

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

BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 19, 2017 AT THE
CULTURAL CENTER OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY, PRESIDENTS ROOM, 2280 AARON STREET,
PORT CHARLOTTE, FLORIDA

MEMBERS ATTENDING

K. Stephen Carter (Chair) Historical/Cultural/
Environmental Representative
Court Nederveld, South County Representative
Robert Logan, Mid-County Representative
Richard Stark, West County Representative
MEMBERS ABSENT
Emily Chidester, Bicycle Club Representative
Karen Freeman, Bicycle Business
Representative
Peter Dowling, West County Representative
David L. Allen, Mid-County Representative

ADVISORY AND OTHERS PRESENT

David Agacinski, FDOT
D’Juan Harris, FDOT
Mitchell Austin, City of Punta Gorda
Ravi Kamarajugadda, CC Public Works
Mike Koenig, CC Community Services
Rick Braun, Citizen
Gary Harrell, CC-PG MPO
Gene Klara, CC-PG MPO

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

K. Stephen Carter, BPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. Roll Call was taken using a sign-in sheet.

2. Public Comments of Agenda Items

There was no public comment on Agenda Items

3. Chair’s Report

There was no Chair’s Report for this meeting

4. Approval of Minutes: June 15, 2017 Meeting

Chair Carter asked the Committee to review and approve the Minutes of the June 15, 2017 Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC).

A Motion was made by Robert Logan to approve the Minutes of the June 15, 2017 meeting. Richard Stark seconded the Motion, and it was approved unanimously.

5. FDOT Draft Tentative Work Program FY 2018/2019- FY 2022/2013

D’Juan Harris, FDOT handed out and reviewed FDOT’s Draft Tentative 5-Year Work Program for fiscal years 2018/2019-2022/2023. He noted that FDOT annually prepares the Draft Tentative Work Program, and stated that the Plan encompasses 5-years beginning on July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2023. He stated that the Draft Tentative Work Program will form the basis for the MPO’s next Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to be adopted and submitted to FDOT not later than July 15, 2018 and FDOT’s Adopted Work Program, which will be adopted on July 1, 2018. He noted that for Federal funding to flow to the state and local governments, the TIP and FDOT’s Work Program must be consistent.

Mr. Harris noted that overall the Plan does not add any major construction projects for the 2019-2023 period. He noted however that the Plan does include several resurfacing projects including SR 776 from Pinedale Drive to the Myakka River; SR 45 (Tamiami Trail) from Taylor Street to the Peace River Bridge and SR 36 (US 17) from Washington Loop Road to the DeSoto County Line. Mr. Harris pointed out that these resurfacing projects include the construction of sidewalks/bicycle lanes as part of the overall resurfacing effort.

Mr. Harris noted that planning and design is underway for the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of SR 31 and CR 74 (Bermont Road). Members inquired as to the number of lanes the proposed roundabout would include, noting that a single lane roundabout has been shown to reduce vehicle speed more than the double lane variety. It was noted by Gary Harrell that the MPO’s 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) calls for the 4-laning of these roadways. Discussion on roundabout designs continued with Bob Logan noting that many large soil hauling and 18-wheel trucks use these roadways and that the proposed roundabout design’s major goal would be to slow these vehicles as they approach and then enter the roundabout. Court Nederveld noted that extensive signage including flashing lights to warning motorists to be mindful that cyclists may be using the roundabout lanes should be included as a part of the overall roundabout design.

Mr. Harris noted all these suggestions and stated they would be forwarded to the appropriate roundabout design group at FDOT.

6. FDOT Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordinator Report

David Agacinski, FDOT, stated that the Open Application Process for inclusion in the Sun Trails Project began on October 5 and will continue to December 15, 2017. He noted that the applications are received directly by him and encouraged attendees to suggest locations for project development along the current Sun Trails network. Mr. Agacinski also noted that the Florida Greenways and Trails System will be holding a revised series of Opportunity and Priority Map Update Workshops (revisions due to Hurricane Irma), noting that on October 26 from 4 to 7 p.m. a local workshop is scheduled at the Morgan Family Community Center on West Price Blvd in North Port, Florida.

Gary Harrell inquired as to where one would find the electronic links or information on the Greenways and Trails maps. Mr. Agacinski noted they may be found on the Florida Department of Environmental Protection website and stated he would send the electronically to Mr. Harrell who would then send them to all BPAC members.

Mr. Agacinski also stated that a workshop to solicit comments for design standards to be included in FDOT's Complete Streets Design manual will be held on November 6, 2017 at FDOT's District Office in Bartow, Florida.

7. Charlotte County Report

Mike Koenig noted that the Community Services Department (Parks and Recreation Division) received accreditation from the Council of the National Association of Parks and Recreation at their Conference held in New Orleans in September. He noted that the Department met a total of 130 standards required to meet accreditation guidelines and that this designation is in effect for a five-year timeframe.

8. City of Punta Gorda Report

Mitchell Austin reported that the City of Punta Gorda is nearing a decision is selecting a consultant to prepare a Transportation and Buildout study. The study would focus on the City's roadway classification network and would be based on FDOT's Complete Streets Context Classifications.

Mr. Austin noted that the North Alligator Creek Bridge project is continuing and is at 90% Design. A concept photo of the overall rendering of the span was included in the agenda packet, clearly shows the paved and elevated bicycle/pedestrian path with motor vehicle lanes located "below" this pathway.

Mr. Austin also noted that the Harborwalk at Gilchrist is on schedule to be completed in late 2017 and is now approximately 80% complete.

9. Citizen Input

Rick Braun provided information that continue to indicate Florida's high crash and fatality rate for incidents involving pedestrian and bicycles. He noted that several these crashes and injuries occur during the hours of darkness. He asked attendees to consider if another BPAC member be considered for inclusion on the Committee to represent those riders who may have first-hand experience as a "night-rider" and the issues they experience including nighttime visibility and safety equipment.

Mr. Braun also related to attendees the difficulty he continues to experience in his attempts to obtain the maps and engineering drawings and plans from local and state agencies. He noted that many times opportunities to comment and offer ideas on design and project construction details are lacking and that attempts to locate the appropriate planning agency or construction firm to provide input are difficult to ascertain. Ravi Kamarajugadda discussed a few avenues of inquiry and information Mr. Braun might be able to use in identifying citizen input opportunities on project design and pre-construction planning. Of note was the suggestion to contact the construction firm that was awarded the construction contract and offer suggestions.

10. Staff Comments

MPO Staff provided an update of progress and overall timetable for the now underway Charlotte County Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan. Mr. Harrell stated that on August 24, 2017 a "Kickoff Meeting" was

held to begin development of the Charlotte County Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan. The Plan will be prepared by Jacobs Engineering of Tampa Florida and Alta Planning and Design (subcontractor to Jacobs). Representatives of the MPO, City of Punta Gorda, Charlotte County Department of Parks and Recreation were in attendance. A review of the scope, schedule, tasks and public participation efforts were discussed and clarified. The Plan is anticipated to take approximately one year to complete and will inventory, identify, and synthesize various trails, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities relating to safety, connectivity, health and education. The Plan will attempt to define overall program goals and objectives within an overall policy context, identifying key challenges, needs, and opportunities for the development of an effective countywide system. Mr. Harrell noted that he along with staff from Charlotte County and the City of Punta Gorda attended a field review using a drone owned by the consultant (Jacobs's Engineering). He looked forward to the benefits this technology could provide for the Master Plan.

Mr. Harrell noted that two possible Sun Trails projects have been identified. The first being the area along the Charlotte County-Sarasota County line along the Myakka State Forest, with the second project identifying the need for sidewalks on both sides of US 41. He noted the goal is to emphasize trails that travel through natural habitats and forests and have a scenic aspect to them.

Gene Klara discussed the current trends and growth of riders using electric bicycles (e-bikes) nationwide and within Florida. He noted that Federal Legislation enacted in 2001 defines e-bikes as ones that are propelled using both human and electric power. He noted that the law states that e-bikes cannot exceed a speed of 20 miles-per-hour (20 MPH) and have an electric motor that exceeds 750 watts of electric power. He noted that electric bikes are allowed on all Florida roads, bike paths and trails, and are not subject to registration or required to have liability insurance. He noted that 90% of e-bike sales are to people over the age of 50 with many of those sales to people over the age of 65. He noted that with Charlotte County having a large senior population e-bike use will continue to grow, as electric assist bikes make biking accessible to a larger demographic.

11. Member Comments

Member comments were offered throughout the meeting with no additional commentary provided by members for this item.

12. Adjournment

There was no further business, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m.

(Next Meeting November 30, 2017)