

May 20thth, 2019 Ojai Valley MAC Meeting Summary

Steve Offerman of Supervisor Steve Bennett's Office called the roll. Members present were Chris Cohen, Jill Borgeson, Terry Wright, Grace Malloy, and Joe Westbury.

Under public comment, Steve Offerman noted the Planning Division would hold a workshop on the General Plan in Oak View, and the Oak View Memorial Day parade. Ron Solarzano provided an update on libraries in the valley.

Ojai Planning Commissioner Kathy Laudison provided an update on commission activities including downtown design guidelines, complete streets, and fences/walls/hedges.

Dave Fleisch, Director of the County Transportation Department, discussed county roads and Creek Road. The County has 944 roads. They annually identify the 50 roads with the highest accident rates. Creek road ranked 15th for the 2015-2017 period and 24th in 2018. Creek Road traffic volume has increased 3.6% per year which is consistent with the county average. The percentage of trucks on Creek Road has not increased. Lane width on Creek Rd is 10', the State standard is 12'. Results of the most recent speed study were presented along with the State law requirements for speed limit setting; the speed limit is currently set as low as possible under State law without losing the ability to use radar speed enforcement. The County plans to install radar speed feedback signs and has a consultant studying signage. Dave Fleisch said that Creek Road meets the classification of a Collector road and noted that Highway 33 has a 40% higher normalized accident rate than Creek Rd and 7 times the traffic volume.

Steve Offerman noted that the County has an official legislative platform supporting new State legislation to make it easier to lower speed limits, that Supervisor Bennett has written to the Waze and Google Maps apps to request they not direct motorists onto Creek, and has requested that Caltrans install a directional sign to Ojai on Hwy 33.

Grace Malloy encouraged taking community input on signs. Suza Francina encouraged more to be done near Camp Comfort, and Joe Westbury noted that there is overflow park parking on the opposite side of Creek Rd. Michael Shapiro implicated the Waze app, and Jim Fryhoff suggested using the "drop a cop" feature on the app.

A resident of Creek Road said her quality of life has declined because of speeding, discourteous driving, and accidents. Nora Davis said she didn't understand why the speed limit isn't the same as other roads such as Burnham. Lynn Olsen noted many animal deaths and supported lower speed limit. Teena Broumand said that Creek Rd should be compared to other local roads. A man said its not safe to ride horses on Creek Rd. Joe Westbury commented that speeders are ignoring speed limit signs and how would changing the speed limit control driver stupidity? Dana Moore noted that making left turns is difficult and tailgating makes turns difficult; she advocated for stop signs. Morice said the road should be considered residential, Dave Fleisch said it doesn't meet the State standard as a residential zone; too few homes per mile.

CHP Officer Denharder encouraged reporting the license plate number of unsafe drivers to the CHP, who will contact the driver and log the complaint. Call CHP dispatch at 805 477-4174.

A resident of Country Club Dr noted accidents there and requested gravel sweeping and sign installation; County staff will address.

Grace Malloy suggested that residents contact the Ojai Valley Inn to discourage their guests from using Country Club and Creek. Suza Francina said she would contact the Inn.

A woman said it's mainly commuters at rush hour that speed and tailgate. CHP Officer Denharder and Sheriff Captain Fryhoff both said that 85% of speeders they contact on Creek Road are local residents.

Teena Broumand said it is the City of Ojai that causes the problem, and weekend traffic is also a problem, and Villanova and other roads have the same problems, and showed a Powerpoint of accidents which she said totaled 30 in 2019. She said that added traffic signals on Hwy 33 cause increased traffic on Creek Rd and requested 3 new stop signs. She has a traffic engineer study that contradicts the County study.

CHP officer Denharder said the CHP used a grant for enhanced enforcement on Creek, and wrote 33 tickets, primarily to valley residents. Captain Fryhoff advised installing deer whistles on vehicles, which he did on Sheriff's vehicles. He also advised drivers to pull over if they are driving slowly to avoid frustration, road rage, and unsafe passing. Terry Wright noted a State law regarding impeding traffic and said he reported an unsafe passer's license plate to CHP and CHP went to the driver's home.

Supervisor Steve Bennett thanked the MAC and speakers and listed items he would follow up on:

- Whether a new speed survey can be done using road segments
- Whether cars running into a nearby wall would affect the stop sign warrant analysis at Encino.
- Confusing signs; he welcomes public input.
- Are there nonwarranted stop signs in the Valley?
- Passing barriers and No Passing signs
- a sign directing motorists to Ojai on Hwy 33
- County consideration of the Pinnacle traffic study

Suza Francina asked if lane width could be reduced to 8'; Norman Baculinao said anything below 9' would create liability.

Terry Tatroe encouraged the County to check the Fire Department's accident records.

Joe Westbury said he drives Creek daily and see few trucks; he questions whether trucks would actually help slow down traffic. Teena Broumand says trucks veer over the lines.

Terry Wright made a motion to have the MAC send a recommendation to the County supporting Supervisor Bennett's recommendations and the County proceeding with them. The motion was seconded by Grace Malloy and approved unanimously. Grace noted that the MAC and County are looking for ways to help

Steve Bennett asked the audience if they wanted a speed limit reduction that would be unenforceable: No. He noted that other Board members would be concerned with liability to the taxpayers for unwarranted stop signs.

The summary of the April 15th, 2018th meeting was approved unanimously with corrections noted by Terry Wright on a motion by Terry Wright, seconded by Chris Cohen.

The next MAC meeting will be June 17.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45