

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT LEE/COLLIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
(MPO)
BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN COORDINATING COMMITTEE (BPCC) AND
PATHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING**

Held on February 25, 2014

10 A.M.

The following members were present for the joint meeting of the Collier and Lee County MPO BPCC/PAC on February 25, 2014, 2013 at the Estero Community Park & Recreation Center, 9200 Corkscrew Palms Boulevard, 103A, Estero, Florida 33928.

Collier County MPO PAC Members Present:

Dayna Fendrick, At-Large
Al Musico, At-Large
Joe Bonness, At-Large

Lee County MPO BPCC Members Present:

Jeff Davis, City of Bonita Springs
Steve Jansen, Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST)
Dan Moser, Injury Prevention Coalition (IPC)
Dawn Huff, Lee County School District
Wayne Gaither, LeeTran
Mark Tesoro, Lee Memorial Health System
Andy Getch, Lee County Department of Transportation
Pat Young, At-Large
Josh Overmyer, Town of Fort Myers Beach
Steve Avakian, City of Sanibel

Collier MPO Staff Present:

Lucilla Ayer, MPO Executive Director
Sue Faulkner, MPO Principal Planner
Sarah Layman, MPO Planner
Kristin Campos, MPO Administrative Secretary

Lee County MPO Staff Present:

Don Scott, MPO Executive Director
Ron Gogoi, Transportation Planning Administrator

Others Present:

Anna Bielawska, LeeTran
Persides Zambrano, City of Cape Coral
Carolyn Conant, Cape Coral Bike Ped
Darla Letourneau, Bike Walk Lee
Maureen Bonness, River of Grass Greenway (ROGG)
Stacy Revay, Collier County Growth Management Division (GMD) Transportation Planning Department, non-voting
Patty Huff, ROGG
Providance Nagy, FDOT

Ryan Weeks, FDOT
Justin Reck, FDOT
Deb Chesna, Florida Department of Health
Vitor Suguri, FDOT
Ellie Krier, Southwest Florida Land Preservation Trust
Megan Contreras, Wink News
Paul Whiteside, citizen

Agenda Item 1 - Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 by Mr. Jansen.

Ms. Campos called the roll for the Collier PAC and announced that a quorum was not present

Mr. Gogoi called the rolled for the Lee County BPCC and announced that a quorum was present.

Agenda Item 2 - Election of a Chairperson

Ms. Fendrick was elected Chairwoman of the February 25, 2014 Joint Lee/Collier BPCC/PAC meeting.

Agenda Item 3 - Public Comments

Ms. Darla Letourneau with BikeWalkLee stated that it is gratifying to see all the presentations scheduled at the Joint BPCC/PAC meeting because it demonstrates that there are many projects that are occurring within Lee and Collier County.

Ms. Letourneau discussed Agenda Item 6A (Presentation on the Cape Coral Bike-Ped Initiative Update) and stated that this proposal is a great interest to BikeWalkLee. She explained that BikeWalkLee has been very supportive of the idea. Cape Coral Bike Ped and the city of Cape Coral were awarded BikeWalkLee's Complete Street Champion of the Year Award for 2013.

Ms. Letourneau discussed the Attachment Item for Agenda Item 6B (Presentation on the Status of the River of Grass Greenway) and stated that the letter requests FDOT to review alternate pathway alignments to be studied as a Design component of the project.

Agenda Item 4 - Approval of the Agenda

The Agenda was approved by Consensus.

The committee agreed to reorder the agenda and moved to reports and presentations.

Reports and Presentations

Agenda Item 6A – Presentation on the Cape Coral Bike-Ped Initiative Update

Ms. Zambrano presented an Update on the Cape Coral Bike-Ped Initiative in a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Zambrano presented the Strategy and Progress of Cape Coral Bike-Ped which included:

- Identify phased improvements and routes to begin creating a city wide network;
- Work the routes with standardized signage and pavement markings;
- Improve critical areas where potential problems exist; and
- Publicize the routes through a website.

Ms. Zambrano explained that Cape Coral Bike-Ped has initiated the Adopt A Route, the blue and white sponsor signs, which tell you the name of the route and the organization that raised the funds to make each route possible. She stated that the community has come together to begin to create a system of over 90 miles of interconnected cycling routes within Cape Coral.

Ms. Zambrano introduced Ms. Conant, Cape Coral Bike-Ped, stated that on March 1, 2014 there would be a Formal Ride to launch the Team Aubuchon Route and the Chamber Route.

Ms. Conant stated that the city of Cape Coral has completed marking the first two routes, Team Aubuchon and the Chamber Route, with green and white traffic control signage as well as the blue and white sponsor signage. She explained that the green and white traffic control signage and the blue and white sponsor signage will provide cyclists an effective means to navigate through the bicycle routes.

Ms. Conant stated that Strategic Goal 3 would be to seek grants in conjunction with the city of Cape Coral for infrastructure improvements. Ms. Conant stated that Cape Coral Bike-Ped would coordinate with the City of Cape Coral, Lee County and/or the State to insure a pathway or other bicycle friendly designs are included in widening or road improvement projects, such as Burnt Store Road widening.

Ms. Conant stated that Strategic Goal 4 would be to publicize the routes through a website and elsewhere for the public to view. She discussed the goals of Cape Coral Bike-Ped which include:

- Relocating needed information from the Cape Coral Bike-Ped website to the city of Cape Coral's website. List all bike route links and other pertinent information on the city of Cape Coral's website and optimizing the city's search engine to locate information on cycling in Cape Coral, in 2015.
- Enlisting writers to submit articles with different slants to state, national and international publications.
- Promoting more effective bicycle tourism to Cape Coral and other areas within the region by working with the Lee County Visitors and Convention Bureau.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Musico questioned the cost of the Sponsor a Route signs. Ms. Conant explained that the sponsor signs are \$300 each or citizens can donate funds for 10 sponsor signs for \$2500 total. Ms. Conant explained that Cape Coral Bike-Ped also gives citizens the opportunity to Name a Route, in which case the citizen's name would be on the route sign for 10 years.

Chairwoman Fendrick asked if the sponsored routes were existing facilities. Ms. Conant stated that Cape Coral Bike-Ped took existing bike lanes and connected them to less congested alternate streets.

Mr. Gaither stated that the networks of bikeway routes identified in Cape Coral are within the vicinity of LeeTran routes. Mr. Gaither asked if Cape Coral Bike-Ped would be interested in providing any amenities for connection with LeeTran. Ms. Conant stated that Cape Coral Bike-Ped would be very interested in becoming more intermodal.

Mr. Moser stated that an interconnected pathway for the populace of Cape Coral is what the city needed.

Agenda Item 6B – Update on the River of Grass (ROGG) Greenway Project

Ms. Faulkner introduced Ms. Maureen Bonness with the Friends of River of Grass Greenway. Ms. Bonness gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on the status of the ROGG project.

Ms. Bonness stated that the River of Grass Greenway is a future 75-mile shared use pathway parallel to US 41 between Naples and Miami. Ms. Bonness stated that the ROGG will be a facility for non-motorized transportation and recreation that promotes enhanced opportunities for education and stewardship of the environmental cultural assets of the area. She discussed the current ROGG projects which included:

- **1.** Feasibility and Master Plan Study for the entire pathway which has been underway for nearly 20 months. The Feasibility and Master Plan Study is funded by FTA Sarbanes Transit-in-Parks grant.
- **2.** PD&E Study for the 17-mile segment known as ROGG west which is between CR 92 (San Marco Road) and SR 29. The PD&E Study is funded by 2009 FDOT Regional Transportation Enhancement Grant.
- **3.** Design study for the 2.3 mile segment to the west of CR 92, known as “ROGG far-west.” ROGG far-west is funded by 2009 FDOT Regional Transportation Enhancement Grant. Concern has been raised about pathway options for crossing the Alexander-Cameron Canal.

Ms. Bonness discussed the Feasibility and Master Plan Study and stated that extensive efforts were made to incorporate widespread public participation through weeks of public meetings, as well as a continuing town hall website. She stated that in June 2013, an Agency Technical Review was held and efforts in recent months have focused on scheduling numerous agency meetings.

Ms. Bonness discussed the PD&E Study for ROGG-west and stated that the PD&E will evaluate the 17-mile segment from CR 92 (San Marco Road) and SR 29 in Collier County. Ms. Bonness stated that the study team is currently gathering information on the social and environmental in the project study area. She explained that ROGG-west is currently on hold pending the results of the Feasibility Study and Master Plan.

Ms. Bonness discussed the Design Study for ROGG far-west and stated that the 2.3 mile segment from CR 951 to CR 92 was contained in the FDOT US 41 PD&E Study. She noted that FDOT expressed concerns with the potential overlap of joint studies and project limits of the 2.3 mile limit.

Mr. Scott questioned if the pathway would be asphalt. Ms. Bonness stated that ROGG far-west would be asphalt. She explained that the Friends of River of Grass Greenway have always stated “hard surface” to leave it open to other alternative materials.

Ms. Bonness discussed the plans for the Alexander-Cameron Bridge and stated that the FDOT design calls for the pathway to be located within the shoulder of the existing US 41 bridge, rather than having a separate bike/ped bridge across the canal. She explained that there are vital safety concerns about co-locating a pathway on a bridge within inches of the traffic and requested that both alternative pathway alignments be studied as a component of the Design project.

Mr. Scott asked what the sufficiency rating was for the Alexander-Cameron Bridge. Mr. Weeks stated that the Alexander-Cameron Bridge is in good condition and the direction FDOT has been given is to utilize the existing roadway and the existing shoulder. Mr. Weeks stated that construction for an independent pedestrian bridge would be a secondary project. He explained that construction for the River of Grass Greenway trail would take place in FY15/16 by utilizing the existing Alexander-Cameron Bridge.

Chairwoman Fendrick questioned if the Alexander-Cameron Bridge has a lot of fisherman on the bridge. Ms. Bonness stated no, there is a sign that states that there is to be no fishing on the bridge.

Ms. Young asked how long it would take to construct the trail from Naples to Miami. Ms. Huff stated that the timeframe would be identified in the Feasibility Study and Master Plan.

Ms. Bonness announced that the Everglades Ride would take place on Sunday, April 13, 2014 to benefit the Friends of ROGG. She stated that there are 16-mile, 27-mile or 62-mile options and opportunities to customize the length of your ride.

Discussion ensued regarding the ROGG. Mr. Weeks stated when the local MPO's are discussing programming projects and if pedestrian bridges are going to be a desirable feature; to ensure that pedestrian bridges are part of the FDOT application that the local MPO would like the pedestrian bridges considered as part of the project.

Agenda Item 6C – Presentation on Serenity Walk Park and Freedom Park

Ms. Ellie Krier with the Southwest Florida Land Preservation Trust introduced the item and gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Serenity Walk Park and Freedom Park.

Ms. Krier stated that Serenity Walk Park is an existing mitigation for the overall Lely Stormwater Area Improvement Project (LASIP). Ms. Krier noted that the land for Serenity Walk Park has 99 acres of natural wooded habitat with a one mile nature trail. She stated that Serenity Walk Park is located in eastern Collier County on the west side of Collier Boulevard south of I-75 and Davis Boulevard. She explained that the restored area includes wetlands that were enhanced by removing invasive, exotic plants and making hydrologic improvements.

Ms. Krier stated that Freedom Park is an approximately 50-acre natural water quality treatment facility, which provides flooding relief and treatment of stormwater runoff from the Gordon River Extension Basin. Ms. Krier explained that Freedom Park combines wetlands, habitats, trails, boardwalks, observation gazebos, educational facilities, and extensive indigenous landscape within a passive park setting. She noted that Freedom Park is located on the north side of Golden Gate Parkway between Airport-Pulling Road and Goodlette-Frank Road.

Agenda Item 6D – Update on the Gordon River Greenway

Ms. Krier introduced the item and gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on the Update on the Gordon River Greenway.

Ms. Krier stated that the first section of the Gordon River Greenway opened in 1992 which consisted of a 1 ½-mile paved loop trail adjacent to the Naples Municipal Airport and along the eastern edge of the river. She noted that the Gordon River Greenway will stretch two miles from Golden Gate Parkway toward the heart of the City of Naples ending at Central Avenue. Ms. Krier discussed the many characteristics that the Greenway would feature. Ms. Krier noted that the overall project, which seeks to create 124 acres of natural trails when complete, has been in the works since the 1980s.

Ms. Krier explained that there is going to be a new parking lot which will create 600 parking spaces for the Naples Zoo, Greenway Park and the Conservancy of Southwest Florida.

Ms. Krier explained that the pedestrian bridge will tie in 3 to 4 acres of Conservation Collier land near the northwest corner of Naples Municipal Airport to the other 35 acres of conservation park property between the Golden Gate Canal and Gordon River.

Mr. Davis asked about the area that is currently under construction just south of Golden Gate Parkway. Ms. Krier stated that the area under construction across from Freedom Park is a canoe/kayak launch which will be complete in September 2014. Ms. Krier explained that the pathway will be 12-foot and 8-foot wide elevated boardwalks which will be ideal for walkers, runners and cyclists.

Action Items

Agenda Item 5A – Amendment of the Collier-Lee Bi-County Regional Transportation Network-Pathways Component

Mr. Gogoi introduced the item and stated that staff from Lee and Collier MPOs have made some changes to the pathway component of the Collier-Lee Bi-County Regional Network which include changing the color coding of those pathways on the map where the status of the proposed pathways have changed from “Programmed” to “Existing” with the completion of construction, and from “Planned” to “Programmed” for those facilities where funds have now been committed for construction.

Mr. Bonness stated that he would like to see modifications in the Collier-Lee Bi-County Regional Network which include Oil Well Road, just west of Oil Well Grade Road to just east of Ave Maria Boulevard and existing Immokalee Road from Northbrook Drive one-hundred feet west of Collier Boulevard.

MOTION BY MR. MOSER TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENT OF THE COLLIER-LEE BI-COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK-PATHWAYS COMPONENT AS AMENDED WITH THE CHANGES. SECONDED BY MR. OVERMYER. APPROVAL BY CONSENSUS

Agenda Item 5B – MPO Recommendation of Joint Regional Pathway Priorities

Mr. Gogoi introduced the item and stated that FDOT District 1 has informed Collier and Lee MPO that it will program regional pathways priorities from the District's allocation of Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funds during the development of this year's Tentative Work Program. He noted that there are two candidate projects from the Lee and Collier Bi-County area which are:

- 10-foot shared use path on the west side of Old US 41 from US 41 to Bonita Beach Road in Lee County – approximate cost for design and construction is \$1,694,310
- PD&E Study for a pathway on Pine Island Road from Veterans Parkway to Stringfellow Road – Approximate cost is \$520,000

Mr. Gogoi explained that both projects are identified in the Lee-Collier Joint Regional Pathway Network which is a requirement of the two MPOs before regional projects can be considered for discretionary funding.

Mr. Gogoi stated that the right-of-way on the west side of Old US 41 by US 41 in Collier County is constrained. He stated that that the ROW constraints may require designing a 8' sidewalk at this location instead, or terminating the proposed shared use path at the northern end of the Landmark Naples Residential Resort and connecting it to the existing sidewalk on the east side of the roadway via a midblock crossing with enhanced safety features.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Ayer stated that Collier MPO supports the proposed 10-foot shared use pathway on Old US 41 from US 41 to Bonita Beach Road and suggested that the Committee not debate about the design solution for the project but to focus on the recommendations of the joint priorities.

Ms. Letourneau stated that both regional projects are excellent however there are safety issues with Old US 41 from US 41 to Bonita Beach Road that makes this project a higher priority, and that the project will extend the TIGER grant improvements further south on Old 41 and into Collier. She explained that the Pine Island Road PD&E Study has potential for connectivity.

MOTION BY MR. OVERMYER TO APPROVE THE JOINT REGIONAL PATHWAY PRIORITIES AS SUGGESTED BY STAFF. SECONDED BY MR. MUSICO. APPROVED BY CONSENSUS.

Reports and Presentations

Agenda Item 6D – Update on Vanderbilt Drive Greenway

Ms. Revay introduced the item and gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on the Update on the Vanderbilt Drive Greenway. Ms. Revay discussed the history of the Vanderbilt Drive Greenway and stated that in 2008, there was a settlement agreement for the Cocohatchee Bay PUD for \$3 million for corridor improvements and bridge enhancements. She explained that approximately \$1.5 million has been spent on bridge improvements along Vanderbilt Drive and there is approximately \$1.5 million left to utilize for pathway and safety enhancements along the corridor. Ms. Revay noted that in 2009, the contractor PBS&J was awarded the design contract for the 4 miles from 111th Avenue North to Bonita Beach Road and in 2011, the pathway was designed by PBS&J to be a 12-foot wide multi-use pathway.

Ms. Revay discussed the various recommendations that would be presented to the Board of County Commissioners in March 2014 which include:

1. To construct an 8-foot asphalt pathway on the west side of Vanderbilt Drive from north of the existing overpass northward to the existing sidewalks in the Bonita Shores area and construct a 10-foot asphalt pathway on the west side of Vanderbilt Drive from 111th Avenue North to the north of the existing overpass.
2. To construct 5-foot shoulders on both sides of Vanderbilt Drive from 111th Avenue North to the Cocohatchee River Bridge.
3. Enhanced warning signs, pavement markings or other acceptable treatments to create visibility and promote safety for cyclists, pedestrians and motorists at the pathway's crossings of the various driveways along the pathway on the west side of Vanderbilt Drive.
4. To construct safety improvements along Vanderbilt Drive in order to provide pedestrian access across Vanderbilt Drive, if warranted. These features include but are not limited to; up to three crosswalk locations with safety islands or medians. Crosswalks can also be important for traffic calming measures. Staff recommends the use of "flashing beacons" or something similar with medians for pedestrian refuge as a safety enhancement. Crosswalk placement needs to be determined by a warrant study however; preliminary locations recommended are at Woods Edge Drive, The Dunes development and another crosswalk north of the overpass.
5. To construct low level lighting along the Vanderbilt Drive pathway. Staff would not recommend operation and maintenance of lighting for the pathway along Vanderbilt Drive due to cost to the County. Staff recommends the residents of Vanderbilt Drive create a Municipal State Taxing Unit (MSTU) or some similar taxing district for operations and maintenance of any lighting installed.

Agenda Item 7 - Florida Department of Transportation

Ms. Providence Nagy, FDOT Bike-Ped Coordinator, reported on the FDOT "Alert Today, Alive Tomorrow" initiative. Ms. Nagy stated that the Alert Today, Alive Tomorrow resource center at the Florida Pedestrian and Bicycling Resource Center at the University of Florida provides educational materials and information to advocate groups within the state.

Ms. Nagy stated that the purpose of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategic Safety Plan is to focus funding and resources on vital areas that have the greatest opportunity to reduce pedestrian and bicycle crashes, injuries and fatalities.

Agenda Item 8 - Transit Update

Mr. Gaither with LeeTran reported that for the first time since July 2010, LeeTran had an 8 ½% reduction in ridership in January 2014.

Mr. Gaither reported on the LinC 600 Route which connects Lee and Collier County transit systems. He stated that LeeTran and CAT staff have been working together and LeeTran is working to seek funding to allow the route to continue in FY 2015 and beyond. Mr. Gaither noted that LeeTran would be making a presentation on this topic to the Joint MPO Board on March 21, 2014.

Agenda Item 9 - Members Comments

Mr. Bonness announced that in an effort to raise awareness, there would be a Share the Road Event on Saturday, March 1, 2014 at Cambier Park in Naples from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. This event is to promote safe passage for all those who travel Naples and Collier County roads.

Agenda Item 10 - Information Items

None.

Agenda Item 11 - Adjournment of Meeting

Having no further business, the Joint BPC/PAC meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:15 p.m.