

TRAFFIC ADVISORY BOARD
CORAL GABLES YOUTH CENTER
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA
JANUARY 20, 2009

	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	
MEMBERS:													APPOINTED BY:
Ian Martinez	P	P	P	P	P	E	**	P	P	E	*	P	Donald D. Slesnick, II
Larry D. Kries	P	P	P	P	P	P	**	P	E	P	*	P	Maria Anderson
Douglas Yoder	E	E	P	P	P	P	**	P	P	P	*	E	Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
Frank Quesada	P	E	P	A	E	P	**	E	P	P	*	P	William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Christopher Morrison	P	P	P	E	P	P	**	P	P	P	*	P	Wayne "Chip" Withers
Bertram Goldsmith, Jr.	P	P	E	P	P	P	**	P	P	P	*	P	Commission-as-a-Whole
Ramon Irigoyen	P	P	A	A	E	P	**	A	P	P	*	P	City Manager

(*) Board recommended not holding a meeting due to holiday vacations

(**) Board meeting cancelled due to threatening hurricane

A - Absent
E - Excused
P - Present

Staff

R. Alberto Delgado, P.E., Public Works Director
Esther Zabalo, Civil Engineer
Lt. Agustin Diaz, Police Department
Robert Lowman, PSB, Division Chief, Fire Department
Mirtha Francomacaro, PW Central Division

Commission Official

Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.

✓ **RESIDENTS**

Residents of the 600 – 700 Blocks of Palermo Avenue
Ada Holian
Vivian Williams
Katie Lindsay
John Holian
James Williams

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Mr. Delgado reported on the newly constructed Segovia/Coral Way roundabout. He mentioned that RPM's (reflective pavement marker) will replace the temporary markings and the four light fixtures which will illuminate the area are coming soon. He emphasized that the good thing was the many e-mails that have being received indicate that people are delighted with the operation of the roundabout. Comments from the residents attending the meeting were positive and that they liked the roundabout as well.

Mr. Delgado further noted that even during the afternoon peak hour traffic flows smoothly and drivers can appreciate all the surrounding entrance features. Mr. Delgado noted that once the one on Biltmore and Segovia is installed, it will complement the new one on Coral Way.

To Mr. Irigoyen's question as to what rating Dr. Elbadrawi had given that intersection, Mr. Delgado noted that it was "D", close to failure. There had been a lot of accidents with drivers making the right turn.

Mr. Delgado suggested that the Board now take up the Palermo Avenue corridor as the residents who had attended the November 2008 meeting were with us again this evening. Mr. Morrison concurred and asked Mr. Delgado to summarize what has been discussed up to this point.

PALERMO AVENUE

An update from Mr. Delgado: "Originally (three years ago) the residents on Palermo Avenue were concerned about the traffic on their street and Public Works had the City Traffic Consultant conduct a traffic study of the entire Palermo Avenue Corridor. A first suggestion was the construction of a roundabout at Palermo and Cardena; however, after looking at the entire corridor he came up with two other traffic calming suggestions for that area, one – the re-alignment of Palermo at De Soto Boulevard (the one going to the De Soto fountain) and also the installation of another traffic circle on De Soto Boulevard and Cordova Street, which is a bit off of Palermo. Seventy-seven percent of the residents are in favor of the one at Palermo and Cardena. However, the City has not received a response from two of the residents that live next to the proposed circle. The County now requires concurrency from the four corner residents at any proposed installation. This does not mean that the circle will not go in because we have seventy-seven percent of the residents in agreement. If you (addressing the residents present) touch base with the owners of 701 and 660 Palermo (is on the southeast corner of the intersection) we would be appreciative". Discussion from the Members and residents ensued.

Mr. Delgado explained that originally the County requirement was 2/3's of the affected area residents; then the requirement was reduced to 51%; and now they want the four corners (or three corners, whatever) of the proposed circle in agreement therefore, he said that he felt the residents should check with those two neighbors. He also noted that it would be a just a courtesy to let them know that the construction will take place. Discussion among the residents as to who those two residents were.

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Morrison recognized Commissioner Cabrera who had just arrived and he brought him up to speed as to what was being discussed regarding the Palermo Avenue and Cardena Street roundabout. Mr. Morrison noted that this issue had been brought up at the November Traffic Board meeting. At that time the Board was favorable disposed to recommend the proposed traffic circle, but there were several other projects in the immediate area which may or may not be included in this year's recommendation as the Board has a million dollar project list and only \$300,000.00 to spend. Tonight is the night the Board is determining which projects to include in the budget before it is submitted to the Commission.

Commissioner Cabrera: He stated that he would only take a minute and then would have to leave. He wished the Board members and the residents present a Happy New Year. He mentioned that this Board is very dear and near to him. He continued that two and a half years ago they had a very productive meeting in the Chief of Police's office about traffic on Palermo Avenue. Police presence helped in reducing speeding, but when the officers are nowhere to be found, the speeding problem returns. Commissioner Cabrera said that he was supportive of the traffic calming efforts back then to assist the residents with their efforts and he is still supporting them. Mr. Cabrera hoped that Mr. Delgado would be able to show empirical data of the traffic problem that exists there. He continued by saying that for no other reason, he wanted to tell them that whatever the Traffic Board ends up doing, he would respect and support, but that he feels that after that one meeting that he participated in, which was very productive, that the situation needs to be addressed. When they first talked about the traffic calming installation, it seemed like it might take a very long time to get it off the ground and the residents understood that might happen. Public Works gets bogged down with so many problems and in some cases traffic calming installations in one area affects another. All the wonderful traffic calming installations that have been installed nearby have impacted the immediate neighborhood. He equated what typically happens to blowing-up a balloon and then when you stick your finger in it, the air goes somewhere else. So, impeded traffic flows into other people's neighborhoods. He finished by saying that this is the reality. Addressing Mr. Delgado he said that whatever he could do to help he would do and whatever the Board decides, he will support.

Mr. Delgado noted that he had informed Commissioner Cabrera that PW had conducted a corridor study of the entire Palermo corridor and that in addition to the proposed circle being discussed tonight at Palermo Avenue and Cardena Street, we are also proposing two traffic calming devices in the area, which are the re-alignment of the De Soto Boulevard and a circle located at the intersection of Palermo and Cordova, which will help to alleviate the speeding problem now being experienced on Palermo. This is an on-going project. PW is looking to do more and more to at least calm the traffic situations in as many areas as possible. Of course, he explained, the main problem is budget. There are only so many projects that can be carried out in a year. PW is recommending construction of this circle for 2008-2009. The other two for the following year; unless we get funding from other projects that may not receive approved from the residents or the County.

To recap, Mr. Morrison noted that besides the Palermo and Cardena circle we have plans for a De Soto Boulevard re-alignment and a circle for the intersection of Palermo and Cordova.

Commissioner Cabrera: "Mr. Chairman do you have anything else you want to ask or do you have anything else that I can help you with?" Mr. Morrison: "No, thank you." Commissioner Cabrera, addressing the Board Members and Mr. Delgado then asked for their support for the Segovia Median.

Mr. Delgado noted that the Segovia Median is going through the process. It is right now at the County's level, going through the JPA (Joint Participation Agreement) process, as is the Segovia/Biltmore circle.

Commissioner Cabrera noted that the Interim City Manager had requested to meet with the County to solicit funding – Road Impact Fees - for the Segovia Median. He excused himself and all the residents thanked him for having attended the meeting and for his support during this process. Favorable comments and goodbyes from the residents were heard.

At this time in the meeting, the Chairman requested the Zone representatives to present their budget priorities for their respective Zones. The Board Members had received a complete updated list of proposed projects at the November meeting. Mr. Morrison asked not to prioritize those projects which were not ready to go in the next nine months.

Mr. Delgado summarized that there are 23 circles proposed for a total of \$700,000.00 and list needs to be narrowed down to half of that (\$350,000.00), the Zone representatives need to select from those 23 projects.

Mr. Morrison noted that the Zone representatives should follow “seniority” when in doubt as some of the requests for traffic calming were several years old. The list of projects is made a part of these Minutes.

ZONE 1: - Ramon Irigoyen - The first three: Cortez and Majorca Avenue; Hernando St. & Zamora Avenue; and Obispo Avenue and Pizarro Street. Mr. Morrison asked Mr. Delgado the status on Cortez Street and Majorca Avenue. Mr. Delgado informed the Board that the traffic calming device had been approved a long time ago.

ZONE 2: - Larry Kries - He noted that he would propose “dollars” and that he thought we should look at Palermo as a corridor. It makes sense to do all the projects on the corridor at the same time as they were designed to work together. If we cannot, then he knows that they will be pushed to next year and he will approach it the same way then. We have the same issues on all east/west corridors. The Valencia corridor is another example. We have two or three projects on Valencia, just like we have two or three projects on Palermo. On another subject, he explained that this is a much bigger project, but the circle at the De Sota Fountain (he drives through this intersection every day) and it really needs to be re-engineered, somehow. Mr. Delgado explained that PW already has Impact Fees funding to do the design of that circle. The idea is to expand the center so that we can protect the fountain. He noted that even after the fountain was remodeled, there was an accident that almost hit the bowl of the fountain.

Mr. Morrison would like Dr. Elbadrawi to bring the design to the next meeting.

Mr. Kries commented that it was very bizarre, as there are stop signs in one direction and not on the other. Mr. Delgado noted that David Plummer & Associates, Inc. was the one that developed the conceptual design, paid by the MPO. We now need to move with the actual design. The idea is to protect the fountain. The problem we are having is that the County has a selected group of consultants and none of those consultants are really qualified to do that type of design and we are trying to see if we can use David Plummer & Associates, Inc. to do that. Or we may design it in-house. The idea is to protect the fountain.

ZONE 3: - Dr. Yoder – In Mr. Yoder’s absence Mr. Delgado noted that the two projects at Santa Maria Street and Alegriano Avenue, and Santa Maria Street and Mendavia Avenue are in progress, PW has not gone through the process of meeting with the residents. Right now they are only requests.

ZONE 4: - Mr. Morrison - The most pressing project is the circle at S. Alhambra Circle and Nervia Street. Mr. Morrison inquired if Public Works had gone to the neighbors adjacent to the intersection to confirm they were in favor. At first we were told by the Riviera Neighborhood Association that the neighbors were opposed and the more recently the father of the owner of the house in opposition came before us and requested the circle. Mr. Delgado noted that we had had a community meeting in 2004 and the problem we had with that circle was that one of the residents at that time, however it is ready to go and it should be incorporated.

ZONE 5: - Frank Quesada - A traffic circle at Brighton Place and Ridgewood Road was requested before his appointment to the Board. He asked for an update and Mr. Delgado informed him that this was submitted a long time ago and all the approvals had been received, but the project was put aside because of lack of funding. There are new residents in the area and they have submitted their signatures and a new request for the installation. Mr. Quesada asked if traffic counts had been taken and if so, did they support the installation? Mr. Delgado informed him that the traffic counts showed that they support the installation. Mr. Quesada asked to proceed with that project. Mr. Quesada proceeded to inform the Board that the next subject he was going to discuss could be brought up at another meeting, but he explained that he is concerned about the effect of the new light installed on Douglas Road at Ingraham Highway. It is not good.

ZONE 6: - Mr. Bertram “Chico” Goldsmith – He had been talking with Alberto and has decided to bump back the Red Road and Lugo Avenue project which can wait for a little while. Mr. Delgado noted that the City wants to go ahead and finish the two roundabouts on Bella Vista. There is a five-way stop there right now and the neighbors want a yield sign.

ZONE 7: - Ian Martinez - He asked that as he did not have a construction estimate for the Salzedo Street and Majorca Avenue Project, does that mean it would be a “new request”? Mr. Delgado explained that the reason it did not show an estimate was because this is an urban area and requires a lot of curbing and also parking was an important element. Mr. Delgado noted that this project would be in the range of \$40,000.00. Mr. Martinez wants to go ahead with this project and the X-walks.

Mr. Morrison noted that the City has spent a large amount of money during the last four years on the traffic calming installations in other zones and we should support Mr. Martinez’s Zone 7 project.

Mr. Martinez reminded the Board Members that he had voluntarily given up a large amount of money because it was denied by the County, namely, the Crosswalk project for Fonseca, Marabella, Alcantara, Montilla, Veragua and Oviedo Avenues, which would have amounted to \$60,000.00. Mr. Delgado clarified that the reason the County did not give its approval was due to the fact that

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the streets were very narrow and the bump outs could not be installed. We will probably have to re-design a project for that area.

Mr. Morrison: “Now we have completed the first sweep and spent \$160,000.00 with \$140,000.00 to go. Let’s take another run through this. Larry we have only spent \$160,000.00, so do you want to push the Palermo corridor quarter?” Mr. Kries: “Absolutely.”

Mr. Morrison: “Those are \$35,000.00 and \$20,000.00 respectively, for a total of \$55,000.00. Can that be done, Alberto?” Mr. Delgado: “Yes, we will accommodate that.”

Red Road and Lugo will also be included.

A resident from Palermo the Palermo neighborhood asked why the different prices if they are all circles? Mr. Delgado explained that it had to do with the complexity of the construction. Some circles required the installation of curbing and often times the drainage has to be relocated, which can be very expensive. That is the difference and every circle is different.

Mr. Morrison recapped which projects had been included: Zone 1, Cortez and Majorca, Hernando and Zamora; Zone 2, Palermo Avenue and Cardena Street, Palermo Avenue/De Soto Boulevard at Cordova Street, and intersection improvement of Palermo and De Soto; Zone 4, So. Alhambra and Nervia; Zone 6, Brighton Place and Ridgewood Road; Zone 6, Red Road and Lugo; Zone 7, Salzedo and Majorca.

Mr. Martinez asked when construction will start on these traffic calming devices and Mr. Delgado informed the Board Members that we are ready to start.

Mr. Delgado noted that he had a meeting with Metro Express (the contractor) the previous week and he is waiting for the okay to proceed. They will work according to areas. Mr. Delgado noted that the two Bella Vista roundabouts are still pending from last year, so they will take care of those first. (Mr. Morrison noted that those two roundabouts were budgeted last year.)

Mr. Morrison: “Let me ask Alberto and Larry a question: The circle at Valencia and Cardena, is that of less importance from projects on Palermo?”

Mr. Kries: “There is traffic on Valencia, as on all east/west corridors, but we have heard from the people who live on Palermo not Valencia...”

Mr. Morrison: “Squeaky wheel”?

Mr. Kries: “Yes”.

Mr. Morrison: “Let’s review the chart one more time and I will ask for a motion:

Zone 1 we have Cortez Street and Majorca Avenue; Hernando Street and Zamora Avenue.

Zone 2, we have Palermo Avenue and Cardena Street; Palermo Avenue/De Soto Boulevard @ Cordova Street, De Soto Boulevard @ Cordova Street. That takes care of the whole corridor.

Zone 4, So. Alhambra Circle and Nervia Street.

Zone 5, Brighton Place and Ridgewood Road.

Zone 6, Red Road and Lugo.

Zone 7, Salzedo Street and Majorca Avenue, for a total of \$315,000.00.

Mr. Martinez made the following motion: **That Public Works proceed as quickly as possible with construction of the traffic calming devices as addressed at this meeting**, seconded by Mr. Goldsmith. All the Members in favor, the motion carried.

Mr. Delgado explained that we try to have the contractor work in one specific area and finish, so heavy equipment does not have to be moved to different locations. He also asked to bear in mind that PW has to also address this year's Impact Fees projects, the Biltmore and Segovia roundabout, the Segovia Median, the re-alignment of Segovia and Alhambra Circle, which will be going before the Historic Preservation Board in February, as well as the two circles in Blue Road (Alhambra and Blue Road and San Amaro and Blue Road).

Mr. Morrison asked when the Biltmore and Segovia roundabout would be completed. Mr. Delgado noted that it is still in the design stage.

A Palermo resident asked if any of the projects from last year would interfere with the Palermo projects, and Mr. Delgado said no, they would not. She also asked when the Segovia Median was scheduled for and Mr. Delgado told her that is scheduled for this fall. He went on to explain why we try to do construction during the summer because traffic is less which minimizes the impact on residents and visitors alike. Mr. Delgado noted that the Palermo projects will probably take place in May.

The Palermo residents thanked the Board and left.

Mr. Morrison asked about the traffic circle on So. Alhambra and Camarin and Mr. Delgado noted that we are sending the letters out to the residents. That he had called Mr. Hornbacher and asked him if he would like to see the plans before the letters were sent to the residents and he said he would. Mr. Delgado also explained that this is the resident who lives in front of the green area. As a courtesy we will show the plans to him. The proposed plan increases the green area more since we are not installing a circle, but this project is for next year.

Mr. Morrison asked about the status of the ones on Sunset and Tibidabo Avenue, and Mindello Street and Gondoliere Avenue. Mr. Delgado explained that the conceptual designs are complete. We have not gone thru with the actual plans yet. But we have not been successful at getting a

consensus on the re-alignment of Erwin Road and Santurce Avenue. Mr. Morrison noted that they will go to next year. Then he asked about the proposed circle on Mariposa. He drives that three or more times a week and he does not see the need. There is very little traffic.

Mr. Delgado noted that we have to do the speed table on Madruga Avenue, which is in traffic Zone 4. This has been long time promised. We finally got the condominium to approve it. Mr. Delgado explained to the Board Members that this is actually an alley. About 40 years ago, and he does not know why, the City donated half of the road to the south side so they vacated half of the road making it from 60 to 30. A lot of traffic cuts through there.

City Updates: None.

Mr. Goldsmith spoke about the light on Le Jeune and how the traffic backs up. This location is a proposed location for the installation of a camera.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Mr. Irigoyen noted that he was driving by the Spanish Village, the new beautiful project, and he commented that he was concerned about the height of the curbing around the circles. Mr. Delgado explained that they still need to put a final coat of asphalt which will bring the street up, which will be done at the end. Those curbs were installed early to protect the hydrants.

Mr. Irigoyen noted that the Segovia/Coral Way roundabout works so well that there is hardly any time where pedestrians can cross Coral Way to get to Anderson. Mr. Delgado noted that there is a proposed circle at that location, which has been approved by the County to use Impact Fees.

Mr. Irigoyen asked if the Bacardi Project, when it was Burger King, included the Palermo corridor. Mr. Delgado informed him that Bacardi already paid for the circles that were installed in Hernando. They are still committed after they finish the project for 90 days to complete/correct any problems. Discussion ensued among the Board Members and Mr. Delgado.

Mr. Martinez complained about construction work going on at Le Jeune Road. Work starts at midnight and continues through the night. Mr. Delgado explained to him that it was south of Granello and they are doing an extension of the water line. Mr. Delgado to check with the County. The problem is that probably DOT does not allow them to do it during the day.

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