



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

**MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 15, 2017
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING**

MEMBERS ATTENDING

John Burrage, CAC Chair, South County Representative
Bob Logan, Mid County Representative
Jim Brown, South County Representative
Dianne Quilty, Mid County Representative
Joanna Drinkwater, Mid County Representative
Ed Zubal, West County Representative

MEMBERS ABSENT/EXCUSED

Grover Mudd, At-Large Representative
Nancie Jankowski, West County Representative
Steve Schoff, West County Representative
Ed Zapke, South County Representative

VACANCY

Vacancy, At Large Representative

OTHERS ATTENDING

D'Juan Harris, FDOT
Mitchell Austin, City of Punta Gorda, Urban Design
Ravi Kamarajugadda, Charlotte County Engineering Department
Gary Harrell, MPO Director
Wendy Scott, Planner II
Bekie Leslie, Administrative Services Coordination

1. Call to Order, Roll Call

John Burrage, CAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:52 P.M. The roll call was taken using a sign-in sheet.

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.

Due to the lack of a quorum at the opening of the meeting, Agenda Item #5 was taken up first.

5. Reports:

A. Chairs' Report

John Burrage referenced a letter to the editor from John C. Heekin published in the *Charlotte Sun* on Wednesday November 8, 2017 regarding the continuing need for a four way stop at the intersection of SR 31 & CR74. D’Juan Harris stated the initial upgrade was to add a flashing light and rumble strips. Additionally, FDOT is conducting ongoing studies, and the ultimate solution may be construction of a roundabout. In his opinion, a four way stop would be a step backwards. Mr. Burrage stated that he wished to address Mr. Heekin’s concerns even if they are not valid. Bob Logan questioned if a huge volume of 18 wheel vehicles at that intersection could be handled by a roundabout. Ravi Kamarajugadda stated that FDOT research indicates that these large vehicles will slow down. It was noted that as FDOT District One Secretary L.K. Nandam often states: roundabouts work well under these conditions despite initial concerns by many individuals, and success depends upon the design and space given the speed. Bob Logan inquired what typical roundabout speeds might be. D’Juan Harris stated that rural speeds average 35 to 45 mph. Mitchell Austin observed that speeds of 25 mph or less are typical for urban roundabouts.

John Burrage offered his congratulations to Gary Harrell on his appointment to the MPO Director position. Mr. Burrage noted that he had reported at the last MPO Board meeting on CAC interest in the Burnt Store Road and River Road TRIP project rankings, as well as CAC interest in Burnt Store Road right-of-way acquisition.

A sixth member arrived at this point in the meeting, resulting in obtaining a quorum of CAC members.

B. City of Punta Gorda Report

Mitchell Austin reported that the City’s Harbor Walk project at Gilchrist Park was almost finished. He also noted that the design for the Multi-Use Recreational Trail (MURT) pedestrian bridge on Alligator Creek would be completed by the end of 2017.

C. Charlotte County Report

Ravi Kamarajugadda provided CAC members with a status update handout on eight roadway issues raised by CAC Members at the previous two CAC Meetings. Regarding right-of-way (ROW) purchase for the Burnt Store Phase II project, Jim Brown inquired if all ROW purchases must be obtained before construction may commence. Mr. Kamarajugadda indicated that all ROW issues in Phase II must be addressed first.

4. Election of 2018 Officers

Gary Harrell took nominations for the CAC Chair position.

Bob Logan nominated John Burrage as the CAC Chair. Jim Brown seconded the nomination. Jim Brown moved to close the nominations, and Dianne Quilty seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of those present. There being no further nominations, John Burrage was elected as the CAC Chair by acclamation.

John Burrage resumed chairing the meeting.

Bob Logan nominated Steve Schoff as CAC Vice Chair, and Ed Zubal seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations, Steve Schoff was elected as CAC Vice Chair by acclamation, pending his acceptance.

6. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report

D’Juan Harris reported that the FDOT Tentative Work Program e-public hearing was concluded, but the comment period was still open on the following FDOT website:
www.swflroads.com

Mr. Harris reviewed two recent changes to the spreadsheet (*FDOT 5 Year Transportation Program 2019 Through 2023 Summary of Additions, Reschedulings and Deletions, Charlotte County*) which was distributed to CAC Members:

- Deferral of the US 41 at Carmalita Street Extension intersection improvement
- Removal of local funds from a Punta Gorda Airport capital project

Bob Logan thanked Mr. Harris and other FDOT staff for the quick action taken to make improvements at the I-75 southbound Kings Highway exit ramp westbound traffic merger lane.

D’Juan Harris showed an FDOT video to CAC Members regarding a successful roundabout project (Polk County/Lake Wales area) that was working extremely well regarding safety and traffic flow despite a great number of trucking vehicles utilizing it. Mitchell Austin pointed out that there was one gentleman commenting favorably in the video who at one time had been vehemently opposed to the roundabout.

Gary Harrell referred members to the spreadsheet entry that included the rigid pavement construction preliminary design phase on SR 31 at CR 74 in the third year. This reconstruction of the intersection (SR 31 and CR 74) with concrete indicated that the roundabout was being planned long term. He cautioned that ROW for the project will be expensive. Dianne Quilty reported that a forestry employee working on the preserve located to the east of the intersection had stated to her that solutions such as a roundabout can’t come soon enough at that location.

7. Consent Agenda:

A. Approval of Minutes: October 16, 2017 Meeting

Jim Brown made a motion for approval of the minutes of October 16, 2017 Meeting Minutes. Bob Logan seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

8. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Safety Measures Targets

Gary Harrell stated that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) now requires states and MPOs to establish performance measures. The first step in the process is to develop targets for safety performance measures. The five national safety performance measures are:

- Number of Fatalities
- Rate of Fatalities per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
- Number of Serious Injuries
- Rate of Serious Injuries per 100 million VMT
- Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries

FDOT has identified “Vision Zero” targets (goal of no fatalities or injuries) for all five of the safety performance measures with the rationale that every life counts. Florida has become the only state in the nation to adopt “Vision Zero.” In addition, they have provided interim targets that set a specific number for each of the targets based on the last few years of data.

Each of the MPOs have until February 27, 2019, to accept the FDOT targets, or develop their own targets. Guidance regarding implementation of adopted targets was provided by FHWA to the MPO staff in October 2017.

Additionally, by May 27, 2018, MPOs must include a narrative description of the safety performance target(s) in their TIPs to address the performance targets, and the anticipated effects the projects will have collectively on meeting these targets. Further, the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) will also need to include narratives on the performance measures, either by the next major update or when/if the current LRTP gets amended after May of 2018.

Mr. Harrell noted that FDOT’s robust Vision Zero “ultimate goal” stresses that safety is key. He referenced comments at the last Florida MPOAC meeting, speculating that if all other states had followed FDOT’s program, the need to establish safety measure targets wouldn’t be necessary nationwide. He noted that FDOT is trying to establish a mindset approach to safety. Since the MPO Board must adopt these safety measures by a firm deadline, this topic must be placed on the MPO’s December 18, 2017 agenda. MPO staff is recommending the adoption of FDOT’s safety measures targets by the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Board.

Dianne Quilty made a motion to recommend the MPO Board adopt FDOT’s safety targets for all five national safety measures. Bob Logan seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

9. FY 2023/2024 Shared – Use Non-Motorized (Sun) Trails Network Priorities

Gary Harrell reviewed the four candidate projects to the SUN Trail network. He stated that as part of the Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan study, the project consultant, Jacobs Engineering, Inc., was working with staff to consider these candidate projects. The Babcock Web Trail Corridor option was not ready for consideration in time for FDOT's December 15, 2017 deadline, so it was being removed from the list. Mr. Harrell described the discussion of the remaining three options by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Members earlier in the day. After considering each trail and its potential for approval, the TAC recommendation was to focus upon the most promising project, the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Corridor (fourth project on the list). Jacobs Engineering, Inc. recommended applying for a feasibility study for this project by the deadline. Mr. Harrell noted that this project seems to be the most promising, especially given the future development of Murdock Village and numerous other attractions along the route (such as the Charlotte Sports Park and the Myakka State Forest). He noted that Charlotte County has done well in the past in fighting for the limited funding available statewide for projects in the SUN Trail network.

Diane Quilty made a motion to recommend the MPO Board consider submitting a feasibility study for the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Corridor – On SR 776 from Murdock Circle to Myakka State Forest for the FY 2023/2024 Tentative Five-Year Work Program SUN Trail Program. Jim Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

10. Public Comments

There were no Public Comments.

11. Staff Comments

Gary Harrell had attended two statewide MPOAC meetings and shared information gained at them with the CAC Members.

FDOT was requesting the list of MPO Project Priorities as the cycle was starting again. MPO Staff was awaiting City and County submissions which would be discussed at the next CAC meeting.

The Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan efforts were underway with the consultants currently in the process of identifying existing and future issues. Mr. Harrell noted that there would be a strong public outreach effort for plan development after the holiday period, and the CAC Members would be involved.

The joint meeting with the Lee County MPO Board has been postponed with a likely rescheduling to the February 2018 timeframe. One issue to discuss would be Babcock Ranch and a proposed FDOT State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) loan. Additionally, the joint meeting with the Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board on January 22, 2018 in Venice, Florida would be including discussions on both River Road and the I-75 interchange in the NorthPort area. FDOT has changed the Interstate Justification Report (IJR), and will report on the new

procedures. Any new I-75 interchange would directly impact the I-75/Kings Highway/Veterans Blvd area.

12. Member Comments

Bob Logan commented on a potential issue with traffic flow at a new convenience store and car wash to be built at the intersection of Midway Blvd and US 41, given the large number of commercial properties located at the intersection. He inquired how FDOT and the County staff will work together regarding traffic entry and exit from the property. Ravi Kamarajugadda described the process that is followed with the County first making the determination followed by FDOT making the approval. Mitchell Austin remarked on the City's similar experience in working closely with FDOT staff member Mark Clark, noting that a lot of thought goes into these processes.

Jim Brown extended his comments from the prior CAC meeting regarding the impact of Tesla electric vehicles as related to the need to revise transportation funding considerations and taxation credit issues. Gary Harrell noted that electric and autonomous vehicles had been discussed at MPOAC meetings as they relate to the need for new transportation revenue sources, given how these vehicles impact gasoline sales/taxes. The issue may be considered by the Legislature when these vehicles are a big enough percentage of vehicles on the road.

Dianne Quigley polled CAC Members about how they disseminate information to citizens in their regions. Discussion centered on meetings and newsletters from groups such as the South Charlotte County Coalition and Homeowners Associations in the areas of West County and DeSoto County/Lake Suzy. Ravi Kamarajugadda pointed out that utilizing MSBUs is another means of educating citizens. Gary Harrell stated that one of the quickest and easiest ways to disseminate information is to link to meeting minutes on the MPO's website. Wendy Scott remarked that a video of the CAC Chair's report given at the MPO Board Meetings is broadcast live and found on the CC-TV Channel 20 video archive.

Jim Brown thanked Mr. Burrage for serving as CAC Chair for another year.

D'Juan Harris noted that a public meeting would be held the following day regarding the last section of I-75 widening (US 17 to Jones Loop Road). It would occur from 4:30-6:00 p.m. at Florida SouthWestern State College.

13. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the CAC will be held on Wednesday, February 14, 2018 at the Eastport Environmental Campus, 25550 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte in Training Room A beginning at 1:30 p.m.