

**TRAFFIC ADVISORY BOARD
CORAL GABLES YOUTH CENTER
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA
JULY 21, 2009**

		S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	
MEMBERS:													APPOINTED BY:
Ian Martinez		P	E	*	P	E	P	P	E	P	P	P	Donald D. Slesnick, II
Larry D. Kries	**	E	P	*	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	Maria Anderson
Deborah Swain											P	P	Rafael “Ralph” Cabrera, Jr.
Frank Quesada		E	P	P	*	P	E	P	A	A	E	E	William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Chris Zoller											P	P	Wayne “Chip” Withers
Donna Kupper											P	P	Commission-as-a-Whole
Al Smith											P	P	City Manager

(*) Board voted not to hold a meeting due to holiday vacations
(**) Board meeting cancelled due to threatening hurricane

A - Absent
E – Excused
P - Present

STAFF

Esther Zabalo, Civil Engineer
Mirtha Francomacaro
Lt. A. Diaz, Police Department

CONSULTANT

Ramon Soria, President, Marlin Engineering
Yamilet Senespleda, Marlin Engineering

GUEST

Mr. Emilio J. Monte, resident

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

Chairperson's announcements:

The minutes for this Board are almost transcription. Mr. Martinez explained that the previous Chairman wanted to be very thorough, word for word verbatim. Discussion: Ms. Swain proposed for this meeting and the next meeting, for the draft minutes are sent to her for review and comments, to try and come with more concise minutes.

The Bicycle Master Plan is of particular interest to Ms. Swain, and discussed how the Board can incorporate some of the components of the Bicycle Master Plan into traffic calming, which are really considered traffic calming devices. When proposals for improvements on the streets that are slated to have bicycle lanes at some point in the next few years, by the time traffic calming devices go in (medians, and circles, etc.) bicycle lanes should be considered. She asked the Members if they were interested in receiving a copy of the Bicycle Master Plan to review and comments. The members indicated they would like to have a copy.

Donna Kupper asked to receive a current list of traffic improvements that have been installed. Esther Zabalo to provide a copy to the Members.

Absenses

Motion: Mr. Martinez moved that Mr. Quesada's absence be shown as an Excused Absence. Dr. Smith seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes: Draft of the June minutes were distributed to the Members. There was not enough time to review the minutes so it was decided to e-mail the draft to Ms. Swain for her comments and approval. They will then be e-mailed to the Members. The members agreed that the minutes should be more concise.

Introductions: Board members, City staff and guests introduced themselves.

Galiano and Sidonia

Mr. Monte lives at the corner of Galiano and Sidonia and had requested the City traffic consultant perform a study of that intersection. He expressed that traffic is getting worse since new buildings are going up in that area, and complained that the cars are speeding through Galiano in order to get to Eighth Street.

The consultant's recommendation for Galiano and Sidonia is a circle or mid-block crosswalks and/or Signalization.

Discussion about the complaint and recommendation included a question about a proposed Santillane modification, making it one lane and stop at Galiano and that that any project of such magnitude would have had to go to the Historic Preservation Board for approval.

Ms. Zabalo commented that the upcoming Ponce de Leon Median Project is going to affect this intersection. Mr. Martinez recommended that we not only look at the streets but at the Galiano Corridor, as a whole. Mr. Soria explained that his firm has been studying the area and they have some recommendations. Both Fire and Police Department have some concerns about Galiano, which is a major route for them for emergency vehicles access.

Galiano is a residential collector, wide with parking on both sides. All our studies indicate that traffic calming is needed on Galiano. Mr. Soria noted that four-way stops reduce speeding. Mr. Monte indicated he supports four-way stop signs.

Discussion followed about the advantages of traffic circles. Mr. Soria offered to work with the Fire Department regarding concerns about traffic circles and will report back to the Board. He also indicated that speed tables and crosswalks are another alternative, should the Fire Department does not approved the installation of the traffic circles, and the importance of signage, to make drivers aware, including flashing signal for pedestrian crosswalks.

Mr. Martinez made a motion that Mr. Soria meet with the Police and Fire Departments to discuss the installation of traffic circles on Galiano and to come back to the Board with their recommendation. He would also like to have residents in his area to attend the meeting when the consultant comes back with the Police and Fire Departments recommendations. Seconded by Mr. Zoller. Motion carried.

The crosswalk and pedestrian light in front of South Miami City Hall. Mr. Soria noted because the use of pavers is very expensive, and explained that "texturizing" is more expensive than a circle for long stretches. He also commented that the street must be wide in order to install a median, and that Galiano cannot be realigned. The only other things we have left are the circles. He feels that is the best solution. All he needs to do is talk to the Fire Department and show them that they can put their big trucks around there with a certain amount of speed. He noted that in the late 1990s he went in a fire truck and the truck was able to go around the circles.

Mr. Monte thanked the consultant and asked him to please do whatever it was needed to do something in the area. He again thanked the Board Members for allowing him to attend the meeting. Once we have the Fire Department's comments we will let Mr. Monte know.

Presentation by Consultant:

Mr. Soria reviewed how the traffic calming process started in the City of Coral Gables, and the creation of the Traffic Zones. The residents wanted street closures, but once they saw that installing traffic calming devices eliminated accidents, people started accepting them. Since then the City has installed medians, diverters, speed humps, and traffic circles.

Mr. Soria worked with the Miami-Dade County to develop traffic calming guidelines for all the municipalities within the jurisdiction of Miami-Dade County. The guidelines set the steps to follow in order to consider volume, width of the streets, and what constitutes traffic calming needs, among others. Discussion, and questions and answers followed.

Mr. Soria explained the different types and purposed of traffic calming devices. Diverters divert the traffic to other streets and the County will require expensive studies and they will require us to look at less-impacting alternatives before we come up with diverters as a solution. Median barriers reduces the volume and act as diverter. Speed humps are only four inches high, but are difficult to get approved by the County. We have two approved speed tables in the City of Coral Gables. We did a study of emergency vehicles and speed tables. Semi-diverters restrict traffic direction. Traffic Circles: are the most common are very effective for safety at the intersections. They are usually designed with four-way yield signs. Mr. Soria continued to discuss the signage and why some circles have stop signs and others have yield signs. Mr. Kries asked about circles that have stop signs on only two of the approaching roads. Ms. Zabalo asked Mr. Kries to give her the exact locations of the circles he was talking about, so that she may check with the County about the yield and/or four-way stop signs. Re-alignment of roads can be expensive. Medians are effective in slowing traffic, but require adequate road width. An example discussed was the landscaped median on both sides of Granada Bridge and the Alhambra Circle Bridge.

The County requires us to look at the least restrictive measures to calm traffic. Mr. Soria noted that traffic enforcement is crucial but the Police Department does not have the personnel to patrol all the streets in the City so we must control the volume and cut traffic.

Further discussion followed about the County's requirements and levels (three levels) for the various traffic calming devices. Mr. Soria prepared a chronology of what he had discussed which will be sent to the Board Members.

Mr. Soria explained that in order to qualify for traffic calming the volume on residential streets has to be over 1,500 vehicles a day, and non-residential street must exceed 3,000. Cut-through traffic on residential streets has to be 25%. Mr. Soria explained a study is performed to determine cut-through traffic.

Problem areas are prioritized by the Consultant has developed a point system. Bike lanes and pedestrian assigned areas are also taken into consideration when they prepare their studies. Mr. Soria explained that he considers the Bicycle Master Plan when he makes his recommendations on traffic calming.

Traffic projects Update:

Ms. Zabalo indicated that so far Hernando and Zamora and Palermo and Cardena have been completed. The rest of the projects are at the survey or design stages. There are three runabout projects (Blue Road roundabouts, which are very big, like the one on Segovia and Coral Way) which will be funded by Impact Fees from the County. Those projects have been approved by this Board. Right now we are waiting for the County's final approval. It is expected construction will begin September or October.

For the Segovia Median, from Bird Road to Biltmore Way, we already have the agreement from the County and will be brought to the County's Commission meeting in October. Construction is expected to begin next year. Ms. Zabalo explained that with the Segovia Median we had public involvement. This is a project that is funded by the County in order to improve capacity so it did not have to go through the traffic calming process. The Blue Road roundabouts required residents' approval.

Mr. Soria described the recent meeting with the County regarding Boabadilla Street. The County approved what the consultant and the City recommended. The County will have a representative at the meeting with the residents. The County is in agreement with our approach.

Ms. Zabalo noted that Mr. Delgado had asked the County's Public Works Director for funding for striping and was told that they did not have funding in their budget for all of the striping projects, but asked for the City to submit locations and present it to the County and they would try to include those locations in their schedule. Striping at the traffic circles is the responsibility of the City.

Board Related Commission Items:

Ms. Zabalo: If we get approval of the County, we can then award the contract for Blue Road roundabouts at our next Commission meeting.

City Update:

Nothing to report

Old Business:

Ms. Mari Molina, Business District Director, has requested to attend our next meeting to give the Board an update on the Miracle Mile Streetscape. The members indicated they would like to hear the presentation.

New Business:

Trolley: Ms. Kupper asked if the Trolley was to charge a fare, if it was going in front of the Commission or was it something that is just being talked about, and if it part of our Board's jurisdiction. Mr. Martinez noted that this Board has jurisdiction over parking issues and he foresees a lot of problems with the angle parking. Ms. Swain noted that this issue had been presented to other Boards, and for us to wait and see the presentation. Ms. Zabalo explained that it was not on the Agenda for the next Commission meeting. Nothing will be done without this Board's knowledge and approval.

Administrative: Ms. Kupper would like to receive the Agenda with sufficient time so that she knows who will be in attendance and prepare for the meeting.

Sidewalk installation on Old Cutler Road: Ms. Kupper asked if we had heard anything about sidewalk installation on Old Cutler Road in front of the Fire Station to Matheson Expansion. No one had heard or knew about it.

Ms. Swain inquired if there have been any studies conducted on Valencia, which is three lanes from Douglas Road to Le Jeune Road, to change it to two lanes. No studies have been conducted. Discussion as to the parallel parking on both sides and it is not safe for vehicles. She noted that Andalusia is two lanes, except for the turning lane, and traffic moves a lot faster.

Ms. Swain requested that the Minutes reflect this discussion and the fact that the Board is interested in this topic.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05p.m.