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CULVER CITY BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
CULVER CITY BICYCLE AND
PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

February 17, 2022
6:00 P.M.

Call To Order & Roll Call

Chair Weiner called the special meeting of the Culver City Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to order at 6:09 P.M. via Virtual WebEx.

Members Present: Michelle Weiner, Chair
Art Nomura, Vice Chair
Zirwat Chowdhury, Member*
George Montgomery, Member
Robyn Tenensap, Member
Dane Twichell, Member

*Member Chowdhury joined the meeting at 6:25 P.M.

Absent: Travis Morgan, Member

Staff Present: Yanni Demitri, Public Works Director
Andrew Maximous, Mobility and Traffic
Engineering Division Manager
Rolando Cruz, Chief Transportation Officer
Alicia Ide, Management Analyst

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Pledge of Allegiance

Member Tenensap led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Items from Members/Staff

Alicia Ide, Management Analyst, discussed dates for the next meeting; welcomed Greg Maron noting that he had been appointed by the City Council and recommended by the Culver City Unified School District; she indicated that the City Council had made the decision to extend virtual meetings; and she noted that the agenda packet included the budgeting calendar for the City.

Greg Maron expressed excitement to serve on the Committee.

Committee Members agreed to meet on March 17, 2022.

Chair Weiner noted the length of the agenda and asked that comments be kept brief.

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Public Comment for Items NOT On the Agenda

Chair Weiner invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Committee:

Bryan Sanders expressed opposition to extending the protected bike path on Elenda Street as he felt it was not needed; he discussed suggestions to remove trees and parking; making the street a one-way street; putting in a traffic signal at Braddock and Elenda; and opposition from the majority of residents in the area.

Karim Sahli felt that a bike lane on Elenda was necessary; discussed proximity to the Middle School and the High School; the climate crisis; benefits of bicycles; and concern with comments from one individual affecting the process.

Jamie Wallace noted that Bryan Sanders was not alone in his opposition to a bike path on Elenda; discussed students riding to school that do not need to use Elenda; congestion; safety concerns; and the difficulty of additional bikes and pedestrians on Elenda.

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Receipt of Correspondence

Alicia Ide, Management Analyst, reported that correspondence had been forwarded to Committee Members.

MOVED BY MEMBER TWICHELL AND SECONDED BY MEMBER TENENSAP THAT THE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECEIVE AND FILE CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: MONTGOMERY, NOMURA, TENENSAP, TWICHELL, WEINER
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: CHOWDHURY, MORGAN

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Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

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Procedural Items

Item PR-1

Oath of Office for Newly Appointed Member of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Chair Weiner administered the Oath of Office to Greg Maron.

Member Chowdhury joined the meeting at 6:25 P.M.

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Action Items

Item A-1

- 1) Review and Discuss Biannual Report to City Council of Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Activities; and,**
- (2) Authorize Transmittal to City Council**

Alicia Ide, Management Analyst, provided a summary of the material.

Chair Weiner invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Committee:

Joanna Boykin indicated that she wanted to speak about the closure of Main Street.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding support for the comprehensive report.

MOVED BY MEMBER MONTGOMERY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER TENENSAP
THAT THE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

1. APPROVE THE BIENNIAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES; AND,
2. AUTHORIZE TRANSMITTAL TO CITY COUNCIL.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: CHODHURY, MARON, MONTGOMERY, NOMURA, TENENSAP,
TWICHELL, WEINER
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: MORGAN

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Item A-2

(1) Receive a Presentation of the Public Works Department Mobility & Traffic Engineering Division's FY 2023 Work Plan Priorities; and (2) Discuss and Make Recommendations as Appropriate

Andrew Maximous, Mobility and Traffic Engineering Division Manager, provided a summary of the material of record.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding the ability of Committee Members to add to the document; the timeframe to make changes to the speed limit; length of time for a normal cycle; eligible areas for adjustment; bicycle security; use of the detection devices for security; clarification on capabilities of the video detection cameras; clarification on the item before the Committee and the process; budget implications related to projects and initiatives; staff activities not reflected in the work plans; day to day activities; highlighting the major priorities for the year; and funding for Ince/Lucerne.

Chair Weiner invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Committee:

Jamie Wallace asked about the Washington/Culver intersection and synchronization after a walk request.

Andrew Maximous, Mobility and Traffic Engineering Division Manager, discussed signal progression and improving efficiencies.

David Coles asked that Lucerne and Ince, the Overland Avenue bike lanes, and the planned HAWK crossing at the library be prioritized.

David Metzler discussed license plate readers and length of time that information is stored.

Andrew Maximous, Mobility and Traffic Engineering Division Manager, clarified that information is scrambled and encrypted and that data is only used to determine travel time.

Mary Daval received clarification that when the document is approved by the City Council it will be available on the City website as part of the budget.

Alicia Ide, Management Analyst, encouraged everyone to attend the City Council meeting where the budget presentation is made.

James Wellford indicated that he was present to speak about Main Street.

Karim Sahli proposed adding a calendar to the document to indicate when projects will be implemented and installing a Class 4 or better bike lane whenever bike lanes are installed.

Andrew Maximous, Mobility and Traffic Engineering Division Manager, indicated plans to list projects on the website with costs, current status, and next steps, and he noted that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Action Plan is the guiding document regarding types of facilities and streets for installation.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding the planned review of mitigations onto Higuera; the Lucerne/Ince intersection; light timing; street cleaning;

street lights; creating better ambient lighting on the bike path; and encouragement for Members to email staff with any additional comments.

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Item A-3

Receive an Update on the Fox Hills Neighborhood Traffic Management Project

Andrew Maximous, Mobility and Traffic Engineering Division Manager, provided a summary of the material of record.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding clarification on timing of the project; assurances from previous staff members about funding and timing of the project; available funding for design; the construction phase; the need for construction funding; neighborhood outreach; information available on the website; notification; openness and transparency; allocation of funding; prioritizing previous commitments made to the Committee; and a request that there be a public review of the final designs for the Jackson to Farragut pass-through.

Chair Weiner invited public comment.

Alicia Ide, Management Analyst, indicated that no requests to speak had been received.

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Item A-4

Receive an Update on the Farragut Drive Bike Boulevard Project

Andrew Maximous, Mobility and Traffic Engineering Division Manager, provided a summary of the material of record.

Chair Weiner invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Committee:

Jamie Wallace received clarification that the project area is from Duquesne to Overland.

David Metzler expressed concern regarding the status of the promised funding; instances of funding reallocation; discussed avoiding further confusion; miscommunication; and ensuring that the public is informed of project status.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding previous presentations to the Committee; additional opportunities to learn about the project when funding is identified; confirmed sources of money; funding tied to particular projects; money that was used for another purpose; creation of a funding plan; a suggestion to simplify plans for "The Snickett" and divert some of the funding to Farragut; heavy usage of the area by children going to school and the importance of making the project a priority; and the ability of Committee Members to email staff with additional suggestions.

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Item A-5

Receive an Update on the Move Culver City Design Changes and Street Cleaning Plans

Andrew Maximous, Mobility and Traffic Engineering Division Manager, provided a summary of the material of record.

Rolando Cruz, Chief Transportation Officer, reported that Public Works was looking at options for street cleaning.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding addressing segments that do not allow for a standard street sweeper; modifications to contract language; frequency of cleaning; staff agreement to provide additional information; information provided by the public; the process to resolve signal issues; safety concerns; timing and physical changes; work with Transportation before the project is considered done; concern with timeliness of addressing safety issues; punch list items vs. City response to safety items; supporting efforts to make things move as smoothly as possible; and safety concerns with the bike lights not working properly.

Chair Weiner invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Committee:

Karim Sahli discussed a report from Bike Culver City highlighting issues and concerns with the MOVE Culver City Project sent to Rolando Cruz, Chief Transportation Officer, and noting that he would be happy to discuss priority issues with staff.

Rolando Cruz, Chief Transportation Officer, acknowledged receipt and review of the report; items already identified to be addressed by staff; additional items noted to be addressed; and agreement to provide Mr. Sahli with a response as to which items are to be addressed.

Dylan Gottlieb discussed issues with having bike lights that do not work; setting a precedent to ignore the bike lights; having the lights work as a priority; and minimum standards.

Andrew Maximous, Mobility and Traffic Engineering Division Manager, clarified that the bike signals work as intended to provide protected exclusive phasing noting that making changes to that are not currently being considered.

David Metzler discussed difficulty crossing with an e-bike and he suggested that the bike lights should be covered up or the greens extended to allow time to get across the intersection.

Dylan Gottlieb was called to speak but was not present on Webex.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding the pilot program; changing roadway conditions; increasing traffic volume with the decrease in COVID; increased commuting trips with large companies in the City; the feeling that MOVE Culver City works well for most of the day; concern with the non-intuitive nature of the lights; having a meaningful time period with the program where things are optimized; acknowledgement of the hard work of staff; the effect of having issues with the lights; the issues being inconvenience rather than a safety issue; and concern with mixed signals sent with the lights.

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Item A-6

(1) Receive an Update on the Opening of the Existing Ballona Creek Access Gate at the Southern End of Jackson Avenue

Andrew Maximous, Mobility and Traffic Engineering Division Manager, provided a summary of the material of record.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding the timeframe for implementation of the permanent opening.

Chair Weiner invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Committee:

Sophie Nenner questioned whether it was a formality to go before the City Council on March 14 and she proposed having the document be signed outside of a Council meeting.

Discussion ensued between Ms. Nenner, staff and Committee Members regarding CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) determinations that must be voted on by the City Council; the 30 day waiting period after approval and submission of papers before the gate can be opened; the decision to open the smaller gate; differences between the entrance on Jackson and other entrances in the City; the narrower opening; the need to install a bollard; constraints; and the tight curve and intent for cyclists to enter the Bike Path slowly.

Bryan Sanders asked whether there had been a study to support opening the gate.

Discussion ensued between Mr. Sanders, staff and Committee Members regarding the directive from the City Council to open the gate; moving forward with opening the gate according to engineering plans; and the role of the Committee Chair.

Jamie Wallace questioned what safety measures would be put in place; discussed the cul-de-sac; concern with the bicycles coming through and the nearby driveways; and she asked what kinds of safety studies had been done.

Andrew Maximous, Mobility and Traffic Engineering Division Manager, clarified that as part of the engineering design for opening the gate, geometric aspects at the end of the road

had been taken into account; discussed types of vehicles using the street; the location of the gate; channelizing the opening of the gate; tapering the entrance to the eastern side of the street; work on the design; and planned implementation 30 days after the City Council meeting if the item is approved.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding administrative authority given to Public Works to open the gate; City Council approval of the exemption determination under CEQA; and concern with an opening before CEQA certification.

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Item A-7

(1) Receive a Presentation on Options for the Closure of Main Street, Between Culver Boulevard and the City Boundary South of Venice Boulevard

Andrew Maximous, Mobility and Traffic Engineering Division Manager, provided a summary of the material of record.

Chair Weiner invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Committee:

Joanna Boykin provided background on herself noting that she has a store on Main Street and the closure is killing her business; she indicated that a permanent closure would not allow retail; stated that she cannot run retail where people cannot visit her; and she asked that the street be opened at least for some of the time so she could run her business.

Stephen Jones indicated that he takes the bus downtown; asked that the Committee support option 1A; discussed available space for his son to run around; the older, more affordable shops on Main Street; lobbying by a major company to open Main Street in order to serve their own interests; he felt that putting cars on Main Street would feed more traffic into the clogged lanes on Culver; and asserted that adding cars would be a step backwards.

Jamie Wallace encouraged the Committee to follow the staff recommendation and choose option 1B; discussed grave economic consequences with not allowing employees to get into Culver Studios easily; discussed traffic impacts; reasons for extra

space; concern for businesses; and she indicated that outdoor dining could be put in the parking spaces.

Dylan Gottlieb spoke in favor of keeping Main Street closed 24/7; discussed making Culver City a destination; drawing people to the safe pedestrian areas; concern with further slowing traffic; surges to vehicle crashes and increases to traffic deaths; concern with opening up vehicular traffic rather than maintaining pedestrian safety; and he proposed asking Los Angeles to add their side of the street to the closure.

Kevin Lachoff asked that the Committee focus their attention on the recommendation from staff and from the Mobility, Traffic and Parking (MTP) Subcommittee to install automated bollards and close Main Street during Tuesday's Farmers Market and on the weekends noting that businesses on Main Street do not want the street closed as it harms their business; he discussed the need to protect those closest to the harm; those who have put their livelihood into their businesses; Town Plaza as a place to gather; the MOVE Culver program design to move people out of the community as quickly as possible; and providing access to downtown.

David Metzler reported on pedestrian traffic in downtown Ventura with the closure of their Main Street, and he questioned why turning the Main Street in Culver City into a permanent pedestrian plaza was not being considered.

Mary Daval urged the City to keep Main Street closed to cars and open to people; discussed the need for additional public space; prioritizing pedestrians over cars; concern with creating a conflict zone; drawing people into the area; studies that show that increasing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improves business; access granted to the Culver Steps and Culver Studios; access to parking; and access for Amazon employees.

David Coles, Bike Culver City, wanted to see Main Street kept car free 24/7; he felt the downtown plaza was the heart and soul of the City and should be extended to Main Street; he felt that since the installment is temporary, there has not been the investment to make it as nice as it could be; discussed convincing the City of Los Angeles to extend their segment by committing to the long-term; and he expressed concern with losing momentum.

George Plato indicated that he owned property on Main Street; expressed opposition to permanently closing Main Street; discussed gridlock on Culver Boulevard; providing another thoroughfare; loss of visibility; harm being done to tenants; loss of businesses; the inability to bring businesses in; and he asked that Main Street be re-opened.

Allison Casey was called to speak but did not respond.

Bryan Sanders expressed support for option 1B; discussed the need to get cars in and out of the area quickly and to keep access points open; concern with assuming that businesses will thrive when the streets are closed; honoring what business owners are saying; and he suggested using a different timer for those making public comment.

Karim Sahli asserted that downtown was not a parking lot for Culver Studios, nor an exit for the parking lot; discussed evidence that indicates pedestrian traffic supports retail; and he asserted that opening Main Street would induce demand and make traffic worse.

Andrew Weissman provided background on himself; discussed the evolution of the downtown area; the importance of a balanced approach; the pilot MOVE Culver City project; and he expressed support for movable bollards that would allow the street to be closed on Tuesdays and weekends as proposed.

Jeanine Wisnosky Stehlin expressed support for the staff recommendation and the recommendation from the downtown businesses; discussed difficulty getting and retaining businesses in the downtown area in the past; stakeholders; the importance of balancing and making room for everyone; she expressed support for closing Main Street on the weekends and on Tuesdays; and she indicated that she did not think the timer being used was professional.

Alicia Ide encouraged people unable to make comment, or unable to finish their comments to send emails to public.works@culvercity.org to be read by staff and shared with the Committee.

Sophie Nenner expressed support for option 1A; felt that Main Street should be closed permanently; and noted the importance of encouraging people to take more public transportation.

Eric Shabsis, Hackman Capital Partners, discussed the Culver Studios Modernization Plan; misleading statements made by Mary Daval and Karim Sahli; the importance of Main Street in accomplishing the community's goals; MOVE Culver City; providing efficient vehicular ingress and egress from Culver Studios with minimal impacts to the neighborhoods; requests from City staff and the neighbors; the importance of reopening the segment to the health of neighborhood and the economy; their investment in the City; Town Plaza; and removal of a street to make way for the pedestrian plaza.

Andrew Omagonsky expressed support for option 1A; felt that downtown was for the people, not the businesses; did not want to funnel cars to a street where a lane has been removed; discussed the length of Main Street; parking; pedestrian accessibility; and support of retail by pedestrians.

James Belford indicated owning businesses on Main Street; discussed businesses that close down on the day of the Farmers Market; accessibility for disabled individuals; keeping long-time businesses open; and he did not think that continued closure was fair.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding appreciation for community input; contradictory arguments for moving people out of the area and getting them in to shop; support for taking a measured approach; opposition to reopening the street completely; vibrancy of the outdoor dining program; the fact that all the same cars are getting to the same parking spaces with the currently; available parking; increased pedestrian traffic in the downtown area with the new businesses coming in; the effects of COVID on businesses vs. the effects of the closure of the street; a suggestion for 24/7 street closure with bollards to allow the flexibility to reopen if needed; concern with opening the street four days a week for rush hour traffic to a garage that is already full all the time; the need for more reimagining and more change; accommodating the future increase in pedestrians; the reopening of Culver Boulevard; concern with prioritizing cars; opening up downtown to dining and pedestrians; confusion with the way the options were presented; agreed upon compromises; promises to Culver Studios; exploring alternative modalities; gridlock; the need for studies and feedback for a permanent closure; consultation with the City Attorney; the potential for Main Street to become a plaza; the need for additional work; data collection; the closure as a temporary measure; the

unprecedented time; creating a restraint to motivate cut through traffic to stop; regular turnover of businesses on Main Street; accommodations to help businesses adapt to changes; additional pedestrians and cyclists coming to the City; the 200 foot closure; the ability to open up the street later; the importance of sharing the City with residents and businesses; adding signage for Main Street to highlight businesses in the plaza not facing Culver Boulevard; the feeling that the Downtown Business Association could be doing more to advocate for Main Street; the need to draw people into Main Street; the line of sight broken by the barriers; lack of signage; legal issues; installing the bollards to increase visibility and make the area more pedestrian friendly; finding a way forward; allowing use of the area as a plaza without a formal process; the experiences of other cities; collecting data during a trial period; formulating a letter to the City Council; the timeframe for City Council consideration; consensus among Committee Members; formulating a subcommittee to draft a letter to summarize feedback from the public and the Committee; support for a permanent closure; appreciation for those who came to speak; businesses who were not able to address the Committee that might have had a positive experience with the closure; support for the bollards; the need for a clear directive from staff regarding the basis for their recommendation; the power of closed streets and feeling safe; the bollards as a permanent solution; the feeling that if the street is to be closed all the time, it should be made into a plaza like Town Plaza; creating a final design for a plaza once the downtown area is fully opened again; people tripping over the curbs at the Santa Monica Promenade; the need for more information; keeping the street closed and judging the situation once things open up again; making the area much more attractive; costs for bollards on both ends of Main Street; a suggestion to have each Committee Member send their thoughts to the City Council through the City Clerk by March 1, 2022; and coming to consensus with a recommendation.

Member Montgomery moved that the Committee recommend to the City Council that bollards be installed at each end of Main Street until there is a need for opening. Vice Chair Nomura seconded the motion.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding the temporary nature of the closure; assessing the situation when things open up again; the suggestion that Main Street remain closed until bollards are

put in place; collection of data for the 7 day per week closure; availability of funding; concern with opening up Main Street before the bollards are installed; establishing a timeline; adding a budget allocation to pay for the bollards; making a recommendation that the Committee is leaning toward a permanent closure for a certain period of time to collect data to understand how it is affecting traffic and businesses in order to make a better determination; input from the public; the need for additional information from staff; making a better decision from an informed place; timing of City Council consideration of the matter; determining the impact of a closure; prioritizing the bollards; stalling the process; individual communication with the City Council; and a suggestion to close Main Street permanently until the bollards are installed and experiment at that time with different situations to see which one works the best.

MOVED BY MEMBER MONTGOMERY AND SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR NOMURA THAT THE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL THAT MAIN STREET BE CLOSED PERMANENTLY UNTIL BOLLARDS CAN BE INSTALLED AND AT THAT TIME, MORE STUDY AND EXPERIMENTATION BE DONE BEFORE THE STREET IS OPENED.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: CHODHURY, MARON, MONTGOMERY, NOMURA, TENENSAP,
TWICHELL, WEINER

NOES: NONE

ABSENT: MORGAN

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Item A-8

(1) Receive an Update Regarding the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Bylaws and Discuss

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding the lateness of the hour; distribution of discussion points for Member consideration at the next meeting; subcommittee work on the bylaws; specific questions to address; Brown Act Rules; and transparency.

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Public Comment for Items NOT On the Agenda (Continued)

None.

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**Items from Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Members/Staff (Continued)**

None.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 10:19 P.M., the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee adjourned to a meeting to be held on March 17, 2022.

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Alicia Ide
SECRETARY of the Culver City Bicycle and Pedestrian
Advisory Committee
Culver City, California

APPROVED

Michelle Weiner
CHAIR of the Culver City Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory
Committee
Culver City, California

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that, on the date below written, these minutes were filed in the Office of the City Clerk, Culver City, California and constitute the Official Minutes of said meeting.

Jeremy Green
CITY CLERK

Date