

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH  
PARKING AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
March 22, 2007**

**A.** The Regular Meeting of the Parking and Public Improvements Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach was held on March 22, 2007, at 6:35 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of the City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue.

**B. ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Osterhout, Paralusz, Seville-Jones

Members Absent: Donahue, Chairman Lang

Staff Present: Rosie Lackow, Senior Planner  
Kara Pompano, Recording Secretary  
Erik Zandvliet, Traffic Engineer

**C. AGENDA CHANGES**

None.

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 25, 2007**

Acting Chairperson Seville-Jones pointed out the following minor changes:

Page 1, Audience Participation, first paragraph: change spelling to “Wachtfogel”

Page 2, third paragraph, last sentence: change to “*against* the property owner....”

Page 2, Audience Participation, first paragraph, last sentence: change to “has *no* objection..”

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Osterhout/Paralusz) to approve the minutes of January 25, 2007, as amended.

AYES: Osterhout, Paralusz, Seville-Jones

NOES: None

ABSENT: Donahue, Chairman Lang

ABSTAIN: None

**E. CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet reported that City Council approved the Commission’s initial recommendations for Neighborhood Traffic Management Plans for both Robinson and Pacific Elementary schools.

**F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

None.

## **G. GENERAL**

### **1. Grand View Elementary School Traffic and Parking Study: Follow-Up Recommendations**

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet presented the staff report and recommendations to: continue the initial traffic safety measures and implement the following additional measures for the area surrounding the Grand View/Ladera School campuses:

- A. Install stop signs in all directions at the intersection of 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Vista Drive.
- B. Add a left turn restriction out of the westerly Grand View parking lot driveway onto 24<sup>th</sup> Street on Wednesday between 1 and 2pm.
- C. Install “KEEP CLEAR” markings within the intersection of 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Manor Drive.
- D. Paint approximately 20 feet of red curb on the east side of Alma Avenue just south of 24<sup>th</sup> Street for improved intersection circulation and visibility.
- E. Remove parking on the east side of Bell Avenue north of 27<sup>th</sup> Street and restripe to provide diagonal parking on the west side of the street segment (net +4 spaces).
- F. Restripe Bell Avenue just south of 27<sup>th</sup> Street to provide a northbound left turn lane into the Ladera loading zone.
- G. Restrict left turns from westbound 27<sup>th</sup> Street to southbound Bell Avenue during peak school dismissal times on school days only on a trial basis, subject to a City survey of residents living on 27<sup>th</sup> Street showing support for the measure.
- H. Extend student loading zone at Ladera Campus southerly to the existing green 24-Minute Parking Zone.
- I. Consider a future capital project to widen the north side of 24<sup>th</sup> Street adjacent to the Grand View School parking lot with the addition to the Capital Projects List.

### **Audience Participation**

**Nancy Madden, Grandview Safety Committee Chairperson, 2900 Block of Pacific Avenue**, submitted a letter from Grand View School Principal Rhonda Steinberg conveying staff and parents appreciation for all the improvements that have been provided by the city and its staff.

Ms. Madden reported that Grand View School is very pleased with the recommendations that are being presented and believe the plans for the Ladera/Bell area will address and improve the current traffic issues in that neighborhood and at the lower campus. She talked of the continued need for clear signage and enforcement, sharing that some parents are pushing the boundaries and “grey areas” or ambiguities need to be eliminated to increase safety in these congested zones. Ms. Madden then briefly reviewed the following needs:

Grandview Parking Lot:

1. “Bus Only Loading” painted near planter in white hatched area

2. “No Parking At Any Time” signs at loading zone
3. “No Parking” painted on street at loading zone
4. Remove existing loading instruction signs and replace them with clearer wording
5. “Staff Parking Only” painted in staff parking area in Grand View lot
6. Enforcement for cars without decals in Grand View Lot
7. Continued enforcement of all traffic rules

Ms. Madden then spoke regarding the Marine Avenue/Manor Drive crosswalk. She explained that it continues to be a heavily trafficked and very hazardous corner. Students and cars cannot see the approaching crosswalk until they are about 50 feet away. She asked that consideration be given to making this a four way stop or adding a crossing guard at this intersection. Ms. Madden also suggested that the Ladera campus loading zone be extended farther than what is being recommended.

**Diane White, Montessori School Director**, stated that the initial measures have made a positive impact, and believes the upcoming relocation of the Mommy and Me program (is told will be happening very soon) will also make a huge difference in the area. Sharing that the program’s relocation will free up parking spaces, she questioned the need for the diagonal parking on Bell Avenue and whether the implementation of the measure should be on hold until the effects of their move can be evaluated. Ms. White agreed with Ms. Madden’s suggestion to increase the proposed length of the loading zone and relayed that Montessori School would be willing to consider changing their morning and afternoon pick up times if it will further improve the situation.

**Krista Skinner, 100 Block of 39<sup>th</sup> Street**, stated that the improvements have made a huge difference and that she too believes the loading zones could be further increased. She agreed that diagonal parking may not be needed after the Mommy and Me program relocates. Ms. Skinner also voiced concern with the proposed left turn restriction on 27<sup>th</sup> Street, suggesting that the restriction relate to the entry into the loading zone.

**Marty Friedman, 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Vista Drive**, referenced his submitted petition for a stop sign at 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Vista Drive, and asked that the Commission seriously consider this request for the safety of the children.

**Walt Drxizn, 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and Vista Drive**, voiced his support for a stop sign on 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Vista Drive, explaining that with all the children in the area, coupled with speeding cars, an accident is waiting to happen. He said children are still getting dropped off at the Vista Drive location and recommended that a touch pad access be considered to allow staff only entrance. In regard to the stop sign request for the Marine Avenue/Manor Drive intersection, Mrs. Drxizn pointed out that there is already a stop sign on Marine Avenue at Grandview Avenue. As these locations are in such close proximity to on another, he believes an additional stop sign may cause a problem. He stated that the improvements have improved traffic flow and commended staff for their efforts.

## **Discussion**

Commissioner Osterhout thanked the Grand View Safety Committee for their work on this issue and commended the City for taking the necessary steps to implement the measures. He conveyed his support of staff's recommendations and stated that although he does not generally support stop signs, he will support further study on the possible relocation of the Marine Avenue/Grandview Avenue stop sign to the Marine Avenue/Manor Drive intersection. Commissioner Osterhout also spoke on the "craziness" he witnessed at the Ladera site during pick up time. He voiced concern with what appears to be the parents' lack of civility and ignorance to the crossing guard, parent volunteer and the implemented measures. He shared that he would like to try the proposed restriction of left turns from westbound 27<sup>th</sup> Street Bell Avenue during peak dismissal time and would rather wait on the diagonal parking until the Mommy and Me program relocates. Commissioner Osterhout also suggested that increased police enforcement be focused on Wednesdays which is an early dismissal day for all grades.

Commissioner Paralusz echoed Commissioner Osterhout's comments and commended staff and the community for their teamwork on this issue. She stated her agreement with holding off on the diagonal parking until the Mommy and Me program relocates and that further study be done on the possible relocation of the stop sign to the Marine Avenue/Manor Drive intersection. She asked that the community continue its good work on this issue, stressing that their input and work are how things get done.

Noting that the Grand View School study has been the most challenging school study thus far, Acting Chairperson Seville-Jones commended Ms. Madden for her positive approach and great recommendations, adding that she has been a great partner in addressing this issue. She indicated her agreement with the staff's recommendations, holding off on the diagonal parking until Mommy and Me relocates, and further study on the stop sign relocation.

## **Action**

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Paralusz/Osterhout) to CONTINUE the initial traffic safety measures and implement the following additional measures for the area surrounding the Grand View/Ladera School campuses:

- A. Install stop signs in all directions at the intersection of 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Vista Drive.
- B. Add a left turn restriction out of the westerly Grand View parking lot driveway onto 24<sup>th</sup> Street on Wednesdays between 1 and 2pm.
- C. Install "KEEP CLEAR" markings within the intersection of 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Manor Drive.
- D. Paint approximately 20 feet of red curb on the east side of Alma Avenue just south of 24<sup>th</sup> Street for improved intersection circulation and visibility.
- E. Restripe Bell Avenue just south of 27<sup>th</sup> Street to provide a northbound left turn lane into the Ladera loading zone.

- F. Restrict left turns from westbound 27<sup>th</sup> Street to southbound Bell Avenue during peak school dismissal times on school days only on a trial basis, subject to a City survey of residents living on 27<sup>th</sup> Street showing support for the measure.
- G. Extend student loading zone at Ladera Campus southerly to the existing green 24-Minute Parking Zone.
- H. Consider a future capital improvement project to widen the north side of 24<sup>th</sup> Street adjacent to the Grand View School parking lot.

It was noted that this list of recommendations does not include the installation of diagonal parking on the west side of Bell Avenue north of 27<sup>th</sup> Street. In addition, staff is directed to study the possible relocation of the Marine Avenue/Grandview Avenue stop sign to the Marine Avenue/Manor Drive intersection, and address the following Grand View School parking lot needs as requested by the Grand View Safety Committee:

- 1. Improve Signage
- 2. “Bus Only Loading” to be painted near planter in white hashed area
- 3. “No Parking At Any Time” signs in loading zone
- 4. “No Parking” painted on the street in loading zone
- 5. Remove existing loading instruction signs and replace them with clearer wording
- 6. “Staff Parking Only” painted in staff area in Grand View Lot
- 7. Continued enforcement of all traffic rules in parking lot and around campus

AYES: Osterhout, Paralusz, Seville-Jones  
 NOES: None  
 ABSENT: Donahue, Chairman Lang  
 ABSTAIN: None

**2. Request for Taxicab Stand on Morningside Drive**

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet presented the staff report and recommendation to post a Taxicab Parking zone on the east side of Morningside Drive just south of 13<sup>th</sup> Street on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, between 6pm and 2am on a trial basis.

In response to questions from the Commissioner, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet clarified that the length of the trial period will depend on whether or not the stand is operating effectively; that there are no other locations designated as such for taxicabs in the City; that taxicabs usually circle around the town or park in a public space until needed; that staff does not know for sure if the complaints of late night noise are related to people waiting for taxicabs; that the City does have a taxicab franchise agreement; and that notice of this meeting was mailed to adjacent properties within 300 feet radius and did not include Ardmore Avenue, east of Valley Drive. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet also stated that he does not believe there is anything in the Shade Hotel’s Conditional Use Permit that would prevent their use of the turnaround.

## Audience Participation

**Robert Carrea, 300 Block of 12<sup>th</sup> Street**, voiced his strong opposition to the proposed taxicab stand. He explained that it was the small town atmosphere that attracted him to buy his property years ago and had no idea the area would turn out the way it has. He understands the need for progress but is disheartened that his property has been continually burdened and now will be subject to an undesirable taxicab stand. Mr. Carrea asked that the Commission consider the homeowners in the area and not allow the taxicab stand.

**Harry Richard Foss, 800 Block of 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Operations Manager for the Shade Hotel**, addressed the Commission regarding their request for a taxicab stand on Morningside Drive for the benefit of the Hotel and restaurants in the Metlox area. He explained that the taxis for all Metlox businesses pick up and drop off in the existing turnout in front of the Hotel and often causes traffic congestion, noise and complaints from the nearby residents along Valley Drive.

In response to questions from Acting Chairperson Seville-Jones, Mr. Foss discussed the Hotel's current use of the turnout and their belief that a taxicab stand will alleviate the congestion caused by waiting taxis in the turnout. Commissioner Seville-Jones asked Mr. Foss if the Shade Hotel would be willing to direct their customers that do not have luggage to the designated taxicab stand.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet responded that typically a taxicab would be called to the Hotel when needed, and the taxi would most likely pick up at the designated location if approved.

**Carol Rowe, Downtown Manhattan Beach Business and Professional Association**, shared past history on this issue, and conveyed that the Association is in support of establishing taxicab stands in the downtown area. She stated that the Association feels it would improve pedestrian safety, provide a convenient service to customers and reduce the need for taxis to drive around town or wait in parking spaces. Ms. Rowe shared that she feels for Mr. Carrea, but when a person purchases residential property in a commercial zone, these types of things will happen. She offered the suggestion that it might be better in terms of resident impacts, to move the location closer to Pomodoro/Fusion. Although it will involve the loss of parking spaces, the new Metlox parking structure provides ample parking. Ms. Rowe concluded by reiterating their support of the designated taxicab stand as well as additional locations in the future, specifically a Manhattan Avenue location.

## Discussion

Commissioner Paralusz expressed sympathy to Mr. Carrera's situation, noting that in her seven years here she has seen tremendous growth in the City. Her hope is that this recommendation may actually improve Mr. Carrera's situation by limiting the number of people walking around or waiting for a taxi. Commissioner Paralusz relayed that she will

support staff's recommendations for the taxicab stand and its location, as she believes it will monitor flow. She pointed out that the hours are limited so it should not affect the aesthetics of the Metlox plaza area; there is taxicab franchise agreement in effect; and said approval is for a trial period.

Commissioner Osterhout observed that a designated taxicab stand will not prohibit taxis from cruising through town looking for customers, and additional taxis will just keep taking a place in the stand. He stated that the only advantage he sees is that people will know where to find a taxi and pointed out that there is no quantifiable way to determine if the stand is reducing the number of taxis cruising through town. Commissioner Osterhout said he is not opposed to giving it a try; however, he would rather have the stand accommodate three taxis versus the recommended five.

Acting Chairperson Seville-Jones stated that she finds it hard to support the taxicab stand as she does not think there is a nexus between the noise complaints and taxicabs; she enjoys the open space and peacefulness of the Metlox open space area and she thinks this would be negatively impacted by five running taxis; she does not believe it will solve the pick up/drop off issues; and although the idea of moving five taxis off the streets into the stand is a gesture, it won't make an impact. She relayed her sympathy to Mr. Carrera's situation and does not feel he should have to endure a stand in front of his home until 2:00 in the morning. If the Commissioner moves forward with a recommendation for the stand, she stated that she would like to see regulations that would not allow the taxis to be left running or unattended; that only those taxis in the franchise be allowed to wait in the stand; that one or two of the five spots be designated for drop offs; that the Shade Hotel consider sending its non luggage customers to the stand; and that staff look into ways to limit cruising taxis through the franchise agreement. Acting Chairperson Seville-Jones concluded by stating that she does not know if she would feel as strongly against the stand if it wasn't for its location and potential impact to Mr. Carrera.

### **Action**

A motion was MADE (Paralusz) to APPROVE staff's recommendation to post a Taxicab Parking zone on the east side of Morningside Drive just south of 13<sup>th</sup> Street on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, between 6pm and 2am on a trial basis. The motion did not receive a second.

A motion was MADE (Osterhout) to APPROVE staff's recommendation to post a Taxicab Parking zone on the east side of Morningside Drive just south of 13<sup>th</sup> Street on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, between 6pm and 2am on a trial basis, with the understanding that the number of taxis will be limited to a total of three spaces and that taxis will not be allowed to leave their taxis running or left unattended. The motion did not receive a second.

A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Osterhout/Paralusz) to approve staff's recommendation to post a Taxicab Parking zone on the east side of Morningside Drive just south of 13<sup>th</sup> Street on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, between 6pm and 2am, on a

trial basis with regulations imposed that taxis are not allowed to be left running or unattended.

AYES: Osterhout, Paralusz  
NOES: Seville-Jones  
ABSENT: Donahue, Chairman Lang  
ABSTAIN: None

Motion Carried.

## **H. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

### **1. City Traffic Engineers (CTE) Association Workshop**

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet briefly discussed the upcoming Workshop scheduled for April 21, 2007. Commissioners Osterhout and Seville-Jones shared how beneficial this workshop was and encouraged those who have not yet attended to do so.

## **I. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.