

**LA JOLLA TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION BOARD**  
**Regular Meeting: Wednesday February 19, 2020**

**Members Present:** Dave Abrams (Chairperson) LJCPA, Brian Earley (Vice Chairperson) LJSA, Tom Brady LJCPA, Donna Aprea LJTC, Nancy Warwick LJTC, Erik Gantzel BRCC, Patrick Ryan BRCC, Natalie Aguirre LJVMA

**Members Absent:** Ross Rudolph LJSA, Robert Mackey LJVMA

**Approve Minutes of:** January 15, 2020 **Motion to Approve Minutes: Gantzel, Second: Earley 6-0-2 ( Abrams, Ryan)**

**Public Comments on Non-Agenda LJ&T Matters:**

**Joan Huffman-** is asking if we can do something about the signal on Nautilus Street at the intersection of Muirlands East and West. As you travel up the Hill you have a signal at Muirlands West and then a few feet further you have the Muirlands East signal. The Muirlands East signal should be a blinking red light so the three intersecting cars can stop and then go ahead if it is clear. Joan made this same comment at the January Meeting and Dave advised her that he sent her suggestion to the City Traffic Engineer and he is waiting for a response so it is in the works.

**Janie Emerson-** President of La Jolla Shores Association, is here about the UCSD expansion project. UCSD is planning to construct nine buildings adjacent to the La Jolla Playhouse at the intersection of Torrey Pines Rd and La Jolla Village Drive. The buildings range from 9 to 21 stories tall. They have plans for two or more buildings by Allen Field and the Venter Institute on the opposite corner of Torrey Pines Rd and La Jolla Village Drive. She said we have to stop this now. LJSA is exploring all of their options to stop this project. Everyone in La Jolla needs to be vested in this because all of our efforts at beautification will be eaten alive by this expansion. She advised people to email [rclossin@ucsd.edu](mailto:rclossin@ucsd.edu) with their comments and keep the pressure on because this project will kill our community. Dave will reach out to them and perhaps arrange a presentation for our Committee. Janie advised that LJCPA also requested a presentation but was not given a definitive answer if they were willing to do that.

Natalie asked if there were any parking structures in the buildings. Janie responded there is some parking but not a parking structure. There will be 1200 underground parking spaces for nine buildings.

**Bill Allen-** UCSD does nothing to help our community mitigate parking problems on the streets. Parking is insane by La Jolla Farms Rd and La Jolla Scenic Drive with student parking and wants to know why our Board is not doing something about putting restrictions or parking meters on them. We need to step it up.

**Misti Coleman**- responding to Bill Allen comment -it's not necessarily just students parking on the streets, it's also UCSD employees. UCSD is not required to provide parking for their employees. If you are on La Jolla Scenic Drive at 6:00 am there are employees parked on the street. A lot of employees do not have parking on Campus so they are parking in the neighborhoods.

**A gentleman in the audience** attended the UCSD open house and asked UCSD representatives about the parking. He was told students and employees do want to pay the parking fee so they park on the streets. He does not understand why LJT&T cannot impose parking meters along La Jolla Scenic North or initiate resident parking permits. Dave responded that our group does not have the authority they think we have.

He did not know that he could speak on something that is not on the Agenda so he is taking this opportunity to request an all way stop sign be installed at the corner of La Jolla Scenic North at Moonridge Drive. If you are driving out of La Jolla Parkway you are on an incline and when cars are speeding and you are crossing La Jolla Scenic North you cannot see them until all of a sudden they appear, and on the other end driving towards the La Jolla Parkway there is a curve so you also have to watch for speeding cars on that end. This is a situation that is waiting for an accident to happen. There will probably not be sufficient records to justify the request because the Police do not document accidents unless there is an injury or fatality.

**John Kassir**, former LJT&T Board member, advised that a traffic study had already been done at that location and it did not warrant a stop sign. Dave responded that it has been awhile since that Study and that a current one is under way. Council Policy 200-08 – Alternative Process is an option if the intersection does not warrant the points needed for the stop signs.

**Brenda Fake**- lives on Coast Walk Trail. Friends of Coast Walk Trail, a 501C neighborhood non-profit received a permit to fix it up. She thanked Barbara Bry's Office for helping them through a very arduous process. She is now raising between \$18-20k to put decomposed granite from end to end and shore up cliff areas and slopes and remove invasive species specifically ice plant. She described it as a painful process to secure the permit but she is here now to request donations through [friendsofcoastwalktrail.org](http://friendsofcoastwalktrail.org).

**Jodi Rudick**, Executive Director of La Jolla Village Merchants Assn, announces an initiative to do some 'way finding' in the Village. Other coastal communities installed some fun signs that point people in the right direction and La Jolla is developing a concept similar to theirs. Residents have all experienced helping a lost tourist find their way to the Cove, seals, or the Museum. LJVMA is going to help people navigate through our community and they are hoping to do that starting from Torrey Pines and directing them to other avenues in the shopping area other than

sending everyone down Prospect Street to mitigate some of the traffic congestion on that street. They will be bringing a concept to LJT&T next month.

**Agenda Item 1: Report from Transit Subcommittee-** Regarding Shuttle Service from La Jolla Village to new Trolley Line Extension Stations (Dan Allen) **Discussion Item**

MTS operates the Bus systems and the Trolley. They finished a Study that has been ongoing for several years proposing alternative routing for the feeder busses to the Trolley. The Trolley is called the Mid-Coast Light Rail Extension otherwise known as UC San Diego Blue Line. The extension of the Trolley will go from Old Town to Tecolote to Clairemont, Balboa Ave and then to Nobel, VA Hospital, 2 stops at UCSD, one stop at Scripps Memorial Hospital and then the UTC Shopping Center.

For several years Dan has been attempting to get a shuttle bus from La Jolla to the Trolley Stations. The MTS finally acquiesced and proposed a new bus line #34 for La Jolla and Pacific Beach. It will leave from Balboa Station to Garnet, to La Jolla, UCSD and UTC every 15 minutes. The timing could be better but it's a foot in the door. There are processes in the works and Dan wants to reconvene the LJT&T sub-committee to discuss them. Dave, Tom, Erik and Dan make up our sub-committee for the shuttle bus study.

**Brian** reminded Dan that two years ago he came before the Board saying he found several hundred thousand dollars that could be used for a shuttle bus project (*Agenda Item 3 March 18, 2018*). Did the MTS acquiesce and give us the new bus line because of that money or are they taking it upon themselves to fund it? Dan responded that money belongs to the Coastal Access and Parking Board. He does not know what their present plans are for that money. Brian asked if there is a guarantee this will happen and Dan responded there is a year and a half process to make sure this happens.

**Jodi Rudick**, Executive Director of the LJVMA, requested to address the question Brian had about the Coastal Access and Parking Board money. Several people who serve on that Board are in this room. Jodi informed the Board that Coastal Access and Parking meets irregularly but they did meet to do an RFP for a Shuttle Connector. The response was that the Coastal Commission would have to take control and hold onto the purse strings. There is a quarter of a million dollars in the fund and the information they received from the Coastal Commission was they would like to wait until this project comes on line and once MTS puts their different initiatives into place we can figure out if there are any holes that need to be filled in. Jodi informed the Board that everyone is on the same page and talking to one another about this project.

Dave recognized Dan's efforts at obtaining that shuttle bus for La Jolla and the audience acknowledged it.

**Agenda Item 2: Request for Reconsideration of La Jolla Scenic North and South Connection (Cont'd Item)** – Former overpass project across La Jolla Parkway that was removed from La Jolla Community Plan (Lance Peto) **Action Item**

This Agenda Item was continued from the October-November 2019 LJ&T Meetings to allow for time to obtain some history of the Overpass project connecting La Jolla Scenic Drive North with La Jolla Scenic Drive South. Dave worked with Steve Hadley to dig through City records to find any history the City had for the project. He read their findings to the audience:

*The La Jolla Scenic Drive North and South connection was first on the 1967 Plan that included an overpass over what was then called Ardath Road and a connection street on the south side of Ardath that extended up the north slope of Mt. Soledad. Some engineering plans and initial construction took place in the early '70s, but the overpass and the connection street were eliminated from the subsequent 1975 Community Plan and remained off in the current 2014 Plan. The rationale for the deletion of the overpass project in the 1975 Plan is reflected in the following wording in that Plan:*

*“The 1967 Plan sought solutions to the problems of traffic congestion and parking space deficiency through the construction of new roads, the widening of existing ones and by doubling the number of parking spaces. It is now believed that the earlier recommendations only intensify circulation and parking problems, and that anything that is done to encourage and make more convenient the private automobile will be a detriment.”*

*The current 2014 La Jolla Community Plan does not speak to the LJ Scenic Drive connection project, but has as its first Transportation Systems element Policy the following:*

*“The City should not widen existing streets or construct major roadways into La Jolla which would result in an increase in existing traffic volumes into the community. Improvements to La Jolla’s street system should be made in a manner that facilitates traffic circulation without disruption of the community character or existing patterns of development.”*

**Public Comments:**

**Joe Dicks** lives on Via Capri. He had extensive involvement in traffic calming for his street that resulted in chokers at Hidden Valley Rd and a roundabout on Via Capri. This proposal would do the direct opposite of what the goals were that was just described in the Plan. He wants to know what the motivation is behind this project and who are the individuals and groups who

are behind it. In order to understand the motivation, we need to know who is on each side of the dispute.

**Lance Peto** is the requestor for this project and behind the motivation for it. He advised it is not so much about the Scenic Drive Bridge as it is about The Throat. It is all about the traffic congestion at The Throat. The traffic coming down Torrey Pines Rd stacks up well past the Convalescent Hospital. There is one traffic lane in the evening for drivers to get up Soledad Mountain because there is only one lane to cross La Jolla Parkway to Hidden Valley and up Via Capri. In the morning traffic is backed up at the Cross coming down Via Capri to Hidden Valley and then going up Torrey Pines because of the lack of access.

Lance referenced the La Jolla Shores Assn meeting. They voted against the project and Joe La Cava made the comment that to build a Bridge that is not connected to anything does not make any sense. The reality is that Plans were prepared and submitted and partially constructed by the City and they do not show any connection to Via Capri. It is merely circulation to get access to get on 52E. Drivers come down to Hidden Valley, cross over, take Ardath Lane to get to 52E. It has nothing to do with Via Capri, had nothing to do with going up the Hill, it is just a matter of facilitating traffic going to 52E. That is what the Plans were that he submitted to the Committee but La Jolla Shores Assn did not see the Plans that were submitted and the congestion down at the Throat is unbearable.

Dave acknowledged that everyone is in agreement that there is an issue down at The Throat. The difference of opinions is whether this is the answer to that problem.

**Carol Hernstad-** is a real estate agent in La Jolla with experience dealing with the traffic congestion at The Throat. She provided the Board with a 3-page pamphlet detailing her suggestions to improve traffic flow at The Throat and began a presentation with her own Plans. Because of the size of the audience with many wishing to speak to this proposal and two other Agenda Items after it, the Board believed that due to timing constraints we did not have time to seriously consider her presentation and suggestions at this Meeting. Patrick suggested that she go on the March Agenda so time could be allocated to hear it. Carol asked Dave if he would put her on the March Agenda and he agreed. Continued to March Meeting.

**Kathryn Murphy** was at the Meeting in December when Lance first proposed reviving the Bridge Connection. Since then she has heard a lot of feedback from the Community saying let's not focus so much on the Bridge as much as let's fix The Throat. At that meeting she asked this Committee to please see if the City could do a traffic study because we are not the experts. She is wondering if the City is doing the traffic study now because she is seeing pink tags on trees on La Jolla Scenic Drive North and South where they have done a survey. This happened right after the meeting so she thought they were starting the survey. Dave responded he wishes it was that fast but it is not related to our traffic study.

**Jill Sugar** – very happy that we are trying to come up with other ideas besides the bridge. If we put a bridge there, drivers would be using it instead of the freeway. The freeway is right there for the purpose of going from north to south. She is against the bridge but supports other ideas to alleviate the problems at The Throat.

**Patrick-** If Lance's Plan only diverted traffic from the North, across a Bridge, but the only thing it did was dump traffic eastbound to 52 and did not send any traffic up the Hill would that solve his requirement. If it's not about what is happening up the Hill on the south side and it is about what is happening eastbound, would a La Jolla Parkway East solve the problem? Lance responded that it would and he would support that.

**Louis Rodolico-** running for City Council. He has been an advocate for building two of University City's missing bridges and this one that we are talking about now. Three bridges not built which is a failure of government. Bridges are a public safety issue; seven lives are lost each year in delay time. Houses should not be allowed to be occupied until the infrastructure is complete. People are saying we do not want a bridge in our neighborhood but it is a public safety issue. We need to be able to transport within our community efficiently. Carbon load is an issue because of the extra travel miles. As far as he knows he is the only City Council candidate who is responsible enough to take the position to build these bridges.

**Ted Haas-** lives on Hidden Valley Road. We need a City traffic engineer to examine this problem and he demands the Board to request it. It took him 17.5 minutes to get to this Meeting and he lives 10 minutes away. He had to wait at the traffic light through three cycles. His street is narrow, curvy, and it is bearing all of the traffic that should be going somewhere else. He wants a traffic study and if it comes down to a Bridge then we will talk about it.

**Simon Andrews-** he does not have a position for or against the bridge but the point of view is we need a global study of the traffic issues coming in and out of La Jolla, otherwise, we will be sitting here arguing with one another forever. He believes Sandag would fund it.

**Sally Miller-** densification. The City is pushing densification, they want every home to have a granny flat, and it will result in more cars and more traffic and we need to get in and out of town.

**Tom Grunow-** he has some understanding of what was proposed regarding the road coming in from La Jolla Scenic North crossing over to allow more traffic to leave quickly seemed like one aspect of it. Maybe the bridge does not have to be built to connect La Jolla Scenic North just like we cannot get on 5N from the Parkway, but is it possible to look at different aspects of the Plan. He lives on the Via Capri side and has seen it back up three miles. A back up on Torrey Pines is one thing but a backup on Via Capri is another one. And now he has seen it backing up

on Torrey Pines. The traffic problem is escalating and is LJ&T going to allow this to go on? Traffic Engineers did a great job on The Throat at the time however it's time to look at that again. He asked Lance if there was an alternative to relieve pressure on Via Capri which is the other side without connecting the bridge. Lance would defer to a traffic engineer.

**Joe LaCava-** most of us know his position because it was written up in the La Jolla Light and then someone took exception to it and he wrote a rebuttal to the Editor. He does not hate the bridge but it has become a singular solution to a global issue. He hears everyone saying we need a comprehensive study and one has not been done in a long time. The Throat made vast improvements at the time but it was done a long time ago. The City installed smart traffic signals (*adaptive signal timing*) that was supposed to make it more efficient. They may not be working the way they were supposed to, the proximity of the Fire Station often disrupts the timing and that messes it up quite a bit so we do need a global solution.

As someone who has been a long-time community leader, civil engineer, and has watched how the City does and does not function so even if you get that bridge ok'd by the community and everyone buys into it, it is not ever going to happen. It would cost tens of millions of dollars that the City does not have. It is the reality of it; it would go on a needs list with everything else but it will never happen. The City will never have that kind of money. Carol Hernstad put up some interesting alternatives, which the Board will hear next month and the Board needs to go in that direction.

**Natalie-** Sandag did a report in 1996 and the bridge is downgraded but not deleted. If you read that report from Sandag that Lance has it speaks to the Fire Dept., it speaks to it being a safety issue. It has a lot of information that has not been brought up at this Meeting and it's important to take a look at it.

**Misti Coleman-** be careful what you wish for with reference to a bridge. Some people are looking at it that it will reduce time going from one mountain to another but once you increase traffic there will be stop lights and stop signs at every intersection so residents can get in and out of their neighborhoods. Your time probably will not be reduced as much as you think. If you create a bypass winding through La Jolla businesses will suffer. She owns commercial and residential property and she is concerned it will hurt her both ways.

Dave received some Letters from other Community Boards regarding the La Jolla Scenic Drive North/South Overpass:

*Re: La Jolla Scenic North Bridge*

*Dear Dave - This letter will confirm the email sent to you after our La Jolla Shores Association (LJSA) Board meeting on January 8, 2020. At that meeting, the LJSA Board discussed the history and future of the La Jolla Scenic North Bridge in detail and the traffic issues at the intersection of*

*Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla Parkway and Hidden Valley Road called "Throat". The Motion was brought to oppose the La Jolla Scenic North Overpass. The Board Vote was 10-1-1 with the President having to abstain per our By-Laws. The LJSA Board unanimously encouraged that the City's resources be used to study the entire traffic problem at the so called "Throat" rather than requesting it on this single issue.*

*Thank you*

*Janie Emerson President LJSA*

*To: Dave Abrams, Chair*

*At the January 8, 2020 monthly meeting of the La Jolla Village Merchants Association, the Board of Directors unanimously voted to support the request to study the status and gather research related to La Jolla Shore (Scenic) North/South bridge connector project. This is not an endorsement of the project, itself. We look forward to learning the results of the study.*

*Jodi Rudick*

*Executive Director LJVMA*

#### **Board Comments:**

**Patrick** recognizes the mutual agreement everyone has for a traffic study and there is an email from the City about the level of what would be required

**Dave** read to the audience the email the Board received from Gary Pence regarding the traffic study:

*In speaking to City Senior Traffic Engineer Gary Pence about the possibility of a Comprehensive Study examining solutions to the congestion problem at The Throat that could include reexamination of the LJ Scenic Drive project, he said a study of that extent would likely need to be outsourced to a Consultant and require budgetary adjustment. He suggested united Community support for such a Study would be helpful if not required.*

A comprehensive traffic study would have to be outsourced costing thousands of dollars and would take a while to complete so he is urging other associations and community boards to get behind this to have a united front in demanding the study.

Erik would make a motion to conduct a comprehensive traffic study at The Throat with all possible solutions related to the traffic congestion, but the surrounding area of The Throat became an issue when deciding if we wanted adjoining or adjacent areas in the motion. Brian was concerned that adjoining areas would not be clear enough. Dave believes The Throat means a convergence of all those roads and the term 'abutting areas' was chosen.



**Motion to Request the City conduct a Comprehensive Traffic Study with all possible solutions related to traffic congestion at The Throat and other abutting areas: Gantzel, Second: Aguirre 8-0-0**

**Agenda Item 3: La Jolla Blvd Pedestrian Safety Ad-Hoc Committee- Status Update and request for Community input (Ira Parker) Discussion Item**

La Jolla Blvd Pedestrian Safety Ad-Hoc Committee is studying pedestrian safety on the Boulevard recognizing it is not safe for pedestrians and will only get worse.

Ad-hoc committee members: Dave, Tom, Erik, and Ira did a drive by on La Jolla Blvd and identified some issues. They picked up 4-5 specific things that could be done having to do with signage, repainting, etc. Major potential strategies include traffic calming, possibly changing some lights, pedestrian and driver education. Ira wants the next two scheduled Board Meetings in March and April to dedicate at least thirty minutes for public input relating to pedestrian safety. The first meeting would focus on La Jolla Blvd from Coast to Palomar and the second meeting would focus from Palomar to Turquoise Street. After the Meetings when they have some input, they will have a formal meeting and establish some recommendations with action items.

Natalie inquired about the light when you are exiting La Jolla by the Cave Store there is a crosswalk for pedestrians on Prospect and it has signage there but she has never seen the light flash and she asked if that particular light flashes because she has not seen it. Kathleen Neal in the audience walks all over La Jolla and can confirm that yes, those lights flash, pedestrians do push the button and they are used a lot. However, when there is a fast flow of traffic drivers tend not to see them even at night. They are so focused on driving and on their speed that they tend to miss it.

**Agenda Item 4: Request for Angle Parking on Herschel Avenue- between Kline Street and Torrey Pines Road (Anthony Crisafi) Action Item**

Dave received an email from Thomas Landre, City Traffic Engineer, requesting endorsement from LJT&T regarding angled parking spaces on Herschel Ave between Torrey Pines and Kline Street. Tony Crisafi circulated a petition for the angled parking spaces and received support for it from abutting residences and businesses. The City evaluated the Street and determined it met the parameters for angled parking and seven additional parking spaces could be installed if parking spaces switched from parallel parking to angle parking.

**Cori Del Castillo** of Island Architects presented the request for angled parking on Herschel Ave. She noted there is congestion in the area with many drivers searching for parking spaces in the afternoons between 11:30-1:30. There is a restaurant in the little plaza on the corner of Torrey

Pines and Herschel Ave that signed the petition because they also have an interest in more parking spaces. Their small parking lot fills up fast leaving their customers searching for parking spaces on the street. Cori informed the Board the new angled parking spaces will continue to be 2-hour time limited but there will be seven more parking spaces for the street. Seven new parking spaces may not seem like a lot but the seven additional cars would appreciate having a parking space. Dave responded that every parking space in La Jolla is precious.

Dave pointed out that just north of the intersection with Kline Herschel is all angled parking and that seems to be working out so the only real concern would be with Stella Maris. Cori responded that the School was consulted and they did not have a problem with it. They have their own parking lot and the Stella Maris building located across from Kline already has angled parking in front of it.

Brian noted the Board approved Stanchions for Stella Maris Academy that are still in place today (*August 16 2017 Agenda Item 5: - City Proposed Controls for the Herschel Ave/Kline Street Intersection*) but it does not look like the angled parking would interfere with them.

There was some confusion regarding angled parking on both sides of Herschel. Tom brought to the Boards attention two pictures of the street; one diagram showing angled parking on both sides but a second diagram showing angled parking on just one side and parallel parking on the other side of the street. Cori provided the Board with another view of the street with the angled parking and it was determined that Tom's two diagrams were one and the same just fragmented from his printer. The source of the confusion is at the north end of Herschel on the east side remains parallel parking due to a passenger loading zone.

**Motion to Approve Request for Angle Parking on Herschel Ave between Kline Street and Torrey Pines Rd as Approved by City Traffic Engineer: Ryan, Second: Brady 8-0-0**

**Adjournment: 5:30pm**

**Next Meeting: March 18, 2020**

**Respectfully Submitted: Donna Aprea, Secretary**