

CITY COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING AUGUST 11, 2010

FOOD TRUCK ISSUE

Summary of proceeding's recording:

BR: equitable policy that works for everybody

4000 food trucks, many for a long time throughout community.

Twitter, Facebook.

Quite remarkable when no issues exist as to negative impact.

Social relationships form.

Downside also: AK. Where to park – not to impede restaurants.

Must find balance.

Need standards and procedures.

LaBonge: I see ppl here who have been in business for 30+ years, agreeing to park on every other block, on opposite sides of the street. called "rancheros"

Also, entrepreneurs, some w/restaurants, have created a place for themselves. I want to see 1) DOT define what belongs in a public parking meter space, 2) create food truck zone – 2-3 on a side street in a multiply-zoned area. New ones challenge the established ones. Trucks are bumper to bumper – not acceptable to me.

Koretz: My piece is more in a few residential areas; our ppl are not enforcing the permit parking district law, trash receptacle/removal laws. We've allowed them to ruin lawns. We are not fully enforcing; enforcement is the primary issue in my view.

12:30

Staff reports:

LADOT: Kristine Matha: pkg enf – only parking location, no longer enforcing food truck-specific ord.

LAPD: Capt Tom McDonald, Emerg Ops Div: no quantitative data suggesting catering trucks increase crime or littering; anecdotally, we've seen them cluster. We get all sorts of complaints; officers address issues as appropriate when witnesses.

CA: Judith Reel: permissible regs- Vehicle Code, preempting City code, is the guide.

22455, enacted in 1984, addresses regulation of mobile food vendors, prohibiting street vending. 1985: revised to allow regulate only for public safety the time, place and manner of vending. Public safety includes traffic, loitering and trash.

Valerie Flores: Surveyed major CA cities that reg mobile food vending – virtually all use permit process to regulate mobile food vendors. Permit system enables city to ensure that mf vendors

comply w/existing City laws – business tax, county food safety handling, parking & traffic regs. Current ability to absorb ticket cost as business cost provides no incentive to follow law. A single, daily \$50 citation may be less than cost of space rental and therefore a smarter investment. A permit system could apply a maximum number of tickets in a given period to a vendor above which more onerous enforcement takes place. This would strengthen existing regulations. Permitting also does not require signs, conserving scarce City funds.

Also: Limit hr of oper- max time, daylight only; location limits- SJ: 200-ft separation betwn trucks. Special events can be exceptions. Health/safety regs for permit process- food handling, bathroom access. Liab ins, not just for autos but also for food safety handling.

Public safety, orderly traffic and still allow vending.

BR: Meet w/vendors and come back with proposed choices to effect enforceable policy.

24:50

Alarcon:

27:50

LaBonge: CA – 2009: Ticket issued for violating time limit code – court threw out based on no public safety issue.

BR: Wants task force - CLA, CLO, Planning, DOT, Cty Health, etc. Next meeting – 60 da.

31:30

LaBonge: Report-back good. Planning to CLA. County Health should report on letter-type rating system. What are other cities doing? Finance?

32:30

John Fisher: LADOT Asst GM: Pkg meter is to support time limit to help ensure turnover and payment for parking.

Can we create zone to exempt food trucks? Must conform to vehicle codes and visibility sight lines.

How many taxis? 3000, all regulated.

S/b max number of food trucks? Where should they be, what zones allowed to work in, Planning s/b involved. C4 zone may be able to adapt to it. In Koreatown, they go one per block at head of street.

Ticket: \$55 in 1-hr zone, single ticket per policy. Would CA consider, would court look poorly on the city for enforcing against businesses doing business by the cost of the ticket, and not the regulation? (intent of law).

36:30

CA- will defend any time, place and manner restriction that serves public safety.

37:15

Koretz: Since parking enforcement hasn't been furloughed, why are we having trouble enforcing on egregious violators? Long trucks in front of driveways eating, repeated trash and walking on lawns. Why not enforce intent of law: multiple tickets. Can also cooperate by creating larger spaces, meters w/more time. In the meantime, vehicles park illegally; can let them go or write just one ticket?

40:30

Rita Robinson, GM DOT: Not on furlough, but have a 40% workforce reduction. We can enforce more aggressively, but most balance deployment per resources.

42:30

Enforcement: Can't selectively enforce.

K: Can rewrite ord to enforce on all veh that have ppl onboard to receive ticket.

Alarcon: Exempted revenue-generating positions from furloughs.

We can discuss how to budget for more officers.

46:25

CA: Regulatory program can be supported by the fee. To support the program, not to produce revenue. Cost neutral.

Alarcon: Enforcement piece must support law. Plan must increase officer quantity.

46:45

LaBonge: BID district – require permitted veh operating there to be part of BID?

47:15

County Health: Terrence Powell, Pub Health, Div of Env Hlth. Comments: Parking planning must include needs of vendors – If parked for > 1hr, need restrooms. Most common violations. Out of 16 Venice veh recently inspected, 25% lacked avail restrooms, which are major factors in preventing food-borne illness, and is safety issue regarding production/consumption of food. Requirement: Restrooms must meet health/safety codes, and be within 200ft and same side of street. Letter must be provided.

LaBonge: Wilshire letters?

6000 mobile catering trucks countywide, exclusive of carts. Moving into letter grading mobile food facilities.

51:00 – PUBLIC COMMENT

Erin Glynn, CEO of Assoc de Rancheros. Food vendors cannot nec absorb ticket cost; our assoc. works to ensure compliance and good bus practices. We wd like a permit process – annual fee for operation, with compliance conditions. We want to be part of the task force to

address the zoning issue; traditional vendors, their livelihood. I request field work to help isolate the issues before enacting ords.

55:15

Matt: Enforcement issue; 80.69. 80.73. Lack of enforcing uber-pkg tkt codes deserves investigation. We interviewed 146 people re: lunch spots; w/o food trucks, 157 trips/wk would drive total of 93m. 369 days of ppl packing lunch. 193 days of out-to-lunch. Ergo, trucks provide consumer services.

57:00

Lea Ross and Peter Verrit. Border Grill rest and gourmet taco truck, no assoc affiliation. Approach soln thru communication, research, good will among all parties.

58:00

John Bowler. BBQ catering truck, former BnM rest, former councilman in S Bay. Regulation: 80.73 LAMC- framework; County Health permit, OC, Long Beach, Pasa, city bus licenses. Health inspections are more frequent than in rest. Paradigm shift: Taking food to where people are.

61:20

Molly Taylor – Sweets truck. Have discussed w/many Council offices. Some have legitimate issues, some are lobby driven. We create community wherever we park; we want to do business freely and fairly.

62:35

Michelle Grant- Grilled Cheese truck. Biz in infancy. 10 mos, 5 local cities, 2 trucks, 20 ees, 30k followers via social media. Rapid growth produces big issues. We welcome being part of the process. In this economy, it is incumbent upon the City to keep this resource available.

Nicole shahamian, Hwd Chmbr of Comm. Strong concern w/proliferation. Siphoning bus from estab Hwd rests. Cash only, hard to inspect, don't contr to tax base, rent, BID assessment, use streets, sidewalks, parking, etc. Roll in, take bus & tax \$, and leave.

5:50

Richard Gomez- ___ Ent, catering trk manuf since 1955. Over last three yrs, laid off 2/3 of workforce, kept in bus by gourmet food trucks. Hired back ees, made temp perm. Movement is national. Regs should benefit everybody.

Tom Patterson- Ofc Mgr of Holmby-Wwd prop owners assoc. CD5. Pls move motion from 60 da to 45 da. Want to be incl'd in task force.

7:35

Dennis Rody- rest owner on Wilsh. Up to 15 fd trks in 1-block area. Multiple tickets are cost of doing bus. Health code, meter viols base on time parked.

9:15

Alarcon: Transp has juris over transpo matters, while Jobs & BizDev Cmte have juris over economic matters. LaBonge: It's been over a yr since Zine came in w/it. Alarcon: And it's been going nowhere. More debate. Alarcon: It's been since 1993, and going nowhere.

1:30

Elias Ybarra: Ranchero 25 yrs. Concerned about this situation. All my life at this, my family. I have all licenses. Any ord must be just and promoting continued contribution.

13:20

Carlo Ruiz: part of assn. of Rancheros. Assoc. 2 yrs. Old. Regular member functions, to ensure proper permitting, operations. Also don't park w/in 200 ft of rests, estab good relations w/neighboring businesses, clean area.

15:00

Guadalupe Rita: la Assoc de Rancheros. My children depend on my lunch work, and practically my entire family works on the truck. To lose this work wd be a great tragedy.

16:15

: on behalf of UCLA Labor Center, supporting Assoc de Rancheros. Catering food trucks are source of City revenue and commissary fees, gas, licenses, etc. Revenue during deep recession. This is about competition bet BnM rests and catering food trucks concentrated on Wilshire and should be dealt as such. Entire industry s/not be penalized from the bad acting of a few lunch trucks that have emerged. Supports Assoc and considers it beneficial.

18:10

Russell Brown: Exec Dir of Hist Downtown BID, Bway Spring and Main, also Dntn LA NC; also manage logistics of monthly downtown Art Walk, which has single-handedly revitalized the area, with bars, shops and restaurants. Also have 40 fd trks have now descended upon the nhd. Over the last 2 months, we have had to call almost riot squad to handle the situation, with BID security unable to manage; blocking driveways, hydrants, patrons and rests. Over the last month, been able to reach accommodation, took fd tks off the street into dedicated pkg lots. Have been working closely w/Matt. It's about good management. Lk fwd to working partnership.

19:30

Kathleen Demonie: Mng old Greyhound bldg/LA Merch Mart; Ptrship Ptrns, 23 yrs; seen a lot of situation. Carts disturb tenants on LA st, parking overnight to get spot, block storefront, cart smells destroy merch. Smell was making mother sick. They use our restrooms.

21:15

Lynn Myers: Mgn Dir Fashion Dist BID. We enc stricter regs; district loses parking, suffers from food smells permeating merch; concentrated on S/S, busiest shopping days; sidewalks not designed for crowds. For perm bus loca, s/b required to rent store. S/b restricted in Indus-zoned areas that have substantial retail uses. Also want inclusion on task force.

22:35

Randall Tampa: Fashion Dist- reiterate Lynn's comments. For 6 mo, I'm go-to callee- 1450 calls to have BID officers go out and politely askushman carts to move because of smoke and damage to merchandise. We work daily w/LAPD, Health Dept and many of vending vehicles; since 6-8 mos, we purchased 100+ trash receptacles, working w/80 vendors, collecting small stipend from them to collect their trash. Asking to determine suitable quantity of carts for dist.

24:00

Andrew Casagna: CA Rest Assoc - we have many members on both sides; some are BnM, now having vending trucks; we ask for a level playing field, equivalent inspections for trucks,

most of which are working w/rests, but some trucks blocking rests. We want to be part of task force. Can bring local Board if needed.

25:00

Jesus Hermosillo: Invited to present prelim research study findings on my Urban Planning Masters degree study for UCLA and Downtown Labor Center. Researching for several months. Locational behavior – semi-permanent but mobile. Rancheros tend to go to food-underserved areas. Community-based. Overhead: Commissary rent = \$800-1000/mo (\$3-4/sf). Avail data from Health Dept = 814 have LA addresses. Low-grossing fd trk grosses about \$50k/yr, yielding contrib. Of \$31mil in fuel/supply/commissary fees, nearly \$5mil in fees, taxes.

28:00

Terry Blumgarden: co-owner Cantor's Fairfax and food truck. Education must be provided. If existing laws are not observed, why w/they observe new laws? Unethical to park truck in front of storefront. National support for movement. Before people were canceling Convention Cnter res 3-4 years out; now, they come here. This movement is a source of respect for LA.- magazines, food shows, bringing positive energy that has been missing. Must work together.

29:41

Bonnie Blumgarden- run Cantors food truck. Providing affordable, healthful, creative eating options in a difficult econ time. Ppl all over country and world look to LA as culinary hot spot. Often partner, sharing cust bases w/other buss. Making LA special.

31:04

Ray Villaman: Former Ex Dir of CA Rest Assoc; own rests, co-founder of Mobi-Munch, provider of online/offline infrastructure to mobile food Indus; want to help provide harmony; our site has 500+ trucks listed in 29 cities. LA is being presented as an example of how to create harmony-producing ordinances.

32:30

Shawna Dawson: Founder LA Take Food Fest; movement is revitalizing community at large; in Feb, at LA Ctr Studios, expected 3-5k ppl; w/3 wks promotion, drew 20k+ ppl from all over town. Ppl spend dollars on product, as we do on various services. Did Rose Bowl in Pasa, paid city fees, funded school programs, contributions, create jobs. Why bad enforcement? I live on a permit street. Only local enforcement is to limit free ent by small bus owners.

35:40

Jed Pauker: VNC, Board will consider valet pkg, fd trks; studying for 2 mos. w/RR; proliferation of fd trks on AK for 2 years; on Windward, it's a bus-to-bus issue, whereas on AK, it's mixture of bus & res. Mitigation and moderation will provide more benefit than pure regulation.

LaB: 45-60 days. Will ck w/BR. Great start; want to reach out to orgs, to tour areas, to look at solns, legis office, DOT, CA to get concept: Can space be created and how much; incl LAPD, Cty Health. meet in committee during following weeks, review the landscape and go forward.