



Minutes September 28, 2016

Special Meeting on Speeding and Traffic Issues in Tierrasanta/Murphy Canyon
Tierrasanta Community Council & Planning Group
Tierrasanta Recreation Center • 11220 Clairemont Mesa Blvd.

Tierrasanta Community Council Attendance:

Deanna Spehn, President

Rich Thesing, Vice President

Dawn Nielsen Lostritto, Secretary

Russ May, Treasurer

Directors

John Adair

Scott Hasson

Dan Lazzaro

Mike George

Mike Ogilvie

Loren Vinson

Rob Kirk

6:08 p.m. Deanna Spehn, President, TCC called the meeting to order, welcoming the approximately 75 people in attendance.

President Spehn introduced Gary Pence, Senior Traffic Engineer, City of San Diego. Mr. Pence first gave an over view of how speed limits are set.

- The City of San Diego receives 4,000 to 5,000 traffic requests a year.
- The Federal Highway Administration classifies streets on an official map. Speed limits are set according to type of street. There are 3 categories:

1. Highway

2. Local residential streets

- 25 mph as required by state law.
- Speed limit is enforceable at 25 mph.

3. Collector or Major streets

- Requires speed survey to be conducted every 7 years.
- Survey is taken by radar/lidar at non-peak hours at free flow.
- City Engineers calculate 85th percentile or the speed that 85% of the cars are traveling. The speed is set at the 85th percentile based on the philosophy that 85% of drivers will travel at a speed that is comfortable to them
- Based on the results of the speed survey, the posted speed limit can either stay the same, decrease or increase. If there is a change, a letter is sent to the Community Planning Group (CPG). The majority of CPGs do not respond to the notice. Some CPGs respond that they do not want the speed raised and to leave it as is, in which case the City will leave the speed the same.
 - The consequence is that speed for that one section of road cannot be enforced by radar, although it can be enforced by pacing which

is difficult to do on a non-highway because it requires following a vehicle on a small street and drivers often notice the police car and the streets may not be long enough to determine the speed. However, most drivers don't know which streets have not had their speed limits increased due to the 85th percentile rule, and don't know that radar/lidar cannot be used to issue speeding tickets in those specific blocks.

- The community plan for a neighborhood includes a map showing which streets are major streets, collector streets and residential streets. The Federal Highway Administration also issues a map with those designations.
- How does an area get radar/lidar enforcement on streets with chronic speeding, etc? It is based on which areas complain the most about speeding and other unsafe conditions. Call City Councilmember Scott Sherman's Office at 619-236-6677 and contact the SDPD Community Service Officer for Tierrasanta/Murphy Canyon, Tom Bostedt at 858-495-7919 or tbostedt@pd.sandiego.gov Be sure and give the days of week and time of day that the speeding, etc., occurs.

What is a Collector street?

- Think of streets as a tree. Residential streets to "collect" onto collector streets to major streets to freeways. Examples of Major streets are Tierrasanta Blvd. and Clairemont Mesa Blvd. Generally streets with double yellow lines are collector streets and streets with center medians and two or more lanes in either direction are major streets. Examples of collector streets are Tambor Road and Rueda Drive.

President Spehn introduced San Diego Police Captain Freedman of Eastern Division and Patrol Sergeant Heller. Captain Freedman has recently assumed command of Eastern Division, which includes Tierrasanta/Murphy Canyon.

- On a freeway, drivers can be cited for traveling 1 mile over the speed limit.
- In the city, the basic speed law is "unsafe for current conditions." Officers have the discretion to pull a driver over for speeding if it can be proved it was unsafe for conditions such as having pedestrians in the area, steep streets, etc. This is often difficult especially if a current speed survey indicates that the flow of traffic is faster than the posted speed signs. There may be other options for enforcement such as an Officer deciding that a driver is doing an unsafe movement.
- The residential street speed of 25 mph is always radar enforceable.
- Officers need to be specifically trained and certified in estimating visual speeding.

Mr. Pence discussed traffic calming devices.

- Electronic sign. Examples are on Antigua Blvd. near Vista Grande Elementary School and on Clairemont Mesa Blvd approaching Antigua from the west. The electronic sign flashes the current speed limit of approaching traffic. Currently, fifty of these signs are waiting to be installed throughout the city. The cost is approximately \$8,000 per sign. Tierrasanta is on the list to have 6 more signs installed on local streets.
- Road humps. Usually slows traffic to 15 mph. There is a process for getting road humps installed, and it requires 75% of the residents to approve. Road humps are only available to be used on residential streets – not on collector or major streets. An unfunded list exists and is prioritized based on accident history, pedestrian usage, etc., and the various proposed locations are ranked throughout city and installed as funding becomes available.
- Traffic Circles. Currently the city is promoting the installation of traffic circles. The decision on whether to add a traffic circle is based on similar criteria as used to decide whether road humps should be installed. A current speed profile is required, along with determining what the traffic volume in a 24-hour count, etc. If the 85th percentile speed shows 10 mph or more, this is considered significant. The current speed limit on Rueda is 25 mph, if found to be 35, then it warrants a traffic calming device. A traffic circle has a circle in middle of intersection with a yield sign at each entering street. The traffic circle slows traffic to 5-10 mph but keeps the traffic moving which is energy efficient and reduces emissions into the air, which is why the installation of new traffic circles is part of the City of San Diego's Climate Action Plan. Traffic circles are designed so that emergency vehicles such as fire trucks and ambulances can travel through them.
- Curb Extensions.
- Installing flashing lights initiated by a push button at crosswalks on collector streets. The City has started installing these in high pedestrian traffic areas.
- Rumble strips are not allowed in residential areas due to the noise they generate.
- Speed Tables or raised crosswalks are a new traffic calming device so installation criteria have not been fully established yet. One set was just recently installed on Santa Monica in Ocean Beach.

The San Diego Police Department statistics: in the last 6 months there were 33 accidents in Tierrasanta/Murphy Canyon and in that last year there were 65 accidents, or approximately 5 a month pretty consistently. 264 citations were issued in this one Beat in the last year, which according to both the Captain and the Sergeant is a pretty significant number to be issued. As staffing permits Eastern Division will assign an officer or two to patrol in the community to see if that can help with traffic/speeding/unsafe condition concerns. It is not always necessary to issue a ticket to modify the behavior of drivers; written warnings and/or verbal warnings are also

effective. In breaking down the citations issued, 10% were for speeding, 7% for running red lights, 10% for failure to obey other traffic laws.

Councilmember Sherman recently budgeted the addition of two mobile trailers that alert drivers on how fast they are driving, similar to the one that is permanently installed on Clairemont Mesa Blvd. heading east near Antigua Blvd. The two new mobile units will be used in the 7th City Council District as needed. Tierrasanta/Murphy Canyon is in the 7th City Council District.

The City collects data showing where accidents occur and that enables the Police Department to determine where enforcement would be helpful.

The following concerns were voiced by attendees at the meeting. (Secretary Note: Concerns are listed geographically rather than in the order they were raised by the public for ease of review)

Traffic Concern or Comment	Response
Through traffic in Tierrasanta/Murphy Canyon	
I'm a runner in Tierrasanta and I've noticed an increase in vehicles cutting through Tierrasanta from I-15 using Clairemont Mesa Blvd. to Santo Road to SR-52. I don't want to be hit by speeding traffic. What can be done?	Pence: The higher the classification of street, the less likely the City is able to use traffic calming devices to discourage cutting through the community.
Community exit at Clairemont Mesa Blvd. north onto I-15 plugs up Clairemont Mesa – can ramp metering be added? Also those cutting through the community using Clairemont Mesa Blvd and turning left onto Santo Road to get to SR-52 is severely clogging Clairemont Mesa Blvd. heading east. What can be done to meter the on ramp so it is not so attractive to cut through Tierrasanta?	Pence: Freeway access is under the jurisdiction of CalTrans.
I am also concerned about speeders driving through Tierrasanta to get to SR-52, especially when the new Kaiser Hospital opens this Spring.	Spehn: TCC sent a 50 page comment letter regarding Kaiser Hospital and the impacts to the community and this concern was included. The community was assured that when the hospital opens traffic concerns can be revisited as the Police Department, Traffic Engineering and the community have a chance to observe the actual impact of the new traffic source.
When SR-52 is backed up it impacts multiple major intersections including Clairemont Mesa Blvd /Santo and Antigua / Santo – can signage be installed to say watch for pedestrians.	
Rueda Drive	

When a Sheriff lived on Rueda Drive, we had periodic radar enforcement. Since he moved, there hasn't been any radar enforcement for many years. How does the Police Department determine where to conduct residential surveillance?	SDPD: Ninety-nine percent of surveillance comes from referrals from the public and is request driven. When SDPD receives request, a letter is sent to Traffic Division. Residents can send request directly to Community Service Officer Tom Bostedt. Most helpful if you can give us information such as days, times, etc.
I live on Rueda Drive and by the time cars are going downhill to Tierrasanta Blvd., their speed is 70-80 mph.	
In the county, there are roads that have signs on them showing the % grade and speed limit. Can that be posted on Rueda as well?	Pence: Need to check; there is a manual for sign guidance on where, when and how signs can be placed.
It seems as if Rueda and Calle De Vida is a perfect location to put traffic circles similar to the Bird Rock area in La Jolla. Put up additional obstacles to slow traffic down. Raise the speed limit, but slow the traffic down.	
I am concerned about drivers turning right onto Tierrasanta Blvd from Rueda. Installing a No Right Turn on Red sign would solve issue.	
If the traffic issue on Rueda Drive has been known for all these years, why hasn't something been done about it before now?	Spehn: This street has been looked at repeatedly. Currently options are available which have not been available previously, hence, the reason for this meeting.
If traffic on Rueda is set at the 85th percentile, what speed would it be?	Pence: Currently it is 25 mph, it would go up to 30 mph. Common speed for collector streets such as Rueda is 40-50 mph. In La Jolla when speed limit was increased, enforcement was also requested and did occur on that street.
Villa Barbados Area:	
Getting onto Santo from Remora is a problem. Traffic speeding on Santo makes it dangerous to turn onto Santo from Remora. Currently drives around to La Cuenta to Clairemont Mesa Blvd to turn onto Santo. Are the signals on Clairemont Mesa and Antigua synced to allow traffic to pull out onto Santo?	Pence: Doesn't run traffic signal group now, but when he did, the engineers take traffic flow into account when setting the coordination of lights.
Gabacho Drive runs into Montego Drive with Tierrasanta Elementary at the top. Cars speed up the street, especially the school buses speed up street. I'm afraid someone is going to get hit. Something has to happen to stop the speeding.	Spehn: Gabacho is slated for an electronic sign as a calming device. Police: report the speeding school buses. Mike George (former school principal): report the speeding buses to the Principal
Several years ago, 6 speed bumps were placed	Pence: I don't know in this particular instance,

<p>on Montego Drive. This diverted speeding traffic onto Gabacho Drive. Neighbors asked City to install speed bumps on Gabacho Drive but were informed no because of Fire Dept. and Gabacho is adjacent to a canyon. Then, saw Portobelo which has many speed bumps and is also adjacent to open space. 1. Are impacts to associated streets taken into account when changes are made to nearby streets? 2. What is the criteria for the Fire Dept decision. 3. Is there an appeal process for this decision?</p>	<p>but yes, neighborhood traffic should be taken into account. Yes, we have assisted residents in appealing Fire Department opposition.</p>
<p>Villa Monserate</p>	
<p>El Comal by Amaro problem with speed. Asked City to review and they sent engineers. The intersection doesn't quality for stop sign because it only meets 15 out of 20 points required for a stop sign. It is dangerous backing out. I'm only 56 feet from the corner. What can I do?</p>	<p>Pence: Stop sign placement requires more than looking at number of accidents. It also includes traffic volume, etc. If doesn't meet, can appeal through the Alternative Process. First, go to Tierrasanta Community Council to see if they will support your appeal. The TCC contacts the Councilmember who writes a letter to the Mayor asking for the stop sign to be installed once funding is identified.</p>
<p>Kumeyaay Elementary School Area</p>	
<p>Tierrasanta Norte. Villarrica Way. Speed profile shows traffic to be 45 mph in one direction, yet doesn't meet requirement for stop sign. Concerned about pedestrian safety.</p>	<p>Request for all-way stop signs is on Agenda for October 19th TCC meeting.</p>
<p>Antigua and Camino Playa De Oro - Bike lane in front of Kumeyaay Elementary on Antigua. Cars park in the bike lane before and after school. In previous years Police/school addressed the issue. It's been 2 or 3 years since and now cars park in bike lane all the time. This blocks the vision of drivers trying to see oncoming traffic when attempting to turn onto Antigua from Camino Playa de Oro.</p>	
<p>Camino Playa de Oro at Antigua needs a traffic signal, especially when cars are parking in the bicycle lane.</p>	
<p>When I cross Via Vallarta at Camino Playa Norte, there are 4 traffic lanes on Via Vallarta. Very dangerous trying to cross due to width of street and speed of traffic. It is not convenient to walk to Colegio or up hill to Villa Antigua housing area.</p>	<p>Pence: There are several options for pedestrian stoplights in uncontrolled intersections. An example is flashing beacons. Intersection would need to meet minimum warrants.</p> <p>Spehn: This area is close to Kumeyaay Elementary and the trailhead for East Shepherd Canyon so it is well used by pedestrians and</p>

	joggers.
Portobelo Area	
In Portobelo area, speed limit was raised. Residents were told, "Nothing can be done about it." Soon after a neighbor was hit by a car and the speed limit was reduced back to 25 mph.	
Clairemont Mesa Blvd. Area	
My house backs up to Clairemont Mesa Blvd. and from 10 to 2, I regularly hear speeding down Clairemont Mesa Blvd.	SDPD: If it is racing, then this warrants a 911 call. If it is speeding contact Tom Bostedt with typical times and days for follow up,
General Questions	
I turned in a log at the last Council meeting of traffic between Rueda and Via Vallarta to Officer Bostedt. What has happened to it?	
How realistic is enforcement? When was last time a radar unit was in Tierrasanta?	SDPD: Part of the issue is we were allowed to do our own calibration of radar equipment in the past, but now the Court has decided this was an inherent conflict of interest and now the radar and lidar units require regular calibration be conducted by a disinterested 3rd party. Last month, our equipment was getting calibrated by a 3rd party. There are Officers interested in enforcing traffic laws. It is helpful if residents could list a time and locations when and where violations occur.
What are dates of last traffic surveys? Are they public records>	Yes. Traffic survey information is available. Go through City Councilman Scott Sherman's office to make a request for the most recent traffic study for a specific street.
Do police monitor Next Door.com	SDPD: No. SDPD can input information but cannot see postings because they do not live in the community. The best way to get information to the SDPD is through the Community Service Officer – Tom Bostedt
Where does the money come from to pay for traffic calming devices?	Pence/Spohn: Comes from different funds including Tierrasanta developer agreement funds and other fees collected to be spent in the community.
What is a school zone?	Pence: 600 feet from edge of school property line.
On Antigua, Clairemont Mesa Blvd and Santo Road, a slurry seal was overlaid some time	Pence: Striping is lagging behind the slurry crew, but all streets will have previous striping

ago. Will they be replacing the striping?	reinstalled on them
Why aren't speed cameras used here? They've had good success in other places e.g. they are used in Europe.	Spehn: Previously installed red light cameras in the City of San Diego were removed and there are no plans by the City for any new installations of cameras at intersections
How expensive is a traffic circle?	Pence: \$150,000 for a small circle to \$300,000 for a larger circle. Depends on the amount of work needed and landscape required. All of the circles in La Jolla were funded in one project.
Can Tierrasanta Maintenance Assessment District open space funds be used to pay for traffic calming devices?	Pence: Unsure, need to ask.
You (Pence) mention 50 electronic flashing devices are awaiting installation, once you start the request how long would it take to install calming devices?	Pence: Difficult to say. Depends on if it is designed in-house. If designed in-house, awarded and build, approximately 3 years. But I don't want this to discourage traffic circles.

TCC Councilmember Mike George introduced himself. He reminded drivers to slow down, saying it is difficult to expect a Police Department with 300-400 officers short to do the work. Our best option is to work with City Traffic Engineering staff to the benefit of the community. He cited his experience with traffic problems while working at Taft School in Serra Mesa. They used the City's ideas to change traffic patterns and it worked. The planning group can help to get things done. Certainly slowing the traffic down on Rueda Drive is a priority, and we'll work on that, then Antigua and Tambor. It's important to remember that people break the law and we are those people.

Several members of the public reported drag racing is a regular occurrence at the eastern end of Clairemont Mesa Blvd., including motorcycles, sports cars, etc. What can be done!

TCC Councilmember Dan Lazarro urged parents at schools not to park in the bike lanes.

President Deanna Spehn thanked everyone for attending the meeting, especially Senior Traffic Engineer Gary Pence, Captain Freedman and Sergeant Heller. Minutes from this meeting will be sent to Gary Pence, Captain Freedman, Sgt. Heller, CSO Tom Bostedt and Councilmember Sherman.

8:30 pm – the meeting was adjourned