

**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, November 2, 2015 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

Commissioner Furey 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, City Engineer Bilezerian, Assistant Civil Engineer Gruezo, Engineering Manager Finton, and Traffic Officer Scott.

**4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Siani 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 OCTOBER 5, 2015**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Sargent moved for the approval of the October 5, 2015 Commission meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Siani seconded the motion; a 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--LOMITA BOULEVARD AND KENT AVENUE**

Engineering Manager Semaan introduced the item and noted that there was supplemental correspondence received after agenda packets were prepared.

Assistant Civil Engineer Gruezo provided background regarding the north/south uncontrolled crosswalk at the west leg of the intersection crossing Lomita Boulevard at Kent Avenue. He stated that Lomita Boulevard is a four lane minor arterial street with a posted speed limit of 40 MPH. He noted that advance warning signs, pavement legend, and flashing yellow beacons exist east/west of the crosswalk. He stated that notices (Attachment A) of this meeting were mailed on October 21 to all addresses within 500 feet of the intersection as well as to Arnold Elementary School and Torrance Unified School District.

He reported that staff collected data and made observations of the crosswalk on October 13 and found little concentration of pedestrian traffic crossing there. He stated that data collection in Attachment F indicates there were six pedestrians crossing between 7:00–9:00 AM and five pedestrians between 2:00-4:00 PM, adding that only two were children. He stated that collision history within the past five years showed one reported accident involving a bicyclist at the south leg of the intersection. He advised that, based on analysis, 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, staff recommends the removal of the crosswalk.

Lavon Heinemann, West 232<sup>nd</sup> Street, voiced her objection to the removal of the crosswalk. She stated that she observed seven children using the crosswalk on October 30 and that crossing at Ocean Avenue is very dangerous.

Chairperson Rudolph stated that removal of an existing crosswalk is shifting the burden onto the pedestrian to be more cautious, and he received clarification from staff that pedestrian right-of-way exists whether a crosswalk is marked or unmarked.

Commissioner Siani observed that data collected last year for the Crossing Guard program showed four school age children crossing in the morning and 23 in the afternoon. She pointed out that the new data shows that the behavior has changed and that pedestrians are now crossing at a different location. She stated that flashing lights often become background noise to drivers and do not add value.

Commissioner Sargent discussed how studies have shown that pedestrians have a false sense of security in uncontrolled crosswalks, that drivers often do not see crosswalk markings, and that he is in favor of removing the crosswalk.

Commissioner Thomas concurred, noting that removing the markings will create more awareness for the pedestrians.

Commissioner Habel stated that the crosswalk and beacons should stay, that they have been there for a long time, and that pedestrians will continue to cross there if they are removed.

Commissioner Bajaj pointed out that removal of the crosswalk does not make it illegal to cross the street. He stated that pedestrians will use more due diligence when crossing safely if there are no markings.

Chairperson Rudolph stated that he is against removing the crosswalk because history is an important factor, it was installed for a reason, and that one accident indicates that it has been doing its job.

Commissioner Sargent stated that there used to be a pass through that is no longer accessible and that the crosswalk is not used as much as it once was.

Commissioner Siani stated that history may be irrelevant because fewer children walk to school now and there is more traffic on Lomita Boulevard.

Claudia Longo, Kent Avenue, stated that her daughter frequently used the crosswalk to go to Arnold Elementary. She asked for reinstatement of the Crossing Guard and installation of a stop sign or speed bump to slow down traffic speeds on Lomita Boulevard. She stated that it is dangerous to cross at Ocean Avenue and requested additional time to allow a petition to be circulated in the neighborhood.

Commissioner Furey stated that he supports staff's recommendation because everything he has heard indicates that the location is too dangerous to have an uncontrolled crosswalk there.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Furey moved to concur with staff's recommendation to remove the existing crosswalk on Lomita Boulevard and Kent Avenue. Commissioner Siani seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 5-2 roll call vote (Commissioner Habel and Chairperson Rudolph voting no).

## **8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

**8a.** Engineering Manager Semaan informed the Commission that, after 16 years of serving as liaison, he has accepted a position in Redondo Beach and that this would be his last Commission meeting. He introduced City Engineer Bilezerian and Engineering Manager Finton who will fill the vacancy.

Commissioners expressed their appreciation to Engineering Manager Semaan and bid him a fond farewell.

**8b.** Chairperson Rudolph was pleased to note that signal improvements at 182<sup>nd</sup> Street and Hawthorne Boulevard are successful.

**8c.** Commissioner Siani suggested improving the signage or speed limit at the curve on 234<sup>th</sup> Street and Anza Avenue.

City Engineer Bilezerian stated that the posted speed limit was established during the Citywide Traffic Study, that there is an edge line to delineate the parking lane from the travel lane, and that there is no proposal to reduce the speed limit or change the standard signage. He offered to check to make sure placement and reflectivity of the existing signage is accurate.

**8d.** Commissioner Siani informed staff that drivers are blocking the intersection of the frontage road at 177<sup>th</sup> Street and Hawthorne Boulevard and suggested painting "Keep Clear" on the pavement.

City Engineer Bilezarian stated that “Do Not Block” signage and a limit line were installed three years ago. He discussed his reluctance to use redundant markings and maintained that what is installed is adequate. He pointed out that it is against the law to block any intersection and that there is an enforcement component.

**8e.** Commissioner Habel stated that westbound morning traffic backs up on Del Amo Boulevard crossing Crenshaw Boulevard and asked staff to research.

**8f.** Commissioner Sargent reviewed items on the Quarterly Traffic Summary of Requests: signal synchronization on Sepulveda Boulevard at Hawthorne Boulevard and Ocean Avenue, speed study for Palos Verdes Boulevard, left turn consideration for Monte de Oro/Catalina Avenue, and speed enforcement on Lomita Boulevard.

Referring to Monte de Oro/Catalina Avenue, City Engineer Bilezarian stated that mast arms are in place if the study warrants installation of the left turn signal.

**8g.** Chairperson Rudolph stated that cable technicians are cutting phone lines along the easement near Regina Avenue and Amie Avenue, leaving them to hang down from the poles. He stated that it a menace and eyesore, and City Engineer Bilezarian offered to check which department or division is responsible.

**8h.** City Engineer Bilezarian informed the Commission that the validity of all speed limits was extended in the Citywide Traffic Study until 2018.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:08 p.m., Chairperson Rudolph adjourned the meeting to December 7, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room, Torrance City Hall.

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Approved as submitted December 7, 2015 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
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