

APPROVED MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY OF ALAMEDA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2019

Chair Soules convened the meeting at 7:01pm.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Vice Chair Soules, Commissioners Nachtigall, Yuen, Kohlstrand, Weitze.

Absent: Commissioners Hans, Johnson.

2. AGENDA CHANGES

None.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

3-A Transportation Commission Meeting: Wed, Nov 20 at 7 p.m.

3-B Tsunami Presentations: Thurs, Sept. 19 at 6:30 p.m. (boating community) and Wed, Oct. 30 at 6:30 p.m. (citywide) – City Hall, Council Chambers

3-C Alameda Bike for the Parks – Community Bike Ride – Sat, Sept 28

3-D International Walk and Roll to School Day – Wed., Oct 2

3-E Smart Driver Refresher Course by AARP at Mastick Senior Center – Wed., Oct 9 - 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

3-F Electric Vehicle 101, City Hall Council Chambers: Wed, Oct 16 at 6:30 p.m.

3-G Transportation 101 + Clipper Card Registrations at Mastick Senior Center – Tues, Oct 22 at 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

3-H Transportation Services Survey for Seniors and People with Disabilities at Mastick Senior Center or on-line at www.AlamedaParatransit.com by Thurs, Oct 31

3-I Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) 2019 Trainings in October: register on Fire Department web page

3-J Upcoming Grant-Funded Bicycle Safety Education Classes:
<https://bikeeastbay.org/alamedabikeed>

3-K Emergency Alerts for Alameda – Subscribe at AC Alert web page:
<https://www.acgov.org/emergencysite/>

3-L Regional Emergency Transportation Alerts – Subscribe:
<https://511.org/alerts/emergencies/511Alert>

3-M Clipper Card (adults) – order on line or at Walgreens or set up Autoload to add value automatically: <https://www.clippercard.com/ClipperWeb/getTranslink.do>

3-N Clipper Card Discounts for youth, seniors and people with disabilities -
<https://www.clippercard.com/ClipperWeb/discounts/index.do>

3-O FasTrak or new toll tag for upcoming I-880 Express Lanes: on line or at Walgreens (except not Park Street location) and then register on line:
<https://www.bayareafastrak.org/en/signup/signUp.shtml>

Chair Soules recognized and congratulated Commissioner Kohlstrand on her recent retirement and described some of the highlights of her career in Transportation Planning.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said she looks forward to giving back to the community during her retirement.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4-A 2019-7280

Draft Meeting Minutes – July 24, 2019

Commissioner Nachtigall made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Kohlstrand seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5-A 2019-7281

Uphold the Public Works Director's Decision to Remove One Parking Space at the Corner of Walnut Street at San Antonio Avenue to improve intersection visibility and safety

Scott Wikstrom, City Engineer, gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at:
<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4139789&GUID=7EAB8214-0BE2-4480-A488-5C82AE7E4927>

Commissioner Kohlstrand asked if the request for improved visibility came from someone in the neighborhood.

Staff Member Wikstrom said that the request came in via SeeClickFix.

Commissioner Weitze noted that in 2012 the warrants for an all way stop sign were not met and asked if that was still the case.

Staff Member Wikstrom said that they have not done updated traffic counts. He said the counts were 30% below the threshold in 2012 and that he would not expect that large of a change at this intersection since 2012.

Steve Mack, appellant, gave a presentation.

Chair Soules asked what the rest of the conditions of the intersection are, such as signage and striping.

Staff Member Wikstrom said that there are no marked crosswalks and that the aerial image displayed is accurate.

Commissioner Kohlstrand asked whether Walnut was considered a local street or a collector in the City's street classification system.

Staff Member Wikstrom said that Walnut is a local street.

Commissioner Weitze asked if there were any other examples of four way stops in Alameda that did not meet the thresholds, but were installed because of community input.

Staff Member Wikstrom said he is not aware of any recent examples that would meet that criteria.

Chair Soules opened the public hearing.

Sean McGowan said that high schoolers zip through the intersection. He said that parking is very difficult during the school year. He said the neighborhood cannot afford to lose a parking space. He said they need a stop sign to reduce speeding.

Bob Ralston said the High School students take up all the available parking during the day. He said drivers like to speed through the intersection. He said they need a stop sign before someone gets killed.

Shemaiah Stanton said that the primary issue is not visibility, but speeding. He said things have changed a lot since 2012. He asked that staff take a fresh look at the need for a stop sign.

Jane Kramer said we don't need to eliminate parking spaces. She said she stops at that intersection automatically when driving, but most people don't know what to do there. She said visibility is not a problem and that it needs a four way stop.

Denyse Trepanier, Bike Walk Alameda, said we are trying to make our streets safer. She said safety has to come as a higher priority than parking. She said every study shows that

daylighting improves safety. She said a stop sign would be nice, but it would not remove the need for daylighting.

Richard Thomas said parking does not take precedence over safety, but that the intersection would still need a stop sign.

Jim Strehlow said that a similar situation happened in 2009 on Buena Vista. He said an argument was made that Safe Routes to Schools concerns could override the lack of warrants for three stop signs that were desired. He said a similar argument could be made here.

Chair Soules closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Weitze asked what it would cost to conduct a new study of the intersection today.

Staff Member Wikstrom said he does not have exact numbers, but suggested it would take several hundred dollars and several hours of staff time. He said for warrants they typically do traffic counts, not speed surveys. He said speed surveys would add additional cost and staff time. He cautioned the Commission that there are probably 50 intersections in town that we could be having this exact same discussion about.

Chair Soules asked what it would take for the intersection to meet the warrants.

Staff Member Wikstrom said there are two primary warrants that enter into the decision. He said one was collision history. He said that if the collision warrant is met, they must be able to say that all other potential improvements have been made, including improving visibility.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said the attached policy emphasizes arterials and collectors. She said that these are both local streets and asked if this is where we should be prioritizing improving visibility.

Staff Member Wikstrom said that the crash history is sufficient to merit addressing visibility at the intersection. He said that would be a required step before consideration of installing a four way stop where the traffic volumes do not meet the thresholds.

Commissioner Kohlstrand asked if limiting the height of vehicles parked near the corner could be the first step.

Staff Member Wikstrom said that could be the first step, but they are recommending the parking space removal as well. He said this would enable them to say that all efforts have been exhausted if collisions continued to occur and there was a desire to install a four way stop sign in the future.

Commissioner Yuen asked if there were other measures which could be taken to reduce speeds and improve safety at the intersection without removing a parking space.

Staff Member Wikstrom said that after education and enforcement, from an engineering standpoint, improving visibility is the logical action to take to increase safety at the intersection.

Chair Soules asked if Alameda High School has any educational programs for their new drivers to promote safe driving in the community.

Rochelle Wheeler, Senior Transportation Coordinator, said the Safe Routes to Schools program is looking to expand to High Schools and Alameda hopes to be one of the pilot cities for that program. She said she is not aware of any activities that are happening now at Alameda High.

Chair Soules asked if planning staff has evaluated residential permit parking policies.

Staff Member Payne said that the neighborhood around the Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal has implemented permit parking through their HOA. She said that it was resident initiated.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said that there were discussions about the issue during her tenure on the Planning Board, but nothing was ever implemented.

Commissioner Nachtigall said she visited the intersection to better understand the visibility and parking situation. She said she believed the daylighting would be helpful. She said that need not contradict the possibility of a four way stop in the future.

Commissioner Weitze asked Commissioner Nachtigall if she noticed any available parking in the area when she visited at 6:45 p.m.

Commissioner Nachtigall said she saw one space on Walnut and several spots on San Antonio between Walnut and Willow.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said that she understands the need for parking but needs to come down on the side of safety. She said it is unfortunate that we have to wait until there are accidents before safety improvements are made or stop signs added. She added that she understood that traffic engineers have to balance safety with the need to move people through an area.

Commissioner Yuen thanked the residents for coming out and sharing how the loss of parking would impact their daily lives. She said she saw the issue as both/and not either/or. She said we should increase visibility and reduce speeding. She said she would support

daylighting the intersection and encouraging staff to look at other engineering options to slow traffic at the intersection.

Chair Soules said that she would support preserving parking and limiting height of vehicles, but does not think that is sufficient, noting that many children are shorter than cars. She said the tradeoff between improved safety and visibility against the inconvenience of having to park further away is a necessary one.

Chair Soules made a motion to approve the staff recommendation. Commissioner Kohlstrand seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

5-B 2019-7282

Discuss Tsunami Awareness

Captain Sharon Oliver, Disaster Preparedness Coordinator, gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4139806&GUID=969322E6-5B51-43F1-A87A-0CDD2C2C9F09&FullText=1>

Commissioner Yuen asked what level of coordination there is with Oakland on this issue.

Captain Oliver said she does coordinate with her counterparts in Oakland and with both police departments to coordinate evacuation plans.

Chair Soules asked how vulnerable populations that do not and cannot drive are being addressed.

Captain Oliver said we have our own shuttle and also partner with paratransit. She said they are at the beginning of the conversation and are working on the transportation plan, but it is not complete yet.

Chair Soules opened the public hearing.

Jim Strehlow said this is what he fears most about the overdevelopment in Alameda. He said we should know what the evacuation rates are of our exits and we should know how many people will die because we have overpopulated the island. He said he remembers regular flooding events that created dangerous conditions for driving and most evacuation routes are vulnerable to flooding.

Chair Soules closed the public hearing. Informational item, no action was taken.

5-C 2019-7283

Recommend City Council Adoption of Vision Zero Policy

Staff Member Wheeler and Lisa Foster, Transportation Planner, gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4139823&GUID=F4F57230-D1C1-4647-85B9-C4DCDEB6B4C7&FullText=1>

Commissioner Weitze asked if there are punitive or enforcement aspects to Vision Zero.

Staff Member Foster said that increased enforcement is part of other cities' plans. She said San Francisco initially focused enforcement on locations and violations where fatalities and collisions were most likely.

Staff Member Wheeler said she sees it as a data driven process to perhaps redistribute where enforcement occurs in order to have the most impact on behavior, rather than simply increasing overall enforcement.

Commissioner Weitze asked if reconsidering the standards and process for placement of stop signs was part of the Vision Zero process.

Staff Member Wheeler said they have not looked at that as a standard to evaluate, given that federal guidelines exist on stop sign placement.

Chair Soules opened the public hearing.

Jim Strehlow said NACTO implementation in San Francisco did not make him feel safer while cycling. He said it took him out of his way, compared to the older, more direct route. He recalled a recent fatality in San Francisco on a NACTO redesigned intersection. He warned the Commission not to believe that this would be a perfect solution.

Chair Soules closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said she supports the Vision Zero movement and looks forward to developing the policy.

Commissioner Yuen said she strongly supports Vision Zero and is excited by the focus on equity. She said she would like to see a focus on design and engineering over enforcement, which can be punitive. She asked that the annual report be brought back to the Transportation Commission.

Commissioner Kohlstrand made a motion that the Vision Zero Policy be recommended to the City Council with the amendment that the annual report come to the Transportation Commission. Commissioner Yuen seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

5-D 2019-7284

Update on Active Transportation Plan

Staff Member Wheeler and Megan Wooley-Ousdahl, Toole Design, gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at: <https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4139824&GUID=46062EA4-6E0C-4F62-8938-8DC2CD9B2970&FullText=1>

Commissioner Yuen asked if the Technical Advisory Committee has changed to the Community Advisory Group.

Staff Member Wheeler said that it has indeed changed to a Community Advisory Group. She said they would still use the Vision Zero Task Force in order to gather technical feedback.

Commissioner Yuen asked how we were recruiting for the Community Advisory Group.

Staff Member Wheeler said they are reaching out to people now from different groups and demographics in the city to attempt to identify a diverse representation of the community.

Commissioner Weitze asked why we are doing all the audits and data collection before a major piece of infrastructure like the Cross Alameda Trail is complete.

Staff Member Wheeler said most of the data collection has been gathering the existing data rather than generating new data. She said there are lots of other facilities and areas of the city that have identified issues that they want to move forward with. She said there will be an automatic bike counter on the new trail which will provide an ongoing source of data.

Chair Soules asked how the survey sample size will ensure an accurate representation and not oversample or under sample certain populations.

Ms. Wooley-Ousdahl said the community survey would be statistically significant with a professional research firm that has methods to ensure a proper sample. She added that the focus groups would be another area where they can be very deliberate about who they reach out to for input.

Chair Soules said that equity in lifestyle, not just demographics, is important to achieve a true mix of Alamedans, and that transparency in that area will be important.

Commissioner Nachtigall said she is not sure that what is described as a focus group is a true focus group.

Staff Member Wheeler explained the way staff envisioned conducting the focus groups with specialized subsets of people such as park users, business groups, or disabled residents.

Commissioner Weitze asked if the survey results would be broken out by renter versus homeowner.

Staff Member Wheeler said that is not something that has been looked at yet for this survey, but that staff can consider it further.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said that transit should be considered as part of the assessment in how pedestrians and bicyclists access the city.

Staff Member Wheeler said that connections with transit are part of their analysis.

Commissioner Kohlstrand said we should take care to ensure that the West End and Bay Farm are adequately represented in the surveys.

Chair Soules suggested having events at mode connections would be a good way to capture folks and get information on the first and last mile issues.

Commissioner Yuen said capturing input from disadvantaged and underrepresented communities comes in multiple forms, including geographic areas that lack active transportation facilities, looking at collision data for areas that are disproportionately impacted, and looking at demographics such as income, race, ethnicity, and age. She said she appreciates the many ways people can get involved in the planning process.

Commissioner Weitze suggested the West End Art Walk as a good place to find survey participants.

6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

6-A 2019-7285 *Status Report on Activities Related to Transportation Policies and Plans*

Staff Member Payne gave an update. The report can be found at: <https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4139839&GUID=BF2758A2-715F-42CD-9795-E9BA6541F532>

Staff Member Wheeler said the expected opening of the Cross Alameda Trail segment under construction is now slated for December. She reported on the theft of the Cycles of Changes storage truck from outside of Maya Lin School, and their fundraising appeal in order to get back in service.

Staff Member Wikstrom explained that the bike lanes on Pacific from Main Street to 4th Street would be delayed due to federal funding requirements and the language in the environmental clearance.

6-B *Potential Future Meeting Agenda Items*

1. Citywide Parking Management Plan – Expansion for Alameda Point and Ferry Terminals

2. Electric Vehicle Adoption
3. Line 19 Promotional Program Evaluation
4. Long-term Goals and Objectives for AC Transit Service in Alameda

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Strehlow told a story of bicycling in the park above the Transbay Terminal on a quiet Saturday morning. He said multiple police officers stopped him for riding his bicycle even though there was no signage saying it was not allowed. He asked if this body was the right place to find out if cycling was permitted there or not, since he has not had success getting responses from AC Transit in the past.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Soules adjourned the meeting at 9:44 p.m.