

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2006
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1315 VALLEY DRIVE
7:00 P.M.**

draft

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:11 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Present: Public Works Commissioners Beste, Brittain, DiVirgilio, Marinelli, Winnek

Also Present: Richard Morgan, Director of Public Works/City Engineer
Greg Savelli, Chief of Police
Michael Flaherty, Public Works Superintendent
Rhea Punneo, Administrative Assistant, Public Works Department
Stephen Hilton, Contract Traffic Engineer

2. Flag Salute

Chairman Winnek led the flag salute.

3. Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting of August 16, 2006 were approved as written.

4. Public Comment

Howard Longacre, Hermosa Beach

Said the streets are falling apart that there's a gigantic Utility Undergrounding District proposed for an area off Aviation Boulevard – the largest planned to date – has been in the process for three to four years and no cost yet determined; said needed street repairs aren't being done in anticipation of the undergrounding and streets are getting spongy; El Nino condition expected this winter and water won't drain; suggested temporary asphalt patches; asked that 16th and Gentry, and 8th Street be checked; also said that streetlights on PCH south from Aviation approximately 19 lights aren't functioning.

Kathleen Midstokke, Hermosa Beach

Said lack of nuisance abatement on plaza at former Sharkeez site is inexcusable that hasn't been cleaned up, asbestos removed, investigation completed; City has the authority under health and safety codes; is dangerous – rainy season coming.

Patty Egerer, Hermosa Beach

Wanted to bring to attention of commission there is no credible traffic survey on 16th Street; has requested back up documentation for report presented at last meeting and not received yet; gave commissioners copy of letter submitted May 18th.

5. Correspondence

None

6. Items for Commission Consideration

At this time Chairman Winnek admonished the audience against boos and jeering during the presentation.

a. Pier Avenue Improvement Project Trial Striping

Mr. Morgan presented the item; said appreciates everyone's patience over the summer for the test then presented a brief overview why at commission; reviewed original plans for design from 1994; explained Proposition C funding and reserving of funds for Pier Avenue improvements; noted that time lapse camera was put on fire tower to record traffic [results on screen during presentation] staff presented as information the item at the previous evening's Planning Commission meeting; Planning Commission sub-committee members Hoffman and Pizer were in attendance this evening and that Commissioners Brittain and Marinelli were on the Public Works Commission sub-committee; said no action item other than taking to Council recommendation to establish Pier Avenue Enhancement Committee – ad hoc committee with specific task; goal has always been to link upper Pier Avenue with Plaza; said whether two or four lanes, will want to add amenities to Pier Avenue; showed photos of similar cities with two lanes leading to pier and showed rendering of new look for Pier Avenue. Mr. Morgan noted that he's always been concerned about safety of diagonal parking which would be aided by slowing of traffic; said traffic counts taken the previous day were the highest count ever recorded demonstrating that the reduction of lanes did not divert drivers; said construction on Manhattan Avenue is causing higher counts on Hermosa Avenue.

Mr. Steven Hilton of AAE presented the video time lapse photography and will burn copies for the Public Works Department. He reviewed the video twice looking for backups and their duration; found three eastbound on Pier Avenue all due to fire truck leaving or returning and lasted very short periods of time; observation was that traffic slowed due to pedestrians or the fire truck leaving or returning.

Highlights of the presentation also included:

- Councilmember traveled Pier Ave. from Hermosa Ave. to PCH and worst delay was two minutes
- Congestion at Valley/Ardmore intersection not included
- Backup issues improved after moving traffic merge to location after STOP on Bard St.
- Camera was positioned to see if congestion was at the merge point
- Safety is the highest priority – safer for pedestrians to cross two lanes than four lanes
- Number of accidents on Pier Ave. appear to be lower
- Count on 8th Street lower than when last counted
- Construction on Manhattan Ave. may be causing diversion of traffic to other streets
- Staff doesn't see major diversion to other streets from Pier Ave. due to high counts
- Taping and counts done at same time

Discussion and questions among commissioners included:

- Five-year extension possible with MTA Prop C funding, currently about two years into City's five-year extension – could ask for additional extension if necessary
- This is called a legacy project – won't change main street more than once in a lifetime – worth taking time to do right-of-way
- Ad Hoc committee to provide additional input from viewpoints
- General curve of traffic counts indicate increase
- Interesting to note that reduction of lanes from two to four has not reduced the traffic on Pier Ave.
- Counts for one day may not indicate complete picture – not clear foundation for changes
- Do not have capability to time lapse photography to establish counts for over a year
- Understood resident suspicion of data – said counts not conclusive but may be making decision partially based on inconclusive data
- Reasons for project include:
 - Pier Ave. has been in poor condition for a long time
 - Biggest issue is drainage – standing water in gutters
 - Flooding problems
 - Is a gateway street for the City
- Counts are good – done by a tube that counts – no hidden agenda
- Staff concerned about diagonal parking and safe speeds
- Community will decide
- Original plan led to Pier Plaza improvements
- Council will make final decision on whether or not ad hoc committee is established

- Until final decision from Council on direction of project, will not go forward with design which includes street repairs
- Comments from commissioners will be brought to Council
- Sole purpose of this item is fact finding regarding the Pier Ave. re-stripping trial
- Feedback from Police and Fire Departments noted delay concerns when trucks parking in median
- Emergency evacuation planning part of reformulating of 1992 plan
- Stop at Bard primarily benefits mobile home park access as well as police and fire

At this time Mr. Winnek opened the floor to public comment; admonished gallery will be keeping comments to three minutes and requested no outbursts from the audience.

Gary Brutsch, Hermosa Beach

Said plan is a failure and should end as soon as possible; data in original report is now twelve years old, biased in favor of businesses; lives on 8th St. and now uses 8th instead of Pier Ave.; said should talk to people who are impacted; feels commission should advise Council test has failed.

Caroline Petty, Hermosa Beach

Said numbers, snapshots in time, won't tell anything; said thank you - appreciates Mr. Morgan's being really communicative; said really need to focus on traffic increases since plan originally done; noted traffic is sure to increase due to two new projects on Pier Ave.; told commission needs to look to future traffic issues; if no other gateway street, there will probably be greater traffic issues in future; said believes the counts, has felt them; intention to reduce cars on Pier Ave. is disturbing to her as she has to use it – lives south of Pier Ave.

Pat Price, Hermosa Beach

Eighth Street resident; quoted from Easy Reader article, saying police said lane reductions slowed response time in western part of town during peak traffic hours; wouldn't be there if no problem; increase in traffic has to stop; she is for four lanes.

Eric Bails, Hermosa Beach

Said that at January 18th meeting asked what problems the Pier Avenue Improvement Project was going to solve; appears scope of project is greater than drainage issues; last comment, fix drainage and enforce traffic laws.

At this time Chairman Winnek asked speakers to stay on point, topic this evening is re-stripping.

Steven Pinard, Hermosa Beach

Said can't speak to Pier Ave. re-stripping but can speak of own experiences on 8th between Ardmore and PCH; people forced to walk in street due to planting and cars parked across sidewalk – increase in 8th Street traffic linked to Pier Ave. changes.

Joan Arias, Hermosa Beach

Lives on 8th St.; has seen distinct increase in traffic since re-stripping; said cars make her house tremble during morning and evening rush hours; said can't look at Pier Ave. traffic without looking at 8th Street; has seen traffic increase on 8th.

Janice Yates, Hermosa Beach

President of Marineland Homeowners Association; surveyed residents results indicated complete support for STOP sign at Bard St.; majority in favor re-stripping – has slowed people.

Gary Kazanjian, Hermosa Beach

Business owner on Pier Ave. as well as resident; commended Mr. Morgan for being great communicator; in favor of four lanes but if had to choose, would choose the first two-lane configuration; cars are going around trucks making deliveries and cars stopped, waiting for someone to pull out of a parking space; is different than Manhattan Beach, there the businesses have alleys for deliveries; traffic and back up worse now that school is in session; likes STOP at Bard;

Valerie Pickard, Hermosa Beach

Lives on 8th St., re-striping has definitely changed life; hard to back out due to line of cars; concerned for daughter's safety; strongly opposes striping.

Katherine Pinard, Hermosa Beach

Lives on 8th St.; said 8th St. has taken a major hit; hasn't seen anything good about the re-striping; suggested that if go back to four lanes, consider lights in pavement for pedestrian safety on Pier Avenue.

Ann Sullivan, Hermosa Beach

Definitely against this plan; plan as stands is for business owners to expand on sidewalk to make more money; many trust issues; apologized to 8th St. residents – uses 8th St.

Robert Hoffman, Hermosa Beach

Said lives three doors from Pier Ave. and re-striping has made it difficult for him to get to and from PCH; he and all his neighbors hate striping.

Nancy Mazza, Hermosa Beach

Said is an 18-year resident; concerned about safety being jeopardized every day striping in place; said in Easy Reader article police acknowledged slower response time; doesn't see how people could speed before; agrees has created hazard on 8th Street; urged give all communication with item to City Council.

Shirley Mayer, Hermosa Beach

Resident of 8th St.; said is a nurse; noted there's great impact to health and safety at stake; pollution increased due to the dust in the air; can't speak neighbor-to-neighbor due to the noise; can't allow kids or pets to go outside; need to make 8th Street not a main street to beach; resents looking at stuff from '92; home has been vandalized three times since striping; said commission has to pay attention to residents.

Carla Merriman, Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau

Representing the Chamber et al, said city's business community is very interested in beautification of Upper Pier Ave., R/UDAT objectives could be realized by this project complete with new infrastructure, i.e., new streetlights, sewer system, improved sidewalks and street re-paving; believe additional landscaping would enhance the downtown business district for all; business owners haven't complained; applaud effort to slow speeders; care about safety of pedestrians; hope project comes to fruition.

Sandy Pfister, Hermosa Beach

Said doesn't live near Pier Ave., would like commission to consider when making recommendation to Council that R/UDAT recommendations are not in stone – were for time when written to be implemented soon; updated study needed; why asking for reduction in traffic; only businesses that can use sidewalk will benefit; said two-lane configuration not working, please recommend it go back to four lanes.

Lisa Moore, Hermosa Beach

Said there are lots of positive aspects – safer for walking, bike riding, driving; lives on Monterey and has been afraid to cross Pier Ave. – now finds it more pleasant; need to work out bugs; thinks density issue has brought change; hasn't noticed big increase since June on Monterey; agrees first striping was horrible; apologized for using 8th St. but has been using for eighteen years; working with school district on a walk campaign, get people out of cars to walk, ride bikes.

Patty Egerer, Hermosa Beach

Said R/UDAT never dealt with feasibility issues; residents not being considered; imperative to understand if sidewalks expanded, commercial impact on traffic to residents in area; increase in business bringing noise, traffic flow, congestion, parking issues; is against re-striping; feels City should look at downsizing businesses on Pier Ave.

Gary Mallette, Hermosa Beach

Is against the project; speeding is not a concern; sidewalks are walkable; 1992 study has no relevance to today; there's more pollution due to more idling vehicles; can't prepare well enough for an emergency.

Howard Longacre, Hermosa Beach

Said it's been established no problem on Pier Ave., have one on 8th St.; no report from public safety officials indicates opinion wasn't favorable so isn't in report; said Mr. Morgan's been amazing taking brunt of comments; participated in R/UDAT; should preserve the four lanes; noted that at last Council said would be initiating comprehensive review of upper Pier Avenue that should be linked to any street improvements; said supports ending the test.

Roger Bacon, Hermosa Business Owner

Has been in business in Hermosa Beach for 57 years; doesn't like Pier Ave., Von's doesn't like it; new regional shopping center going in at new center at Sepulveda and Rosecrans will be major competition for this area; said majority of people want four lanes; said change is a liability.

At 9:00 pm, Chairman Winnek called a recess; meeting restarted at 9:17.

Steven Domingue, Hermosa Business Owner

Has been in business here for 15 years; striping done 7:00 pm to 6:00 am and no one could park at 7:00 am; believes rent will go sky high if change goes through – will put him out of business; is against the change.

Steve Heuer, Hermosa Beach

Said merge is at a crosswalk – need more care for pedestrians; many cars backed up at STOP signs, specifically at Monterey; diagonal parkers having difficulty getting out of spaces near STOP signs; sketchier to ride bikes in that area now; thinks putting lights in street brilliant idea; sees STOP at Bard as a good thing; if speeders on Pier, why not more enforcement out there; population growing by leaps and bounds – absurd to reduce from four lanes to two; evacuation route important.

Linda Campbell, Hermosa Beach

Said she loves the re-striping; safer for pedestrians; longer wait times small price to pay for safety.

Kathleen Midstokke, Hermosa Beach

Thanked the commission for listening to a lot of speakers; was involved in R/UDAT study and doesn't remember any emphasis on upper Pier Ave., was on lower Pier Ave. at the time; outer lane was used to hunt for parking, other lane to speed through; already outside dining on Pier Ave.; believes sidewalks are for pedestrians, baby strollers and wheelchairs, not for outdoor dining or display of merchandise.

Frank Hallstein, Hermosa Beach

Said he likes the STOP at Bard, doesn't care for rest of change; thinks is like putting carriage before the horse; need parking before making this a destination, shouldn't send to City Council, should dump right here.

At this time the item was brought back to the commission for discussion. Highlights of the discussion included:

- Ad Hoc committee will be comprised of two members of both Planning and Public Works Commissions, two Council members, two local representatives or architects.
- Public Works Commission looks at infrastructure issues, not planning or financial issues
- How commission feels about having the ad hoc committee will be brought to Council
- This evenings meeting is a way to collect information; it is not a political situation
- Maybe re-striping isn't best from an emergency or evacuation perspective
- Chief Savelli advised no official department statement has been made regarding Pier Avenue; statement in Easy Reader was the officer's personal observation only; many of his personnel have said are in support of STOP at Bard.
- Memo had been received from Fire noting problem with trucks in median; staff will ask for a more thorough
- Would be good if Council moves forward quickly – drainage and safety issues are important
- Impact of striping could not have been imagined – good idea to do test
- Distinct opinions and important issues voiced this evening
- Commissioners in general glad test was done
- R/UDAT report dated
- Streets impacted by traffic not traveling Pier Ave. must be included in a more comprehensive plan if go forward with two lanes
- Pedestrian safety another issue that should be addressed – not done in current
- Signals at Monterey, Valley/Bard could be added to move vehicles safely
- Sometimes changes are necessary to improve safety
- Doing the study better than reading a report
- Funding will be available when ready to begin construction on project
- Action to be taken was to receive public comment, pass to Council

MOTION by Commissioner Winnek to receive and record public comment and pass on to the City Council or via ad hoc committee to be formed. Seconded by Commissioner Beste.

AYES: Beste, Brittain, DiVirgilio, Marinelli, Winnek
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

Additional discussion included:

- Second item in recommendation is to provide Commission opinion on striping and ad hoc committee
- May want to make into one motion that includes:
 - Return to four lanes
 - Retaining STOP at Bard
 - Focus effort on increasing safety in crosswalks
- Form ad hoc committee for importance, significance of project

MOTION by Commissioner DiVirgilio that Commission recommend to Public Works Staff and City Council end the test with exception of keeping STOP at Bard. After discussion, seconded by Commissioner Beste.

At this time a gentleman came forward attempting to speak to this item but was told he was out of order.

AYES: Beste, Brittain, DiVirgilio, Marinelli, Winnek
NAYS: None

ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

MOTION by Commissioner Brittain to for an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of Planning Sub-committee, Council Sub-committee, local architects, to meet regarding revitalization of Upper Pier Avenue, to provide oversight for design of project and do this as quickly as possible.

After some discussion, motion was reworded as:

MOTION by Commissioner Brittain to support staff recommendation to establish an Ad Hoc Committee. Seconded by Commissioner Beste.

At this time the same gentleman, who identified himself as Dean Francois, attempted to speak to this motion and was again told he was out of order – was told could speak later at Item 11, Public Comment.

AYES: Beste, Brittain, Marinelli, Winnek
NAYS: DiVirgilio
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

Additional discussion included:

- Want to move traffic in a safe manner
- Should identify traffic safety in a separate motion to Council
- Additional requirements could hold project up for years
- Should formerly acknowledge many safety issues that need to be addressed
- Don't have to push forward, could make statement to Council that want to further investigate, do broader discussion that supersedes downtown enhancement
- Public safety is larger than this project
- Safest design possible – can be added as item on future commission agenda
- Every safety improvement possible will be included in project
- Is realistic to put the infrastructure in place when do improvements for possible future signals – allowing for future options so don't have to tear up what's in place – could look at that
- Citywide circulation study that looks at entire situations to significantly change anything – big challenge to made significant changes – all will impact side streets
- Have options to do more later

MOTION by Commissioner Winnek that members of Pier Avenue Subcommittee represent the Public Works Commission at the Ad Hoc Committee. Seconded by Commissioner Beste.

AYES: Beste, Brittain, DiVirgilio, Marinelli, Winnek
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

At this time Mr. Francois again attempted to address the commission and was again told this was per time to address the commission.

7. Commissioners' Reports

None at this time.

8. Public Works Department Reports

- a. Monthly Activity Report – July
- b. Project Status Report – July

The above items are submitted for information purposes only.

9. Items Requested by Commissioners

None

10. Other Matters

Commissioner DiVirgilio congratulated Kiwanis, MOMs, all involved in "Show of Hands" for recent event – donations were for Centennial events.

Commissioner Brittain thanked and commended Public Works team for their involvement in the event.

11. Public Comment

Kathleen Midstokke, Hermosa Beach

Has worked with the Brown Act since 1984 – believes Mr. François misstated the intent of the act giving the public the right to speak to every item on the agenda and commission generously gave the public almost two hours to do so; motions were relevant to the item and commended the chairman for holding to his position.

Patty Egerer, Hermosa Beach

Would like to have residents involved in process on these committees; have way of communicating to them when meetings are so they may attend.

Mr. Morgan advised it is all part of the Brown Act as part of public notification.

12. Adjournment

Commissioner Winnek adjourned the meeting at 10:18 pm to the meeting of Wednesday, October 18, 2006.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and complete record of the action taken by the Public Works Commission of Hermosa Beach at the regularly scheduled meeting of September 20, 2006.

Victor Winnek, Chairman

Richard D. Morgan, P.E., Secretary

Date