



## KENSINGTON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT Emergency Preparedness Committee Meeting

Agenda

Thursday, September 24, 2020 3:00 – 5:00pm

### Via Zoom Teleconference

This meeting will be conducted exclusively in remote access format in compliance with Executive Order N-29-20 issued by Governor Newsom and the Contra Costa County Shelter-in-Place Order.

### Join the meeting

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

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Webinar ID: 977 7611 1941

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Directors: Larry Nagel and Kevin Padian  
Public Members: Ms. Lisa Caronna, Ms. Katie Gluck, Mr. Peter Guerrero, Mr. Peter Liddell,  
Ms. Danielle Madugo, Mr. Paul Moss, Mr. David Spath

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Public comment on items not on the agenda
3. Recommendation to accept minutes from July 30 meeting (ACTION)
4. Brief reports from EPC members: **[15 min total for all items]**
5. Discussion Items
  - 5.1. Changes to Kensington Traffic and Evacuation Patterns Now Completed (INFORMATION)
  - 5.2. Recommendation to ask the Board to request the El Cerrito Fire Department and the KPPCSD to use Nixle and NextDoor to (1) notify the public of Red Flag Days and (2) notify the public in advance of the first warning of impending Diablo Wind Events (ACTION)
  - 5.3. Status of Proposal for a Pilot Program to Provide Emergency Radios to Members of the Public (DISCUSSION/ACTION)
  - 5.4. Status and Future Steps for Investigating the Acquisition and Installment of Emergency Public Address Systems for Kensington (DISCUSSION)
  - 5.5. Request for the Board to Approve Action Items Proposed by the Kensington Police Department Regarding Investigation into Potential Changes in Parking Configuration

on six segments of Kensington streets, including public input, and to approve the production (no cost) of an educational video to explain the rationale for the proposed parking changes (ACTION) (supporting material)

- 5.6. Request from Emergency Preparedness Committee to Hire a Part-Time Emergency Preparedness Coordinator (Discussion and possible ACTION) (supporting material)
- 5.7. Preliminary calculations of the traffic load on Kensington's streets during an emergency evacuation with little warning; implications for educating residents (DISCUSSION)(supporting material)
6. Future Agenda Items:
  - 6.1. To be discussed
7. Scheduling next meeting
8. Adjournment



**TO:** Emergency Preparedness Committee  
Kensington Fire Protection District

**DATE:** September 24, 2020

**RE:** Emergency Parking and Evacuation Planning

**SUBMITTED BY:** Mary A. Morris-Mayorga, Interim General Manager

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## **Recommended Action**

For information only; no action requested at this time.

## **Background**

Beginning in 2019, Supervisor Gioia's office has held meetings with local agencies focused on Wildcat Canyon/Tilden Park fire prevention and response that arose from resident concerns. On July 9, 2020 a meeting was held to clarify roles of County Public works and local law enforcement; background and meeting notes are attached.

Officer Brad Harms presented potential parking configuration changes to support evacuation traffic flow (map attached) to determine County Public Works steps required. He would lead community outreach if the plan proceeds. If the KPPCSD and KFPD pass resolutions of support for this, Supervisor Gioia would pass a traffic resolution to initiate County Public Works efforts.

As KPPCSD is in charge of traffic, they have begun a public outreach program and may take action at a future meeting. If that occurs or in the interim, the KFPD may wish to hear the presentation by Officer Harms to learn more about this project. appropriate.

## **Fiscal Impact**

There would be no fiscal impact from this item.

**Attachments:** Emergency Parking and Evacuation Planning Background/Meeting Notes  
Letter from Residents on Windsor  
Map of Proposed Parking Direction Changes

## Item 5.5

### PROPOSED INITIAL SAFETY PARKING CHANGES FOR KENSINGTON, PHASE ONE

As everyone knows, Kensington is a small town built gradually over several decades but not optimally planned. Our terrain is steep and complex, our roads are narrow and winding, and parking is a perennial problem. We have over 5000 people clustered into a square mile. Getting cars past each other on these narrow streets is difficult at the best of times. We have to make plans in case of emergency.

What we've learned is that in the event of an emergency – such as a fire roaring through Tilden Park – we need better plans in order to evacuate everyone effectively. Our Police and Fire Departments are working together to raise everyone's awareness and help get residents prepared to evacuate. A big part of this is making sure that your path to safety is as clear as possible. And that may require a few changes.

Last year the Fire Board commissioned a Traffic Evacuation Study using experts from UC Berkeley's Institute for Transportation Studies. These experts measured every street in town and counted the cars. They planned out possibilities for evacuating. And they made a series of recommendations for how we can change our traffic patterns to help everyone evacuate more safely.

With this new Traffic Evacuation Study, we have data to work with. The most problematic area for evacuation in town is the southeast part. This roughly encompasses the neighborhoods from the Summit Reservoir to around Hilltop School. The streets are narrow and steep, and parking is tight. And it's not always oriented in the most efficient direction for evacuation and safety.

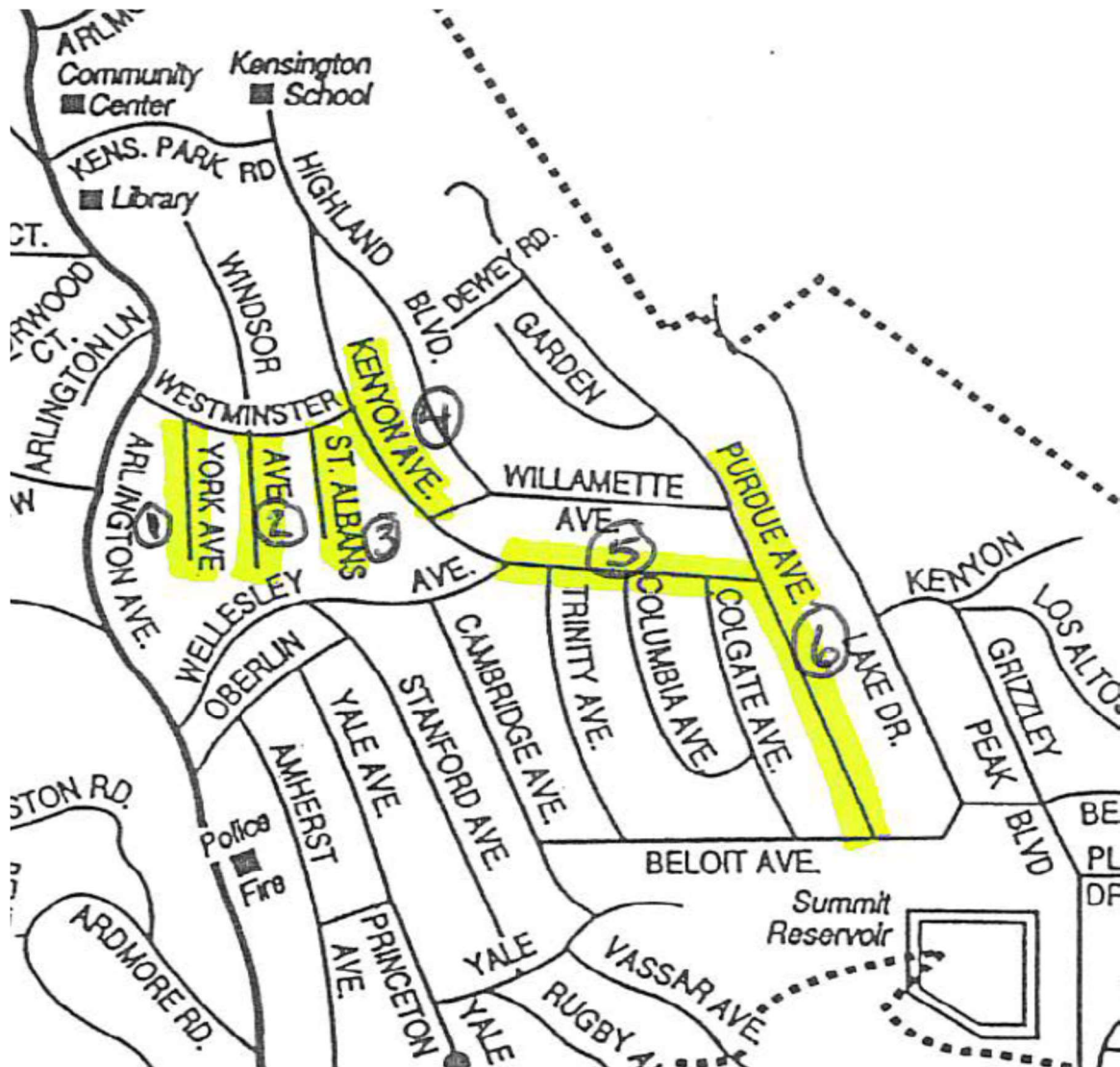
In considering traffic recommendations, we focused first on the area around Hilltop School, because we want to keep our children safe and be able to get them out quickly in case of emergency. This means coordinating those plans with surrounding streets. There are some changes in the orientation of parking on some street segments that can be made for everyone's safety.

At the outset, we want to consider six changes, which fall into two groups. The first group is the three one-block cul-de-sacs off Westminster. These are York, Windsor, and St. Albans. Right now, the cars are parked on the west side of the street, facing the cul-de-sac. And frankly, that's very hazardous. In case of an emergency, every car on that street has to do a K-turn to face outward. This will slow everyone's evacuation. And if someone tries to drive to the end of the cul-de-sac to turn around, they'll be going in the opposite direction of evacuating traffic. So this is not workable.

On these three blocks, it makes sense to turn parking to the other side of the street, facing north toward Westminster. It's a simple shift, but it can save lives.

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The second group of considered changes is on Purdue and Kenyon. Specifically, the changes are:



1. **York Avenue** (Note: new direction the parked vehicles will now be facing, is outward towards Westminister, no longer facing the end of the cul-de-sac).
2. **Windsor Avenue** (Note: new direction the parked vehicles will now be facing, is outward towards Westminister, no longer facing the end of the cul-de-sac).
3. **St. Albans** (Note: new direction the parked vehicles will now be facing, is outward towards Westminister, no longer facing the end of the cul-de-sac).
4. **Kenyon Avenue** between Willamette Avenue and Westminister. (Note: -New direction the parked vehicles will now be facing, is downhill towards Arlington Avenue).
5. **Kenyon Avenue** between Purdue Avenue and Wellesley Avenue. (Note: -New direction the parked vehicles will now be facing, is downhill towards Arlington Avenue).
6. **Purdue Avenue** between Beloit Avenue and Kenyon Avenue. (Note: -New direction the parked vehicles will now be facing, is downhill towards Arlington Avenue).

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We believe, based on the data from the traffic study and the larger picture for all of Kensington, that these changes are going to make this neighborhood safer. We know it's not a perfect solution for everyone. Some people will feel inconvenienced. We understand that, and we're sorry to have to ask you to change. But this is good change, and we hope you'll cooperate to help your neighbors.

We want to hear your concerns, and we'll do everything we can if there's a problem. We also want you to think of your neighbors, not just in your immediate neighborhood, but in those uphill from you and downhill from you, wherever you live. All of you will have to evacuate in case of an emergency. A choke point, a traffic jam, anywhere in the system will affect others. And these choke points prevent fire engines and other emergency vehicles from getting where they need to be. Many of our street segments that will need to be used in an evacuation have parking on both sides of the street with room for only one lane of traffic. All the cars on one side of the street will have to do K-turns to face the evacuation direction. The cumulative effect of this pattern will stall evacuation for blocks and blocks, taking time that we will not have.

These are the first of a number of changes that Kensington Police and Fire, working with the County Supervisor's office, will want to propose. But other things are happening. We're removing the concrete bollards around Kensington Park and elsewhere and replacing them with chain link that can be removed in emergencies to help evacuation. We've arranged with Sunset View Cemetery to allow evacuation through their property at the gate at Sunset and Franciscan. Our traffic experts estimate that this will drain 30% of traffic through the hills and alleviate stress on surrounding streets. And once we work out the details, you should be seeing blue emergency evacuation signs at important intersections throughout town.

We ask the District Boards and the people of Kensington to support these proposed changes because in an emergency they will save lives. Please approve the proposed motions so that we can proceed in this vital work. Thank you.

*1. The Board considers approving a request sponsored by the KPD and the Emergency Preparedness Committee of the KFPD, based on recommendations of the Traffic Evacuation study commissioned by the KFPD, to recommend to the County proposed parking orientation changes on six Kensington street segments. (ACTION)*

*2. The Board considers approving the production of an educational video, to be accessed on the websites of both Boards, with public safety officials explaining the need for evacuation preparations and how proposed parking changes implement that. (ACTION)*

**Draft Proposed Job Description  
Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, KFPD**

The Kensington Fire Protection District (KFPD) seeks a part-time Coordinator of the implementation of Emergency Preparedness measures approved by the KFPD Board. Principal duties will be in three major areas:

1. Rebuilding of Kensington's CERT program, including not only earthquake preparation but emergency evacuation procedures, house hardening and safe vegetation practices, and neighborhood alert coordination;
2. Education of Kensington's public about emergency alert and evacuation procedures and advice, using District website and other media, NextDoor, the Outlook and other outlets, in coordination with the Emergency Preparedness Committee;
3. Working with local and county officials to implement the District's goals of emergency preparedness and public safety.

The Coordinator will report to the District's General Manager through the EPC, which will set the immediate goals and objectives of the position, with the general supervision of the KFPD Board. This is a position of activism, communication, and education, not of administration.

The successful candidate will have at least a Bachelor's Degree with a specialization (or substantial life experience) in public administration, writing, conservation biology, or any field related to public safety and communication. CERT expertise is required. Familiarity with District structure and operations is desirable but can be acquired on the job. Salary and hours, not to exceed 50%, are negotiable depending on experience.

Candidates will please submit a CV with personal contact information, along with a statement of no more than a page summarizing your training and experience and why you are the best fit for this position. Send to [fire@kensingtonfire.org](mailto:fire@kensingtonfire.org) by [date]. The KFPD is an equal opportunity employer. [etc.]