



**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES**

**Friday, November 16, 2007
1:00 p.m.**

**701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025
Menlo Park City Council Chambers**

ROLL CALL – Fergusson, Cohen, Boyle, Cline, Robinson

Staff present: City Manager Rojas, City Attorney McClure, Transportation Manager Taylor.

A. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

B. SPECIAL BUSINESS

1. **Reconsideration of the approval of a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to submit a joint application with San Mateo County and the Town of Atherton for a Safe Routes to School Grant for the improvement of pedestrian and bicycle safety for Safe Routes to Laurel School, and consider action to authorize the Laurel Safe Routes to School Council Subcommittee to continue work on determining a process and potential solution for improving pedestrian and bicycling safety on Coleman Avenue in unincorporated San Mateo County. ([Staff Report #07-197](#))**

Transportation Manager Chip Taylor reported that at the Council meeting of November 6, 2007 the Council directed staff to submit a grant application for the Laurel School Safe Routes to School project, including Coleman Avenue. He stated that at this meeting the Council also formed a subcommittee of Mayor Fergusson and Councilmember Robinson to work with the other jurisdictions to build consensus for the project and inclusion of Coleman Avenue in the plan. Mr. Taylor informed the Council that the subcommittee met with members of the Board of Supervisors, members of the Atherton Town Council, and their staff as well as City staff, and as a result the subcommittee has formulated the following recommendations:

1. Submit a grant application to the State based on the November 6, 2007 staff report, including only those proposed improvements outlined in the staff report and not including any improvements for Coleman Avenue.
2. Request the County of San Mateo and the Town of Atherton formally support the grant application as co-applicants and seek letters of support for the application from the Menlo Park City School District and Sequoia Union High School District.
3. Authorize the Laurel Safe Routes to School Council Subcommittee of Mayor Fergusson and Councilmember Robinson to continue working with residents, staff and neighboring jurisdictions in developing a plan for improving the safety of Coleman Avenue.

Mayor Fergusson and Councilmember Robinson reviewed their work as a subcommittee and their conclusion that there is not a plan for Coleman Avenue that has sufficient support among the various parties, and that submitting a grant application with the inclusion of Coleman Avenue would most likely result in grant application that would not be successful.

Mayor Fergusson stated that as a result of the subcommittee's meetings they were able to get the commitment from Supervisor Gordon to work with others toward a successful conclusion. She noted that she recently received two petitions in support of improvements to Coleman Avenue and provided these to the City Clerk.

Councilmember Robinson commented that improvements that would be acceptable to the residents of Coleman Avenue might not meet the criteria of this specific grant, and the Council and others may need to find other solutions for this specific area.

Members of the public commented as follows:

Mark Costa stated that Coleman Avenue has many gravel filled potholes and many drivers speed on this road. He said the public right-of-way for Coleman is suppose to be 60 feet, but that many of the residents have planted trees and other structures in the right-of-way. Mr. Costa said that this road should have a paved bike path and a safe path for children walking to school.

Lynn Gorodsky, a Coleman Avenue resident, responded that she has never planted outside her gate, but that there is a 200 year old heritage oak tree on her property. She stated that in her point of view the City is trying to fix a problem that does not exist. She commented that the quality of her neighborhood is important to her, as is the safety of children. She said she is unaware of any traffic incidents involving pedestrians or bicyclists and that her neighbors are very careful and aware of this type of traffic. Ms. Gorodsky pointed out that the California Highway Patrol is against young children bicycling to school and that it is her understanding that Laurel School has a policy against children bicycling to school.

Robert Cronin said that he does not understand the objections of Coleman Avenue residents to improving the road. He agreed that because there is so much controversy regarding Coleman Avenue, it should be left out of this grant application and efforts need to be made to work on a resolution for this area. Mr. Cronin supported children bicycling to school and for parents walking their children to school. He stated that if there are more children walking and bicycling to school, the more attention and consideration this matter will get.

Vice Mayor Cohen pointed out that removal of Coleman Avenue from the grant application adversely impacts Menlo Park residents. He stated that he is not sure he can support a motion that doesn't include Coleman Avenue. He questioned whether turning Coleman Avenue into a one-way street would temporarily solve the problem.

Transportation Manager Taylor explained there has not been community support for this, and that it would most likely require a traffic study and possibly an EIR.

Councilmember Robinson reminded the Council that at the meeting of November 6, 2007 the consultant recommended that Coleman Avenue not be included in the grant

application unless there was support for this from the residents, which there is not. He stated that none of the options that have been discussed have reached a point at which there is agreement to move forward. He said the goal now is to hold additional meetings and to explore ideas and options to solve this problem.

Councilmember Boyle suggested: 1) any solution for Coleman Avenue should not significantly impact other neighborhoods; 2) the City should work toward having other jurisdictions paying their fair share for the Safe Routes to School plan; and 3) one idea that might be considered as an alternative would be to come down Coleman from Willow, turn right on Berkeley and then go up to Colby.

Councilmember Cline pointed out that there are many challenges that will need to be addressed and hoped that the Board of Supervisors will be part of the effort to resolve this.

Action: Moved, seconded (Cline/Fergusson) and carried unanimously to rescind Resolution No. 5768 and adopt Resolution No. 5769 authorizing the City Manager to submit a joint application with San Mateo County and the Town of Atherton for a Safe Routes to School grant for the improvement of pedestrian and bicycle safety for Safe Routes to Laurel School and authorizing the Council Subcommittee to continue to work on determining a process and potential solution for improving pedestrian and bicycle safety on Coleman Avenue.

C. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:06 p.m.

Margaret S. Roberts, MMC – City Clerk for
Sherry Kelly, Interim City Clerk