
**CITY OF LAGUNA HILLS, CALIFORNIA
TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES
MAY 15, 2013**

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Traffic Commission of the City of Laguna Hills, California, was called to order by Vice Chair Donald Froelich at 7:00 p.m. in the Laguna Hills City Council Chamber, 24035 El Toro Road, Laguna Hills.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Vice Chair Donald Froelich led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL OF COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Present: Donald Froelich, Vice Chair
Steven Beeuwsaert, Commissioner
Michael Caputo, Commissioner
Rick Frazier, Commissioner

Absent: Ed Rowe, Chair

Staff Present: Humza Javed, Associate Civil Engineer; Cindy Sands,
Administrative Assistant

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS

2. MINUTES

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

IT WAS MOVED BY COMMISSIONER MICHAEL CAPUTO, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STEVEN BEEUWSAERT, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 15, 2013, TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioners Beeuwsaert, Caputo, and Frazier, and Vice Chair Froelich

NOES:

ABSENT: Chair Rowe

3. PRESENTATIONS

None

4. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

4.1 EVALUATION OF TRAFFIC SPEEDS ON EMPTY SADDLE DRIVE

Staff stated that a resident had expressed concerns about excessive traffic speeds on Empty Saddle Drive. As a result of this concern, staff requested that the City's Consulting Traffic Engineers of Hartzog & Crabill, Inc. perform a traffic analysis during the morning peak hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Results determined that the 85th percentile speed was 34.5 miles per hour in the eastbound direction and 33.7 miles per hour in the westbound direction. Based on the City's Residential Streets Management Policy, any speed in excess of 34 miles per hour is subject to review for additional traffic controls. Staff is recommending increased traffic enforcement and placement of the radar speed trailer along Empty Saddle Drive between Nellie Gail Road and Spotted Pony Lane in accordance with the City's incremental approach to resolving excessive traffic speeds on residential streets.

Ms. Nicole Cavaricci, a resident of Empty Saddle Drive, asked for clarification as to how the surveys were performed and the accuracy of the results, and suggested the use of visual signage to warn drivers to slow down.

Mr. Marcel Cavaricci, a resident of Empty Saddle Drive, stated his concerns regarding the excessive speed of traffic and the safety of pedestrians.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER RICK FRAZIER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STEVEN BEEUWSAERT, TO RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL: (1) ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT; (2) CONTINUED USE OF THE RADAR SPEED TRAILER ALONG EMPTY SADDLE DRIVE BETWEEN NELLIE GAIL ROAD AND SPOTTED PONY LANE; (3) NOTIFICATION TO RESIDENTS REGARDING TRAFFIC CONDITIONS ON EMPTY SADDLE DRIVE; AND (4) STAFF REVIEW WITH TRAFFIC COMMISSION IN SIX MONTHS.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioners Beeuwsaert, Caputo, Frazier, and
Vice Chair Froelich

NOES:

ABSENT: Chair Rowe

4.2 ANALYSIS OF VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN INTERACTION AT THE SOUTHERLY CROSSWALK AT THE INTERSECTION OF PASEO DE VALENCIA AT CALLE DE LA PLATA

Staff stated that this issue is another review of the site, originally evaluated in May 2011, and provided an overview of the background and history of the City's previous evaluations and actions. Due to the increased occupancy rate at the San Sebastian Apartments, staff requested that the City's Consulting Traffic Engineers of Hartzog & Crabill, Inc., perform an updated left-turn phasing warrant analysis and pedestrian evaluation at the signalized intersection of Paseo de Valencia at Calle de la Plata. Results of the analysis determined that based on accident history, traffic delay, traffic volumes, and roadway geometrics, the intersection did not meet the requirements for left-turn phasing as defined in the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Staff is recommending the installation of two pedestrian countdown timer heads on the south leg of Paseo de Valencia at Calle de la Plata to assist pedestrians in judging whether there is sufficient time to cross legally. The timer heads will also provide an additional visual to motorists alerting them of pedestrians in the crosswalk.

Ms. Katrina Rasmussen, Community Director at San Sebastian Apartments, thanked the Traffic Commission for their efforts, discussed her concerns regarding the safety of pedestrians, stated she is in favor of the pedestrian countdown timer heads, and inquired about the installation of a flashing light border crosswalk. Staff reported that per the California MUTCD, in-roadway pavement lighting is not to be used at signalized intersections.

Ms. Kathleen Costello, a resident of the San Sebastian Apartments, thanked the Traffic Commission for the opportunity, discussed her experiences using the crosswalk, and stated that her concern is motorists don't seem to notice when people are in the crosswalk.

Ms. Ruth Tipton, a resident of the San Sebastian Apartments, thanked the Traffic Commission for the opportunity and stated that she is also concerned about the pedestrians from the San Sebastian Community stepping into the crosswalk and motorists turning right onto Paseo de Valencia who are not paying attention to the pedestrian stepping of the curb. Ms. Tipton also inquired about the installation of a second crosswalk.

Ms. Laura Martinez, a resident of the San Sebastian Apartments, stated her concern is that the motorists turning left onto Paseo de Valencia from

the mall are looking at the cars coming out of the CVS shopping center and do not look for pedestrians in the crosswalk.

Mr. Harvey Dorn, a resident of San Sebastian Apartments, stated his concern regarding motorists coming from the mall travelling on Calle de la Plata to turn right onto Paseo de Valencia, they are stopped in the far right-turn lane where there is a very faint right arrow and many times the motorist will go straight. Mr. Dorn suggested the installation of a right-turn arrow.

The Commission engaged in a discussion with staff regarding the various issues presented by the residents.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER CAPUTO, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FRAZIER, TO: (1) INSTALL TWO PEDESTRIAN COUNTDOWN TIMER HEADS; (2) REVIEW THE POSSIBILITY OF INSTALLING A FOURTH NORTH SIDE CROSSWALK; (3) REVIEW SIZE OF SIGNAGE FOR INCREASED VISIBILITY, AND (4) INCREASE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioners Beeuwsaert, Caputo, Frazier, and
Vice Chair Froelich
NOES:
ABSENT: Chair Rowe

4.3 EQUESTRIAN TRAIL CROSSING SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS

Staff stated that this item is an ongoing issue and briefly reviewed the background information and history of the City's actions including the formation of the staff directed Nellie Gail Ranch Equestrian Crossing Ad Hoc Committee (Committee). Staff stated that four in-house meetings and two field meetings were conducted to review and evaluate eight priority locations selected by the Committee throughout the Nellie Gail Ranch community. The locations were reviewed for site distance, roadway geometrics, accident history, speeding and volume. Staff presented a PowerPoint presentation and discussed: (1) equestrian trail crossing history; (2) sign package layout; (3) traffic engineering solutions; (4) selected locations; (5) traffic engineering tools; (6) estimated costs; (7) committee recommendations; and (8) staff analysis. Staff is recommending:

Location 1(Nellie Gail Road 500' south of Oso Parkway)

- Raised pavement markers
- Flashing LED signage
- Installation of Two "Ahead" signs
- Installation of left-turn striping

Location 2 (Nellie Gail Road at Gallup Circle)

- Multi-way stop sign controls
- Removal/replacement of signage/striping
- Sign Package installation on Gallup Circle

Location 3 (Nellie Gail Road at Oso Parkway)

- Two Pedestrian Countdown Timer Heads

Location 4 (Nellie Gail Road 200' north of Lost Colt Drive)

- Two Flashing LED signage
- Two "Ahead" signs

Location 5 (Knuckle corner of Greenfield Drive at Hidden Trail Road)

- Installation of Yield Lines

Location 6 (Hidden Trail Road 170' north of Stageline Drive)

- Addition and relocation of signage

Location 7 (Nellie Gail Road between Dapple Grey and Houston Trail)

- Installation of Yield Lines

Location 8 (Nottingham Court 200' south of Oso Parkway)

- Entire Sign Package has been installed

Mr. Sanjay Mathur, a resident of Hidden Trail Road, stated that he is in support of improving the trail conditions; however, he is opposed to the potential parking restrictions on Hidden Trail Road and additional signage. It is his opinion that the real problem is speeding and is concerned that restricting parking would only increase traffic speeds as the road will appear wider. Mr. Mathur is in favor of additional traffic enforcement.

Mr. Don Gaskey, a resident of Hidden Trail Road, read a letter to the Traffic Commission from his next door neighbor. In the letter, Mr. Leary states that he is completely against the plan for potentially restricting parking on Hidden Trail Road and suggests that the real solution to making the horse trail crossing substantially safer is to control the speed of traffic. Mr. Gaskey stated that he is also against the plan to potentially restrict parking on Hidden Trail Road.

Ms. Deborah Weinstein, a resident of Rangewood Road, stated that she agrees with the issue of speeding and does not believe signage will make a difference. Ms. Weinstein suggested the use of speed bumps or other

method to physically slow down the cars, and requested that red curbs be painted at that entrance and exit to trailheads in order to increase safety as cars regularly park at the trailheads and equestrians have to negotiate the sidewalks to get onto the trail.

Mr. Mike Peak, a resident of Nellie Gail Road, stated that he is in support of the staff recommendation as stated for the Nellie Gail Road at Gallup Circle equestrian trail crossing intersection. Mr. Peak believes that the new signage and three-way stop sign will reduce the traffic speed on Nellie Gail Road.

Mr. Jim Anderson, a resident of the Nellie Gail Ranch community and member of the Ad Hoc Committee, thanked Mr. Humza Javed for his time spent with the Ad Hoc Committee and stated that he appreciates what the Traffic Commission is doing on their behalf. He stated that the equestrian trail crossing located at Hidden Trail Road 170' north of Stageline Drive has been the most problematic and thanked the residents for coming forth and discussing their ideas. Mr. Anderson stated he would be in favor of installing speed bumps or a similar device to slow the speed of traffic, is sensitive to the parking issues for the residents of Hidden Trail Road, and agreed that driver behavior is unfortunately the big issue.

Mr. Tom Traylor, a resident of Hidden Trail Road, referenced a letter written by Mrs. Lisa Traylor and discussed their concerns regarding the potential parking restrictions recommended for Hidden Trail Road and stated that his family strongly opposes those restrictions. Mr. Traylor also stated that he is concerned that restricting parking may increase the speed of traffic as the perception would be that the street is wider.

The Commission engaged in a discussion with staff regarding the various issues and options available to address equestrian trail safety, traffic speeds, and parking restriction concerns including signage, flashing LED lights, speed humps, etc.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER BEEUWSAERT, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FRAZIER, TO RECOMMEND TO CITY COUNCIL THE SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS RECOMMENDED BY STAFF WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE NO PARKING RESTRICTIONS ON HIDDEN TRAIL DRIVE; AND INCREASE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT ON HIDDEN TRAIL ROAD.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioners Beeuwsaert, Caputo, Frazier, and
Vice Chair Froelich

NOES:

ABSENT: Chair Rowe

5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

5.1 RADAR TRAILER SCHEDULE FOR JUNE/JULY

Staff briefly reviewed the use of the radar trailer and submitted the schedule for review by the Traffic Commission. Staff stated that, per request of Ms. Cavaricci (Item No. 4.1), Empty Saddle Drive will be added to the schedule.

5.2 SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT VERBAL REPORT

Staff not available.

6. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Caputo inquired about the services available through the Sheriff's Department i.e. staff available to enforce speed issues.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Traffic Commission at this session, Vice Chair Froelich declared the meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m. to the meeting of July 17, 2013.

Prepared by:

Approved by:

Humza Javed, P.E.
Associate Civil Engineer

Donald Froelich
Vice Chair