 30 years and that Aviation Boulevard between 2nd Street and Pacific Coast Highway is extremely dangerous.

F. COMMISSION ITEMS

1. Commissioner Vigon requested an explanation for the parking signs along Oak Avenue by the Belamar Hotel. He added that the blue no parking signs looked very tacky. Commissioner Vigon suggested that the residents along Oak Avenue go through the process and request permit parking along their street.

Management Analyst Madrid stated that she would follow up on this item with Associate Planner Danna.

Commissioner Vigon added that perhaps the City could expedite permit parking.

2. Commissioner Fournier brought up his concerns again about the missing tiles in the crosswalk throughout the City especially along Manhattan Beach Boulevard at Morningside Drive.

Commissioner Silverman stated that the Downtown Business Association may get involved in this project, there are many safety concerns.

3. Chair Stabile remarked that he has not seen the added verbiage to PPIC Requests and he has asked for this information before.

Management Analyst Madrid explained that she had sent it to him but would resend it again.

4. Chair Stabile asked about cars parking on the sidewalk between Marine Avenue and Rosecrans Avenue on Manhattan Avenue. He would like this item looked in to, he doesn't think that pedestrians should have to walk in the street or push a baby stroller in the street to get around cars that are parked illegally.

G. STAFF ITEMS

1. Management Analyst Madrid noted that Council has approved the Pennekamp Elementary School Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan.
2. Management Analyst Madrid reminded the Commissioners that there is a Traffic Commissioners Workshop coming up on March 17, 2012 in Buena Park, and that she will forward more information when it is available

H. ADJOURNMENT

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m. to the Regular PPIC Meeting on Thursday, March 22, 2012 at in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue, in said City.

