

**MINUTES
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
DECEMBER 18, 2013
7:00 P.M.**

**WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY HALL,
8300 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chair Horvath.

- A. Pledge of Allegiance
Commissioner Cooper led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- B. Reminder to Speak Clearly Into Microphone and to Turn Off All Cellular Phones and Pagers

The Commissioners and public were reminded to speak clearly into their microphones to accommodate the public record tapes and the hearing-impaired.

C. Roll Call

Commissioners present:

Misti Cooper, David Eichman, Steven Greene, Lindsey Horvath,
David Warren

Commissioners absent:

Amy Walia-Fazio, Steve Wayland

Staff present:

Melissa Antol, Long Range and Mobility Planning Manager

Oscar Delgado, Department of Public Works Director

Jackie Rocco, Parking Operations Manager

Don Norte, Parking Services Officer

Walter Davis, Neighborhood Traffic Management Program
Specialist

Bob Cheung, Senior Transportation Planner

Mott Smith, Consultant

Danny Casillas, Administrative Specialist III

- D. Approval of the Agenda of December 18 2013, Transportation Commission meeting.

Motion: Greene Second: Warren

All ayes.

Motion passed.

- E. Approval of Minutes

Motion: Approve minutes, Commission meeting of November 20, 2013

Moved: Eichman Second: Warren

Aye: Eichman, Walia-Fazio, Greene, Horvath, Warren

Abstain: Cooper

Motion passed.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR

No items.

3. ITEMS FROM PUBLIC

Kevin Burton, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about Operation Firefly.

4. ITEMS FROM COMMISSION

No items.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

- A. Larrabee Street Permanent Medians

Staff report by Walter Davis

Commissioner Warren commented that the Commission may want to consider doing away with the City policy concerning the 85th percentile in future requests for speed humps.

Motion: Recommend to the City Council approval for permanent installation of medians on Larrabee Street between Cynthia Street and Sunset Boulevard.

Moved: Eichman Second: Warren
All Ayes
Motion passed.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Valet Parking Permit Fees

Staff report by Don Norte and Mott Smith

Commissioner Horvath asked why the Transportation Commission is being informed, but not consulted on the item.

Jackie Rocco explained that, as an item under Code Enforcement, it is not really under the purview of the Commission. She added that fees fall under the City Council's purview. The item is being presented as directed by Council as an informational item, and an opportunity for input from the public.

Larry Block, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke AGAINST the item.

Commissioner Cooper asked if the policy will hold valets accountable against gouging businesses and customers.

Jackie Rocco replied that new regulations and Code Enforcement have helped greatly in keeping prices consistent.

Mott Smith added that a realistic scenario is that a business will see a drop in cost, but it depends on the number of cars that are parked by the valet.

Commissioner Cooper confirmed that there would be no set fees for valets. She asked if the east side businesses were consulted.

Mott Smith replied that most businesses don't get sufficient parking to cover valet services. Healthy valet business will pay for services, so businesses don't pay out for parking. He warned that regulating prices could be unsustainable for businesses.

Oscar Delgado added that valet companies compete with parking garages and meters, so they are self-regulating.

Commissioner Greene suggested less flexibility in the schedule in favor of standardization and less confusion for patrons when parking. He asked who is eligible for encroachment permits.

Jackie Rocco explained that the business owns the permit, while the valet company holds the license.

Commissioner Greene asked if it would be possible that two different businesses own a permit on the same meter.

Jackie Rocco said that, under the new schedule, it would be possible.

Commissioner Greene suggested finding a way to let patrons know what is actually a real valet zone.

Jackie Rocco said that the valet operation signs are ordered and installed by the City, as well as temporary signs, so they are very consistent and recognizable.

Commissioner Warren asked what was the reaction from valet companies and the Chamber of Commerce.

Mott Smith replied that, after an initial trepidation, they were supportive at the end of the day.

Commissioner Warren asked how profitable, statistically, the valet business is in West Hollywood and what the logic is behind charging valet companies less than other cities do.

Mott Smith said that general profitability is immeasurable, and in his experience, most valet companies need some subsidy from restaurants to operate. Generally when it is healthy, it is a minimal subsidy, but mostly depending on the venue, they make their margin on the fee.

Commissioner Warren asked what happens when you put the same valet in front of a similar business in another city.

Mott Smith says the difference is paid by the business.

Commissioner Warren surmised that Staff's feeling is, that by keeping fees low, the City is protecting the businesses.

Jackie Rocco confirmed that.

Commissioner Greene asked staff to talk about the City's restriction of setting fees only to recover costs.

Oscar Delgado explained.

Commissioner Warren asked if valet fees are cost-based.

Oscar Delgado said that the City has discretion.

Commissioner Warren asked if it has any actual effect on the rates that is being charged to customers.

Oscar Delgado said it is unpredictable as to how much individual businesses will pay for their valet.

Commissioner Warren commented that he thought the meter occupancy rates were low.

Oscar Delgado explained that there are higher occupancies on different nights during different hours and the availability of the space is factored in more than revenue.

Commissioner Warren confirmed that the revenues for the busiest meters in the busiest part of town were used, based on the detailed information given by the meters.

Jackie Rocco gave an example from a specific meter.

Commissioner Warren commented that he didn't see miscellaneous costs covered in the formula.

Jackie Rocco replied that those costs covered in licensing fees.

Commissioner Eichman how the statistic of 50 – 60 cars was derived.

Mott Smith explained.

Commissioner Eichman asked in what geographical area it was based.

Mott Smith said it was a general estimation.

Commissioner Eichman agreed with Commissioner Greene's comments on flexibility and asked what happens to cars that are parked in the morning and overstay into the lunchtime valet service.

Jackie Rocco replied that it is a possibility that the cars would be towed, but staff finds that people really respect the "Tow Away" signage, so they expect it would be minimal.

Commissioner Eichman asked if there is a sense as to how many restaurants would change to the lunchtime valet.

Oscar Delgado replied that, right now, there doesn't seem much demand for it.

Commissioner Horvath agreed with Commissioner Greene's comment on limiting flexibility in favor of standardization. She also emphasized a push on awareness efforts, including outside of West Hollywood.

Commissioner Greene asked if the meters can be programmed not to accept payment during valet hours.

Jackie Rocco said that they could.

Commissioner Horvath also stated businesses should be aware of parking valet policies.

B. Pedestrian-Bicycle Master Plan Update

Staff report by Bob Cheung.

Kevin Burton, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke IN FAVOR of Staff report recommendations.

Adam Bass, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke WITH CONCERNS REGARDING of Staff report recommendations.

Commissioner Horvath reviewed the plan action schedule.

Commissioner Greene said that he is looking forward to seeing more of the plan. He likes the Willoughby plan. He mentioned a gap on Santa Monica Boulevard between Kings Road and Sweetzer. He suggested adding bike detection to the toolbox for traffic signal operation. He suggested considering the plan within the context of other City priorities, as well.

Commissioner Warren asked what is in the draft plan for public reach-out.

Melissa Antol listed various considerations and programs.

Commissioner Warren commented that he is concerned that the plan is too large to cover in one meeting. He asked in what way the listed projects are catalytic.

Bob Cheung explained.

Commissioner Warren said he is concerned with what is not listed, i.e. Fairfax Avenue. He suggested explaining why they are not listed.

Melissa Antol replied that staff will clarify approach in how and which projects will be implemented.

Bob Cheung added that staff will also present the plan priorities in consideration of connectivity with surrounding cities.

Commissioner Warren commented that the list seems to favor bicycling over pedestrian needs. He feels pedestrian needs should, at least, be considered equal to bicycling needs.

Melissa Antol replied that the City has already made many pedestrian improvements, so it may seem unbalanced when looking at the plan.

Commissioner Warren suggested that staff consider the possibility of over-saturation in use of the flashing beacons at crosswalks. He also emphasized the importance of talking to residents in the Willoughby area concerning the Willoughby improvements. He added that Fountain presents an issue with policy and suggested that it be approached separately, with preliminary decision from Council prior to proceeding.

Commissioner Horvath stated her concern with the perception of "west side vs. east side" as far as pedestrian improvements in the presentation. She added that Bike Share was not mentioned in the plan, but will be included. She encouraged dialogue with the public outside of the scheduled meetings.

7. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports.

8. OLD BUSINESS

9. EXCLUDED CONSENT CALENDAR: Items removed from the Consent Calendar for separate discussion are considered at this time.

10. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Antol:

- Smart Ride City Line app
- Traffic Cop item
- Park Me phone app for West Hollywood
- Way Finding Task Force
- Parking Occupancy Update
- Meter Report
- Field Trip in Santa Monica

Casillas:

- Transportation Commission Meetings now at Plummer Park

11. ITEMS FROM COMMISSION

Warren

- Clarification of Meter Report item
- City Hall Parking Mitigation Plan
- Crosswalk enforcement

Horvath

- Petition for Tax Fairness for Commuters
- Thanks to Staff and Commission

12. ITEMS FROM PUBLIC

Larry Block, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke about pedestrian safety.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Action: The Transportation Commission adjourned at 9:00 p.m. until the next meeting on January 15, 2014, 7:00 p.m., at Plummer Park Community Center, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, Rooms 5 and 6, West Hollywood, California.

Moved: Warren Second: Greene

All ayes.

Motion passed.

APPROVED BY MOTION OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION THIS
15TH DAY OF JANUARY 2014.

Chair

ATTEST:

Staff Liaison