

CITY OF CORONADO
TRAFFIC OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

The regular meeting of the Traffic Operations Committee (T.O.C.) was held on Thursday, May 24, 2007, at 2:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Present were Scott Huth, Lou Scanlon, Ed Walton and Tony Peña. Rick Sitta represented the absent Kim Raddatz. Assistant Engineer Dave Johnson was also present.

1. Minutes of the February 22, 2007 Meeting – Mr. Peña moved to approve the minutes and Mr. Walton seconded the motion. The motion passed with Mr. Scanlon and Mr. Sitta abstaining.

2. Oral Communications – Dennis Dorman, 850 Pomona Avenue, got the notice about Item #4 a week and a half ago and put it in the trash can. However, Sunday at 1:00 he very nearly had an accident at Maria Place and Pomona. He came to a full stop, looked left and then right; fortunately, he looked again after he got into the middle of Pomona, just before he entered the lane coming from Glorietta and there were two cars on top of him at about 25 mph. He hit his brakes, they went by and then he parked his car in his driveway and there was a clear reason he didn't see those cars. From the point where you have the cut in the sidewalk until around the corner, heading toward Glorietta, there was a large pick-up truck, a panel truck and a large SUV. Part of the truck was obstructing the sidewalk cut. The three of them formed a wall he could not see through. Everything to the right was obstructed. If he hadn't looked twice, that would have been a collision. It's a very dangerous intersection and he very nearly could have been a statistic.

About Seventh Street (Item #6), he's lived here for 50 years and he knows that intersection; fortunately he realizes he can't see and knows that you have to ease out from the stop sign and you're still blind to traffic coming from the bridge and you have to idle forward and look past the house on the corner. It's clearly dangerous and most of us who live here know to be careful, but he's not sure whether you shouldn't think about changing it because of visitors and tourists.

3. Reconsideration of Recommendation Regarding the Request to Relocate a Handicap Blue Curb Zone on Sixth Street Near E Avenue to Sixth Street at D Avenue – Mr. Peña moved that this item be placed on consent for approval of the staff recommendation and Mr. Walton seconded it. It passed unanimously.

4. Recommendation Regarding a Request to Install a 25-Foot Red Curb Section at the Intersection of Maria Place and Pomona Avenue – Mr. Johnson reported that the Engineering Department had received a letter from Lawrence Zaino, 1513 Maria Place, requesting that a red curb section be painted at the south corner of Maria and Pomona. Mr. Zaino stated that it's difficult to see oncoming traffic when there's a vehicle parked

at this location and it also impedes the visibility of drivers to pedestrians crossing Maria at Pomona. Mr. Johnson said that in his initial reading of Mr. Zaino's letter and subsequent conversation with Mrs. Zaino, he misunderstood the exact location of the request for the red curb; the actual location of the red curb that he believes they're requesting differs from Exhibit A in the agenda packets. He referred to the exhibit on the overhead display and said that he originally assumed that the location requested for red curbing was between the driveway at a residence on Maria and the pedestrian ramp which directs pedestrians into the intersection of Maria and Pomona, but he believes, based on the correspondence he received subsequent to the City's notification to residents about this issue, that the location where they'd like to see red curb is along the area where the red vehicle is parked in the exhibit. If Mr. Zaino is in the audience he can clarify that. Mr. Peña asked if this would change Mr. Johnson's recommendation and he replied that it would not. There were no reported collisions at this location in the most recent three-year accident history. This intersection is not unlike many in Coronado; it is controlled by a stop sign on Maria Place. By law, vehicles need to come to a complete stop behind the stop bar and because of the presence of on-street parking, it's necessary to creep out beyond the stop bar to make sure there's a safe distance between oncoming vehicles and the initiation of a turn. This situation is seen throughout Coronado and the reason for this is because of the high demand for on-street parking. Parking in Coronado is very impacted; it seems like there are more cars than on-street availability, so the on-street parking resources are very valuable. Staff feels that the elimination of a parking space on the southbound side of Pomona would not necessarily make this a safer intersection. Therefore, the staff recommendation is to not install a 25-foot red curb at this location.

Mr. Huth noted that Pomona starts to widen past Maria in this area and Mr. Johnson concurred. There are traffic chokers just north of Miguel, but the street does widen as you proceed northbound on Pomona.

Mr. Sitta inspected the intersection as the exhibit had shown and he was ready to jump on board with the installation of the red curb because a car parked there would definitely impact the vision of a vehicle on Maria Place if a pedestrian was walking through the intersection. Unfortunately, he didn't look at the other side of the curb, as is supposed to be proposed.

Mr. Huth requested clarification that the request is oriented where the two vehicles are parked on Exhibit A and Mr. Johnson said yes, based on the feedback in the letters supporting the red curb installation. Hopefully that will be affirmed by people in the audience.

Lawrence Zaino, 1513 Maria Place, wanted to comment on making a left-hand turn from Maria onto Pomona. This is not a 90-degree corner; it's between 70-75 degrees, so that adds to the difficulty of making that turn. There is a stop sign and a white line at the bottom of Maria; however, when you're driving you can move the whole car beyond that white line and still not see the oncoming traffic. You are already obstructing one-third of the traffic coming south in the lane going toward the tennis courts. You have to move another half a car before you can begin visualizing the traffic. The speed hump is 50 paces from that corner and drivers coming toward the intersection of Pomona and Maria are going so quickly that when you think it's reasonably safe you pull out and try to get into the 25 mph limit or these guys will run into you. Then, as you proceed, they're in such a hurry that they pass you on the left if there's no oncoming traffic; if there is, they pass you on the right side, not knowing that there is a crosswalk, a choker and another speed hump. If you're going 25 mph they can't really make the turn

around you to get by that choker and it's not that far. The choker and the speed hump are probably around 120 paces which makes that turn very difficult. He thinks most of the people leaving the Amphib Base, or wherever they're coming from, are leaving the island. Why aren't they taking Glorietta? Probably because there are six extra speed humps and it takes them longer. That corner is difficult to get out of in the morning. Somebody is going to get hurt.

Charlotte Zaino, 1513 Maria Place, said that Mr. Johnson omitted some information that was in the papers sent to her and that was the impact to the Strategic Plan which he felt taking away a parking space would do. It seems the main objection to the request for a red curb on the south corner of Maria and Pomona are twofold: (1) there have been no reported accidents from 2002-2005; that's good, but that doesn't take into consideration how many near misses there might have been; how many unreported accidents might there have been. The same holds true for 2005 to 2007; there could have been near misses as was reported by the first gentleman who came up. That corner remains very, very dangerous. It is a distinct liability for the City. (2) The Strategic Plan, 4.2.1.2 which was pointed out to her by Mr. Johnson on the papers she got from him. She found that 4.2.1.2 is under a larger umbrella, simply called "Parking 4.2," which reads as follows "in the central commercial and beach areas there is a growing parking problem which adversely affects residents, businesses, visitors to the community and local traffic flow. The number of beach users and visitors to the City will increase over the next several years, thus aggravating the parking problem." It continues on with "Priority Objectives: To address the parking problem in the beach and downtown commercial zones according to the following priorities: (1) Preserve parking for residents; (2) Accommodate commercial parking; (3) Accommodate visitor parking." She'd like to refer back to the key words: "Central commercial." The corner of Pomona and Maria is three-tenths of a mile from Orange Avenue. We're half a mile from the nearest beach. As far as visitors go, there's no tourist attraction anywhere near them that would incline someone to park on that corner. They're all in other places. She continues to be perplexed as to how the Strategic Plan 4.2.1.2 impacts the City connected with that parking spot. It doesn't make too much sense to her. In closing, she says she continues to be puzzled and cannot see how the elimination of several parking spaces on the south corner of Maria and Pomona is contrary to the Strategic Plan 4.2.1.2. Eliminating three or four spaces would be in the interest of safety for the citizens of Coronado, especially the schoolchildren who cross daily at that ramp.

Tom Whitson, 1519 Maria Place, has lived at that address for 32 years. Over that time he's seen a build-up of traffic on Maria Place, mainly due to Orange Avenue being backed up with bumper to bumper traffic. This is along a creative route to the bridge and at certain times of the day it's very heavy. He's concerned about children crossing. You can see from the diagram that if you're starting from the existing pedestrian ramp, there's no way you can see west on Maria Place. He's seen baby buggies trying to peek out to see around that car parked there and skateboarders. It seems to be a hazardous location that needs attention. Mr. Walton asked Mr. Whitson if when he mentioned pedestrians, he was talking about the parking space between the pedestrian ramp and the driveway. Mr. Whitson said yes, it's between a street sign and a utility pole; it's where what looks like an SUV with a white hood cover is on the exhibit.

Marge West, 1514 Maria Place, can't believe that there's not a red marking on that corner. One day she was walking and she saw the boy who parks his car regularly on that corner and said to him "that isn't allowed and he said 'well, I live across the street.'"

He had all Maria Place and Maria Place has nobody parking on it. She has 140' frontage and she doesn't care if people park there, so it doesn't make sense – you're not giving up parking space on Maria Place. It's a residential section and people don't park there.

Helen Alexander, 1523 Maria Place, said that several houses were built on the block in the last couple of years, so there have been trucks parked constantly in front of their places. They've all spread out as there's no building right at the moment. She once received a ticket for parking more than 18" from the curb. She'd like to state that "Marge's friend" in the white truck is sometimes parked two and three feet from the curb and no one's ever given him a ticket. The red truck apparently belongs to someone living across the street on Pomona. Since the letters about this meeting went out it has been parked in the house's driveway. They have underground parking that she doesn't think anyone uses. The red van has sort of disappeared, so they're conscious of the fact that they are obstructing.

Mr. Peña asked Mr. Johnson if they are now talking about a red curb extending about 50' instead of the original 25' and Mr. Johnson responded that there are two concerns – one that Mr. Whitson brought up which was the original location marked on the exhibit and second, he believes the Zainos are concerned with the location just to the south of the pedestrian ramp which is where the red vehicle is parked in the exhibit. He'd imagine that both those locations could be considered.

Mr. Peña asked what kind of noticing was provided and Mr. Johnson responded that it was the typical 300' radius noticing and maybe a little beyond. Mr. Peña asked if the exhibit was on the notice and was informed that it was. Mr. Peña's technical concern is that if the City was to consider taking action on a 50' red area, at that point maybe more neighbors would be involved because it's such a larger chunk of no parking area than the 25' shown on the notice. The merit of the request is a separate issue.

Mr. Walton said there are two issues brought up by the residents. One is the pedestrian sight visibility and the other is the sight lines from Maria Place looking at Pomona to make a left turn, looking at the northbound traffic. If you look at the diagram and a car is at the stop bar wanting to turn left, it would be hugging the left center line. If you draw a line from that to the northbound Pomona Avenue travel lane and touch the edge of that red vehicle, you have about 140-170' of clear visibility. At 25 mph that gives about four-and-a-half to five seconds of reaction time. He doesn't know if there is a sight visibility problem there. His initial reaction, as far as painting a red curb on Pomona, would probably not be 25'. Per current laws, you cannot park in a pedestrian ramp area – it's a crosswalk, whether it's marked or not. He knows that the white vehicle does sometimes encroach there. Perhaps if some red standoffs were painted there it would clear up the pedestrian issue by not allowing him to encroach in that area. He explained that a standoff is a three to five-foot section of red curb on each side of a pedestrian ramp, so that it's more visible to drivers that they aren't supposed to park there.

Mr. Walton asked Mr. Johnson if he had any accident data for 2006 and Mr. Johnson said he hasn't officially gathered the 2006 data, although he did go through the reports and found that there were no accidents reported in 2006.

Mr. Huth drove this area just before this meeting. There wasn't anyone parked in the proposed red zone when he was there, but when he was behind the white bar (and he's in a truck), he couldn't see smaller vehicles coming up Pomona and he was pulled out quite a way just to see how comfortable he would be to make a northbound turn. A concern is that when you pull out you're looking northbound and here comes southbound traffic coming up on your other side. He also echoed Mr. Peña's concern that since we

did not indicate that we would be specifically looking at the Pomona area for red curbing, he doesn't know that it's appropriate to take action on that side today. It would be better to limit the discussion on what was marked in the notice, which was the proposed 25' red curb on Maria that's shown on the diagram.

Mr. Scanlon asked when Mr. Huth drove the area whether there was anything parked where the red vehicle in the exhibit is and Mr. Huth said there were at least two cars parked. When he pulled out the cars coming at him were low-profile sedans and kind of hidden behind that angle until he really got out into the street more. It's consistent with a lot of intersections where you have to pull out beyond the parking area to really be able to look down the road, but there is a different curvature here. But he wasn't really looking at that as much as the curbing marked on the plan.

Mr. Huth suggested deferring this item and looking at the entire area around the corner. Mr. Scanlon moved to table the issue until the additional curb area can be properly noticed and Mr. Sitta seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. Mr. Johnson indicated that this could come back next month.

5. Recommendation Regarding a Request to Convert an Existing 12-Minute Parking Zone to a 2-Hour Metered Parking Space – Mr. Peña moved that this item be placed on consent for approval of the staff recommendation and Mr. Walton seconded it. It passed unanimously.

6. Discussion Item Regarding the Conceptual Reconfiguration of the Intersection of Seventh Street, Adella Avenue and Pomona Avenue to Improve Traffic Circulation – Mr. Johnson provided some background on this issue. In 1998 the City Council directed BDS Engineering to develop traffic calming measures along Pomona Avenue. This program included the speed humps, the traffic chokers just north of Miguel and also a reconfiguration of the Seventh, Adella and Pomona intersection which is a very large expanse of pavement without a lot of delineation in that vicinity. Councilmember Tanaka asked that the TOC review the concept for the intersection reconfiguration based on BDS' drawings. The conceptual plans for the proposed improvements are included in today's TOC packet. He's looking for general discussion from the TOC on whether or not these concepts should be studied further and whether or not the members feel that this would be an opportunity for a future CIP project, as final improvements would require an engineering design and a bid contract for improvements. It should be pointed out that the original intent of the plan was to do things in a painted manner to get a feeling for how drivers would react to the improvement and if staff felt that was successful, it could be furthered by hard improvements like a raised curb section. A traffic circle concept that was discussed in earlier TOC meetings was emailed to the TOC members for discussion again today.

Mr. Johnson explained the various concepts. The first was designed by BDS and shows the limits of a proposed island. [The rest was unintelligible – Mr. Johnson was away from the microphone.]

Mr. Huth asked for questions and Mr. Peña said the permanent one and the temporary one are basically the same, so his questions apply to both. Starting with the southerly confluence of Adella when it splits off – will it be one way in this plan? Mr. Johnson said it would be a way for people going northbound on Adella, one way out. Mr. Peña asked if there would be a "Do Not Enter" sign so Pomona Avenue traffic doesn't go

south, turning onto the one-way area. Mr. Johnson said appropriate signage would need to be installed at this location. [Unintelligible discussion from Mr. Johnson.]

Mr. Peña asked if it would be marked “Right Turn Only” or would drivers be able to access Pomona north as well? Mr. Johnson said he’d prefer to have a “Right Turn Only” at that location. If it wasn’t signed there would be nothing to preclude a vehicle from turning there. Mr. Peña said that might conflict with the next intersection to the north where Adella merges with Seventh. Can they go both north and south there? Mr. Johnson said this concept was developed to show the hard improvements of painted islands that would minimize the amount of asphalt area, but of course there would need to be additional markings in this location. Based on traffic counts, it would be determined which street has the greater amount of traffic and we might want to put a control on Adella; for instance, perhaps a yield control.

Mr. Huth said if a driver can come down Adella and turn southbound at Pomona at either one of those locations, why even have the one closest to the park? [Unintelligible discussion from Mr. Johnson.]

Mr. Walton recalled that when this was initially developed it was just a concept that was thrown out to show what could be done; there isn’t very much engineering behind it, it’s just a conceptual plan, so the questions being asked are those that would be asked if it were going to be a fully-designed intersection.

Mr. Huth asked Mr. Johnson how he would see traveling southbound on Pomona and making the turn to get onto Adella Avenue and Mr. Johnson responded that it would be a little sinusoidal and a driver would definitely have to make kind of an S-turn. Vehicles traveling south on Pomona would make a right into the entrance and then would have to yield to any vehicles coming down Seventh or even those that are already in the intersection, turning from Adella onto Seventh. So there would be quite a conflict point at this location in the intersection. [Unintelligible discussion from Mr. Johnson.]

Mr. Peña said if that one-way off of Adella could be eliminated and made more of a monolithic dead area, it could also be turned into a small parking area for users of the park which would be a real safe means of accessing the park without having to cross the street on Pomona. It could be landscaped as well. Mr. Johnson said if this were to be a hard improvement, the additional curb line could be used for parallel parking.

Mr. Johnson said [unintelligible]. The reason for this would be to have traffic that’s entering this intersection have a more [unintelligible] . . . the driveways, especially on the east side of Pomona that would need to be served [unintelligible]. Roundabouts are a traffic control improvement that has been popularly adopted by agencies. The cities of San Diego and Encinitas have done a few; they have gained more popularity recently. This is probably a more expensive improvement than the one we just saw before, but they have their merits.

Mr. Peña observed that the really small roundabouts, like the ones in La Jolla, make you almost come to a stop to access them; it’s pretty tight. He thinks with the Paris-style ones that are really big, you don’t really have to slow down. He doesn’t see this one requiring motorists, for example, going north on Pomona, having to slow down very much. He knows there will be a yield sign there, but since Pomona is a pretty big travel lane, and serves as a commuter lane as well, you’ll have people speeding around this size of a roundabout and not get speed down very much. Mr. Johnson said this is just a concept, but if it were to proceed as a CIP project, we would want the designer of the project to create those deflections in such a manner that it would require vehicles to slow to a reasonable speed. Manuals that recommend or show design requirements for

roundabouts indicate that they are typically done on roads that intersect perpendicularly and have about equal volumes of traffic on all four legs and in this case, Pomona carries the majority of traffic and the angles where Seventh and Adella intersect Pomona make it more difficult for this type of application. Mr. Peña noted that there aren't equal access distances either; some are narrow merging opportunities and some are very long.

Mr. Johnson displayed another concept given to the Engineering Department by a resident. What it proposes to do is to channelize traffic in a more manageable way so that there is not as much confusion for vehicles that are coming [unintelligible]. You can see how he wanted to channelize traffic wanting to get on Seventh and Adella by moving them away from the traffic stream on Pomona. He's got a few stop signs here and that is something that would have to be worked out during the final design.

Larry Zaino asked what would happen to the choker attached to the park with the first diagram. The choker limits Pomona to two lanes. Mr. Johnson explained that the chokers were installed to decrease the amount of pedestrian crossing distance and to channelize vehicles into the center of the roadway. He said the intersection plan is a few hundred feet down from the chokers.

Mr. Walton said that no matter what is proposed it will have to be a CIP project and it will have to be approved by the City Council. Pomona in this area is a wide expanse of asphalt and he would like to see a CIP project move forward. The first step would be to get authorization to get a design, maybe several alternatives, and have the designer look at what was presented today, and maybe a traffic engineer can come up with a plan that works even better. Council would need to prioritize this with other projects and they have a very full plate of CIP projects. As far as the urgency, the accident history in this area is relatively accident free. This has to play into when it's done, but he's in favor of moving forward with some kind of CIP project.

Mr. Huth asked if the problem we're trying to fix is with the intersection; it's not really a pedestrian problem, it's a vehicle problem? Mr. Walton responded that it's so wide there (most Coronado streets are 48', curb to curb); this area is in excess of 60', so there's really a lot of room for vehicles to pass each other on the left and the right and gain speed. By narrowing the street he thinks some of the speed could be curbed and there would be better direction and definition of where they should be traveling.

Mr. Huth says if we're looking at this particular design, he doesn't see the need for being right next to the park (the lane that comes out on Pomona from Adella) in that he's curious about how Seventh, coming down the hill would enter the smaller intersection; is there a stop there now on Seventh? Mr. Johnson responded that there is, up by the curb return, but not that far into the intersection. Mr. Huth felt it would be interesting to see how that would work once you took that away and tried to push everything to one stop area. Mr. Johnson thinks that based on traffic volumes, most likely Adella would have the yield control and vehicles entering that small intersection area on Adella would probably need to yield to anyone on Seventh. Mr. Huth commented on the portion that's on the north side of Pomona and what impact it would have on the parking in front of that residence, because it looks like it would eliminate it. Mr. Johnson agreed that it would take away some curb frontage.

Mr. Peña said the Planning Commission would like to see this move up on the CIP priority schedule. Mr. Huth asked if there is any merit in getting feedback from the TOC on the other two drawing and Mr. Walton said he thinks that if this does get prioritized, to go at it with an open palette and give these concepts to the traffic consultant, saying that they were developed over the years and there are pros and cons to

each of them, but he'd be interested in hearing people's views of these alternatives. If this is funded for a design they could be passed on to the consultant.

Mr. Huth asked for comments on the other concepts. Mr. Walton said he had a concern with the size of a traffic circle and trying to squeeze one in that area that will work. There are also odd angles and driveways that would have to be incorporated into the traffic circle which would be a concern. Mr. Huth noted that the Birdrock traffic circles are at conventional intersections, so those flow better, except when there are big vehicles going through them; that's why they have the rounded curb and the sidewalk in the center that no one would use.

Mr. Huth said the other concept is almost a morph of the first one except it pulls that area away from the curb and creates a new island as opposed to that extended area of the curb line on the 600 block. Mr. Scanlon wondered if that would prohibit a left turn from Pomona onto Seventh or is it wide enough to allow traffic to turn left? [Mr. Johnson's response was unintelligible.] Mr. Huth observed that it looks like the island blocks that. Mr. Peña said he didn't see a fatal flaw, but he doesn't see it as a great plan either, but it's something to throw in the pile for the consultant. Mr. Walton's concern is with the driveway on the north end of the island; they'd now have to back out of two traffic lanes to get going, unless they're planning to go to Seventh. Those are details that would be worked out with an engineering plan.

Mr. Huth asked if the TOC should send a recommendation to the Council and Mr. Walton responded that there is a CIP project proposed for the Seventh and Adella intersection. The TOC could endorse that there should be something done and convey to Council that the need is there and see if that influences them to move it up or down. It's currently unfunded. Mr. Peña said the CIP is all about priorities and he was wondering how this stacks up with the Five Points; it's a tricky intersection as well. Mr. Walton said there's nothing planned there and Mr. Peña said he thought something had been planned in conjunction with the Glorietta Bay Master Plan. It's confusing. Mr. Walton said it's very safe; for the amount of traffic that goes through Five Points, accidents are very few. Mr. Huth said that some intersections that force people to be safer when they enter them because of their unconventional layouts; with Five Points, definitely everyone is watching when they come into that.

Mr. Huth asked if there was any thought of making any more recommendations and Mr. Peña said he didn't see how the TOC can recommend it be a high or low priority; they can say they reviewed it and think it has some merits. The TOC doesn't know if there are more important projects on the CIP list. Mr. Scanlon observed that that's the discretion of the Council; it is an unfunded CIP project right now. As he recalls, it's about a \$135,000 proposed design. Mr. Huth went along with Mr. Peña's suggestion to provide comments, but observed that we're not hearing any glaring data saying there's an immediate issue that needs to be dealt with in terms of accident history. Mr. Walton said he'd like concurrence from the Committee that there is room for improvement at this intersection and it should be looked at in the CIP. The Committee did not assign a priority to this issue, but felt that it is worth looking at.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.