



*Richard
Gutmann
gave comments
during public
comment*

Date: March 12, 1993

To: Gerhardt H. Felgemaker, Environmental Planning Officer

From: Richard I. Backus, City Traffic Engineer *RIB*

Subject: METRO BLUE LINE WARDLOW ROAD STATION RELOCATION - INITIAL STUDY/NEGATIVE DECLARATION

The Traffic Engineering Division has reviewed subject document and has the following comments:

- o Although we are very much in favor of the proposed station relocation it is believed that the introduction of 500 park-and-ride spaces would have a significant impact on traffic operation at the intersection of Pacific Place and Wardlow Road during both the a.m. and p.m. peak periods. The subject intersection is already operating at an unacceptable level of service (Level E or worse) during the afternoon peak period.

We recommend that in conjunction with the station relocation project, a detailed analysis of the traffic operational condition at this intersection be performed. Mitigation measures including but not limited to intersection geometric modification and realigning both north and south Metro Blue Line tracks so that the train crossing at Wardlow Road could also be controlled by the existing traffic control signal should be considered and evaluated.

- o The need for modifying the existing southbound off-ramp from southbound 405 Freeway to Pacific Place should be examined since the existing geometrics permit right-turn movements only. The proposed new station location could potentially generate demand for left-turn movements at this off-ramp terminus.

RIB:JC:mm
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Planning and Building Dept.
Community Planning

DELI OWNER PUTS BLAME ON BLUE LINE

Press-Telegram (Long Beach, CA) - Thursday, November 7, 1991

Author: Larry Lynch / Staff Writer

It was 2 a.m. Wednesday when Divina Buhay awoke to a pattering sound on the outside of her tent.

Nowhere evident was the reason she was spread out on the sidewalk on the northwest corner of East Wardlow Road and Pacific Place, 11 hours into a hunger strike.

Wardlow Road was empty.

The half-mile line of cars that was backed up at 5 p.m. behind the Blue Line's crossing barriers had long since cleared.

But when Buhay, 48, opened the tent flap to look outside, her immediate problem was an automatic sprinkler soaking the landscaping in front of the small shopping center where her family operates a delicatessen. Buhay was getting as wet as the plants.

By Wednesday afternoon she could laugh at the memory.

She had called off her hunger strike at noon, convinced that Los Angeles County Transportation Commission officials were finally listening to her.

"They have asked me to wait until after I meet with them next Wednesday," she explained.

With the support of a group of nearby residents who showed up for the start of her strike, Buhay is trying to persuade county officials to interrupt the speeding light rail cars at Wardlow Road long enough for the intersection's traffic lights to work normally. Now, the passing trains trip the lights, sometimes backing up traffic for blocks, making access to the shopping center difficult.

And that's forcing her into bankruptcy, Buhay says.

"Let me show you how bad it is," she sighed Wednesday, as she spread out two documents on a table in the deli and sipped a cup of soup, her first food since 3 p.m. Tuesday.

The documents were preliminary eviction notices from her landlord seeking \$15,446.50 in back rent for three businesses she was operating in the small shopping center - video store, dry cleaner and delicatessen.

She has given up two of those businesses but is trying to save the delicatessen.

Gus Hein, a spokesman for the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, says Buhay's problem is more the economy than the traffic.

Meng Kao, 21, who runs a doughnut shop in the center, agrees.

"Business is off 10 percent to 15 percent everywhere," he says. "Everybody who comes in here

says that."

Kao says he would like some more short-term parking at the corner.

Siding with Buhay, however, is Mary Vallier, who runs the small market in the center. She claims her business is "off by half" because of the congestion.

Eight District Councilman Jeffrey Kellogg, who represents the neighborhood on the Long Beach City Council, supports Buhay's position for a different reason.

"I have heard from a lot of my constituents that they would like to see the trains slow down there, mostly because of the noise," Kellogg said.

Caption: Hunger striker Divina Buhay blames the Blue Line, in background, for ruining her Long Beach business.

Press-Telegram photo / Juanito Holandez

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BLUE LINE LIGHT RAIL MAKING BUSINESS LIGHT, OWNERS BLUE

Press-Telegram (Long Beach, CA) - Tuesday, September 24, 1991

When the Blue Line light rail service began in July 1990, Divina Buhay thought it might be a small boost to her combination dry cleaning and video rental store in a commercial strip opposite the station at Wardlow Road and Pacific Place .

"With trains arriving about four or five times an hour, a rail line couldn't hurt us and might just bring in a little more business," she said.

Now, 14 months later, more than half of her customers are gone, the money she and her husband borrowed to ride out what they thought was a temporary slump is all gone, and they are planning to close their doors at the end of this month.

The Buhays blame the Blue Line for traffic congestion that put a traffic jam in front of their store that rush-hour customers can't penetrate.

"We had been doing so well here for two years," she said, "and the line opened and it all started to fall apart. First we blamed the Gulf War. Then we blamed the recession. But the war ended,

and we continued to lose customers. I went around and asked other cleaning businesses and video rental stores how they were doing, and they said their business was down 10 to 15 percent.

“Ours was down 50 to 60 percent. Everybody agreed, that's not the recession.”

She disregarded the grumblings of regular customers about how tough it was to get out of the strip's little parking lot because of traffic backed up on Pacific Place . (“Some people don't like change, you know.”)

“Most of our customers live east of here,” she says. “They come off the freeway after work, stop here and then have to get out onto Pacific southbound and cross to the left-turn lane to get onto Wardlow going east.”

That's where the Blue Line train crosses, and that's where the guard gates come down, stopping east-west traffic and turning traffic lights to red, playing havoc with the usual timed sequence and jamming traffic.

Not four to six times an hour, as had been predicted, but as many as 16 times an hour in the late afternoon - 28 times in a two-hour period one day last week.

These observations and her customers' complaints and their signatures on petitions may be proof to the Buhays that the Blue Line is turning their 3-year-old business from boom to bust. But to James D. Wiley, senior manager of real estate for the Blue Line's bosses, the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, it is an illusion.

“The fact that your business is in close proximity to one of the Blue Line stations may cause you to initially believe that the project is responsible for your decline in business,” he wrote to the Buhays in answer to their plea for some kind of relief.

“Many large and small businesses are experiencing declining revenues. Most of these reversals are attributed to a downturn in economic growth within the country and a lack of consumer confidence in the economy.”

(Well, yeah - that and the fact that the customers get stuck in the parking lot when the trains go by.)

It isn't an illusion to Long Beach city Traffic Engineer Dick Backus, whose staff studied the corner and made some signal sequence adjustments. That improved the situation a little bit, says Buhay, but not enough to make the difference. It is, however, as far as Backus can go.

“Although conditions have improved, occasional delays and backups of southbound left-turn and eastbound movements (caused by guard-gate interruptions) are unavoidable,” Backus wrote to Buhay.

The city is on the right track, Buhay says, “but the full solution will come too late for us. There have been tears shed over this, and it could have been avoided with better planning by the Blue Line designers.”

Her solution seems too simple to be workable: Remove the gates and force the Blue Line trains to run with the traffic lights as they do through the city's busy business district.

``Don't get us wrong - we're for progress, high and low tech," she says. ``Life without cars, vacuum cleaners and washing machines is unthinkable, but with better thinking, you can have progress without ruining lives."

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Page: B7

Column: George Robeson

Record Number: 9109240004

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And here is an October 18, 2000, Press Telegram letter to the editor:

Delays

Re: the Sept. 29 editorial, ``The MTA is one of the most (if not the most) inefficient, poorly managed and corrupt bureaucracies in L.A. County." Harsh words, but they accurately describe my experience with the transit authority.

For the past 10 years, I have had to traverse the intersection of Magnolia Avenue and Wardlow Road when leaving my relatives' home. During peak traffic periods, it is common for cars to back up for blocks as MTA Blue Line trains cross Wardlow Road at Pacific Place, one after another.

Residents of the area have sent numerous letters and made many phone calls to the MTA, including Long Beach's member on the MTA board, Jenny Oropeza. But she hasn't returned one call. And nothing has ever happened -- that is, until four weeks ago. No delays and no more fear of a rear-end collision when traffic repeatedly stops for the lowering gates.

It was great! That is, until you think about the high price some people paid for this strike-produced solution to our problem.

J.L. Wagner

Rancho Santa Margarita

April 2, 2013

Dear Council members:

I can't be at tonight's Council meeting, but I wish to express my objection to a new traffic signal at Pacific Place and Wardlow Road. It will only add to an already terrible traffic situation.

I am enclosing a printout from NewsBank of a February 9, 2000, letter to the Editor of mine printed in the Press-Telegram.

As I stated in my now 13-year-old letter, "Traffic there often backs up three blocks to the west, as train after train causes the crossing gates to close." Things have only gotten worse since. I don't understand how you can even consider another traffic signal on this stretch of Wardlow.

I'm also very unhappy that Councilman James Johnson didn't even notify us in Wrigley Heights that this traffic signal was planned.

Sincerely,

Anita Pettigrew
3619 Magnolia Ave.
Long Beach, CA 90806
(562) 427-5843



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BALLOTS

Press-Telegram (Long Beach, CA) - Wednesday, February 9, 2000

Your front page Feb. 7 "'None' vies for ballot" no doubt pleases Alan F. Shugart, pioneer of the floppy disc. After all, it was Shugart who bankrolled the collection of 650,000 signatures to qualify Proposition 23 -- the none of the above (NOTA) ballot option initiative.

However, the initiative does not sit well with political scientist Ann Crigler, who said, "'I think it's a very bad idea." Crigler is director of the Unruh Institute of Politics at the University of Southern California.

Sadly, Crigler talks down to the voter by suggesting Proposition 23 "'none of the above" as a lazy man's protest. Further, she said Shugart's "'NOTA" idea demonstrates that voters need to be educated about the process.

Thus, if the voters need to be educated, then one can conclude Crigler has failed as a political scientist teacher. Besides, it follows that if the voter lacks the necessary education it's a contradiction to say the voter knows which candidate, under the present voting system, is best qualified to be a political leader..

Edward T. Marshall

Los Alamitos

Proposition 25

Don't be duped into thinking Proposition 25 is about real reform. This measure isn't about cleaning up politics, it's about creating a system that gives special advantages to wealthy candidates.

On top of that, it would cost taxpayers \$55 million every year to pay for political ads and political literature. If Proposition 25 was a real finance reform measure, it would attack the problems created by the unlimited amounts of soft money pouring into California's political system. Proposition 25 deserves a No vote.

Patricia Williams

Long Beach

Traffic problems

Maybe local government or the MTA will read this letter and send someone to observe the Blue Line at Wardlow Road in Long Beach during evening rush hour. All other methods of communicating with them have failed.

Traffic there often backs up three blocks to the west, as train after train causes the crossing gates to close.

We know that the city's Director of Public Works got some of our many messages. Our homeowners' association obtained an April 2, 1999 memo from him to the city manager in which the director refers to the traffic problem. And he admits that "' ... traffic volumes cannot be handled adequately during the peak hours when the crossing at Wardlow

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Road has back-to-back interruptions from northbound and southbound light rail trains."

However, he blames the large number of recent complaints on residents' concerns about a proposed development.

Sure they fear the effect of another 100-160 houses just off Wardlow Road and immediately north of the traffic tie-ups. but as far back as 1993, years before the property was even on the market, we informed city government that the Blue Line was causing serious traffic problems.

Did the city listen? No. Later, it even certified an Environmental Impact Report for some unrelated property using a traffic study of the area that had been done in January 1987 -- three and one-half years before the Blue Line began operations!

The present state of the intersection, though, speaks for itself. Now if someone will just listen.

Anita Pettigrew

Long Beach

John Rocker

I guess baseball commissioner Bud Selig has never heard of the First Amendment. Otherwise he would not have fined and suspended Atlanta Braves pitcher John Rocker for remarks he made to a reporter for Sports Illustrated.

I don't ever remember Selig censuring Roseanne Barr for destroying the national anthem at a San Diego Padres baseball game, which was much more of an insult.

John Rocker has apologized for his behavior and that should be the end of it. Howard Stern has said worse things every week on his weekly television show and yet everyone takes it for granted that Stern can say anything he likes and get away with it. Jay Leno has consistently demeaned the president of the United States on his "Tonight Show" and yet his superiors continue to allow him to do so. I cannot see any difference between Rocker, Stern or Leno and I think Bud Selig has more than exceeded his authority by his treatment of John Rocker.

Peter John Moore

Long Beach

Violent athletes

Sports have suddenly become more dangerous off the field than on the field. With the recent car accident death of Bobby Phillips and fatal car accident injury to Derrick Thomas, and the murder arrests of Ray Lewis and Rae Carruth and the bizarre Leon Smith crime spree, perhaps more mandatory anger management and pre-marital counseling and driver safety training is needed, especially for professional athletes who display warning signals. Just because an athlete makes a lot of money does not necessarily mean he is mentally or emotionally sound or safety conscious.

Kenneth L. Zimmerman

Huntington Beach

Comparisons

After listening to George W. Bush for the past few weeks, I have finally figured out why President Bush thought Dan Quayle was a genius: it was "a comparison thing."

Judy Morioka

Long Beach

Edition: AM

Section: EDITORIAL

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Column: Letters

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April 2, 2013

Re: New traffic signal at Pacific Ave

Councilmembers:

I would like to invite you to turn left from Magnolia Ave onto Wardlow Road (coming south on Magnolia Ave from the Wrigley Heights neighborhood) during the heaviest traffic hours of the work week and enjoy the possibility of not being able to get onto east bound Warlow Road for a couple of signals. The three east bound lanes at Pacific Place soon turn into two lanes creating more fun for the drivers that use this route any part of the day.

How fast can your car get off the line (from a new signal at Pacific Ave)? Three lanes into two. Might create a TV reality show.

I would bet even money that there will exist a heavier traffic problem for those on Warlow Road (going both east and west bound on Wardlow Road) if there was a signal placed at Warlow Road and Pacific Ave.

I think James Johnson believes that the City of Long Beach is comprised of District 07 only and that his (James) area of Bixby Knolls comprises the entirety of District 07. Is James ready to pay off all the collision damage to vehicles (and pedestrians) if the signal is put in? It would seem only fair since it is his pet project at the moment.

Kendall Rainwater

612 West 37th Street
426-0883