

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION  
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2006  
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
1315 VALLEY DRIVE  
7:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m.

**1. Roll Call**

Present: Commissioners DiVirgilio, Lombardo, Marinelli, Winnek (arrived late)

Also Present: Richard Morgan, Director of Public Works/City Engineer  
Michael Flaherty, Public Works Superintendent  
Rhea Punneo, Administrative Assistant, Public Works Department  
Ray Abassi, Contract Traffic Engineer

Absent: Commissioner Beste

**2. Flag Salute**

Commissioner DiVirgilio led the flag salute.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of January 18, 2006 were approved.

**4. Public Comments**

None

**5. Correspondence**

None

**6. Items for Commission Consideration**

**a. Traffic Signal at 16<sup>th</sup> St. and Pacific Coast Highway**

Mr. Morgan gave presentation regarding new traffic signal at 16<sup>th</sup> St. and PCH to be installed at northwest corner of intersection. The installation of this signal was approved by City Council in 2003 and thereafter approved by Caltrans who issued a permit for installation. Despite approval, the public has expressed concern for the potential impacts that this signal will cause for traffic flow and inquired as to mitigation options if signal becomes problematic. Upholding previous decision, City Council directed staff to bring issue to Public Works Commission for examination of mitigation options should signal cause traffic flow problems.

Mr. Morgan stated that no action was required to be taken by commission, they were to hear public concern and have discussion about possible options and may request action if desired. He also stated that there will be a commission meeting following installation of signal to discuss actual statistics rather than speculation.

Coming forward at this time to address the commission were:

Lee Grant, 1011 16<sup>th</sup> St., came representing many residents living east of PCH on 16<sup>th</sup> St. who submitted a petition against installation of signal at PCH and 16<sup>th</sup> St. He feels that no input was taken from residents of 16<sup>th</sup> St. who will receive the highest impact from this signal. He is against this signal due to dangerous conditions created by higher traffic volumes on this narrow street which has limited sidewalk usage, inability for multiple vehicles to pass through traffic, and steep inclines/declines with limited visibility. Mr. Grant stated that 16<sup>th</sup> St. was not meant to be a commercial conduit to shopping centers but to be used as access for residents to their homes.

Upon Mr. Grant's presentation of mitigation plans, Commissioner DiVirgilio requested that he save that presentation until after the City engineer had an opportunity to make the City's presentation.

Gene Shook, 1601 PCH, owner of Hermosa Pavilion, stated that there was no requirement in leases with any tenants to install signal; Mr. Shook took appropriate measures and chose to install signal because he thought it was the right thing to do and noted it was approved five to zero by City Council and Planning Commission three years ago which involved a traffic study. He stated that he and members of his family have almost been hit as pedestrians in that intersection, as well as having observed many other accidents take place. It is his opinion that if there is not a signal installed that someone will eventually be killed and it is a safety issue. Mr. Shook is not opposed to residents blocking street, making residential only, or creating one-way street but expressed that he is already obligated spending large sums of money to install this signal and the process has already begun.

Susan Blako, 7<sup>th</sup> St., reminded commission of accidents involving pedestrians and suggested easiest solution is to install signal and make 16<sup>th</sup> St. one-way.

Charlie Dougherty, 1600 Ardmore, feels intersection is in need of signal and suggested 16<sup>th</sup> St. be made one-way street.

Marlie Ramirez, Hermosa Beach school teacher and owner of Kids' Cabaret, stated majority of kids walk to her business and feels signal is needed for safety issues.

Lisa Brannan, 1610 Raymond Avenue, is opposed to signal but understands need for signal. She inquired about more studies on how traffic will be affected because old traffic studies are outdated and not current with changes made since installation of 24 Hour Fitness.

Patty Egerer, 925 15<sup>th</sup> Place, feels residents were denied appropriate study before approval of installation. She pointed out that 16<sup>th</sup> St. east of PCH is not capable of handling two-way traffic.

Sandy Fineman, 945 16<sup>th</sup> St., described for commission how difficult it is for her to navigate sidewalks with children on her narrow street.

Robert Easton, 1532 Silver Street, feels it is very dangerous intersection and would like to see signal go in but wants amicable compromise for residents.

A presentation was made by Traffic Engineer Ray Abassi on subject of traffic studies as related to 16<sup>th</sup> St. and PCH. Mr. Abassi stated that the criteria had been met to find positive need for signal installation. He stated that another traffic study can be done three to six months after installation and if problems arise then traffic calming measures can be taken to adjust.

General discussion among the commissioners highlighted the following:

In response to a question posed, Mr. Abassi responded that changes in traffic volume from 1998 to 2003 most likely are from development and increased patronage.

Mr. Morgan responded that this corner went from empty to active and that if Mr. Shook had not chosen to install signal that Caltrans would have because of traffic activity.

Commissioner Lombardo stated that it would have been more beneficial to have had the Public Works Commission involved in 2003. She also reminded the public that the traffic signal will be installed regardless of opposition, so commission needs commentary on solutions to traffic flow problems, not on opposing signal installation.

Mr. Morgan shares concern with residents for safety and feels that installation will increase safety. He also stated that an option for 16<sup>th</sup> St. would be to construct continuous sidewalks on both sides of street and recommended further investigation for that option as the budget would support such change.

Coming forward at this time to address the commission were:

Lee Grant, 1011 16<sup>th</sup> St., presented Exhibit 6-a (1) to commission for alternating traffic flow in order to navigate and/or discourage increase in traffic.

Commissioner Lombardo stated in response to Mr. Grant's presentation that if there is only left and right turn from both west and eastbound traffic on 16<sup>th</sup> St. coming from west side and east side of PCH there may not need to be one-way only street designation on 16<sup>th</sup> St.

Mr. Grant responded that the 24 Hour Fitness creates problems because people want to cut straight across and agreed that right and left turn only may be an inexpensive solution if it can be enforced with signage.

Mr. Morgan clarified with Mr. Grant that he would consider a one-way barrier if that solves the problem.

Traffic Engineer Ray Abassi recommended that traffic studies need to be completed so as to define exact traffic problems before solutions are made, and Mr. Morgan agreed.

Gene Shook, 1601 Pacific Coast Highway, owner of Hermosa Pavilion, questioned whether or not the AMC theatre was open during the 1998 traffic study and suggested that that may be an influence on previous studies. Mr. Shook reminded commission that any changes to the signal and expenses accrued due to those changes would be the responsibility of the City as his project was approved as funded.

Commissioner Lombardo responded that the commission was not going to be recommending any physical changes, only restricting right and left turns.

Mr. Morgan responded that Caltrans was open to restricting right and left turns and had already discussed that option.

Lisa Holcombe, 1630 PCH, representing Pet Care Company, reminded commission that animal safety was also a concern for them. She encouraged traffic studies for 17<sup>th</sup> St. as well as 16<sup>th</sup> St. and encouraged traffic enforcement as well.

David Adler, 943 15<sup>th</sup> Place, wanted to thank Mr. Shook for installing signal; however, is in disagreement of waiting on traffic studies to make changes as he feels 16<sup>th</sup> St. is too dangerous because of traffic flow. He wanted commission to know that he feels it would be negligent to wait for an accident to happen to change traffic flow.

Patty Egerer, 925 15<sup>th</sup> Place, stated that it doesn't make any difference what time of day the traffic flow is heaviest in the study; all eastbound travel is hazardous and wait-and-see mentality is negligent.

Greg Sampson, 949 16<sup>th</sup> St., thanked Commissioner Marinelli for spending time in community to investigate problem. Mr. Sampson disagreed with wait-and-see mentality and wanted change now.

Sandy Fineman, 945 16<sup>th</sup> St., is a member of 24 Hour Fitness and looks forward to using signal in intersection. Ms. Fineman also wanted to point out that measures need to be taken so as not to train drivers to go in wrong direction; wants to safeguard residents when signal goes in.

Bill Henshaw, 930 15<sup>th</sup> Place, commends attempting solutions for 16<sup>th</sup> St., but encouraged traffic study for all surrounding areas including 15<sup>th</sup> Place.

Mindy Brown, 939 16<sup>th</sup> St., thanked developer for endorsing the 16<sup>th</sup> St. plan and encouraged traffic studies to be made public. She worries about speeds of cars if signal is installed.

General discussion among the commissioners highlighted the following:

Commissioner Lombardo liked Exhibit 6-a (1) very much but disagreed with right turn only from 16<sup>th</sup> St. onto PCH and recommended at least to make signage for safety of residents.

Commissioner DiVirgilio complimented residents on organization in presentation to commission and expressed surprise that commission was not involved before. Commissioner DiVirgilio cautioned that he doesn't want to wait and see but doesn't want to be hyper reactive to concern on 16<sup>th</sup> St. without giving surrounding streets equal consideration. He wants to find short-term solutions and review plan with broader input.

Commissioner Marinelli commented that he visited residents on 16<sup>th</sup> St. and witnessed firsthand drivers speeding and parking legally, illegally, and circling around for parking to go to 24 Hour Fitness. Commissioner Marinelli agreed with Mr. Morgan that studies need to be redone as developments have gone up. He wants to be proactive and investigate signage for eastbound left turn onto PCH north and right turn onto PCH south with no traffic onto east 16<sup>th</sup> St. heading eastbound. He requested a wait-and-see for barrier at bottom of street and keep veterinarian's office ingress/egress open.

Commissioner Winnek stated that he would block street off if it were his choice and that safety is a huge concern, but accidents occurring would only be speculative at this point.

In response to a question by Commissioner Winnek, Mr. Morgan stated that the approval of this signal in 2003 did differ from the normal procedure in that it did not hold a public meeting at that time but is being installed as a safety enhancement and not intended to change traffic circulation.

Mr. Morgan would start the process of analyzing the proposals; the process does require change in traffic flow and recommended studies to bring back to commission and then take to City Council. He stated it would be an approximate two-month process even on a fast track and also wants to incorporate a larger residential area.

***Amended to include:***

Commissioner Winnek stated the task at hand for the Commission under Item 6a. was to review and receive public comment on the 16<sup>th</sup> Street issue and return it to staff. This having been done the item is closed and remanded back to staff. If anyone wished to make an ancillary motion that may be done at that time.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Lombardo to recommend installation of signage for following: 16<sup>th</sup> St. eastbound to PCH left and right turn only; southbound on PCH signage for no left turn at 16<sup>th</sup> St.; PCH going north no right turn on 16<sup>th</sup> St.; does not want 16<sup>th</sup> St. going west at PCH right turn only, wants left turn also to go south at PCH. She is not proposing a one-way street yet. Seconded by Commissioner Marinelli.

AYES: Lombardo, Marinelli

NAYES: DiVirgilio  
ABSENT: Beste  
ABSTAIN: Winnek

Mr. Morgan commented that it would be better to incorporate traffic engineer instead of signage alone and must go through Caltrans. He further gave direction to analyze proposal and have presented before City Council.

Commissioner Lombardo reminded public to follow through with City Council on this issue.

**7. Commissioners' Reports**

None

**8. Public Works Department Reports**

Mr. Flaherty presented that the Little League field was refurbished with grand reopening. He also updated for the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Mr. Morgan updated commission on Pier Ave. project and sewage spill situation. He also reported that Public Works Department had lost two engineers and will be looking for qualified replacements.

**9. Items Requested by Commissioners**

None

**10. Other Matters**

None

**11. Public Comment**

Lisa Holcombe, 1630 PCH, wanted to express the problems for parking and traffic patterns created by 24 Hour Fitness and she requested 30 minute parking for her business.

Mr. Morgan directed Ms. Holcombe to the Planning Commission as that topic is on their agenda for the upcoming meeting.

Patty Egerer, 925 15<sup>th</sup> Place, came forward also to discuss parking and traffic problems created by 24 Hour Fitness.

**12. Adjournment**

At 9:36 p.m., Commissioner Winnek adjourned to the meeting of Wednesday, March 15, 2006.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and complete record of the action taken by the Public Works Commission of Hermosa Beach at the regularly scheduled meeting of February 15, 2006.

  
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Victor Winnek, Chairman

  
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Richard D. Morgan, P.E., Secretary

3/15/06  
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Date

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