



SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
September 10, 2024
CITY OF SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO
JOINT SPECIAL MEETING
PARKING PLACE COMMISSION AND
TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 5:11 p.m. by PPC Chairperson Abarca & TSC Chairperson Monzon

ROLL CALL:

Present: Dana Abarca, PPC Chairperson & TSC Commissioner
Hermes Monzon, TSC Chairperson & PPC Commissioner
Brandon Chan, PPC Vice Chairperson & TSC Commissioner
Justin Yuen, TSC Vice Chairperson
David Carbone, TSC Commissioner

Absent: None

City Staff: Marissa Garren, Secretary to the Parking Place Commission and Traffic Safety Commission
Diana Wang, Clerk to the Parking Place Commission and Traffic Safety Commission
Dave Bockhaus, Public Works Deputy Director
Eunejune Kim, Director of Public Works
Matthew Ruble, Principal Engineer
Alex Henry, Public Works Program Manager

AGENDA REVIEW: No changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

CONSENT CALENDAR: None.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS: None.

ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION: None.

ITEMS FROM THE STAFF:

1. Special "Walk & Talk" Downtown Walk

- Secretary Garren asked everyone to raise their hand prior to speaking throughout the meeting to ensure the audio recording is clear.

- Secretary Garren noted that she will take photos during the walk, which will cover eight planned locations for discussion today.
- Secretary Garren introduced city staff to commissioners.
- Parking Place Commissioner (PPC) Vice Chair & Traffic Safety Commissioner (TSC) Chan asked if the City Hall parking lot was permanent parking, and Secretary Garren clarified that it is for both employees and the public.
- **First Location: Parking lot 7 (371 Miller Avenue)**
 - Secretary Garren mentioned that the City recently repaved and restriped their surface lots and updated the traffic markings to allow entrances and exits on both sides for improved flow.
 - Matthew Ruble, Principal Engineer, expressed satisfaction with the resurfacing project, noting it looks great. In response to TSC Commissioner Carbone's question, he confirmed the parking lot has 40 spaces.
 - TSC Chair and PPC Commissioner Monzon mentioned that half of the lot was previously used for city vehicles and asked about assigned parking spaces. Secretary Garren clarified that while some city vehicles are parked in the lot by employees, there are no assigned spaces.
 - PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan inquired about parking permits, and Secretary Garren confirmed that City employees do not pay for permits but use sticker permits on their personal vehicles for parking at the City parking lots.
 - PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan inquired whether the lot had permit and metered parking. Secretary Garren confirmed it does, with all metered spots having a 2-hour time limit.
 - TSC Vice Chair Yuen inquired about the parking demand for city employees and the number of employees in the area. Secretary Garren replied that she doesn't have a specific number but noted that some employees bike, use EV chargers, or park in the Miller Parking Garage. TSC Vice Chair Yuen also asked if city employees could park on the streets with their permits, to which Secretary Garren answered no; they are only allowed to park in city lots.
 - PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner asked if this was the only lot with a single parking machine instead of regular meters. Secretary Garren noted that a few other lots also use parking machines. PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan then asked why all lots don't use machines and whether they are more cost-effective. Alex Henry, Public Works Program Manager, explained that parking machines are more cost-effective due to lower maintenance needs compared to individual meters, which require regular checks and repairs.
- **Second Location: Miller Parking Garage (329 Miller Avenue)**
 - Secretary Garren mentioned that new, solar-powered parking signs with sensors should be installed by the end of the year and should cost around \$30,000. PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan inquired about maintenance after the warranty, noting issues with previous signs. Secretary Garren explained that manual fixes were problematic, leading to sensors being left off. TSC Chair and PPC Commissioner Monzon asked if the \$30,000 covered all aspects, including solar panels and sensors, and if the signs would be updated and illuminated. Dave Bockhaus, Public Works Deputy Director, confirmed the signs are illuminated at night.

- PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan asked about new EV chargers for the rooftop, and Secretary Garren indicated plans to upgrade or replace the 10-year-old level 2 chargers, with possibly fast chargers like the ones on the 1st floor. TSC Commissioner Carbone inquired about adding more chargers, and Secretary Garren mentioned staff are looking into installing more chargers at LPR and other city lots.
- PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan also asked if EVGo would cover installation costs; Secretary Garren clarified that EVGo pays for the spaces they use which helps offset costs. PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan inquired about the metal gate and suggested adding a safety mechanism to deter unwanted visitors, to which Secretary Garren confirmed the gate remains in place and does not come down.
- PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan inquired whether the garage is always at full capacity. Secretary Garren replied that it varies depending on the time of day, but generally, there are usually spaces available.
- TSC Commissioner Carbone asked if the garage is open 24 hours a day. Secretary Garren confirmed that it is, with enforcement in place from Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Secretary Garren reminded the group that “Genentech Comes to Town” is scheduled for next week, and they will have private shuttles transporting their employees around the City.
- **Third Location: Miller Avenue and Linden Avenue**
 - Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer, discussed the Linden Avenue projects, which included traffic upgrades, curb extensions, and new bus bulb-outs to streamline bus operations and additional bus shelter. The vision aims for enhanced crosswalks with biofiltration areas and high visibility. Complaints about the bulb-outs protruding too much were noted, but they are designed to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists by guiding drivers to navigate turns more carefully.
 - TSC Commissioner Carbone expressed appreciation for the historic light fixtures along Linden Avenue and Grand Avenue. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer, noted that future streetscapes aim to preserve these lights, which originally had red illumination according to the South San Francisco Historic Museum. While some lights have been painted over or may be replicas, Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer acknowledged issues with pedestrian lighting, including poor diffusion and requests for better lighting. Attempts to improve the situation include changing light bulbs and directing light downwards. He also stated that concerns about dark intersections are consistent with those of other downtown areas.
 - TSC Chair and PPC Commissioner Monzon inquired about potential improvements, particularly at this intersection and the Linden Avenue and California Avenue intersection where flooding and clogging occur during the rainy season. He noted he is not an arborist but noticed that the landscaping is difficult to maintain due to rapid plant growth and compacted soil, which is intended to manage water flow. While the City plans to address this by digging out and replanting as needed, Monzon observed that the current setup appears challenging to maintain and may require manual cutting instead of using a mower. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer acknowledged this concern.

- PPC Vice Chair and Commissioner Chan asked if the new light poles on Baden Avenue will match the standard lighting used throughout downtown. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer, confirmed that the plan is for uniform lighting, with large developers expected to adhere to this standard. A consultant is being hired for a streetscape design review to define a cohesive look for downtown, including lighting and sidewalk patterns. The goal is to create a more uniform appearance. TSC Commissioner Carbone expressed interest in the streetscape design.
- PPC Vice Chair and Commissioner Chan inquired about plans for bulb-outs at other downtown intersections. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer, explained that most downtown intersections are identified for bike and pedestrian improvements due to the area's high pedestrian traffic and injury risk. While the overall approach will focus on pedestrian-friendly designs, specific challenges include managing water flow at intersections, particularly where traditional storm drain networks are absent. Solutions will need to be developed to address these issues.
- PPC Vice Chair and Commissioner Chan asked if the project was in the design phase or awaiting funding. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer responded that it is pending funding. While the City has identified the project's needs and regularly applies for grants, they did not win the multi-million-dollar portion for Safe Streets for Schools grant so there are limitations. However, they did secure \$400,000 for a Vision Zero initiative to enhance downtown infrastructure and focus on eliminating traffic fatalities.
- TSC Vice Chair Yuen inquired about the status of the Vision Zero plan. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer, replied that the City has recently received the grant for it. Although the Vision Zero Plan and policy have been adopted, the specific details are still pending. The acceptance of the grant must be approved by the City Council before work can officially begin.
- TSC Chair and PPC Commissioner Monzon asked about expanding signalized intersections to Aspen Avenue, where a new park is being developed. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer, responded that he doesn't have information on this because it depends on a study assessing whether the intersection meets the criteria for a signal, which is based on traffic volume and available funding.
- TSC Commissioner Carbone inquired about plans to address excessive trash around the new park development, noting that the previous park in the area accumulated trash quickly due to its downtown location. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer, stated that he is not the project manager for the Linden Park but mentioned that a traffic study had been conducted for the new park.
- PPC Vice Chair and Commissioner Chan proposed using a distinct design or color for public parking signs to differentiate them from those used for apartment garages.
- **Fourth Location: Parking lot 13 (374 Cypress Avenue)**
 - Secretary Garren thanked the Engineering Division for managing the repainting in the parking lot.
- **Fifth Location: Parking lot 1 (208 Grand Avenue)**
 - Secretary Garren noted that, in a previous meeting, the Parking Place Commission approved reducing the number of permit parking spaces from 16 to 6, thereby creating 10 additional metered parking spaces.

Additionally, the Maintenance and Operations Division updated the signs on each pole to clearly indicate whether parking requires a permit or is open to all, to help prevent confusion among residents using the parking lots.

- TSC Vice Chair Yuen inquired about the removal of yellow delineator posts on Grand Avenue, which were taken out during resurfacing. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer, explained that they are evaluating whether to reinstall them. TSC Vice Chair Yuen also asked if there were many requests to remove the delineators. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer noted that there were complaints about both the appearance of the posts and the fact that people were still turning into oncoming traffic to avoid them.
- **Sixth Location: Grand Avenue and Airport Boulevard**
 - PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan inquired about the date for the grand opening of the Karyl Matsumoto Plaza. Secretary Garren replied that it, along with the Caltrain electrification event, will take place on Saturday, September 21, at 9 a.m. She encouraged the commissioners to attend, noting that the public event will feature a live band, giveaways, and light refreshments.
 - Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer, detailed the traffic improvements at Grand Avenue and Airport Boulevard, which have been under construction for about two years. The project focuses on enhancing bike and pedestrian safety, particularly at major intersections. Improvements include dedicated bike crossings and Class 4 bike lanes on all sides. New features include green channelizers and K71s along Airport Boulevard, creating a buffered bike lane with parking-separated buffers where vehicles separate the bike lane from the travel lane.
 - TSC Chair and PPC Commissioner Monzon asked if the new measures made biking safer, to which Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer, confirmed. He explained that the goal is not only to create a visual buffer but also to introduce physical barriers such as concrete curbs or planters; in this case, channelizers were used. These have been placed along Airport Boulevard and East Grand Avenue. Channelizers are a cost-effective solution that are highly visible to drivers and tend to withstand impacts well. TSC Commissioner Carbone inquired if channelizers can bounce back after being hit, and Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer responded that they can, even after impacts at speeds up to 50 or 60 mph. Despite their simple appearance, they are quite durable. Additionally, a recent grant was obtained to install these channelizers along Junipero Serra Boulevard.
 - PPC Chair and TSC Commissioner Abarca expressed concerns about the spacing of channelizers on Airport Boulevard and Grand Avenue, noting that vehicles could pass between them and enter the bike lane. She recommended adding more channelizers. Principal Engineer Matt Ruble confirmed that an additional channelizer had been added but agreed that adding one or two more could enhance safety.
 - PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan inquired about adding buffers next to the bike lane. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer explained that they wouldn't add posts because parked cars would serve as a buffer, and there needs to be space for car doors to open.
 - PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan mentioned initially, people weren't sure how to park in the spaces and were parking in the bike lanes.

Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer mentioned there were sign boards posted to navigate drivers on how to park. TSC Chair and PPC Commissioner Monzon pointed out that a smaller cleaning machine operates downtown. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer confirmed they have a small machine for hosing down streets and that the City ordered a medium-sized sweeper to access the bike lanes and tight spaces.

- TSC Commissioner Carbone mentioned there used to be a left turn here on Grand Avenue and questioned why that was taken out. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer explained that it was eliminated for safety reasons, noting that traffic volume for that turn was low. The change aimed to create a larger median for pedestrian refuge and to simplify the traffic signal phases.
- Commissioner Abarca inquired about the absence of a pedestrian walk button for individuals who stop in the middle of the intersection. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer clarified that the signals and pedestrian walk signals operate on a timer.
- TSC Chair and PPC Commissioner Monzon inquired about a "Welcome to South San Francisco" sign. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer responded that there is currently no funding allocated for a new sign. He noted that while there is a vision for Grand Avenue, the sign has been put on hold until the streetscape project on Grand Avenue is completed, at which point it should be incorporated into that plan.
- TSC Commissioner Carbone inquired about the possibility of converting street parking on Grand Avenue to parallel parking. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer replied that while the decision is still pending, that is the vision. He noted that although switching to parallel parking would reduce parking density, it would enhance safety for bicyclists and create a wider sidewalk.
- PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan raised concerns about the inconsistency in downtown, citing differences in planters, streetlamps, architectural designs of buildings, and bus stop colors. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer agreed that uniformity would improve aesthetics but noted that it ultimately depends on the funding from developers.
- TSC Chair and PPC Commissioner Monzon inquired about the return of the bus shelter. Secretary Garren replied that it should be arriving soon, though the exact location is still uncertain. Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer added that SamTrans maintains a list of all bus stops and shelters in the city and prioritizes them based on need.
- PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan asked who is responsible for maintaining the planters in front of the new developments. Principal Engineer Matt Ruble explained that the City closely collaborates with neighboring developers to ensure maintenance of the planters. Vice Chair questioned whether it would be a code violation if the developers fail to maintain the planters, Matt Ruble, Principal Engineer confirmed that it would be. The planters that are not from new development most likely belong and maintained by the City.
- PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan recommended maintaining a consistent tone, noting that the stone flooring is slippery in some areas on Grand Avenue, especially during rain. Principal Engineer Matt Ruble acknowledged the concern and suggested checking that area during their walk back.

- **Seventh Location: Baden Avenue and Cypress Avenue**

- PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan thanked the staff for reviewing and implementing his TAC request making Cypress Avenue a two-way street for traffic from Grand Avenue to Baden Avenue, stating that the results look great.
- **Eight Location: Parking lot 5 (319 Baden Avenue)**
 - Secretary Garren noted that with the new traffic enforcement company, Laz should be starting soon. In the future, they intend to move away from physical parking permits and will instead use license plate readers to scan vehicles.
 - PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan inquired about the possibility of viewing the parking carousel at the Grand Avenue and Cypress Avenue apartments. Secretary Garren replied that it is a possibility, but they would need to make a request.
- **Last Location: Parking lot 12 (337 Baden Avenue)**
 - Secretary Garren mentioned this parking lot is permit parking only.
 - PPC Vice Chair and TSC Commissioner Chan asked if parking enforcement from PD is still being conducted in the meantime. Secretary Garren confirmed that it is, until Laz takes over.
- **Updates**
 - Secretary Garren noted that the original plan was to present to the Council at the end of September, but it will now be moved to the October 23 meeting to give Commissioners more time to prepare. She also mentioned that she would include the photos taken during today's walk in the presentation slides. Additionally, she reminded everyone to send their responses to her directly or call her, rather than communicating as a group, to avoid violating the Brown Act.
 - TSC Chair and PPC Commissioner Monzon asked which agenda item will their presentation be under. Secretary Garren replied that it would be listed under Presentations at the beginning of the meeting.
 - TSC Commissioner Carbone asked to include the lane configuration on westbound Chestnut Avenue between El Camino Real and Mission Road at the next meeting.

Parking Place Chairperson Abarca & Traffic Safety Chairperson Monzon adjourned the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marissa Garren
Parking Place/Traffic Safety Commission
Secretary

Dana Abarca
Parking Place Commission Chairperson

Hermes Monzon
Traffic Safety Commission Chairperson