



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

**MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 8, 2017
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING**

MEMBERS ATTENDING

John Burrage, CAC Chair, South County Representative
Steve Schoff, CAC Vice Chair West County Representative
Grover Mudd, At Large Representative
Bob Logan, Mid County Representative
Jim Brown, South County Representative
Ed Zapke, South County Representative
Dianne Quilty, Mid County Representative
Nancie Jankowski, West County Representative
Ed Zubal, West County Representative

MEMBERS ABSENT

Naomi Manning, Mid County Representative
Steve Fabian, Jr., At-Large Representative

OTHERS ATTENDING

D'Juan Harris, FDOT
Venkat Vattikuti, Charlotte County Engineering Department
Ravi Kamarajugadda, Charlotte County Engineering Department
Mark Gering, City of Punta Gorda Public Works
Robert M. Herrington, MPO Director
Gary Harrell, MPO Principal Planner
Wendy Scott, Planner II
Bekie Leslie, Administrative Services Coordination

1. Call to Order, Roll Call

CAC Chair John Burrage called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M. The roll call was taken using a sign-in sheet. He recognized new member, Dianne Quilty, who gave a brief description of her former duties as a County employee before her recent retirement.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments on agenda items.

4. Election of 2017 Officers

Bob Herrington assumed chairing the meeting and took nominations for the CAC Chair position.

Robert Logan nominated John Burrage as the CAC Chair. Jim Brown seconded the motion. There being no further nominations John Burrage was elected as the CAC Chair by a unanimous vote.

John Burrage returned to chairing the meeting.

Jim Brown nominated Steve Fabian as CAC Vice Chair. John Burrage seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations, Steve Fabian was elected as CAC Vice Chair by a unanimous vote (pending his acceptance).

5. Reports

A. Chairs' Report

John Burrage mentioned transportation issues that had been discussed at the December 19, 2016 MPO Board Meeting (both US 41 and Burnt Store Road) and the December 21, 2016 Punta Gorda City Council Meeting (Aqui Esta Drive). Bob Herrington stated that FDOT has identified funding for US 41 left turn lane improvements at Murdock Circle. Venkat Vattikuti described how the US 41 resurfacing project includes three intersection redesigns spread along the corridor. He stated that currently only the contractor has control of the intersection signal timing. At the same time, the contractor is changing the paved shoulders for bike lanes and curbing which is difficult to accomplish as existing roadway traffic is passing by. He described how a problem had developed regarding the requirement for a certain thickness of pavement, which has required changes to be made.

B. City of Punta Gorda Report

Mitchell Austin was unable to attend the CAC Meeting, so Mark Gering was attending on behalf of the City and had no report.

C. Charlotte County Report

Venkat Vattikuti stated that the County has dedicated needed funding to finish Burnt Store Road Phase 2. In response to a previous question he described a signalization issue that arises

whenever a pedestrian needs to cross US 41 whenever a pedestrian pushes the button in order to cross the major roadway.

It can take 15 minutes (5 or 6 cycles) to get back into synch, and additional pedestrian crossing can further aggravate the situation. Since pedestrians must be accommodated, Mr. Vattikuti suggests that individuals plan on making their trips at least 15 minutes earlier than they typically would in order to avoid being late. Mr. Vattikuti indicated that the signals address both time of day and seasonal impacts. Mr. Vattikuti also described how recent closures on both Midway Blvd and Edgewater Drive have created large temporary traffic issues.

6. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report

Charlotte County's new FDOT Liaison, D'Juan Harris, introduced himself. He described his planning experience and noted that he is also the FDOT Liaison to the Lee County MPO. He has been with FDOT for 2½ years.

He noted that State Road 31 has been designated as an Emerging Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) roadway, making it eligible additional funding.

Rachel Cone is the interim FDOT State Secretary. L.K. Nandam is the new FDOT District One Secretary.

Bob Logan noted that SR 31 has been a long term concern, and asked if anything was being done at Bermont Road. Staff noted that both the County and the State have looked at signalization as part of the Babcock Ranch developer's agreement. FDOT has studied installing a roundabout at the intersection of SR 31 and CR74.

7. Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes: October 19, 2016 Meeting**
- B. FY 2016/2017 – FY 2017/2018 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)/Metropolitan Planning Organization Agreement Amendments and De-Obligation of PL Funds**

Ed Zapke made a motion for approval of the Consent Agenda. Dianne Quilty seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

8. 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Amendment

Bob Herrington described how this LRTP Amendment added the Babcock Webb Trail Corridor extension through the Webb Wildlife Management Area as a multi-use trail.

Dianne Quilty made a motion to recommend the MPO Board approve the Amendment to the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Robert Logan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

9. 2017 Project Priorities - Discussion

Gary Harrell noted that the project priority submission due date is mid-February annually. He reviewed the prior year Project Priorities list and gave an update on each item, noting that some phases were approved in the FDOT Work Program. He cautioned that the substantial funding of the Congestion Management Box program would likely be reduced by cost overruns. He also noted that Burnt Store Road TRIP funding had been obtained. Mr. Harrell answered specific questions that members had regarding Burnt Store Road, State Road 776, various South County projects, and Harbor View Road projects.

10. Public Comments

There were no Public Comments.

11. Staff Comments

Bob Herrington reviewed recent staff activities. He stated that the Scenic Highway project has gone stagnant, although efforts are underway to resurrect the program. The MPO will assist with this effort as needed.

12. Member Comments

Grover Mudd commented on (1) complaints about temporary sidewalks on the southbound side of US 41 where barriers on sidewalks impair wheelchair usage, and (2) an area by Lowes/Five Guys on US 41 northbound where white painted turn arrows and “move over” signage is needed. D’Juan Harris said he would investigate these matters.

Bob Logan commented on the area of Peachland Blvd/Veterans Blvd/Kings Hwy regarding: (1) the plan to connect Veterans Blvd to the interstate, and (2) the widening of Peachland Blvd by 2 feet on each side. Ravi Kamarajugadda stated he would check with Gary Grossman, his predecessor on the issue. Bob Logan noted that 250 more housing units on the north side soon would add to the bottleneck in the entire area.

Steve Schoff discussed the San Casa difficult intersection with Placida Road where a new assisted living facility is located. There is no sidewalk on the south east side of the roadway and he has observed several times a gentleman on a motorized wheelchair frequently passes on a gravel strip where there is a 45 mph speed limit. He stated that a crosswalk and sidewalk will be needed at that location. Mr. Schoff noted that Winchester signage is improved given increased traffic. He also commented on the turnoff at Caulkins LP Gas, from Winchester at Avenue of the Americas. Ravi Kamarajugadda stated that intersection will be signalized. Mr. Schoff also remarked on the need for lowering Merchant Crossing speed limits during season, stating that it would be helpful on 776 from Pine Street to Oriole Blvd.

Ed Zubal commented on traffic issues in the heavily congested area of State Road 776 and Pine at a gas station. He noted that U-turns in the Walmart area are aggravating the timing and there are a number of accidents.

Mr. Zubal also stated that Winchester northbound at State Road 776 has a need for arrows to be painted indicating turn lanes so vehicles could line up in either the through or turn lanes while waiting for the signal to change. Bob Herrington stated that there is a similar problem at Harbor View Road and US 41.

Ed Zubal inquired about traffic in the Murdock Village area. Dianne Quilty stated that the purchasing private entity is doing its due diligence looking at the viability of the project which is starting on Oct. 1, 2016 and continuing for the next 18 months. Charlotte County is not yet involved until the private entity completes the assessment. Mr. Zubal noted that the impact on Toledo Blade traffic will be big given the amount of new development.

Dianne Quilty commented on US 41 left turn lanes between Enterprise Drive and the Sarasota County Line that appeared to be half lanes. Staff stated that the width is not final but merely in place during construction. The condition is temporary and the striping will be changed eventually.

Nancie Jankowski inquired about signalization at the intersection of Winchester Blvd and Avenue of the Americas. Ravi Kamarajugadda confirmed.

13. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:16 P.M. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the CAC will be held on Wednesday, April 12, 2017 at the Eastport Environmental Campus, 25550 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte in Training Room B beginning at 1:30 p.m.