

**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, 2009 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Sargent.

**3. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Clouch, Lewis, Rische, Santome, Sargent, Tsao, and Chairperson Galvin.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Transportation Manager Semaan, Project Manager Sedadi, and Planning Associate Crump.

**4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Tsao 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, 2009**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Sargent moved for approval of the August 3, 2009 Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Clouch seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

**6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1**

Carolyn Saruwatari, West 230<sup>th</sup> Street, expressed concern about the crosswalk across Greenwood Avenue at 227<sup>th</sup> Street near Hickory Elementary School. She stated that there have been many near incidents, that the situation is getting worse, and recommended installation of a three-way stop sign or at least a crossing guard.

In response to Commissioner Sargent's inquiry, she stated that the main concern is during school arrival and departure hours but that speeding on Greenwood Avenue is also a concern. She added that she has been trying to get something done about this dangerous crosswalk since 2007.

Responding to Commissioner Clouch's inquiry, she stated that the school as well as a Y.M.C.A. day care center is near the intersection.

Eric Boysen, Greenwood Avenue, stated that in the morning it is very congested, that Greenwood Avenue is a narrow street with a long straight-a-way, that a nearby 25

m.p.h. speed limit sign is blocked by a tree, and that speeds reach 45 m.p.h. on Greenwood Avenue.

Anh Ngo, Fern Avenue, also voiced concern about near misses at the intersection of Greenwood Avenue and 227<sup>th</sup> Street and urged Commissioners to approve installation of a stop sign.

Eric Ngo, Fern Avenue, stated that drivers are trying to turn left onto 227<sup>th</sup> Street and are not paying attention to pedestrians. He expressed support for a stop sign or crossing guard at the intersection.

Stan Fujii, West 229<sup>th</sup> Street, stated that cars speed through the intersection and that cars parked on both sides of Greenwood Avenue hinder visibility. He recommended a three-way stop sign and a crossing guard.

Christine Boysen, Greenwood Avenue, recommended installation of a stop sign at the intersection and pointed out that Hickory Elementary School does not provide parking lots for parents.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lewis moved to bring back an item regarding the intersection of Greenwood Avenue and 227<sup>th</sup> Street at a future Commission meeting. Chairperson Galvin seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

Commissioner Tsao thanked audience members for coming and noted that something needs to be done about their concern.

Commissioner Lewis suggested that staff ask the Police Department to provide extra enforcement in the area.

Chairperson Galvin suggested that a speed trailer be placed on Greenwood Avenue near 227<sup>th</sup> Street.

Commissioner Santome expressed appreciation to residents for coming and suggested that staff speak with Torrance Unified School District regarding parking at Hickory Elementary School.

**7. ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION**

**7a. PRESENTATION ON CONGESTION MITIGATION FEE SOUTH BAY PILOT STUDY BY ROBERT CALIX, METRO**

Transportation Manager Semaan introduced Robert Calix, Metro, and Chris Wornum, consultant for Metro.

Mr. Calix provided a power point presentation on the proposed Congestion Mitigation Fee as a component of the Congestion Management Program (CMP). He provided background on the CMP passed by Proposition 111 in 1990 and noted that MTA staff has been working on a fee mitigation Nexus Study for four years. He explained that, if adopted by the MTA Board, local jurisdictions would be responsible for adopting a fee through a local ordinance. He stated that the study has been broken up into four steps and that they are currently in the middle of the second step. The first step, to determine if a program is feasible in Los Angeles County, was approved by the Board in September 2008. He stated that a one time fee would be applied to all types of new development across all land uses and that local jurisdictions would control and

implement the program by identifying local projects with regional benefit, adopting an ordinance, collecting local fee revenue, and building transportation projects. He noted that Torrance, as well as 20 other Los Angeles County jurisdictions, has already established a fee program to fund transportation projects.

Commissioner Sargent received clarification that the one time fee is paid up front on new developments, similar to a Development Impact Fee, and that the amount of the fee is not being recommended yet.

Mr. Calix discussed the second step of the Study that involves working with local jurisdictions to confirm growth forecasts and identify projects with regional benefits. He stated that they have met with 38 out of 88 Los Angeles County jurisdictions.

In response to Commissioner Clouch's inquiry, Transportation Manager Semaan stated that the dollar value would be based on a needs list and would normally be placed in a City fund to be applied to capital projects. He explained that other times special conditions or mitigation measures are placed on the development and, if an improvement is made that is on the needs list, the cost of the improvements is credited. He provided further information about the credit/debit point system and difficulties that some jurisdictions are having offsetting a portion of the impact of their new development on the regional transportation system.

Mr. Calix added that communities such as Torrance that already have a program would be "grandfathered" in and that each jurisdiction, not Metro, would collect the mitigation fees. He stated that many cities in Los Angeles County do not have a Development Impact Fee like Torrance does and that they are going to each jurisdiction with the proposal to bring each jurisdiction to a consistent and level playing field.

Commissioner Clouch inquired why Metro got involved in this and Transportation Manager Semaan explained that they are trying to make sure that Los Angeles County complies with the CMP in order to receive state gas tax revenue and to preserve eligibility for state and federal funding for transportation projects.

Mr. Wornum provided additional explanation that they are trying to set uniform ground rules throughout the County, such as using consistent trip generation rates for all land use. He added that eventually they may determine that the minimum amount they collect may vary by sub-regions that have different growth patterns and demands.

Mr. Calix presented the Program Work Plan and stated that Step 2—working with jurisdictions to identify local projects with a regional benefit—will be completed in late 2009 or early 2010. He stated that Step 3, to conduct and fund a legally necessary Nexus Study on behalf of local jurisdictions, will take place in early 2010 to fall 2010, with presentation to the MTA Board for approval in fall 2010. He noted that local growth forecasts will be verified to make sure that population and employment growth forecasts are consistent with each jurisdiction's expectations and General Plans.

Commissioner Sargent inquired about intersections where Cal Trans is involved, such as Pacific Coast Highway and Crenshaw Boulevard and Mr. Calix responded that one of their goals is to be the convener of parties that are interested in particular projects, adding that Cal Trans has been enthusiastic and supportive about the program.

Commissioner Rische received clarification that the fee program would apply to a professional football team building a stadium.

In response to Commissioner Clouch's inquiry, Transportation Manager Semaan explained that fees collected are not specific and are placed into a pool to be used to make improvements on the needs list.

Commissioner Rische related his observation that in the past estimates of population growth are low.

Mr. Wornum explained that City staff is reviewing the baseline forecast and making adjustments, adding that estimates should conform to the General Plan. He noted that every five years the assumptions can be updated at no cost to the City.

In response to Commissioner Sargent's inquiry, he advised that all Los Angeles County cities have General Plans but that some are out of date.

The Commission was in recess from 8:22 to 8:28 p.m.

**7B. DISCUSSION OF COMMISSION ISSUES RAISED BY CITY COUNCIL AD HOC COMMITTEE**

Transportation Manager Semaan reported that an ad hoc Council Committee for Commission Review met on August 24, 2009 to initiate discussions for review of City Commissions, adding that Chairperson Galvin and Commissioner Clouch attended the meeting. He noted that History and Background of City Commissions, correspondence, Minutes from the August 24, 2009 meeting, Strategic Plan/General Plan References, and Torrance Municipal Code's Section on Traffic Commission Responsibilities were included in agenda materials. He requested that Commissioners provide feedback and input which would be forwarded to the Council Committee.

Commissioner Sargent questioned the \$60,000 a year for staff time as stated in correspondence from Commissioner Rische and Commissioner Rische responded that a City Councilmember told him that amount.

In response to Commissioner Sargent's inquiry, Transportation Manager Semaan stated that staff has never assessed the time spent to prepare for Commission meetings and that it depends on the topic and background.

Commissioner Sargent noted that many of the Powers and Duties of the Commission contain the phrase "upon request of the City Council" or "upon request of the Planning Commission." He stated that it would be helpful to remind and encourage City Council and the Planning Commission to delegate items to the Traffic Commission.

Commissioner Tsao commented that the Traffic Commission is very important to the City, is trying to help improve the City, and is doing a tremendous job. He stated that the Planning Commission needs to delegate items to the Traffic Commission and that it is important to promote the City to attract businesses.

Commissioner Santome recalled items considered by the Commission over the past five years brought forward by citizens and the resolutions that developed. He noted that citizens have direct access to staff at the meetings and that, although it has been slow the last few months, it will pick up again. He stated that he supports meeting quarterly or on an as-needed basis and that costs associated with staff time should be separated.

Commissioner Clouch commented that traffic is a major concern in the City and that City Council approved staff salaries. He stated that the Traffic Commission would have a bigger impact if it had direct communication with Public Works, that improvements need to be made regarding cut-through traffic, and that the Commission should not meet if there are no action items. He stated that it is not realistic to merge with the Planning Commission and recommended that the Planning Commission be divided—five members for hillside overlay issues and seven members combined with the Traffic Commission for everything else.

Chairperson Galvin encouraged Commissioners to attend the next ad hoc Council Committee meeting. She recommended that before any large projects are approved they should come before the Traffic Commission and that the Commission should go dark if there is nothing to discuss.

Commissioner Sargent concurred with going dark as long as an adjourned meeting could be reconstituted if deemed necessary.

Commissioner Rische questioned who Public Works is accountable to and stated that he is interested in learning more about the installation and repair of stop signs and signals.

Commissioner Lewis stated that consolidating the Traffic Commission with another Commission is a bad idea and that the eight to ten months spent on the recreational vehicle issue more than justifies the Commission's existence. He expressed support for going dark if there are no action items.

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

**8A.** Commissioner Clouch distributed Torrance Police Department Annual Traffic Report for July 2008 – June 2009 and requested that staff place an item on the next agenda regarding traffic citations.

**8B.** A brief discussion centered on the November 2, 2009 Commissioner re-certification class and the need to adjourn tonight's meeting to October 26, 2009 to discuss traffic circulation in the "Sleepy Hollow" holiday light area of the City.

Commissioners Rische and Sargent stated that they would be unable to attend the October 26, 2009 meeting and requested excused absences.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:25 p.m., Chairperson Galvin adjourned the meeting to Monday, October 26, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room.

Approved as Submitted October 26, 2009 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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