

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MARCH 3, 2010**

The meeting was held in the multi-purpose room of Walnut Park Elementary School, 2642 E. Olive Street, Huntington Park, California 90255-6324.

1) Call to Order

The meeting of March 3, 2010, was called to order at 9:20 a.m.

2) Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3) Roll Call

Present:                      Chair Robert A. Ringler  
                                    Vice-Chair Thurston Reese  
                                    Commissioner John Watkins  
                                    Commissioner Marvin Estey  
                                    Commissioner Rhett Price

Absent but excused:        Commissioner Guillermo Villalobos

Also in attendance were the following:

Mr. Scott Schales, Assistant Division Engineer; Mr. James Chon, Senior Civil Engineer; Mr. Alan Nino, Associate Civil Engineer; Ms. Irena Guilmette, Supervising Civil Engineering Assistant and Mr. Omar Ahmed, Senior Civil Engineering Assistant.

4) Approval of February 3, 2010, Minutes

The Minutes of the February 3, 2010, Highway Safety Commission (HSC) meeting were approved.

- a) Removal of crosswalks on Seville Avenue at Live Oak Street, Grand Avenue, Cudahy Street and Hill Street  
Appellants: Mr. Joseph Baltazar, Walnut Park Association  
                    Mr. Wally Shidler

Mr. Nino informed the HSC that in order to remove crosswalks, DPW must follow guidelines set forth in the California Vehicle Code (CVC). Section 21950.5 of the CVC clearly states the following:

*An existing marked crosswalk may not be removed unless notice and opportunity to be heard is provided to the public not less than 30 days prior to the scheduled date of removal. In addition to any other public notice requirements, the notice of proposed removal shall be posted at the crosswalk identified for removal.*

Mr. Nino reminded the HSC that they were informed that the crosswalks on Seville Avenue would be removed at the March 7, 2007, HSC meeting. At that time, the HSC was informed that if people respond to the posted notice, they may come to the HSC for their appeal and that was why he was providing a presentation today.

Mr. Nino then presented a power point presentation to the HSC in regards to the appeal for the removal of crosswalks on Seville Avenue at Live Oak Street, Grand Avenue, Cudahy Street and Hill Street. Mr. Nino informed the HSC that the Traffic Design Section of the Department of Public Works (DPW) requested a study to determine the feasibility of removing the existing uncontrolled marked crosswalks on Seville Avenue as part of a proposed resurfacing project.

Mr. Nino provided the HSC with the following information related to Seville Avenue:

- ◆ 56 feet-wide north/south local-collector roadway
- ◆ 1 travel lane and parking in each direction separated by a two-way left-turn lane.
- ◆ Posted Speed Limit – 25 MPH
- ◆ Prevailing Speed - 33 MPH
- ◆ Average Daily Traffic – 13,000 Veh/Day

Mr. Nino provided the HSC with the following information regarding how the Seville Avenue was conducted:

- ◆ Counted the number of vehicles and pedestrians.
- ◆ Measured speed of vehicles.
- ◆ Reviewed the reported collision data.
- ◆ Observed pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- ◆ Conducted a traffic signal study.

Mr. Nino informed the HSC that a traffic signal study was conducted at each of the four intersections and that a traffic signal was not warranted at any of the intersections. Mr. Nino showed on a map that there were existing marked crosswalks at the following locations along Seville Avenue:

- ◆ North and South approaches of Seville Avenue at Live Oak Street
- ◆ North and South approaches of Seville Avenue at Grand Avenue
- ◆ North and South approaches of Seville Avenue at Hill Street
- ◆ South approach of Seville Avenue at Cudahy Street

Mr. Nino informed the HSC that after conducting the vehicle and pedestrian counts at the above-mentioned intersections, DPW recommended the following at the crosswalks along Seville Avenue:

Live Oak Street:

Remove crosswalk at south approach.

Restore ladder-type crosswalk at north approach, install advance signage, and upgrade signage to be consistent with current federal guidelines.

Grand Avenue:

Remove crosswalk at north approach.

Restore crosswalk at south approach and install ladder-type markings, advance signage, and install signage to be consistent with current federal guideline.

Hill Street:

Remove crosswalks at north and south approaches.

It is recommended to encourage pedestrians to use existing traffic signals within 300' to cross Seville Avenue.

Cudahy Street:

Remove crosswalk at south approach.

It is recommended to encourage pedestrians to use existing traffic signals within 300' to cross Seville Avenue.

At this point, Commissioner Estey asked if there was a pre-school located at the northwest corner of Seville Avenue and Grand Avenue. He also asked if these crosswalks were on the Suggested Route to School Maps. Mr. Nino informed Mr. Estey that there was a pre-school at the northwest corner of Seville Avenue and Grand Avenue. Mr. Nino also informed the HSC that there is a Suggested Routes to School Map and that this map recommends the children cross at the signalized intersection of Olive Street and not to cross at the subject uncontrolled crosswalks. Chair Ringler asked if a Suggested Route to School Map could be provided to the parents. Mr. Nino stated that DPW could furnish a map for Walnut Park Elementary School.

At this point, Mr. Wally Shidler, one of the appellants, provided a testimony as to why he believed the crosswalks along Seville Avenue should remain in place. He also mentioned that the City of South Gate has a traffic signal at the intersection of Santa Ana Street and Seville Avenue that doesn't work correctly. Mr. Shidler stated that he's been conducting his own observations and he believes that 9 out of 10 people stop for the pedestrians in the marked crosswalks along Seville Avenue.

After Mr. Shidler made his presentation, the other appellant, Mr. Joseph Baltazar, gave his presentation. Mr. Baltazar stated that there will soon be a middle school and there is now a pre-school on Seville Avenue. He said there were also bus stops and he believes the crosswalks were essential. He stated that many children don't pay attention when crossing anymore due to the usage of cell phones, texting and I-pod devices. Mr. Baltazar stated that if anything, they need more marked crosswalks, not less.

A resident, Ms. Mary Lou Rodriguez, stated that Mr. Baltazar and Mr. Shidler had covered most of their concerns. She asked for a showing of hands how many in the audience would like to see lighted crosswalks along Seville Avenue. A number of people raised their hands in support of this. Ms. Rodriguez asked if DPW was planning to replace the crosswalks with traffic signals. She stated that she had a cousin killed in a crosswalk by a distracted driver who was texting.

At that point, Deputy Evans from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department informed the HSC that he had been working in the community for 10 years and has noticed many changes. Deputy Evans stated that he believed that removing the crosswalks would be a detriment to the community and that instead, DPW should be enhancing the crosswalks with lights. Commissioner Watkins asked him what he meant by lights. Deputy Evans stated he meant they should be upgraded.

Next, Deputy Von Arx spoke and said he believed the crosswalks should not be removed. Chair Ringler asked the Sheriff if the crosswalk were removed, wouldn't it force people to look before crossing? Deputy Evans mentioned that there are many unlicensed drivers who are not familiar with the laws and that they would stop for a marked crosswalk.

Next, Officer John Tye from the California Highway Patrol spoke and stated that he's been working in the area for 20 years and that upgrading some of the crosswalks to a ladder crosswalk would make them more visible.

However, he believed removing the crosswalks would be detrimental due to all of the unlicensed drivers in the area. Chair Ringler asked Officer Tye if there were any statistics on undocumented collisions that could be used to secure federal funding for enhanced speed enforcement. Officer Tye was unaware of those types of statistics.

Commissioner Estey asked Mr. Rigsby, Vice-Principal of Walnut Park Elementary School, how many children attended the school. Mr. Rigsby informed him there were 1070 students as well as 350 students in the after-school program. Mr. Rigsby introduced Mr. Dover, the principal of Walnut Park Elementary School. Mr. Dover stated that the school used to be a year-round school and since the school has gone to a traditional school program, there has been a 30 percent increase in enrollment.

The HSC took a break at 10:50 a.m. The meeting resumed at 11:08 a.m.

Commissioner Estey thanked the audience for their attendance at the meeting and suggested to the HSC that they make their motions one intersection at a time. The HSC agreed to this suggestion. After hearing the testimony of DPW, the appellants, community members, law enforcement and school officials, the HSC made the following motions:

Motion 1

Approve DPW's recommendation to remove the crosswalk at the south approach of Seville Avenue at Live Oak Street, to install CA MUTCD compliant pedestrian crossing signs and install a ladder type crosswalk at the north approach of Seville Avenue at Live Oak Street after the road resurfacing.

The vote went as follows:

Ayes: Watkins, Estey, Reese  
No's: Price  
Abstain: Ringler

Motion 1 carried by majority.

Motion 2

- a) Remove crosswalks at north and south approaches Seville Avenue and Grand Avenue.
- b) Install 4-way stop at intersection of Seville Avenue at Hope Avenue
- c) Install pedestrian actuated traffic signal at the intersection of Seville Avenue at Hill Street.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Motion 3

Approve DPW's staff recommendation to remove existing ladder-type crosswalk, pedestrian crossing signs and pedestrian pavement markings from the south approach of Seville Avenue at Cudahy Street.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Motion 4

DPW to evaluate traffic signal timing at the following intersections:

- a) Seville Avenue at Olive St
- b) Seville Avenue at Broadway
- c) Pacific Avenue at Grand Avenue

The motion was carried unanimously.

6) Report on business other than appeals

Ms. Guilmette informed Chair Ringler that she needed to have him sign the Sunset Review submittal letter for the Auditor Controller's Office.

7) Public Comments on any matter not on agenda

There were no public comments on any matters not on agenda.

8) Reports from special committees

There were no special committee's announcements.

9) Special Orders

There were no special orders.

10) Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

11) New Business

Ms. Guilmette informed the HSC that the appeal for Kagel Canyon Road at Lopez Canyon Road is tentatively scheduled to be heard at the April 7, 2010, HSC meeting.

12) Date for next meeting announced and adjournment

Chair Ringler informed the HSC that the next meeting of the HSC is tentatively scheduled for April 7, 2010. The meeting was adjourned at 12:23 a.m.

A recording of the discussions held at this meeting is on file at Public Works.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Irena Guilmette". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

IRENA GUILMETTE  
Executive Officer  
Highway Safety Commission

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