



MEMORANDUM

To: Ernesto Pino, Interim Public Works Director, City of Coral Gables
Eric Riel, Director of Planning, City of Coral Gables

From: Charles Hart, P.E., PTOE, Marlin Engineering, Inc.

Cc: Eric Penfield, P.E., Marlin Engineering, Inc.

Date: May 26, 2010

Re: Review of Gulliver Academy Traffic Study (May 2010)

MEI Project No.: 2007013.001

Marlin Engineering was tasked by the City of Coral Gables with reviewing Gulliver Academy's Traffic Study, which was prepared to address the transportation impacts associated with their Master Plan Revision application. Specifically, the Applicant was requested by the City of Coral Gables to evaluate traffic concerns on Old Cutler Road during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal periods and assess the school's on-site traffic management plan. Pursuant to the school's Master Plan Revision, several new buildings are proposed to be added to the campus to replace existing outdoor facilities. It is important to note that student enrollment is not proposed to increase.

Summary of Applicant's Traffic Study Findings

The Applicant states in the traffic study, dated May 2010, that because the student enrollment of Gulliver Academy is not proposed to increase the additional vehicular impact upon the adjacent roadway network, including Old Cutler Road, is negligible. Driveway volumes entering and exiting the site will remain static, and as a result, traffic congestion currently experienced on Old Cutler Road and other facilities will not be significantly affected by this proposed Master Plan amendment. The Applicant is recommending some minor signal timing modifications at the signalized intersection of Old Cutler Road and SW 120th Street. These signal timing modifications should improve the eastbound left-turn movement operations during the morning peak hours.

Additionally, the Applicant states that parents should not be allowed to park on Old Cutler Road and walk their child to the school. Instead, any parent that wishes to walk their child to their classroom must park on-site.

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Evaluation of Findings

The primary congestion experienced by motorists along Old Cutler Road near Gulliver Academy occurs between the signalized intersections near the school's entrance. Therefore, Marlin Engineering staff conducted a field review of the traffic operations along Old Cutler Road between Chapman Field Drive and SW 120th Street during a typical school day in April and May 2010.

Observations revealed that drivers along Old Cutler Road experience delays that cause queuing in both northbound and southbound directions. Many of the drivers were not oriented towards Gulliver Academy, but rather were traveling on Old Cutler Road as their preferred route to their ultimate destination. A rudimentary travel time analysis was conducted along northbound Old Cutler Road during the AM peak period from Chapman Field Drive to SW 120th Street, a distance of approximately one mile. Results indicate that the amount of time to travel this distance was approximately eight minutes. For comparison purposes, this one-mile section of roadway operating under the posted school zone speed limit of 15 miles per hour could be traversed at this speed in approximately four minutes if traffic flow is unimpeded and the driver is not stopped at the signalized intersection at SW 128th Street. These cursory travel time results confirm that several minutes of delay are currently experienced by motorists on Old Cutler Road during the morning peak hour due to Gulliver Academy ingress/egress operations.

It should be noted that this area of Old Cutler Road is a component of a much larger arterial corridor that runs from south of Cutler Bay to north of downtown Miami. It provides an alternative to congestion on U.S. 1. Within the Old Cutler Road corridor, there are several other schools and reduced speed school zones creating similar delays. While the resultant delays only occur for a short period, their effect is amplified because they coincide with the morning peak period, i.e. "rush hour", on Old Cutler Road.

Conclusion

The Applicant's proposed amendment to the Gulliver Academy's Master Plan will not degrade the current traffic conditions on Old Cutler Road. No additional traffic will be generated as a result of this Master Plan Amendment, and the amount of congestion and vehicular delay currently experienced by motorists on Old Cutler Road immediately adjacent to Gulliver Academy will not increase as a result of this project.