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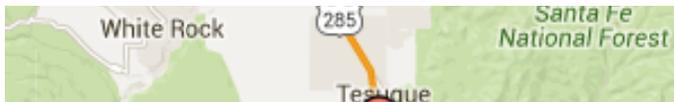
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Don Gaspar Avenue: Bike lane wins parking committee backing

Supporter says change would help eliminate bottleneaking

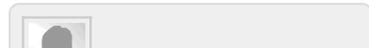
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Posted: Wednesday, September 19, 2007 12:00 am

Tom Sharpe The New Mexican



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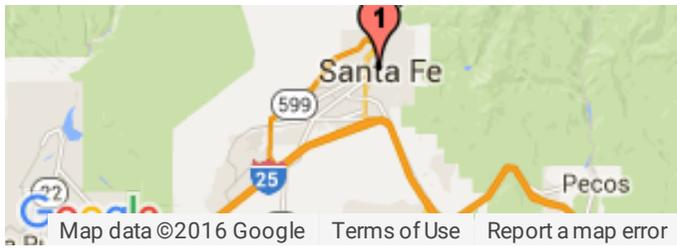
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Danny Trejo

Robert Wuhl



Posted on Sep 19, 2007
by [thomassharpe](#)

bicycle lane
would replace
parking spaces
on the west side

of Don Gaspar Avenue under a plan
approved Tuesday by the Parking
Advisory Committee.

The committee's recommendation applies only to the one block of Don Gaspar within the Business Capital District — the 500 block from Paseo de Peralta to Santa Fe Avenue.

But it is the first step toward a bike lane all the way from Paseo de Peralta to Cordova Road. The next stop is the Public Works Committee.

Eight people, most of them residents of the neighborhood, spoke at Tuesday's meeting. Five favored replacing the parallel parking spaces with a bike lane while three favored keeping parking as it is.

The Parking Advisory Committee unanimously approved the plan and urged the City Council to allow "30-degree reverse diagonal parking" on the east side of Don Gaspar.

Parking Director Bill Hon said some of the parallel-parking spaces lost on the west side of the street could be made up by allowing cars to park diagonally at a 30-degree angle on the east side. If cars park at 45 degrees, as city code now requires, they would stick out too far to allow both a 5-foot bike lane and an 11-foot vehicle lane, he said.

Allowing cars to back into diagonal parking spaces, instead of with their fronts against the curb, would improve safety by giving drivers better visibility when pulling into traffic, Hon said.



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Among those endorsing the bicycle lane Tuesday was Nate Downey who presented a petition signed by 200 people. He said only two people he approached in his Don Gaspar neighborhood opposed the plan for a bike lane.

"It's a political nightmare to be against this thing," Downey said. "If you want to do something that's for the will of the people, you put the bike lane in."

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Bicycle enthusiast Dan Baker, who lives on the far south side of Santa Fe, said it is difficult for bicycles and motorized vehicles to share Don Gaspar because the street is one-way going south and uphill. He said this means slower-moving bicyclists hold up motorized traffic and create bottlenecks.

Opposing the plan was LaMerle Boyd who said eliminating parking on Don Gaspar's west side will encourage people to park in the lot of her office building in the 500 block.

Michael Pottow, who lives in the 700 block of Don Gaspar, said eliminating parking spaces would inconvenience his wife, who is disabled. It also might encourage speeding because having parking on both sides of the street creates a traffic-calming measure, he said.

Contact Tom Sharpe at 986-3080 or tsharpe@sfnwmexican.com.



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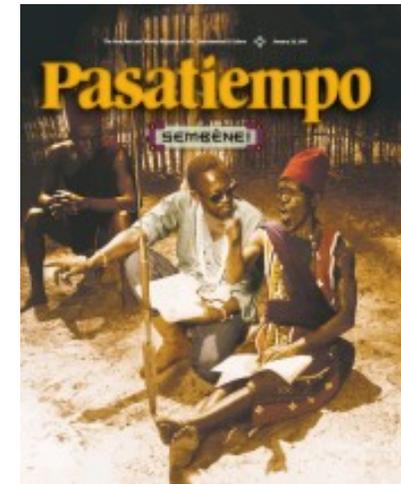
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