

**CITY OF ORINDA
TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

February 11, 2019

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TSAC) WAS HELD ON THE ABOVE DATE IN THE SARGE LITTLEHALE COMMUNITY ROOM, 22 ORINDA WAY, ORINDA, CALIFORNIA.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bisesto called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

COMMITTEEMEMBERS: Laura Bisesto, Greg Haet, Lary Hanshaw, Mark Roberts, Steve Schnier

City Staff: Public Works and Engineering Services Director Larry Theis; Assistant Engineer Kevin McCourt

City Councilmember: Dennis Fay

Chair Bisesto introduced and welcomed newly elected Councilmember Fay to the meeting; she also announced that this would be the final meeting for Committeemember Hanshaw as his term has expired; she thanked him for his work and contributions to the TSAC.

C. TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

January 14, 2019

Chair Bisesto advised that she had reviewed the e-mail submitted by Orinda resident Nick Waranoff requesting changes to the meeting minutes; she did not believe changes to the minutes were warranted.

Committeemember Schnier requested that Page 5, Paragraph 8 be amended to read "...the placement of the totem sign on the *east* side of Camino Pablo appears to *also* affect sight distance"; and Page 5, Paragraph 9 be amended to read "...the City has not received many complaints regarding the sign on the *east* side of Camino Pablo."

Committeemember Haet noted that he would abstain from the motion as he had been absent from the January meeting.

MOTION: By Committeemember Roberts, seconded by Committeemember Schnier, to approve the TSAC Meeting Minutes of January 14, 2019, as amended. The motion carried by voice vote of 4-0-1 (Haet abstained).

D. PUBLIC FORUM – None

E. DISCUSSION – BIKE RODEO/BICYCLE SAFETY DAY

Director Theis stated that staff will present the Bike Rodeo/Bicycle Safety Day to the City Council on March 5, 2019, as a Consent item, though the City Council may pull it off of Consent for discussion; the expenses for the event will be charged to the General Fund rather than to the budget for traffic calming, which is restricted to matters of traffic impacts; the event is strictly an educational event.

Assistant Engineer McCourt requested clarification of the event location.

Chair Bisesto noted that the event would likely be held at Wagner Ranch Elementary School; she asked if any of the Committeemembers would like to co-host the event, which will take place on May 11, 2019, from 9:00 a.m. to Noon.

Comitteemember Schnier stated his interest in co-hosting the event.

Director Theis suggested that available Committeemembers attend the March 5, 2019, City Council meeting to demonstrate support for the event.

This item was continued to the next TSAC meeting.

F. TRAFFIC CALMING UPDATES AND ACTIONS

1. Briefing from Police Chief – SLOW DOWN ORINDA/Traffic Citations Report
No report

2. Traffic Calming Requests - None

3. Accessibility Issues

Assistant Engineer McCourt advised that he is currently working on the preliminary design and checking for feasibility of the two previously discussed pedestrian ramps for Santa Maria Way at Altarinda Road.

Director Theis noted that the existing topography would make it difficult to install ramps at this location; additionally, the budget may need to be adjusted depending upon the cost estimate.

G. STAFF REPORT

1. *Update – Current Balance of Traffic Calming Improvements Program
FY 2019 expenditures \$5,992.30 to date; \$40,000 budget = remaining balance
\$34,007.70*

2. *Update – Sundown Terrace Speed Cushion Installation*

Director Theis advised that all cushions have now been installed.

3. *Update – Rheem Boulevard Traffic Calming Request*

No update.

4. *Update - Hillcrest Drive (between Martha Road and Overhill Road) – Speed Cushion Installation and Radar Speed Sign Installation*

Assistant Engineer McCourt stated that he had completed the evaluation of the requested traffic calming location; he noted that the street meets all criteria.

Emily Waterbury, Orinda resident, asked where the placement of the devices would be and what the steps would need to be taken to lower the speed limit.

Assistant Engineer McCourt indicated that the calming devices would need to be located outside the major curve in the roadway.

Director Theis advised that an *advisory* sign could be placed with a lower speed limit, however, it would not be enforceable; the default speed limit in residential areas is 25 mph, with the exception of directly in front of schools (which could have a lower limit of 20 mph or 15 mph); the request for an advisory sign could be added to the current Traffic Calming Request; signage could be placed before the speed cushions advising a 15 mph limit; depending upon the location of the sign and speed cushions, this could slow vehicles at the curve; staff will schedule a neighborhood meeting for discussion.

5. *Postponed - Donald Drive – Signage and Speed Cushion Installation (ON HOLD)*
No update.

6. *Postponed – Rheem Boulevard at Zander Drive– 3-Way Stop Sign (ON HOLD)*

Joe Moran, Orinda resident, stated that he has lived in the area for over fifty years; the Rheem Boulevard/Zander Drive intersection has always been dangerous; the sight distance and the geography create a difficult turn; sight from low cars is completely blocked by the railing on the left side coming out of Zander Drive; making a left turn riding a scooter or motorcycle would be very difficult; the rim trail which people walk to from Zander Drive is located across Rheem Boulevard, which is difficult to cross at the intersection; he added that that two residents who were unable to attend this meeting had written statements supporting installation of a Stop sign.

Tara Presheil, Orinda resident, said that she had recently moved to the neighborhood; the Rheem Boulevard/Zander Drive intersection is the worst she has experienced; when entering the intersection from Zander Drive, the sight distance is very short in both directions; vehicles on Rheem Boulevard speed; there is also an existing dip in the roadway, which adds to the sight distance issue; she concurred that it is difficult to access the rim trail from Zander Drive.

Eric Au, Orinda resident, stated that he lives on the west side of Rheem Boulevard; he agreed that some measures to improve safety at the intersection would be beneficial, however, he did not support installation of Stop signs; he was concerned that there would be a traffic backup at the Stop sign which would affect ingress/egress to his driveway; he would possibly support speed cushion installation; he was more concerned with speeding in the area; lighted signs, flashing caution lights, or lowering the speed limit would increase safety.

Suzy Simmons, Orinda resident, said that she has her passengers advise her when the intersection is clear of oncoming traffic; her recently licensed teenage daughter has been advised to only turn left at the intersection at night when she can see the lights of oncoming vehicles; she herself has had two near misses at the intersection; she requested a cross-walk in addition to Stop signs so that her blind son could access the rim trail without her assistance.

Ben Bonham, Orinda resident, stated that he lives on the corner of Rheem Boulevard and Zander Drive; he was concerned with vehicle speeds on Rheem Boulevard and thought that drivers may ignore a new Stop sign; installing a cross-walk may give pedestrians a false sense of security; he requested installation of speed cushions to deal with the speeding issue and the removal of weeds along the roadside to allow for better sight distance.

Wolfgang Gurr, Orinda resident, questioned why a traffic signal is not being considered, as it may be a superior measure to address the issues.

Director Theis advised that the initial request was for a Stop sign; there would be a different warrant analysis for a traffic signal, which would be more visible but have a much higher cost; he summarized that there is not a perfect solution for the intersection; the intersection does not meet the majority of the Stop sign warrants, except for sight distance; a similar study conducted in 2010 by a different consultant concluded that it did not meet any of the warrants and therefore did not require a Stop sign; according to the current policy, speed cushions are not to be placed on Arterial roads; Rheem Boulevard is an Arterial roadway; staff has concerns about the increase of rear end collisions and would add additional warning signs with the installation of any new Stop signs; notifications will be sent out to residents within at least 500 feet of the proposed Stop signs to obtain additional feedback; the City Council would make the decision whether to add Stop signs as a Traffic Order.

Mr. Moran noted that a Stop sign was added in the Town of Moraga when they had a sinkhole and it did not affect traffic; he pointed out that Overhill Road has multiple Stop signs and wondered how those signs had been approved with the reluctance of the City to install Stop signs.

Committeemember Roberts supported installation of measures at the intersection.

Committeemember Hanshaw stated that he had experienced the turn and it is challenging; although the speeds on Rheem Boulevard are inconsistent, some of the vehicles do travel very fast; he agreed some measures should be undertaken; the installation of Stop signs would be a positive step and a crosswalk would increase safety.

Committeemember Haet stated his belief that the intersection may be the most dangerous that has been brought before the TSAC; disregarding the cost, a traffic signal is more visible from a distance and would address the issue of increasing air pollution and traffic; given the circumstances, a Stop sign should be considered at the minimum.

Director Theis advised that the cost for installation of a traffic signal would range from \$100,000 - \$200,000; the installation of Stop signs and the additional advanced warning signage may be a few thousand dollars.

Committeemember Schnier added that he does not want to base decisions on the few drivers who will ignore any signage that is installed.

Director Theis clarified that people tend to believe they have more right-of-way on Arterial streets; Stop signs are not meant for speed control; the Stop signs on Overhill Road may have been installed for speed control at a time before the current Stop sign warrants were created; although the City always has the discretion to install or not install Stop signs, going against the warrants leaves the City open to liability.

Committeemember Schnier stated that he would support the additional Stop signs.

Chair Bisesto commented that the installation of a traffic signal would be most ideal; however, it would also have unintended consequences such as having flashing lights in residents' homes.

Councilmember Fay requested that staff look at different options for this intersection; the intersection may only need one additional Stop sign; staff should explore the placement of the Stop sign closer to the crest for additional line of sight.

Committeemember Roberts commented that there may be an increase in noise with cars stopping and starting.

Director Theis stated that the TSAC and staff previously recommended another 3-Way Stop sign and the City Council voted against it due to impacts to the neighborhood; staff will request feedback from the surrounding neighborhoods so that the City Council can weigh all of the factors; staff will also contact the Town of Moraga, which will likely be the most directly affected.

MOTION: By Committeemember Hanshaw, seconded by Committeemember Haet, to initiate the process to install Stop signs at the intersection of Rheem Boulevard and Zander Drive. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Director Theis advised that staff would look at other options; the total process may take three to six months.

This item was continued to a future TSAC meeting.

7. *Postponed – East Altarinda Road– Signage (ON HOLD)*
No update.

8. *Postponed – Northwood Drive – Speed Cushion Request (ON HOLD)*
No update.

9. *Postponed – Lost Valley Drive – Signage/Striping/Radar Feedback Request (ON HOLD)*
No update.

H. MATTERS INITIATED

Director Theis notified the Commission that Stuart House and Travis Blaschek-Miller are the two newly appointed TSAC members; they will begin their service at the March 18, 2019, TSAC meeting.

I. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: By Committeemember Schnier, seconded by Committeemember Roberts, to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

The next Regular Meeting of the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee will be 7:00 p.m., March 18, 2019, in the Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way, Orinda, California.

Prepared by: K. McCourt