



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS
TRAFFIC & PARKING COMMISSION

September 1, 2016

TO: Traffic & Parking Commission
FROM: Transportation Staff
SUBJECT: Staff Status Report

The purpose of this staff report is to provide the Commission with updates on pending items; therefore, the Commission cannot make formal recommendations on these items.

a. Valet

344 North Camden Drive (Mr. Chow)

Staff conducted daytime and evening observations of the valet operations at Mr. Chow on Thursday, August 18, 2016. During the two-hour daytime observation, two attendants received seven vehicles and returned three. During the two-hour evening observation, four attendants received 25 vehicles and returned five. While daytime activity was low, staff has scheduled further observations to determine if the valet operation can operate sufficiently without one of the four assigned meters.

Observation Date	Observation Time	Valet Spaces	Attendants	Vehicles Received	Vehicles Returned
Thursday 8/18/16	12 p.m. – 2 p.m.	4	2	7	3
	7 p.m. – 9 p.m.		4	25	5

Short-term valet requirements

Due to traffic safety concerns regarding residential valet operations, Beverly Hills Parking Control Officers and the Parking Service Manager requested Public Works staff to develop the recent modifications to the City’s short-term valet permit requirements. To prevent vehicle queuing in traffic lanes near residential valeted events, short-term valet companies are now required to provide a staging area with four signs at the cost of \$128.20, based on the City’s fee schedule. These fees are in addition to the short-term valet permit fee of \$104. Furthermore, the 1:7 attendant to vehicle ratio requirement in hillside areas was modified to 1:5, due to the increased time required to park in these areas. These changes are reflected in the short-term valet permit conditions provided to the valet companies when applicable.

b. Southwest Traffic Calming/Moreno Bollards Update

An information report summarizing the June 20, 2016 Traffic & Parking Commission special meeting will be included in the September 6, 2016 City Council study session. Unless otherwise directed, staff will engage an independent traffic data agency to collect traffic counts for the South Santa Monica Boulevard gateway at Moreno Drive and select

City Council Liaisons: John Mirisch and Julian Gold
Bicycle Ad Hoc: Jake Manaster and David Seidel
NSMB Ad Hoc: Lester Friedman and Jake Manaster
Taxi Ad Hoc: Lester Friedman and Nooshin Meshkaty

residential streets in the Southwest area of the City to evaluate potential environmental impacts resulting from proposed turn-restrictions recommended by the Traffic & Parking Commission.

c. 2016 Halloween Enforcement

The Beverly Hills Parking Enforcement Division will conduct its annual Halloween special task force on Monday, October 31, 2016 in the northeast section of the City bordering the City of West Hollywood. Parking Enforcement will follow the same successful deployment as previous years. Parking Enforcement Manager Brad Cornelius will provide a full report at the October 6 TPC meeting.

d. Correspondence

Attachment A is a letter from Mr. Mark Elliot regarding crash injuries.

City Council Liaisons: Julian Gold and William Brien

Bicycle Ad Hoc: Jake Manaster and David Seidel

Taxi Ad Hoc: Lester Friedman and Andy Licht

Tour Bus Ad Hoc: Lester Friedman and Jake Manaster

ATTACHMENT A

From: Karen Myron
Sent: Monday, August 15, 2016 2:16 PM
Cc: Aaron Kunz; Martha Eros; Bijan Vaziri; Scott Dowling; Michael Foxen
Subject: Correspondence RE: Elliot to TPC re street safety.pdf
Attachments: Elliot to TPC re street safety.pdf

Good Afternoon Commissioners,

Please see the attached letter from Mark Elliot.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Karen Myron
Community Development Department
Planning Division
City of Beverly Hills
455 N. Rexford Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
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bcc: TPC

Mark Elliot
212 S. Reeves Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90212

August 10, 2016

Mr. Jake Manaster, Chair
Mr. David Seidel, Vice Chair
Members of the Traffic & Parking Commission
455 North Rexford Dr.
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Dear Chair Manaster and members of the Traffic & Parking Commission:

I've been observing TPC meetings for years and do appreciate the effort involved in managing so many traffic-related issues. Our commissioners clearly invest considerable time and thought in addressing parking, valet and even taxi regulation (to name just a few). Yet I wonder why the commission does not address street safety, which appears within the commission's remit.

In Beverly Hills five pedestrians are injured on average each month while walking our city streets. Three cyclists are injured in collisions and more than thirty auto occupants every month report a crash-related injury. And that's just an average: spikes like June's marked uptick in total crash injuries (to a high for this year of 51) are driving the trend upward. "It's a lot," said Sgt. Dowling of June's figure.

Indeed! But June is by no means the outlier: monthly crash injuries last year reached nearly 50 in four months of last year, and both February and March this year racked-up comparable totals. State data show that Beverly Hills consistently tops other small cities in California when it comes to crash injuries.

Moreover, crash injuries categorically has been on the increase since 2012. That should be cause for concern, yet city officials seem to accept the premise that road users will be injured in such numbers despite the traffic laws and road standards put in place to minimize the harm. Sgt. Dowling suggested some level of acceptance in March when he remarked, "Everything on the report is within the norms." The January data he was presenting showed 41 crash injuries that month. (In my opinion, that many injuries should fall within no norm.)

Keep in mind that our high-and-rising frequency of crash injuries comes despite advances in automobile safety and tightened federal regulations. And increasing congestion too should slow our traffic (which might lead to fewer injuries). Yet the upward trend in overall crash injuries is driven by an even more marked increase in auto-occupant injuries since 2012. That year the monthly average injured auto-occupants totaled 20. By 2015 it had reached 31. No fewer than 33 auto-occupants were injured on average in each of the first six months of this year. That's up 50% since the 2012 baseline. This June more auto-occupants were injured than in any month in nearly five years.

August 10, 2016
From: Mark Elliot
To: Traffic & Parking Commission
Re: Crash injuries

Where is the discussion about street safety? Over the last few years we've seen increased media attention to the toll of irresponsible driving and poorly-designed streets. The Los Angeles Times, for example, recently called out a handful of intersections *right here in Beverly Hills* that appear (according to state data) to be among LA County's most dangerous for pedestrians (that's even after adjusting for other factors). I don't think that the LA Times findings prompted any discussion among TPC commissioners.

If Sgt. Dowling wonders why crash injuries are piling up (as they did in June), the reasons are not hard to see. As that study suggested, we're not designing our streets for safety. Our solution at Olympic & Beverly was to align the striping and install automated cameras. Wilshire at SM North & South are among the clearly most hazardous and difficult to navigate – especially for cyclists. They've seen no improvements at all.

In fact, Beverly Hills has sat on the sidelines as today's safe-streets movement succeeded in prompting other Westside cities to introduce intersection improvements, safety signage and pedestrian-safety devices (like flashing crosswalks). Where are our flashing crosswalks?

Second, we give scofflaws a pass. The data suggest a nearly uninterrupted decline in BHPD traffic enforcement efforts between 2008 and 2013. If we turn our back on law-breaking, is it a surprise if crashes are more frequent in the following years? Automated red-light cameras are no substitute for hands-on policing to catch scofflaw drivers. Our unimproved Wilshire crosswalks are a clear-and-present danger to pedestrians.

Commissioner Meshkaty touched on the role of enforcement at the August 4th meeting. She asked Sgt. Dowling whether there was a relationship over time between a rise in 'accidents' (her term¹) and a decline in citations. (He responded by rehearsing department caveats about staffing.) Commissioner Meshkaty's question, along with June's crash injuries, should arguably have sparked a discussion about street safety. Instead commissioners seemed content that the June injury numbers were "within the norms."

Without that street safety policy discussion we will make no progress on reducing the harm. Despite decades of 'traffic calming' talk in Beverly Hills, for example, there are no traffic-calming measures in place and dangerous speeds continue to prevail in residential neighborhoods. Our city has embraced no best practice for street design as has been recommended by the National Association of City Transportation Officials, for example. So we stripe few high-visibility crosswalks and let pavement markings deteriorate before we re-stripe. And in what must be a cost-cutting measure, Public Works continues to prefer white paint to durable, highly-reflective thermoplastic.

In making such choices the city lets road users bear the risks rather than take steps to reduce the hazards of walking and driving.

¹ Never say 'accident' when collisions are most often a product of driver negligence or his failure to take due care. More: <https://twitter.com/droptheaward>

August 10, 2016
From: Mark Elliot
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Re: Crash injuries

Let me offer an example. Last year, Health & Safety Commission produced a ‘Dangerstoppers’ video about street safety. Rather than focus its effort on unlawful drivers, video producers instead urged pedestrians and cyclists alike *to watch out for their own safety*. Day in and day out drivers fail to yield or otherwise intimidate pedestrians in crosswalks. Yet that video wagged its finger at distracted walkers *even in instances when the pedestrian has the right-of-way*. It had nothing to say about our ramp-down in enforcement.

There are many ways that this commission can jump-start the street safety discussion. Perhaps the first step is to put the issue on the next liaison agenda. I for one would like to know whether commission and council attendees share my concerns regarding street safety. The commission can also take the longer view on the data. Snapshots are less informative than context: what do the trends suggest? Ask staff and BHPD to prepare a back-of-envelope analysis showing perhaps the collision hotspots (if they exist) and the factors behind the crashes. And finally, commissioners can simply ask why so many people are being injured in Beverly Hills.

Meetings sometimes pass without a substantive question posed to BHPD about the data. Commissioner Meshkaty asked about enforcement in August. The prior July Mr. Solnit asked about right-of-way violators. In April Mr. Friedman asked about cell phone users. In these instances BHPD representatives were not prepared to answer. While these questions produced no informative answers, they should be asked much more frequently.

I myself would prefer not to sit through another uninformative BHPD presentation followed by the Chair’s swift switch to the next topic (“Moving on...”) If we are concerned about public welfare in Beverly Hills, we can’t simply continue to move on without discussing street safety and ways we can improve it.

Sincerely,

