

**CITY OF PASADENA
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES
PASADENA CITY HALL
100 NORTH GARFIELD AVENUE
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER – S249
AUGUST 18, 2021**

SPECIAL MEETING

The virtual meeting was convened pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20 issued by Governor Gavin Newsom on March 30, 2020, and was held solely by videoconference/teleconference

OPENING

The acting Chair Madison called the special meeting of the Public Safety Committee to order at 4:34 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Mayor Victor M. Gordo (Chair)
Councilmember Tyron Hampton
Councilmember John J. Kennedy
Councilmember Steve Madison

Staff:

Steve Mermell, City Manager
Javan Rad, Chief Assistant City Attorney
Kris Markarian, Acting Director of Public Works
Valerie Flores, Recording Secretary

OLD PASADENA PARKING METER ZONE ADVISORY COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT – JULY 2019 THROUGH JUNE 2020 AND WORK PLAN – JULY 2020 THROUGH JUNE 2021*

SOUTH LAKE PARKING PLACE COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT – JULY 2019 THROUGH JUNE 2020 AND WORK PLAN – JULY 2020 THROUGH JUNE 2021*

It was moved by Councilmember Kennedy, seconded by Mayor Gordo, to receive and file the Annual Report for the Old Pasadena Parking Meter Zone Advisory Commission and South Lake Parking Place Commission:

AYES: Councilmembers Kennedy, Hampton, Madison, Chair Gordo
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

INFORMATION ITEM

COLORADO STREET BRIDGE BARRIER ENHANCEMENTS PROJECT – RECOMMENDATION OF BARRIER DESIGN OPTION*

Steve Mermell, City Manager, introduced the agenda item and Kris Markarian, Acting Director of Public Works provided a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the project, and responded to questions.

Steve Line, Principle Project Manager for Donald MacDonald Architects, continued the PowerPoint presentation, and responded to questions.

Valerie Flores, Recording Secretary, reported that four letters providing comments on the item was received by the City Clerk's Office, distributed to the Committee, and posted online.

Sue Mossman, Executive Director of Pasadena Heritage and Colorado Street Bridge Task Force member, expressed appreciation on behalf of the Task Force members to City staff and the design team for their efforts. She stated that at this time, there is no consensus among task force members on any of the options presented and that members agree that the "right solution" has not yet been found, and urged the Committee to support the Public Works Department to continue moving forward with further exploration.

Councilmember Madison commended the City Manager for taking the steps in 2017 to implement the temporary barriers on the bridge. He continued his comments and spoke on a book called "Talking to Strangers" by Malcolm Gladwell, that included a chapter on suicides which describes a phenomenon called "coupling", stating if we could disrupt this "coupling" of the bridge being a place where suicides are known to happen, we will continue to reduce the number of incidents in our City. He expressed that the bridge is a sacred and iconic structure for the City of Pasadena, stating he feels we are not ready to make a decision and there has not been enough of a process to identify the best option. He suggested that if there is consensus amongst the committee members to narrow down the choices presented by staff, proceed with the implementation of two concepts, and continue the public outreach process. He expressed his preference would be Option B as one of the two options to be considered, noting that he feels the other options presented make the mistake of not being deferential enough or too deferential to the historic bridge design.

Councilmember Kennedy spoke on the passing of Delano Catherine Hadley Robinson, widow of Matthew "Mack" Robinson, a silver medalist at the 1936 Olympic Games and the older brother of baseball Hall of Famer Jackie Robinson, and requested that the meeting be adjourned in her memory.

Councilmember Kennedy spoke in support of Councilmember Madison's suggestion to narrow the choices to two potential concepts for further discuss. If there is consensus amongst the committee members, he suggested proceeding with both Options A and B, contract additional expertise from local professionals in addition to the City's consultant, Donald MacDonald Architects, and proceed in a timely manner. He expressed he would have favored a concept that would have an absolute way to prevent the possibility of suicide, but does not believe there would be consensus amongst the committee to consider the "alternative concept" presented by staff, to enclose the entire length of bridge.

Mayor Gordo joined Councilmembers Madison and Kennedy in expressing his condolences to the Robinson family, stating he would reach out to the family on behalf of the City Council.

The Mayor spoke on the effectiveness of the current temporary fencing along the bridge, and given the incident data reported by staff, he feels the temporary fencing has started the “decoupling” trend mentioned previously of incidents. The Mayor stated he would like staff to further study additional design concepts using the cable net material exhibited as part of the “alternative concept” used to enclose the entire length of the bridge and to explore further potential design concepts/material for the steel halos at the alcoves, while continuing the public outreach process.

Councilmember Hampton echoed the Mayor’s comments and expressed his support for staff to further study concepts that incorporate the cable net material, and suggested the possibility of limiting trucks to traverse the bridge to accommodate enclosing the entire length of the bridge using the cable net material. He encouraged staff to continue with their efforts in searching for a design that is both effective and aesthetically pleasing. In addition, he spoke on the potential to hire individuals to “man” the bridge twenty-four hours a day, given the anticipated cost for completion and matters related to fiscal impacts due to the pandemic. He expressed his thanks and appreciation to staff for their efforts on the matter and to the Councilmembers who have been adamant about seeking a permanent solution to protect and save lives.

The Mayor expressed his support for staff to further review the potential to hire individuals to guard the bridge, whether it be as guided tours on the bridge, include as part of the Rose Program, and/or the volunteer/guides that are present in Old Town Pasadena. In addition, he spoke on the potential for a hybrid concept that would include guarding the bridge and a barrier structure, noting that it is his hope that the safety structure installed not be permanent and can be removed in the future.

Councilmember Madison spoke on the location of the full-scale mock-ups, and requested that if future mock-ups are installed he would prefer the design to be placed in the middle of the bridge to allow for a better visualization and “apples to apples” comparison of the concepts.

Following discussion, the Committee requested that staff consider reviewing additional concept options using the net material, as well as narrowing down the options presented by staff, and providing further analysis on the potential to hire individuals to “man” the bridge.

The City Manager stated that it is his expectation that the temporary fencing would remain in place, continue public outreach, continue working with the Colorado Street Bridge Task Force and partners, return to the Committee with a timeline and proceed with further discussion on the anticipated extended process.

On order of the Chair, and by consensus of the Committee, the information was received and filed.

REPORT FROM PASADENA HUMANE SOCIETY*

Due to time constraints, the above information item was held for discussion at a future Committee meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

On the order of the Chair, the special meeting of the Public Safety Committee was adjourned at 6:51 p.m., in memory of Delano Catherine Hadley Robinson, widow of Matthew "Mack" Robinson, a silver medalist at the 1936 Olympic Games and the older brother of baseball Hall of Famer Jackie Robinson.

Mayor Victor M. Gordo, Chair
Public Safety Committee

ATTEST:

Valerie Flores
Recording Secretary