

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
MINUTES
Thursday, February 26, 2004

The regular meeting of the Traffic Operations Committee (T.O.C.) was held on Thursday, February 26, 2004, at 2:00 p.m. in the Police Facility Emergency Operations Center. Present were Paul Crook for the absent Robert Hutton, Tony Peña, Scott Huth, Ed Walton and Kim Raddatz. Also present were Dave Johnson, Assistant Engineer and Elizabeth Brett, Traffic Sergeant.

1. Minutes of the January 2, 2004 Meeting – The minutes were unanimously approved.
2. Oral Communications – None.
3. Recommendation Regarding the Use of a Temporary Loading/Unloading Zone in Front of 111 Orange Avenue – The pastor of the Baptist Church at 111 Orange Avenue wanted to provide a parking space for the van the church uses to transport church members and this was visited at the last T.O.C. meeting. At that meeting it was recommended to convert part of a loading zone or a metered parking space, but the T.O.C. did not favor this idea. The new suggestion is to use a temporary A-frame sign with appropriate wording and to use it only on Sundays. The caveat is that because it would be a temporary zone, the police cannot ticket it. Mr. Walton moved to approve the staff recommendation, Mr. Peña seconded it and it passed unanimously. Mr. Crook requested that the church be made aware of the enforcement issue.
4. Recommendation Regarding the Encroachment of an ADA Compliant Pedestrian Ramp at the Alley Entrance to Vons Supermarket, 868 Orange Avenue – Mr. Johnson said he understood that a customer complained to Vons that the ramp at the alley entrance exceeded the maximum ADA allowable slope. Vons hired an architect and engineer to design an ADA compliant ramp. In order to meet maximum grades the ramp needs to encroach into the alley right-of-way. As designed, the ramp will extend into the alley 8', so to provide the minimum backing distance the parking lot must be restriped.
Mr. Raddatz was concerned that a 20' wide alley will be reduced to 12' and encroach into parking spaces. This would almost eliminate a fire engine from traveling the alley. Fire engines are 10.5' wide and if cars are parked improperly the alley will be almost impassable. Mr. Johnson said there is a minimum 14' between the curb and an existing power pole and this is the width of a fire access lane. Mr. Huth said he does not like taking City property to solve an ADA issue on private property. He asked if this could be achieved by changing the whole slope of the alley so it slopes up. Mr. Johnson said staff hadn't looked at any alternative designs. Mr. Huth felt that if the slope could be changed it could eliminate the proposed railing. He would also like to know what kind of research Vons had done on the interior of the building. He'd like to look at other alternatives to changing the profile of the alley.

Mr. Peña said if Vons doesn't want to intrude on their building, perhaps they could look at a lift, a foot at the most, that could take them up to their property line. Brian Fitzgerald, Latitude 33 (engineering firm), said he doesn't think the door is wide enough to handle a cart and a lift. Jim Symons, representing Nadel Architects, said it's not just an issue about a person in a chair or with a cane or walker; it's also shopping carts. It would be a chaotic situation if it were all on private property.

Mr. Raddatz said it makes him nervous to lose 8'. It would be a gamble that everyone would be parked properly. He'd like to look at sloping the alley in another direction. Mr. Peña asked if there had been a legal review of this. Is it legally required to have ADA access at this point? Where is the primary entrance? Mr. Symons said the address is on the street. Mr. Peña said Vons has a large parking lot off the alley, so someone may have ruled that this is the primary entrance. Then the City might grant an encroachment permit based on convenience.

Mr. Walton said he would like to look at ramping the alley, drainage and the feasibility of putting a ramp on private property. Mr. Peña said he'd like to look at a ramp or an alternative to a ramp if there is a requirement. Mr. Walton made a motion to continue this item and Mr. Peña seconded it. It passed unanimously. Vons' representatives will come back with more information.

5. Recommendation Regarding the Installation of a Marked Crosswalk at the "Five Points" Intersection as Part of an Amendment to the Safe Routes to School Program –

Mr. Johnson said that the Coronado Unified School District (CUSD) had discontinued bus service for students living south of the Village. This resulted in students walking or bicycling on the Silver Strand bike path to go to and from school each day. Concerned parents contacted the CUSD superintendent because there was no provision in the Safe Routes to School (SR2S) program for these students. CUSD contacted the City for help in developing an amendment to the existing SR2S.

The only traffic controls being suggested for the five-points intersection are marked crosswalks and pedestrian warning signs in advance. Mr. Crook noted that the report says that the cost will be shared with CUSD. He asked if CUSD was aware that there is a cost-sharing mechanism in the SR2S. Linda Visnick, CUSD representative, said she was not aware of that, but the school district is willing to work with the City. Mr. Johnson said it would be about \$650 with the signs.

Mr. Peña questioned whether marked crosswalks might be more hazardous than unmarked crosswalks because pedestrians have a false sense of security when in a marked crosswalk and exercise less caution. Mr. Johnson replied that the difference is between controlled and uncontrolled intersections. Marked crosswalks are used in controlled intersections when there is a need to guide pedestrians across the intersection. It indicates a suggested route. Warrants must be analyzed for installation of a marked crosswalk at an uncontrolled intersection.

Mr. Crook said that what brought this to the T.O.C. was the cancellation of the bus route and he understands that it's back now. Ms. Visnick said that the bus service has been reinstated, but there is a very limited ridership. Mr. Johnson said it was felt that a number of students are still using the bike path as a means to travel to school and an SR2S for these students is needed. Mr. Walton said he saw a need for this additional traffic control, not only for the SR2S, but the tennis courts and golf course are there too.

Mr. Huth pointed out that kids come from the other way too, en route to programs at the Yacht Club or Tennis Center. Mr. Peña moved to approve the staff recommendation including the pedestrian warning sign, Mr. Huth seconded it and it passed unanimously.

6. Recommendation Regarding a Request to Review the Existing Signage along the Intersections of the Bike Path from the Tennis Center to the Coronado Cays – Mr. Johnson said this request was made by a member of the Parks and Recreation Board. It has been visited by the T.O.C. several times in the past. The T.O.C. decided to sign all the bike path intersections with stop signs, except that at Rendova Road, Avenida del Sol and Avenida de las Arenas yield signs are still in place. He could not find any record that this ever went to the City Council. The staff recommendation is to make no changes to the existing signs.

Mr. Walton said he feels it is confusing to have stop signs by pedestrian crossings, but it seems to have been working all these years and he's not aware of many conflicts at these intersections. Mr. Johnson said that in five of six accidents over the past three years, the cause was bicyclists not adhering to the traffic control. It is not inherently dangerous. Mr. Raddatz made a motion to approve the staff recommendation, Mr. Walton seconded it and it passed unanimously.

7. Recommendation Regarding a Request to Evaluate Potential Improvements for Palm Avenue – Mr. Johnson said that resident Jeanne Fox has hosted workshops regarding possible improvements to Palm Avenue. The City Council directed the T.O.C. to review her concepts. Palm Avenue is a two-lane roadway with a curb-to-curb width of 62' with parallel parking on both sides of the street. It has several six-way intersections with odd approach angles. There have been three reported accidents occurring on Palm Avenue between D Avenue and Alameda over the past three years. Ms. Fox's suggestions were each addressed separately:

1. The intersection of Alameda Boulevard and Palm Avenue needs corner redesign to reduce high speed turns onto Palm Avenue – Mr. Johnson said that vehicles can maintain their speed through this intersection because of the wide turning radius. Candlestick delineators could be used to decrease the turning radius.

2. Lane markers need to be installed in the center of Alameda Boulevard at Palm Avenue and the center of Alameda Boulevard at Second Street – In this case, as in #1, candlesticks would act to narrow the turning radius and as a guide to drivers so they're less apt to take a left-hand turn off Palm as a shortcut off the island. Mr. Walton suggested that #'s 1 and 2 could possibly be pursued as one item. Regarding both items, Mr. Walton said that one difficult thing in enforcing the turn restriction during afternoon peak hours is the location and visibility of the sign. If this could be combined with candlesticks it might be more visible. Mr. Huth said there are smaller signs that can be placed on top of candlesticks.

Ms. Fox, 230 Palm Avenue, said the critical issue is that using the police force to enforce a time-specific no left turn does not work. Signage is ignored. If it can't be regulated with signage and a minimum amount of enforcement, it's not working. The street gets hundreds of cars per day and it's very unsafe with cars going at high speed

toward the First Street gate. They could use traffic officers for three hours in the a.m. and four hours in the p.m.; it's unconscionable.

Mr. Raddatz observed that candlesticks are used in his neighborhood and they are "taken out" all the time. Mr. Crook said this road is so wide and the signs are over on the side of the road, so it's easy for someone to say they did not see the signs.

3. A center median should be installed in the 100, 200 and 300 blocks of Palm Avenue – Mr. Johnson said the suggested concept is a landscaped median with the hope that it might reduce vehicle speeds and increase safety. It is also being suggested to enhance the view corridor. It is a relatively expensive item, would probably be a Capital Improvement Program (C.I.P.) project and need to be approved and funded by the City Council. Mr. Walton said he felt the T.O.C. should forward this item to the City Council to see if they have an interest and want to pursue it.

Mr. Huth noted that there are alleys, crossings and break-ups in this area as a result of it being a diagonal street. He wondered if it would be a series of mini medians. Mr. Johnson responded that if cross traffic is desired it would be. Mr. Huth asked if residents had been asked about the possibility of closing off access.

Ms. Fox said there is a large area for a median at J Avenue, Palm and Second Street. She has seen landscaping combined with a speed hump at the alley that allows access to the alleys. Now there are too many choices for drivers about who has the right-of-way. Signage is unclear. When the aircraft carrier dredging was done they lost their "garden neighborhood" to an "industrial view."

Mr. Huth said that as a T.O.C. member he could not see recommending #'s 3 and 4. He knows there some possibility of slowing traffic with center medians, but it would be nice to know if this has a lot of support. Mr. Johnson said preliminary design would be required to address such things as drainage and access. Mr. Raddatz was concerned from a safety perspective that in the event of a fire it could cut off access to a lot of fire hydrants.

Mr. Peña said from his perspective, it's obvious that there's some neighborhood benefit, but from a T.O.C. perspective, what is motivating this? There have been three accidents in three years in this corridor. Is this significant? Is it to slow traffic or make the neighborhood more aesthetic? If this is not to address safety hazards, other streets like Olive could request the same. Mr. Johnson said that Palm Avenue does not have a higher than average accident rate.

Mr. Walton recommended forwarding this item to the City Council to see if they want to do it as a C.I.P. project. Mr. Peña agreed and said that from the T.O.C.'s authority, they should be reporting safety problems to the City Council; other requests should go to Council as a neighborhood beautification issue.

Sgt. Elizabeth Brett said that traffic officers cannot articulate a safety hazard because of the low accident rate compared to volumes. Fifty percent of tickets are excused by the court.

Ms. Fox said that Palm Avenue was designed so that a horse and carriage could turn around, and therefore is an out of scale design for the community. Other streets have traffic mitigation devices in place. It starts to look like this is where traffic is being funneled. The situation is dicey at best and has reduced the quality of life. Children do not go to the park. It's a thoroughfare of commuter traffic. She would like to see the improvements done in phases; start with the simplest of concepts.

Mr. Peña said the T.O.C. should comment on those concepts that address safety issues. Mr. Johnson said the median concept may be counter to safety because it's forcing traffic toward curbs, sidewalks and pedestrians. He would prefer to see curb bulbouts to force cars to the center of the street. Mr. Huth suggested combining #'s 3 and 4 as possible C.I.P. projects rather than recommendations from the T.O.C.

4. The six-point intersection of Second Street, J Avenue and Palm Avenue needs to be redesigned to an irregular shaped traffic island – Mr. Johnson said that a traffic circle forces traffic into one direction to reduce conflict points. It could be tried on a temporary basis with recycled rubber curbing.

5. The alley between J and I Avenues, in the 200 block, should be made one-way towards Third Street – Mr. Johnson said that residents feel that too many vehicles cut through this alley. All residential alleys in Coronado are two-way; if we were to design one alley one-way, it would not be consistent with the rest of the alleys in Coronado and drivers would not know what to expect. There is no accident history here and there is a morning turn restriction from 5:00 to 8:00 a.m. Ms. Fox said the idea was to reduce the load of traffic flowing into the intersection and was tied into #4. It doesn't stand on its own merit.

6. A four-way stop, adjacent to the park, should be installed at the intersection of Palm and I Avenues – Mr. Johnson said the staff recommendation is to do data collection and evaluate the request against traffic warrants.

7. Reduce speed of vehicles turning right from Third Street onto Palm Avenue by decreasing the turning radius and delineating the centerline of Palm Avenue near Third Street – Mr. Johnson said this request is almost identical to #1. Palm Avenue residents have suggested decreasing the turning radius so vehicles cannot make wide turns and speeds would be lower. Ms. Fox said that as cars come off Third and make a right onto Palm they can lose control. She has seen tire marks in the park near the playground. Some people won't allow their children to play in the park. Mr. Johnson said that he has observed cars eastbound on Palm and Third passing on the right, so candlestick delineators would narrow the street and not allow this. Ms. Fox feels that some drivers coming off a one-way street think Palm is also one-way and will drive two blocks before they realize it or see parked cars. Mr. Peña observed that delineators are ugly and this goes against the desire to beautify the area.

8. The alley north of D Avenue between Palm Avenue and Sixth Street has a problem with two-way traffic mixed with high school students walking to and from school. Consider designating alley one-way to decrease the number of conflicts between vehicles and students – Mr. Johnson said that, as in the other recommendation, because it's a residential alley and there have been no reported accidents during the last three years, the recommendation is to leave it two-way.

Mr. Peña asked Ms. Fox if she had given a petition to the City Council and she said she did. She said she hosted multiple meetings and gave out flyers. He asked if, for the items proposed, whether she had pretty good support and she said she feels she has neighborhood consensus.

Mr. Raddatz said that he keeps asking himself whether there is a hazard on Palm. The last traffic counts came to 2,300/day. Is this too much? The average speed is 30 mph. Is this a hazard? If not, should the T.O.C. be looking at this in general? Ms. Fox

responded that engineering is the science and the neighborhood is the experience. Mr. Peña said that for the committee to be consistent, it looks at police and engineering records to give the firmest basis on which to make decisions. When the T.O.C. looks at a plan, it might be a great plan, but is it really required for safety? Mr. Johnson suggested that he could look at other streets with similar volumes and look at accident reports so the committee can compare apples to apples.

Mr. Huth move to go with the staff recommendations for Items 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Items 3 and 4 are more consistent with C.I.P. projects and he would suggest going in that direction with them. Mr. Peña seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.