

## Coffee Notes – September 10, 2007

Topic: PD Traffic Safety

Speaker: Officer Barnes

The Mayor began the meeting by describing her experience testifying before Congress in her role as Second VP of the National League of Cities.

She mentioned, briefly, transportation plans and processes that involved DRCOG.

Officer Barnes took the floor:

He started by giving a description of traffic enforcement in the City over the last year. One area of targeted enforcement was 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Zuni and York Street. He said over 50% of City accidents occurred there. Later in the session he would say that the majority of the accidents were due to the construction-related traffic patterns combined with inattentiveness.

Officer Barnes added that with school having just started, the traffic unit would be targeting school zones to make it safer for kids who walk to school.

He said that last year at the 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Huron St. intersection, they were giving out 4 tickets per half hour. By the end of the year, it was down to 1 or 2.

On Fox Run Parkway, PD traffic unit increased the amount of stop sign enforcement and speeding enforcement in the area.

At this time, Officer Barnes opened the floor to questions from residents.

Q) A resident asked if City vehicles had any impunity when it comes to speeding.

A) Officer Barnes said they did not, and the next time the resident sees a City vehicle speeding through an area, to take the vehicle number and call it in. They can keep an eye out for vehicles speeding, and possibly contact the driver even if they cannot ticket them.

Q) A resident asked about the red-light camera system.

A) Officer Barnes responded that at this time it is not functioning, though the signs are still up.

Q) A resident asked about the accuracy of radar guns.

A) Officer Barnes described how the different types of radar systems worked and pointed out that the PD also uses a laser system which is highly accurate in determining which vehicle's speed is being recorded.

Residents had several complaints about high speeds through certain areas of the City including Melody Drive and 120<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Irma.

A) In response to a request for a "Your Speed Is" sign on Melody Drive, Officer

Barnes pointed out that case law allowed for Photo Radar systems, but those systems would have to be manned for any tickets issued to be valid.

Q) A resident asked about the PD's policy for Mexican national truck drivers importing goods.

A) Officer Barnes answered that Mexican driver's licenses and consulate ID's were not valid for driving in the United States, and that each driver that was stopped and had only these credentials could be ticketed for driving without a license.

Q) A resident asked what percentage of tickets issued on 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue were Northglenn residents.

A) Officer Barnes responded that the percentage was about 25% to the best of his knowledge.

Q) A resident asked how the Police Department calibrated the radar systems.

A) Officer Barnes said tuning forks are used every day, and the tuning forks are checked periodically by state authorities who receive certification and guarantee they are calibrating radar correctly.

Officer Barnes added now that Malley Elementary School was changed to Hulstrom Options School there was an increase in the number of students attending and traveling to this area. He remarked that this is creating higher levels of congestion around the school as more students are coming from different areas versus walking range. He said the traffic unit plans to be highly visible in an attempt to deter dangerous driving as parents drop children off at the school. For the most part, though, the PD had no plans to try and alleviate the congestion since high congestion means lower traffic speeds and that translates into fewer serious accidents—especially in areas with high pedestrian traffic. He added that the City is looking into requirements that could mean more signage for the blind crosswalk on Malley Drive.

Q) A resident pointed out that crossing guards previously used to help children cross the streets to get to schools more safely were eliminated. A recent school board policy forbids faculty and staff from acting as a crossing guard because of liability issues.

A) The Mayor responded that she would discuss the "liability" issues with the school board to see if crossing guards could be allowed.

Q) A resident pointed out that some school zones place signs in the roadway that allow traffic to pass, and create an impediment that slows traffic down. The signs let drivers know they are entering a school zone and that the area is a crosswalk for students going to or from a school.

A) Officer Barnes said the City could check into the feasibility of such signs, and the suggestion sounded like a good idea.

At this point, Officer Barnes had to leave, and the Mayor opened the floor for general questions.

She mentioned, before questions started, that E.B. Rains Jr. Memorial Park had been

listed as one of the top 5 playgrounds in Denver.

Q) A resident asked about the construction of the cell tower.

A) The Mayor replied that the construction had been approved, and the cell company was set to begin construction, though she didn't know when that was to commence.

Q) A resident asked about a rumor they had heard regarding the building of a stadium in or around Northwest Open Space.

A) The Mayor responded that at one time there had been a brief discussion of building a banked stadium, one with earthen banks on each side for seating for public gatherings, sporting events, etc, but that it was quickly dismissed. Currently, there are no plans and no money for such a project. In addition, because the property is public space, any changes in its use would have to be approved through a public process and a vote.

Q) A resident raised a concern about the algae bloom at Windburn Pond.

A) The Mayor said that fixing the algae bloom was certainly on the radar for Parks, but wasn't exactly sure of the progress thus far.

The Mayor closed the meeting by talking briefly about some of the methods municipalities are using to fund infrastructure projects including leasing and selling them to foreign investors. She said that while that does answer the need for capital to keep the project going, the long-term consequences have yet to be seen.