

**TRAFFIC ADVISORY BOARD
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA
APRIL 20, 2010**

MEMBERS	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	APPOINTED BY:
	09	09	09	09	09	09	09	09	09	10	10	10	
Ian Martinez	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	E	Donald D. Slesnick, II
Larry D. Kries	P	P	P	P	P	E	E	P	P	P	P	P	Maria Anderson
Deborah Swain	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
Frank Quesada	E	E	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P	P	#	William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Chris Zoller*	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	Wayne "Chip" Withers
Donna Kupper*	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	Commission-as-a-Whole
Al Smith*	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	City Manager

P - Present

E - Excused Absence

A - Absent

*** - New Member**

+ - No Meeting

(#) Resigned

Commissioner Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.

Administrative Staff

Patrick Salerno, City Manager

Maria Menendez, Assistant City Manager

Staff

Ernesto R. Pino, Interim Public Works Director

James Kay, Engineering Division Supervisor

Esther Zabalo, Civil Engineer

Mirtha Francomacaro, CPS, Central Division

Lt. Agustin Diaz, Police Department

Guest

Nelson Ortiz, Consulting Engineer, Publix Supermarkets

Mrs. Swain called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. She noted that Commissioner Cabrera is coming to the meeting to address the Bicycle Path Master Plan. When he gets in she would interrupt the meeting and since there were visitors, she asked everyone to introduce himself/herself.

Minutes of March 16, 2010:

Copies of the March Minutes were distributed to the Members. Upon Mrs. Swain's question as to whether there was any discussion, Mr. Kries was recognized.

Mr. Kries noted that Page 3, second paragraph, the intent was to have both Police and Fire Departments involved in the approval of any traffic calming installation and there was already a procedure in place but if it wasn't, it needs to be put in place so that every project is brought to the Fire and Police Departments for them to sign off. He would like to have this correction to the March Minutes so reflected.

Mrs. Zabalo reiterated that both Fire and Police are always invited to attend the meetings, and the County does not sign off without the approval of those departments. Mr. Kries said that Chief Reed noted that there are streets that have traffic

calming devices on streets that should be open, so there appears to be a disconnect. Mrs. Menendez asked if the conceptual plans should be submitted to Fire and Police prior to coming to the Board or should they be submitted as part of the design. Mrs. Swain said that a citizen makes a complaint and brings up an issue which may require a traffic study. In the meantime during this discussion there is someone from the Police and Fire Department. They do attend the public meetings. Mrs. Swain asked staff if they get copies of the conceptual design phase. Mrs. Zabalo said that they do not, but noted that for the large projects they are invited to the pre-construction meetings. Mrs. Swain clarified that the Fire Department indicated that their problem is not with the traffic circles, but with the diverters approaching the traffic circles, as they demonstrated on a video. They also want to make sure that there are no devices ever put on the main arteries and gave us a list of those. She continued that we also have issues on circles that were already constructed where the curbs may be too high on one side, they are not leveled but they are too high a further hindrance trying to get around them. We want to make sure that we not only cooperate but that they are satisfied. We do not know if there is a formal mechanism, but that was kind of the nature of our discussion.

Mr. Kries noted that there are some traffic calming devices on some of those roads the Fire Department does not want any devices installed, but there are some traffic calming devices on some of them.

Dr. Smith said that the Fire Department could provide a map showing the arteries where they do not want traffic calming devices installed – Mrs. Swain noted that they had provided a list of those arteries. Mrs. Zabalo noted that the traffic calming devices shown on the video were installed in 2001-2002. PW does no longer install diverters.

Mrs. Swain suggested the following sentence could be added to last month's Minutes indicating that the **Fire Department also delivered the list of roads where they do not want any traffic calming installed.** She also said that maybe under Old Business we could take a formal action as to what the Board recommends for the process.

Upon motion made by Dr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Zoller, the Minutes were approved as amended.

Excused Absences:

Mr. Zoller moved to accept Mr. Martinez' request to be excused; Dr. Smith seconded. Motion carried.

Secretary's Report:

Mr. Kay noted that the Biltmore and Segovia roundabout is open, but there are still some items to take care of. Blue Road roundabouts were completed but PW is taking a look at putting some striping across the street at those two intersections, which may include installing sidewalk ramps, based on a citizen request that PW will look into it. The process for the proposed speed tables on Santa Maria was completed but it failed to make the County's required two-thirds vote, so that project will not be implemented. PW is getting ready to open the bids on the Ponce de Leon Boulevard median on Thursday, which will start construction the early part of the summer, and finish fairly fast. Mr. Kay responded that there are funds for the project, and bike lanes will be added to the side of the road. It will not only beautify the road but it will also enhance that neighborhood.

Mr. Kries pointed out that since the last meeting, there was a traffic diversion project that was completed that was not on the list –Sevilla and Le Jeune Road, a right-turn only diverter, which he believed was related to the old Bacardi Building Project. He suggested that our Board should have a list of all projects that are going to occur, no matter the funding source. Furthermore, this is one of the streets that is on the Fire Department's list from the last meeting where they don't want any traffic diverters. There needs to be some communication and a process should be formalized. He expressed shock that the Fire Department did not know about this, because he recalled this project very well because of the Codina deal. He reiterated that we ought to have all projects on the list, whether paid for by the City or a developer or anyone else.

At this time and for the benefit of those present who do not attend the meetings, Mrs. Swain asked the Members to introduce themselves. During the introductions, Lt. Diaz said that this will be his last Traffic Advisory Board meeting since he is retiring next month. He will bring either Sgt. Medina or Sgt. Garcia from his department to the next meeting. The Members wished him well.

Report from Publix:

Mr. Ortiz, consulting engineer for Publix reported that the Publix will be located at the intersection of Flagler Street, Ponce de Leon Boulevard and Douglas Road. Construction has already started. The project consists of a three story structure with shopping on the ground floor and parking on the second and third floors. All access to the ramp is from Ponce de Leon Boulevard. Douglas Road will have the truck ingress for loading within the building and egress off of Ponce. Flagler and Douglas are major roadways, so there is no other connection to those roads. All vehicular traffic coming in and out of Publix should be coming from Ponce de Leon Boulevard. The building permit should be issued pretty soon but they have all underground approvals from different agencies to install the water and sewer lines and that work is going on now. David Plummer & Associates, Inc. performed a traffic study. He further commented that Ponce is currently very lightly travelled. Since it is a County Road, they had to dedicate five feet of right-of-way and a future five foot pedestrian easement on Douglas. At some point in the future the County is going to extend a lane and do some signalized modifications on both signals. To questions, Mr. Ortiz responded that there are a couple of hundred parking spaces, that the land is owned by Publix. He also noted that it is a very unique project since a corner of it is in the City of Miami and $\frac{3}{4}$ in the City of Coral Gables, and it is the only project he has done with Dade County and two municipalities and two fire departments. Mrs. Kupper said she thought that Mr. Martinez had some concern about a one way street, because of the two municipalities that everyone will meet on that corner. Mr. Ortiz will look at the traffic report and will report to the Board to answer the traffic related questions. He said that he has been there at different times and there is little vehicular traffic on Ponce, other than maybe during early and afternoon rush hour. Publix hours are from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. and the deliveries occur, at least the larger trucks, quite early in the morning. The other trucks and vehicles come at different hours. Mr. Ortiz indicated that they had gone through Stage 1 and 2 of the DRC (Development Review Committee-B&Z), met with commissioners, and had public meetings, the Architectural Review Board. Mr. Kries stated that a project of this magnitude should have come to this Board.

Mr. Ortiz noted that the windows on the residential side cannot be seen through. He clarified there will be 233 parking spaces, but did not know how many daily customers were expected. Mr. Ortiz said that the intent is that once this Publix is open they will close the store that is to the northwest on Flagler. He said that they will have a cafeteria window along Ponce to attract people and there is quite a big area with benches and tables. Mr. Ortiz offered to visit the Board whenever the Members wanted to address any issues. He is in the area quite frequently and would be glad to attend. The Members thanked him for the presentation.

Report from Commissioner Cabrera:

Commissioner Cabrera thanked the Members for allowing him to visit to let the Members know that he has formed a new ad-hoc committee, which will include this Committee's Chair Person. The Commissioner explained that sometime in 2004 a Bicycle Lane Master Plan was developed by the City's consulting engineer using funding from the one-half penny tax. He explained that bicycle lanes are an integral part of any community, and should be available to everyone who lives, works or plays in the City. The Commissioner met with City Manager Pat Salerno, a Assistant City Manager Maria Menendez and Interim Public Works Director Ernesto Pino for an update on the implementation of the projects in the Master Plan. The meeting centered on the work that has been done and like in any government, funding is the real problem. He reached out to other governments through this newly-formed special committee, which includes residents who have expressed a strong desire to improve the quality of life for cycling. Other members of local government were invited including Miami-Dade County Commissioner Carlos Gimenez (his senior staff member, Ruben Arias attended), the Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator for City of Miami, Collin Worth, one of Mayor Tomas Regalado's assistant, Violet, who handles a lot of cycling initiatives, was also participating. The purpose of this Committee is to provide Commissioner Cabrera with feedback on the Bicycle Master Plan, and at their next meeting he expects to receive feedback on some action that can be taken that he can then relay back to staff. For example, re-striping is the easier, as stated on page 1 in the Bicycle Master. However, bicycle lane striping requires a certain pavement width. Commissioner Cabrera spoke to Congresswoman Ileana Ross-Lethinen to inquire about some federal funding for some of these projects. Some of the new Committee members know a lot about finding ways to find the right funding sources, including Miami-Dade County's MPO Pedestrian/Bicycle Coordinator, David Henderson, a Coral Gables resident, and Collin Worth, from the City of Miami.

Commissioner Cabrera went on to explain that half a million dollars, according to David, was already allocated to Communities throughout Miami-Dade County for bicycle-related projects and another half a million is to become available.

Approximately nine or ten months ago, a company gave the City \$5,000 which was used to purchase 30 bicycle racks that Public Works installed throughout the City, mostly in parks. The Commissioner hopes to secure another \$5,000 or \$6,000, to purchase another thirty bike racks concentrated in the downtown area so that cyclists do not need to park their bikes and lock them on parking meters, benches, and trees. He will also be talking to the City Attorney and the Planning Director to specifically look at several cities in the Northwest or the West, including San Francisco; Portland, Oregon; Seattle, Washington; because they have been innovators in improving the cycling experience and have been very creative. This includes performing construction in such a way that people think of having showers in buildings and parking storage, etc. He has begun some preliminary discussions with a company that specializes in installing storage containers and inside the storage containers are bicycles that can be used with a special card, then that bicycle can be deposited back at that particular storage facility. These storage units are used in both Paris and Barcelona. So very unique and so very creative (comment from a Member – Paris does) and Commissioner Cabrera said he knew that Paris does. Also, Barcelona. The biggest program in this Country is called “SPOKES” and they are very big with universities. The Commissioner expressed his enthusiasm about the concept, and is excited about getting input from the individuals on his new Committee.

Mrs. Swain added that we see a lot of resurfacing projects and we are not always watching to make sure that bicycle lanes are included. She also pointed out that there are opportunities for striping that create a safety zone for bicycle riding. It may not be an official bicycle lane, but a *Share the Road* sign can be put up and there is some space on the roadway edge so cyclist can move over and get out of the traffic. It is very interesting that there is a source of funds specifically for bicycle lane striping. Mrs. Swain pointed out that we are fortunate Commissioner Cabrera, who is such a good champion in the City that wants to try and tackle this. This is great timing for the City and very interesting to our Board and it is wonderful a committee was formed.

Commissioner Cabrera clarified that this is an Ad-Hoc Committee made up of a small group of very nice people. He then described Ms. Swain's experience with attempting to obtain striping on University Drive from Blue Rd. to Bird Rd. by working with Public Works. University is not wide enough to accommodate 5-foot bicycle lanes. The City of Miami Bicycle Coordinator indicated that the requirement is not five feet, it's four feet. That is something that he will investigate to determine if that one-foot difference makes enough of a difference to proceed with a project like that. The map in the Master Plan shows that University Drive should have that bicycle lane corridor. There are many opportunities that we can focus on with the little funding that we have available, that we will be able to at least improve that part of our City.

Mr. Zoller asked Lt. Diaz if everyone is aware of the new law that every one must give a three foot wide berth to cyclists. He also stated that he was under the impression that cyclists are also supposed to obey the same rules, observing that he has never seen a cyclist stop at a stop sign. He then asked if there is any enforcement of this law. Lt. Diaz responded that bicycles must obey the same laws, but there is rarely any enforcement. Commissioner Cabrera added that what has been enforced is that when cyclists ride two or more abreast, they are treated like a motor vehicle, and are supposed to follow the same laws; stop at the same stop signs. They are supposed to yield at the yield signs and are supposed to go around a traffic calming or a roundabout, the same as a motor vehicle. He commended the Police Department for this enforcement. He then observed that he had obtained enforcement books for both the cyclists and the pedestrians from the Bicycle Association of Florida for the department. Mr. Zoller stated that they are more dangerous to drivers because they have, in many cases, had the attitude that they have the same rights that a pedestrian would, and that he has seen riding sometimes four abreast, on major corridors going through the roundabouts with reckless abandon and continued on their way, sometimes taking up the entire automobile lane, four abreast. Mrs. Swain responded that is why she asked last month if there are grants available for bicycle safety programs. Mr. Zoller commented that we got excellent press coverage from the Neighbors regarding the bicycle initiative.

Commissioner Cabrera noted that they all know to abide by the law, that they know they are supposed to carry a drivers' license and they know they have to obey the laws like everyone else, but they do not.

Mrs. Kupper described that in Minneapolis, where she spends a lot of time, the speed limit in the downtown area is 25 MPH. Businesses give cyclists a per diem for riding their bikes, and provide showers, indoor storage in case it is raining in the afternoon, they give them a certain number of bus passes that they can take the bus in case it is a rainy day. She also brought up the issue of resurfacing. She lives in Gables-by-the-Sea and they have done all the sewer work and the roads have been resurfaced, but that it is really dangerous to go north on Old Cutler Road. As a City she would feel better if Sunday mornings were reserved for the bicycle groups, since they are there anyway. Commissioner Cabrera responded that the problem is that

it requires a lot of resources from the Police Department, who would have to make sure that if people are invited to come cycling in our City they are going to be safe. Most of the cycling takes place in Keys Biscayne and Homestead, and that the City is a cut through to those destinations.

One other thing that was brought up in the Committee meeting the previous morning was "Miami Bike Days" which was a City of Miami Project under Mayor Diaz, and it continues. In fact, this week-end they will have a Miami Bike Day in the Grove. And at some point in time it would really be advantageous if the City of Coral Gables and the City of Miami could have joint Bike Day, putting the two resources together. Commissioner Cabrera will discuss with staff and see if that is available or if it is something we can do.

He envisions having an event in our City when the Farmers' Market is going on where all congregate at the Farmers' Market and have a children's rodeo where children could learn to ride safely, and mechanics there to teach how to solve problems. Perhaps there could be a historic tour through our City by Paul George, as he has done in the past with bicycles. There could even be a race. Commissioner Cabrera continued that the City is perfect for being a bicycle-friendly community and is perfectly situated. Although there are cut through drivers on weekdays, most cyclists ride on week-ends and early mornings. Even then cyclists confronted by drivers to get on the sidewalk and out of the street, and some who do not give the 3 foot wide berth. Another obstacle is pedestrians on the road, including ladies with strollers, roller blades, and dogs. Mrs. Kupper noted that a lot of times circles are installed but do not provide bike lanes and so going forward where and when do we make those provisions on the plans. Commissioner Cabrera said he did not know but that he would let the Public Works professional address that issue. Mr. Pino interjected that new roundabouts that are being installed do have bicycle lanes, not on the roundabouts but special lanes just for bikes. He mentioned the Biltmore/Segovia.

Commissioner Cabrera then expressed that the challenge is keeping bicycle lanes as a priority when there are projects that are traffic-related. He pointed out the Ponce de Leon Median project which was an opportunity to add bicycle lanes and that it was identified in the Master Plan to be a bicycle lane thoroughfare. Mr. Zoller observed that Ponce is problematic and that we should have a meeting with the Parking Board because of the safety issue with bicycles where there is angle parking.

Commissioner Cabrera pointed out that it happens in Boston, they have bicycles where there is angle parking and a car door is opened and hits a cyclist. Angle parking and bicycle lanes are a life safety issue. Mr. Zoller agreed with the Commissioner and commented that with a median (Ponce) would be even narrower. That, coupled with the angle parking will make a bicycle lane unfeasible. Commissioner Cabrera would like to see bicycle lanes along Miracle Mile. If Boston can do it, San Francisco, Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington can do it, we should be able to do it.

The Board Members thanked the Commissioner. Commissioner Cabrera then stated that one of the things we came away with yesterday with the Committee was that we really have to get this Board behind us in terms of the bicycle initiative and there is talk by Miami-Dade County Commissioner Gimenez of doing away with the one-half penny sales tax because some municipalities are not using it correctly. Mrs. Swain suggested that Commissioner Gimenez could put caveats instead of eliminating it. Commissioner Cabrera mentioned that Commissioner Gimenez will be attending the next meeting of his committee and he is a great advocate.

Commissioner Cabrera thanked everyone and congratulated staff on the roundabout and asked if PW was planning on planting trees soon. Mr. Pino informed him that we had to find the funding for it.

Old Business:

Mrs. Swain asked how we are doing on the stop sign on Augusto. Mr. Zoller has reached out to the resident and he has not returned the phone calls. So, at this point, Mr. Zoller agrees with him and thinks it is a great idea, but he has not been able to talk with him. He noted that we had a very large and expensive study on that intersection and proposal, too complicated and way too expensive, and this resident's proposal for one stop sign at this little street will go a long way toward resolving this problem. Staff is to find out from the resident if the stop sign is satisfactory and then contact the County.

Mrs. Swain brought up the discussion of the Minutes about seeing if there are some things that can be added to the official process to involve the Fire and Police Departments in the pre-design, design and construction phases of the calming devices to make sure they are okay. She suggested that staff make a recommendation to the Board on a process. Dr. Smith indicated that Chief Lowman had shown that even when they are built, they (traffic calming devices) are hard to mount because

sometimes the street is higher or lower on one side, and requested that they (staff) verify they are all mountable. Mr. Kay responded that all of the traffic circles are all mountable. It is the diverters, which are installed in the center which creates an impediment for the fire rescue vehicles. Mr. Zoller noted that when the circles on South Alhambra were reconfigured, a very stiff right-angle curb was installed, which could damage fire emergency vehicles that hit it. He told Mr. Pino that the circle is on South Alhambra Circle between Maynada and Nervia.

Mrs. Swain then asked if there is some reason why material seems to be cracking. Is there something that can be done with the material differently because we see a lot of the curbs that are starting to crack? Mr. Pino responded that PW would have to check; there are standard County details that we follow on the concrete. Mr. Kay indicated that it may not be the material; sometimes they are constructed without enough compaction under the brick pavers and they settle. Brick pavers go behind the curb and the pavers tend to settle down and it leaves an exposed edge which is more easily damaged.

Discussion followed regarding the proposed speed tables on Santa Maria, which were not approved by the residents. There are two the new speed humps in major thoroughfares through High Pines.? They are all County roads that now have speed humps, complete with signage and striping. One runs north and south and one runs east and west and the both now have numerous humps. (S.W. 54 Avenue and S.W. 76 Street). Mr. Zoller observed that they must have received County approval and are very effective. Mrs. Kupper said there is an area in South Miami where they are proposing them. Mrs. Swain mentioned a web site showing movable rubberized and they are less expensive and can be moved and spaced for larger vehicles, so that is something we could look at. Mr. Pino asked if they were permanently installed; Mrs. Swain responded that they are not.

Mrs. Kupper said that this is something we should continue to look into.

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 6:39 p.m.