



CITY OF HEMET
Traffic and Parking Commission Minutes
Wednesday, May 12, 2004
8:00 AM

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

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 AM by Chairman Berry.

1. **ROLL CALL:** Don Berry, Chair; Dan Walters, Chair pro tem; Commissioner Gareth Modica; Commissioner Roger Wellman; Planning Commissioner Jim Calkins; Council Member Roger Meadows.

Commissioner Berry made a motion to excuse Commissioner Modica, seconded by Commissioner Walters, and carried 3-0.

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Gow, Deputy Public Works Director; Police Captain Rudy Cabrera; Police Officer Jim Waters; Carly Johansen, Engineering Aide; Marilyn Hampton, Commission Secretary.

2. **FLAG SALUTE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Chairman Berry.
3. **Approval of Minutes of April 14, 2004.**
Motion was made by Commissioner Walters to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Wellman, and carried 3-0.
4. **Report of Council Action on April 13, 2004 - Council Accepted Resignation of Tom Covington from Traffic and Parking Commission.**
5. **Appointment of Roger Wellman as new Commissioner.**
Commissioner Wellman was introduced and welcomed by Mike Gow.
6. **Report of Council Action of April 27th on Commission recommendations of April 14th.**
Mr. Gow reported that Council approved speed limits from last meeting and the Auto Mall improvements.
7. **Request for Review of Ongoing Speeding Problems on West Oakland Avenue, Between Lyon and Kirby Avenues.**
(Judy Riggi and Irene Fekete - Valle Hermosa - Hemet)

Mr. Gow said this situation is not new to the City or Commission. The speed limit is posted at 25 mph, as low a speed as possible. The request is for more enforcement. Staff recommended placing a speed trailer for a short-term benefit by making drivers aware, together with additional enforcement in the area. Mr. Gow stated that residents are frustrated with drivers going too fast, and it is a very real concern for

Traffic and Parking Commission Minutes

May 12, 2004

Page 2

which the speeders need to be cited. Oakland is a through street and part of the network used to get people through the city. The City has recently not allowed fronting residential homes on streets like Oakland because of the concerns seen.

Irene Fekete, 1831 W. Oakland, asked how many speeding citations have been issued on Oakland since she attended the September meeting. Police Captain Cabrera reported that Officer Waters has issued 7 citations recently. A hand search will be undertaken for complete details and total number of citations. Ms. Fekete remarked that she looked at a similar 1/4 mile area in Sierra Dawn and indicated that they have dips, signs, and a signal. She stated there are none of these measures present to slow vehicles down from traveling 50-60 mph on Oakland. She said the residents would be happy with the same arrangement to curtail traffic as in Sierra Dawn. She stated a mileage trailer was placed when Adelphia was tearing up the streets, but was put right between their equipment and the orange cones. She stated that a traffic study was supposedly done, but no report was given to them. She requested cooperation in helping to curb speeding activities. She stated the problem does not seem to be present on the other side of Lyon and Oakland where there are stop signs and lights present.

Judy Riggi, President of Valle Hermosa, asked when the 7 tickets were issued. Officer Waters stated citations were given 4-5 months ago when a man called the Police about a Volkswagen bug with loud pipes racing up and down the street at a certain time of day. The traffic was observed for an entire hour and Officer Waters stated that the traffic was very slow during that time. The drivers cited were driving 5-6 miles over the 25 mph speed limit. He stated that when people call, the Police always ask if there is a particular time of day when there is increased traffic. He instructed to call the Police Department and let them know that information and they can send an officer out at certain time.

Ms. Riggi stated that recently she was parked on Oakland taking care of a resident's complaint. A man was driving down the street at 25 mph when a driver behind him became impatient and passed him, coming within inches of her vehicle. She queried whether there should be vehicle weight signs posted in her neighborhood. Mr. Gow stated there is no weight restriction on Oakland.

Ms. Riggi reported that a tow truck is being parked overnight on Oakland from 7:00-7:30 PM. She felt that the wide, long truck presents a dangerous situation for Seniors who are backing out of their driveways into the speeding traffic, because the truck obscures their vision. She has talked with the Police and with Code Enforcement about the truck, without response. The number listed on the tow truck was found to be disconnected.

Council Member Meadows stated he will personally photograph the truck and take this matter to Code Enforcement. He asked staff to study Oakland to find the best area to post a stop sign. If it does not improve traffic, it can be removed. Mr. Gow stated it is

Traffic and Parking Commission Minutes

May 12, 2004

Page 3

easy to post additional speed limit signs on that segment of Oakland, four signs on each side of the street.

Motion was made by Commissioner Walters to request staff to study Oakland to find the best area to post a stop sign, and to post four additional speed limit signs on each side of the street at one-eighth mile spacing between Lyon and Kirby, seconded by Commissioner Wellman and carried 3-0.

Charles Aikman, 1995 W. Oakland, stated he lives very close to where the truck is being parked and sees it each morning. He notices increased traffic at the time of shift changes, approximately 7:30 AM and 3:30 PM. He felt that crosswalks should not be installed, saying if Seniors cross the street during one of those times, they would be at risk. He supported the recommendation made.

Ms. Fekete stated that Sierra Dawn has a tonnage sign and asked if one could be placed in Valle Hermosa on Oakland. Mr. Gow stated that would limit refuse and delivery vehicles. He said that type of sign is used to protect the structural integrity of the road.

8. Request for Four-Way Stop - Corner of Oakland Ave. and Santa Fe St. - Staff to Report on Results of Warrant Study.
(*Florence Norgard - Hemet*)

Mr. Gow stated traffic counts have not yet been received and asked that this item be continued until June.

Motion was made by Commissioner Walters to continue the item until June when the traffic counts are in, seconded by Commissioner Wellman and carried 3-0.

9. Request for Stop Sign at Millie Drive and Joshua Avenue, or at Millie Drive and Elder Way, and 25 mph Speed Limit Sign.
(*Mary Frances Rowe - Hemet*)

Mr. Gow stated that Millie Drive is a 1/4 mile street between Commonwealth and Eaton. This straight thoroughfare results in higher speeds than should be. The speed limit is not posted, but is 25 mph by default. The request is to put in stop signs to slow traffic. Staff has looked at warrants for stop signs, but traffic counts would not justify a stop sign. If speeds are over 25 mph, in order to post a speed limit sign, it has be based on the survey, which may come back higher than 25 mph. Gow felt it would be best to leave the speed limit at 25 unposted.

Mary Frances Rowe, 1265 Millie Drive, brought in 60 signatures, one from each household of the 132-home development. She stated there are 8 homes facing Millie, and all experience the speeding, which is worse on Friday and Saturday nights. She would like to see a stop sign at Elder and Millie to slow people down. Backing out of her driveway in the mornings is nearly impossible due to the traffic from the developments at Commonwealth and Kirby as parents take kids to Fruitvale school. She felt that this will worsen when a traffic light is put in at Fruitvale and Sanderson. There is no method in place to slow cars down, and they have a clear shot to come in from Eaton and Millie, driving fast. Commissioner Berry asked if people take the route

Traffic and Parking Commission Minutes

May 12, 2004

Page 4

as a shortcut, and Ms. Rowe affirmed that they do. She stated that there are puddles of water on Sanderson, and residents avoid that area and drive down Eaton and Millie instead. She stated she is willing to pay for the signs herself. She stated her Homeowners' Association wrote a letter to Council requesting speed bumps. Speeds have increased since January 2003. Mr. Meadows reported that the City recently obtained the right-of-way at the new Warren Stock Farm, and engineering will be undertaken to remedy the situation so the water puddles will no longer remain.

Commissioner Wellman expressed that stop signs can be a very good thing, but they also create noise, pollution, and gas consumption. He said he is curious about the City's overall position and if stop signs are being used to enforce speed limits throughout town. He felt that, if appropriate, it would be beneficial to find other resources for P.D. to play a more vital role in controlling speed.

Mr. Gow stated that State Guidelines clearly indicate that stop signs are not to be used solely for speed control. In appropriate conditions, they are good; however, if put in wrong locations, they tend to increase rear-end accidents. Staff bases their evaluation on warrants. He stated that funding for law enforcement is always an issue. Commissioner Wellman stated it is a perceptual thing to feel that all cars are speeding if one or two are spotted. He queried where ticket money goes or if it is earmarked to support officers to write more tickets. Council Member Meadows stated traffic fines do not come close to paying for the paperwork officers have to do for one ticket. The City strives to maintain one officer per 1,000 residents. He stated that the City is in a very tight financial situation for the next two years.

Mr. Gow stated sight distance can be looked at, since residents have many relatively close intersections. Someone turning left onto Millie may not see or anticipate left turns from someone on an adjacent street. He felt that a stop sign may help, especially for vehicles cutting through down Millie. Millie is not intended to be thoroughfare, and there is no concern for maintaining traffic flow on it. He said there are a high number of intersections in that 1/4 mile distance, stop signs would improve that. Ms. Rowe stated the drainage ditch slows vehicles at Millie. Elder Way was chosen as the best location.

Motion was made by Commissioner Walters to approve a four-way stop at Elder Way and Millie, seconded by Commissioner Wellman and carried 3-0.

10. Request for Lower Speed and Speed Limit Sign on a Portion of Meridian from Park to Washington.

(Peggy Stinson - Hemet)

Mr. Gow stated that the area was looked at recently by the Commission. The issues were speeds on Meridian from Park north to Washington/Mountain. The Commission took action to lower the speed limits there. The basis of this request is to re-evaluate and see if anything else can be done. Staff has heard no additional information to base further change.

Peggy Stinson, Hemet, requested that home addresses not be included on agendas

and minutes placed on the Internet.

Ms. Stinson walked her neighborhood and got 75 signatures on a petition requesting the speed limit to be lowered from the current 45 mph. Mr. Gow stated it was recently lowered from 50 to 45. Ms. Stinson stated that there was a big accident and several more accidents since mentioning the situation at April's meeting. On Park Ave., the speed goes from 40 to 45, and cars can fly down Meridian. She stated that Meridian has become a drag strip and a shortcut from Florida to the Ramona Expressway. Residents of single-family homes with driveways on Meridian cannot get out of their driveways. She stated that the City of San Jacinto has speed limit signs at 25 mph, and she requested the same consideration. Her petition has several examples of speed limits, and she asked that the speed limit be lowered.

Commissioner Walters asked what is involved with squaring up that curve immediately. Mr. Gow said it would need to be designed and a contractor hired. The Commission had recommended squaring up the corner when the area is re-paved. Commissioner Walters asked if there were enough funds available to square the curve now. He said that safety would be enhanced if the curve was squared off, but it would not help people to back out of their driveways. The Planning Commission has established guidelines recently that no homes can front on through streets. Mr. Gow stated there is no stop from Park to Washington. On Hemet St., a stop sign is on Charlton and Mountain. Ms. Stinson felt a stop sign would not help the situation and requested lowering the speed limit. Commissioner Berry stated the cars are traveling fast, and a warrant might result in increasing the speed limit. Mr. Gow stated a survey was recently done, and speed limits are based on that survey, including an additional 5 mph reduction because of fronting residential. He agreed that a side effect of a new survey could raise the speed limit. Commissioner Walters requested that a speed trailer be placed on Meridian and patrol the area at 6:00 AM on weekdays. Captain Cabrera stated the speed trailer can be placed at the site. Commissioner Walters asked Captain Cabrera to work with Ms. Stinson to find best location for the traffic trailer.

Judy Riggi asked if the City has considered putting up cameras like in Los Angeles or Montebello to catch speeders going through traffic. Captain Cabrera stated no; there are legal concerns to using them concerning privacy. Some California communities have them for traffic light violations, but not for speed violations. The cameras have to photograph the face of the driver, not just the vehicle license number.

Mr. Gow indicated that staff will prepare a plan, cost estimate, and time estimate for construction for the NE corner of Meridian at Park. The P.D. will look at placing a speed trailer in an appropriate location.

Motion was made by Commissioner Walters to expedite squaring up the curve with a standard radius, curb return and a dedicated right-turn lane; place the preliminary design and cost estimate on June's agenda, seconded Commissioner Wellman and carried 3-0.

11. Request for Bicycle Lane for Elk Street, between Florida Avenue and Acacia

Traffic and Parking Commission Minutes

May 12, 2004

Page 6

Street and a Speed Limit Sign.

(Louis A. Pongetti - Hemet)

Mr. Gow showed the Commission a map indicating bike lanes, bike routes, and bike paths and explained the difference between them. After discussion, it was determined that this area of Elk is not suitable for a bike lane, as it does not connect to any other segments of bike lane, and the street is not wide enough.

Louis Pongetti, 225 S. Elk St., #3, stated that cars speed 50-60 mph on this segment of Elk. He requested a bike lane which could also be used for pedestrians, stating there are 20 families with kids who walk. He indicated that people drive right next to the curb and requested a center line to separate the traffic. Mr. Gow stated that the photos staff took show a path is available behind the curb where pedestrians can walk. Pedestrians should not walk in a street or within a bike lane. Pongetti noted Elk does not have a center stripe.

Motion was made by Commissioner Walters to approve adding center striping on Elk from Florida Avenue to Acacia, and accept staff recommendation to not put in a bike lane, seconded by Commissioner Wellman and carried 3-0.

12. Request for Curbside Parking Restriction at 129 and 141 S. Inez St. and Request for 2-hour Limit Signage.

(Alan L. Callahan - Hemet)

The request is from a business owner who wants 2-hour parking limit posted so that the spaces will be available for customer parking. Staff recommends accepting this request.

Motion was made by Commissioner Walters to approve restricting curbside parking and install "2-hour Parking Limit" signage, seconded by Commissioner Wellman and carried 3-0.

13. Request for Stop Sign at Thornton and Buena Vista.

(Dolores Miller and All Concerned Residents - Country Club Estates)

Mr. Gow stated he talked with Ms. Miller, who made the request with the understanding that traffic counts will be re-done in September. Current studies show warrants are close to being met for a stop sign at that intersection. The middle school is opening in August. It is recommended that traffic studies be done after that time and upon return of winter visitors, and that this item be deferred until the November meeting. Commissioner Walters stated that sight distance east and west on Thornton for traffic on Buena Vista was investigated in the past. Mr. Gow stated it was improved with the lowering of shrubs, and red curbing was extended on each side of Thornton at Buena Vista. Captain Cabrera stated he has heard nothing regarding any increases or decreases in accidents.

Motion was made by Commissioner Walters to postpone this item and bring back traffic counts in November, seconded by Commissioner Wellman and carried 3-0.

14. "Police Department Only Parking" along West Side of Juanita, north of Latham.

Mr. Gow stated that staff is in favor of the request for red curb with white stenciling "P.D. Parking Only."

Traffic and Parking Commission Minutes

May 12, 2004

Page 7

Motion was made by Commissioner Walters to approve painting red curb with white stenciled lettering, "P.D. Parking Only," seconded by Commissioner Wellman and carried 3-0.

15. 5-Year Speed Survey Update on Various Streets in the City.

Mr. Gow stated the City is required every 5 years to update the speed survey by measuring and analyzing the speed of 100 cars. The Traffic Commission then reviews and approves the update and recommends that Council approve the resolution. When drivers are cited for speeding, the judge looks at the most current speed survey to enforce the citation. Four segments are actually increasing speed limits; 7 are decreasing. For those increasing, the City is using a 5 mph reduction.

Motion was made by Commissioner Wellman to approve staff recommendation to accept the resolution to update speed surveys and speed limits, excepting those speed limits which are not increasing, seconded by Commissioner Walters and carried 3-0.

16. Riverside County TIP update.
Informational only.

17. Action Item List.
Informational only.

18. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Commissioner Walters reported that on Park Hill between Cornell and Dartmouth, potholes are present which can be patched and asked that it be checked out. *He requested that discussion of a left-turn signal light at Stanford northbound and southbound at Florida be placed on the June agenda.* Mr. Gow stated that Council prioritized left-turn phasing signals throughout the city and staff is working towards that. Commissioner Walters stated the northbound traffic comes from the County to the City on Stanford. Mr. Gow said the City will request them to share the expense.

Council Member Meadows reported on Council's approval of \$850,000 to update the City's General Plan. The Mayor will write a letter requesting one individual per Commission to serve on the committee.

19. Future Agenda Items.

Temporary Stop sign at Johnston and Buena Vista.

Discussion of left-turn signal light at Stanford northbound and southbound at Florida.

20. ADJOURNMENT:

At 10:56 AM, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for 8:00 AM, Wednesday, June 9th, in City Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Traffic and Parking Commission Minutes
May 12, 2004
Page 7

Marilyn Hampton
Commission Secretary