



**CITY OF HEMET**  
**Traffic and Parking Commission Minutes**  
**Wednesday, March 10, 2004**  
**8:00 AM**

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**City Council Chambers**  
**450 E. Latham Avenue**  
**Hemet, CA 92543**

The meeting was called to order at 8:08 AM by Chairman Berry.

1. **ROLL CALL:** Commissioner Don Berry, Chair; Commissioner Dan Walters, Chair pro tem; Commissioner Tom Covington; Commissioner Gareth Modica; Planning Commissioner Jim Calkins; Council Member Roger Meadows - all present.  
  
**Absent:** Commissioner Patrick Searl resigned at the Council meeting on 3/9/04 to serve on the Planning Commission.  
  
**Staff Present:** Deputy Public Works Director Mike Gow; Police Corporal Jeff Pinney; Engineering Aide Carly Johansen; Administrative Assistant/Commission Secretary Marilyn Hampton.
2. **FLAG SALUTE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Chairman Berry
3. **Approval of Minutes of February 11, 2004.**  
*Motion was made by Commissioner Walters to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Modica, and carried 4-0.*
4. **Report of Council Action on February 24th to Commission recommendations of February 11, 2004.**  
*Mr. Gow reported that Council approved Commission's recommendations.*
5. **Whittier School Parking**  
*(Anissa Vincent, Whittier School PTO President)*  
Mr. Gow stated that 10-minute parking signs are posted along Whittier and Gilbert, and the curbing at the corner of Gilbert is painted red. Last year, the parking sign was relocated from the red curb. The current request is to mark the signs to allow longer periods of parking outside of typical school hours and indicate 10-minute parking during school hours. He felt that the concern is for the safety of students

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during school hours, but the action being requested is to allow parking after school hours. He felt this is a convenience matter versus a safety issue and will not affect the picking up or dropping off of students. He stated that the City would need input from the school district to enact changes, in addition to a request from the PTO.

Anissa Vincent, 3193 Avon Place, Hemet, President of Whittier Elementary School PTO, stated the request is for signage to reflect 10-minute parking Monday through Friday, 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM. This would allow more parking for conferences and open houses during non-school hours. She felt that painting the curb green in the 10-minute zone would also give greater visibility.

Commissioner Covington supports the signage changes and green curb. He asked what conversations are occurring between the PTO and parents concerning parking three deep in the street. Ms. Vincent stated the issue was brought to her attention by a Hemet Police Officer living in the area, who assisted the PTO with the proposed changes. There is illegal dropping off of kids in the middle of the street because of no designated parking. Commissioner Covington asked if there are parent volunteers to help with traffic control; Ms. Vincent was not aware of such. He had spoken with a lady who helped with traffic control in the past. The same problem is present, primarily at older schools constructed when the population was less.

Commissioner Walters inquired if Police Volunteers could assist with traffic control in the mornings and afternoons. Mr. Gow stated the school has crossing guards at Whittier and Carol. He stated if something is done at one school, we may need to be prepared to do the same at other schools. Signage is more visible and easier to maintain than red curbing. Staff recommends posting signs, but not painting red curbing, as it would be inconsistent with changed hours of parking. He believes that sight distance at driveways requires the existing "No Parking" for at least one space. Mr. Gow stated that staff can work out a consensus with the school district itself regarding any changes. Commissioner Modica felt that 10-minute parking should not apply to Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. Council Member Meadows stated that education is needed for the drivers. Police Corporal Pinney stated that a Police Patrol Officer is not always present at Whittier Elementary; motor officers are divided among elementary schools to keep traffic moving. He stated that Whittier and some other elementary schools were never intended to have so many students. The problem is that parents just want to drop off their kids, and if the police are there ticketing illegal parking due to the totally inadequate parking, this causes animosity. He stated the change in society has resulted in many parents picking up their children, creating the need for more parking. He felt that the problem is not solvable by the Police Department. Commissioner Walters felt there was a problem with parents' vehicles blocking residential driveways; Corporal Pinney said there

have not been a lot of complaints about that. Commissioner Calkins asked if the Commission could have input and comments on school site plans. Mr. Gow stated that the City comments on school plans, but has little authority to dictate parking. Commissioner Calkins stated the parking at Harmony Elementary works well, because there are no buses using the driveway, which is used for student drop off and pickup. There is parking available on Windsor off Cawston and a crossing guard present. Mr. Gow stated that the new Jacob Wiens School will have a bus area and a separate student pickup and drop off site.

Council Member Meadows reported that the City Council reactivated the Council liaison to the School district. He is one liaison and another has not been appointed. He said older schools have the parking problems; adequate parking has been planned for new schools.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Covington to change the signs on Gilbert and Whittier to read "10-Minute Parking, 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday" to allow longer after-hours parking, seconded by Commissioner Modica, and carried 4-0.*

6. Access Review for TPM No. 31668 at Southeast Corner Sanderson/Devonshire - Median Plans.

The traffic consultant for the developer of the proposed commercial site at the SEC of Sanderson/Devonshire recommended placement of raised medians. The Commission directed staff to prepare an entire plan for raised medians on Sanderson. Mr. Gow described the potential plan for 6" raised curb medians from Devonshire to Acacia. He stated he sees this as precedent setting. Medians have been a controversial issue throughout the city, especially on Florida. There have been complaints about left-turn movements onto Sanderson at Dairy Queen, Home Depot, and Steer and Stein. Raised medians would restrict left-turn movements and help to eliminate turning conflicts. The medians could be landscaped, Xeroscaped, or filled in with stamped concrete, keeping sight distance issues in mind. The drawing shows 11 driveways now having potential left-turn movements onto Sanderson, which would be blocked by the raised medians. Four entrances would be created or allowed to have left turns off Sanderson into shopping centers; one at Stater Bros. and one into Home Depot, but no left turns onto Sanderson down to Acacia. The plan is to eliminate left turns onto Sanderson, but allow channelized left-turn movements, giving a barrier between traffic pattern. The developer's traffic consultant wanted to eliminate left turns entirely. The area south of the proposed development includes Von's, Dairy Queen, and Target. Accesses are indicated into Staples, one into Dairy Queen, one into Von's, one into Steve's. Raised medians can be placed to channelize the left-turn movements to allow access into the shopping center and into Staples. There will still be some flexibility for left-turn access into both shopping centers.

Council Member Meadows received a complaint that there is no sidewalk or ADA

provision, only dirt and curb, going north on the east side of Sanderson between Tarbell Realty and Dairy Queen. A young man in a wheelchair scooted across Sanderson when he saw a break in the traffic and a Police Officer ticketed him. Mr. Gow stated that the City can construct a section of sidewalk and handle the situation at staff level.

Commissioner Calkins clarified that the proposed changes would allow only right turns out of the entire Von's center. He reminded the Commission that Safeway had been located where Grocery Outlet is now and moved because of poor access and right turns only. Mr. Gow stated that is one consequence of restricting left-turn movements. He identified on the drawing a section near Steve's where a left turn could remain. He said a physical barrier could be created and leave the left turn also. Commissioner Walters inquired about the Planning Commission's feelings about medians. Commissioner Calkins stated that the issue was raised, but nothing definitive came out of discussion. CalTrans talked about placing raised medians on Florida, but ran into a real bottleneck at the railroad track. He stated he can request that the item be placed on the Planning Commission's agenda. Commissioner Calkins stated the Planning Commission is still looking at the SEC of Devonshire and Sanderson. Mr. Gow stated, from staff's perspective, medians do make traffic safer and create a barrier between opposing traffic. Landscaping medians adds an attractive element. He stated that, if a merchant is opposed to restricting left turn movements, they will drag their feet in putting up signs that have fallen down and he felt that medians would help even without right or left-turn signs. He stated that the entire area from Florida to Acacia is dangerous and needs to be looked at, especially in view of the coming heavy traffic with Lowe's. Mr. Gow stated that medians are very successful for obtaining grant funding. If the plan for this project is approved and goes into our Master Plan, we can look for grant funding. Corporal Pinney stated that he believes, in terms of regulating left turns, raised medians are effective. He indicated that a lot of collisions are due to failure to yield; however, he agreed that business owners do not like to have their entrance blocked out.

Mr. Gow stated that the developer will be directed through the Planning Commission to install the medians along their project about 2/3 of the way from Devonshire to Florida. Stater's is not part of that plan and needs to be acted upon and phased in. He stated that the Traffic Commission has the authority to make recommendations directly to the Council, but may want to take a joint recommendation with the Planning Commission to the Council on this controversial item. He suggested that field work be done in meeting with the business managers involved, including Von's, Target, and Staples, to get their buy in on the project before taking it to Council. A left turn out of Staples and Target Center onto Sanderson could be looked at to move traffic in and out as easily as possible. He stated that the first phase of the medians could piggyback on the developer's improvements. He felt it would be prudent to take to Council the entire plan the

Commission directed staff to prepare, along with the findings of the Planning Commission, comments from the businesses, along with the support of the Police Department, and use the area from Florida north to Devonshire and from Florida to Acacia as a traffic calming test area. Council Member Meadows stated that CalTrans is again indicating they will talk medians if something is not done on Florida, since traffic activity continues to increase.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Walters to present to the businesses involved the plan for 6" curb raised medians from Acacia to Devonshire, with the addition of left turn out at Von's and the Staples center, and take the item as quickly as possible to a Council Work Study, seconded by Commissioner Covington, and carried 4-0.*

**7. California/74 Traffic Signal.**

Mr. Gow stated Heartland is on the NWC and a mobile home sales office is on the NEC. The entire north half of Florida is in the City's jurisdiction, the southerly half is in the County's jurisdiction. Plans submitted did not take into consideration the widening of the road. The property owner is more than willing to give the needed right-of-way, but there is a potential issue of who owns it; the County and the original owner may need to quit claim any interest. The proposed layout shows three through lanes, a left-turn lane going southbound onto California, and a dedicated right-turn lane. On the east side, there are two through lanes and a center turn lane. Mr. Gow has, on several occasions, asked the County if they want to have their signals installed at the ultimate right-of-way, but has received no comment yet. He is prepared to move forward on the project after obtaining the right-of-way. If the County is forced to move their signals later on, that is their project. The layout design will be submitted to CalTrans, and it is hoped that construction will be started by the end of the year. CalTrans, Edison, Verizon, Adelphia, Edison, and utilities are all involved with the project. Mr. Gow stated he is recommending to Council to widen California where the sales office is. On California, there will be a left-turn lane onto Florida, a single through lane, and a right-turn lane. The NEC is in the City. If the County does not want to have their signals installed at the ultimate right-of-way, they will have to be relocated later when the area is developed and annexed into the City. There will be a condition on the developer's project to move them at that time.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Walters to support staff's recommendation to expedite this very important project, seconded by Commissioner Modica, and carried 4-0.*

**8. Bridge Inspection Report.**

Informational item. CalTrans checks bridges every two years. There are 13 bridges in the city and we are getting two more. All bridges passed inspection. The bridge on Stetson crossing the Hemet Channel near the airport is on staff's list to seek grant funding for complete replacement. Council Member Meadows stated that if Stetson ever turns and goes SW around the canal, this bridge will not get as much

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traffic. Stetson would run along to Warren Rd. Mr. Gow stated that when Rancho Diamante develops or we get State funding for transportation, that will happen. Council Member Meadows stated that the County cannot extend the runway without extending Warren, and part of Stetson will be taken out by the runway.

**9. Riverside County TIP update.**

Informational item. An item of note is the extension of Domenigoni Parkway out towards the 215 which is set back because of the finding of a breeding pair of gnat catchers.

**10. Action Item List.**

The list is designed to update Commission on projects and assist staff in keeping sight of Commission's directions.

**11. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

**12. Future Agenda Items.**

None.

**13. ADJOURNMENT:**

*At 10:08 AM, motion was made by Commissioner Covington to adjourn the meeting.*

Next meeting is scheduled for 8:00 AM, Wednesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, at City Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

**Marilyn Hampton  
Commission Secretary**