

PARKING AND TRAFFIC COMMISSION

Minutes of February 28, 2007

COMMISSIONERS

Michael Benbow, Chairman
Richard Kaufman, District 1
Vacant, District 2
Charles Coronado, District 3
Jose De La Torre, District 4

STAFF MEMBERS

Sgt. Knapp, Police Department
William Payne, Traffic Department
William Barnett, Senior Transportation Planner
Alma Bryant, Code Enforcement Manager
Patrick Lui, Transportation Engineer
Pearlie A. White, Secretary

1. Meeting was called to order by Chairman Michael Benbow at 7:00 p.m.
 - a. Roll-Call: Three Commissioners were in attendance for roll call. Commissioner Kaufman arrived at 7:08 p.m.
 - b. Approval of Minutes: Commissioner De La Torre moved that the minutes of November 15, 2006, be approved. Commissioner Coronado seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a 3-0 vote.
 - c. Commissioner Kaufman arrived at 7:08 p.m.
 - d. Commissioner Benbow introduced himself and gave a short, personal history to the Commission. Mr. Benbow stated his goal will be to get much accomplished as Chairman of the Commission.

II. Referrals from City Council or City Departments:

- a. Referral from City Administrator: Request to Study Modifying Parking Standards and to Strengthen Code Regulations to Restrict Parking of Oversized Vehicles.

Transportation Planner William Barnett referred to the staff report from the City Administrator regarding this subject and introduced Code Enforcement Manager Alma Bryant to the Commission who discussed the complaints and restrictions about parking and illegal camping. Ms. Bryant stated that over the past five to six months, the City has had a problem with motor homes parking on streets especially in District 4. She discussed the problems and restrictions about parking and illegal camping and said there is a need for stronger regulations to control mobile home and oversized truck parking.

In response to a question from Commissioner Coronado, Ms. Bryant discussed how trucks can be cited for lack of business licenses.

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Mr. Barnett stated that the report addresses some of the problems and is asking the Commission to direct staff to conduct studies and prepare recommendations back to the Commission, as the purpose is not to resolve any matter tonight but to get some directives and additional input on the scope of what staff should be studying.

Chairman Benbow asked if it was only in District 4 that this problem is occurring. Ms. Bryant stated it is happening in all districts but they have been getting most of the complaints from District 4 with regard to the motor homes, whereas District 2 and 3 are mostly for haulers.

Commissioner De La Torre stated he had addressed this problem earlier about illegal parking of oversized vehicles on the streets in his neighborhood.

William Payne from the Traffic Enforcement Division stated they cite such vehicles daily, mainly on La Brea Avenue, Crenshaw Boulevard and Manchester Boulevard if the vehicle is over 10,000 pounds, but once they pay their fines, there is little more the City can do. He said one trucker illegally parks at Hardy Street and Crenshaw Boulevard and is cited twice a week but apparently he doesn't mind paying the fine. He also said that, currently, if vehicles are less than 10,000 pounds the City cannot cite them.

Chairman Benbow stated the mobile homes parking in front of a resident's home all day is horrible and does nothing beneficial for the street.

Commissioner Kaufman apologized for being late. Commissioner Kaufman asked if there was any land for these problematic vehicles to park where they could pay a rental fee by the month. He suggested the City could hire a security company to maintain this area to relieve the Police Department of this responsibility

Mr. Barnett stated the City, itself, does not own any surplus land and property owned by the Redevelopment Agency and has limitations on the resale and reutilization of their land. He said the dilemma is that nowhere in the South Bay or West Side is there a single trucking facility because the real estate value is so high that anyone who owns land will put it to some other higher use. He stated when he gets calls from truckers on where they can park in the City he tells them there is none in the City and he refers them to websites stating where there are areas in other cities.

Mr. Barnett said staff anticipates doing a thorough survey with other cities/agencies, soliciting what problems they have and how do they handle them. Regarding increasing parking penalties, he said about two years ago, at the initiation of Chairman Benbow's complaint, the City did increase some of them but, by law, cities within the County are suppose to adopt common parking

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penalties. He explained that, with the 89 agencies in LA County, staff had prepared a matrix of different fines, where the fines went from one extreme to the other, and the City strove to adopt new fines at the higher ends of these ranges. He said staff will again look at where those fees are but the City is pretty much tapped out in terms of increasing parking penalty amounts.

Mr. Barnett said staff will focus more on vehicles, their weight, their use and duration on a street to see if vehicles based on their dimensional size including their weight, can be better regulated on a residential street.

Mr. Barnett also informed the Commission that at the end of March 2007, the Transportation Section will be down to two people so staff cannot estimate how soon they can complete this study.

In reply to Commissioner Kaufman's question about large commercial streets to park non-oversized vehicles; Mr. Payne stated legally they can park on streets such as Manchester and Crenshaw Boulevards but street sweeping presents a problem which means they would have to move them each morning.

Commissioner De La Torre said he would like to also recommend that contractors' trucks be considered as many of these are parking in the residential area.

Mr. Barnett asked if Code Enforcement staff is aware of any cities that do tow vehicles and Ms. Bryant answered Carson and Maywood. Mr. Barnett said this is the type of things they will be asking from other cities in their research.

Chairman Benbow directed Staff to conduct a study and, upon completion, report back to the Commission.

III. **Public Hearing:** None

IV. **Other Business:** None

V **Public Comments:** None

VI **Commissioners Initiatives**

Commissioner Kaufman said he took pictures of a motor home that seems to park right at the corner but not at a red curb. Ms. Bryant stated it's not illegal for it to just park if it is not in a red zone, and unless it is more than 72 hours, these RV's cannot be cited unless they have persons sleeping inside.

Commissioner De La Torre said he had complained about parking on the sidewalk and driveway. He said that on 112th Street in front of a garage and

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driveway during the day and the evening, a car is parked next to the fire and it is a safety hazard.

Ms. Bryant stated they have been citing for this type of parking, and she explained the difference between Parking Enforcement, which is under the Police Department, and Code Enforcement, which is under Parks, Recreation and Community Services. She said Code Enforcement handles both parking and other violations, even with only six officers.

Commissioner Kaufman asked about vehicles illegally parked across parkways, and Ms. Bryant stated that is considered as sidewalk parking – anything that obstructs the public sidewalk. Ms. Bryant emphasized that Traffic and Code Enforcement works closely together enforcing the law but Code Enforcement focuses on property violations other than traffic violations.

Mr. Payne asked the Commissioners to always call when there is illegal sidewalk parking as they are always out there citing vehicles and can easily move to another location upon receipt of a call. He said it is better to call than to not call.

Ms. Bryant added they also cite the property owners for lawn parking.

Chairman Benbow said laws and ordinances need to be stiff to protect the City residents. He is concerned that the City could wear out its officers who are going out every day fighting these battles.

Chairman Benbow said he has a 10th and 11th Street Block Club invitation to a meeting regarding their neighborhood complaint about having their street blocked off. Mr. Barnett responded that the street was blocked off at their request. Mr. Barnett and Commissioner Kaufman said their proposal to exclude their neighbors by using permit parking had been sufficiently studied earlier by the Commission.

Chairman Benbow said he will go to hear what they have to say since he lives so close he can walk over there on a daily basis to see what is actually going on.

Chairman Benbow requested a list of the emergency and contact telephone numbers and Staff stated they will get those numbers to him.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.