

CITY OF CORONADO

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

April 25, 2013

A meeting of the Traffic Operations Committee (TOC) was held on Thursday, April 25, 2013, at 2:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Mike Blood, Rachel Hurst, Matt Little and Ed Walton were present. Lou Scanlon was absent and represented by Mike Lawton. Assistant Engineer Dave Johnson was also present.

1. Minutes of the March 28, 2013 Meeting – The minutes were approved unanimously.
2. Oral Communications – None.
3. Recommendation Regarding Installation of a 30-Foot Yellow Zone and Removal of 40 Feet of Red Curb Zone on Ocean Boulevard adjacent to the North Beach Restrooms – Mr. Johnson reported that in July 2012, the City Council approved the installation of yellow curb loading zones at South Beach and Central Beach to support beach activities such as weddings. The Recreation Department also wanted a loading zone at North Beach; the proposed location was to be a newly constructed pad just to the north of the existing driveway access to the beach, but the Coastal Commission denied the request and asked the City to locate the loading zone off the beach. The Engineering Department investigated other ways to accommodate a loading zone on the street without impacting the amount of parking in the area.

A 30' yellow curb zone east of the existing handicap blue curb parking zone was proposed in what is now an open parking space. In order to have no net loss of parking, the existing red curb zones across the street were looked at. After researching, no reason could be found for so much red curb. There is approximately 110' of red curb along the curb return in front of 301 Ocean Boulevard. The Vehicle Code allows cars to park on curb returns; they just can't park in front of a pedestrian ramp. There is a possibility of eliminating some of the excess red curb in order to have no net loss of parking and gain a yellow curb zone. Staff's recommendation is to remove approximately 40' of red curb zone (two 20' sections will equal two parking spaces) on the north side of Ocean Boulevard/Ocean Drive and install a 30' yellow curb zone on the south side of Ocean Boulevard adjacent to the North Beach restrooms.

Mr. Little moved to approve the staff recommendation, Mr. Blood seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. Recommendation Regarding a Request to Evaluate Pedestrian Crossings at the Intersection of Avenida de las Arenas and Strand Way – Mr. Johnson said that Frank Spitzer contacted the City regarding his concern for pedestrian safety at this location. Mr. Spitzer stated that he witnessed a near-miss collision between a pedestrian and a vehicle there and requested that the City conduct a study to determine if additional signage or pavement markings would be appropriate there.

Strand Way functions as a frontage road that provides access to the bay front developments such as City Hall and the Community Center, as well as Glorietta Bay Park and the public boat launch facility. Strand Way runs parallel to SR 75 for much of its length and is separated from SR 75 by a median which hosts a Class I bike facility. Traffic on Avenida de las Arenas and SR 75 is controlled by a signal. Vehicles on Strand Way entering the intersection from either the north or south are controlled by yield signs and then are controlled by the signal on Avenida de las Arenas. There is a slight elevation difference (18-24") between Strand Way and SR 75 which requires a stem wall that parallels Strand Way. At the intersection of Avenida de las Arenas onto Strand Way is an approximately 10½% slope where the bike path and crosswalk interface with the intersection.

Mr. Johnson said that Mr. Spitzer's concern is the lack of a clearly marked pedestrian path between the Community Center on the east side of Strand Way and the bike path and marked crosswalks on SR 75. Currently, there are post and chain fences that line the stem wall near the intersection to alert pedestrians that they're not to enter Strand Way across that location because of the elevation difference and the lack of proper pedestrian ramps.

He said that this is considered somewhat of an irregular intersection because Strand Way and Avenida de las Arenas is one intersection and SR 75 and Avenida de las Arenas is a second intersection. The intersections are not connected by a marked crosswalk due to the steep slopes as you travel from SR 75 to Strand Way.

He said that when dealing with pedestrians and accessible paths, the City is regulated by the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide facilities for disabled pedestrians that meet minimum standards for accessibility. Pedestrian ramps have maximum allowable slopes; the standard for the maximum slope is 8.33% and as this location has an approximately 10½% slope, it exceeds the maximum slope for an ADA pedestrian ramp. Therefore, without some reconfiguration or change in the intersection's geometry, there's no way to safely provide an ADA-accessible pedestrian ramp at this location. The City wouldn't want to encourage pedestrians to cross at a location with an excessive slope that could possibly put them in harm's way. He does not recommend a pedestrian ramp in Strand Way and because a pedestrian ramp can't be provided, no crosswalk markings should be installed that would encourage crossings at that location.

He also looked at the use of an in-street pedestrian sign to alert drivers to the possibility of pedestrians. He analyzed the City's warrant for these signs, but this location did not meet the criteria. The two criteria that were not met were that these signs can only be used in marked crosswalks and there is a minimum threshold (2,500) for vehicles traveling on the street. The average daily traffic on Strand Way at this location is 1,530. The warrant states that all criteria must be met in order to install an in-street pedestrian sign. Therefore, such a sign is not being recommended.

He looked at replacing the existing yield signs on Strand Way with stop signs. Yield signs allow drivers to determine if there are any impending conflicts with pedestrians in the intersection and, if not, they can either proceed through the intersection to the other side of Strand Way or make a turn onto the state highway. If there was a stop sign there, vehicles would be required to come to a full stop; they want to make the light through the intersection and sometimes are more concentrated on the light than they are at looking at either side of the intersection to see if there are any pedestrians crossing. Also, yield signs allow some stacking in the intersection because vehicles can come to the limit line and make the decision to enter based on the green light, whereas with a stop-controlled intersection, if the light is red on SR 75 that

driver is required to wait at the stop which could cause a lot of congestion within that intersection. There are warrant criteria for stop signs, but they were not looked at because the vehicle volumes that were looked at for the in-street signs would not meet the criteria for a stop installation.

Mr. Johnson summed up: Many pedestrians traverse this intersection as it currently exists. Unfortunately, the existing geometry precludes the use of marked crosswalks or an in-street pedestrian sign. Replacing the existing yield signs with stops would increase traffic congestion, but more importantly, could lead to an increase in dangerous driver behavior. Staff will continue to look for methods to provide marked crosswalks across Strand Way as well as funding availability. This is probably more of a capital project (such as changes in grade) than simply putting paint on the ground or some signs in place.

Frank Spitzer feels his request is hamstrung because of rules and regulations, but he wanted to point out several things. He feels that crossing the highway is intuitive – bicyclists, pedestrians and drivers know where to go within the intersection because it's controlled. When they get into the Strand Way intersection it's irregular and not intuitive what to do. When you come across from the Shores to the City complex you see a sign that says "No pedestrian crossing/Use crosswalk." So crossing is controlled up to that point. When you go to the other side, then what? How do you cross? There's no intuitive way to do it. When bicycles see a yield sign it's usually to yield to cars, but pedestrians crossing is not taken into account. More importantly, when you're approaching the yield sign from a car you're looking already at the intersection; you're not looking to the left where people are coming from the promenade to cross. It's the same thing for bicyclists going the other way; it does not include anything whatsoever providing pedestrians or bicyclists coming from the Shores or from the other way. The bike yield has nothing to do with pedestrians, so in order to get from the complex area to cross Strand Way, there should be some sort of guidance to say "go this way/be cautious." In other words, you come from the bike path going toward the Playhouse. Also, people who are going to City Hall, northbound on the bike lane, will go diagonal into that confusing intersection. Expected vs. unexpected. When you're crossing from the Shores there's the beautiful promenade and the eye is automatically showing you the bay; it's not cognizant of what's going on from the standpoint of pedestrians. Also, the yield sign on the right-hand side can barely be seen; it's higher than what is normal from a driver's perspective because of the three-foot-high wall. If you go southbound on the Strand you're looking that way, not to the left. The pedestrian sign says what you can't do, but it doesn't say what you can do. He wanted to find out if below the yield sign a sign could be put up for caution purposes (he displayed two signs indicating pedestrians crossing). Mr. Spitzer said he'd contacted someone with the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* and asked him what the exceptions are. The man said he'd get back to him next week. Mr. Spitzer realizes that something might cost thousands and thousands, but something should be done in the interim and he asked the committee to look at it.

Mr. Little asked how people are expected to cross Strand Way – what route does the City want them to take? Mr. Johnson responded that it doesn't want them crossing at the northern leg because of the semicircle area and the distance between the point where they would stage themselves to see if traffic is within the intersection because that crossing is quite long. We would want them to cross at the intersection leg where the sign points them to use the crosswalk to come across the intersection. There the crossing path is much shorter – only 20'. There's a chain and post fence on either side of the stem wall to let people know we don't want them traversing across the stem wall. He noted that there are no crosswalk markings to guide

pedestrians because of the 10½% slope. If we were at grade with the pedestrian ramp we would most likely encourage pedestrians to cross at that location.

Mr. Little asked if Engineering had considered putting a stop sign at that location and leaving the other yield sign and Mr. Johnson said no. Mr. Lawton was concerned about having a yield sign on one side of the intersection and a stop sign on the other side; this could be confusing.

Mr. Walton doesn't really think the issue is markings and getting pedestrians across, direction-wise. He thinks the issue is where they should cross and can you do that with the existing grades? He thinks there needs to be a physical change of the intersection to correct the problem. A possible solution could be a speed table to raise the grade up to install a proper pedestrian crossing. It would slow traffic and assist with the grade, but he's not sure it would work because it would have to be engineered to account for 12-18". Mr. Little agreed that a physical design change needs to occur. Mr. Lawton asked if there are any marked crosswalks across Strand Way where the distance is similar to 20' and Mr. Johnson replied that there's one at the Boathouse Restaurant. Mr. Lawton's experience with 20'-wide crossings is that pedestrians don't look at 20'-wide roadways as major crossing and they pretty much cross where they want to cross or where it's comfortable for them to cross. A crosswalk may visually create something, but really, pedestrians are going to cross a 20' roadway wherever they want to cross.

Mr. Walton said this would have to be placed in the Engineering work plan and because it will need to have some design and engineering, it probably needs to get some funding.

Mr. Blood made a motion to support staff's recommendation for no change in the intersection, and to task Engineering to add it to their work plan and report back to the T.O.C. in a timely fashion with some possible alternatives. Mr. Little seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.