

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON
THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2014, BEGINNING AT 7:00 P.M. AT LOS ALTOS CITY HALL,
ONE NORTH SAN ANTONIO ROAD, LOS ALTOS,
CALIFORNIA**

ESTABLISH QUORUM

ALL PRESENT: Chair MOISON, Vice-Chair BODNER, Commissioners BAER, BRESSACK,
JUNAID, McTIGHE and LORELL

STAFF: Assistant City Manager WALGREN, Planning Services Manager KORNFELD,
and Transportation Projects Manager NOVENARIO

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Planning and Transportation Commission Minutes

Recommendation to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2014 Planning and
Transportation Commission regular meeting.

MOTION by Commissioner McTIGHE, seconded by Commissioner JUNAID, to approve the
minutes of the February 20, 2014 Planning and Transportation Commission regular meeting as
amended by Commissioner BAER regarding the second bullet reference to the "Opportunity Study"
on agenda item No. 4; and per Planning Services Manager KORNFELD's amendment to the last
bullet on agenda item No. 2 referencing condition No. 12.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

DISCUSSION

2. First and Main Street Intersection

Discussion of the traffic light timing, queuing of cars, and turning movement at the intersection.
Project Engineer: Novenario

Project Engineer NOVENARIO provided a background report using resident Jim Wing's letter as
his discussion framework. He discussed the signal timing plans and explained the City's
coordination with the County based on established thresholds; that a free-timing pattern is only used
when volumes are very low; and that the Main and First Street intersection are a slave to the
Foothill Expressway signals controlled by the County.

Resident Jim Wing thanked staff for their work and said that the Commission, staff and citizens of
Los Altos can help prioritize the issues. He said that first priority should be given to the Foothill
Expressway and San Antonio Road intersection signal timing, and then look at the Main and State
Street intersection to try and discourage cars. He conveyed that cars (not trucks) are the problem at

the First and Main Street lane-width change due to the need for the cars to clear the “buffer” between signals. There was no other public comment.

The Commission discussed the First and Main Street Intersection and made the following comments:

Commissioner LORELL:

- Left turns off of First Street in both directions are the problem where the cars waiting to turn block the intersection; and
- There is a need to allow protected left turns to address the issue.

In response to Commissioner LORELL’S comments, Project Engineer NOVENARIO stated that he would discuss split-phasing with the County to see if it works with their models, since the County controls the Foothill Expressway/Main Street signal.

Commissioner BAER:

- There is a need to coordinate the Foothill Expressway signals at the intersections of San Antonio Road, West Edith Avenue, and El Monte Avenue too.

Commissioner BRESSACK:

- The County’s priority is to keep the flow of Foothill Expressway, but there are special conditions here that should affect their priority; and
- Los Altos has the only segment along Foothill Expressway with so many intersections so close to the expressway and the adjacent downtown.

Project Engineer NOVENARIO noted that the City of Los Altos has a good relationship with the County, and they are responsive to timing issues.

Commissioner MOISON:

- Noted that the signal timing at the Springer Road/Foothill Expressway intersections seems well controlled and allows traffic to flow through smoothly.

Project Engineer NOVENARIO stated that the Berry Avenue stop sign creates issues with the Foothill Expressway light because the pauses it creates times-out the signal. He said that the City could consider adding a signal at Berry Avenue, but that it was not preferred. He conveyed that the signal at El Monte Avenue and Foothill Expressway controls the San Antonio Road/Foothill intersection and the Main Street/Foothill intersection signals, and that the County would have to add capacity on Foothill Expressway to solve the issues.

Commissioner JUNAID:

- There is definitely a timing issue at the San Antonio Road and Foothill Expressway signal because the red light comes too quick and backs traffic up.

Project Engineer NOVENARIO stated that they have found the issue and are working on resolving the fault in the signal connector. He said that they are also considering a “Pedestrian Only” phase for the Foothill Expressway/Main Street intersection.

Commissioner LORELL:

- The Covington Road, Giffin Road and El Monte Avenue signals are not timed well with Foothill Expressway and causes back-up traffic on El Monte.

In response to Commissioner LORELL’S comments Project Engineer NOVENARIO stated that the City is addressing a traffic loop detection issue there where the faulty loop creates a default signal timing pattern rather than the programmed timing pattern.

Commissioner BODNER:

- Asked how long it would take to solve malfunction issues at the signals and what the process was to discover the issues.

In response to Commissioner BODNER’S question, Project Engineer NOVENARIO stated that the City has changed signal contractors, added a checklist for monthly surveys (they found the Covington Road/El Monte Avenue issue), and will respond to resident complaints regarding the First Street/San Antonio Road/Foothill Expressway intersection.

Commissioner BRESSACK:

- Suggested that we should be using more up-to-date equipment.

Project Engineer NOVENARIO noted that the City of Los Altos is reviewing equipment upgrades for Capital Improvement Project needs and is considering purchasing cameras.

Commissioner McTIGHE:

- The Homestead Road signal backs up in the PM hours all the way to Foothill Expressway.

Project Engineer NOVENARIO noted that the County is working on timing plans for that signal and should have it resolved soon.

Commissioner LORELL:

- Asked how the Commission will learn of resolutions to the issues discussed.

In response to Commissioner LORELL’S question, Project Engineer NOVENARIO stated that he would inform the Planning and Transportation Commission as things are fixed.

Commissioner BRESSACK:

- Suggested using web posts on the City’s website to show the status of the work and progress being made on the issues that were discussed.

Project Engineer NOVENARIO noted that the First and Main Street intersection was designed for smaller trucks and larger trucks are directed to take other routes.

Assistant City Manager WALGREN noted that the tight radius at the intersection was intended to slow cars, and that it would be better to evaluate the intersection once the development at 400 Main Street was completed.

3. County Expressway Plan 2040 Update

Discussion of the Expressway Plan 2040 and traffic light timing coordination between the County and City of Los Altos at intersections along Foothill Expressway. *Project Engineer: Novenario*

Project Engineer NOVENARIO gave a background report and update on the County Expressway Plan 2040. He stated that on a segment analysis of Foothill Expressway, the Level of Service (LOS) on some parts in Los Altos were rated F and that they are looking into adding capacity between El Monte Avenue and San Antonio Road along Foothill Expressway.

The Commission discussed the County Expressway Plan 2040 Update and made the following comments:

Commissioner BAER:

- Foothill Expressway has negatively affected the City of Los Altos disproportionately noting that 7 of 11 signals along Foothill Expressway are in Los Altos.

Commissioner LORELL:

- The more we inform the public about Foothill Expressway and County policies, the more residents may be acceptant of signals as solutions.

Commissioner BAER:

- Widening Foothill Expressway only invites more traffic (El Monte Avenue too).

Commissioner BRESSACK:

- Asked what LOS E and F “mean” in terms of determining solutions.

Project Engineer NOVENARIO stated that Level of Service E and F thresholds create the relative basis of mitigations. He further commented that the County intentionally does not mark the bike lanes with all markings on Foothill Expressway so as to not encourage novice bicyclists.

Commissioner MOISON:

- San Antonio Road is arterial due to regional development and that the solutions relate to managing the regional traffic.

Commissioner BAER:

- Development creates more traffic and exacerbates the issue.

Assistant City Manager WALGREN noted that the new Mountain View office development at El Camino Real will add more traffic to San Antonio Road.

Commissioner BRESSACK:

- Noted that the Civic Center plan should make it easier for pedestrians to cross San Antonio Road; and
- The flashing lights in the crosswalks on San Antonio Road were a good start.

Assistant City Manager WALGREN stated that the City is hoping to retain intersection improvements envisioned in the Civic Center Master Plan (San Antonio/Main).

Project Engineer NOVENARIO stated that he is working on improving the San Antonio Road signals to handle increased traffic demands from Mountain View.

Project Engineer NOVENARIO gave an update on the Loyola Bridge widening project stating anticipated construction is for summer 2014 and that the County did their own outreach for their process.

Commissioner McTIGHE:

- We should plan on A Street changes at Loyola Corners; and
- It is not safe for pedestrian and bicyclists to cross over the existing Foothill Expressway bridge.

Assistant City Manager WALGREN stated that the City has an unscheduled A Street project with a one-way design to improve pedestrian and bike access, but that affects circulation and the City would need to study the traffic impacts of the project further before committing to it.

Commissioner BAER:

- Suggested changing A Street temporarily to a one-way to test the circulation.

Project Engineer NOVENARIO stated the County's signal timing is adaptive and has demand-driven signal timing sensors and cameras would be used for monitoring only. He said that he is working on improving signal timing and equipment for the City by coordinating controllers with the County and fiber optics.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Commissioner McTIGHE reported that 467 First Street will be heard on the March 11, 2014 City Council meeting and he will be the Commission representative. Commissioner JUNAID reported on the February 25, 2014 City Council meeting, in which the Use Permit for 1555 Oak Avenue was approved and commented on former Council member Ron Packard's encouragement at the meeting for downtown property owners to contribute to building a parking garage downtown.

Commissioner BAER reported that the City Council prohibited telephonic meeting attendance. Commissioner BRESSACK commented that the Commission and City of Los Altos should be proactively pursuing video conferencing because the technology is here in Silicon Valley now.

POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner BAER suggested adding “Construction Holidays” as a future agenda item to discuss a discrepancy in the Municipal Code. With Chair MOISON and Commissioner JUNAID in agreement with BAER, there were three Commissioners in support of discussing it on a future agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair MOISON adjourned the meeting at 8:57 P.M.

David Kornfield, AICP
Planning Services Manager