



CITY OF HEMET
Traffic and Parking Commission Minutes
Wednesday, October 11, 2006
8:00 AM

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

The meeting was called to order a 7:59 AM by Chairperson Modica.

ROLL CALL: Commissioner Anne Marc- Aurele; Commissioner Don Berry; Chairperson Gareth Modica; Council Member Roger Meadows; Planning Commission Liaison, Eric McBride.

Members absent: Commissioner Michael Asher; Commissioner David Oltman

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Gow, Public Works Director/City Engineer; Patricia Castillo, Traffic Engineer; Megan Caines, Office Specialist; Richard Broos, Streets Superintendent; Joseph Nevarez, Traffic Sergeant.

FLAG SALUTE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE: Chairperson Modica

1. Approval of Minutes of September 13, 2006

Commissioner Berry moved to accept the minutes as presented. Commissioner Marc-Aurele seconded, and motion passed 3-0.

2. Report of Council Action on September 13, 2006 meeting:

Informational. Traffic Engineer Patricia Castillo reported on the status of the items submitted to the City Council by the Traffic Commission.

3. Request for Handicap Parking Spaces and Loading/Unloading Zone at Weston Shuffleboard Court.

Traffic Engineer Patricia Castillo requested that the item be tabled to a future Traffic Commission meeting, so that Staff may have more time to conduct research and prepare a recommendation.

Commission tabled item until the November meeting.

Castillo requested that the Commission move to Item 7.

7. Request for School Signage at the HELP School at 136 N. Ramona St.
(Ms. Tina Koonce, Hemet Unified School District)

Castillo reported that after performing a field review of the location only one school sign was present. Staff recommends that one additional school sign be added to the northbound side of Ramona St., and speed limit signs be posted near the school.

Commissioner Marc-Aurele moved to accept Staff recommendation to install the school and speed limit signs. Commissioner Berry seconded, and motion passed 3-0.

Castillo requested that the Commission move on to Item 4.

4. Request for 3-way Stop at the Intersection of Lincoln Ave. and Steiner Dr.

Castillo reported on the request. This item had come before the Commission at previous meetings. Castillo reviewed the location and a multi-directional stop is not warranted. Staff recommends against the installation of a 3-way stop sign until the warrants are met.

Commissioner Marc-Aurele inquired if this area was a speed problem. Traffic Sergeant Joseph Nevarez replied that the police department has placed speed trailers at that location and stationed traffic police out there to issue citations. The police department has not found this area to have a speed problem. Additionally, as the counts conclude, there is not a tremendous amount of traffic that travels that street. There was, Nevarez continued, a pedestrian fatality accident relatively near that location approximately eighteen (18) months ago. However, it was closer to Lake St. than to the location in question, and it was not a speed related accident.

Commissioner Berry moved to accept Staff recommendation to not install a 3-way stop at Lincoln Ave. and Steiner Dr. Commissioner Marc-Aurele seconded, and motion passed 3-0.

Castillo requested discussion move to Agenda Item 6.

6. Request for Traffic Signal at the Intersection of Florida Ave. (SR-74) and Cornell St.
(Mr. Nabil Matar, Mr. Nadar Sarkis, Mr. Aydin Hamouni, & Mr. Mouris Ibrahim)

Castillo reported that this intersection meets the warrants for the installation of a traffic signal. Given that this intersection is on a State Highway, Staff recommends that the information collected be forwarded to Caltrans, with a written request for the installation of the traffic signal.

Commissioner Modica asked if there were any comments from the public.

Mr. Nabil Matar
41241 State Highway 74

Mr. Matar informed the Commission that he has owned Hemet Car Wash for years and has witnessed many accidents. Years ago, he continued, he had requested of Caltrans that a traffic signal be installed, and the request was stymied. Mr. Matar would appreciate the installation of a traffic signal in order to reduce the number of accidents at Florida Ave. and Cornell St.

Mr. Nadar Sarkis
636 W. Florida Ave.

Mr. Sarkis informed the Commission that he shared Mr. Matar's concerns about the intersection.

Commissioner Modica asked how far this intersection was the nearest traffic signal. Nevarez replied that the distance between existing street lights was approximately one half to three-quarters of a mile, from Columbia on the west and Stanford on the east.

Council Liaison Roger Meadows asked if the County had been notified, given that the intersection falls under the jurisdiction of the County as well as Caltrans and the City. Castillo replied that a letter had not been sent to the County yet. Meadows continued that the County should help with the costs of the installation of the traffic signal, and he would like to have the County's opinion before Caltrans gets involved.

Commissioner Marc-Aurele moved to contact both the County of Riverside and Caltrans about the possibility of the installation of a traffic signal at Florida Ave. (SR-74) and Cornell St. Commissioner Berry seconded, and motion passed 3-0.

Castillo requested that the meeting return to the Agenda as presented.

5. Request for Handicap Access Ramps at Mountain Valley RV Resort Entrance (Between Acacia and Florida Avenues)

Castillo reported on existing conditions. Pedestrians in wheelchairs traveling along Lyon Avenue are required to leave the sidewalk and travel in the street. Staff recommends the installation of the access ramps along the westside of Lyon, between Florida and Acacia Avenues.

Commissioner Berry moved to accept Staff recommendation to install handicap access ramps on both sides of the driveway entrance on Lyon Ave. Commissioner Marc-Aurele seconded, and motion passed 3-0.

8. Request for 4-Way Stop at the Intersection of Cawston and Thornton Avenues (Mr. Dale Mills, 4810 Thistle Creek Way)

Castillo reported that after performing a study, the intersection does not meet the warrants for a multidirectional stop. Castillo stated that although there were three accidents within 200 feet of the intersection, only one accident was attributed to the intersection in question. Therefore, Staff recommends against the installation of a 4-way stop at the intersection of Cawston and Thornton Avenues until the warrants are met.

Commissioner Berry moved to accept Staff's recommendation to not install a 4-way stop at the intersection of Cawston and Thornton Avenues. Commissioner Berry seconded, and motion passed 3-0.

9. Pedestrian Access at the Public Library

Informational. Castillo reported on various options to improve pedestrian access to the public library from south of Latham Ave. Among the possible options discussed were: adding an uncontrolled crosswalk, adding a crosswalk and stop sign, installing a traffic signal, installing a pedestrian controlled signal (similar to what is existing on Latham by the hospital), installing a pedestrian refuge, installing a raised crosswalk, and installing a raised intersection.

Castillo could not recommend installing an uncontrolled crosswalk, as it does not provide any additional protection to pedestrians and tends to give the public a false sense of security. Castillo informed the Commission that the intersections in question do not meet the warrants for either a stop sign, a standard traffic signal or a pedestrian access signal. Installing either, when they are not warranted can generate more accidents, and would increase emergency response times, as both the police and fire departments use Latham as a primary access route.

Castillo went on to describe the pedestrian refuge, raised crosswalk or raised intersection. The pedestrian refuge is designed to allow pedestrians to contend with only one lane of traffic at a time, providing a refuge in the middle of the street. The raised crosswalk or intersection is designed to make the pedestrian more visible, while at the same time slow down vehicles. The negative impacts of these choices are increase in maintenance costs, drainage problems, and an increase in emergency response time.

Commissioner Marc-Aurele moved to direct staff to put together the three (3) best possible solutions for this situation and to return the item to a future meeting of the Traffic Commission. Commissioner Berry seconded, and motion passed 3-0.

10. General Plan Circulation Element Review

Informational. Public Works Director/City Engineer Mike Gow reported on the updates being made to the General Plan. Gow informed the commission about the status of the Devonshire extension, the Whittier extension, and the re-alignment of SR-79. He presented to the commission the most current draft of the General Plan Circulation Element.

Commissioner Berry asked if these improvements would be postponed until the alignment of SR-79 is completed. Gow responded that these project would continue to move forward.

Planning Commission Liaison Eric McBride was excused at 8:48am.

11. Action Item List

Informational. Castillo reported on the status of items previously brought before the Commission.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

13. Future Agenda Items.

A. Potential Traffic Signal and Crosswalk at the Library

B. Crosswalks near West Valley High School

C. Request for Handicap Parking Spaces and Loading/Unloading Zone at Weston Shuffleboard Court.

14. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting was adjourned at 8:52am.

Next regularly scheduled meeting is scheduled for 8:00 AM, Wednesday, November 8, 2006, at 450 E. Latham Avenue, City Council Chambers.

Respectfully Submitted,

Megan Caines
Office Specialist
Public Works, Engineering Dept.