

HAMMOCK LAKES PHASE I AND II – COMMUNITY MEETING
10-19-04
COMMISSION CHAMBER

64 invitation letters were mailed. Copy of the letter and sign-in sheet attached to these notes.

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m. by the Traffic Advisory Board Chairman, Chris Morrison. Traffic Advisory Board Members were in attendance.

Chris Morrison introduced Alberto Delgado, Public Works Director; Richard Cook, Fire Chief; Charley Small, Miami-Dade County Public Works Department-Special Taxing District; Chico Goldsmith, Zone 9 Traffic Advisory Board representative; and Mr. Bill Ogden, President of the Hammock Lakes Phase I and II Homeowners Association, who is proposing the closure.

Bill Ogden, 5590 Hammock Drive: Technically, it is not a road closure. We are creating an emergency access gate. A Special Taxing District has been established to pay for a Roving Patrol within the community. A gate is being proposed at Old Cutler Road so the roving patrol can perform its task more effectively. Currently cars entering from Old Cutler Road go undetected by the roving patrol. We started this process three years ago. At the first meeting we had David Morton, Architect, to design the entry gate. We will go before the Architecture Review Board. Studies have been performed regarding the turning radius of the proposed entry gate.

A 6' tall coral rock wall has been proposed. Any emergency vehicle will be able to gain entry. This would be a gate similar to the ones on Red Road that are powered by solar battery. Emergency personnel can access the gate and it stays open until there is no longer an emergency. The gate will have a sensor that works with a siren.

Chico Goldsmith, Traffic Advisory Board Zone 9 Representative: What happens when there is a power Failure?

Bill Ogden: The gate has a battery pack.

Bill Ogden: We have submitted a petition to the County with 75% of the signatures of residents requesting the gate. We need a Resolution that will authorize the Special Taxing District. The County will reimburse the City.

Larry Kries, Traffic Advisory Board Zone 2 Representative: 75% of the residents?

Alberto Delgado: Old Cutler Road and School House Road do not connect with Banyan Drive. Any closure will have to enter thru School House Road from Kendall Drive. The County has two separate criteria: approval of 2/3 of the affected area residents/owners, or a Special Taxing District.

Provisions are that as far as emergency departments have controlled access, there will be no delay for their response. However, we are holding this meeting because of the request to place a gate in a public street. Everyone has a concern. They think this is going to affect them. No concern on the Special Taxing District. The concern is for the closure of that street. Traffic closure, maintenance.

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Bill Ogden, 5590 Hammock Drive: The Special Taxing District will include a capital assessment that covers all the capital costs and the first year's operating expenses. In future years there will be an assessment for operating expenses and maintenance. Only local traffic will be affected. The operating expenses will include a security expense of \$1,200.00. We have found it necessary to retain the roving patrol to provide for better security.

Wayne Talamas, Traffic Advisory Board Zone 8 Representative: Thank you for your petition and concerns. Does your association collect a monthly fee?

Bill Ogden: Voluntary dues of \$20/year.

Charley Small, Miami-Dade County Public Works Department, Special Taxing District: Old Cutler Road is a County Road and the County has responsibility and insurance liability. The County will assist the property owners and will assess taxes every year for the improvements, maintenance and the operation of the gate.

Blackwell Stieglitz, 8820 Schoolhouse Road: This matter that has been presented to you is a chameleon at both ends. The proponents' design is a precursor to placing a manned gate at Banyan Drive. We will have this grandiose charge in perpetuity and the closure will have an indisputable impact in front of my house. Such a closure will divide us from the rest of the City of Coral Gables. Place traffic bumps to stop the cut-thru driver. Do not close the street. What is the safety census from the Police Department? Thank you.

Mercer Clarke, 4880 Hammock Lake Drive: My home has been broken into three times. There are violent crimes. The closure will reduce the opportunity for criminal activity.

Phillip Brawner, 9100 School House Road: The concept of closing Hammock Lakes is faulty. Police security is the issue. I am concerned that traffic on Hammock Road Drive slow down and I want to restrict traffic in front of our house. I suggested a "No Left Turn" sign on Old Cutler Road and a reduction in the speed limit to 15 MPH. I am against.

Suzan Ponzoli, 5505 Banyan Trail (S. W. 98th Street): The adjacent land is going to be developed into an extension of Matheson Park. There are four entrances. I am opposed to the closure.

Howard Grey, Planning-Parks Department, Miami-Dade County: You are closing public access thru that neighborhood.

Maria Avenarius, 9300 Old Cutler Road: She did not know about this closure. She is opposed to it.

Lynn Hart, 4860 Hammock Lake Drive: If the majority wants it, there is no point to be excluded. There was no petition to do a gate at Banyan Road.

Blackwell Stieglitz: One simple problem, security. I have been broken into

Steve Halegua, 5520 Oakwood Lane: Safety issues for emergency vehicles. Old Cutler Road and Kendall Drive on the way to Red Road, the only way is to cut thru Red Road. I am against.

Dan Gelfman, 9401 Kerwood Court: The closure will add even more traffic gridlock on Old Cutler and Kendall Drive. From a philosophical point of view, there are too many unsightly gates now. It is unfriendly to be gating communities. There is no compelling reason it should be contemplated. They want a gated community. No interaction of continuity with the roving patrol. This can be resolved with a couple of solutions.

Fire Department/Police

Fire Chief Cook: We have many gates and we have two fire stations #2 and #3 in that area. Normal response time is 5 minutes.

Lt. Paul Miyares (Concurred)

Debbie Augenstein, 5690 Banyan Drive: There has been a roving patrol since before we were annexed by Coral Gables. They were County officers before Coral Gables police officers roving Hammock Lakes and Banyan Drive. This is not about closure on Old Cutler. East side has wanted for years roving patrol. More input from affected citizens should be sought. Once that is done, they will then go back and request another closure, and eventually it will become a gated community, which is what they have been looking to accomplish all along. Against.

Suzan Ponzoli brought up the Matheson Park issue again.

Phillip Brawner stated again that he is against.

Bill Ogden: Howard Grey, Miami Dade County Planning Parks Department, closing public access thru that neighborhood, pedestrian bicycles and service vehicles, only. Long term: Removal of the service function of the park

Dr. Doug Yoder, Traffic Advisory Board Zone 3 Representative: Do we have traffic measures and actual traffic counts? Count 200/250.

Charley Small: We have to do a review on the traffic, but need to find out if a full blown traffic study is necessary to proceed with this closure. When you make the closure you cut down the traffic. The impact is very little.

Dr. Doug Yoder: Where does that traffic go?

Charley Small: It goes to Old Cutler Road and to 88th Street. Is that information available? The Chief of the Traffic Division says we do not need a full blown traffic study.

Nancy Green, 9485 Old Cutler Lane: If we cannot go thru the closed area, we have to go all the way out of our way. Against.

Bill Ogden: Informed that this request was forwarded to the Commissioners at Miami Dade County and the County said that there was minimal traffic and no traffic impact.

Mr. Stieglitz addressing Mr. Small: To have the County say that there is no big impact is preposterous.

Paul Miyares, Coral Gables Police: We cannot place a trailer to detect speeding as there is no real swale to place it.

Steven Rossman, 5340 Banyan Drive: The main speeding trouble according to the Coral Gables Police is us. We have to control ourselves. Mr. Ogden and I have worked on getting a roving patrol for the entire area or we will have no security. The result of a closure is that we will have a light security on one side and less on the other. Against.

Chris Morrison: We thank you for your eloquence and for your presentation. As an Advisory Board, we cannot authorize, we can only recommend to the City Commission..

At this time Mr. Morrison made a motion to recommend the request for closure to the Commission. Dr. Yoder seconded. Chairman Morrison asked the question:

"THOSE IN FAVOR OF RECOMMENDING THE CITY COMMISSION APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR THE CLOSURE"

Larry Kries, Zone 2: "I am concerned with closures. **I cannot support the request.**"

Chico Goldsmith, Zone 9: "Although I do not agree with closures, I will support the request based on the safety issue".

Wayne Talamas, Zone 8: "I do not agree with closures. **NO.**"

Dr. Yoder, Zone 3: "**NO.**"

Chris Morrison, Zone 4: I have an issue with closures, as well. While I understand the security concerns, this Board is charged with addressing traffic concerns. If this closure is permitted, it may place even more traffic on Old Cutler and Kendall Drive in an area that is already congested at rush hour. **I vote no.**

The Board members recommended against the request for closure.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.