

TRAFFIC ADVISORY BOARD
CORAL GABLES YOUTH CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM
TUESDAY, JULY 20, 2010, 5:30 P.M.

- MEETING MINUTES -

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

P - Present
E - Excused Absence
A - Absent
*** - New Member**
+ - No Meeting
(#) Resigned Staff:

Staff:

Glenn Kephart, Public Works Director
James Kay, Engineering Division Supervisor
Esther Zabalo, Civil Engineer
Sergeant Jesse Medina, Police Department

Mrs. Swain called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Ms. Swain announced the new Public Works Director and said that she appreciated him coming to his first Traffic Advisory Board meeting.

Mr. Kephart stated that it's very important what Board members do. He thanked the members for volunteering their time and stated that it's essential for Public Works to have a Board like theirs and he's looking forward to working with them.

Ms. Swain stated that in last month's meeting Mr. Quesada (Zone 5, Commissioner Kerdyk appointee) was present and announced his resignation because he is a candidate for City Commissioner and Mr. Martinez (Zone 7, Mayor appointee) also resigned because he will be a hearing officer for the City. She advised members that if they knew of anyone that may be interested in serving the Board, to communicate with the Mayor and Commissioner.

Mr. Smith asked if they have to live in the zone and Ms. Zabalo said yes. Ms. Kupper asked if the Mayor and Commissioner Kerdyk knew that these two (2) positions were vacant. Ms. Swain stated that she believed the resignations have gone to the City Clerk's Office and the Clerk will notify the Mayor and Commissioner.

Ms. Swain presented the Board with an e-mail from Mirtha Francomacaro announcing her retirement. She further said that in the meantime, Ms. Zabalo will be filling-in for Mirtha.

Minutes of May 18, 2010:

Ms. Swain asked if everyone reviewed the May 18, 2010 minutes and asked for comments/suggestions. Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Kries seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

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Secretary's Report:

Mr. Kay updated the Board on the Ponce de Leon Boulevard project. He stated that this project has required a bit of the staff's time primarily because of all the requirements, including FH requirements and the Maintenance of Traffic (MOT). He said that this has been the first time Public Works administers an FH project and with the compliance of the Department of Transportation's standard requirements and are learning along the way. He reported some delays due to soil density testing but that now they are moving forward. He also mentioned another project, at Indian Mound Trail and Valencia, which will be finished by next month. Another project is the Segovia Median which went out for bids, but it was decided to not award the contract since there were some objectives and there were other plans for that roadway. Mr. Kay mentioned that they are waiting to see what happens with the Somerset School, even though this project will work with or without the new Somerset School.

Mr. Kries commented that there was never a traffic study done related to the Segovia Median project. He further stated that the Board was under the impression there were some studies done. He also asked about the funding sources and if the impact fees were through developers.

Ms. Zabalo responded that this was funded through the impact fees from the developers. As far as the traffic study, there was one as part of the whole area between LeJeune and Sevilla and all the traffic calming along Hernando, which was brought up into this project. There wasn't a specific study done for the Segovia Median.

Mr. Kay mentioned that part of the reason is that Segovia itself is very much under-utilized, there are four (4) lanes of traffic. He said he's never seen a traffic jam anytime of the day. The idea was to reduce the four (4) lanes to two (2) and it would still function the same way. Mr. Kay also mentioned that a bicycle lane will be added, which will enhance the roadway.

Mr. Kries asked when the revised plans would be available and Mr. Kay said that he didn't know and that it will probably be coming back in the fall this year

Ms. Swain asked if Marlin Engineering is the consultant doing the traffic study. Mr. Kay responded that they are involved with the traffic impact to the school and as well as the median.

Mr. Kries stated that at the City Commission meeting yesterday they discussed traffic studies being done that reported no traffic impact at all, as a result of the school. He asked if there were copies of this traffic study.

Mr. Kay said yes, and that this has been reviewed and comments were provided. He said that even though the consultant for the school came out with a Miami-Dade County template (for the analysis), concerns were expressed about the queuing of the children and a spill over into the right of way. In addition, even with three (3) separate times for arrivals and dismissals there are still some concerns.

Mr. Kephart added that the study for the Somerset Baptist assumes 100% efficiency in their internal circulation to keep traffic in and it was based on 735 students. He said that what Mr. Kay is saying is that we don't think that 100% efficiency is reasonable and that it's not going to happen especially in the parking lot area. Mr. Kephart stated that if you lower the number to about 70% efficiency, it comes out to somewhere between 300 – 350 students that may be accommodated in two (2) afternoon pick-up shifts. We were also concerned about the three (3) pick-up shifts because operationally it becomes complex and difficult to monitor. Mr. Kephart stated that the traffic study was based on 735 and thinks that the school is only asking 680.

Mr. Kries mentioned that in the settlement agreement, the school came back and wanted 550 and was informed that now they wanted 700. He also said that this is in his zone and there's been talk about this project since he's been on this Board. He asked for an update as soon as it's available.

Mr. Kries referred to Mr. Kay's comment by saying that they'll have to see how the school is going to impact the median project. Mr. Kay stated that the City wants to get by the school issue to see the outcome.

Ms. Kupper stated that she liked that this project was held back due to drainage, curbing, bicycle lanes and that all the right pieces needed to be evaluated. Further stated that it fascinates her that no traffic study was done, but those

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things were not incorporated originally because they may become a major thoroughfare to take traffic off LeJeune and other streets, specially with the way the roundabouts are going in on Biltmore Way.

Mr. Kay said that he didn't think the neighborhood is interested in seeing it becoming a major thoroughfare.

Ms. Kupper said that from a traffic point of view, this is another artery that may be looked at eventually by cars as we know just like Riviera.

Sergeant Medina asked if the project will incorporate changes to the intersection of Segovia and Bird and Mr. Kay said no. Mr. Kay also stated that there's no signal at that intersection and it's not contemplated at this time.

Mr. Kries said that he didn't think this will increase the volume of traffic and that it will remain the same volume of traffic, which is relatively low, but it will surely remove a lot of asphalt. He also commented that something should be done about Biltmore Way because it's a cannon. Biltmore Way has all this asphalt, with some traffic but there's more asphalt than traffic.

Traffic Updates:

Mr. Kay stated that they've been working to implement some traffic calming in the region of Ponce and Boabadilla. He said that they are installing some signs at Boabadilla (north of south 8th street). Due to cut-through traffic in that neighborhood, the City is proceeding with the installation of this signage to discourage traffic from cutting through. He said that Ms. Zabalo can provide more of an update on the type of signage and location.

Ms. Zabalo mentioned that this was part of the Boabadilla traffic study. She said that there were some traffic alternatives presented by the traffic consultant and the least restrictive ones were the restriction signs (NO U-TURN and NO LEFT TURN), they are at Boabadilla, Marabella, Fonseca all those streets north of SW 8th Street.

Mr. Kay stated that traffic signs at Augusto & Maynada have been requested. These were discussed during the last meeting. He said these were requested and are pending for Miami-Dade County to do the study.

Mr. Kay also reported on Santa Maria and said that a meeting was held with property owners to take a vote and they did not get the 2/3 majority to install the speed bumps. They have requested for a second vote so letters will be sent out.

Mr. Kries asked if the Fire Department will accept these speed tables. Mr. Kay responded by saying whatever is designed will have to go through the Fire Department for approval.

Ms. Kupper stated that in the meeting she was absent (the previous meeting), speed tables with the cut outs for the width of the axles for Fire emergency vehicles were discussed and asked for the status. Mr. Kay stated that they have not taken a look at them yet. Ms. Zabalo mentioned that she went to High Pines to see the speed tables they installed which just have asphalt with the signage and stripping. She continued by saying that these are not like the ones the City has. Ms. Swain commented that these are not great and standard. Mr. Kay stated that he was under the impression the speed tables the Fire Department previously mentioned were in Miami Beach. Ms. Kupper said the Board should confirm this with Chief Lowman at a later date since he's not present at this time.

Mr. Kay discussed Milan & Cordova which is kind of an offset intersection and that the consultant went to this location. Ms. Zabalo stated that the plans were taken to Miami-Dade County. Mr. Kay further stated that since it's difficult to fit a traffic circle that would be effective in this area, it was decided to proceed with a 4-way stop sign.

Ms. Kupper spoke regarding Red Road & Lugo Avenue as she lives in Gables by the Sea and this is her community's entrance. She stated that residents unanimously approved it however, three (3) of the four (4) homes in the corner declined it. The one resident who approved it (out of the four (4) residents from the corners) stated that he believed the other three (3) residents declined due to a letter circulated by a Pinecrest resident. She said that a team of residents, with a Pinecrest representative and those who approved it are going to approach the three (3) homes who declined to ask them for a reason why. She said this way they can make the necessary adjustments in

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hopes to get their approval. Ms. Kupper continued to state that the problem is that as an association and residents, they are fighting the Gulliver Academy expansion which is consuming a large amount of people's money, time, and effort. In addition, she stated the second Commission hearing on the Guilliver Academy expansion item was tomorrow and it is why they have not focused on the circle matter. They wanted to get over this Commission meeting regarding Gulliver. Ms. Kupper also said that since she's a member of the University Baptist Church and if there's a vote regarding the school, she would not vote because of this reason. She added by saying that having a school with 800-900 students with a cap of a 1,000 in a neighborhood is nothing but horrendous. She said that in her opinion, people may say that is great for property value, but it's a nightmare and they are not nice neighbors. This is how her community feels about the Gulliver Academy expansion.

Ms. Kupper asked regarding the Red Road & Lugo Circle re-voting process and what would be the time frame. Ms. Zabalo said that the voting can be reinitiated after (90) days from the last voting.

Ms. Swain referred to an email from a resident regarding a traffic circle on Galiano. She stated that the resident is upset because there is apparently money for the Segovia project but no money for the small traffic circle on Galiano. Ms. Swain stated she saw correspondence to the resident explaining that the funding sources were different and that the resident requested at least a 4-way stop sign. Ms. Zabalo mentioned that a 4-way stop sign was requested and it's pending County approval/response.

Mr. Kries asked about the improvements on Red Road & SW 8th Street which is not listed in the provided projects list. Mr. Kay said this is a Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) project and it will start in about a year.

Mr. Kries also asked about the Granada and Bird project and Mr. Kay said that this is another Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) project which involves widening of the lanes and sidewalks on the north side of Bird Road. Mr. Kay also reported the pedestrian bridge is going to go on the north side of the existing bridge to cross the Coral Gables waterway it's a pedestrian bridge.

Ms. Kupper stated that she found information regarding the inquiry pertaining to the speed tables and that this was mentioned by Chief Reed who suggested to explore Miami Beach since they have speed tables for larger trucks. Mr. Kay said that they will contact him.

Mr. Kephart asked a question pertaining to a resident's concern regarding a sign on US1 to see if anyone had history of it. He said that the sign on US1 says alternate to LeJeune and directs onto Granada and that the resident was concerned about adding extra traffic on Granada. Mr. Kephart stated he contacted FDOT and they are looking into it. Sergeant Garcia said that they are trying to alternate the congestion on US1.

Mr. Kries asked for the Ponce de Leon project's completion date. Mr. Kay stated that completion is expected at the end of February 2010 and that the City is doing its best to meet this schedule.

Sergeant Medina asked if there was a big project going up on South Alhambra, US1, Caballero. He stated that this project was brought to the Development Review Committee (DRC) meeting but does not know the status. Mr. Kay stated this building is coming up at Sunset near Yumuri.

Sergeant Medina also mentioned another building coming up by the Ross store which is moving along. He stated that they are building a new parking garage with seven (7) stories. Mr. Kay stated that the building just to the west of that lot is going to be demolished.

Old Business:

Mr. Kries brought up the striping.

Ms. Swain mentioned that there is funding for bicycle path striping at the County and they have our bicycle master plan where they are looking at Phase I projects. These are projects are very limited since the program is only for projects where the street pavements are wide enough to accommodate bicycle paths. However, these projects should be eligible for immediate funding.

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Mr. Kay said there is a bicycle path project at Country Club Prado from SW 8th Street to Sevilla Avenue which has been approved for funding by Miami-Dade County. The street pavement there is wide enough for bicycle lanes on both sides of Country Club Prado. The project will have a crossing at Coral Way (SW 57 Avenue) where a separate path will be constructed at the end of the cul-de-sac to the Red Road intersection and then cross over Coral Way to the other cul-de-sac at the other side of the street.

Mr. Kries commented that bicyclist will need luck crossing there. Mr. Kay said they will have to cross at the intersection.

Mr. Kay stated that a path can be build to take them to cross at the intersection, because the cul-de-sacs are close by on both, the north and the south sides of Coral Way. Sevilla Avenue between Country Club Prado and SW 57th Avenue will also incorporate a bicycle lane and we'll have to take some of the parkway to widen the pavement.

Mr. Smith commented about the Blue Road and Alhambra circle and the possibility of adding reflectors. He also commented on Granada were it meets US1, before crossing Ponce de Leon Boulevard that there is a left arrow stripe which he feels should be placed sooner. He stated it makes drivers think they can go straight to US1 when it's to make a left turn on Ponce de Leon Boulevard.

Mr. Kephart stated that he needs to go out there and take a look.

Mr. Kries inquired about the landscaping plan for the Biltmore Way & Segovia Circle. Mr. Kephart responded that there's nothing currently planned for that intersection. Mr. Kay added that funding needs to be allocated.

Mr. Kries suggested that with the savings from the Segovia median project that some funding can be used to add the landscaping at this circle.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.