

MINUTES

CITY OF SAN JOSE

TRAFFIC APPEALS COMMISSION - April 17, 2008

A. CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Traffic Appeals Commission (TAC) was called to order by Chair Dale Osborn at 7:00 p.m. QUORUM - Yes

B. Commissioners present: Dale Osborn, Chair
Gary Pelton, Vice Chair
Richard Daulton
Timothy Flynn
Arul K. Edwin
Sgt Paul Woo (SJPD)
Craig Ferguson

Commissioner not present: Naomi K. Nakata

Staff present Sam Koosha, Len Ramilo, Vu Dao,
German Leon and Elizabeth Larson

Guests Dina Jones, Chad Rosser, Greg Hite, Betty Kabanek and
Richard Kabanek

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF March 20, 2007

The minutes were approved as written.

D. APPEAL FOR Basking Ridge Avenue Intersecting with Schoolhouse Road

Chairperson Dale Osborn explained the presentation format to the representatives of the neighborhood. City staff will make a presentation and then followed by Police Department's comments. Residents will be given the chance to present their appeal. Commissioners will have a discussion and make the decision.

Chair Dale Osborn roll call. All commissioners were present except Kathy Nakata.

Sam Koosha introduced himself and Len Ramilo as the Department of Transportation representatives that will provide the presentation.

Len Ramilo started the presentation by using a map on the screen pointing out the general characteristics of the area. Mr. Ramilo said that Basking Ridge is a collector street in the neighborhood. The traffic generators include the neighborhood park and Ledesma Elementary School; otherwise most of the traffic are residents of the area. There is a new development on the southern portion of Basking Ridge but the street ends at that development. In other words, if motorists want to get out of the neighborhood, they have to travel north and utilize Silicon Valley Blvd or Hellyer Ave, which are arterial streets. All-way stop signs were recently installed at the intersection of Veranda and Basking Ridge, making it an all-way stop intersection.

A resident ask to elaborate the meaning of arterial street. Sam Koosha explained that the City Council and Planning Department put together a map which designates the streets as main transportation network. Hellyer is designated as a minor arterial and Basking Ridge is a neighborhood collector.

Mr. Ramilo continued by giving an overview of City Council Policy 8-1. Len explained what is required to warrant residential all-way stop and the 20 points that must be accrued. The policy uses the following criteria for evaluation: crash history, conflicting traffic volume, presence of schools and unusual conditions. Each criteria was discussed thoroughly supplemented by an example.

Analysis of Basking Ridge Avenue and Schoolhouse Road. Consistent with Council Policy 8-1, this particular intersection scored a total of 12 points. The following warrant points were obtained for the subject location:

Crash History	=	6 points
Approach Volumes	=	0 points
School Warrant	=	0 points
<u>Unusual Conditions</u>	=	<u>6 points</u>
Total	=	12 points

There was one correctable crash at this location during the past three years. Basking Ridge Ave carries an average of 5,760 vehicles per day, while the average approach volume for Schoolhouse Road is 280 vehicles per day. The posted speed limit on Basking Ridge is 30 mph. Staff measured the speed and found the average speed was 34.1 miles per hour.

A radar speed trailer was deployed on Basking Ridge to remind motorists of the prevailing speed limit. San Jose Police Department was asked to enforce the speed limit on Basking Ridge. A service request was issued to repaint faded markings at the intersection.

Mr. Ramilo also mentioned that both State and Federal guidelines recommend against using stop sign for speed control. Also, stop signs are utilized to establish right-of-way between motorist and pedestrian, reduce delays, and enhance safety for roadway users. Unwarranted stop signs provide a false sense of security to pedestrians, intentional violations which provide extra burden on Police, may increase potential for rear end crashes, increase speed between stops to make up for lost time, and extra fuel consumption which lead to increased air & noise pollution.

A resident asked if the average speed of 34.1 mph was taken from the Radar trailer reading; he thinks that it would make a big difference. Len explained that the average speed was calculated using the traffic counters that would register the speed and volume of vehicles for 24 hours. Radar trailers are utilized only for motorists' education.

Sgt. Paul Woo provided the San Jose Police Department's (SJPD) report. He said that SJPD received 8 complaints from the area during the past 18 1/2 months. Their unit worked at different intervals throughout that period. In May 2007 an officer worked for 2 days in the morning and wrote 10 citations for speeding; another officer went out in June 2007 in the morning and did not observe any violation. In October 24 another officer wrote 4 citations again in the morning and the following week wrote 3 citations. Sgt Woo personally went out and did observations at the intersection. The section of Basking Ridge, from Silicon Valley Road to Veranda is basically 6/10 of a mile. He mentioned that motorists do drive fast since there is enough of a stretch of a roadway that people can pick up speed, but these are mostly residents who live in the neighborhood. He also mentioned that motorists roll out the stop signs at the intersection of Basking Ridge and Veranda. Sgt Woo indicated that he concurs with DOT staff recommendation of not installing stop signs at the intersection of Basking Ridge and Schoolhouse.

Chad Rosser, an area resident, said he lives in this community since it was built and well before Hellyer was constructed. He mentioned that majority of the complaints are not only from vehicles coming out of Schoolhouse but also from everyone who uses the trail at the corner of Basking Ridge and Schoolhouse. Majority of vehicles coming from Hellyer or Silicon Valley Blvd, traveled at high speed since these streets are posted at 45 mph and carry that speed upon turning at Basking Ridge.

Dina Jones, a resident living at the corner of the intersection, added that motorists are building up speed prior to approaching Schoolhouse Road and by the time they reach Jenny Court (an intersection 2 blocks north of Schoolhouse) they don't see the trail ahead. A motorist's main focus is driving and not looking for the trail to see the pedestrian waiting to cross.

Another constituent added that he lives in high density condominium development for 3 years and now lives at Basking Ridge south of Schoolhouse for 3 years. He mentioned that he lost a dog a year ago; if there are stop signs, the dog would probably be alive. He quoted "I have a 3 year old son now and I walk that trail about every day with him as well. I'm scared for my life. With that being said, it is a very dangerous point of entry to a trail without having fear of being hit by a car. That's the main issue here. It's not a matter of adding 10 seconds to someone's commute or have an emergency vehicle have to wait 3 or 5 seconds to go through a stop sign. It is a matter of pedestrian safety. You will have even more pedestrian traffic and even more children accessing that trail. I don't think this commission has put forth the pedestrian study, I know they have vehicle study".

Sam Koosha added that Basking Ridge is not designed for bikes and should not be utilized by bikers. Everybody should be careful when crossing the street. He concurred with the residents that speeding is an issue. DOT will evaluate the signings and possibly put additional speed limit signs to remind motorists of the prevailing speed.

Commissioner Rich Daulton mentioned that he has been in the area at 3 different times. He almost ran over a person walking with his bike on Silicon Valley Blvd. He did not expect to see a centipede guy with dark clothing with a light on his helmet taking off. He saw people running across on Silicon Valley where the trail connects and he thought that the roadway has 4, or 5, or 6 lanes. These pedestrians did not pay any attention to traffic. He added that Basking Ridge is an ideal situation by controlling the traffic among themselves or through the homeowners association. He told the residents that they only have one way in and one way out. There is no cut-through traffic unless a guest or somebody is visiting the neighborhood. The roadway does not get to Metcalf because it doesn't go through that 1.6 mile of a drive from Silicon Valley to the end. He encourages the people present in the meeting to collaborate with other residents in the area.

One of the residents commented that since the location did not qualify for stop signs, what other options does the neighborhood has for safety, especially for pedestrians crossing to go to the trail. Mr. Koosha said that DOT would take a look at installing high visibility pedestrian signs near the trail entrance, advance warning signs, and additional speed limit signs so that motorists would be more aware.

What about installation of x-walk and make the trail more visible? Mr. Koosha responded that DOT needs to follow the guidelines for the installation of x-walk. Careful consideration is needed with the installation of a marked x-walk as this may give a false sense of security to pedestrians. The trail is under the County Parks jurisdiction; DOT will follow up with the County to clear the bushes for better visibility of the trail.

Sgt Woo added that citizens can log in to SJPD website and file their complaints on line. He encouraged the residents to fill in the form on line. The more complaints received the higher the chances that the neighborhood would be in their list.

A motion to deny all-way stops at the intersection of Basking Ridge Ave and Schoolhouse Rd was made by Commissioner Gary Pelton and seconded by Commissioner Flynn. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m

Respectfully submitted:

Approved:

Elizabeth Larson
Traffic Appeals Commission Secretary

Commissioner Dale Osborn/Gary G. Pelton
Chair