

TRAFFIC ADVISORY BOARD  
CORAL GABLES YOUTH CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2015 5:30 P.M.

**MEETING MINUTES**

<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>M</b> 14	<b>A</b> 14	<b>M</b> 14	<b>J</b> 14	<b>J</b> 14	<b>A</b> 14	<b>S</b> 14	<b>O</b> 14	<b>N</b> 14	<b>D</b> 14	<b>J</b> 15	<b>F</b> 15	<b>APPOINTED BY:</b>
Ignacio G. Borbolla	A	P	E	P	+-	P	E	P	E	+-	P	E	Jim Cason
Gordon Sokoloff	P	P	P	E	+-	P	E	P	P	+-	P	P	Patricia Keon
Deborah Swain	P	P	P	P	+-	P	P	P	P	+-	P	P	Vince Lago
Chris Morrison	-	P	P	P	+-	P	P	P	P	+-	P	P	William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Albert Corrada	A	E	(#)	P	+-	P	P	P	P	+-	P	P	Frank C. Quesada
Donna Kupper	P	P	P	E	+-	E	P	P	P	+-	E	P	Commission-as-a-Whole
VACANT	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	City Manager

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

**STAFF:**

Jessica Keller, Assistant Public Works Director  
Yamilet Senespleda, Public Works City Engineer/Senior Traffic Engineer  
Ludwik Janiga, Public Works, Civil Engineer  
Jeannette Reyes, Public Works, Clerical Assistant II  
Robert Lowman, C.G. Fire, Division Chief  
Brian Lawrence, C.G. P.D., Lieutenant

**GUEST:**

Frank Quesada, Commissioner  
Melissa Seifer, Coral Gables resident

**CALL TO ORDER:**

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

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:**

**January 20, 2015 Meeting Minutes – Mr. Sokoloff made a motion to approve the minutes conditionally and if anyone disagrees they can send an e-mail for revision. Mr. Morrison seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**ABSENCE:**

**Mrs. Kupper made a motion to excuse Mr. Borbolla absence, Mr. Sokoloff seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**MOTIONS:**

**US1 between Santona St. & Granada Blvd. - Mr. Morrison made a motion for Public Works to have FDOT bring to the attention of the school board, that the parking accessibility for the bus pick up / drop-off will be affected by this project. Mr. Sokoloff seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**Mediterranean Village Project - Mr. Morrison made a motion to forward the traffic study for the Agave project to the Mayor/Commission for review ASAP. Mrs. Kupper seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**Miracle Mile Streetscape Steering Committee - Mrs. Kupper made a motion to have the City Commission direct the Miracle Mile Streetscape's Steering Committee, to find a way to accommodate bicycle lanes to the best of their ability. Mr. Corrada seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.**

Mrs. Kupper introduced Melissa Seifer whom she brought to the meeting as a guest. Melissa is a neighbor who lives in Gables by the Sea, serves in the HOA and is interested in becoming a TAB member.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:**

Yamilet presented (3) on-going FDOT projects on US1: (1) Project between *Santona & Granada*, including the intersection of *US1 and Grant Avenue* -

**Project Details:**

- Repaving and resurfacing the road as needed
- Upgrading pedestrian signage and pavement markings
- Updating traffic signals
- Extending left turn lanes at several locations
- Relocating existing trees impacted by roadway widening
- Widening the road at Granada Blvd to create a southbound right turn lane
- Reconstructing the concrete median at the intersection of Augusto Street and the frontage road to restrict any eastbound, northbound and southbound left turn movements
- Installing high emphasis pedestrian crosswalks at the intersections of Alhambra Circle, August Street and Granada Blvd.

Changes are to provide or extend left turn lane on US1, changes in the landscaped medians, changes to the signals on Grant Avenue and pavement marking signs. This is basically the scope of work in these projects. (2) *Maynada, Agosto with US1* - comments were submitted to FDOT

by staff regarding this intersection of Maynada, Agosto with US1. FDOT is proposing to extend the median on Agosto to prevent vehicles from making a left hand turn on to Homestead Avenue. The improvements are to prevent the south bound left turns on Homestead Avenue and west bound left turn from Homestead Avenue to Maynada or Agosto.

Mrs. Swain asked if the middle school has an opinion on this project. Yamilet stated that the School was invited to the public meeting and no one attended. Mr. Morrison is concerned, as the school buses line up on Homestead Avenue east bound. Yamilet said if they are going east bound on US1, they can go to the next intersection and make a right turn. Mr. Morrison said that the bus pick-up zone is on the south side of the street facing east. Lt. Lawrence said they would have to go to Marius Street around UM and go up north. Mr. Morrison suggested if it's not too late, to get input from the school board since it will affect them. Jessica asked Yamilet if the residents and school officials were specifically invited. Yamilet said everyone in the affected area was invited.

Mrs. Swain asked if there is anything that will affect pedestrians negatively or will it improve the situation for other than automobiles. Yamilet said FDOT is providing a crosswalk on the south west leg and therefore it should improve it. Mr. Morrison is aware that there is a crosswalk on Agosto and one crossing US1, he does not recall anything on Maynada or Homestead, and asked if there will be any enhancements at that location. Yamilet said sheet S12 demonstrates all of the signs and markings that will affect the area.

#### Grand Avenue & US1 –

##### **Project Details:**

- Installing new traffic signs and signals to provide a dedicated lane for westbound left turns at Grand Avenue

The County is proposing on Grand, going west bound the same existing left turn lane, making it longer, improving the markings and changing the signal to have a green arrow protective phase. Mr. Morrison asked if they figured out how it will impact the traffic on LeJeune and US1. Yamilet said yes.

Mrs. Kupper asked about the projects proposed on the Bahamian Village side. Chief Lowman said a couple of projects have been discussed at the DRC but nothing practical.

#### US1 from Ponce to Douglas –

##### **Project Details:**

- Realigning the roadway and reducing curves
- Improving the pedestrian overpass
- Improving pedestrian accessibility
- Installing new sidewalks on the east and west side of SR5
- Removing a mid-block crosswalk and installing a signalized pedestrian crosswalk at the Ponce de Leon Blvd. intersection.

- Improving irrigation to reduce wet pavement
- Modifying traffic signals systems and mast arms
- Installing new roadway lighting in both travel directions

Based on crash history, the County is making safety improvements to the median and the left turn lane is going to be longer. A noise wall is being evaluated adjacent to the linear park. The City Attorney and the Lola B. Walker HOA are involved. Jessica said the City has not taken a position yet but they will when they have a better understanding of the project scope and position of the directly impacted communities. These projects are scheduled for construction in 2016.

Chief Lowman mentioned to staff that the traffic signal on the Riviera intersection had a control module at the Fire Station that when the trucks need to get out, the light turns red for the trucks to get on to US1 or get across US1 and it's currently not working. Yamilet asked Chief Lowman to e-mail the information to staff and they will take care of it.

Mr. Morrison asked if there will be a visual of what the noise wall will look like. Jessica said the meeting is tomorrow night and her understanding is, the way it's presented they do not know what the height will be yet. They know that they need a threshold so that the wall can be built. They don't have to have the wall but the choice is a wall or noise pollution.

Yamilet said the traffic study shows that due to several rear end collisions along US1, there is a need to have more storage on the left hand turn lanes.

Mrs. Swain commented that the only way to solve traffic solutions is to find alternatives to providing automobile traffic lanes.

Mrs. Swain had a resident approach her regarding the intersection of Granada and North Green Way. Residents say the visibility is terrible and due to the on street parking at the Granada Golf Course, one needs to go pass the stop sign almost into oncoming traffic to be able to see. Mrs. Swain said it's a dangerous intersection and asked staff if there's a traffic study and if not, can one be requested. Lt. Lawrence will provide staff with a 3-year accident report history and will have his staff look into it as well.

Bike to work day – the City will be sponsoring an event along with Bike Walk Coral Gables on March 6, 2015.

Scope of the Board – Mrs. Swain said members need to come up with the description and mission of the Board to have it approved by City Commission in order to change the existing scope. Jessica said for the next meeting she will provide draft language for the Board to red line it.

Jessica said that a representative from the Parking Department will be attending future TAB meetings to discuss the Trolley Transit issues once the scope of the Board is revised.

Mrs. Kupper mentioned that at the last meeting it was discussed to possibly expand the size of the Board. She said with so many projects coming-up, the Board should consider adding two more members.

Jessica mentioned she will be developing the language for the Transportation Master Plan and would like the Board's input at the next meeting.

The Board asked about the City Manager's vacant appointee. Jessica said she will find out.

### **TRAFFIC UPDATE:**

Anderson & University - community meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 4, 2015 @ 6:00 pm at the C.G. Youth Center.

Algardi Avenue, Cantoria Avenue & Garcia Avenue – community meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 26, 2015 @ 6:00 pm at the C.G. Youth Center to discuss traffic study.

Gables by the Sea – moving forward with lowering the speed limit to 25 mph.

US1 (Douglas to Ponce) - meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 18, 2015 at the C.G. Library.

S.W. 8<sup>th</sup> St. (39<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 33 Avenue) - meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 25, 2015 at the C.G. Library.

Majorca - public meeting early April (date TBA)

Biltmore Drive & Blue Road – proposing realignment and speed tables.

Mr. Morrison requested a 90 day rolling calendar in order for the Board members to be aware of the upcoming community meetings that pertain to their zone beforehand and be able to attend those meetings. Jessica said yes.

### **TRANSIT UPDATE:**

Jessica said there was a Trolley extension meeting; the trolley will be extended to McFarlane Homestead Historic District. Staff will take a look at the plans and revise what was proposed.

Trolley Facility Site – meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, 2015.

**GUEST:**

Commissioner Quesada said that it usually takes a month before the City Commission gets the TAB minutes, therefore he's either reading them before the meeting or a few days before. With all the different projects that are coming up in the City and developers asking for variances, traffic and parking are the biggest issues for downtown. The input of this Board, every commissioner reads. Commissioner Quesada does not want anyone to think that he is against or for a project before it goes to the commission, but he does discuss lobbyist, even though the commission rejects a project there are things the developer can still do as-of-right. The City has about 10.9 million square feet of rentable office space and Brickell has about 7.4 million square feet (4 million square feet larger than Brickell). Coral Gables has 22 foreign consulates in trade offices. There is so much that the City has that creates the unique downtown the City has. 46.7% of the City's annual yearly budget comes from the revenues the City gets from downtown. The mileage rate have been lowered four years in a row, the reserves are higher now than the entire history of the city, it is at 29.2 million dollars in reserves. Six years ago it was at \$900,000.00. Taxes have been lowered and they are doing a lot of infrastructures improvements throughout the city. Commissioner Quesada says all this happens because downtown is doing well, but it will not do well if there are issues of congestion with traffic and parking.

Mr. Morrison mentioned that the Traffic Advisory Board was not present when this project came about until afterwards. Commissioner Quesada was under the impression that the developers met with the TAB. Mrs. Swain said they were at the last TAB meeting at the Board's request.

In an effort to better prepare for traffic impacts, Ramon Trias, Planning Director will attend the TAB meetings, quarterly, starting in May so he can provide an overview of upcoming projects.

Commissioner Quesada agrees that it is a mistake that the TAB was not aware and it's something that needs to be corrected. He said Commissioner Kerdyk spoke with him a couple of days ago in reference to a Traffic Master Plan for downtown Coral Gables all the way to US1 (US1 to 8<sup>th</sup> Street). When a development comes in, whether it's as-of-right project that does not go in front of the City Commission or project that request variances that require Commission approval, they are required to do a traffic study. The Traffic Master Plan the Commission wants, it's for all projects moving forward.

The commission want to know how's it going to affect, not only one block two blocks but a mile away, how's it going to impact the traffic lights and the stacking as it impacts the entire downtown. The Trolley system is working spectacular and in the next two years the City is hoping to implement a downtown loop. This was one of the items that were brought to the Commission. They had an outside consultant take a look at the Trolley master Plan. The Trolley has been successful because it's free and it's beneficial on the downtown traffic. What Commissioner Quesada requested, and it was passed with a unanimous decision, was for every

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consultant who is brought in, works with the Traffic Advisory Board in developing the Traffic Master Plan. Commissioner Quesada said no matter what happens with Agave whether they go through with what they are asking for right now, that the commission tells them they can only do as of right what they are allowed to do. If the Traffic Master Plan passes, one of the things Commissioner Quesada will be pushing for, and he is positive the commission will follow suit is for whatever the results are, the developer comply with.

Mrs. Swain asked Commissioner Quesada about the request the TAB made regarding broader input of public process for the Agave project. Commissioner Quesada said it was not discussed publicly but he did discuss it with Ramon Trias who gave the commissioner a list of all the public meetings that occurred from the pre-review to the public meetings. The Commissioners want to know how many people attended these meetings and the notifications. Mrs. Swain said that a notification to the immediate owners would not reach out to those who are not right there. Mrs. Swain also mentioned that the landlords are not obligated to notify the tenants and therefore the tenants wouldn't know about it. Commissioner Quesada said that maybe the code needs to be revised for certain types of projects. The Board agrees that for something of this magnitude, the Agave project should have been broadly advertised.

Commissioner Quesada mentioned the area around Merrick Park is becoming a hot spot for residential development. This is because Gables Residential, a company from Atlanta, GA, is one of the largest multi-family apartment developers in the country. Currently, they are constructing phase I, residential apartment complex, and their occupancy is about 98%. They are doing well but now all the developers and landowners in the area are noticing how well they are doing and want a piece of the action as well. Therefore a lot of projects are coming to the area. There are 48,700 residents in the City of Coral Gables, we want to be over 50,000.00 because then, the City will be in a different bracket for federal and state grants. This makes it more important for the Agave project and the traffic, that there is a great plan, not only for next year, but for 5, 10, 25 years down the line. This is the importance the Traffic Master Plan and having the TAB involvement in this plan.

Mrs. Kupper stated that equally distant from Merrick Park to Mediterranean Village from Mediterranean Village up to the 1200/1300 block of Ponce, in the Alhambra, Navarre, and

Majorca area, there are a lot of buildings going up. The miles from Merrick Park, to this area of Ponce is only a couple of miles which adds high density.

Commissioner Quesada said it's important to change the requirements when it comes to traffic and compliance with the Master Plan because when a developer proposes as-of-right there is not much the City can do.

Mr. Morrison mentioned that during the Mediterranean Village presentation, it was said that many of the intersections on Ponce were classified as failed. Commissioner Quesada was not aware of this and asked Yamilet if they are failing intersections. Yamilet said there is one that was classified as failing but there are a few that were classified as

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E which means if you add two or three more cars to the study it would be classified as F. Commissioner Quesada asked what the basis of a failing classification. Is it the traffic counts or the stacking? Yamilet said delay. He asked what streets are the affecting streets. Yamilet will have to look at the report and forward it to him.

Mr. Sokoloff said he is not against growth, but is opposed to unbridled growth and that the quality of life in Coral Gables is the reason most people live there and it will go down the tubes if the building goes unbridled. Commissioner Quesada agreed.

Ingraham Park - Commissioner Quesada mentioned Ingraham Park was his first initiative as a commissioner. The idea was to get cyclists and the runners off the street. Now the issue is accessing the park from the neighborhoods, therefore AECOM is designing a crosswalk for people to access the park safely.

Edgewater, Ingraham Terrace and LeJeune – Commissioner Quesada said there was discussion about building a traffic circle at Ingraham Terrace and LeJeune intersection and some improvements at the Edgewater Circle. He said there is a waterway commissioner in the County that will give the City money for improvements in any area above waterways. Ingraham Park qualifies for these funds, they can still fund the park retroactively because it's a public park, it's accessible and it's on the water. He asked Jessica to reach out to the waterway commissioner in the County.

Miracle Mile – There is currently a meeting at the Youth Center's Theater regarding the Miracle Mile Streetscape project and tomorrow morning there will be a Special Commission meeting to discuss this project. There is a Steering Committee, a representative will be meeting with the TAB periodically to keep the board in the loop of what's happening and to make sure that the TAB feedback goes back to the committee. Jessica added that at each subsequent meeting, they are refining the proposal each step of the way.

Commissioner Quesada mentioned that the school board has what is called a *controlled choice* of schools. Many residents have complained over the years about this, therefore this commission has decided to do something about it. They are trying to get rid of that system to create neighborhood schools. One of the arguments is that this lottery system creates more traffic. Mr. Morrison asked if the City is one of the few cities who still run this system. Commissioner Quesada said the City of Coral Gables is the only city.

Segovia Circle – Commissioner Quesada said that residents have been complaining about Segovia Circle, east of the Country Club. Residents' complaints are that they feel like they are going to get run-over because of the speed that comes from Alhambra into the residential area. Mrs. Swain said there needs to be something that slows them down but does not prevent them from going through.

## **ADJOURNMENT:**

*Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.*