

TRAFFIC ADVISORY BOARD
CORAL GABLES CITY HALL
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA
AUGUST 18, 2009

S O N D J F M A M J J A

MEMBERS

Ian Martinez	P	E	P	*	E	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
Larry D. Kries	E	P	P	*	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P
Deborah Swain										P	P	P
Frank Quesada	E	P	P	P	E	P	P	A	A	P	E	P
Chris Zoller										P	P	P
Donna Kupper										P	P	P
Al Smith										P	P	P

APPOINTED BY:

Donald D. Slesnick, II
Maria Anderson
Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Wayne "Chip" Withers
Commission-as-a-Whole
City Manager

STAFF

R. Alberto Delgado, P.E., Public Works Director
Esther Zabalo, Civil Engineer
Lt. A. Diaz, Police Department
Fire Chief Robert Lowman

CONSULTANT

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

GUESTS

Mari Molina, Director, Coral Gables Business District
Burton Hirsh, Coral Gables Business District
Javier Salman, C3TS, consultant for Coral Gables Business District

Ms. Swain called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. June 16th minutes were e-mailed to the Board Members. Mr. Kries moved to accept the June minutes, seconded by Mr. Zoller. Ms. Swain asked the question; the minutes were approved.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Mr. Delgado noted that Ms. Zabalo had prepared a map depicting all the traffic calming installations. He discussed circles, roundabouts, intersection re-alignments and medians. He indicated that the Ponce de Leon Boulevard Median had already been approved. Discussion among the members.

Projects: Currently we are working on the Madruga Avenue speed tables. Salzedo Street and Majorca and Brighton Place projects are expected to be completed in September. Bid Awards for the Blue Road and San Amaro, and Blue Road and Alhambra Circle will be presented at the next Commission meeting. The price was \$145,642.00 for both roundabouts, at a savings of \$65,000.00. Also the Segovia and Biltmore Way will be awarded at the next Commission meeting. \$310,000.00 and the estimated cost was \$350,000.00, a savings of \$40,000.00 which can be applied to other projects.

The Segovia Median, Joint Participation Agreement has already been approved by the County. It will go to the County Commission in October. After that we start the bidding process which will probably take a couple of months. Construction is expected to commence next year. Mr. Kries asked for a copy of the design.

Mr. Delgado explained that it will be mostly landscaping and even though it is open, there will be no dedicated turning lanes, to address Mr. Zoller's question. Mr. Delgado further noted that the median is wide enough and there will be enough space for vehicles to line-up and turn without blocking.

Mr. Delgado informed the Board Members that we are almost finished with the design of the second Phase of the Ponce de Leon Boulevard median. This phase will take the project from Alcazar to Salamanca, which is the street by the park. This project is funded with Impact Fees and stimulus funds. The project is expected to begin the first quarter of next year.

Ms. Swain inquired as to when the construction of the Blue Road roundabouts would commence. Mr. Delgado informed her that probably will start in October. Mr. Delgado noted that we would like to be finished before the holiday, but we are subject to the County.

Mr. Zoller commented if the price of those roundabouts was two for the price of one, was it due to the size, because the Segovia roundabout is \$310,000.00. In the case of the Blue Road roundabouts Mr. Delgado explained that it is due to the economic situation. In the case of the Segovia is due to the additional work that will take place such as drainage, etc.

Mr. Zoller asked what was going to happen with the light at Segovia and Biltmore Way and Mr. Delgado told him that it will be gone. This is a "green" project, the same as the roundabout at Segovia, Biltmore and Coral Way. Cars do not need to stop at the light, no electricity involved. Everyone is complimenting the City on the Segovia/Biltmore Way/Coral Way roundabout, but there is still a problem caused by cars piling up on Biltmore. Once the Segovia Median is in, it will help the vehicular flow. Mr. Delgado explained that when there are traffic lights the cars accumulate on both directions this creates a bottle neck of cars. Once the traffic lights are removed, this does not take place. Public Works will arrange for traffic to be diverted during construction. Discussion ensued.

Red Road and Lugo Avenue – The Village of Pinecrest requested a letter from the City as to what was planned for the area adjacent to the city limits of Pinecrest. A nice letter will be sent to their City Manager informing him that they have jurisdiction over the east corner and they will be involved in the project.

The next step is to call for a community meeting to show the proposed plans. Once this is done we will obtain a vote from the residents. Mr. Soria will give his presentation. Mr. Martinez asked if the design had already been submitted to the County. Mr. Delgado explained that what the County denied were the bump-outs. PW met with the County's PW's Director and presented the plans. Whatever presentation we make it has already been approved by the County. There were no further questions from the Board Members.

Ms. Swain asked for everyone to introduce himself/herself.

STREETSCAPE PRESENTATION

Ms. Molina, Director of the Coral Gables Business District:

The Coral Gables Business Improvement District is an organization of Miracle Mile property owners and merchants, and includes everyone between the area of Douglas Road and Le Jeune Road and Giralda and Andalusia..

Ms. Molina explained that although they are still early in the process they have been working on this project for eighteen months. In February, the Commission approved the release of some funding to start the design for the

Miracle Mile Streetscape, as well as the Giralda's Restaurant Row. She distributed a design that has not been brought to the Commission yet. The design addresses how the project is going to affect traffic.

Ms. Molina noted that they had some money (about 1.3 million dollars) and had received GO bond from at the County level earmarked for Miracle Mile. If the funds are not used, other municipalities can bid for that money. Ms. Molina reviewed the brochure and pointed out numerous benefits to both the merchants and the City if the project is carried out. She requested the support of the Traffic Advisory Board.

Mr. Hirsh, Chairman of the Streetscape Project: commented that they would welcome any ideas or dialogue.

Mr. Salman, 3CTS – Engineer and Architect: Noted that this project is a combined effort of residents and merchants of the area which will make this a more pedestrian friendly area. He further explained there would be no traffic issues since the traffic lanes were already reduced and the plans call for further enhancements. The other issue is available parking. He described connections between parking garages and Miracle Mile. In the Central Business District there are 2,585, on street parking spaces. Ms. Molina to send a PDF file of the Parking Study to the Board Members. The ramp parking garages have approximately 2,300 to 2,400 spaces.

Parking options include leaving parking as is; 45 degrees angle parking; and parallel parking. Angle parking does not improve visibility at all. He explained the benefits of the different parking options. The valet parking will remain in place without any changes. Sidewalks would go from 15 feet to 22 feet. Curb and gutter for draining would be used.

Mr. Quesada asked what, the source of the 7.6 million is, assuming that is what everyone wants. Ms. Molina replied that they have been working with Public Works over the course of last year and a half, to identify funding sources from the Federal, State and Local governments, and they can look at Impact Fees not spent. For recurring funding sources she noted that they have the advertising through the Mile which will be created thru this project. They can work with parking by increasing parking for the City in general another quarter per hour. She noted that there may be a special assessment.

Mr. Martinez noted that it appears that on Miracle Mile there are many vacant store fronts. Ms. Molina explained there are 157 store fronts in Miracle Mile; right now there are only 14 vacancies. She explained the merchants are stakeholders, as well as property owners and are participating in the process.

Ms. Molina stressed that the Paseos and the Walkways are going to be significantly improved and the parking garage will be named, the Museum Garage, the Theater Garage, etc.

Discussion followed, including the source of funding, the safety associated with angle parking and parallel parking, losing spaces, changing the configuration of the road to allow for extra wide and extra long spaces, which is the traffic consideration of the project. Members urged that back streets and alleys be improved. Members also shared experiences with Giralda and Miracle Mile as a destination and as a through-fare. Concerns discussed included difficulty finding on-street parking and current traffic volume.

Mr. Martinez noted that since he was coming to the meeting, he decided to count how many parking spaces were actually open. Right now, 5:30 p.m., there were only two parking spaces available on the north side of Miracle Mile, Houston's west.

Ms. Molina noted that they have gone before the Economic Board, the Development Board and the Parking Board and all were in favor of the project.

Ms. Swain thanked them for attending and for their presentation.

Traffic Consultant Report:

Hardee and San Vicente: Ms. Senespleda reported that to the south there is a circle on Como Avenue, and that speed values on Hardee and San Vicente comply with the general criteria for the north portion of San Vicente for a circle and re-alignment of that intersection to reduce the speed. She also explained that residents had complained about the speeding.

Discussion followed as to whether the circle is going to reduce speeding, volume cut through traffic. Mr. Soria explained that the circle will not reduce speeding on Hardee, because there is no speeding, it will not reduce the cut through traffic. Furthermore, there was no information about accidents.

Mr. Martinez moved: **To deny the petition for the traffic circle.** Ms. Kupper seconded. However, because the Zone Representative for that area was not present, Mr. Martinez asked to table the motion to discuss at the Board's September meeting.

Board-related Commission Items:

None

City Update

No update

Old Business

Four way stop signs on traffic circles: Mr. Martinez, noted that Hernando and Almeria has four-way stop signs and it is a traffic circle. It was explained that the signs were in position before the circle was installed and that when an intersection has four-way stop signs before the circle is installed, they are kept.

Striping: Ms. Kupper inquired as to the striping by the County. Mr. Delgado explained that when he met with the County's representative he was told that the County has limited funding. Mr. Delgado noted that Public Works is thinking of University Drive as one of the candidates and we may choose another one. Ms. Kupper will send Alberto an e-mail on two streets that are painted incorrectly.

Crosswalk at the corner of Pisano Avenue and Granada: Ms. Swain asked if the traffic engineer was looking at this. It was explained that the County is going to do some kind of improvement along Granada and Ponce, and is proposing to re-align the intersection (Pisano and Granada) trying to eliminate the right side lane. Discussion among the members ensued.

Ms. Swain asked for a motion to have the City **request a study of the Valencia corridor.** Mr. Kries, moved, Ms. Kupper seconded. Motion carried.

Mountable curbs: the fire department is concerned that the curbs that are being installed are too high, and make maneuvering difficult.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Swain adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.