

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 4, 2019**

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

1. Call to order

At 9:06 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Recited.

3. Roll Call

Present: Chair Guillermo Villalobos
Vice-Chair Vincent Rosario
Commissioner Marvin Estey
Commissioner Thurston T. Reese
Commissioner Rhett Price

Absent, but excused: Commissioner Robert A. Ringler

Also, in attendance were the following:

Board of Supervisors: Ivan Sulic, Deputy Supervisor District 4 (SD4)

County Counsel: Laura Jacobsen

City of La Mirada: Mark Stowell, City of La Mirada Public Works Director

Staff: Emiko Thompson, Assistant Deputy Director
Bahman Hajialiakbar, Principal Engineer
James Chon, Senior Civil Engineer
Lee Miller, Civil Engineer
Jay Varma, Associate Civil Engineer
Tasha Malalang, Civil Engineering Assistant

Appellants: Marielena Sosa
Jackie Teepen
Jared Teepen
Eric Lindsey

4. Approval of September 4, 2019, Meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the September 4, 2019, Highway Safety Commission (HSC) meeting were approved.

5. Citizen Appeal of Denied Request by Public Works

There were no new citizen appeals.

6. Report on Business other than Appeals

Crossing Guard Update

Mr. James Chon reported that during the 3-month period since our September 4, 2019, Highway Safety Commission meeting, Public Works completed a total of 4 studies for crossing guard service. Crossing Guard Service was recommended at 2 locations: Woodbury Road at Casitas Avenue (Pasadena Unified School District) and Kwiss Avenue at Kennard Street (Hacienda LA Puente Unified School District). There are 8 pending crossing guard studies.

The total number of locations with crossing guard service is 235. Please note that the total number of crossing guards for these 228 locations is 235, which is due to some locations being served by more than one crossing guard.

7. Public Comment on Any Matter Not on the Agenda

None.

8. Special Orders

None.

9. Continuation of business from prior agenda

Staff Presentation:

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

Mr. Lee Miller informed the HSC that the following motion was made at the September 4, 2019, HSC meeting:

- It is recommended Public Works proceed with the lane reduction plan on Santa Gertrudes Avenue between Leffingwell Road and Lemon Drive/Ocean Avenue.

- It is recommended Public Works conduct a community outreach meeting to gather community input regarding a lane reduction on Santa Gertrudes Avenue between Leffingwell Road and Lemon Drive/Ocean Avenue.

Mr. Miller informed the HSC that the community outreach meeting was held on October 16, 2019, at Liberty Community Plaza. He stated there was approximately 90 attendees and that there were representatives from the City of La Mirada, City of Whittier, the California Highway Patrol (CHP), the Los Angeles County Fire Department and Supervisor Hahn's office. Mr. Miller stated that the vast majority of community members did not support the lane reduction with only a few community members supporting the lane reduction. Mr. Miller informed the HSC the primary concerns of those opposed to lane reduction were:

- Traffic congestion along Santa Gertrudes Avenue and residential streets nearby
- Northbound traffic from Imperial Highway and Southbound traffic from Leffingwell Road will be congested
- Jaywalking will increase if parking is allowed along the east side
- More parking will create more vandalism/littering on street
- Rear end collisions will increase when cars are trying to park or access apartment driveways
- Creates congestion just for 40 additional parking spaces
- Creating parking, but not installing flashing beacons at fire station
- Waste hauler blocks traffic when servicing dumpsters on the roadway

Mr. Miller stated that other comments of those opposed to lane reduction were:

- Need for Street Lighting
- Lack of speed limit signs
- Speeding on Santa Gertrudes Avenue and nearby streets
- Street racing at night on Santa Gertrudes Avenue
- Need speed enforcement
- Need Safety for fire trucks
- Apartment owners should be providing free parking
- Consider removing parking completely on Santa Gertrudes Avenue

Mr. Miller stated the primary concerns of those in favor of the lane reduction were:

- Safety for apartment residents as parking will be provided to minimize crossing the street.
- Speeding on Santa Gertrudes Avenue

- Drag Racing on Santa Gertrudes Avenue

Mr. Miller stated that as a result of the Community Outreach Meeting, Public Works is making the following recommendations to the Highway Safety Commission:

- Retract recommendation for lane reduction on Santa Gertrudes Avenue.
- Approve PW's recommendations to:
 - Install embedded LED Fire Station sign
 - Install EMERGENCY ACCESS KEEP CLEAR sign at fire station driveway
 - Install Radar Enforced plaques
 - Install additional speed limit signs with 40 pavement markings adjacent to speed limit signs
 - Proceed with community meeting for the installation of Street Lighting
 - Reschedule dumpster pick-up times to not coincide with school drop off and pick up times

Commission Discussion:

Commissioner Marvin Estey suggested that Public Works coordinate with the CHP for additional enforcement. Commissioner Rhett Price asked whether the road is enforceable. Mr. Miller stated that there is a valid Engineering and Traffic Survey for Santa Gertrudes Avenue and that it is enforceable.

Vice-Chair Vincent Rosario inquired whether the flashing beacon for the fire station will be actuated or steady because he thinks it should be actuated. He also questioned whether a fully actuated traffic signal should be installed. Mr. Chon explained that recommendations were based on the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. He stated that since it's an operational enhancement, the funding of the traffic control device should come from the fire department. Public Works would be funding if it was a safety need (based on warrants).

Commissioner Thurston Reese asked for an explanation of the street lighting process. Mr. Chon explained the process.

Ms. Jackie Teepen stated that she lives on La Cima Drive, which is near the proposed project. She thanked Public Works for changing the recommendation to not proceed with the lane reduction project. She also stated that at the community outreach meeting, there was mention of a permanent radar sign (driver feedback sign) being installed on Santa Gertrudes Avenue to address speeding concerns. Ms. Teepen stated she believes there needs to be some sort of control at the fire

station. She informed the HSC that the project was not supported by the vast majority of those who attended the community outreach meeting. She stated that there were letters of opposition to the project from the cities and an email from Jocelyn Oliveras from SD4 expressing the interest to not proceed with the project. Ms. Teepen stated that many who attended the October community outreach meeting couldn't be at today's Highway Safety Commission meeting, so she provided a list of their written comments obtained at the October meeting.

Mr. Eric Lindsey stated he lives on Scott Avenue and that he fully supports Public Works' recommendation not to continue with the project. Mr. Lindsey stated he was also in support of all Public Works' recommendations for enhancements. He stated he still has concerns about residents from the apartments on Santa Gertrudes Avenue parking in their neighborhood and suggested permit parking. Chair Villalobos explained about parking requirements for new developments. He recommended Mr. Lindsey contact the Department of Regional Planning for parking concerns and zoning enforcement issues.

Mr. Mark Stowell, Public Works Director for the City of La Mirada, stated that a letter was submitted to Public Works' regarding the City's position on the project and that the city was opposed to the lane reduction on Santa Gertrudes Avenue.

Mr. Ivan Sulic, Deputy from Supervisorial District 4, stated that Supervisor Janice Hahn supports Public Works' recommendation to not proceed with the lane reduction on Santa Gertrudes Avenue.

Ms. Marielena Sosa stated that she appreciated the process but is concerned that the proposed recommendations for motorists were not focused on pedestrians. Ms. Sosa was hoping that a pedestrian actuated signal would be installed but thanked everyone for the efforts that have been put in through this process.

Ms. Teepen provided a rebuttal of Ms. Sosa's remark regarding pedestrians being overlooked. She stated the whole issue was brought to their attention due to jaywalking and that pedestrians need to cross at safe locations such as traffic signals. She stated that the responsibility of pedestrians is important as well.

Chair Villalobos read the Cities' letters and referenced the project creating a "detrimental" impact to motorists.

After hearing the staff report and testimony from the public, the HSC made the following motion:

- It is recommended the HSC rescinds their recommendation to implement a lane reduction on Santa Gertrudes Avenue between Leffingwell Road and Lemon Drive/Ocean Avenue.
- It is recommended Public Works proceed with the following along Santa Gertrudes Avenue between Lemon Leffingwell Road and Lemon Drive/Ocean Avenue:
 - Install embedded Light Emitted Diode (LED) Fire Station sign
 - Install “EMERGENCY ACCESS KEEP CLEAR” sign at fire station driveway
 - Install “RADAR ENFORCED” plaques
 - Install additional speed limit signs with “40” pavement markings adjacent to speed limit signs
 - Proceed with the procedures involved in installing additional street lighting along Santa Gertrudes Avenue.
 - Reschedule dumpster pick-up times to not coincide with school drop off and pick up times

The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

10. New Business

Chair Villalobos asked what he needed to do to get his Public Works identification (ID) card replaced. Mr. Chon stated that all the commissioners could check-in with the Human Resources front office to have their Public Works’ ID cards replaced.

Chair Villalobos stated that as a follow-up to the last meeting’s minutes, he attended a 2nd meeting with representatives from Supervisor District 1’s office. He stated that Waqas Rehman, Joseph Martinez and Martin Reyes were present at this meeting. Chair Villalobos asked how the HSC could interact with the community regarding sidewalks and homeless encampments. He stated that SD1 was to work on this and wondered if Pubic Works was actively involved in these issues.

Commissioner Price explained there is a legal process involved in removing the homeless. Chair Villalobos stated there needs to be housing for the homeless. Commissioner Estey stated there needs to be adequate bed space/shelter before agencies can take action. Chair Villalobos stated there are county owned lands with airport hangers that can be used as homeless shelters and wondered if the County can utilize county owned land. Commissioner Reese stated that the Governor has appointed Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas to be on a task force for this issue.

Chair Villalobos stated there is also an issue with taco vendors conducting sidewalk vending and that there needs to be permits and enforcement. Ms. Emiko Thompson stated that vendors just pay the citations and continue to do business. She stated that these are legal issues and guidance is needed.

Chair Villalobos stated that both the Whittier Boulevard and East Los Angeles Merchant's Associations have concerns about cruising and safety concerns from motorists doing exhibition type driving. Ms. Thompson stated that there are associated concerns of trash and illegal activities, and that Public Works, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, and the CHP are working to curtail these issues early on.

11. Next Meeting

Date to be determined.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

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