



MINUTES
ATHERTON TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
Tuesday, July 18, 2016
6:00 PM – Special Meeting
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 94 ASHFIELD ROAD

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL (5 minutes)

Committee Members: James McLaughlin (Chair), Gary Lauder (Vice-Chair), Mark Cummings, Joseph Davis, Sriram Iyer

Councilmember Liaison: Michael Lempres

Staff: Acting Police Chief Joe Wade and P.W. Director Mike Kashiwagi

- The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm.
- All committee members were present.
- Acting Chief Wade asked that Item 4b- Appointment of New Chair, be moved to the beginning of the meeting. Gary Lauder made a motion to nominate James McLaughlin. Sriram Iyer seconded that motion and James McLaughlin accepted the nominations. There were no other nominations for the Chair position, and the members voted unanimously for James McLaughlin, making him the new TC Chair (3 votes in favor and 1 abstention- Cummings).
- James McLaughlin made a motion to nominate Gary Lauder as the Vice Chair. The motion was seconded by Sriram Iyer. There were no other nominations for the Vice Chair position, and the members voted unanimously for Gary Lauder, making him the new TC Vice-Chair (3 votes in favor and 1 abstention- Cummings).
- Prior to discussion of items on the agenda, Gary Lauder suggested that the members each provide a brief background and introduction. All members gave a brief background.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS for items not on the agenda

- There were no public comments.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES Minutes of the May 2016 meeting

The minutes were approved as written without discussion.

4. NEW BUSINESS

- 4a. a. Set/Confirm meeting schedule for the year
b. Appointment of Chair/Vice Chair

4a: The committee set meeting dates for the remainder of the year: September 13 and November 1.

4b: See above

5. REGULAR AGENDA

5a. OLD BUSINESS (20 minutes)

- a. Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan (T/C Item of Interest)
Status update on Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan – M. Kashiwagi
- b. Contemporary traffic issues (T/C Items of Interest)

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- c. Status of Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon – M. Kashiwagi
- d. Parking Restrictions- Rebecca Lane– M. Kashiwagi
- e. Neighborhood Traffic Management Program- M. Kashiwagi
- f. Facebook Draft Environmental Impact Report- M. Kashiwagi
- g. Camino Al Lago/Camino Por Los Arboles- M. Kashiwagi

5a: (a): For the benefit of the new members, M. Kashiwagi spoke briefly about the inception of the Bicycle/Ped Master Plan back in 2014. M. Kashiwagi talked about the completion of the class 3 bike routes, and explained the difference between Class 1 and 2 bike lanes. M. Kashiwagi also informed the new members that the Bike/Ped Master Plan identified Glenwood Avenue as a class 2 bike facility, and explained that Staff had a consultant assess whether Oak Grove Avenue might be a more suitable class 2 facility than Glenwood Avenue, primarily because the Menlo Park portion of Oak Grove already had an existing class 2 bike lane, thus providing a connection with the Menlo Park plan.

Mike Lempres advised James McLaughlin that as the new Chair, he or his designee, would be required to be a liaison to the Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee. McLaughlin told the other committee members that he would like to see them all attend on a rotating basis.

Committee Member Cummings asked Acting Chief Wade whether the plan included an enforcement element. Wade said the plan did not specify anything specific in regards to enforcement. M. Kashiwagi added that one of the goals of the plan was to educate residents.

Committee Member Joseph Davis commented on the decision to make Oak Grove Avenue a class 2 bike lane for connectivity reasons because, he said, that Oak Grove Avenue dead ends on one end, and the bike lane stops after a few blocks when it reaches downtown Menlo Park. M. Kashiwagi responded by saying that the decision was made based upon counts, which included data indicating that many more cyclists use Oak Grove Avenue. M. Kashiwagi also said that Oak Grove Avenue was more of a direct route to Cal Train.

5a(b): This portion of the meeting was moved to the end, as there was uncertainty among the committee members as to the true meaning of, “Contemporary Traffic Issues.” Ultimately, the Committee members agreed to share their individual perspectives and assessments of the Town’s various traffic issues. Each member of the committee was given five minutes to share their individual perspectives on the Town’s traffic concerns and how best to address them. This portion of the meeting took place after of item 6(a). Each Committee members 5 minute contribution to this item can be viewed in its entirety beginning at approximately the 1:55 mark on the video, which is posted on You Tube, courtesy of the Town of Atherton. The video can be seen by accessing the Town Website or by accessing the following URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hmd6sXdQ4Z8>

5a(c): M. Kashiwagi reported that Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon is currently under construction at the intersection of El Camino Real and Almenbral Avenue. M. Kashiwagi explained to the new members that

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the beacon was designed as a stop control to the existing crosswalk at that intersection. Although the process took some time to get underway, M. Kashiwagi said that the project was well underway and that the beacon should be functional by August 1, 2016. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony for the beacon on or about August 13, 2016. This will be the first beacon in the San Francisco Peninsula. M. Kashiwagi said they are doing the ribbon cutting almost two weeks after the initial start date so that drivers have a chance to see how it operates and become used to it. M. Kashiwagi further described the hybrid beacon as a traffic signal that only operates when a pedestrian hits the button. Once activated, flashing amber lights will let drivers know that the crosswalk has been activated, an indication that a pedestrian is using the crosswalk.

Gary Lauder asked if there was a risk of someone mistaking the beacon for a traffic signal that had lost its power. M. Kashiwagi explained that would not be an issue.

When asked about Cal Trans involvement with the project, M. Kashiwagi explained that Atherton is funding this hybrid beacon project. M. Kashiwagi said there are currently 5 existing crosswalks at uncontrolled intersections in Atherton, a couple of which have had fatalities in the past 5 years. Cal Trans, in an effort to make the San Mateo County stretch of El Camino Real safer, offered to install “rapid flashing” beacons at various El Camino Real intersections within Atherton. However, rather than install rapid flashing beacons, M. Kashiwagi said they chose to get the hybrid pedestrian beacon, because it was designed to stop cars, rather than slow them down, which was the function of the rapid flashing beacon. Cal Trans will install 17 hybrid beacons throughout the San Mateo County, two of which will go in Atherton, one at the Alejandra intersection, and the other at Isabella Avenue. This project will begin in the south (Atherton) and work its way north through the other San Mateo County cities.

5a(d): M. Kashiwagi explained to the new members that there have been parking issues on Rebecca Lane, particularly during Menlo Atherton High School (MAHS) pick up time in the afternoon. M. Kashiwagi said that he had not received any recent calls about parking issues on Rebecca. Acting Chief Wade surmised that M. Kashiwagi hadn’t received any calls because other than a “small contingent” of summer school attendees, the MAHS regular student body was out for summer.

For the benefit of the new members, Gary Lauder explained the Rebecca Lane parking issue, which was that MAHS school parents would drive their vehicles into the Rebecca Lane cul-de-sac and wait to pick up their kids. When too many vehicles would enter at one time, cars would wait, often blocking driveways and clogging up the street.

Acting Chief Wade said that there is discussion amongst staff about changing the current “No Parking” signs to “No Stopping” signs. In addition, MAHS must continue to educate student’s parents about not entering Rebecca Lane to pick up their children.

5a(e): M. Kashiwagi defined the NTMP as policies that identify processes and criteria for the placement of traffic calming devices on residential streets. M. Kashiwagi said the NTMP has been in review for about the past year, and added that the plan has been reviewed by the Atherton Police Department, and the Menlo Park Fire Protection District. There was also a community meeting in 2015 which addressed the NTMP.

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Joseph Davis spoke about the Town Council’s direction (from a previous Council meeting) to revisit the plan and look more closely at a more realistic threshold for justifying a recommendation for a traffic calming device. M. Kashiwagi said that the thresholds had been re-calculated since that time. M. Kashiwagi also said he received feedback that the NTMP document was very long and needed to be made more simple and easy for residents to follow. Once the plan is approved by Council, M. Kashiwagi said that the NTMP document will be simplified so that it’s not too overwhelming. To assist in making it more clear, M. Kashiwagi said they would meet with any street that felt as though they might be interested in pursuing a traffic calming device, but weren’t clear about the process.

Michael Lempres emphasized that the NTMP does nothing to replace existing city procedures. He said that the NTMP provides an opportunity for people who live on the same street who believe they have an issue to bring that issue forward. Lempres added that prior to utilizing the NTMP, residents should first seek the Town services such as calling the police (ie- to deal with speeding vehicles).

Gary Lauder said he was against the NTMP because he felt as though it introduces bureaucracy, complexity, and new burdens on the Town and on the Transportation Committee. Lauder added that because of lack of time and resources, the Transportation Committee doesn’t do some of the things it should do. As an example, Lauder cited a passage of page 1 from the NTMP manual, which addressed the NTMP’s principles and philosophies: “stable residential neighborhood traffic requires sufficient arterial and collector traffic flow to minimize incentives to cut through residential neighborhoods. The primary defense against neighborhood traffic problems is an efficient arterial and collector grid.” Lauder said he agreed with that statement, but argued that nothing in the NTMP did anything to address that. Lauder also said he believes that the Transportation Committee does nothing to address that. Lauder said he believes that the Transportation Committee should address that because he believes improving the flow of the Town’s collectors and arterials the best way to minimize cut through traffic.

M. Kashiwagi recommended reviewing the June, 2016 City Council Agenda for to anyone wishing to get more information regarding the NTMP.

5a(f): M. Kashiwagi provided the committee with the comment letter sent to Menlo Park regarding the Facebook expansion. M. Kashiwagi mentioned that whenever a project from another jurisdiction will impact the Town, Staff will provide feedback (M. Kashiwagi cited the Greenheart project as an example). Gary Lauder requested that the Transportation Committee receive all feedback literature electronically.

Mike Lempres also briefly spoke about the challenges of being heard when another jurisdiction has a project that will affect the Town. M. Kashiwagi said that cities do not go beyond their own borders to calculate the impacts of their project on neighboring jurisdictions, because doing that will result in a bigger impact study fee. M. Kashiwagi said the only area he’s ever seen that had a regional impact fee was in Riverside County.

5a(g): M. Kashiwagi informed the Transportation Committee about a “skewed intersection” that was reported by a resident to be confusing and at times unsafe (Camino Al Lago at Camino Por Los Arboles). The intersection can be confusing because there are several entry points, two lanes of traffic in each lane,

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and obscure angles that require vehicles to weave through the intersection. Additionally, there are a series of existing yield signs that are there to help the driver navigate through the intersection. A resident who travels through this intersection daily reported almost being hit by another vehicle. The resident believed the collision almost occurred because the yield signs confuse the drivers. In the past 5 years there were a total of 4 collisions at this intersection, but all of them were single vehicle collisions with a fixed object. Ultimately, Staff evaluated the intersection and made the following recommendations:

Cowell Lane at Camino Por Los Arboles-

- Replace the existing Yield sign with a new 30” Stop sign.
- Install “Sharks Teeth” markings

Camino A Los Cerros at Camino Por Los Arboles

- Replace the existing 24” Yield sign with a new 30” Yield sign
- Install “Sharks Teeth” markings
- The landscaping in the median should be trimmed so that the height does not exceed 36” high (measured from pavement level)

Camino Al Lago at Camino Por Los Arboles

- Replace the existing 24” Yield sign with a new 30” Yield sign
- Install “Sharks Teeth” markings

Camino Al Lago at Camino Por Los Arboles

- Replace the existing 24” Yield sign with a new 30” Yield sign
- Install “Sharks Teeth” markings

Gary Lauder suggested that a small roundabout, although more expensive than the changes listed above, might be a good solution to the problem.

6. STAFF REPORTS

- 6a. **Police Traffic Unit** (10 minutes)
- a. Monthly Report for March 2016 – Acting Chief Wade
 - b. Monthly Report for April 2016 – Acting Chief Wade

6(a): Acting Chief Wade reviewed the above Monthly Traffic Reports, and M. Kashiwagi gave a brief update on the Marsh Road closure.

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6b. **Public Works Updates**

6(b): There were no Public Works updates.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- There were no public comments.

8. **NEXT MEETING DATE** Tuesday, September 13, 2016

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted –

Joseph Wade, Acting Chief of Police

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