



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

**MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 14, 2018  
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING**

**MEMBERS ATTENDING**

John Burrage, CAC Chair, South County Representative  
Pauline Klein, At Large Representative  
Jim Brown, South County Representative  
Bob Logan, Mid County Representative  
Ed Zubal, West County Representative  
Dianne Quilty, Mid County Representative  
Joanna Drinkwater, Mid County Representative  
Steve Schoff, West County Representative  
Ed Zapke, South County Representative  
Nancie Jankowski, West County Representative

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Grover Mudd, At Large Representative (Excused)

**OTHERS ATTENDING**

D'Juan Harris, FDOT  
Mitchell Austin, City of Punta Gorda, Urban Design  
Ravi Kamarajugadda, Charlotte County Engineering Department  
Ned Baier, Jacobs Engineering  
Peter Gerhardt, Charlotte County Planning and Zoning Board  
Gary Harrell, MPO Director  
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**

All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

There were no public comments on agenda items.

## **4. Reports**

### **A. Chairs' Report**

John Burrage introduced new CAC member, Pauline Klein, who gave a brief career history. Steve Schoff accepted the nomination of the CAC Vice Chair position which had been voted on at the last CAC Meeting in his absence.

Mr. Burrage referred to several newspaper articles focused on transportation issues.

- Letter to the Editor from Earl Petterson entitled “Stoplight, please, at Holiday Lake,” in the *Charlotte Sun*
- *Charlotte Sun* article by Gary Roberts dated Wednesday, January 24, 2018, “Fatal crash frustrates Holiday Lake residents”
- Letter to the Editor from Richard Sajdak entitled “Big trucks are tearing up Peachland,” in the *Charlotte Sun*
- *Charlotte Sun* article by Gary Roberts dated Sunday, January 14, 2018, Wednesday, “Peachland Blvd. traffic signal gets green light”

There was also some discussion of the widening of Gasparilla Road and issues regarding a traffic signal at one of the intersections.

Mr. Burrage reported his attendance at the MPO Board Meeting on December 18, 2017, where Bekie Leslie was recognized for 15 years of MPO service. At the meeting, Commissioner Deutsch was elected MPO Chair, and Commissioner Herston was selected as MPO Vice Chair.

### **B. City of Punta Gorda Report**

Mitchell Austin stated that the last section of the Harbor Walk project in Punta Gorda’s Gilchrist Park soon will be officially turned over by FDOT to the City. The new playground at Gilchrist Park is currently under construction with an expected completion date of late March 2018. Also in progress is the design of the North Fork of Alligator Creek bridge with comments due for receipt at the end of the month.

The City’s Transportation Buildout study will be starting shortly and completed at the end of this year. The City will be taking public comment soon.

### **C. Charlotte County Report**

Ravi Kamarajugadda reviewed several ongoing County projects:

- The Sunseekers developer is conducting a traffic study.
- FDOT will return the US 41 resurfacing project to Charlotte County soon, and then, traffic signal retiming will occur.
- SR 776 has another ongoing timing project.
- County staff is aware of the recent accident on Gasparilla Road and is working to put signals at different locations along that roadway.

Dianne Quilty inquired about funding used for traffic signal hardware along US 41. Mr. Kamarajugadda stated that it was obtained during the Automated Traffic Management System (ATMS) phase. He noted that once a signal is warranted, maintenance is automatic. Ms. Quilty asked if a streetlight would be installed soon at Peachland Blvd and Loveland Avenue (detour sign area). Mr. Kamarajugadda replied that eventually there will be a signal installed in conjunction with the new large development (Bank of America area), after the developer's study is completed. He noted that a similar situation is ongoing at the old Kmart location.

Steve Schoff asked about improvements to the Avenue of the Americas and Winchester Blvd. Mr. Kamarajugadda responded that the work is 90% complete.

Bob Logan commented on the need for additional traffic signals on Cochran Blvd between US 41 and Veterans Highway.

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

D’Juan Harris reported that FDOT has received the Project Priority applications from the MPO for FY 2020-2024. He noted that the process is still open and requested that any new projects be forwarded to the MPO.

Bob Logan commended FDOT for producing a great job on the US 41 repaving, but expressed concern over the new striping resulting in a bicycle lane between two automobile lanes. Mr. Harris called this type of lane setup “keyholing.” Pauline Klein remarked that this was a typical treatment for bicycle lanes. Dianne Quilty noted that this marking was the same as in other states. D’Juan Harris remarked that keyholing is the new design standard, which is favored by avid cyclists, although casual cyclists are often unfamiliar with it. Mitchell Austin stated that this discussion brings up a valid point, since the area deals with multiple types of cyclists: (1) avid/confident/often fearless, (2) timid/meek and (3) utility riders whose only transportation option is cycling. This is the reason that both US 41 bike lanes and wider sidewalks are needed for all types of bicyclists.

### **6. Consent Agenda**

#### **A. Approval of Minutes: November 15, 2017 Meeting**

*Bob Logan made a motion for approval of the November 15, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes. Ed Zapke seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.*

**7. Draft FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)/Metropolitan Planning Organization Agreement**

*Bekie Leslie had provided a revised cover sheet to CAC Members for Item # 7, along with a new Agenda # 7.1 FY 2017/2018 -2021/2022 TIP Amendment*

Gary Harrell briefed the members regarding the draft UPWP document:

The FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)/Metropolitan Planning Organization Agreement describes the transportation planning activities and establishes the MPO budget. The State Fiscal Year begins on July 1, 2018. The UPWP includes a narrative of the work to be accomplished and the cost estimates for each task activity. Federal and state regulations govern the types of activities that are eligible for federal and state funding. The timeline for the adoption of the FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 UPWP is listed below:

- March 15, 2018 – Deadline for MPO to transmit the Draft FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 UPWP to FDOT District One and reviewing agencies.
- April 15, 2018 – Deadline for District and reviewing agencies to provide the MPO with comments on the Draft FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 UPWP.
- May 15, 2018 – The MPO Board reviews the comments and adopts the Final FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 UPWP for distribution to the District and reviewing agencies.
- Within 10 working days of receipt – FDOT District One reviews the MPO adopted Final FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 UPWP. The MPO and District One staffs resolve any outstanding issues. The District transmits the comments and responses to the FDOT Public Transportation Office and FHWA.

Mr. Harrell described how new federal transportation legislation now requires MPOs to address performance goals, with the first one (safety) being reviewed at the previous meeting. This new requirement is listed in the draft UPWP document under several taskings. Mr. Harrell reported that the draft UPWP has already been submitted to state and local officials, and some comments already have been received. On March 8, 2018, the MPO Board will review this draft to be forwarded to reviewing agencies, and approval of the finalized document will be scheduled for the May 2, 2018 MPO Board Meeting.

Steve Schoff inquired about what population projections are being utilized. Mr. Harrell stated that the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) projections are the industry standard.

Dianne Quilty asked about some minor technical revisions. Bekie Leslie stated that the changes on the cover sheet involved the FM project number. Staff expected additional technical changes going forward.

***Ed Zapke** made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board approve the Draft FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)/Metropolitan Planning Organization Agreement to the appropriate reviewing agencies, allowing staff to make*

*appropriate revisions needed. **Dianne Quilty** seconded the motion. The Motion was carried unanimously.*

### **7.1. FY 2017/2018 – FY 2021/2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment**

Gary Harrell discussed a change to a lighting project on US 41 between Aqui Esta Drive and Airport Road. The City of Punta Gorda has opted not to install City funded decorative lighting but to use standard highway lighting. The change enables increasing the limits of the project for approximately the same amount programmed using State funds. Changing the limits of a project requires a TIP Amendment. The Amendment also removes local funds.

***Dianne Quilty** made a Motion to recommend that the MPO Board approve an Amendment to the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO's TIP for FY 2017/2018 – FY 2021/2022 changing the limits FPN 434988-1 to: US 41 from South of Rio Villa Drive to Airport Road. **Jim Brown** seconded the motion. The Motion was carried unanimously.*

### **8. 2018 Project Priorities - Discussion**

Gary Harrell reviewed the 2018 Project Priorities List which included Highway Projects, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Projects, Congestion Management/Transportation System Management (CM/TSM) and Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) funding.

Jim Brown asked if there has been any progress in resolving the Burnt Store Road right-of-way situation. Gary Harrell indicated that issues remain, especially since the State has not given up a needed small piece on conservation land for the building of the roadway.

Steve Schoff inquired about the lack of a right-hand turn lane on SR 776 at Flamingo Blvd intersection. He also asked about the Riverwood area where a light with turn lanes is already installed, and he wondered why one is needed for Jacobs Street. Ravi Kamarajugadda responded that the decision is purely based upon crashes (such as at Cornelius Blvd). He noted that most Flamingo Blvd crashes are from left turns, U-turns or rear end crashes.

Joanna Drinkwater described issues along Kingsway Hwy in the DeSoto County Line area, including the inaccuracy of traffic crash data given assorted responders from Charlotte, DeSoto or Sarasota Counties. Ravi Kamarajugadda stated that he would confer with Venkat Vattikuti, County Traffic Engineer regarding the matter, while agreeing that reviewing accident data is difficult to obtain because of the tri-County nature of the traffic flow. Joanna Drinkwater stated that DeSoto County is addressing the Kings Hwy (from Sandhill Blvd to the County Line) widening issue soon. Ravi Kamarajugadda agreed to follow up soon on these transportation concerns on the border of the Charlotte County/urbanized area of DeSoto County.

## **9. Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan – Status Report**

Ned Baier with Jacobs Engineering gave a briefing regarding the ongoing Charlotte Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan. He noted that the project is at the halfway point of plan development. Jacobs is working with their subcontractor, Alta, which develops nationwide bicycle pedestrian projects. He noted that an additional evening public meeting to review the draft plan will be added to the schedule at the request of TAC Members earlier in the day. All public outreach efforts were reviewed, and it was observed that over 100 comments already had been received on the MPO's website using wikimaps.

## **10. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

## **11. Staff Comments**

Gary Harrell announced a Public Workshop for the Harbor View Project Development & Environmental (PD&E) Study to be held on March 29, 2018 at the East Port Environmental Campus. He noted that staff had been busy with meetings, including normal attendance at the Punta Gorda City Council, the Lee County MPO's Technical Advisory Committee and an FDOT MPO Certification Meeting.

Ed Zapke commented on the longtime delays in completion of the Burnt Store Road Corridor Project. He especially emphasized the northern segment in Lee County from the Charlotte County line to the current construction would not be completed until long after our segment is completed. Mr. Harrell stated Lee County MPO has opted to use the federal process for their final northern segment, which adds years to the project. The Burnt Store Road Corridor would be addressed at the Joint Meeting of the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and the Lee County MPO.

Steve Schoff commented on the importance of the Charlotte roadway connection to River Road including Lee County's Boca Grande area. He also stated that the Atlanta Braves' new Spring Training facility coming to North Port would add further impact to River Road.

Gary Harrell mentioned that MPO staff had held several teleconferences with staff from Jacobs Engineering and the Charlotte County Parks and Recreation Department regarding the ongoing Bicycle/Pedestrian Regional Master Plan project. He noted that the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee would be discussing it further on March 1, 2018.

Other meetings attended by staff were the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board, the Charlotte County Airport Authority, the Joint Meeting with the Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board, the Community Traffic Safety Team, and the Charlotte Harbor CRA (briefing on Sun Trails projects).

## **12. Member Comments**

A discussion centered on how Charlotte County sometimes does not receive equal treatment regarding transportation funding, compared to the Lee County MPO and the Sarasota/Manatee MPO.

Jim Brown noted that many residents in the Burnt Store Marina area head south to shop because of the current Burnt Store Road (BSR) bottleneck.

Bob Logan asked if any consideration was given to the use of traffic control devices rather than roundabouts on SR 31 at CR 74. D’Juan Harris noted that this issue would be a topic at the joint meeting with the Lee County MPO on February 16, 2018. He said that the full signalization alternative would occur soon.

Pauline Klein addressed the issue of the new “no turn on red” sign at the major intersection of Harbor View Road and US 41, where a right turn lane was recently installed. D’Juan Harris noted that the issue was one of line of sight/obstruction problems creating a safety issue.

John Burrage recommended that CAC members speak at MPO Board Meetings regarding their major concerns. D’Juan Harris asked that CAC Members bring crash data or contact Ravi Kamarajugadda to obtain it, to facilitate discussion/research. He also observed that several intersections have issues during construction, but once FDOT returns projects back to the County, many issues are addressed.

Joanna Drinkwater stated that it should be required that developers build amenities such as sidewalks, since they should be expected to do their share. Steve Schoff added that what Ms. Drinkwater had alluded to is impact fees. He referenced how Babcock Ranch had received a \$400 Million waiver of impact fees. He stressed that it would be interesting to look at the status of impact fees in other Counties.

Ravi Kamarajugadda reported that he had received word via telephone during the meeting that the Kings Hwy widening project would be ready to go forward after DeSoto County officials completed their review.

## **13. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 P.M. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the CAC will be held on Wednesday, April 18, 2018 at the Eastport Environmental Campus, 25550 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte in Training Room A beginning at 1:30 pm.