



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 08/04/2020

ITEM NO: 17

ADDENDUM

DATE: July 20, 2020
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Approve the Santa Clara County Fire District Emergency Route
Recommendation for Alpine Avenue and Remove Parking on One Side of the
Street

REMARKS:

Attachment 4 contains public comment received since the issuance of the staff report on Thursday, July 30, 2020, and before 11:00 a.m. Monday, August 3, 2020.

Attachments previously received with the Staff Report:

1. June 2, 2020 Council Meeting Verbal Communication
2. June 25, 2020 Memorandum and Recommendation from Fire Chief Bowden

Attachment distributed with this Addendum:

3. Public Comments received 11:01 a.m. Thursday, July 30, 2020 and 11:00 a.m. Monday, August 3, 2020.

PREPARED BY: Arn Andrews
Assistant Town manager

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Town Attorney, and Director of Parks and Public Works

From: Janet Gutierrez
To: Arn Andrews
Subject: Alpine ave parking
Date: Thursday, July 30, 2020 2:53:14 PM

Since the majority of the traffic on Alpine Avenue comes off Main Street , has anyone considered that having parking on the north side goes against the natural flow of traffic and will require a lot of turning around, either in our driveways or at the top of Alpine, to park on the north side. Doesn't make sense to me. I agree with the idea of parking on one side, just not the side that has been chosen.

Janet Gutierrez

ATTACHMENT 3

From: Dirk Franklin
To: Arn Andrews
Cc: Rob Rennie; Gwen Dawkins
Subject: Re: Emergency Response Street Modifications - Alpine Ave
Date: Saturday, August 1, 2020 11:15:31 AM

Arn,

My family is greatly disappointed with the lack of notice for this proposal.

Notice date 7/30 for a meeting on 8/4? Does this comply with town guidelines AND best practices in transparency in government?

Lucky Covid has kept most in town and available to join the council meeting. I expect a robust Alpine Ave turnout as usual.

The Town has some responsibility in this parking problem. The Town issued many building permits on a known narrow street without ANY REQUIREMENT for a parking plan. The parking issue is ONLY based on Construction parking. Not the residents.

Health and Safety of residents is critical, but just because there is a lack of planning and execution we DO NOT SEE THE NEED TO HAVE OUR PROPERTY RIGHTS NEGATIVELY IMPACTED.

For the record [REDACTED] is against this new regulation.

Dirk and Gwen Franklin

On Jul 30, 2020, at 8:53 AM, Arn Andrews <aandrews@losgatosca.gov> wrote:

Good Morning Alpine Avenue Residents,

You are receiving this email to inform you of proposed emergency response modifications for your street. On June 22, 2020, the Santa Clara County Fire Department staff performed an inspection of the width of Alpine Avenue as it relates to ingress/egress of emergency vehicles and residents in the event of an emergency and/or evacuation. On June 25, 2020, the Town received a recommendation from the Santa Clara County Fire Chief to limit street parking to one side (northerly side) of Alpine Avenue year-round. The recommendation is intended to ensure the safe and expeditious passage of emergency responders and residents in the event of emergency and/or evacuation. The recommendation is scheduled to be considered at the August 4th, 2020, Town Council meeting. If you are not able to attend the meeting and have questions, concerns, or comments, please contact Arn Andrews, Assistant Town Manager, at 408-354-6836, or email aandrews@losgatosca.gov.

Thank you

From: Henry Richards
To: Arn Andrews
Subject: ALPINE AVE emergency access
Date: Saturday, August 1, 2020 4:19:43 PM

Dear Arn Andrews,

I am writing to you in response to your request for comments in re. the "Emergency Response Modifications" proposed for Alpine Avenue.

First of all, let me say that I wholeheartedly support adequate access for emergency vehicles through our street and I believe that was one of the concerns raised when street parking was restricted as it is now. In fact, the restriction was extremely effective in keeping Alpine Avenue clear so long as the regulations were enforced. Recent construction along the street has created unsatisfactory "congestion" however the current parking restrictions have not been stringently enforced and has allowed the problem to persist.

I would like the council to consider the following:

1. Order the enforcement of current regulations to mitigate the congested parking situation for now.
2. Defer or table any current decisions until feedback, comment and input for those of us who are directly impacted by your decisions can be solicited.
3. Timely notification to the residents of Alpine Avenue is essential to this process.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely yours,
Henry Richards



From: Jeff Gallinat
To: Arn Andrews
Subject: Alpine Avenue Parking Change - Town Council item for Tuesday, August 4th
Date: Sunday, August 2, 2020 8:58:17 PM
Attachments: Alpine Parking Note - Aug 2 - v3.docx

Arn,

I am attaching a letter here that several residents on our street (15 total) have helped to author and agreed to regarding the request to implement one-way restricted parking on Alpine Avenue.

I would appreciate it very much if you would ensure this is forwarded to the Council members, per process, ahead of the Zoom call/discussion on this issue on Tuesday, where many of us will be attending.

Would appreciate return acknowledgement of this note, and should you want to clarify/discuss anything, please feel free to give me a call.

Thanks very much,

Jeff Gallinat



August 2, 2020

To: Arn Andrews and the Los Gatos Town Council

Re: Alpine Ave Parking Changes to be discussed in August 4, 2020 Town Council Meeting

We are respectfully submitting this input ahead of the council discussion on this issue.

Our request is for a 30-day delay/continuance of the implementation of the proposed changes to allow representatives of the Town, the Santa Clara County Fire Department, and the Alpine Avenue Community to fully communicate and work together to build a solution that best addresses the needs of both Los Gatos and our Alpine Avenue residents.

As you may remember, we've had a number of previous discussions over the past couple of years (and subsequent positive changes) to address the unique challenges of our street, and would like to repeat that proven process on this issue as well. We want the right solution for the 'common good' here – both us and the residents of Los Gatos. There are several reasons for our request:

1. Unfortunately, we didn't get an acceptable amount of time to understand and create an informed (and possibly collective) response to this notification. We are an engaged set of neighbors, and many of us are surprised (and some frustrated) with the short notice here, given similar issues we've had in the past, and our desire to really be involved in any solution. Specifically, we've had less than 5 days since any formal notification, even the Town had the fire department recommendation for more than 5 weeks. We do understand there may be urgency to this request, but given our inability to completely discuss the recommendation, jointly assess its impact, and understand other possible solutions, ***we want a reasonable amount of time to properly engage here with the relevant parties.***
2. Our fellow citizens who recently raised this issue with the town (who are not residents of our street) undoubtedly could have seen congestion on Alpine. We all have, from time to time. Recently, though, this has been largely due to a series of construction projects by our fellow residents, some of which were major and were done in areas with limited parking and access to the properties involved. Most Alpine residents let this temporary inconvenience pass, in support of our neighbors. However, if there actually was a concern within the Town about larger issues, *the Town certainly had the ability and the obligation to address this within the current policy.* So, this is an exceptional and temporary situation, and one we agree needs to be addressed going forward, probably by both the town and our residents, but through planning, permitting, and enforcement. ***If we actually abide by the current policies here, we believe the present parking solution will work, and represents a limited risk to the community as a whole.***

3. Although we all understand and appreciate the Town's responsibility to manage risk and ensure public safety, the proposed solution could present other potential risks that need to be considered and fully assessed in a new traffic assessment. Today's parking practices using both sides of the street in a "light and controlled" manner (when we are not in the "exceptional mode" we've been in recently). The present restrictions actually give the residents the permitted parking they need, limit overall congestion, balance the 'load' of each side of the street, also serve as an additional deterrent to speeding (which is the KEY issue, highlighted in the previous HS parking situation). We believe the proposed single-side parking solution would create a 'clear lane' for emergency traffic, but would also burden half of the residents and restrict their traffic views, and would also contribute to further speeding, which are also risks to our community and the public (and might be far more frequent ones). Alpine is unique in construction, and is often used by many town residents for many different purposes (walking, biking, etc.), and that needs to be considered as well. ***We believe additional study and discussion on this is proposal is warranted to understand and balance these risks. We need to find a solution that is truly holistic and balanced, and truly safe on a daily/ongoing basis.***
4. Finally, there has been no discussion or disclosure on any possible alternatives to provide emergency access to other homes that we are aware of. We don't know what the alternatives are here, or if they even exist. What we DO know is that a lot of large heavy equipment already transits through our narrow street daily, and that they have done so for decades, largely to the benefit of those on Foster and other streets. ***We want to understand, explore, and assess any other alternatives for emergency access that might be available to address this concern.***

To conclude, there is no debate that we want Alpine to remain safe, and there is also no debate from any of us on the need for appropriate access for public safety vehicles to all town residents. We believe if the present regulations are actually adhered to and enforced, the solution we have already created together will work to balance all interests, and we would prefer the Town take this path first. If the Town genuinely feels there is a need to make a change here, we want the opportunity to formally exercise our rights to engage in that conversation and jointly participate in whatever solution is really the best one available.

My wife and I will be at the meeting (as will several of our neighbors who have agreed to be included in this letter, noted below). Please do take this letter under advisement, and please ensure the Council members see it before our item comes up for discussion on Tuesday.

Jeff and Julie Gallinat [REDACTED]
Tom and Ann Atkinson [REDACTED]
Steve and Linda Rice [REDACTED]
Ernie and Nancy Boitano ([REDACTED])

John Thomsen [REDACTED]
Phil and Melanie Branon [REDACTED]
Lou and Cheryl Ryan [REDACTED]
Dirk Franklin and Gwen Dawkins [REDACTED]

From: Lisa Roberts
To: mjensen@losgatosc.gov; BSpector; Rob Rennie; Marico Sayoc; Arn Andrews
Subject: Agenda Item 17, August 4, 2020 Town Council Meeting: Alpine Avenue
Date: Monday, August 3, 2020 9:31:52 AM
Attachments: Letter Town Council re Parking Proposal 8 3 2020.pdf

Dear Mayor Jensen, Vice Mayor Spector, Council Member Rob Rennie, Council Member Marico Sayoc, and Assistant Town Manager Arn Andrews:

Attached is a letter from my husband Peter Rehon and me regarding the above-referenced agenda item. We would appreciate your careful consideration of this letter, along with other letters and emails sent in this matter by other Alpine Avenue residents.

Thank you very much,

Lisa Roberts

Lisa C. Roberts

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

██████████ ALPINE AVENUE
LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA 95030

August 3, 2020

Town Council
c/o Arn Andrews, Assistant Town Manager
aandrews@losgatosca.gov
110 E. Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95030

**Re: Item No. 17 on August 4, 2020 Town Council Meeting Agenda re
Alpine Avenue**

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Members of the Town Council:

We reside at ██████████. We are writing to express our opposition to the action proposed under the above-referenced agenda item, specifically, the proposed action to “Approve the Santa Clara County Fire District Emergency Route Recommendation for Alpine Avenue and Remove Parking on One Side of the Street.” We have read the letter of yesterday from our neighbors at ██████████ and ██████████ Alpine, and whole-heartedly agree with the sentiments it expresses, and by this letter, wish to lend our voices to theirs in asking the Town Council not to adopt the proposed parking measure.

As set forth below, we believe that the Council should not adopt the parking proposal. Alternatively, should there be any indication of positive support for this action, we request that the matter be continued for at least 30 days to obtain necessary input including the preparation and review of a traffic study and meaningful input by all neighbors affected—including most particularly the residents of Alpine Avenue, none of whom had any part in this item being placed on the Agenda. It is the residents of Alpine who would be directly, materially, and permanently affected by its approval, and who have not been given adequate notice and an opportunity to respond.

The proposal has not been properly researched, vetted, or considered. However well-intentioned it is and how important is the need to address fire safety, it has completely ignored other critical issues of safety—longstanding ones that the residents and users of Alpine encounter on a daily basis. It has received no input at all from Alpine residents.

The grounds for not adopting the proposal, or at a minimum, continuing this matter, are set forth below.

- **The Residents of Alpine Were Given Inadequate Notice of this Proposed Dramatic Change of Their Street, Neighborhood, and Safety.**

As discussed further in the sections following this one, the proposed alterations to Alpine Avenue are dramatic, Draconian, and pose unconsidered safety and other risks to Alpine residents and other residents of Los Gatos and elsewhere who regularly walk, bike, stroller, jog, and drive Alpine Avenue. It warranted significant prior notice to all interested parties, and most importantly, the residents of Alpine. To the contrary, we were given inadequate notice. This has not only resulted in the appearance of unfairness, it has presented us with the reality of not having been given a meaningful opportunity to respond.

As each member of the Council is aware, Alpine is an extraordinarily engaged community of residents. It has been before the Council on several, significant, and memorable occasions in the recent past, in full force, most times acting if not unanimously nearly so, and, indeed, the very issues on which it has been recently extremely active are the matters directly at issue here: parking and public safety. The lack of reasonable notice in this case is even more perplexing given the knowledge by the Council and Staff of this history of engagement.

The Town gave no notice of any kind to Alpine of the pendency of this proposal until an email sent at 8:53 a.m. on Thursday, July 30 (followed thereafter by door hangers). In other words, it gave the persons with the most direct interest in this proposal—only 2 hours and 7 minutes to respond before the deadline for submission in the regular packet—an impossible task, thereby depriving them of the opportunity of having their submissions setting forth their concerns and opposition considered methodically along with the proposal. It gave Alpine only two business days even to submit a response before the deadline for submission in the Addendum and only three business days' notice of the hearing. This has provided Alpine residents with no meaningful time to confer with one another (even though supposedly the Town likes residents to work together), to formulate an appropriate response by them to the Town, or to consider or suggest other options much less make inquiry or investigation into such other options.

The Town gave its notice to the Alpine neighbors on July 30th even though Staff was in possession of the report by the Fire Marshal suggesting this action on June 25—five weeks before any notice was given to Alpine.

The Town also gave this short notice notwithstanding the obvious effects of the COVID pandemic on people's ability to meet, whether between themselves or before the Council. It is appreciated that videoconferencing is available; what the Town does not fully appreciate is that one must study the Town's website and the notices accompanying the agenda to find out about videoconferencing and learn what must be done to even address the Council. Given the fact that videoconferencing can be a challenge even to the technologically savvy, and given the new requirements imposed just for speaking to the Council, it is likely that many residents of the Town may not have their voices heard just because of this short notice.

Every governmental agency has lengthened notice periods and rescheduled hearings because of the COVID emergency, and for the Town to give such extremely short notice of this important matter is directly contrary to the purpose and intent of the State and County emergency orders.

The speed with which the Town is acting to pass this action with minimal opportunity for public input is in stark contrast to a long history of making Alpine wait months—years—for safety projects involving traffic, speeding, and parking that were in the past sorely needed.

At a minimum, this matter should be continued to allow for further investigation by the Town and further input by Alpine residents, including the opportunity to speak with each Council member and formulate a response which addresses the Fire Marshal's concerns and those of the community.

- **The Proposed Action is Premature and Ill-Considered.**

For the foregoing reasons, we are unable to set forth a full statement of our concerns over this proposal. However, just thus far, the concerns include the following:

1. The impetus for this proposal has not come from a single Alpine resident, but by two non-Alpine residents. The first, whose address is unknown, identified himself to the Town Council at the June 2 meeting as "representing the Civic Center Hillside Neighborhood, as you all know." The second is a resident of Foster Road.

2. While fire safety and emergency access is equally a concern of Alpine residents, it is not the only significant safety risk presented to Alpine residents, who, along with other users of the street, will be most impacted by the proposed changes.

3. The most paramount—and daily—safety concern for Alpine users is speeding and the resulting immediate and constant risk to human life and safety—all-year-round and not just during fire season. This concern has been the primary safety concern voiced time and again by Alpine residents and recognized by the Town. The proposed changes will dramatically increase that risk. This increased risk must be measured against the perceived potential benefits of this plan. Yet, the Town has failed to do any investigation—no traffic study or other apparent steps—to weigh that risk.

4. Allowing parking on only one side will drastically increase speeding—and the danger associated with it. Putting the parking to one side will effectively open a virtual speedway on the remainder of the road, and it will present a clear, present, and daily danger to everyone who uses Alpine (including, as noted above, pedestrians including with baby strollers, bikers, and joggers).

5. The danger will be even more pronounced than ever before because the South sidewalk on which no parking will be allowed (and no cars will be present to slow down racing) is narrow and has no median. There have already been numerous instances of cars jumping the curb on Alpine. So far, they have not been fatal. That this trend of good luck will continue is not a bet we are willing to make.

6. As noted in the Fire Marshal report, one-sided parking results in U-turns. That is why it chose north side parking so drivers could leave the hillside area without doing a U-turn. This proposal will require residents on the south side (including residents including cottage dwellers and others who lack off-site parking) to park on the north side—which they can do only by either driving up Alpine and doing a U-turn or by accessing Alpine via another street, such as Johnson Avenue. This is not just a matter of convenience. It is a matter of safety. Just the recent presence of construction vehicles has led property owners to choose (as is their right) to block their driveways to prevent the danger, wear, and tear of trucks turning around, and this proposal will lead to the same, or other neighbor issues associated with the public use of driveways as turnarounds. Alpine has no intersecting streets. A legal U-turn without use of private property requires a trip to the top, at the narrow intersection of Foster. That, and anywhere else on the street, is not safe for the U-turns that this proposal will mandate.

7. The matter of U-turns—and the need for south-side residents to increase crossing the street to get to and from their homes—further increases the already-present—and by this proposal, greatly exacerbated—risk of unfettered speeding.

8. The proposed alterations will undo the street changes that have been made over recent times—with the strong engagement and support of Alpine residents—including speed bumps and parking limitations. This is not only unwise, it is disrespectful of Alpine residents who fought hard for and supported those much-needed changes and went through the sacrifices associated with getting them and having them imposed on their street.

9. The Town has also not taken into account its own role in the problem. Alpine already has in force a parking program that would likely reduce the congestion that could affect access, but the Town has not enforced it. There is currently construction on the street (some of it sped up in recent months to make up for COVID delays). We have no opposition to the construction and indeed regard it as a positive part of living in a vibrant and changing community. We do question why the Town has not better managed parking on Alpine or enforced the parking rules that were long sought by the Alpine community and finally implemented by the Town.

10. In making this proposal based solely on a fire safety report with no other issues of safety taken in consideration, the Town has also failed to consider other potential consequences of its action—including the piecemeal nature of addressing fire safety. The non-Alpine residents who initially raised this issue on June 2 suggested a review of Johnson Avenue as well. They also apparently addressed only certain areas of Los Gatos (the Civic Center hillside area). There are countless other areas in Los Gatos similar to—or more challenging—than the area above Alpine. If steps are to be taken, they should be taken on a Town-wide basis, and the considerations should include all relevant circumstances, including traffic safety, including whether the proposed changes will impact other streets, and whether the steps taken as to one street or area are fair and equitable in comparison to other similarly situated streets or areas.

11. Safety is paramount, but it also bears mentioning that Alpine is in an historic district. The Town and its residents will also be affected. Alpine is a residential street treasured by its residents, but it is also a charming, provincial, and symmetrical neighborhood that harkens back to Los Gatos's past. The proposed changes, akin to ones that might be expected for an expressway or commercial throughway, are antithetical to the character of the street and would be a sore disappointment, we believe, to the many people who use Alpine, along with many other lovely streets in Los Gatos, to stroll, bike, and spend some of their leisure time. In addition to making the street far more dangerous on a daily basis, the associated destruction of the charm and character of the street would be a permanent loss to Los Gatos, and one that, if sufficient careful attention is given to the issues of safety, should not be necessary.

In summary, we request that the Town not adopt the parking proposal, or, at a minimum, continue this matter to allow for further study and an opportunity for the community to respond, and for a more measured and reasonable approach to this imp.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Lisa C. Roberts



Peter M. Rehon



cc: All Alpine Residents via email

From: Bruce D Mitchell
To: Arn Andrews
Subject: Re: Alpine Avenue Emergency Response Street Modifications
Date: Saturday, August 1, 2020 1:31:43 PM

Mr. Andrews:

A few questions for Town staff, and as appropriate, elected/appointed personnel:

-There must be alternatives to the changes proposed by the Santa Clara County Fire Chief.
What are the alternatives?

-Alpine Avenue residents were notified by email and by a flyer on July 31st, just four business days before the Town Council meeting on which this item is on the Town Council agenda. The Town received the Fire Chief's report on or about June 25. This is over a month before the Alpine Avenue residents were notified of the Fire Chief's report or that the Fire Chief's report is on the Council's August 4th meeting agenda.

Why such an unnecessarily short notice to the residents of Alpine Avenue, the people most impacted by the contents of the report?

-The Santa Clara County Fire Chief's report is on the agenda as "approve" at the August 4th Town Council meeting. Why "approve" when "review" or "consider" would be a more appropriate for a public hearing.

Connie and I, and the majority of our Alpine Avenue neighbors have many concerns including but not limited to:

-Increased speed. on Alpine Avenue. The closing of parking on the south side of Alpine Avenue will effectively add a lane which will increase the already excessive speed that many (Foster Road) drivers travel on Alpine Avenue. As evidenced by the speed bumps, installed at the request of Alpine Avenue residents, excessive speed is a problem.

-To better maintain safe speeds on Alpine Avenue the posted speed limit should be 20 miles per hour (similar to College Avenue) with routine enforcement of the posted speed limit.

-Parking on Alpine Avenue will be reduced by 50%. This will negatively impact Alpine residents ability to entertain, have house guests, and similar activities.

-The inevitable "U" turns.

Please feel free to contact Bruce at [REDACTED].

Bruce and Connie Mitchell
[REDACTED]

From: JANE BROGNA
To: Arn Andrews
Subject: Support of one-side street parking
Date: Thursday, July 30, 2020 6:34:23 PM

We are fully in support of one-side street parking on Alpine Ave. We own the property at both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

Jane and Sal Brogna

Sent from Xfinity Connect App