
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 3:40 PM
To: Traffic Engineering
Subject: Public Comment from Zebra House re: Intersection Safety at SECR & Esplanade
Attachments: March 2024, City re ECR & Esplanade.pdf

Dear Jane – please provide the attached letter to the City Council for consideration at/during the meeting tomorrow. Please let me know if you have any questions or need clarification on our proposal.

Thank you so much,

Sara Peterson

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



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RE: Consideration of Intersection Safety Improvement on South El Camino Real at Esplanade

Dear City Council members and others attending the meeting in consideration of this important traffic topic that impacts both residents and businesses on the south end of town:

My name is Sara Peterson. I am writing to you as the owner of Zebra House Coffee, the sole occupant of the building located at 1001 S El Camino Real and resident of South San Clemente. Zebra House is located on the east side of El Camino Real and share the access point with Ralphs where the delineators were placed in 2020.

Bottom Line Up Front: We believe there is an Alternative 2 that needs to be considered and ask for a continuance of this topic. Our Alternative 2 blends together the current suggestions to provide a more balanced solution to the issues at hand.

The last 3.5 years: In 2020 we opposed the delineators as the solution to the traffic accidents that were occurring. We were also not in support of the turn lanes. We suggested that the visibility to cars entering El Camino Real at the Esplanade intersection was perhaps a contributing factor to the accidents. We voluntarily reduced the palm trees in the required planter along our parking lot and pay our landscaper to keep that area trimmed. We believe this has contributed to a reduction in the number of accidents and we intend to maintain this. To the contrary, we have witnessed a major increase in the poor driving decisions of drivers since the delineators were installed. People go the wrong way on either side of them to access the place they want to visit. They also use our drive-through entrance as a major passageway to access Ralph's, despite the signage we paid to install trying to discourage this behavior. The delineators are continuously run over, and we find them in our planters or along the curb near our business. I believe they have been replaced several times since 2020. New customers have experienced difficulties trying to access our location. Oftentimes they give up and just keep going to the next option. Coffee and drive-throughs are about convenience and ease of access, which the delineators impede. One of our major entry points to our business was cut off by the city during the pandemic when we were already at a hardship. And half of our parking spaces were made to be more inaccessible for our café customers – for which we had just taken on a major remodel to expand that side of our business. On the positive, we were grateful the delineators didn't extend far enough to cut off both entries to our front parking lot of our business. This would have been a catastrophe for us.

March 19, 2024: As the topic comes up again today, I regret I am not able to attend the meeting in person given my childcare responsibilities. However, we hope that you will take this letter seriously and that it can be heard and considered properly.

The options being considered and our corresponding view on them are as follows:

Proposal: Leave the delineators. We are opposed to the delineators and would like them removed. They negatively impact the flow of vehicles into our business, make customer parking more difficult, clutter our drive-through, and cause wreckless driving decisions by those set in their ways.

Alternative 1: Add 2 left turn lanes and lose parking on El Camino Real. While I do not like the delineators, we are very concerned by this suggestion and believe it should be considered but modified. As currently suggested, the turn lanes on both sides of Esplanade

will make the traffic worse in some ways. For those cars going in and out of Ralphs and the north side of our café parking, the reopening of the intersection is definitely a blessing. We also like the turn lane addition on the north side of the intersection to make it easier to turn into Ralphs/Zebra. However, we do not think the left turn lane for cars to turn down Esplanade is necessary. It will make it so cars pulling out of our south access point would only be able to turn right, which is okay if you rely on the shared access point, except that it makes people going left out of the shared access point have to compete with yet another lane of traffic. There are way more cars trying to go left than there are people turning into Esplanade – especially with the removal of the beach sign – so this seems like a misplaced turn lane in our opinion. With new residential, office and restaurant tenants since the 2020 decision was made (and a major restaurant which hasn't even opened yet), losing parking has even more consequences than it did before. We do not want to find customers for these businesses in our valued parking spots – something we already battle as it is.

We believe there should be an Alternative 2, which we believe finds the best balance between safety, commercial viability/access, parking, and residential concerns:

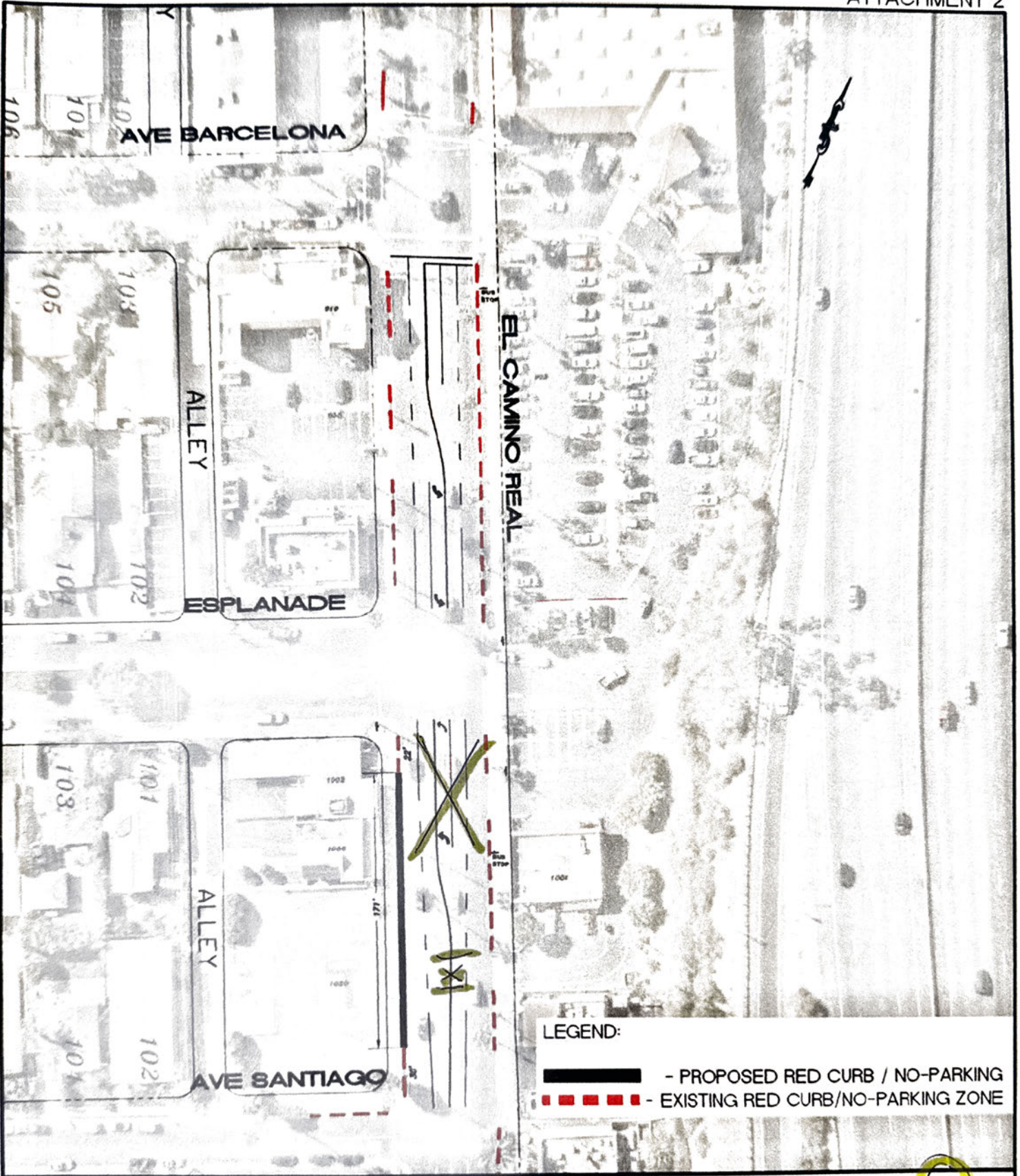
- 1) Remove the delineators for the reasons stated above
- 2) Add the suggested left turn lane into the Ralphs/Zebra House shared entry way
- 3) Do NOT add a left turn lane on the south side of the our share entry way – this lane impacts parking for the new development there which will in turn impact us and the residents on Esplanade and Santiago. The southern proposed turn lane also makes left turns out of the Ralphs/Zebra House shared access point very challenging. And lastly, it serves only a small portion of the overall traffic, which will be even less of the traffic count when the beach sign is gone.
- 4) Wish list item: Add a break in the middle yellow lines on ECR for cars going south so they could more safely enter our drive-through. This has always been “unspoken”, but it would be great to add this into whatever decision is made.

Please see attached markup of the exhibit marked Alternative 1, which represents our ALTERNATIVE 2. We would ask for a continuance so that Alternative 2 can be considered by all those impacted.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'SA', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Sara Allen Peterson
Owner & Tenant, Zebra House Coffee
Resident of South San Clemente



12.1.2023

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CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE
 910 Calle Negocio
 San Clemente, CA 92673
<https://www.san-clemente.org>

ALTERNATIVE 2
**PROPOSED LEFT-TURN POCKETS
 AND RED CURB**