

December 12, 2006

Honorable Chairman and Members of the
Public Works Commission

Regular Meeting of
January 17, 2007

DISCUSSION OF WORKSHOP FOR 16TH STREET RESIDENTS

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Public Works Commission:

1. Direct staff as to the format desired for a workshop to be held with the 16th Street residents to develop mitigation measures for traffic impacts due to the new traffic signal; and
2. Set a date for the workshop.

Summary:

Staff has completed the final round of traffic surveys for 16th Street both east and west of PCH (See Attachment 1). Total daily counts taken on November 27, 2006 were up 48% east of PCH and up 75% west of PCH above counts taken on February 7, 2006. The February counts are considered the background counts which were taken prior to the installation of the traffic signal and the Pavilion (primarily 24-Hour Fitness) was in operation.

The Public Works Commission, at its regularly scheduled meeting held on August 16, 2006, directed staff to do a new traffic study and to then hold a workshop with the residents in order to develop mitigation measures (See Attachment 2).

In response to concerns expressed by the Commission and Council regarding previous traffic studies, staff hired a different traffic counting firm to complete the November traffic counts and is now considering a new traffic engineering consultant to assist staff in developing mitigation measures. Staff recommends holding the workshop at the regularly scheduled meeting in February, 2007 to give the new consultant time to review the traffic data and to develop mitigation alternatives.

Attachments:

1. Traffic Counts
2. 8/16/06 Commission Minutes

Respectfully submitted,



Richard D. Morgan, P.E.
Director of Public Works/City Engineer

6a

6. Items for Commission Consideration

a. Traffic Signal at 16th Street and Pacific Coast Highway

Mr. Morgan presented the item, noting that the signal was installed last May; noted that staff believes it to be wonderful safety improvement, certainly for the PCH corridor; spoke with Sgt. Thompson who concurs, saying has done a lot for speeding on PCH between 21st St. and Pier Ave.; now relatively safe turning movements; as directed by Council, now back with status report. He then turned floor over to Ray Abassi, Contract Traffic Engineer for his report.

Mr. Abassi told of taking traffic counts both before and after signal was installed – extensive counts to follow potential impact of signal on neighborhood streets; stated that there was no significant cut-through traffic from an engineering stand point – that the area is at a Level of Service A; concluded that there was no significant level of residential intrusion and no further analysis was warranted.

Mr. Morgan noted that a City stealth survey (done on 16th east of PCH) indicated the average rate of speed was 17.5 MPH, 85th percentile was 22 MPH and detected a single vehicle traveling at 50 MPH, most likely late at night; staff has observed 16th on many occasions and has not seen any speeding. Mr. Morgan advised that staff does not support making changes to turning movements; signal seen as safety improvement, changes to turning movements would make the intersection not as safe.

The commissioners had no questions for staff at this time; Chairman Winnek then called for public comments. At a request from members of the audience, additional copies of the agenda item were made and distributed.

Melinda Brown, Hermosa Beach

Said she was here three months ago; said now dealing with velocity and volume; has seen an increase in speed and cars going up and down 16th since the installation of the signal; wants to mitigate the problem before gets worse; being middle of block she feels she feels the increases the most; there are no speed limit signs; there are no police patrols; said street not designed to be major thoroughfare; noted 21st St. is twice as wide as 16th St.; recommends 16th be made one-way, westbound – maybe Ardmore to PCH as well; consider speed bumps or sidewalk on north side of street – back end of property; also turning limitations.

Meryl Lande, Hermosa Beach

Appreciates the study but finds it hard to believe anyone could find there's been no increase in volume and velocity; said people are parking there at all hours of the day and night; finds beer cans outside garage; said it is an unacceptable situation; said signal was for crossing kids; doesn't think making 16th one way would help, would only impact other streets.

David Adler, Hermosa Beach

This issue has brought the neighbors together; wants to say concerned about more than just 16th St.; feels street no longer safe, especially when school starts in September; said it's a fact there is more traffic, there will be even more traffic when school starts and even more traffic once Pavilion leases out rest of spaces; said study faulty after school was let out; doesn't know how commission can make decision based on that; how do values of LA

County apply to Hermosa Beach; people can't pull out of their driveways; urged commission not to base decision on study because it is faulty; parking on 16th has improved since free parking offered at gym.

Mr. Morgan clarified a point – Council does understand that this is a school route and there is a capital project to put in sidewalks on 16th St. this year.

Lee Grant, Hermosa Beach

Mr. Grant read his statement for the commission – noting that he feels the study is incomplete and inaccurate, that it was done when school was out, when traffic is erratic; feels study doesn't make sense; said he knows when a car is speeding; traffic will be much worse when school starts; "I know this traffic study is wrong." Said study is biased, defies common sense.

Eric Reilly, Hermosa Beach

Here to speak on behalf of his children; lives at apex at of hill where cars and trucks are literally going 45 MPH; said trucks are flying up street; said feels statistics not accurate; asked that please, for the kids on the street, do something.

Sam Abrams, Hermosa Beach

Said logic says the report can't be true; said signal was put in so traffic goes directly to Prospect; can't believe report unless there was a summer lull; if a parking issue, put in a parking district; at Planning commission, approved 8,000 s.f. restaurant and there'll be lots of cars coming in. Said barrier on 14th was put in before he moved there, signage helped keep folks from speeding down 14th to barrier and no outlet to PCH.

Richard Thompson, Hermosa Beach

Said can barely get out of his garage in the morning; said cars are moving a lot faster than 25 MPH; has physically gotten out in front of cars and slowed them down; there are no speed limit signs; cars are parking on corners, safety vehicles couldn't get by.

Ron Miller, Hermosa Beach

Wanted an understanding of counts in report; asked about disparity between eastbound and westbound traffic on 16th St. plus northbound and southbound on PCH.

Steve Scandura, Hermosa Beach

Said he loved living in Hermosa – doesn't want to turn it into MB, with race tracks on every street; sympathizes with residents on 16th St.; sympathizes with people on 16th – suggested signs that say "No Through Traffic" or a speed bump; people in hurry using 16th and therefore going faster; making 16th one way would cause big problem on 17th and big problem on Raymond; maybe better to address problem with speed limit signs, speed bump and some enforcement.

Linda Miller, Hermosa Beach

Said she lives in condo complex; said 16th St. [Ardmore to PCH] is one block street carrying a tremendous amount of traffic; at least 200 cars in that one building (Commodore); compared with on block street at McDonald's – noting turning restrictions

and suggested similar signage at pavilion; added wants speed bumps on both sides to parking garage; said it's a miracle no one killed already considering the amount of traffic on that one block.

Dr. Stacy Keller, WCA Animal Hospital, Hermosa Beach

Said she sympathizes with residents; noted there are two entrances to the hospital – one on PCH, one on 16th and if 16th is made one way westbound, clients would not be able to access the hospital parking area; believes speed and volume can both be addressed by speed bumps, rather than making 16th one way.

Patty Egerer, Hermosa Beach

Said she lives on 15th Place and property goes through to 16th St.; said she feels traffic as it goes up and down the hill; said the whole area is affected; said drivers go up 16th, to Mira to 15th Pl. to Ocean to Aviation – shortcut avoiding three signals created by signal at 16th and PCH; said that report not acknowledge significance of traffic flow change; said while has created some safety on PCH, is like their neighborhood is condemned; said would like to see back up information, wants another run of traffic counts; said numbers don't make sense; asked if anyone has evaluated materials used to build 16th St. – noting was built in 1927; said that there's been a dramatic change in the neighborhood that must be realized.

Lisa Brennan, Hermosa Beach

Said is frustrated, doesn't know what the solution is and is asking commission to help with the solution; said would like second chance with the traffic count; map is incorrect which so maybe the numbers are as well; said has lived there 11 years; said everyone knows that when a traffic light goes in, traffic goes up; said she knows is convenient but knows it ties to commercial areas; for first time could not get out of her garage the preceding Sunday; said traffic study should be done when school is in for a fair count; feels neighbors on Raymond are concerned; asked for way to mitigate traffic, especially commercial traffic in her neighborhood.

Greg Sampson, Hermosa Beach

Said he has two kids under three; said volume and speed are his main concerns; as everyone has said, speed and traffic have increased – it's through traffic between Prospect and PCH; said reports are faulty; said at last meeting commission approved looking at one way on 16th or other options; said two cars in each direction cannot pass at same time; CUP approved previous evening at Planning Commission means alcohol okay until midnight; asked if other solutions can be looked at.

Howard Longacre, Hermosa Beach

Reviewed his handout; said this signal is an attractive nuisance; suggested eliminating through traffic on 16th; said gate just above entrance to parking at animal hospital is what is needed; said no more traffic counts.

Point of Order: Mr. Longacre noted that other commissions and/or councils allow more time to speak.

Alan Tellman, Hermosa Beach

Said this isn't normal inclined street, is very steep and vehicles are "flying" when get to top of hill; said report wasn't realistic – no school traffic; now has to get out to street so wife can get onto street to leave in morning; said report is incorrect saying traffic isn't fast in neighborhood – sees many near misses; said average speed noted in report is impossible; noted street was built in 1927.

Gene Shook, Pavilion

Said parking district needed east and west of PCH, parking will only get worse over time; said slowing methods include speed bumps, posted speed limits, "No Trucks" signage; said creating inconvenience will cause people to go elsewhere; said speed bump should be placed west of loading dock if installed; said timely enforcement most important thing area needs.

Point of Order: Ms. Egerer noted that the chart in the report doesn't have reference where the roadway capacity values were obtained – source document. Also noted that roads are built differently now than they were in 1927 and gave picture from that period to the commission.

Alan Strusser, Hermosa Beach

Said he doesn't know the answer, does know the entire neighborhood is affected, does use Raymond to 16th to use the signal; said if he lived on 16th, he'd be selling; noted the two schools are accessed using 16th St.; noted Hermosa is changing – is more expensive and more family friendly.

Phil Luken, Hermosa Beach

Said he was here the previous evening where they said no studies were being done so applauds this commission for doing so; said there may be some inconsistencies in report; asked that commission continued to look at situation; asked that look at other forms of mitigation before making street one way.

Rosalyn Bender, Hermosa Beach

Pointed out that signal didn't go up until private business owner paid for it; forty years ago parents bought home she currently lives in east on 16th St. because didn't want traffic, noise, safety and parking issues that west side of PCH presents; still have all of those issues; looking at Current Traffic Counts, said counts aren't realistic and residents have spent entire summer and suggested resolutions have not been taken seriously.

Michael Nixon, Hermosa Beach

Said he's an 11-year resident; this is the first issue that's jarred him; said people tear up and down street at all times of day and night; asked about installing speed bumps; asked that do study when school is in session – would make more sense.

Discussion among the commissioners and questions to staff highlighted the following:

- Trips generated per day per households feeding the area, the numbers seem to make sense.

- It was noted that person with driver's license should know the allowable speed limit is 25 mph when signs aren't posted – and don't have to be per the California Vehicle Code.
- Clarified that speed humps on streets steeper than 8% and 16th St. clearly exceeds
- Clarified difference between speed *humps* and speed *bumps*
- Report with counts was taken after school was out for summer – different traffic patterns
- If created one-way streets, speed would most likely increase on the couplets as would the volume of vehicles and, would be best to do it area wide which would mean a change to the Circulation Element
- Couplets are normally within one block of each other
- Markings and signage needed as well as additional enforcement
- Methods using signal to discourage traffic include using delayed turning; current timing set up by Caltrans and they don't slow traffic, they want smooth flow
- 16th St. clearly a school route with additional traffic during school year
- Data doesn't show problems indicated by the neighborhood
- Council hasn't heard requests for changes because Council direction was to do report, receive public comment at Public Works Commission, then back to Council with comments – still in process
- Possibly should have workshop to determine all issues and components of problems and possible solutions to move forward on issues other than light – looking for solution for whole neighborhood
- Another study needed after school year begins

Point of order: Residents not asking for removal of light, asking for traffic and speed mitigation

- Addition of "fancy" new restaurant not seen to be traffic nuisance – visitors from other cities would most likely take the larger streets to leave the area rather than neighborhood streets
- Don't want to create problems for other neighborhoods
- Time, thought, additional study can hopefully come up with good solution
- Restricting eastbound through traffic to residents only is not a legal option
- Turning restrictions during peak hours can be done but can cause problems on other streets

MOTION by Commissioner DiVirgilio that commission support staff recommendation to leave signalized intersection as is with condition of exploring options for mitigation efforts east and west of Pacific Coast Highway with possibility of that including an all-party workshop and a new traffic study. Seconded by Commissioner Beste.

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

Further discussion included:

- Signage and pavement markings can/will be done for neighborhood.
- The Community Development Director usually takes the lead when creating parking districts.
- A combined effort is needed to develop solutions that work.

16TH STREET - SUMMARY OF TRAFFIC COUNTS WEEKDAY 24 HOUR TOTALS

LOCATION	02/07/06	06/23/06	09/26/06	11/21/06	11/27/06
W/O PROSPECT	N/A	149	879	1255	1238
E/O PCH	822	889	866	1192	1215
W/O PCH	3538	4284	5048	6165	N/A
E/O ARDMORE	N/A	N/A	N/A	3462	N/A