

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN  
ADVISORY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON WEDNESDAY,  
JULY 24 AT 7:00 P.M. AT CITY HALL-COMMUNITY CHAMBERS, ONE NORTH SAN  
ANTONIO ROAD, LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA**

PRESENT: Suzanne Ambiel (Chair), Karl Danz (Vice-Chair) Bill Crook, Chris Hlavka, Wes Brinsfield, Jim Fenton, Cedric Novenario (Staff Liaison)

ABSENT: Bill Sheppard

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Jim Wing provided comments to both item #'s 2 & 3. See attached for Mr. Wing's comments. In addition to the written comments provided item #3, Mr. Wing noted that pedestrian landings, keeping the as a simple-action oriented type plan should be considered.

John Baer provided comments to item #2. In general, Mr. Baer suggested the mail boxes not be placed in the parking plaza, consider visibility, and leave mail boxes where they are.

**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION**

1. Minutes

On a motion by Jim Fenton, seconded by Bill Crook, the item is approved as amended. Passed 6-0.

2. Relocation of U.S. Postal Service Mail Collection Boxes

Staff presented the proposed locations for the U.S. Postal Service Mail Collection Boxes at Parking Plaza's 2 and 3. The commission as well as the public in attendance provided feedback. This item will be returned at a future commission meeting with additional site locations for consideration

3. Pedestrian Master Plan

Staff presented a draft of the Pedestrian Master Plan outline. The commission as well as members of the public in attendance provided feedback to staff regarding plan organization and content.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

4. School Commutes

Staff provided an update regarding the work completed by the first School Commutes sub-committee meeting. The report summarizes the intent and suggested approaches for conducting a School Commutes study session for the public. The next sub-committee meeting is tentively scheduled for August 2013.

5. Monthly Staff Reports

Staff liaison updated Commission on related Capital Improvement Projects.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Suzanne Ambiel adjourned the meeting at 9:09 p.m.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

BPAC Members,

Subject: BPAC 7-24-13 Meeting Agenda Item 2, Postal Mail Box Location

Lacking any details on Postal Mail Box locations, only action taken by Council on 6-24-13 was to refer to BPAC for review of all possible locations and details. BPAC Staff report did not provide any details on possible location at Plaza 2 north driveway exit. Enclosed is my letter to Council that has some details on Plaza 2 and 3 locations. It also notes my concern about pedestrian visibility and safety when two big mail boxes are placed in six feet long driveway exit zone next to very busy sidewalk between Walgreens and Main.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jim Wing

Los Altos Mayor Fishpaw,

Subject: Council 6/25/2013 Meeting Agenda Item 12, Drive-thru Mailbox Relocation

I do not feel you have enough data to go forward with staff's recommended location for drive-thru mailboxes. Care should be taken to address potential pedestrian safety problem. I recommend you have site detail plans reviewed by BPAC before approval of this project.

Number one pedestrian safety problem in our downtown is visibility of pedestrians on sidewalks at parking plaza exits. Both BPAC and PTC reviews of 6 feet tall Wayfinding Plaza Identification signs noted this problem. Staff mitigated visibility problem by designing three feet high signs. Second street sidewalk between Safeway Pharmacy and Walgreens has very high pedestrian usage. It is used by many groups of teenagers going to Walgreens who are talking more than watching for cars exiting parking plaza 2. Plaza 3 location on driveway behind stores like Chase Bank has fewer pedestrians but does get busy with office employees going to lunch.

Two drive-thru mailboxes form a visibility block 54 inches high [includes 4 inch high pick-up time sign and 5 inch pedestal] by 70 inches wide, when drop off slot elevation is at required 49 inches. This size almost blocks current Plaza 2 and 3 pedestrian visibility triangle zones. Location must not be close to sidewalks to prevent cars from blocking sidewalk during drop-off. This means using a parking place may be the only option.

San Antonio Streetscape has restricted car access to Plaza 3 driveway behind stores. Cars can now only access driveway behind stores by entering from San Antonio at hidden parking plaza entry across from Library driveway. Cars can no longer circle through Plaza 3 from Second or use main Plaza 3 entrance at Hawthorne / San Antonio intersection to access driveway behind stores. Half of driveway length is very narrow and delivery trucks often block for several minutes at a time.

Staff has a very difficult job to find a suitable location for two pairs of drive-thru mailboxes in our downtown. Existing First street eastside location may be the “lessor of evils”. When 100 First Street development is complete, 80% of pedestrian traffic will be on west side. While First Street is under construction, many of my neighbors now use City Hall drive-thru mailbox and it works well for them.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jim Wing

Milverton Road

Los Altos, CA

Los Altos BPAC Commission Chair Ambiel,

Subject: BPAC 7/24/13 Meeting Agenda Item 2, Drive-thru Postal Mail Box Location

It should be an easy design problem to locate two drive-thru postal mail boxes in our downtown, but it is not that easy. Selecting a location that meets design criteria that works for both drivers and pedestrians is a challenge. Key elements of location design criteria are as follows:

1. Provide good traffic access
2. Insure pedestrian safety
3. Avoid traffic congestion while stopped at mail box
4. Location must be intuitive [near post office]

Existing drive-thru location at Loyola Corners meets all design criteria. Location is very good for South Los Altos but not for North Los Altos

Existing drive-thru location at City Hall meets all design criteria except location is not intuitive and most residents do not know it is there. This drive-thru could be improved by adding express mail box and providing late Post Office pick-up time of 5:00 PM.

Existing drive-thru location on North First Street meets all design criteria except drive-thru lane must be shared with pedestrians. Sharing sounds bad but number of pedestrians using east side of First Street is very low. Count data from September 2007 indicates 80% of pedestrians walk on west side of First. West side pedestrian pattern is expected to remain the same after current construction because of new sidewalk landscape and it has afternoon shade. Post Office reports 2000 pieces of mail per day at this location. Count data from September 2007 indicates that cars using drive-thru to be less than 400 a day with most at 5:00 PM when pedestrian usage is very low.

Staff recommended two locations at 6/25/13 Council, one at Plaza 3 north exit at Third [Chase Bank] and one at Plaza 2 north [Los Altos / Safeway Pharmacy] exit at Second. Council rejected Plaza 3 because of very poor access and Plaza 2 because of pedestrian safety. Council did recommend sending this project to BPAC to study recommend other locations.

A location just behind downtown post office that uses one parking space would be a good intuitive fit. Pedestrian safety would be very good but access would be somewhat limited in the 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM weekday hours due to service trucks and lunch hour crowds. Existing recycle bin shares adjacent parking space that is restricted to cars less than 15.5 feet long. Average California car length is 16.83 feet long. Recycle bin could be shifted four feet north into parking space with drive-thru mail box and remove car length restriction in adjacent parking space. Bicycle racks may be considered in this drive-thru mail box space.

Village Park curb recess on Edith is a location with very good access from north / south bound San Antonio and would keep extra cars from entering congested downtown since they can exit to Foothill Expressway or Los Altos Avenue. Existing curb recess space is "tailor made" for drive-thru postal mail boxes. First Street mail box configuration and traffic circulation easily fits into Village Park curb recess. Only change would be to use box to box spacing that is used by Post Office at Loyola Corners This location is highly visible so intuitive criteria is somewhat satisfied. I walk past this site several days a week and almost never see any cars parked there.

Sometimes I see a Los Altos Park maintenance truck. Park Commission lists Village Park as our most underutilized park. There is space between existing curb recess and Edith crosswalk for one or more 9 by 22 feet parallel parking spaces. Sidewalk wiggle would need to be extended and maybe go around Pistache tree.

I recommend you consider Village Park location.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jim Wing

Milverton Road

Los Altos, CA

**Comments regarding Item #3 from Mr. Jim Wing**

Move the following to appendix

1B Benefits of Walking

2A Climate Performance

3A Settings & Context

3D Opportunities

4 Needs Assessment

4A Public Outreach Findings

4B Pedestrian Activity Levels

4C Collision Analysis

4D Pedestrian Suitability

6A Methodology