

CITY OF CORONADO
TRAFFIC OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Thursday, April 3, 2008

A special meeting of the Traffic Operations Committee (T.O.C.) was held on Thursday, April 3, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Present were Scott Huth, Ed Walton, Lou Scanlon and Tony Peña. Ed Hadfield represented the absent Kim Raddatz. Assistant Engineer Dave Johnson was also present.

1. Minutes of the December 20, 2008 Meeting – The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Oral Communications – Carelyn Reynolds, Coronado Cab Corporation, P.O. Box 180179, Coronado, 92178, wanted to explore designating a cab stand on the southbound side of the 1500 block of Orange Avenue near the Hotel Del. She believes this would allow for greater safety in accessing the Hotel Del, which is one of their major customers, by preventing some of the cross-traffic movement. It wouldn't involve losing any meters and Sgt. Hima has offered to work with them on developing this; he envisions perhaps taking a spot from the white curb area to be designated for a cab stand.

Bob Lindsay, 1117 Isabella, wanted to discuss the Third and Fourth Streets intersections with Alameda Boulevard. He is impressed with how smoothly the traffic runs through the Fourth Street intersection. At Third Street traffic roars into the base as fast as it can; this works nicely with the traffic director. He understands that traffic lights will be going in at both of these intersections. Third Street does need something; either a person directing traffic during rush hour or a signal. It's difficult to make a left turn off of Alameda onto the base because of sight lines and how the traffic flows. He doesn't believe that a stoplight will ever work better than it is now on Fourth Street. The traffic flows beautifully all the time there. Do we really need to put a stoplight at Fourth? Will it be any better than it is now?

3. Request to Install a Blue Curb Zone in Front of 67 Catspaw Cape – Mr. Johnson reported that Ms. Kimberlee O'Maley, 67 Catspaw Cape, has requested a blue curb be installed in front of her residence. She has provided proof that she is a caregiver for her daughter with a disability that limits her mobility. The City has a warrant for installation of blue curb zones. One condition of the warrant is that the requestor is in possession of a valid handicap placard and this condition is met. Another condition is that the resident is not capable of unassisted travel of more than 50'; this condition is also met as her daughter is in a wheelchair and needs assistance to get into the residence. The other condition is that there can be no on-site space that can be converted into handicap parking. Typically, a garage will disqualify a residential blue curb zone because it can be converted to accommodate handicap parking. In this case there may be some special circumstances which make modifying the garage to accommodate handicap parking impractical. There are a washer and dryer positioned at the front of the garage that, if moved, might require quite a bit of modification

to the plumbing and electrical hook-ups to be placed in a different location. The Committee may determine that the circumstances in this particular location preclude reasonable accommodation and may allow for a handicap parking space.

Ms. Kimberlee O'Maley, 67 Catspaw Cape, is the mother of Kelsey O'Maley, age 13, who has cerebral palsy from a severe premature birth at 24 weeks and is essentially a quadriplegic and a permanent wheelchair user. Ms. O'Maley is a single parent. She looked for 15 months for a house with enough open space to move Kelsey around and get her into her bedroom, etc. It gets very difficult to manage someone with a complete disability as she gets bigger. One of the issues is getting her into the house. To transport Kelsey she has a converted van. Their vehicle has a rear-entry ramp conversion because it's much easier to park in most places. The ramp adds an extra three feet, three inches. You also have to have space when the person gets off the van and has to be maneuvered around; ADA requires five feet. Since Kelsey is still pediatric, it can be done in about three-and-a-half feet. The garage is only 20' deep and the van is 20'-5", so even if there was nothing in the garage, the garage door wouldn't close and when you put the ramp down it adds the extra three feet and a few inches. Then the driveway has an incline. Once the ramp goes down the van lowers so it's at the required ADA slope, which is 12 to one for every foot. It kneels down to the exact safe slope. Vans are only supposed to be allowed out on a flat entrance for safety for both the user and the handler. If a person is in a motor chair they're backing out and will go down the lift. If they're on a ramp it creates a danger spot. If it's a facilitated person, as in Kelsey's case, Ms. O'Maley manually takes her out, so there is a person behind and if you're going down a slope with a wheelchair that's dangerous to both people. Kelsey is also getting bigger and heavier and will be getting a new, larger wheelchair in June. To do this in a garage, the van and the ramp would all have to be on an even slope. If the driveway were totally level it would be fine; in this case there's a slope which creates an unsafe condition.

She continued that the choices are to use the driveway as a cut curb; it's a little bumpy but manageable if the first space is there. If the first space isn't there and she has to park in front of the full driveway, she can't get the wheelchair off the ramp and still get up the driveway. At the south end of the driveway the lip rises to where it becomes prohibitive to get the wheelchair over that; it's not an even cut curb through the whole driveway, so she'd end up half on the sidewalk and half on a raised cut curb. Kelsey goes in out and via the front door; the door that accesses the house from the garage is only 26" wide; her wheelchair now doesn't fit and her new wheelchair certainly won't fit. So they can't access the house through the door from the garage into the back of the house. Another option would be to create a cut curb at the end of the sidewalk and paint it blue or red so no one could park in front of it. If that was done, more parking spaces would be lost because it would take up the bulk of that curb where people park. To her, that creates a bigger problem in terms of accommodating the neighborhood and trying to maximize the parking availability. She noted that her personal car will always be parked in the garage and many of the residents park two cars out.

Mr. Peña asked why the O'Maleys have a rear-loading van versus a side-loading van and Ms. O'Maley said that because her daughter is a quadriplegic she can't do any activities of daily living such as feeding herself or rolling over. A rear-entry van is much easier because it puts Kelsey right up front in the middle and you don't lose any seats. With a side entry you have to take out a seat and that put the person in the wheelchair way behind the driver where she can't be seen. A rear-entry van is almost like a bowling alley that gets cut out when it's converted and the wheelchair rolls right into the center. You don't lose any of the side seats. It's actually the safest place for a wheelchair user to be if there were to be a

collision. And as a child, she wants friends to go places with her and her friends can sit on either side of her. Rear entries are done with hydraulics and they have almost no breakdowns; they've had their current one for 10 years and it's never broken down. She has friends with side entries where they pretty much destroy the OEM of the van; you lose your warranty with the manufacturer as soon as it's converted; she has never lost her warranty with Chrysler because none of the OEM is touched in the rear-entry conversion. Her conversion has never broken down and it has an immediate manual override, so if anything happened to the automatic, she can pull it down and up. Side entries are not built with hydraulics; they're mechanical, with an engine that breaks down more, so you lose your van more often and if she were to lose her van it's very hard to transport her daughter. The time a van is out being repaired pretty much shuts your life down. For the manual override in side entries you have to use a tool and get it undone; Ms. O'Maley said she's not good at engineering and she didn't want to have to be an engineer to drive her daughter around if a van broke down. They do travel a lot. The reliability of the rear-entry van has proven itself over 10 years.

Mr. Walton asked if Ms. O'Maley's garage is a double-car garage and she responded that it is supposed to be, but the former owner put built-ins on the left side so it would be hard to open the doors if two cars were parked there. Mr. Walton said he hadn't had a chance to see the interior of the garage, so it's difficult for him to say whether it can or can't be converted. He drove the neighborhood and saw similar units that have washers and dryers out there; he doesn't know if that's the way it was designed or if new washers and dryers are bigger and better served out there. He also noticed that a lot of the garages are not being utilized to house vehicles. He feels that it would be difficult to make a decision without seeing the garage. Ms. O'Maley responded that you can't make the van any smaller and you can't force the garage to be any longer or the driveway to be level. She emphasized that she will be putting one car in the garage, but the van will not fit. Kelsey has one of the most serious types of disabilities that people can have; a lot of people have blue permits, but Kelsey has a plate because of a lifetime disability. She doesn't have a hanging tag. She feels that needs to be taken into consideration; Kelsey is not the standard variety blue tag.

Mr. Scanlon asked to confirm that the length of the garage, irrespective of the washer and dryer, is 20' and Ms. O'Maley said that is correct, so even if she took that out the garage door wouldn't come down. Twenty feet is with the ramp down; if the ramp is up it's 17'-2". Then you need three-and-a-half feet to maneuver. Mr. Huth said he noticed several cars parked across driveways in Ms. O'Maley's neighborhood and asked how that would work for her. She replied that the ramp would have to come down in the middle of the driveway because Kelsey needs to go on the flattest part of it. It's not as flat as a cut curb, but it could work. She and Mr. Johnson projected that the front of the van would go in front of the utility box and they would need an extra 10-12' of the curb which would be short of the required amount for a compliant handicap blue curb. The downside is that you can't put signage on a non-compliant space and call it a handicap space and if there isn't signage, then anyone can park there even without a blue tag. Because it's not compliant you can't legally protect it for the use of those with disability tags or plates. For example, the school district has completely non-compliant handicap parking; she has a hard time getting her daughter to school because people don't respect it; they pull up and just sit there forever.

Don Thoza, 79 Catspaw, he wrote one of the letters about this request. His letter was against installing a blue curb unless it was a wheelchair situation. This is a wheelchair situation and what Ms. O'Maley is saying is 100% true and she hasn't even mentioned the

up-step from the garage to the ground level to even get into the house through the bedroom. She is telling even less than what there is and all of what she said is true.

Bill Maxam, 24 Catspaw Cape, strongly supports Ms. O'Maley's application. There may be a letter or two in the file from a couple of other neighbors who do not support it, but it's his understanding that they didn't bother to go over and speak to Ms. O'Maley and really see what the situation is. He has built about 18 houses around San Diego County and has some experience with ramps and what needs to be done to modify things. As far as moving the wall on the inside of the building to get more space, she'd be moving a load-bearing wall that has electrical and plumbing and which economically doesn't work. If there ever was a case of real need and the opportunity for our City to show what we can do for people who have these situations, this is the case for that. He's seen a few blue curbs around town that are basically for older people that need a little help with their walkers; that's not what we're dealing with here. He hopes the City will be able to help.

Mr. Peña said before he came to the meeting he had a lot of questions and thought that maybe it would be possible to do some things without installing a blue curb, but he did not realize the parameters were so tight with this situation in terms of the measurements and the vehicles. The garage is a fixed dimension unless you want to knock a wall out, and he doesn't think you want to go that far. He is convinced there's a need for a blue curb. His question is should it be a modified length of blue curb to see how that works (whether people respect it) or should it be a full-length blue curb that can be enforced?

Mr. Huth asked if there is any way to adjust the driveway apron and do red standoffs. Mr. Johnson said he and Mr. Walton discussed this and they felt a red zone, while it would keep people from parking in that location where Ms. O'Maley is looking for some relief, there's no way to guarantee that she wouldn't receive a ticket for being parked in a red zone.

Mr. Huth asked if the City has ever had an applicant whose garage would require significant structural movement to make it comply and Mr. Johnson said that the blue curbs the T.O.C. has recommended have been ones that have not had any type of on-site available parking to be converted. The warrant says that if there is an on-site space it must be able to be *reasonably* converted; in this instance the word "reasonable" is the key word. In this case it's not a reasonable accommodation.

Mr. Walton commented on the modified blue curb concept. If we don't put a full standard curb in there that may entice a user to think it's full-size and encroach on the driveway. He is more encouraged to go with a full-length blue curb. Based on what he's heard, his concern about the garage may be moot; it seems like this might be a case where reasonable accommodations can't be made in the garage. Based on people's testimony, particularly Mr. Thozza's where he was opposed and then came back and said "She's absolutely right," is pretty convincing.

Mr. Scanlon moved to forward to the City Council a recommendation to install a full-length blue curb zone adjacent to the residence at 67 Catspaw Cape. Mr. Peña seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Johnson said he would forward the recommendation to the City Council at their April 15 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m.