



City Council Economic Development Subcommittee

MINUTES (DRAFT)

Conference Room A

City Hall, 501 Primrose Road – Burlingame, California
Wednesday, July 29, 2020 – 8:30 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Vice Mayor Ann O'Brien Keighran, Councilmember Ricardo Ortiz

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: City Manager (CM) Lisa Goldman, Community Development Director (CDD) Kevin Gardiner, Economic Development Specialist (EDS) Joseph Sanfilippo, Public Works Director (PWD) Syed Murtuza, Senior Civil Engineer (SCE) Andy Wong, Streets, Storm Drains and Sewers Division Manager (SDSDM) Michael Heathcote, Deputy Director of Public Works Operations (DDPWO) Rob Mallick, Parks and Recreation Director (PRD) Margaret Glomstad, Finance Director (FD) Carol Augustine

Members of the Public Present: John Kevranian (President of Broadway Business Improvement District), Georgette Naylor (President of Burlingame Chamber of Commerce), Jenny Keleher (President of the Downtown Burlingame Business Improvement District), Terry Horn (Henry Horn & Sons), Sam Abassi

READ AND APPROVE MINUTES FROM JULY 1 MEETING

Approved.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Review of Street Closures on Broadway and Burlingame Avenue

PWD Murtuza introduced the topic, starting with Broadway. He noted the two-week pilot went particularly well, despite some early complaints about signage. Some restaurants were taking over the fire lane, and they have now been informed that this is not allowed. There were no concerns with traffic and no current complaints from residents.

John Kevranian (President of Broadway BID) commended the City for the initiative and noted that restaurants are grateful. He noted that some restaurants have difficulties accommodating customers due to limited square footage of store frontages and inquired whether restaurants could expand their seating into adjacent areas not being used by retailers. Mask compliance is high, and he noted that customers visiting Broadway are mainly Burlingame residents, whereas Burlingame Avenue has a more regional draw.

PWD Murtuza mentioned that restaurants are allowed to encroach into other store frontages as long as there is written permission that can be sent to the City for enforcement.

Vice Mayor O'Brien noted that face masks are much better on Broadway and highlighted the A-frames

in particular (which she hopes can be implemented on Burlingame Avenue); CM Goldman noted that Library staff created the signs, and Public Works staff have already placed the signs at Burlingame Avenue. She mentioned that some restaurants did not have tables six feet apart, but CM Goldman noted that the City does not have the required staff to police the social distancing measures. There is a hope that businesses will hold more self-accountability for complying with health mandates. CM Goldman and Vice Mayor O'Brien requested that the BIDs distribute additional messaging to their membership to stress the mandates to prevent San Mateo County entering the State's COVID-19 watchlist.

Councilmember Ortiz questioned traffic circulation on Broadway for safety concerns. SCE Wong noted that drivers are generally courteous to each other on the side streets. Councilmember Ortiz mentioned that complaints on Broadway are much fewer, and he is particularly concerned about social distancing and mask enforcement on Burlingame Avenue. He mentioned preliminary support for parklets on Burlingame Avenue, rather than the full street closure, to help discourage a festive atmosphere.

CM Goldman noted that some retailers are voicing great concern over lost business. Jenny Kelleher (President of DBID) introduced the results of a survey that the DBID had distributed. She mentioned that the majority of responses are in favor of an extension of the closure, but highlighted great concern over face coverings and social distancing. The vast majority of retailers have reported being negatively affected, and the majority of restaurants have reported being positively affected.

Mr. Kevranian noted that Broadway retailers are enjoying the benefits of the street staying open until Saturday at 4 p.m., and there were fewer complaints from businesses. Ms. Kelleher noted that many comments requested the street to remain open on Fridays, or to close in the afternoon.

CM Goldman noted that one restaurant was interested in a more permanent parklet with nicer amenities, which Ms. Kelleher supports as well. PWD Murtuza noted that Burlingame Avenue can have outdoor dining without a closure due to the wider sidewalks, and parklets can prevent concerns with restaurants encroaching into others' storefronts. He mentioned that additional rental parklet barriers are not currently available, so fulfilling requests is difficult even now (even before considering parklets for Burlingame Avenue).

PWD Murtuza noted that parklets could be combined to form a contiguous parklet for multiple restaurants. SDSDM Heathcote estimated that about 20 parklets can be created with the amount of barriers remaining in stock. The City is currently renting parklet barriers, but there is an option to purchase the barriers at a higher price point (but lower overall since it is a one-time cost) with a quicker turnaround. PWD Murtuza voiced support for hydro-filled barriers only, and mentioned that restaurants are welcome to do their own parklets, but they must be evaluated properly for safety.

CM Goldman supported purchasing barriers for the remaining parklets, particularly for the shorter lead time to implementation. She noted that the item must be brought to the full Council on August 17. Vice Mayor O'Brien questioned where the city has space to store the barriers, and PWD Murtuza noted there is some space in their park storage yard. Once the barriers are no longer needed, staff will need to evaluate whether the barriers can be re-sold given the lack of storage space.

Councilmember Ortiz recommended bringing an item to the City Council on August 17 to stop the closure of Burlingame Avenue. CM Goldman noted that a modification to close the Avenue starting on Saturday morning, rather than Friday morning, through Sunday is possible. Vice Mayor O'Brien agreed and hoped that removing Fridays will send a message for people to follow regulations.

Terry Horn questioned the encroachment permit requirements for expanding into another storefront's area. PWD Murtuza noted that any applicable encroachment permits are modified to denote the amendment. Mr. Horn wondered if masks can be manually distributed to those not in compliance, but CM Goldman mentioned a general concern over conflicts that may result from this.

The Broadway closure will continue unmodified for now, but the Burlingame Avenue closure modification to parklets will be discussed at the City Council meeting on August 17. Councilmember Ortiz requested that Mr. Kevranian notify the Broadway BID members that the City is pleased with the safety compliance on Broadway, though he cautioned that the closure can change if compliance does not continue.

PWD Murtuza voiced concern over a dueling Broadway closure promoting a festive atmosphere and parklets on Burlingame Avenue, and Vice Mayor O'Brien theorized that the issue is particularly sensitive because San Mateo County is one of the only local counties not on the State's watchlist.

Discussion of Retail Establishment Encroachments into the Public Right-of-Way

EDS Sanfilippo introduced the topic, noting that some retailers are requesting encroachments into the street for pop-up tents. PWD Murtuza noted that the tents cause crowding, and are also a safety concern.

Vice Mayor O'Brien noted that indoor retailers are allowed to operate. Councilmember Ortiz agreed, particularly given the current atmosphere on Burlingame Avenue, which is having difficulties even with the current social distancing guidelines.

Future Agenda Topics

The August 12 meeting will revisit the reviews of both the Broadway and Burlingame Avenue closures in anticipation of the August 17 City Council meeting.

Miscellaneous Discussion

All discussion was related to the agenda items.

Action Items

- Mallick and Heathcote will modify the closure either this weekend or next. Engineering technicians from Public Works will try to notify restaurants about changes to the closure, if staff time allows. A discussion of the full parklet option for Burlingame Avenue will go to City Council on Aug 17.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

- August 12, 2020 - Revisit of Broadway and Burlingame Avenue closures

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Sanfilippo
Economic Development Specialist