

Traffic Commission Meeting of
June 7, 2021

SUPPLEMENTAL #1

TO: Traffic Commission
FROM: Craig Bilezerian, Public Works Director
SUBJECT: **Supplemental Material for Agenda Item No. 7a**

Attached is email correspondence received after the agenda item was posted.

Respectfully submitted,

CRAIG BILEZERIAN
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

By 

Steve Finton
Deputy Public Works Director/ City Engineer

Attachments:
15 emails from Residents.

From: Amy Josefek [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 06, 2021 7:29 PM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Consideration of Tree Removal on PCH at Colinas

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To Traffic Commissioners:

I am a Torrance resident, and live ON Camino de las Colinas. And I would like this tree to stay where it is!

- For those who say "everything was tried," we've seen no evidence of a basic, preliminary step in using signage to prohibit left turns into Colinas and/or Delicias during peak hours (such as 4:30 - 6:30pm), when majority of the cut through was noted.

Referencing the Staff Report for the June 7th meeting:

- Under Other Alternatives Considered, you list "Extend Left-Turn Lane Without Removing Tree." You state, "this may provide minimal improvement" but have come to a conclusion that it would not help. ***How can you not be willing to try this less-drastic measure first???***

- Under Other Alternatives Considered, you list "Modify Traffic Signal Sequencing." You again state, "this may provide minimal improvement" but have come to a conclusion that it would not help. ***How can you not be willing to try this simple measure first???***

- Has the City tried switching the flow, so that the left-turn signal FOLLOWS the traffic able to continue north on PCH?

- Is there any proof that, even with a longer pocket, drivers accustomed to cutting through would change their habits to now wait at a light (when they now don't have to wait for any light at all?).

For those who say, this is only one tree, or the wrong tree in the wrong place, that may well be true. And lessons are learned that would not allow this tree to be planted similarly in the future. But, for now, it's what is there, and should be protected, rather than prioritizing traffic/drivers.

The treatment of this "only one tree" seems rather indicative of how we are dealing with the nature around us, which seems, to put it mildly, rather poorly.

Again, I would like this tree to remain in place.

Thank you for your consideration.

[REDACTED]

From: April Telles [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 06, 2021 3:50 PM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: 6/7/2021 Torrance Traffic Commission Agenda Item 7A: I Vote Please DO NOT Remove that Tree!

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Dear Torrance Traffic Commissioners,

Regarding: 7A. Consideration of Proposed Median and Tree Removal Related to the Westbound Left-Turn Lane Extension Project on Pacific Coast Highway between Palos Verdes Boulevard and Camino de las Colinas.

At the Torrance Traffic Commission Meeting on 4/5/2021 I was encouraged as I heard so much interaction from the community and so many great ideas put forward about how to help alleviate the backup at the intersection in question. I had hoped that the commission/city would be willing to consider some of these options before removing the beautiful tree that has stood there for many decades. But the fact that this is once again on your agenda leads me to believe that this tree's days are numbered. It also makes me doubt if any alternatives were really considered. If in fact any traffic studies, traffic light timing studies, lane reconfiguration analysis, etc were done. I'm not going to reiterate alternatives here as they are part of your record/minutes from your 4/5/21 meeting.

My biggest fear is that this magnificent tree will be removed and then within a short time period it will become apparent that the problem is not solved. What then? The tree will have been killed for nothing. Trees are more important to us right now than ever. Not only do they have their own inhabitants, but as we head into record breaking heat and future water shortages, shade and carbon reduction from trees is going to be essential to the physical and mental well being of all residents. This may be just one tree but it is one of many that we are removing from our neighborhoods.

I ask once again for you to exhaust all options before making this decision.

Regards,

April F Telles

[REDACTED]

Torrance

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 07, 2021 10:09 AM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: The Tree

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To Traffic Commissioners .
I live on Camino de las Colinas.
The tree should stay.
Removing it will make little difference, only allowing 4-5 more cars to line up.
A solution you should consider is 2 left turn lanes from tree to traffic light.
This works well at many intersections in our city i.e. Torrance Blvd and Hawthorne Blvd.
Dell Amo Blvd and Prairie Blvd
Calle Mayor and Anza to name a few.
All of us who live on Camino de las Colinas will still be able to leave and enter our street both left and right at PCH.
Please consider this and thank you for your time.
Sincerely
Christine Norris

[REDACTED]

From: Cynndy [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 06, 2021 7:04 AM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Objection to extension of left turn lane from North PCH to South PV Blvd

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Traffic is getting more and more congested in our neighborhoods. In part because Torrance City keeps approving high density housing projects (several right on PCH) and Palos Verdes continues to build, build, build. I can see the EASY FIX, for the short term, could be to make it easier for folks to turn left on Palos Verdes Blvd at the Pacific Coast Highway intersection rather than through the neighborhoods of Camino de las Colinas, Paseo de la Delicias, Vista del Parque or Paseo de la Gracia.

At first glance, PCH and PV, and for that matter PCH and Calle Mayor, are busy and industrial intersections, but they too lead a driver past people's homes. In fact both of them right through MY neighborhood and right past my home.

I am already aware, through a study done about 10 years ago, that more than 2,500 vehicles drive past my front door on Palos Verdes Blvd EVERY SINGLE DAY. I'm sure the number is exponentially higher now. It wasn't always like this. When I moved into my home it was reasonably quiet and I could sit on my deck and enjoy the ocean sounds and view. But with the "Freeway" that PV Blvd has become, that is no longer an option. I have complained much to Torrance PD with no resolution. I wish you all would have a meeting about how to resolve this volume and the horrendously loud, reckless and speeding vehicles on the stretch of PV from PCH to Malaga Cove. But I digress...

You are now proposing to increase that traffic in front of my home and the homes on Calle Mayor to stop the complaints of others who probably get 20 cars passing by their homes on a "bad" day. It isn't a fair trade off. People can get to Palos Verdes Blvd via Hawthorne Blvd. How about proposing they turn from PCH at Hawthorne to get to their homes (ridiculous I know but where does it end? When are others right to a quiet neighborhood more important than mine or yours?). When I have written to the mayor of Torrance about my traffic problems he has disrespectfully simply replied with a smiley face emoji!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I'm not even going to get into the fact that you want to cut down some beautiful trees to complete this project. I'm sure the folks who live in the townhouses on the Southwest corner of PCH and PV are not looking forward to staring at the huge multi use project being built across from them. We have far too little beauty in this traffic jungle. Cutting down trees is never a good solution.

I am against the alteration of the median and left turn lane extension from North PVH to South PV Blvd.

Thank you for your attention and consideration on my objections.

Cynndy Wills
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Diana Neidert [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 07, 2021 9:44 AM
To: PWTraffic
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Traffic Committee Meeting - June 7, 2021

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We have lived in Hollywood Riviera for 38 years.
We were sad to learn the upcoming traffic meeting tonight will consider removing an older tree to extend the westbound, left-turn lane on Coast Highway between Palos Verdes Boulevard and Camino de las Colinas.

True, this is only one tree! But to many of us, this attitude towards this one tree is indicative of how little attention is being paid to our natural environment.

In addition to the beach, one of the major benefits that drew us to this area many years ago was the amount of trees.

We ask that you DO NOT remove this tree.

Thank you,

Diana Neidert
Patricia Doyle
[REDACTED]
Torrance Residents

[REDACTED]

From: D. J. Keller [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 06, 2021 2:02 PM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Tree Removal

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Greetings,

I have written before re my support for keeping the tree. I just wanted to be sure I was included with those in favor of keeping the beautiful tree.

Thank you,
Donna & Bob Keller
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: George [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, June 05, 2021 10:44 AM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Objection to Left Lane Widening Proposal

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This proposal doesn't address the actual problem. What's needed is a real traffic enforcement presence in Torrance.

Nobody wants wild and dangerous drivers traveling through their quiet neighborhood streets. And people on Palos Verdes Blvd South do not want more crazy and lawless drivers traveling past their homes and disturbing them either.

The last I heard, the Torrance Traffic Division only had two motorcycle cops to patrol the entire Torrance area. That is extremely deficient. I've had to contact the Palos Verdes Police Department to get some assistance further south. The Palos Verdes police strictly enforces traffic laws with absolutely no help from the Torrance Traffic Division around them.

See the attached photos of the Torrance Traffic Division escorting very loud and wild driving vehicles into Palos Verdes. Is this the case of "if you can't beat em, join em"?

Do you get my point?







Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: Jim Montgomery [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 07, 2021 8:58 AM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Public Comment: Agenda Item 7A, Proposed Tree Removal

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Greetings Commissioners and Staff,

I am a Torrance resident living in the Lower Riviera. I've read the staff report from Steve Finton, Deputy Public Works Director - City Engineer, for tonight's meeting and I agree with the statement that the wellbeing of City of Torrance residents should be a City priority. However, I disagree strongly that all viable options to address cut-through traffic without removing this tree planted about 40 years ago have been implemented. My major concern is this tree will be removed and the cut-through traffic issue will still exist.

Staff states that the "Modify Traffic Signal Sequencing" is not a viable option. Was a traffic simulation performed to support the conclusion? If so, I hope it will be presented tonight. If not, I do not see how you can draw the conclusion that you do. I would request that a traffic simulation be performed if it has not been before taking any irreversible actions tonight. You need complete information to make your best informed decision.

In addition, I see no mention of putting in place left-turn restrictions on both Colinas AND Delicias during the peak period of 4:30P to 6:00PM. This has not been attempted.

I think putting both of the above options in place would dramatically reduce cut-through traffic and I urge the Traffic Commission to consider this option before cutting down this tree. Try it for a month to see the results and revisit this issue at your next commission meeting. This issue has been under study since 2016. Taking another month to perhaps find a solution that protects the wellbeing of the City of Torrance residents AND preserves this iconic tree as one enters Torrance will be one month well invested. You have the opportunity to satisfy all residents concerned about this issue. Once this tree is destroyed, it cannot be undone.

Thank you in advance for considering my request.

Best,
Jim Montgomery
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Joe Gennaro [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 06, 2021 1:10 PM
To: PWTraffic; [REDACTED]
Subject: Old Growth Ficus Tree on PCH at PV Blvd.

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To the Traffic Commission:

All of you are well aware of the mature ficus tree on the median island on PCH just south of PV Blvd. Along with many, many local residents, I'm showing my ongoing support for saving this magnificent tree. Cutting it down is an act that cannot ever be undone. As you well know, they just aren't growing instant mature trees anymore.

As you may also know, there's enough lane room on the northbound lanes of PCH (just south of PV Blvd.) to extend the left-turn pocket by a distance that would accommodate a number of additional cars -- without cutting down the glorious ficus tree, which residents recognize as being an aesthetic joy -- a treasure to behold in an area consisting mostly of asphalt, concrete and glass.

I speak not just for myself, but for *many* locals who would mourn the loss of this particular ficus. The present traffic-related rationale for eliminating the stately tree pales in comparison with the need to save it. I participated in an on-site protest organized this spring. The spirited, well-attended demonstration in support of saving this worthwhile tree is testament to how many people are in tune with nature -- which is the way the Traffic Commission should be tuned in. Many others with whom I've spoken both at the demonstration/protest and elsewhere -- and I (of course) -- are *entirely committed* to casting our votes for whomever sees the value and splendor of this natural growth. Virtually all resident of the area want to keep it alive in its present location -- particularly because *there's at least one other way of handling the traffic* flow at P.V. Blvd. and PCH.

Please consider this heartfelt, clearly valid plea. Lots of citizens/residents -- many of whom don't have the ability to write letters like this one -- and who may be unable to attend a Monday night meeting either in person or via Zoom -- would *greatly appreciate you allowing the tree to survive intact*.

Sincerely,

Joseph Gennaro [REDACTED]

Long Time Seaside Ranchos Resident

[REDACTED]

From: Kathryn Hospodar [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 07, 2021 12:08 PM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Concur with plan to remove tree in PCH median

Dear Public Works

I am a neighbor who lives in Hollywood Riviera on Calle Mayor. I wanted to write to let you know that our family concurs with the plan to modify the left turn lane on Westbound PCH turning left onto Palos Verdes Blvd. I also concur with removing the one tree in the median. Please plant a tree (or 2) somewhere else to make up for the loss. We live on Calle Mayor, and there are too many cars using this street as a cut through to get from PCH or Anza to PV Blvd. I would like our home environment to be quieter with fewer cars traveling unnecessarily on Calle Mayor.

Thank you
Kathy Hospodar

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Loreen Trevino [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 07, 2021 12:39 PM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: public comment

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Dear City Leaders,

The left turn lane from PCH onto PV Blvd is definitely a problem. However, the issue of traffic, speeding and cutting through the residential streets will not be resolved by making the left turn lane longer.

People need to stop speeding!

The traffic heading eastbound on PCH turning right onto PV Blvd is of greater concern. Without a clearly designated right turn lane, traffic becomes congested and accidents are inches away from happening.

Speed enforcement is what is needed.

Thank you for your listening to the opinions of the residents.

Loreen Trevino

[REDACTED]

From: mitzi shitanda [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 04, 2021 9:40 AM
To: PWTraffic
Cc: mitzi shitanda
Subject: Proposed median & tree removal

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Torrance Traffic Commission

I favor the extension of westbound left-turn lane on PCH between PV Blvd. and Camino de las Colinas. That would help eliminate the excess traffic on Paseo de las Delicias as well. Cars zoom at all hours creating noise that awakens me because my bedroom faces the front, ie street.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mitzi Shitanda

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: Sara McKown [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 07, 2021 9:46 AM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Consideration of Tree Removal on PCH at Camino de las Colinas

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Dear Traffic Commissioners,

Please keep the tree in place. It is a beautiful, 100 year old tree which cannot be replaced. It's time to put nature on equal terms with the modern world.

Please do not cut this tree down just to convenience drivers and traffic.

Thank you,
Sara McKown

[REDACTED]

--

Sara McKown
Wife, Mother, and Friend

[REDACTED]

From: Steve Gerhardt [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, June 05, 2021 3:05 PM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Extend WB Left-Turn Lane on PCH and PV Blvd NOW

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Hello!

I continue to support extending the left turn pocket, removing the tree as needed, in the hopes of reducing cut-through traffic on Colinas and Delicias. I appreciate the effort the City made during the delay to consider other alternatives, but think it's time to make a decision and move this project forward. Please vote to implement staff's recommendation.

If possible, it would be great if the City of Torrance could work with the City of Redondo Beach to make other improvements to the intersection to ease traffic flow in the future. One improvement would be a dedicated right turn lane from Southbound PCH to Southbound PV Boulevard (at the Rock n Brew). This was considered the past, but was not implemented due to utility relocation expenses, but is still much needed for traffic headed to Palos Verdes.

Another improvement would be to shave the median on Southbound PV Blvd next to the Fat Burger to allow cars to enter the left turn pocket for Southbound PCH earlier. Often, the through traffic is backed up and, because the left turn signal goes first in the cycle, drivers are stranded in the through lane until the through signal lets them into the left turn pocket, and have to wait for the full signal cycle to make a left. A narrower median wouldn't cause any other problems that I can see. The landscaping is pretty anemic there.

Thank you again for working through the competing issues on this important intersection.

--
Steve Gerhardt

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: t [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 07, 2021 2:44 AM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Public Comment

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Regarding Item 7a of the Agenda (Consideration of Proposed Median and Tree Removal Related to the West bound Left- Turn Lane Extension Project on Pacific Coast Highway between Palos Verdes Boulevard and Camino de las Colinas

To Whom It May Concern;

I live on Via Monte D'Oro and turn on Camino de las Colinas to reach my home. I would like to still be able to do so. I also feel that removing the tree will barren the area (there are no trees nor greenery on the right side of PCH traveling north, so removing the tree will make the area even more stark).

I skimmed through the "other alternatives" in the proposal attached to the agenda and did not see the suggestions i propose below in the sequencing options.

- Adjust the left turn signal to run at the beginning AND the end of of the northbound cycle (when required)
- In addition to the above, or instead, add the ability to turn left with the yellow arrow (similar to the signal on torrance to PV Blvd).

This intersection is busy in all directions at various times (I'm sure you know), so if signal timing change, as i note above, could be implemented for all directions, then maybe all directions can be improved rather than just northbound.

If you could please take the option of adjusting the signals first, it would be appreciated. The PV/PCH corner area doesn't need to lose that tree.

Thank You,
Tracey Nakadate