

TRAFFIC ADVISORY BOARD
CORAL GABLES YOUTH CENTER
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA
JUNE 16, 2009

	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J
MEMBERS:												
Ian Martinez	P	P	E	*	P	E	P	P	E	P	P	
Larry D. Kries **	P	E	P	*	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	
Deborah Swain												P
Frank Quesada	**	E	P	P	*	P	E	P	A	A	P	
Chris Zoller												P
Donna Kupper												P
Al Smith												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

(*) 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

Commissioner Ralph Cabrera
R. Alberto Delgado, P.E., Public Works Director
Esther Zabalo, Civil Engineer
Lt. A. Diaz, Police Department

CONSULTANT

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

GUESTS

Dr. Douglas Yoder, outgoing board member
Bertram Goldsmith, outgoing board member
Thomas R. Mooney, resident

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Commissioner Cabrera presented Dr. Yoder with a Certificate of Appreciation for his loyal service and hard work while a member of the Traffic Advisory Board. The Commissioner mentioned that we had had great success and worked very hard, but that there was much that needed to be done to control the traffic in our City. Dr. Yoder was very appreciative and he noted that he will continue to be around and in spite of what is written, ours is the best City and we should keep it that way.

Commissioner Cabrera recognized Bertram Goldsmith, appointed by the Commission-as-a-Whole, and also thanked him. He noted that he will present Mr. Goldsmith with a Certificate of Recognition.

Secretary's Report

For the benefit of the new board appointees Mr. Delgado briefly described the duties of the Traffic Advisory Board. He went on to inform those present that the Board is divided in seven zones. The City is divided in 14 traffic zones and those 14 zones have been combined so that each traffic zone consists of two.

He further explained that a zone is an area surrounded by collectors, arterials, and local streets. Granada and Alhambra are collectors. Anything that happens in your zone affects the entire area.

Maps depicting the various traffic zones were distributed to the members.

Mr. Delgado explained how funding is obtained. One source is Impact fees collected by the County which in turn gives to the municipalities for traffic/road and/or capacity improvement projects. Mr. Delgado noted that the Ponce de Leon Median is one project that is being funded by impact fees.

Mr. Delgado also mentioned that we get a proportional share of the One-half Penny Surtax, which funds the operation of the Coral Gables Trolley Program. Although these funds have been used entirely for the trolley, they can be used for other projects. Eventually when the trolley is able to generate revenues through the advertising program and some other programs that we are developing, the Trolley Program will be able self-funded so that we can free some money from the One-half Penny Surtax that can be used in traffic calming devices because it is transit-related. However, we have used some of the One-half Penny Surtax to do, for example, the Ponce de Leon design master plan and the Miracle Mile original master plan. The City also has another source of funding - developers' contributions. We must not forget that the Village of Merrick Park contributed \$610,000.00 for citywide traffic calming. The first traffic calming designs and installations in 2001-2002 were funded with those \$610,000.00.

Mr. Delgado turned the meeting over to the Board Members. Mr. Zoller suggested the members introduce themselves, which they did. The new members are: Deborah Swain, Chris Zoller, Dr. Al Smith, and Donna Kupper. Staying Members: Ian Martinez, Esquire, Frank Quesada, Esquire, and Larry Kries.

Mr. Thomas R. Mooney, resident, introduced himself. He attended the meeting to hear what the Board had to say about his request for traffic calming installation at Segovia and Navarre.

Nominations for Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Frank Quesada nominated Ian Martinez for the position of Chairman. He noted that Mr. Martinez has been with the Board two years now and has been diligently working towards the installation of added calming devices and is always devising new ways to obtain funding for our projects. Mr. Kries seconded.

Mr. Zoller asked if we could appoint the Chairman at the next meeting. Mr. Delgado noted that this is in the By-Laws and we needed to select both positions at in June.

Mr. Kries noted that whoever is selected as the Chairman must attend every meeting and he mentioned that Chris Morrison (outgoing Chairman) attended every meeting.

Mr. Zoller nominated Deborah Swain as Chairperson because of her past record as Chairperson of the Advisory Board on Disability Affairs. Seconded by Donna Kupper.

There were no more nominations from the floor, so the floor was closed for nominations.

Dr. Smith asked Ian Martinez about his experience:

Ian Martinez: "I am an attorney, work and live in the Gables and am associated with the Florida Department of Transportation and represents DOT on many issues."

Deborah Swain: "I am the principal with firm of Milian, Swain & Associates, Inc., providing civil and environmental engineering, environmental science and management and financial consulting.

By a majority of votes, Deborah Swain was elected Chairperson and Ian Martinez Vice-Chair.

The meeting was then turned over to Ms. Swain. The Chairperson asked for the approval of the minutes of the May 19th minutes. Mr. Kries moved to approve the minutes. Dr. Smith seconded.

Page 3, second paragraph from the top: "... discussion about the trolley project and its connecting to the City of Miami. Correct Mr. Kries name on page 1." Subject to the corrections the members approved the minutes.

Presentation by Ramon Seria/Yamilet Senespleda: Cars driving along Navarre and Segovia. Westbound along Navarre they stop in the middle of the road because they cannot see. Marlin Engineering is proposing to make the area narrower so cars need to slow down. Throughout the presentation designs were reviewed. A member suggested we contact Code Enforcement so that we can find out if the fence meets our regulations.

- There is not speeding, so it does not qualify
- There is volume

The consultants met with our Fire Department and their concern is how long it would take to reach the person in need of an emergency vehicle.

- As long as we are not putting physical barriers out in the middle of the road they will not have an issue with this design.

Mr. Martinez suggested we send the police to the field to try and slow down the traffic. Mr. Delgado explained that a traffic circle costs around \$35,000.00; the improvement the consultant is suggesting will cost \$5,000.00 and this is something that will address the issue. Mr. Delgado suggested that this intersection improvement could be placed in next year's budget.

Striping and Signage. The members discussed this issue at length.

Mr. Delgado to notify Code Enforcement to check on the triangle of visibility at various locations.

Motion: Mr. Zoeller moved that we recommend the plan of the four medians at the corner of Segovia and Navarre to be added to our budget as soon as we possibly can. Seconded by Mr. Martinez. Motion passed.

Mr. Mooney thanked everyone and left the meeting.

Discussion ensued about Lugo and what could be done to slow down traffic. The problem with Lugo is that it only has half of a right-of-way and then you have the mangroves. Mr. Delgado noted that we have not been able to find a solution to the Lugo issue. Mr. Goldsmith noted that we have not found a solution to the Lugo situation. We have talked about enlarging the Cartagena circle to allow for bikers, but nothing else.

Ms. Kupper asked if we were now approving projects for the next fiscal year and Mr. Delgado informed the Board that we are now trying to finish the projects that were approved for this fiscal year. When the Budget is approved in September, once we know if there is any capital funding, in the meeting of October we then prioritize the projects. Mr. Delgado also explained that we try to review all the zones and allocate projects to all the zones.

Report from Marlin Engineering:

Intersection of US1, Augusto and Maynada. Marlin Engineering developed three alternatives for this intersection.

- Alternative 1 – will require some median installation and striping.
- Alternative 2 – will require the traffic circle which is expensive.
- Alternative 3 – the most simple will involve removal of asphalt and some striping.

Mr. Delgado noted that this is a very critical intersection and for many years residents have been complaining about the traffic. The City investigated and asked the consultant to develop a plan taking into consideration the fact that we do not want to stop the flow of traffic coming from US1.

Mr. Delgado noted that one of the issues is the speeding on Maynada, which is a County road (a collector). There were a lot of complaints about the speeding along Maynada. The idea is to install

some islands to reduce the speed along the corridor. We cannot install anything else because this is a corridor.

These are the three alternatives the consultant submitted for consideration. This problem will not be solved today, so they should be taken to be reviewed revisited at the next meeting. But whatever the Board decides, the City will contact the school and will advise the residents.

Mr. Martinez suggested contacting Miami-Dade County Schools to see how this installation will affect their ability to bring children to the school and what impact it will have in their operation. He noted that the residents are important, but if the school is negatively impacted, we will have a worse situation. He also noted that as a good neighbor policy we should contact someone from Miami-Dade County Schools. It also may be a good idea to have them come and sit down with us.

Mr. Delgado explained the difference between a roundabout and a circle: The roundabout improves capacity and is installed at intersections where you need a capacity improvement. Vehicles do not stop; they yield and keep moving. He noted the roundabout at Segovia and Coral Way, which was a very difficult intersection. He also mentioned the one at the Village of Merrick Park. He continued explaining that a circle is the opposite. The circle is to stop traffic. In a circle you cannot allow two cars to come, you need to yield. The Fire Department does not allow us to install traffic circles on Maynada which would be equivalent to blocking the traffic.

Mr. Delgado noted that the installations on Blue Road are going to be roundabouts. Mr. Martinez asked if they had any problem with the islands and Mr. Delgado explained that they did not.

Ramon Soria informed the Board that for the next meeting he will bring the County's criteria as it applies to the installation of traffic calming devices to share with the members as to what we look at to decide whether a segment is eligible for traffic calming or not. The County's criteria for installation of traffic calming devices on a corridor must exceed 3,000 vehicles. Residentials must exceed 1,500.00

Mr. Delgado commented that before the circle was installed on Maynada and Alfonso vehicular speed was excessive. Discussion among the members followed.

Ms. Kupper asked for visual information. Ms. Swain asked Mr. Zoller if he wanted to speak to people in his area. Members discussed the project among themselves.

Ms. Kupper and Mr. Zoller asked how to proceed. Mr. Delgado explained that if zone reps felt a project has merit, the project will be included in the construction list for next year. Mr. Delgado further explained that we would still have to prioritize the list. If a project is found to be a valid request, we can place it on the list and in October the Board will decide which projects will be considered for the next Fiscal Year.

To answer Ms. Kupper's question as to when do we obtain the residents approval, Mr. Delgado noted that after the Board Members approve the projects, we take them to the residents for their approval. There have been cases where the residents have not approved a project and it was

removed from the “to do list” and it can be replaced by another project. It is then taken to the County for their approval. Mr. Delgado explained that this is a long process which takes anywhere from six to eight months. The projects you will prioritize in October and November will not be built until the summer.

Mr. Zoller commented that he would defer to Larry (Kries), Frank (Quesada) and Ian (Martinez) since they have been on the board the longest. Mr. Kries commented that he did not have any idea whether that would be the most important project in Mr. Zoller’s area.

Mr. Kries noted that come October there will be an opportunity to put this in or some other things may come up, and may defer to you because he did not know if that was the most important project in your area, (meaning Mr. Zoller’s).

Mr. Delgado further explained to the Members that by October they may have more projects and they would have to make the decision of selecting two or three of the projects they consider most important.

Motion: Mr. Zoller made a motion to postpone action at this time? Mr. Kries seconded. Motion carried.

The Chair person called for a vote on Alternative 2: All members agreed.

Mr. Delgado made the last presentation which is at the intersection of Granada Boulevard and Aguero Avenue, south of US1.

The consultant noted that the main concern at that intersection is the speeding. They developed two alternatives and said that both of them would work perfectly. The Members discussed the two alternatives. Mr. Delgado further explained that the complaint had come from a resident on Viera Avenue. When we met the resident complained that drivers trying to catch the green light speed up. That is the reason why the consultant feels that by controlling the Aguero Avenue intersection drivers will know that they will not be able to make it through the light.

Mr. Zoller commented that his experience driving through the areas he has found that there are certain drivers in this town or in the County, coming thru our town who find it a real challenge to see how fast they can get thru these obstructions. He agreed that a circle would be a bit more effective.

Mr. Delgado noted that the consultant is proposing a roundabout or a “belly”. Mr. Soria explained that the roundabout is more of a budget alternative. The roundabout is the most effective solution to this problem and since we have a church I do not perceive a problem going into the swale. And it is also a more aesthetically pleasing alternative.

Mr. Quesada asked Mr. Soria between the second and third item we discussed today, which is more pressing, more of a concern, more chance of injury?

Mr. Zoller: Maynada between Alfonso and Hardee or Granada? The consultant recommends Granada. Mr. Delgado noted that the islands would be approximately \$5,000.00 per island. The Maynada could be between \$50,000.00 and \$75,000.00.

Ms. Swain asked if there was any further discussion? The Members unanimously voted in favor of the circle.

Mr. Delgado recommended that the Members review the list of projects to see if they have any questions. He pointed out that most of the construction will take place in the summer and that we are trying to expedite the construction as much as possible. We have already complete Palermo and Cardena circle. Speed tables on Madruga are also under construction. We completed Hernando and Zamora and the Bella Vista circles are done with the exception of the striping for the bicycle lane.

Mr. Kries noted that this was an item from the previous meeting under Old Business. He asked the Chair person if she would entertain Old Business.

Mr. Delgado said that he did not want to take any more time on this issue.

Ms. Kupper asked Mr. Delgado that she would like to talk to him next week to look over the plans for Red Road and Lugo Avenue, we have them but they have not been approved by the County. We have a conceptual design to be submitted to the residents.

To Ms. Kupper comment about residents walking to the park, Mr. Delgado noted that we would have a walkway.

Mr. Kries said he had an item of Old Business related to the traffic projects; this was discussed at the last meeting. One of the projects in his zone, on De Soto Boulevard and Cordova Street, was not approved by all residents. One of the residents on the corner nixed the project. So what was discussed at that meeting was that now those funds would be freed-up for another project in his zone. In reviewing the other projects in his zone that were already on the boards, he suggested that we move to the Valencia Avenue, Indian Mound Trail and Madrid project. We have a conceptual design; the residents have already approved the project. He also requested that we look at the whole Valencia corridor, it is an incredible high-traffic corridor and knows that this is one of the problem intersections, but there are other problem intersections, so sort of in the future look at the entire corridor and not at isolated intersections.

The members discussed the various projects.

Motion: Mr. Kries moved that funding that had been allocated to the De Soto/Cordova Street project be transferred to the Valencia Avenue, Indian Mound Trail and Madrid project. Mr. Zoller seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Martinez noted that back in April he had inquired as to whether there was any money from the County for the solar powered crosswalk. When the Board met at the Coral Gables Woman's Club there was a lot of discussion about solar power money and the need for pedestrian crosswalk like the one at the Youth Center, and he requested the City ask the County, and since the County will now receive federal money, if we can get any funding for solar power. If the County has federal monies it would behoove us to tap into that money.

Excerpt from the April meeting:

Mr. Martinez: "Alberto, let me ask you a question. The one on Ponce, the crosswalk on Ponce by US1, is that solar powered?" Mr. Delgado: "I believe it is...the one by US?" – Mr. Martinez, Yes. Just throwing this out, but since the Federal Government is throwing money out, you know, printing it like crazy, is there anyway the City can ask for these new signs to be solar powered since it is green energy?"

Mr. Delgado: "We need to check with the County to see if ..."

Mr. Martinez: "Because there is this whole thing that if Miami County is going to be the first green city in the United States. If we can get those crosswalks solar powered... Would you look into this?" Mr. Delgado – Yes. I think that the first one that the County helped us installed was that one on Ponce de Leon...

Mr. Martinez: "That's right. The County Commission actually did that, Commissioner Gimenez in fact."

Mr. Delgado informed the Members that the County gave the City \$7,000.00 for the installation and we paid the other \$7,000.00. Mr. Martinez: "But since they are giving away money...I don't know how to do it, but maybe you guys ought to know." Mr. Delgado noted that that was a good suggestion and we will have to check.

Mr. Delgado commented that the County can also pay for a lot of the bicycle lane striping. We have some streets ready to be stripped and if we can get the money we can get started on the first phase of the bicycle lane striping.

We have another item. The North Gables – Boabadilla Street.

Mr. Soria interjected that the City of Coral Gables has been the number one City in South Florida who has set funding for traffic calming installations. There is funding out there that we can go after.

Mr. Delgado recommended the Members consider the intersection of Granada and De Soto Fountain. We have a project (Impact Fees project) to do a runabout. We still do not have the funding, but one possibility is to look at the intersection for striping first, as we did in Cartagena/Cocoplum, like a test project because right now there is a lot of problems... So it may be that we can do some analysis of the intersection in preparation for that project, and do some striping first and because that is going to cost a lot of money. We are talking about maybe in the range of \$300,000.00/\$400,000.00.

Ms. Swain asked about getting money for bicycle lane striping. Mr. Delgado informed her that if we can get the funding from the County we will have like 10 locations already ready to go. We have the University Drive, Bella Vista, we have some going thru the Alhambra extension. We can also tap into the Segovia median. If they have the money.

Mr. Martinez recommended spending the money as soon as we get it to try and stimulate as many jobs as we can.

Mr. Delgado noted that he had overheard that the County had enough money for striping. Ms. Swain asked when would we know? Mr. Delgado, by this Friday.

Mr. Quesada: A few meetings ago we discussed Douglas Road, Ingraham Highway that merge at the new light there, which now affects the Coral Gables residents, and we discussed to try and get someone from the County to come here and see if we can try to work something out. We can work with them to try and improve it for the Coral Gables residents. That is the biggest issue in my zone.

Mr. Delgado: We need someone from the County to explain what they are doing there. They modified the intersection and is causing problems.

Mr. Quesada: And for those of you who do not drive through the area, they put a stop light right where Douglas meets Ingraham and it causes tremendous delays and back-ups in the morning and the stacking is just horrible and it goes into the circle. It is a bit better now that school is out, but is still a considerable delay.

Mr. Zoller: To that end, I'll tell you, there are numerous residents who live in that neighborhood; some who work nine to five, others who are retirees. The retirees love that traffic light and they don't care about stacking. Guys who have to commute to work, like you, they hate it. You are going to run into a lot of problems.

Mr. Quesada it makes no harm to discuss it.

Ms. Swain inquired if there are any other issues remaining.

Mr. Kries shared with the Board Members copy of an article on Red Light Cameras that he wanted to officially present to the Board.

Mr. Delgado gave an update on the red light cameras explaining that the Police Department had been working with the City Manager's office and a company who install the red light infrared cameras that will take a picture and they send you a ticket. The problem is that this company has been working for more than six months trying to find the locations to install those cameras. They cannot use the mast arm, they are not allowed. They need to have an independent pole and are having problems installing the cameras and cannot get the power. There are a lot of things that this company has been facing. They claim that we can make a lot of money for the City. They have encountered so many problems that we do not know if this project is going to move along.

Mr. Martinez would like them to come and give us a presentation. Mr. Delgado, if you want to.

Ms. Kupper asked if this is within our jurisdiction. Ms. Swain also wanted to ascertain whether this would come under this Board's jurisdiction.

Mr. Delgado explained that the City Commission had already voted in favor of having this company install the red lights about a year ago when they had a presentation before the Commission. We have been having meetings with them to follow their progress.

The County does not allow them to use any signalization. Mr. Martinez wanted to know if they are doing any testing in Coral Gables. Mr. Delgado indicated that yes, they were looking at Granada and Le Jeune Road, but now they are looking at other locations, Miracle Mile. Mr. Martinez reminded Mr. Delgado that Miracle Mile is a State Road. Mr. Delgado explained that Miracle Mile would be a good location because all the lights are metered by box and they can tap into the lights. They do not have the power problem. He will keep the Board informed, but indicated that there is another conference call meeting on the 22nd.

Since the City is doing sewer work on Old Cutler Road Ms. Kupper asked if we were going to rip out of their roads. Mr. Delgado told her no, that the work will end at the intersection of Red Road and Old Cutler Road, which is Phase III. In the future, next year, we are going to go into Phase IV, which will go all the way along Old Cutler Road down to Lugo and will not affect the circle.

Ms. Swain discussed the blinking light at the pedestrian crosswalk light at the intersection of Granada and Pisano for a crosswalk across Granada by the large green area.

Mr. Soria noted that they need to look at that intersection area for a signalized intersection. Discussion ensued. Mr. Delgado will address.

The Chair person adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Ms. Swain addressed the meeting dates. She asked for the Members' consensus as to whether they wanted to continue meeting the third Tuesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. Mr. Delgado informed the Members that any time they needed to cancel a meeting they could do it. He also said they could discuss this later, but the Members agreed not to hold a meeting in December.