



PACIFIC PALISADES COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Statement from PPCC Chair Regarding Accident on Sunset on Sunday 4/2/17

The tragic accident on Sunset Boulevard and Chautauqua on Sunday afternoon in Pacific Palisades has impacted our community causing deep concern. With one fatality and the involvement of a teen driver, this terrible incident has hit close to our hearts and left many looking for answers.

At the core of the matter is the issue of bikers riding through our town, on their way to leisure rides across Los Angeles, in pursuit of a long-standing hobby. Our community has addressed the concerns of residents multiple times by bringing the police and the Council District into the conversation. Our community's liaison to CPAB (Community Police Advisory Board) has ridden along with an LAPD task force to see just what kind of enforcement is being done. He was able to observe the scrupulous efforts of LAPD to mitigate the riders' impact on our community, and witnessed one bike impounded when ticketed, for lack of documentation. As I am told by our West Bureau Operations Captain and the West Traffic Division Captain of LAPD, when police do mount an enforcement campaign at targeted times to focus on riders, they are just as likely to encounter residents breaking speed and traffic laws as bikers. Add to that the fact that speed surveys have expired along Sunset making enforcement all the more difficult.

Still, the tragedy on Sunset on Sunday has not been determined to have been caused by excessive speed. While an investigation is still underway and I am not privy to the inner working of LAPD process, I am told that information will be made available to this community once the investigation has been able to unearth the facts that contributed to the accident which took the life of a rider.

On Thursday, April 13th, PPCC will hold its monthly public Board meeting, to which I have invited Captain Valerie Thomas of LAPD's West Traffic Division. I have asked her to be prepared to take questions and make available the information she can regarding this accident at that point. I am hoping for an open and frank discussion about what happened, what the causes may have been, and what can be done to make our streets safer for riders and our community when they pass through. We are a small community located in a scenic part of the city which attracts traffic passing through to various leisure attractions, including the ocean and mountains. We should be able to protect our roads, our residents and our quaint village while still being host to legal through-traffic. At the same time, we as residents must also practice safe road skills and drive with care.

There are no easy answers here, as much as we wish for there to be. I have reached out to LAPD, the office of the City Attorney and my colleagues at WRAC for a discussion about solutions that can begin today. In the meantime, CD11 and LADOT have been alerted to the perils of the specific intersection where the accident occurred and the At-Large rep on the Community Council is working to keep the City focused on improving that, and other, intersections for safety.

Together with this community, PPCC will work to seek solutions and continue the conversation to address this issue of broad concern.

Maryam Zar, PPCC Chair, April 4, 2017