

Decision No. 22511 -

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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| In the Matter of the Application of |) |
| the County of Los Angeles for order |) |
| authorizing a grade crossing over the |) Application No. 16350 |
| Pacific Electric Railway Company's |) |
| right of way on Hancock Avenue. |) |

Everett W. Mattoon, County Counsel, by
Robert W. Kenny, Deputy, for Applicant.

R. E. Wedekind, for Pacific Electric Railway
Company, Protestant.

Harry Barrett, for West Hollywood Chamber
of Commerce, Interested Party.

B. F. Shrimpton, property owner, Interested
Party.

BY THE COMMISSION -

O P I N I O N

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The County of Los Angeles, by its County Counsel, has petitioned the Railroad Commission for an order granting authority to construct a public street known as Hancock Avenue at grade across two main line tracks of the Pacific Electric Railway Company at a point opposite the intersection of Hancock Avenue with Santa Monica Boulevard in said County of Los Angeles, State of California.

A public hearing on this application was conducted by Examiner Handford at Los Angeles on May 23, 1930, at which date the matter was submitted.

Hancock Avenue is a north and south street two blocks long, extending from Santa Monica Boulevard on the south to Holloway Drive on the north, and has no connecting street south of Santa Monica Boulevard. Santa Monica Boulevard in this territory is a two lane street, the Pacific Electric Railway tracks being located in private right of way between the two lanes. Highway traffic may move in both directions on each lane but testimony indicates that a large majority of said

traffic actually moves east on the southerly roadway and west on the northerly roadway. Crossings are now constructed across the Pacific Electric Tracks at Westbourne Drive approximately 500 feet east of the proposed crossing and at Larabee Avenue approximately 700 feet west.

Pacific Electric Railway operates a double track railway through this territory which carries an average of over 300 interurban passenger trains and twelve freight trains daily. The speed of these trains is now restricted due to the proximity of its station in the vicinity of Clark Street and Santa Monica Boulevard and also due to a safety stop on the eastbound track at approximately 100 feet east of the proposed crossing.

Applicant's witnesses testified that traffic from territory along Hancock Avenue, destined east on Santa Monica Avenue, now moves against the majority of traffic on the northerly roadway of Santa Monica Boulevard to the crossing at Westbourne Drive and that the proposed crossing would permit such traffic to move along the southerly roadway between Hancock Avenue and Westbourne Drive, thereby reducing the hazard to highway traffic and the congestion at the Westbourne Drive crossing. Witnesses for applicant further testified that the Hancock Avenue crossing would reduce the distance naturally traveled by people residing along Hancock Avenue when driving to and from the business district located along Santa Monica Boulevard and particularly in the vicinity of Santa Monica Boulevard and Clark Street. However, this reduction in distance would in no instance exceed approximately 500 feet.

Applicant's witnesses in general were of the opinion that crossings should be constructed at each street intersecting Santa Monica Boulevard but not closer than 300 feet. Mr. Shrimpton, a realtor and property owner in this vicinity, felt that Santa Monica Boulevard in this territory should be paved from curb to curb, including the area occupied by the Pacific

Electric tracks. All were in agreement that the proposed crossing would serve traffic local to Hancock Avenue only and that the crossing, if constructed, should be protected by automatic signals.

N. C. Johnson, Assistant County Fire Warden, testified that the crossing would be more convenient than the Westbourne Drive crossing for fire apparatus when moving from its fire house on Hancock Avenue to territory south of Pacific Electric Railway tracks, in that two turns would be eliminated and traffic conditions would be more favorable.

Pacific Electric Railway Company appeared in protest to the granting of the application. Witnesses for the Pacific Electric Railway Company estimated the crossing would cost \$2,396.00 of which amount the railway agreed to pay \$496.00. Mr. Bowen, Assistant Engineer for the railway, was of the opinion that crossings should be constructed across Santa Monica Boulevard at intervals of not less than two blocks or approximately 1200 feet, but only when connecting streets and traffic conditions justified. He further testified that the proposed crossing would be a great inconvenience to the public using the railway and a hazard to the users of the highway.

It appears from the testimony that the crossing at Westbourne Drive is inconvenient, hazardous and not properly located and that the proposed crossing is requested, in part, in order to alleviate this condition. If relief from the condition created by the improper location of a crossing at Westbourne Drive is needed, studies looking to its proper re-location or to its elimination should be made. No knowledge was had by any witnesses of such a study having been made, although all agreed that a general survey of the territory adjacent to Santa Monica Boulevard in this vicinity, to determine what crossings, if any, are needed and the best locations therefor, would be helpful.

It does not appear that the convenience that would be created for the very small amount of traffic local to Hancock Avenue that would use the proposed crossing justifies its opening and the resultant hazard to highway and railway traffic. The record indicates that a large amount of traffic crosses the Pacific Electric tracks along this territory in order to use the right hand roadway along Santa Monica Boulevard. The proposed crossing would result in a diversion of this sort of traffic from existing crossings, thereby spreading the hazard over a greater territory. The record does not show that additional facilities are needed for such traffic. We, therefore, conclude that public convenience and necessity do not require the construction of this crossing and that the application should be denied. The following order will so provide.

O R D E R

The County of Los Angeles having made application for authority to construct a public street known as Hancock Avenue at grade across two main line tracks of the Pacific Electric Railway Company at a point opposite the intersection of Hancock Avenue with Santa Monica Boulevard in said County of Los Angeles, State of California, a public hearing having been held, the matter having been duly submitted, the Commission being now fully advised and basing its order upon the conclusion and findings of fact as stated above,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that this application be and it is hereby denied.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 6th day of June, 1930.

CC Seaver

John B. Curtis

W. J. Lee

COMMISSIONERS.