

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION
MINUTES OF JULY 3, 2019**

The meeting was held in Conference Room B at the Department of Public Works Headquarters.

1. Call to order

At 9:20 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Recited.

3. Roll Call

Present: Chairperson Thurston T. Reese
 Commissioner Marvin Estey
 Commissioner Rhett Price
 Commissioner Guillermo Villalobos
 Commissioner Vincent Rosario
 Commissioner Robert A. Ringler

Also, in attendance were the following:

Emiko Thompson, Assistant Deputy Director
Bahman Hajialiakbar, Principal Engineer
James Chon, Senior Civil Engineer
Lee Miller, Civil Engineer
Jay Varma, Associate Civil Engineer
Irena Guilmette, Supervising Civil Engineering Assistant
Samantha Torres, Civil Engineering Assistant

4. Approval of February 6, 2019, Meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the February 6, 2019, Highway Safety Commission meeting were approved.

5. Citizen Appeal of Denied Request by Public Works

Denial of midblock crosswalk and pedestrian traffic signal on Santa Gertrudes Avenue adjacent to the Seville Apartments

Appellant: Fourth District

Mr. Lee Miller presented the attached Power Point presentation and summarized Public Works' recommendations as follows:

- Deny the request to install a midblock crosswalk, flashing beacons, and pedestrian traffic signal at Santa Gertrudes Avenue near the Seville Apartments.
- Forward the speed data to the Santa Fe Springs office of the California Highway Patrol for increased speed enforcement, at their discretion, and deployment of radar speed trailers.
- Recommend traffic lane reduction on Santa Gertrudes Avenue, between Leffingwell Road and Lemon Drive/Ocean Avenue.

Commissioner Rhett Price asked if there were any intersections or alleys that cross the roadway between Lemon Drive/Ocean Avenue and Leffingwell Road. Mr. Miller stated there are no intersections or alleys between those limits. Commissioner Price asked to see the face page of the collision report for the collision that occurred on Santa Gertrudes Avenue in front of the Seville Apartments. Mr. Miller provided him with the report. The Commissioners took a moment to step outside of the room to examine the subject collision report. The Commissioners came back into the room and the meeting resumed at 9:47 a.m.

Commissioner Price asked Public Works Staff about the radar speed check that was taken and wanted to know what the high and low speeds were during that radar speed check. Mr. Miller informed him that the high speed was 57 miles per hour while the low speed was 25 miles per hour. Commissioner Price asked whether a sight line study was conducted at the location. Mr. Miller informed the Commission that there was slight horizontal curvature, but if you were on the east side of Santa Gertrudes Avenue, a pedestrian should have adequate visibility of the approaching vehicles. Commissioner Price asked what other options there was in the traffic tool chest. Mr. Miller stated other items that were considered were a pedestrian traffic signal or an overhead flashing beacon. Ms. Emiko Thompson stated that a pedestrian traffic signal and overhead flashing beacon studies were conducted, and they were not warranted. Ms. Thompson stated that by using a lane reduction, more parking is provided, which could prevent pedestrians from crossing Santa Gertrudes Avenue at the Seville Apartments.

Commissioner Marv Estey asked if there were other apartment complexes on Santa Gertrudes Avenue. Mr. Miller showed an aerial view of where the apartment boundaries were located and indicated that the other apartments were on the west side of Santa Gertrudes Avenue and there was currently parking on the west side of

the roadway. Commissioner Vince Rosario stated there is a fire station on the east side of Santa Gertrudes Avenue north of the Seville apartments. He also stated there was a palm tree and wall nearby that makes it difficult to pull out onto Santa Gertrudes Avenue. He stated he had spoken to some of the firemen at the fire station and they indicated there are many near miss collisions that don't get reported. Mr. Miller stated Public Works didn't analyze the midblock collision rate near the fire station. Commissioner Rosario stated that he believes there could be emergency vehicle issues with this new roadway reconfiguration. Mr. Miller stated that Public Works had just received a request for a Fire Station Symbol sign in advance of the fire station on Santa Gertrudes Avenue.

Ms. Marielena Sosa informed the Commission and Staff there are 76 apartment units with each tenant having one assigned off-street parking space. She stated there is no guest parking on the premises.

Commissioner Guillermo Villalobos stated that on Gerhart Avenue in the County, a bike lane was installed, and the speed limit was reduced. He stated he thinks it's a long distance to expect a disabled person to walk if they must cross the roadway at the signalized intersections at Leffingwell Road or Lemon Drive/Ocean Avenue. Ms. Thompson indicated that the apartment complexes should have ADA parking facilities on the apartment premises. Commissioner Villalobos stated that Regional Planning typically puts conditions on apartment projects, but this facility was built long ago and those type of design elements were likely not incorporated.

Commissioner Rosario stated that parking is difficult on Santa Gertrudes Avenue and there are much larger apartment complexes on the west side of the roadway that might attempt to utilize the added parking and still cross the roadway. Commissioner Rosario stated there are cars parked south of the apartments on the Santa Gertrudes Avenue frontage road.

Chair Thurston Reese asked for Ms. Marielena Sosa to make her presentation. Ms. Sosa introduced herself. She stated that she had spoken to the residents and at least half of the residents in the 76 units were in favor of a lane reduction. She stated that many people were present when the little girl and her father were struck on the roadway and they were traumatized. She stated that she is seeing the same patterns again and that the California Highway Patrol has not been there enforcing the speed limit. Commissioner Reese asked Ms. Sosa how long she has been living at the Seville Apartments and she stated she has been living there since May 2018. Commissioner Rosario stated that he didn't think there was still going to be enough parking on the east side of Santa Gertrudes Avenue to accommodate the residents because with on-street parking, it is always first come, first serve.

Commissioner Price asked if there is still preferential parking in the County. Mr. James Chon stated that there are still preferential parking districts in the County. Ms. Thompson asked Ms. Sosa if the residents would be opposed with the County going in a different direction regarding the lane reduction and Ms. Sosa stated she trusts the efforts of the County. Ms. Sosa stated that parking is the residents' top priority.

Chair Reese introduced Ms. Kaylee Vela from the Fourth Supervisorial District. Ms. Vela stated she was at the meeting to observe. She stated that in San Pedro, lane reduction has helped, but traffic does get diverted sometimes. Ms. Vela stated that there is no parking on the east side of Santa Gertrudes Avenue right now and that her office receives calls from residents complaining about this. She believes reducing the lane is the best solution. Commissioner Price asked if SD4 would support a preferential parking program. Ms. Thompson stated that another type of study and community engagement would need to be conducted to determine whether preferential parking was an option.

Commissioner Estey asked if the Fire Department has been notified of this lane reduction plan because there could be more problems for the Fire Department. Commissioner Ringler stated that permit parking has many issues and they should include the Fire Station in the plan and make sure a Keep Clear is installed in front of the Fire Station. Commissioner Price said the community should be involved with this lane reduction plan because they need to understand that pedestrians cannot cross the roadway. He also stated that they may wish to consider permit parking for the residents of the apartments.

Commissioner Villalobos stated that if there is no parking for the disabled within the Seville Apartment complex, the County should consider installation of a blue curb on Santa Gertrudes Avenue.

Commissioner Price stated that it sounds like Supervisorial District 4 as well as the community would like to have the lane reduction on Santa Gertrudes Avenue.

Commissioner Rosario stated that he believes a traffic signal at the fire station would be better for the residents of the apartments as well as the Fire Department. Commissioner Rosario stated he believed that it is too far to expect residents who don't find parking in front of the Seville Apartments to have to cross at Lemon Drive/Ocean Avenue or at Leffingwell Road. Commissioner Rosario stated he would like a device that would serve the dual purpose of getting pedestrians across the roadway as well as accommodating the fire engines exiting the fire station.

After hearing the testimony of both staff and the appellants, the HSC made the following motion:

Motion 1:

- Deny the request to install a midblock crosswalk, flashing beacons, and pedestrian traffic signal at Santa Gertrudes Avenue near the Seville Apartments.
- Forward the speed data to the Santa Fe Springs office of the California Highway Patrol for increased speed enforcement, at their discretion, and deployment of radar speed trailers.

Motion 2:

- Recommend Public Works' staff reevaluate traffic lane reduction on Santa Gertrudes Avenue, between Leffingwell Road and Lemon Drive/Ocean Avenue. This reevaluation should include considering the needs of Los Angeles County Fire Department Station Number 15 and possibly extending the lane reduction north and south of the proposed location limits. Public Works' Staff to report findings at future meeting.

The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Report on Business other than Appeals

Crossing Guard Update

Ms. Irena Guilmette reported that during the 5-month period since our February 6, 2019, Highway Safety Commission meeting, Public Works completed a total of 3 studies for crossing guard service. Crossing Guard Service was recommended at two locations and denied at the other. There are 8 pending crossing guard studies.

The total number of locations with crossing guard service is 229. Please note that the total number of crossing guards employed by the Los Angeles County Office of Education for these 229 locations is 237, which is due to some locations being served by more than one crossing guard.

7. Public Comments on Any Matter Not on the Agenda

None.

8. Special Orders

There were no special orders.

9. Unfinished Business and General Notes

There was no unfinished business or general notes.

10. New Business

Commissioner Villalobos stated he has observed many truck vendor issues on Whittier Boulevard near Goodrich Boulevard. He also stated that the homeless living in recreational vehicles (RV) disrupt parking and traffic along Whittier Boulevard. Ms. Thompson stated Public Works has been involved with RV parking issues and that the Board of Supervisors is very compassionate about our homeless population. Ms. Thompson stated there is a process to approaching the homeless and the Los Angeles Homeless Authority makes an effort to both talk and offer services to the homeless population.

11. Next Meeting Date to be determined

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for September 4, 2019.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

IG:

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Attach.