

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE TRAFFIC COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Traffic Commission convened in a regular meeting at 7:02 p.m. on Monday, October 5, 2015 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Habel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Bajaj, Furey, Habel, Sargent, Siani, Thomas, and Chairperson Rudolph.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Engineering Manager Semaan, Associate Engineer Sedadi, and Torrance Police Sergeant Koenig.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Thomas moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Sargent seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5a. MINUTES OF AUGUST 3, 2015

Commissioner Sargent inquired about the investigation regarding Julie Dojiri's concern under Orals about the sensor for pedestrians at Nadine Circle. Engineering Manager Semaan responded that the remote sensor was found to be malfunctioning and was replaced with an active push button device.

MOTION: Commissioner Sargent moved for the approval of the August 3, 2015 Commission meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion; roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1

Chairperson Rudolph explained the policies and procedures of the Traffic Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to City Council.

7. ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION

7a. CONSIDERATION TO REMOVE CROSSWALK– 182nd STREET AT BAILEY DRIVE

Engineering Manager Semaan provided background and analyses on the item and distributed supplemental correspondence received after agenda packets were prepared. He stated that notices were mailed to all addresses within 500 feet of the intersection as well as to the three schools in its proximity. He noted that the North/South crosswalk is uncontrolled and is at the west leg of the intersection crossing 182nd Street. He stated that 182nd Street is a four lane minor arterial street with a 35 MPH speed limit. He noted that staff made observations and an outside consultant collected data (Attachment F) at the crosswalk on September 29, 2015 and found very little concentration of pedestrian traffic there, only 5 to 7 per hour. He stated that the majority of pedestrians crossed the intersection in the East/West direction. He recommended that the Commission review the staff report, take public input, and concur with staff's recommendation to remove the existing crosswalk on 182nd Street at Bailey Drive. He noted that the recommendation is based on field observations, relocation of the Crossing Guard, pedestrian count data, and guidance elements provided in the California Vehicle Code and California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

In response to Commissioner Bajaj's inquiry, he explained that data was collected at the intersection during consideration of the Crossing Guard Program; however, counts were taken only for elementary school age children.

Iona Matson, 183rd Street, objected to the recommendation, noting that she and many seniors use it frequently, she feels safer being in a crosswalk, cars stop for pedestrians, and there are three schools close by.

Ron Terrazas, 184th Street, stated that it is dangerous to cross at the intersection and that most cars do not stop for pedestrians. He expressed concern that middle school students are not cautious and that cars on 182nd Street exceed the speed limit.

Scott Villalva, West 182nd Street, voiced his objection to the recommendation. He stated that 182nd Street is a racetrack and that pedestrians would not walk to Prairie Avenue or Hawthorne Boulevard to cross. He recommended leaving the crosswalk and installing flashing lights to enhance it.

Donna Cessor, West 183rd Street, stated that pedestrians use the crosswalk to go to Columbia Park, it gives drivers an opportunity to slow down, and signage should be enhanced to make it safer.

Jeanette Hendrickson, Osage Avenue, stated that an unmarked crosswalk is more dangerous than a marked one. She noted that the entire community uses it, not just students, and recommended installation of flashing lights. She stated that crossing at Prairie Avenue is not safe for pedestrians because of the flashing yellow arrow.

Kassie Kameoka, West 182nd Street, stated that it is a dangerous intersection, that she utilizes the crosswalk daily, and that it needs to stay there.

Pat Munday, West 183rd Street, stated that many seniors use the crosswalk and that she does not like crossing on Hawthorne Boulevard.

In response to Commissioner Sargent's inquiry, staff advised that uncontrolled crosswalks have been removed in the City and include one on Carson Street and Hickory Avenue as well as on Sepulveda Boulevard near Palos Verdes Boulevard.

At Commissioner Sargent's suggestion, Engineering Manager Semaan explained that studies throughout the United States have shown that marked crosswalks give pedestrians a false sense of security and that they are more likely to look in both directions and cross with more caution when using an unmarked crosswalk.

Commissioner Siani recalled that there were only 3-5 elementary school children utilizing the crosswalk per hour during data collection for the Crossing Guard review. She received clarification that the majority of the crosswalks in the City are at controlled intersections. She pointed out that the Crossing Guard was removed to channel students to controlled intersections and that it is legal to cross at any intersection.

Commissioner Habel recommended leaving the crosswalk as it is because pedestrians use it throughout the day, children will think that they can still cross there, and pedestrians would not walk to Hawthorne Boulevard or Prairie Avenue to cross.

At Commissioner Furey's suggestion, Sergeant Koenig stated that it is safer to cross at Hawthorne Boulevard or Prairie Avenue at controlled intersections and where there are Crossing Guards. He noted that it is difficult for drivers to see marked lines and pedestrians, and he described the pedestrian accident that occurred. He added that area Traffic Officers monitor speeds on 182nd Street, noting that the major problem observed is left turn violations. He stated that jaywalking is most likely to occur after work hours and that jaywalkers probably cross streets with the most caution.

Commissioner Bajaj stated that the City of Los Angeles did a study for selective crosswalk removal and found a 61% reduction of pedestrian related accidents. He added that it does not make sense to leave it there just because it has been there for 45 years.

Chairperson Rudolph received clarification that the crosswalk was installed at least 45 years ago. He stated that visual enhancements have been effective, that there is no evidence that removal would make it safer, and that 14 people have objected to its removal. When he suggested enhancing it to make it safer, Engineering Manager Semaan stated that there is no justification for further enhancements.

Commissioners Bajaj, Furey, Sargent, Siani, and Thomas all recommended removal of the crosswalk markings because of the false sense of security they give to pedestrians.

Terry Ragins, West 180th Street, stated that the crosswalk is important for Magruder Middle School students and that they would not walk out of their way to cross at a controlled intersection.

MOTION: Commissioner Siani, seconded by Commissioner Sargent, moved to concur with staff's recommendation to remove the existing crosswalk on 182nd Street at Bailey Drive.

MOTION: Commissioner Habel made a substitute motion to not concur with staff's recommendation and to leave the existing crosswalk on 182nd Street at Bailey Drive as it is. Chairperson Rudolph seconded the motion and the motion failed on a 5-2 roll call vote (Commissioner Habel and Chairperson Rudolph voting yes).

MOTION: Commissioner Siani, seconded by Commissioner Sargent, restated the original motion to concur with staff's recommendation to remove the existing crosswalk on 182nd Street at Bailey Drive. The motion passed on a 5-2 roll call vote (Commissioner Habel and Chairperson Rudolph voting no).

7b. QUARTERLY TRAFFIC COMMISSION SUMMARY OF REQUESTS

Engineering Manager Semaan presented the Quarterly Traffic Commission Summary of Requests encompassing the month of October 2011; and, September 2014 to September 2015. Referring to the North/South split phasing of the Lower/Costco signal on Skypark Drive, he advised that construction of improvements has been postponed to fall 2015. At Commissioner Bajaj's request, he explained the justification for the improvements.

Responding to Commissioner Furey's request on June 1 regarding visibility at Crenshaw Boulevard and 182nd Street, he stated that the electronic sign was malfunctioning and replaced with brighter and more visible LED text.

In response to Commissioner Sargent's April 6 inquiry regarding Palos Verdes Boulevard, Engineering Manager Semaan stated that engineers have not completed their analyses yet but that signal poles and controllers have been upgraded to accommodate potential protected left-turn phasing.

When Commissioner Sargent inquired about Ms. Henrickson's concern about pedestrian safety at Prairie Avenue, Engineering Manager Semaan stated that having a flashing yellow arrow is no different than if there was a regular green signal and that the pedestrian has the right of way.

8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2

8a. Commissioner Habel stated that from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. only four or five cars can get through the intersection going eastbound on 182nd Street at Crenshaw Boulevard; Engineering Manager Semaan offered to ask Operations to check the signal timing.

9. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:56 p.m., Chairperson Rudolph adjourned the meeting to November 2, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room, Torrance City Hall.

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Approved as submitted November 2, 2015 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
