

PARKING AND TRAFFIC COMMISSION

Minutes of August 23, 2006

COMMISSIONERS

Lynette Lewis, Chairperson
Richard Kaufman, District 1
Vacant, District 2
Charles Coronado, District 3
Jose De La Torre, District 4

STAFF MEMBERS

William Barnett, Senior Transportation Planner
Patrick Lui, Transportation Engineer
Georgia Smith, Acting Secretary

1. Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lynette Lewis at 7:00 p.m.
 - a. Roll-Call: Three Commissioners were in attendance. Commissioner Kaufman arrived later.
 - b. Approval of Minutes: Commissioner De La Torre moved that the minutes of June 28, 2006, be approved. Commissioner Coronado seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a 3-0 vote.

II. Referrals from City Council or City Departments: None

III. Public Hearing:

Proposed Alley Closure at Crenshaw-Imperial Library

Transportation Planner William Barnett stated that the City's library is located at the southwest corner of 111th Place and Crenshaw Boulevard and the adjoining public alley runs down the middle of its parking lot. He said staff had received a request from Administration to consider the closure of this alley to through-traffic to alleviate a potential hazard to library patrons who may be walking in the library parking lot. He explained that the alley would not be completely closed off but would be barricaded at the middle point so that half of it will be accessible from 111th Place on the north and 112th Street on the south. Mr. Barnett said that this is a public hearing so staff has sent out notices to all properties within a 300 foot radius of the proposed closure site, in addition to letters specifically addressed to the medical businesses in the two structures adjoining the alley.

Commissioner Kaufman arrived at 7:04 p.m.

Chairperson Lewis opened the meeting for public comments, but no one spoke. Chairperson Lewis asked if staff had received any correspondence on this proposal, and Mr. Barnett stated he had received none.

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Commissioner Kaufman recommended posts across the alley rather than a gate, because a gate with a lock could be broken frequently, wasting City funds for repairs with Vincent Park as an example. He also stated that several posts would prevent motorcyclists from fitting through if there were a chase by law enforcement officers.

Commissioner Coronado expressed his opinion that alleys are a nuisance and concurred with the proposed closure.

Commissioner De La Torre asked if this barricade will be permanently fixed. Mr. Barnett stated more than likely there will be posts inserted in the ground and locked at the base so that, if ever there is a need for utility or emergency access the posts can be removed.

Chairperson Lewis stated her opposition to closing the alley and said the alley is needed for access to these businesses and the church. Chairperson Lewis said she would like to table this proposal, especially in view of the fact no one showed up at this hearing.

In response to questions from Chairperson Lewis, Mr. Barnett stated the notices were mailed out to everyone ten days in advance.

Commissioner De La Torre stated he believes this proposal is primarily about the safety of the patrons of the library and senior citizens.

Commissioner Kaufman, citing the sufficiency of the notices, stated he saw no reason why this proposal to install a midpoint barricade in the alley should not be approved.

Commissioner Kaufman made a motion to approve the resolution authorizing the installation of a midpoint barricade in the alley between 111th Place and 112th Street, west of Crenshaw Boulevard. Commissioner Coronado seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a 3-0 vote with 1 abstention by Chairperson Lewis.

IV. Other Business:

a. Reconfiguration of Crenshaw Drive and Closure of West Boulevard.

Mr. Barnett summarized the previous discussions about possible closures of Crenshaw Drive and 82nd Street and explained how these discussions had led to concerns by residents that more traffic might be diverted onto West Boulevard, and their request that West Boulevard be closed at Manchester Boulevard. Mr. Barnett described how West Boulevard could be closed but also described concerns expressed by a representative of the church at that corner.

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He stated this is not a formal public hearing but over 300 notices had been sent to residents in the neighborhood to participate in this discussion. Mr. Barnett explained that any decision would constitute a recommendation to be considered in the revision of the Circulation Element of the General Plan.

In response to Commissioner Coronado, Mr. Barnett said this discussion is about both West Boulevard and Crenshaw Drive.

Commissioner Coronado stated the Commission should ask the audience for their ideas and suggestions.

Chairperson Lewis asked if notices were sent to Briarwood. Mr. Barnett answered no as he had inquired of Administration if they wished to include Briarwood and was informed that, at this time, this discussion is focused on 82nd Street and Crenshaw Drive. If any change should be considered in the upcoming General Plan revision, the residents in Briarwood would be able to participate in that public hearing.

Chairperson Lewis thanked Mr. Barnett and asked for any comments from the audience.

1. Annette Gatlin, 3428 W. 80th Street, stated her concern was about emergency access into the neighborhood with the closing of Manchester at West Boulevard.
2. Larry Stamps, 3419 W. 83rd Street, agreed with Ms. Gatlin that West Boulevard should not be closed due to many senior citizens in the neighborhood. He said he prefers a cul-de-sac on Crenshaw Drive or 82nd Street. He felt cut-through traffic is not a problem in this neighborhood.
3. Robert Robinson, 3510 West 85th Street, said there is no neighborhood problem with the church and is opposed to the closure.
4. Jean Williams, resident of 82nd Street between West Boulevard and Victoria Avenue, said she is opposed to closing any street.

In response to a query by Chairperson Lewis, Mr. Barnett stated the Commissioners have the choice to recommend one or more of the options, to make no recommendation or make a recommendation to make no changes

Commissioner Kaufman stated speed bumps are not a good option to slow motorists and felt the closure of Crenshaw Drive would be preferable.

Commissioner De La Torre stated he would like to survey the residents later this year to better understand their feelings.

Chairperson Lewis asked if anyone else would like to comment on this matter.

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5. Tamika Criss, 3533 W. 81st Street, said if speed humps are not a helpful option, she asked about adding more stop signs on each street.

Mr. Barnett stated that studies have shown that too frequently spaced stop signs tend to be disregarded by frustrated motorists, making such an intersection with stop signs more dangerous.

6. William Gaston, 3501 W. 83rd Street, recommended no street closures but wanted overhead signals for Crenshaw Drive.

7. Curtis Woodle, 3520 W. 82nd Street, stated that no option the Commission recommended will satisfy everyone.

8. Elaine Ross, 8432 W. 79th Street, stated she received no notice. Mr. Barnett responded that notices were not mailed that far north.

Commissioner De La Torre said that at this point the Commission cannot make any determination.

Commissioner De La Torre made a motion to maintain the existing streets from being closed.

Chairperson Lewis seconded the motion.

Motion was passed with a 3 to 1 vote. Commissioner Kaufman abstained.

Mr. Barnett stated the Commission has now made no recommendation to the consultants working on the General Plan for any street modification. Mr. Barnett stated that as independent consultants, they might still possibly incorporate one of these changes into their draft General Plan revisions.

VI. Commissioner Initiatives

Commissioner De La Torre complained about the overweight trucks. Mr. Barnett stated he will report it to the Police Traffic Division.

Commissioner Kaufman expressed his concern about vehicles illegally entering Vincent Park and parking inside the park. He said this is dangerous for the children who are on tricycles and are playing.

Mr. Barnett said he would apprise Recreation and Parks of his concern.

Chairperson Lewis complained about the difficulty to turn left from Crenshaw Boulevard to Century Boulevard, and the left turn is causing a back-up in traffic.

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Mr. Barnett explained to the Commission the City's plans for alleviating this problem.

Commissioner Kaufman asked would it be possible to post Crenshaw Boulevard for no trucks between Imperial Highway and Century Boulevard and require them to go down to Prairie Avenue instead.

Mr. Barnett stated that Imperial, Crenshaw, Prairie and Century are all officially adopted truck routes.

Chairperson Lewis declared the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.