

**MARTIN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY
Monday, October 19, 2016 – 5:00 P.M.
2401 SE Monterey Road
1st Floor Growth Management Room
Stuart, FL 34996
(772) 221-1498**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Joan Moore, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

2. ROLL CALL

Members in Attendance:

Joan Moore

Ken Natoli

Andy Flanner (Left 6:12 PM)

William Fry (Arrived at 5:04 PM)

Craig Houdeshell

John Trahan

Hal Forslund (Arrived at 5:09 PM)

Eric Smith

Gene Zweben

Excused Members

Julie Preast

Jan Icyda

David Pittinos

Members Not In Attendance:

Cheryl Lenartiene, resigned.

Staff in Attendance:

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator (Arrived at 5:44 P.M.)

Margaret Brassard, Administrative Assistant III

Bolivar Gomez, Planner II

Ricardo Vazquez, Planner I

Others in Attendance:

Alex Barr, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)

Helen McBride, Self

J. D. Whitaker, SCALA

Stephen Williams, SCALA

Fernando Morales, FDOT, Project Manager

Stewart Robertson, Kimley-Horn (Arrived at 5:20 P.M.)

A quorum was present for the meeting.

Ms. Moore, noting there are so many new members on the Committee, that she sends a

card to all members that leave to say “Thank you” for their service on the committee.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Mr. Andy Flanner made a motion to approve the Agenda which was seconded by Mr. Ken Natoli. There were no objections. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Gomez advised that the representatives from Scalar Consulting Group are running late and since they are not here at the moment he asked if the Committee had any objections moving forward to Agenda item C as Agenda item B will probably be lengthy. It was approved to present Item C first then return to Item A.

4. AGENDA ITEMS

A. US-1 RESURFACING PROJECT (N. OF SE SALERNO RD. TO N. OF SE FISCHER ST.)

Mr. Gomez advised that this is a milling and resurfacing project from North of SE Salerno Road to North of SE Fischer Street which is being managed by Scalar Consulting Group on behalf of FDOT. He said that Mr. J. D. Whitaker and his staff are here to present the project overview of this resurfacing project. Mr. Whitaker introduced himself then Mr. Fernando Morales, as the FDOT Project Manager on this project. Mr. Whitaker advised the main focus on this job is to rehabilitate the substandard pavement currently in existence. He said that they are also reviewing downsizing the interior lanes to introduce FDOT’s new initiative of seven foot buffered bike lanes which is designed for a roadway with a speed less than 45 miles per hour and within two miles of an urban boundary. Mr. Whitaker provided a summary of the currently existing conditions throughout the 1.6 mile project: three twelve foot lanes and a five foot paved shoulder. He said that they will narrow the two interior lanes which will provide two feet of extra space for the buffered bike lanes. Mr. Whitaker said that it’s a “Three R” job [Resurfacing, Restoration and Rehabilitate] but in addition to resurfacing the roadway they will be bringing the pedestrian facilities up to standard. He said that they have walked the corridor, identified missing or substandard sidewalks and noted facilities that need upgrading. No signal improvements will be made he said, only pedestrian facility changes at the three intersections involved in this corridor. Mr. Whitaker said that he will now take questions. Mr. Natoli inquired if they saw other pedestrians during their walk through of the corridor. Mr. Whitaker said that only a few people were seen biking with fewer walking. Mr. Natoli mentioned that as long as Martin continues to create corridors of that nature, people will never bike or walk in those areas. It was said that it is posted for 45 mile per hour (MPH), however, most people are traveling closer to 65 MPH. Mr. Trahan inquired as to how the bike lanes will look and if they will be painted green. Mr. Whitaker said that lanes will not be green but there will be approximately a two foot buffered striped area between the travel and bike lanes for a total of seven feet. Mr. Trahan asked if there would be rumble strips. Mr. Stephen Williams from Scalar said that there would be rumble striping between the travel and bike lanes where there’s a shoulder. He said that the rumble striping will be on the stripe that the car would hit first before going into the bike lane. Mr. Alex Bar asked Mr. Trahan’s opinion of rumble stripes as some bike groups do not favor them. Mr. Trahan said it depends on the depth, some states use breaks at turns so the cyclist can

get to/from the bike lane. Mr. Whitaker said that Scalar has to adhere to “set” design standards so he is unsure as to other alternatives that may be used. Discussion ensued about reflective/non reflective rumble strips, other marketed alternatives and drainage in bike lanes. Mr. Whitaker added that they are not introducing new drainage facilities. Mr. William Fry inquired as to the sequence of the countdown crosswalks whose use is anticipated along the US 1 corridor; will it be pedestrian before or after the turns. Mr. Whitaker said that conversations with MPO staff indicated a desire for advanced signals i.e. the “Lead Pedestrian Signal” which allows the pedestrian a head start of a couple of seconds to get positioned within the crosswalk prior to vehicular traffic. He said that all four quadrants at the three intersections are being tested. Mr. Whitaker concluded stating that there will be a Public Workshop/Open House on Tuesday night from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM at the Port Salerno Civic Center if anyone has more questions or desires more information on the project. Seeing no additional discussion, Ms. Moore thanked the consultants for their presentation.

B. BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN & TRAILS MASTER PLAN –EAST COAST GREENWAY

Mr. Gomez reminded the committee that the MPO is working on the Bicycle, Pedestrian and Trails Master Plan and a component of that is the East Coast Greenway (ECG). He said that staff is seeking a main and an alternative alignment for the ECG. Mr. Gomez said that a map of the existing trails/shared use paths was included in the Agenda Package. Mr. Gomez said that Jonathon Dickinson State Park (JDSP) recently obtained a Federal Land Access Program (FLAP) Grant, so funds have been programmed for the project through JDSP, across US 1 to Hobe Sound. He highlighted the different Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs) in the vicinity and suggested that the committee begin to brainstorm as to which directions should be looked into more as an option. Mr. Gomez reminded the committee that Mr. Stewart Robertson, with Kimley-Horn is here and the two of them will be glad to entertain suggestions and ideas that they may take to the steering committee. Mr. Robertson brought Sun Trail Alignment Maps [corridor for the ECG] which were laid across the table for the committees viewing. He clarified that this map only shows the corridor which is currently designated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) who have been working with the ECG. Mr. Robertson said that he also brought the Non-Motorized Needs Plan from Martin’s 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). He displayed each map as an incentive to begin the discussion. Mr. Gomez informed Mr. William Fry that he didn’t have the exact mileage for the paths but that he will follow up with an email. Mr. Natoli provided some history for those who are new to the committee in that Mr. Herb Hiller from the ECG strongly advocates that the trail comes into downtown areas where there are things that people can do. He said that Mr. Hiller mentioned that an alternative route may also be designated, but the major challenge is determining a path through downtown Stuart. Mr. Natoli said that the City of Stuart is doing some creative things regarding the railroad, possibly Mr. Sam Amerson with the City could help us with this downtown Stuart route. Some creativity of that nature may be needed to travel through downtown Stuart, as well as crossing the bridge, he said. He said if the big bridge is used, there would have to be two crossings of US 1, as well as modifying the bridge as there currently is only a six foot

sidewalk. Ms. Moore noted that buffered bike lanes were going to be striped on that bridge. It was noted by a couple of members that buffered lanes on that bridge would not make a big difference as the vehicle traffic is traveling at 65 MPH and families with children would not be walking or biking across it unless there was a physical barrier. Mr. Natoli redirected the conversation to the small Bascule Bridge, possibly "hanging" the walkways from the bridge. Mr. Gomez said that Ms. Preast is out of town but she sent an email to staff suggesting that Martin get the Sharrow Program started using the Bascule Bridge. He said that Mr. Barr had advised that the City of Stuart would have to apply for a permit and is of the opinion that a Sharrow may be considered as an on road portion of the ECG. He said that Ms. Preast wanted the committee to know that she was suggesting that a Sharrow be considered for the Old Roosevelt Bridge, i.e. the Bascule Bridge. Mr. Natoli said that residents in Martin County do not know what Sharrows are so implementing one is useless until a lot of education is done. Mr. Natoli said that there isn't enough room on the Bascule Bridge as it only has a four foot sidewalk on one side. He suggested suspending an eight foot walkway from the Bascule Bridge, but the challenge continues as one still has to get through Downtown and around the railroad tracks. Mr. Natoli said that the alternative route is still a possibility, which is the Willoughby Extension. Mr. Natoli said that he had mentioned this to Commissioner Ed Fielding who appeared to be interested in the project. He added that one only has to get from Willoughby to the Atlantic Ridge as there are already some existing trails, they would just need some improvements. An aerial of the vicinity was viewed on the screen which showed large undeveloped green areas. From there, he said, one would work their way down to Jonathan Dickinson State Park (JDSP), and that would be a fantastic ECG trail or loop, which would also promote ecotourism. Mr. Natoli said this would need cooperation from the City. He said whether you are going down Ocean Boulevard or not, to get through the City and Confusion Corner is a major challenge. Mr. Gomez mentioned that for the Sun Trail funding, they ideally want the route to be on the East side, an alternative route is fine but Martin may not be able to apply for Sun Trail funds for that route. He said if it is an idea that this committee desires it can be included adding that there is the waterpark and a transit stop near Willoughby which makes for a good destination. Mr. Natoli inquired as to what are the application deadlines and minimum requirements to apply for the Sun Trail Funds as a lot of the plans currently are little more than lines on a map. Mr. Gomez said that it's important to have it in the Master Plan showing that this is the desired proposed alignment that would be a good start for the Sun Trails Application. Mr. Robertson advised that Sun Trails will only fund the main alignment it won't fund loops or spurs which could potentially use other funding sources. Mr. Natoli said that Willoughby through the Atlantic Ridge would be very special. Mr. Natoli referred to the map that was recently marked up by the BPAC showing the potential route through the Atlantic Ridge saying that if the wetlands can't be avoided, a boardwalk can be constructed to lessen the impacts. He commented that Martin is big on nature and it would be remarkable if people could go out there on a boardwalk to enjoy nature's beauty. Mr. Natoli mentioned once this is determined moving east and west would be the next step. Mr. Gomez mentioned regarding the downtown area, that Mr. George Stokus who is on the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), recommended taking Palm

Beach Road to get to downtown Stuart, and Ms. Moore said that she takes Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to Palm Beach Road, circumventing confusion corner, as well as East Ocean Boulevard. She said that depending on where she's heading, she can turn left on Palm Beach Road to head to the island or right to go toward Jupiter on Dixie Highway. Mr. Natoli suggested that people not consider how they can easily go somewhere, but the eight foot minimum which is necessary for the trail. Ms. Moore noted that since Palm Beach Road is four lanes the minimum may work there. Mr. Gomez mentioned that connectivity may be made at the park that is just north on Palm Beach Road as well. Discussion ensued as to different potential routes, the ECG and the Pinellas Trail which was a "Rails to Trails" project. Mr. Gene Zweben suggested that the committee have someone from the ECG come to a meeting to discuss ways that they have used in the past to get through areas. Mr. Natoli suggested that that City of Stuart also be involved as they may be capable of providing valuable insight as they are a main bottleneck. Mr. Gomez advised that there will be a City of Stuart representative on the Steering Committee and he will look to see what they have done in the past in relation to multi-modal paths. Mr. John Trahan asked why the trail is going through downtown as opposed to the island. It was advised that it was because of the Green River Parkway. Mr. Trahan commented that Martin was pushed into the Green River Parkway and moving the trail that far south preventing being able to travel down the island. It was noted that the Green River Parkway has been designated as ECG so it's a done deal and must be used at this point. Alternate routes may be considered, they just have to seek funding other than Sun Trails. Mr. Trahan stated that mostly cyclist travel on the island as well as Jupiter Island. Mr. Gomez added that Indian River County's trail is on the island. Mr. Natoli reminded the committee that the ECG is not just a bike trail it's a multi-use trail. Discussion ensued while viewing the aerials regarding the vicinity near the roundabout in the downtown area and the pros versus cons for the trail to traverse through those areas as well as the current location facilities. Mr. Gomez requested some clarification as to exactly which areas the committee wished to focus, and the committee requested that it all be reviewed in an attempt to hone in on the "best" options. It was mentioned that in the Golden Gate area, there's a stretch without bike lanes but it is four lanes so it can be used fairly easily. Railroad Avenue was brought up which runs parallel to Dixie Highway and it was touted as being a good idea. Mr. Gomez advised that it was suggested to him to go through the Golden Gate neighborhoods and avoid Dixie Highway all together. Mr. Natoli mentioned if the committee could find an area with which it is comfortable an application for the Sun Trail Funds could be made. Another challenge would be in Port Salerno and again Mr. Natoli suggested that the railroad area is key if an opportunity to use some of their space could arise. Mr. Gomez mentioned that there is a small bridge and path near the railroad tracks at SE Salerno Road which goes to Cove Road which he said could be a potential. It was said that the railroad has been mentioned many times and someone asked if the railroad has been cooperative in other Communities. Ms. Moore said that if it's in their right-of-way the local government will be charged for it. Discussion ensued as to the length of the path near Railroad Avenue and where the second rail track will be placed in the future. It was determined that the path goes north to Commerce Street and could be reached via Dixie Highway from downtown.

Mr. Gomez said that that Commissioner McDonald suggested that the Master Plan should work with the Grade Separation Plan so that project recommendations for the Grade Separation Plan would also be incorporated with the Master Plan. He said especially if a pedestrian overpass is being considered. Discussion ensued as to space and ROW issues with the FEC. Mr. Gomez suggested that Mr. Robertson and he would look into these locations to determine ROW possibilities. He continued South to the Hobe Sound area viewing the vicinity of Jonathan Dickinson State Park (JDSP) showing where the shared use path will go through JDSP and cross over US 1 to get to the bike lanes on Dixie Highway so connecting the shared use path on Gomez Avenue to Old Dixie Highway bike lanes would be the desire. Mr. Craig Houdeshell mentioned that the terminus of the current alignment on Gomez should be continued South to Bridge Road, then back out to Old Dixie Highway, connecting with the existing path. Mr. Gomez stated that on the 2040 LRTP, that alignment is noted. Mr. Houdeshell said there's no need to put it back on Old Dixie Highway plus there's no bike lane there anyway. It was noted that there is a sidewalk on the west side of Gomez. Mr. Natoli suggested contacting Palm Beach County to see what alignments they are considering so possibly Martin could plan to meet in the same location. Mr. Robertson stated that they will look into that and that Palm Beach's alignment is on US 1 as that corridor is a top priority for them in getting people to the Jupiter Riverwalk area. Discussion ensued as to the location of the signalization and shared use path crossing Federal Highway [US 1]. Mr. Gomez stated that the signalization is in the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) but the exact location isn't specified, so he will look into it to connect the shared use path to the bike lanes.

It was noted by the committee that this meeting has been very productive and meetings of this nature should happen more often. Mr. Houdeshell stated that a meeting focusing on the downtown Stuart issue should be held to get a location resolved. Ms. Moore said that Mr. Sam Amerson from the City of Stuart would need to participate as he is well versed in the City's ROWs, issues and all things relating to the City and plans for the downtown. Mr. Natoli said that the presentation of the Master Plan Scope of Service was well received by the MPO Board.

Mr. Houdeshell said that he has written a letter to the Federal Government regarding the [proposed] merging of MPOs (Notice of Proposed Rule Making NPRM). Ms. Beltran advised that the Public Comment Period has been reopened until October 24, 2016. Mr. Houdeshell asked if some Draft verbiage could be disseminated to this committee so each member could comment if they so choose. Ms. Beltran said that she could provide a copy of the first letter that the MPO submitted to the Docket at the Federal Register. Ms. Moore affirmed that it would be sent to each of the committee members, the location destination will be provided and that they would be advised that the docket will only be open for approximately one week. Mr. Trahan questioned if the MPO commented on the dispute resolution process that was part of the rule change. Mr. Trahan said if the change goes through, there is to be a dispute resolution process between the involved communities as well as the larger regional entities, which has to be agreed upon, however there was no framework as to how that was to be followed. Should that be a comment, requesting information as to how

this will take place and be implemented? Ms. Beltran noted that was one of the complaints by many as that framework was never provided.

Ms. Moore stated that the committee is requesting another special meeting possibly when Mr. Amerson can be in attendance. Mr. Gomez affirmed. Mr. Natoli inquired if the County has any information as to the railroad. Mr. Gomez advised that Ms. Terry Rauth is in communication with the railroads and would have information pertaining to them. Ms. Moore reminded the committee that Martin currently is in a law suit with All Aboard Florida (AAF) and Florida East Coast Railway (FECR). She added that since the ECG isn't directly a part of "Martin" maybe they will entertain conversations about it. Mr. Gomez said that he's got a list of representatives suggested by Commissioner Doug Smith for the Master Plan steering committee, one of whom will be a BPAC member. The representatives are as follows: City of Stuart, Martin Health System, the Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs), State Parks Systems, Transit, Eco-Systems and Restoration, Parks and Recreation Department, as well as the BPAC. Mr. Gomez offered that frequently the Chair would be the member selected to sit on a Steering Committee, but Ms. Moore suggested that Mr. Natoli would be better versed for the position. Mr. Natoli said that he would be willing to take on that position. Mr. Gomez concluded that no motion was needed.

C. MULTIMODAL SCOPING CHECKLIST – FM# 436870-1 (SR 714/SW MARTIN HIGHWAY FROM CITRUS BLVD. TO SW MARTIN DOWNS BLVD.)

Mr. Bolivar Gomez advised the members that Martin Highway from Martin Downs Blvd. to Citrus Blvd. is scheduled to go through the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) phase, to determine the impacts of widening and adding two lanes. The Multimodal scoping checklist, provided by the Office of Modal Development at the Florida Department of Transportation, allows for other facility improvements to be analyzed and potentially included. He said that it's usually just a small check list which asks the MPO what are the needs of that facility/corridor. Mr. Gomez presented a map of the location which showed the lack of a bicycle lane on Martin Highway and said that there is the need for a sidewalk to go the length of the entire project boundaries. Mr. Natoli added that there is a missing sidewalk link on the North side of the road in front of a new project, and he questioned how it was approved without the sidewalk. Ms. Moore stated that they really need sidewalks on both sides of the road in that area as it's too dangerous to cross and she is of the opinion that there is enough usage out there to warrant the sidewalk. Mr. Gomez affirmed the comments adding that it is a crash hot spot as identified in the Bicycle-Pedestrian Safety Action Plan and was discussed at the December Open House. He advised that he will include continuous sidewalk on both ends in the Scoping Check List and requested any additional input from the committee. Discussion ensued as to locations of needed sidewalks, road shoulders that disappear on or near a bridge and the turning lane that ends on Martin Downs. Mr. Gomez reiterated that FDOT is expected to widen the road to four lanes as well as the bridge since it is within the project boundary. Mr. Gomez advised that he will forward the comments to the Office of Model Development.

5. COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Fry mentioned that recently there was a charity event held at Indian Riverside Park in which the event host blocked the sidewalks with tables to encircle the participants so they were directed through the entire exhibit. He's aware that they had to pull a permit in order to host the event but they should be advised not to block the common path/sidewalk. Ms. Moore noted that it's a common occurrence; they make the arrangements with Parks and Recreation. Mr. Zweben said that to have the sheriff enforce the traffic laws, has any work been done with them on these types of events. Ms. Moore mentioned that there are ex-officio members, Policemen and Sheriffs but they don't attend our meetings. She's of the opinion that their resources are just spread too thin. Mr. Gomez advised that each of the ex-officio members receive the notice of meetings. Prior to the next meeting, he said that he'll contact them to see if he can have representatives show up. Ms. Moore noted that there are ex-officios from the City, the County and the Town of Sewall's Point. Discussion ensued as to the much needed education of people to stop vehicular infractions. Ms. Moore said she was unsure if the Bike Rodeos were conducted by the Sheriff's Department anymore. Mr. Natoli said an occasional appearance by a policeman would be greatly appreciated as they can answer questions for which we don't have the answers and they can take feedback to their Departments. Mr. Trahan asked if any members attended the "Breakfast with a cop" that was recently held. Ms. Helen McBride explained that it's directed more at children as a crime and safety event.

Mr. Hal Forslund told of his observations during cycling excursions throughout the states, Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Northern Michigan. He said that some small quiet towns are providing bicycles for visitors. Plus more and more people are cycling, that would surprise you, he said, grandparents are cycling with their grandchildren. People will ride if they feel that the environment is safe.

Mr. Natoli showed on a map the area in Palm City under I-95 and the Turnpike. He suggested that Mr. Gomez research what is going on at the Atlantic Custom Yachts property and neighboring vicinity. He said there's a good possibility that a route could be obtained in that site, out to the locks and beyond to State Road (SR) 76.

Mr. Houdeshell said that he's talked to a couple of bicycle shop owners about coming to these meetings. He said that they each said it's just a bad time of the day to go to a meeting.

6. COMMENTS FROM FDOT

Mr. Alex Barr approved of the progress that the committee is making. He said that he hopes the committee will continue to be in touch with the FEC as it's an excellent use of ROW. Mr. Barr said that there are bike trails right next to the rails without issues in Europe. He said it would be so nice to be off of the street, keep pushing.

7. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None. Ms. Moore express thanks to Ms. Helen McBride for her attendance at the meeting.

8. NOTES

None.

9. NEXT MEETING

10. ADJOURN

Seeing nothing further on the Agenda the meeting was adjourned by the Chair via RONR (10th ed.), p.350, I. 16-17 at 6:39 PM.


Recorded and Prepared by:


Margaret H. Brassard, Administrative Specialist, III


Date

Approved by:


Joan Moore, Chair


Date