

From: [Raymond Dussault](#)
To: [City Council](#); [City Clerk](#); [Mayor Michael Detoy](#); [Suja Lowenthal](#)
Subject: Dining Decks and unnecessary regulation
Date: Tuesday, June 14, 2022 2:37:04 PM

Dear Council:

Like most every resident, I support all the outdoor dining culture that has exploded in the wake of COVID. The patios have become not only an extension for the restaurant space but an extension of all of our neighborhoods. It is common now to find friends and family enjoying the extended dining decks and stopping to say hello.

Since the council began indicating these extensions were likely to be made permanent, they have become even nicer with restaurants investing in their space to enhance their appearance. This is costly and I encourage you to not set this back with unnecessary and burdensome regulations.

I remember when the first extensions were approved and while we - restaurants and residents - were appreciative, I could never quite comprehend the last minute tack on of requiring restaurants to pack all of their tables and chairs into cramped establishments at 11PM. The way I remember it, no one even asked what the purpose of this bizarre controlling rule was for.

I implore you, please, if you have the urge to tack on even more restrictions and regulations, please ask yourselves:

- Why is this rule needed?
- What PROBLEM does it solve?
- Is this a problem that actively exists or just one we think "might, possibly, maybe" happen in a wild worst case scenario?
- If I put myself in the role of business owner, is this burdensome in ways I haven't thought of? (Like, have I envisioned for a single second where I expect businesses to put all this furniture?)

Making rules just for the sake of making rules is not governance, it's obstructionism.

Thank you for your time and please attach this to the agenda.

Sincerely,

Raymond Dussault

--

Raymond Dussault
33 North Ventures, Inc.
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254
Phone: (916) 205-1844

UPPER PIER AVENUE COMMITTEE

Final Report



Hermosa Beach, California

March 25, 2008

UPPER PIER AVENUE COMMITTEE

Final Report

I. Introduction

In June 2006, work crews from the Hermosa Beach Public Works Department began the trial process of re-striping Pier Avenue from four lanes to two. The Community's response to the trial was vocal and immediate. Letters and phone calls poured into the City and almost every one, and whether favoring the changes or railing against them, all invariably asked the same question - *Why is the City doing this?*

The simple answer is that monies were available to improve and fix long-standing drainage and safety issues that plagued Pier Avenue, and to their credit, our Planning Department saw an opportunity to improve Pier Avenue and looked to the City's R/UDAT Implementation Plan (1994) for guidance on how best to proceed. The Implementation Plan under "Street Section Improvements" states at Page II-23: "Convert 2 lanes of traffic each way to 1 lane of traffic each way. Transition to be made west of green belt." And that's what the Public Works Department did.

This incident highlighted a problem that has the potential to change Hermosa Beach into someplace other than the seaside village we know and love. The striping issue demonstrated that Hermosa Beach does not have a well-articulated vision of the future for Upper Pier Avenue. But this problem is nothing new – the October 1992 R/UDAT report stated one of the primary reasons for engaging in the R/UDAT process was that "Hermosa Beach desperately needs to formulate a shared vision of its future."

Stated simply, the striping issue illustrated there was a planning gap for the development

Pier Avenue, a focal point through the generations



Present Day Community Center, formerly a Public School



of Upper Pier Avenue left after the R/UDAT planning process ended in the early 1990s. In order to bridge this gap, the City Council commissioned the Upper Pier Avenue Committee (“UPAC”) to examine the entire ecosystem on Upper Pier Avenue. The Council asked UPAC to analyze alternatives and build community-consensus about the future development of Upper Pier Avenue.

The UPAC brought the Community into direct contact with the City’s decision-makers and the professional staff. Throughout the process, residents had the opportunity to express their desires and concerns about the future of Upper Pier. Towards this end, the Committee conducted two separate “Town Hall” meetings, both of which were standing-room-only events. The UPAC surveyed and interviewed businesses on Upper Pier, as well as the property owners, to solicit their input and understand their concerns.

The UPAC gathered the input from the community, professional staff, and other experts and analyzed the available alternatives. The Committee understands that there will always be conflicts and disagreements among residents, businesses, and City Officials, but the Committee worked very hard to find common ground between the various interested groups and set a course of forward action for the City.

One final word about this report - this is an Executive Summary of the process UPAC engaged in to develop its recommendations for Upper Pier Avenue. This report is intended to highlight the Committee’s “big picture” recommendations and is not designed to recount the minute details of the Committee’s analysis. More detailed information can be found in the assembled minutes and sub-committee reports.

II. UPAC Mission

The City Council commissioned the UPAC to investigate the entire ecosystem of Upper Pier and recommend guidelines for its future development.

The Committee was also guided by the Hermosa Beach General Plan, which states its goal:

“Protect and maintain the small town beach community atmosphere of Hermosa Beach.”

From this guidance, UPAC determined its Mission Statement to be:

“To develop the vision for a Specific Planning Area on Upper Pier Avenue based on research, consultation with design and planning professionals, and community input.”

Based on these guiding principles, the UPAC engaged in a comprehensive, data-based analysis of Upper Pier Avenue. In the end, the recommendations in this report reflect the consensus of the Committee based on Community input and preferences.

III. Organization

The Council designated two City Council members (Kit Bobko & Pete Tucker), two Planning Commissioners (Pete Hoffman & Ron Pizer), and two Public Works Commissioners (Dan Marinelli & Janice Brittain) to serve on the UPAC.

At its first organizational meeting, the six standing UPAC members voted increase the Committee's membership to eleven. Twenty-seven members of the public applied for selection. At its February 2007 meeting the Committee elected Ken Klade, Larry Peha, Dean Nota, Kim MacMullan and Jerry Gross to join the UPAC.

All members of the Committee, both elected and nominated, had equal votes on all matters. Every member of the Committee participated on at least one Sub-Committee.

IV. Methodology

From the outset, UPAC resolved to base its recommendations on analysis and data as opposed to opinions and supposition. The Committee made a concerted effort to reach consensus among its members, and to solicit as much community input as possible.

In order to accomplish this, the Committee conducted a 6-week survey of residents and visitors to Upper Pier Avenue in June-July 2007. There were a total of 571 responses to the survey, of which 479 were from Hermosa Beach residents. (405 surveys were completed on-line, 74 on paper.) The Alliance Consulting Group and CIDR Systems compiled and analyzed the collected data and presented their findings to the Committee on August 1, 2007.

The survey revealed that an overwhelming number of respondents favored development of an Upper Pier streetscape project, with new landscaping, textured sidewalks, improved signage, *etc.* Residents also favored widening the sidewalks, and corresponding improvement of the pedestrian-friendly atmosphere on Upper Pier. Nearly three-quarters of residents supported mixed-use development on Upper Pier.

The Committee also met with business owners on Upper Pier in two workshops in October 2007 to gather their feedback and input.

V. Analysis

The Committee determined the best, most efficient way to analyze the issues involved with Upper Pier Avenue would be to divide the project into four sub-committees: (1) traffic, circulation & parking; (2) urban design and streetscape; (3) land use and zoning, and; (4) economic development.

A. Traffic, Circulation & Parking

City Councilman Peter Tucker, Public Works Commissioners Dan Marinelli and Janice Brittain, and Mr. Jerry Gross comprised the Traffic, Circulation & Parking sub-committee ("Traffic Sub-committee").

The Traffic Sub-committee tackled perhaps the most highly visible, and potentially divisive, aspect of the Upper Pier project. In fact, it was the City's decision to re-stripe Upper Pier Avenue from four lanes to two that was one of the chief reasons the City Council decided to form the UPAC in the first place.

Pier Avenue is the main east-west arterial in downtown Hermosa Beach, with the average daily traffic counts ranging from 11,000 to as high as 19,000 vehicles per day. During peak load hours, there are approximately 2,000 vehicle trips on Pier Avenue. The Traffic Sub-committee found that reducing the Pier Avenue to only one lane in each direction (i.e., two-lanes) would intensify delays during the street's peak-use periods.

The survey and feedback the UPAC gathered revealed that Hermosa residents prefer a four-lane configuration on Upper Pier Avenue. Many residents expressed the opinion that Upper Pier Avenue was the major thoroughfare through the City, and it was important to maintain traffic flow on it during peak use times. Residents also felt that reducing Pier Avenue to two lanes would cause unnecessary congestion during peak use times with the unwanted side-effect of forcing traffic onto neighboring residential streets.

Residents and businesses alike also expressed a desire for increased parking options on Upper Pier Avenue. The Traffic Sub-committee's proposal results in no net-loss of parking on Pier Avenue.



The Traffic Sub-committee also took into consideration the residents' express desire for a beautification (streetscape) program on Upper Pier, and the express preference for widening of the sidewalks.

Based on these considerations, the Traffic Sub-committee made the following recommendations to the UPAC, which the full Committee adopted. The recommendations are as follows:

- Implement streetscape program for Upper Pier Avenue with pedestrian safety a priority
- Maintain 4-lane configuration
- Widen sidewalks to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment on Upper Pier Avenue (from existing 10 feet to approximately 14 feet)
- Provide landscaped median island
- Maintain diagonal parking on north side of Pier Avenue from Valley Drive to Manhattan Avenue
- Convert diagonal parking to parallel parking on south side of Pier Avenue from Valley Drive to Manhattan Avenue
- Reconfigure pedestrian crossings on Pier Avenue with "bulbs" to create pedestrian refuges and enhance safe pedestrian crossing
- Create new "green space" at north and south sides of Manhattan Avenue where it intersects with Pier Avenue
- Maintain diagonal parking on both sides of Pier Avenue from Manhattan Avenue to Hermosa Avenue
- Create an eastbound "transition" lane from Hermosa Avenue to Pier Avenue
- Implement a "scramble" pedestrian crossing at Pier Avenue and Hermosa Avenue.
- Utilize multi-space parking meters on Upper Pier Avenue

The Traffic Sub-committee made the following future recommendations for the City Council to consider:

- Explore existing opportunities for alternative parking (i.e., leased lots, valet services, shuttle services, *etc.*) In particular, valet parking for restaurants along Upper Pier Avenue on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights
- Consider changing 16 spaces on the east side of City Hall to 2-hour meters during the City's non-business hours
- Explore adding 15 spaces to Oak Street (by leasing or purchasing an easement from Marineland Mobile Home Park)
- Consider expansion of the existing parking lot on 14th Street (adding potentially 53 additional spaces to the City's parking inventory)
- Consider issuing special "mirror hanger" permits to employees at the downtown area businesses that would allow them to park away from the downtown area and congested neighborhoods. This would potentially free almost 300 spaces for residential use
- Explore construction of a pedestrian overpass and/or gateway over the greenbelt where it crosses Pier Avenue.

B. Urban Design and Streetscape

The two professional architects on the Committee, Dean Nota and Larry Peha comprised the UPAC's Urban Design and Streetscape Sub-committee ("Urban Design Sub-committee").

Upper Pier Avenue is, expectedly, dominated by the street that is wider than the Pacific Coast Highway. The right-of-way on Upper Pier Avenue is 10-feet wider than the State Highway. The street has traditionally been a thoroughfare for residents traveling west from PCH, and alternatively as an arterial channeling commuters from the residential neighborhoods back to the highway.

Currently, Upper Pier has sporadic, poorly coordinated landscaping and single-story buildings, which create a low, horizontal proportion to the street. The street lacks pedestrian amenities and scale, and subsequently suffers from weak pedestrian activity on a day-to-day basis. Long crosswalks and poor signage also plague upper Pier Avenue. Indeed, a common refrain from residents is that they feel "unsafe" crossing Upper Pier Avenue, especially with small children or pets.

And although some of these issues are a direct result of the large scale of Pier Avenue, that same scale presents unique opportunity for the development and design of the street. For example, one of the Committee's main goals was to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment on Upper Pier Avenue without reducing the number of traffic lanes. Fortunately, the width of the street allows for this.

The Urban Design Sub-committee recommended that the expansive views from Upper Pier Avenue down to Pier Plaza should be maintained, along with the existing continuity of retail along the bend of Pier Avenue to Hermosa Avenue. The Sub-committee identified the large asphalt space at Pier Avenue and Hermosa as a place where the pedestrian experience (and safety!) would be enhanced by a reduction in the scale of the crosswalk.

Additionally, the Sub-committee recognized an opportunity to bring consistency to the landscaping and design from Hermosa Avenue to PCH, and to promote continuity in the urban design along the entire length of the street.

The Urban Design Sub-committee also suggested that Upper Pier Avenue not be designed primarily to accommodate automobiles, but rather as a shared use between automobiles and pedestrians.

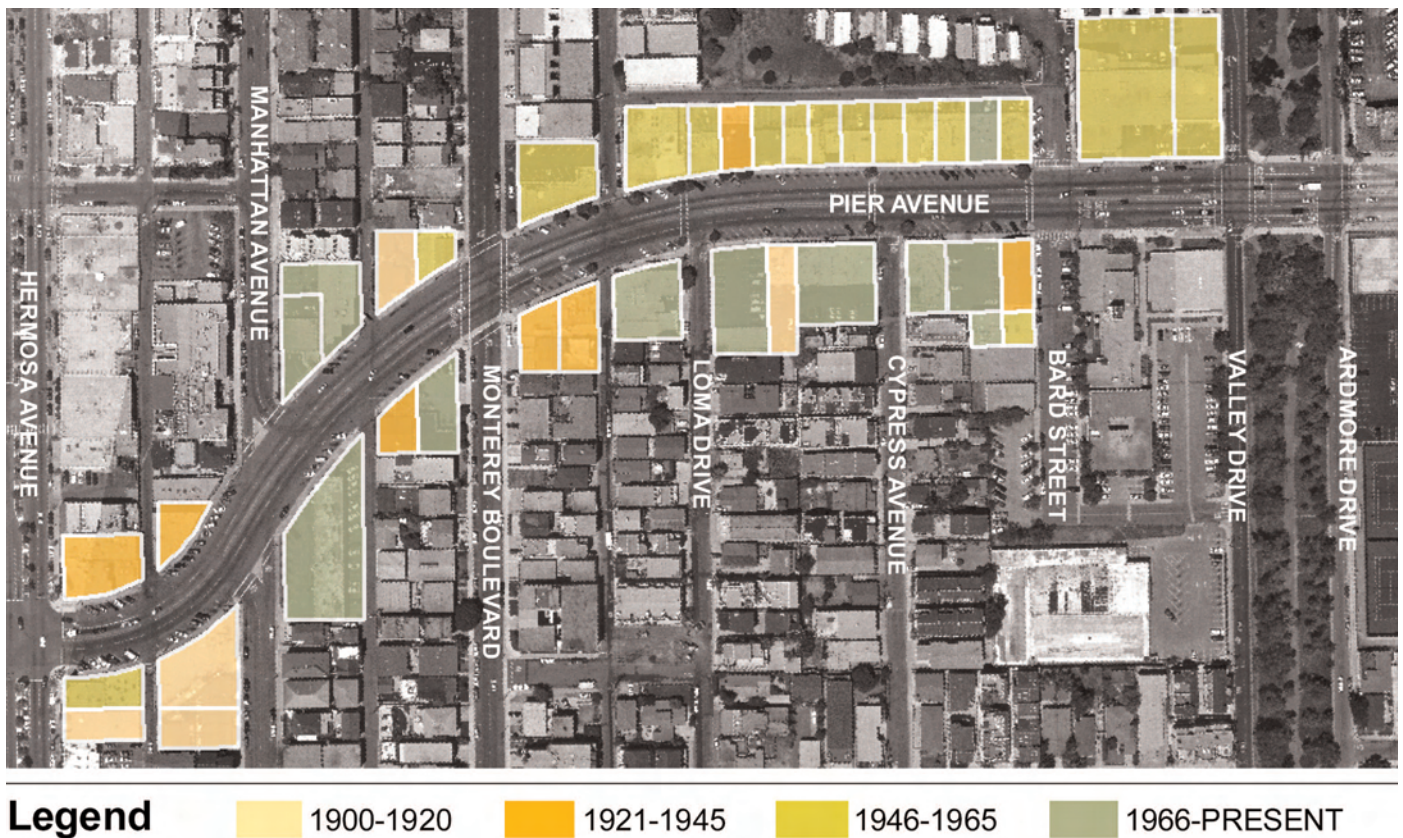
Finally, the Urban Design Sub-committee recommended the City look for ways to preserve historic buildings along Upper Pier Avenue to maintain the street's unique "Hermosa feel."

C. Land Use and Zoning

City Councilman Kit Bobko, Planning Commissioner Pete Hoffman, and architects Dean Nota and Larry Peha comprised the Land Use and Zoning Sub-committee ("Land Use Sub-committee"). This sub-committee's examined the land uses and zoning requirements for the development of Upper Pier Avenue.

Two considerations guided the Land Use Sub-committee's analysis. First, the sub-committee took into consideration the location of Upper Pier Avenue in relation to the rest of Hermosa Beach.¹ Upper Pier Avenue is the "heart" of Hermosa Beach, and it is located in one of the most densely populated cities in Southern California. This consideration led the Sub-committee away from recommendations that would increase the density and traffic on Upper Pier Avenue. Instead, the Sub-committee's recommendations further the idea of a small town "village center." For example, the Sub-committee shied away from mixed-use residential uses on Upper Pier Avenue that would increase traffic and residential density in favor of mixed-use commercial uses that would increase pedestrian traffic on the street.

UPPER PIER AVENUE — YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT



The second consideration was based on guidance from the UPAC Mission Statement and the City's General Plan – to promote a pedestrian-friendly "village center" for Hermosa Beach. Making Upper Pier Avenue more pedestrian-friendly is not a mysterious process; people will naturally walk more if useful destinations are close to their homes, and the environment is safe, interesting and pleasant. The Sub-committee (and Committee at-large) believes a diverse mix of uses and useful destinations at the center of our community would facilitate a more walkable environment.

¹ All of the properties fronting Upper Pier Avenue are zoned C-2 ("Neighborhood Commercial"). According to the Hermosa Beach Zoning Ordinance, C-2 is zoned "to provide opportunities for a limited range of office, retail, and service commercial uses specifically appropriate for the sale and character of the downtown – a resident and visitor serving pedestrian oriented shopping/entertainment district." HBMC §17.26.020 B (2).

UPPER PIER AVENUE – ZONING DESIGNATIONS



With these considerations in mind, the Sub-committee looked for ways to promote a coherent “village center” retail sector serving local residents and visitors, and arrived at the following recommendations:

- Analyze the C-2 (“Downtown Commercial Zone”) permitted use list and related sign ordinances in the context of promoting pedestrian-friendly, resident-serving, day time uses consistent with the existing zone and General Plan designation
- Encourage commercial mixed-use with service-type industries on the second floor and general commercial/retail on the ground floor
- Retain the 30-foot height limit (from existing grade), with a strong preference towards 2 stories
- Improve the visual aesthetics by limiting franchise architecture, promoting consistent streetscaping, minimizing bulk, scale, and massing of any new buildings on the street
- Analyze existing parking requirements relevant to dis/incentives for redevelopment and/or redesign of existing buildings
- Insure Conditional Use Permit (“CUP”) policies on Upper Pier Avenue are consistent with community oriented, resident serving uses – including standards for hours of operation and outdoor dining
- Provide incentives for retention, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of historic buildings

- Encourage “permeable” building facades to facilitate pedestrian-friendly uses/atmosphere on the street
- Analyze impact of proposed redevelopment of Civic & Community Center sites and Pier Avenue frontages to insure consistency with UPAC design and development standards.

D. Economic Development

Two local Businessmen Ken Klade (Klade Gallery) and Jerry Gross (Branded Mortgage) and Planning Commissioner Ron Pizer comprised the Economic Development Sub-committee.

The Economic Development Sub-committee started its analysis by conferring with local business owners to understand their interests and concerns regarding UPAC. The Sub-committee met with Upper Pier business owners twice to gather their input and insure their inclusion in the process.

The Sub-committee also met with the property owners to gather their input on the UPAC.

Additionally, the Sub-committee and UPAC utilized the previous report (2002) by the Economic Development Committee to inform their analysis of the economic issues involved with Upper Pier Avenue.

Again, with an eye towards developing a pedestrian-friendly “village center” on Upper Pier Avenue, the Sub-committee made the following recommendations:

- Create an Economic Development Commission (“EDC”) to address commercialism on Upper Pier Avenue, PCH, and other areas of the City
- Explore the use of professional consultants to assist the EDC in attracting “village friendly” businesses to Hermosa Beach
- Create incentives for second floor professional services to create more opportunities for ground floor, pedestrian-friendly retail uses

Additionally, one of the main concerns both the business owners and the property owners voiced during their meetings with the Sub-committee regarded “down-time” they would incur during construction on Upper Pier Avenue. The Sub-committee and City Staff agreed to coordinate with the businesses on Upper Pier to mitigate any negative effects of construction, and to provide a point-of-contact at the City who would be available to businesses during the construction phase.

VI. Next Steps

The recommendations set forth in this Final Report represent more than a year of analysis, discussion and compromise by the UPAC. The Committee went to great lengths to gather and synthesize data from residents, businesses, property owners, and staff.

With all of the above-considerations in mind, UPAC respectfully makes the following recommendations to the City Council:

1. Approve the UPAC's Traffic, Parking and Circulation recommendations.
 - a.) Authorize the Public Works Director to solicit Requests for Proposals to select design consultants to prepare plans, specifications, and cost estimates for all street and landscaping improvements. (Note: The Committee recommends utilizing architects Dean Nota and Larry Peha to serve on the Selection Committee along with Public Works Staff.)
 - b.) Direct the Public Works Commission to provide guidance in developing streetscape/public facilities commensurate with the recommendations set forth in the UPAC Final Report.
 - c.) Direct Staff to report to Council within 180-days following the award of the design contract with preliminary plans, cost estimates, and design recommendations.
2. Authorize the Director of Public Works to implement the "scramble" cross walk at the intersection of Pier Avenue and Hermosa Avenue.
3. Refer to the Planning Commission the UPAC report with guidance to develop zoning and parking guidelines to facilitate the goals articulated in UPAC's Final Report. (Final report regarding changes to the zoning code, parking, *etc.*, to the City Council due within 9 months of City Council approval.)
4. Create an Economic Development Commission.
5. Maintain the UPAC as an advisory / *ad hoc* committee as required.

#