



**CHARLOTTE COUNTY - PUNTA GORDA  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 10, 2016  
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING**

**MEMBERS ATTENDING**

John Burrage, CAC Chair, South County Representative  
Grover Mudd, At Large Representative  
Jim Brown, South County Representative  
Bob Logan, Mid County Representative  
Ed Zubal, West County Representative  
Ed Zapke, South County Representative  
Steve Fabian, Jr., At-Large Representative

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Nancie Jankowski, West County Representative (Excused)  
Joseph Tiseo, Mid County Representative (Excused)  
Steve Schoff, West County Representative (Excused)  
Naomi Manning, Mid County Representative (Excused)

**OTHERS ATTENDING**

Lori Carlton, FDOT  
Mitchell Austin, City of Punta Gorda  
Gary Grossman, Charlotte County Public Works  
Robert M. Herrington, MPO Director  
Gary Harrell, MPO Principal Planner  
Wendy Scott, Planner II  
Bekie Leslie, Administrative Services Coordinator

**1. Call to Order & Roll Call**

John Burrage, CAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M. The roll call was taken using a sign-in sheet.

## **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Because no flag was present in the room, attendees did not recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **3. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

There were no public comments on agenda items.

## **4. Chair's Report**

John Burrage reported on the Live Oak Point Opening Ceremony/Ribbon Cutting. He reported that County Commissioner Deutsch was pleased with the ongoing efforts of the CAC. John Burrage also expressed interest in the issue of follow up on issues identified by CAC members. Bob Herrington stated that in addition to the FDOT report, recurring items would be added to future CAC meeting agendas for City and County Reports.

## **5. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report**

Lori Carlton responded to Joseph Tiseo's question from the last CAC meeting regarding landscaping at the I-75 intersections currently being improved. She stated that at both the Kings Highway and the US 17 interchanges funding for new fifth year (FY 20/21) was currently being programmed.

Steve Fabian asked about FDOT's study of the region in the Burnt Store Road/Home Depot area of Punta Gorda. He described the need for no left turn/no u-turn signage at seven openings on Burnt Store Road and compared it to similar issues that had been addressed on US 41 where no left turn signage was added. Bob Herrington that FDOT staff had attended a City of Punta Gorda meeting regarding the issues of the entire area. As a result, FDOT staff members recommended that the City conduct traffic counts in the area of Tripoli Blvd. Mitchell Austin noted that the traffic count results reflected less than 10-20% volume on Tripoli Blvd was generated from the shopping area. Gary Harrell noted that this amount was significantly lower than anticipated. He stated that the next step is for the Publix supermarket at Colonial Promenades to be refurbished, and some proposals on traffic routing will be included in the design. Ed Zapke noted that at a South Charlotte County Coalition meeting, City Councilmember Nancy Prafke had addressed this issue and stated that the City and the shopping center owners would be discussing the issue. Bob Herrington noted that there was an open median at Madrid Blvd at one time which was closed off at the City's request. Steve Fabian stated that commercial trucking has no way to exit the shopping center easily.

Grover Mudd described a troubling event in the area of US 41 resurfacing. He related how a sight impaired person was in the area and wandered into the roadway. When a gentleman in a vehicle got out to assist the individual, his car was struck, and he was ticketed. Grover Mudd stated that curbing was needed in three areas on US 41 Southbound from Harbor Blvd to the US 41 bridge. He noted the danger of having a serpentine sidewalk right against the road.

Bob Herrington noted that improvements are being made in conjunction with the US 41 resurfacing project. Lori Carlton indicated that she would inquire about the potential to

address this safety issue as future improvements currently are being considered. Grover Mudd requested that curbing be provided like that which had been done at Peachland Blvd.

Bob Logan stated that a proposed Wawa convenience store was under consideration at Midway and US 41. Gary Grossman noted that the property is located just south of the AT&T store and will combine two entries. He stated that he will bring the site plan to the next CAC meeting. FDOT has been contacted regarding the proposed project.

Steve Fabian commented on the need for a right turn only or one way sign at the location of the exit from the Goodwill Store on US 41 South, similar to the one at the neighboring Trattoria Limoncello Restaurant. Lori Carlton promised to ask FDOT staff about the matter.

## **6. Consent Agenda**

### **A. Approval of Minutes: April 13, 2015 Meeting**

*Jim Brown made a motion for approval of the April 13, 2016 Meeting Minutes. Bob Logan seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.*

## **7. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Roll-Forward Amendment**

Gary Harrell described the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Roll-Forward Amendment and the projects with funding being rolled forward into the new state fiscal year which took effect July 1, 2016. He noted that the two SR 776 resurfacing projects were added to the Work Program in May 2016.

*Ed Zapke made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board approve the amendment to the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO's TIP for FY 2016/2017 – FY 2020/2021 adding the Roll-Forward projects. Robert Logan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **8. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

## **9. Staff Comments**

Mr. Herrington reviewed a number of recent activities of staff. He described the emergency MPO Board meeting that was held July 26, 2016 regarding the Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM). He stated that 22 of 27 Florida MPOs and one third of the MPOs nationally will be impacted. Per the MPO Board's direction, Bob Herrington posted two comments to the docket: (1) request for time extension on rule comment period, and (2) letter stating the MPO Board's concerns.

Bob Herrington announced that Don Lee will be the recipient of the 2016 Peggy Walters Citizens Mobility Award. He will receive the award at the August 29, 2016 MPO Board Meeting.

Gary Harrell described two Sun Trail project requests that were recently submitted to FDOT: (1) the underpass on US 41 northbound bridge that is ready to send out for bid, and (2) the northbound overpass of Alligator Creek. He noted that the Charlotte projects are #4 and #8 on the FDOT District One list.

Gary Harrell described a meeting that he had attended regarding the proposed new I-75 Charlotte County Rest Area. He stated that the PD&E contained six proposals with three on each side of I-75 presented in an Open House setting. Ed Zapke asked about attendance and interest groups represented at the meeting. Mr. Harrell described how some attendees had spilled over from a prior new South County library meeting. Ed Zapke felt that trucking industries would be more interested than the general public and asked if travelers and their interest groups would also be considered. Gary Harrell stated that FDOT had extensive contact lists and reached out to interest groups beyond Charlotte County. Bob Logan inquired about any time constraints on the project given the distance between current rest stops south of Tampa to Fort Myers. Gary Harrell indicated that the pressing need for a new rest area was stressed at the meeting. Some parcels don't require ROW purchase, which can add an additional two years to the project. Bob Logan inquired about the status to the rest stop at Jones Loop Road which had been closed. Bob Herrington stated that it was still vacant. He described how the County was interested in obtaining the property, but FDOT had indicated that the agency still wishes to sell the property. It was closed because of lack of use with its being located off the interstate and near businesses with facilities.

Bob Herrington provided the CAC members with the new Meeting Calendar reflecting changes to accommodate FDOT's Work Program.

## **10. Member Comments**

Ed Zubal stated that there were plans to build a new Sheriff's station in the residential area of Wilmington Blvd and Sunnybrook Blvd. He asked if there has been any assessment done on its impact on area traffic. Gary Grossman recalled seeing some information on the building plans. Ed Zubal said there has been some opposition to placement in that residential location, which borders the Myakka Forest and has the bulk of the population that would be served, located to the south. Gary Grossman will obtain a traffic impact statement.

Jim Brown noted that improvements at Zemel Road and Burnt Store Road are outstanding. He stated that given building and highway construction on Burnt Store Road mostly occurring in Lee County, the Phase 2 section of Burnt Store Road was very dangerous with no shoulders. Gary Harrell noted that Charlotte County Administration is taking this issue very seriously and looking for funding from all available sources. Bob Herrington stated that the County has also applied for Small County Outreach Program (SCOP) funding.

Bob Logan asked about the status of fixed route transit service for Charlotte County. Bob Herrington stated that the focus was on improving the current system. He noted that rebranding under the name Charlotte County Transit had occurred and fares have been reduced. Wendy Scott remarked that the Board of County Commissioners has addressed the

issue of driver shortages when it recently approved a new driver contract with a built-in wage scale. .

Bob Logan asked about the chances of obtaining a new I-75 interchange to alleviate the issues in the area of Veterans/Peachland/Kings Highway at I-75. Bob Herrington indicated that FDOT's main focus is the six laning of I-75, and there were no upcoming plans for a new interchange further north.

Bob Logan inquired about funding for the I-75 project's new noise walls. Lori Carlton indicated that this matter was taken into consideration during the PD&E study phase. Bob Herrington stated that FDOT has standards based upon anticipated noise levels.

Bob Logan asked Gary Grossman about the grading of sidewalks on the north side of Peachland Blvd which are part of the Schools project. He noted that students walking down Atwater Street from Peachland Blvd use the street because the sidewalk is underwater when it rains. He wondered if any improvements would be done on Atwater Street sidewalks, since the goal is to keep children off the street. Gary Grossman stated this as an existing problem. Bob Logan stated that if the sidewalk is built too low and water covers it than it should be part of the Peachland Blvd project.

Grover Mudd asked Lori Carlton to provide contact information for the FDOT ADA area representative. Gary Harrell noted that Sean Masters had previously held the position. Lori Carlton state that she will find out the contact information and forward it to Bob Herrington.

Ed Zapke asked if there were any efforts underway to coordinate SunPass with Easy Pass (the toll collection system in the Northeast US). Both Bob Herrington and Lori Carlton believed that effort was underway and offered to research the matter further.

Bob Herrington provided members with the dates for upcoming joint meetings with partner MPOs:

- Lee County MPO: Friday, Nov 18, 2016 at 10:30 am, Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, 11330 Burnt Store Road, Punta Gorda, FL 33955
- Sarasota/Manatee MPO: January 23, 2017 meeting, location to be determined

## **11. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:39 P.M. The next scheduled meeting of the CAC will be held on Wednesday, October 19, 2016 at the Eastport Environmental Campus, 25550 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte in Training Room B beginning at 1:30 pm. This is a new meeting date which differs from the one found on Agenda Item #11.