

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
PARKING AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
March 23, 2017**

A. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Parking and Public Improvements Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, California, was held on the **23rd day of March 2017**, at the hour of **6:30 p.m.**, in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue, in said City.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Fournier, Lipps, Nicholson, Delk.
Absent: Chairman King.
Staff Present: Traffic Engineer Erik Zandvliet.
Clerk: Angela Soo.

Commissioner Lipps took over responsibility of chairing the meeting.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

03/23/17-1 February 23, 2017

MOTION: Commissioner Delk made a motion to approve the minutes with no corrections. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nicholson.

Ayes: Fournier, Lipps, Nicholson, Delk.
Noes: None.
Abstain: None.
Absent: Chair King.

D. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Commissioner Lipps opened Audience Participation (3-Minute Limit).

Gita O'Neill, no address provided, said the crosswalks around the City in general are in poor condition. She hopes that the plans for new crosswalks understands near Pennekamp Elementary School, across Meadows Avenue and 2nd Street do not get derailed. She also said brighter crosswalk paint and painting red curbs would improve visibility.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet suggested the City could consider an annual or bi-annual crosswalk/school markings maintenance program.

Commissioner Lipps closed Audience Participation.

E. GENERAL BUSINESS

03/23/17-2 Consider an Adult Crossing Guard at Rowell Avenue and Gates Avenue

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet summarized the staff report.

In response to a question by Commissioner Nicholson, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said the process for relocating or adding a crossing guard would require going to City Council and presenting the different options.

Commissioner Nicholson questioned why there is a crossing guard at Manhattan Beach Boulevard and Peck Avenue where there is a four-way traffic signal with crosswalks.

In response to a question by Commissioner Fournier, Traffic Engineer confirmed that adding another crossing guard must go to City Council for approval.

In response to a question by Commissioner Lipps, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet explained that “uncontrolled” means an intersection with no stop sign or traffic signal.

Commissioner Delk said he is interested in the Police Department’s perspective and invited Lt. Andy Harrod to speak.

Lt. Harrod said crossing guards help relieve police officers from having to patrol or respond to all those areas, because there are just not enough officers to be everywhere at the same time. The crossing guards are definitely an added protection for the schools at a small cost. The Police Department has no funding for any new positions. He also noted the higher traffic volumes and lack of compassion by drivers near schools make it more difficult to walk to school. He noted a recent accident where a parent was driving in a hurry and caused a rollover accident.

Commissioner Nicholson asked if drivers behave better when crossing guards are present.

Lt. Harrod said sometimes parents and commuters still go through the crosswalk without stopping, even with a crossing guard. However, he said crossing guards do provide a calming factor and increase visibility by the vests they wear.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet remarked the City is in the beginning of the second budget cycle, which would be a good time to request any additional funding for crossing guards.

In response to a question by Commissioner Lipps, Lt. Harrod said bus services ceased about 10 years ago.

Audience Participation

Gita O'Neill, no address provided, said many pedestrian cross on the north side of the school and down the vehicle ramp, which is very dangerous. Having a crossing guard would encourage people to walk all the way to the crosswalk. She also added that parents are walk their Kindergarten children to school at this crossing.

Commissioner Lipps closed Audience Participation.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Delk supports having a crossing guard at every school intersection, but realizes there is also a \$12,000 cost.

Commissioner Nicholson also supports having a crossing guard, giving people an incentive to stay on the west side instead of walking on the east side without a sidewalk.

Commissioner Fournier said the City is an exception to most schools because there is no bus system in place.

MOTION: Commissioner Fournier made a motion to authorize a crossing guard at Rowell and Gates Avenues. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Delk.

Commissioner Nicholson amended the motion to request the City Council fund the additional cost for the new crossing guard. Commissioner Fournier accepted the amended motion.

Ayes: Fournier, Nicholson, Delk, Lipps.

Noes: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Chair King.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said he expects the item will go to City Council end of May.

03/23/17-3 Consider an Adult Crossing Guard at Pacific Avenue and 17th Street

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet summarized the staff report and mentioned a typo with one of the school names.

Commissioner Delk agrees with the need for a crossing guard at that intersection, but asked why there is one at 14th Street and another at Manhattan Beach Boulevard.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet explained the flow of suggested school routes and recommended crossing locations. He also noted that these crossing guard locations also serve American Martyrs School.

Commissioner Lipps opened Audience Participation.

Audience Participation

All the Audience Participation was in favor of authorizing a crossing guard at Pacific Avenue and 17th Street.

Jill Schleifer, 17th and Pacific Avenue, said there are also private schools that do pick-up/drop-offs, causing a lot of backing up into red curb areas.

Emma Schleifer, 17th and Pacific Avenue, thanked the PPIC for their time and keeping them safe.

Katie McDonald, 1609 Walnut Avenue, recounted her terrifying experience when walking 10 children to school one day. She had first made sure all children were stopped on the corner before proceeding to cross, when a car behind her on the north side swerved around trying to make a left hand turn dangerously close to the children.

Mercedes Morton, 1508 N. Poinsettia Avenue, said her children were part of that incident. She also pointed out the hedges along the school grounds and parked cars that make it difficult to see the children. She further added Pacific Avenue becomes a speedway.

Commissioner Nicholson asked if the school can trim the hedges and suggested parents approach the PTA.

Tracy Horan, 1149 Pine Avenue, said she walks her kids to school and noted the developmental benefits of walking. Additional factors justifying the crossing guard are the two entrances/exits to Pacific School along 17th Street.

Allison Compton, 1701 Pacific Avenue, said the crossing guard may not be the complete answer but she would appreciate one and requested further research be done.

Jane Hill, 1700 Pacific Avenue, said she is not only concerned about the children's safety, but her father's security as well. On one occasion she observed a woman driving her car alongside her kids, essentially walking them in her car. She suggested installing flashing red lights and thanked the PPIC for their consideration.

Commissioner Lipps closed Audience Participation.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Fournier said he supports the crossing guard and reminded the community to call the Police Department when violations occur in order to make them aware. He also asked about hedge trimming enforcement.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet explained that the hedges are on school district property but are subject to the same rules as fences.

Commissioner Nicholson said it is ironic that the mothers here tonight are the same demographics of the mothers that are driving. He is amazed at the disregard and believes any change has to start with the mothers, using the PTA as a resource.

Commissioner Lipps agreed with getting the PTA involved and putting out a weekly newsletter.

MOTION: Commissioner Nicholson made a motion to accept staff's recommendation for the crossing guard and encourage City Council to fund the position. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fournier.

Ayes: Delk, Nicholson, Fournier, Lipps.

Noes: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Chair King.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said the item will go to City Council along with a request for funding, and will most likely be on the Consent Calendar. It would still be helpful for supporters to attend the meeting in case the item gets pulled from the agenda. He further explained the approval will be for crossing guard plus funding in the 2017-2018 budget.

Commissioner Nicholson advised the audience to keep track of the item and attend the meeting in order to express their support, if needed.

F. OTHER ITEMS

03/23/17-4 Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Reports: Receive and File

Received and Filed.

03/23/17-5 Staff Follow-Up Items

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet provided an update on the Valley Drive Neighborhood plan which is expected to go to City Council in May.

Traffic Engineer Zandvliet provided an update on Gelson's Market that was approved by the Planning Commission and will most likely be appealed.

In response to a question by Commissioner Fournier, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet explained the appeal process.

Commissioner Nicholson complimented Traffic Engineer Zandvliet on his explanation of the parking calculations used for the Gelsons. He remarked that the anti-Gelson's group had time to prepare their case because the City took a long time in scheduling the hearing. This in turn caused many of the anti-arguments to be based on misinformation.

03/23/17-6 Commissioner Items

At request of Commissioner Nicholson, Traffic Engineer Zandvliet provided an update on the project at Highland Avenue and 38th Street and said it was out to bid. The crosswalk work is actually \$200,000 not \$313,000, because there are two projects in the bid. Construction is expected to begin before Memorial Day.

Commissioner Fournier asked for status of ensuring parking meters can read new chip cards. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet said the City is purchasing updated parking meters, but will not be able to do all 2,500 meters at the same time.

Discussion followed on whether someone is allowed to park at a broken meter. Commissioner Fournier asked for clarification. Traffic Engineer Zandvliet yes, but they are still subject to the time limits. He said the City has real-time reporting that shows which meters are inoperable. Commissioner Nicholson added that salt air ruins the readers.

Commissioner Lipps adjourned the meeting.

G. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at **7:41 p.m.** to the regular Parking and Public Improvements Commission Meeting on **Thursday, April 27, 2017**, in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue, in said City.