



# Meeting Minutes

Town of Fort Myers Beach Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan  
Project Advisory Committee

April 26, 2017

10:00 – 11:30 am

Fort Myers Beach Town Hall, Council Chambers  
2525 Estero Blvd, Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931

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## 1. Welcome

Ms. Chelsea O'Riley, with the Town of Fort Myers Beach (FMB), began the meeting at 10:05 a.m. Project Manager Ned Baier, with Jacobs Engineering, introduced himself. He also introduced Brad Davis with Alta. He thanked Ms. O'Riley and Mr. Ron Gogoi. Mr. Gogoi is with the Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Mr. Baier stated the MPO was funding this project. He asked the attendees to sign in and take a meeting agenda sheet. He stated there were also copies available of the minutes from the last meeting. Mr. Baier stated this was the final Project advisory Committee (PAC) meeting. Mr. Baier asked the attendees to introduce themselves.

## PAC Members

1. Chelsea O'Riley, Town of Fort Myers Beach Public Works
2. Scott Baker, Town of Fort Myers Beach Public Works
3. Ron Fleming, Fort Myers Beach Resident
4. Hunter Abel, LeeTran
5. Roger Hernstadt, Town Manager of Fort Myers Beach
6. Jim Steele, Former Interim Town Manager of Fort Myers Beach
7. David Agacinski, FDOT D1 Bike and Ped coordinator
8. Peter Dolid, Fort Myers Beach Resident
9. Dan Hendrickson, Resident, Local Planning Agency for Fort Myers Beach
10. Tim Lalor, Lee County Sheriff's Office (LCSO)
11. Megan Helln, Bike Walk Lee
12. Rob Phelan, Lee County Department of Transportation
13. Sean DePalma, Town of Fort Myers Beach Parks and Recreation
14. Simone Behr, Lee County Visitors and Convention Bureau
15. Ron Gogoi, Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization
16. Mark Mallard, Lee County Sheriff's Office
17. Lloyd Adams, Fort Myers Beach Fire Department
18. Paul Yacobelli, Lee County Parks & Recreation

## **Residents/Participants**

- Bruce Butcher, Fort Myers Beach Town Council
- Ned Baier, Jacobs Engineering
- Brad Davis, Alta Planning & Design
- Brett Messner, Tetra Tech
- Matt Noble, Town of Fort Myers Beach

## **2. Project Purpose, Schedule, and Deliverables**

Mr. Baier presented the Project purpose, schedule, and deliverables. The project purpose includes identifying projects for bicycle and pedestrian safety, getting the Town of Fort Myers Beach (FMB) to adopt the Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP), aligning and updating previous plans, and exploring opportunities for funding. This will be a living, evolving plan that will reflect the needs of the community. Mr. Baier stated the project schedule started in November of 2016 and will be completed in June of 2017. He said the technical work and production of the BPMP final report will be completed in the next few weeks for review by the Town of Fort Myers Beach (FMB) staff and the MPO. He stated the PAC will have an opportunity to review and comment on the final report as well. He stated the report will then be amended to reflect the comments and suggested changes. Mr. Baier reported that this was the last meeting of the PAC before the plan will be presented to the Town of Fort Myers Beach Town Council most likely in June. Mr. Baier explained that the Public Workshop will begin today at 5:00 p.m. at this location, 2525 Estero Boulevard. He reminded the committee that the work began in November of 2016 and should be completed by June 2017. Mr. Baier said the project deliverables categories range from existing conditions to design criteria. He stated there will be reports on funding, needs, costs, and project prioritization.

## **3. February 15 Public Workshop**

Mr. Baier described the public comments and project recommendations from the February 15, 2017 Public Workshop held at the Town Hall. Following a presentation, people attending the workshop were asked to study the display boards and maps around the room and provide comments including voting for preferences. Each person had 6 stickers and could vote from a list (including pictures) of bicycle and pedestrian programs such as safety campaigns, signage, and walking biking events. Next, participants had an additional 6 stickers and could vote for walking infrastructure improvements such as sidewalks or biking infrastructure such as bike lanes and trails. The display boards described each program or infrastructure improvement and pictures. Mr. Baier showed the committee members the boards. Mr. Baier summarized the results. He said that the top three program voting results were interpretive signage such as describing history and facts about FMB along walkways, a bicycle and pedestrian safety campaign, and employer-based encouragement such as businesses providing financial incentives or bike parking for employees to bike and walk. Guided nature walks and a senior's walk program were also well liked. Mr. Baier said the top three infrastructures voting results were pedestrian crossing improvements, bike lanes, and protected bike lanes. The most popular walking infrastructure improvements were shared-use paths along roadways, pedestrian crossing improvements, and shared-use paths. Sidewalks on

residential roads were the least popular type of infrastructure improvement. The top three biking infrastructures were bicycle-friendly intersections, protected bike lanes, and buffered bike lanes. Neighborhood greenways were the least supported infrastructure improvement for bicyclists.

Mr. Baier also reviewed the social media aspect of public outreach that used the on-line engagement tool Wikimap Comments. The recommendations included providing better bikeways, clearing obstructed views at side streets, improving the pedestrian crossing at Albatross, improving bike crossings at bridges, adding bike parking at beach parking, adding trash cans at transit stops, and providing a more robust education and enforcement campaign for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists,

#### **4. Fort Myers Beach Comprehensive Plan**

Mr. Baier reported that the consultant team again reviewed FMB's adopted Comprehensive Plan and found references and recommendations for improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in FMB. This included several policies and a map in the Transportation Element including: 1. Mobility – Hidden Pathway Systems (Policy 7-D-5), 2. Upgrade Estero Boulevard (Policy 7-E-4), and 3. Improve sidewalks and bikeways. Mr. Baier showed a map of the Hidden Pathways concept of a linear biking and walking trail from one end of FMB to the other located primarily along Estero Boulevard and neighborhoods on the Bayside. It was noted that the Community Design Element also references the Hidden Pathways: Objective 2-A.

#### **5. Projects submitted for Grant Funding**

Mr. Baier then reported that the consultant team confirmed with FMB staff and MPO staff that a grant was awarded from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for 2018 for the design and engineering for sidewalk and other bicycle infrastructure enhancement on Connecticut Street from Estero Boulevard to Estero Bay. He said his team is recommending design treatments for Connecticut Street making this more like a Bicycle Boulevard. This would include a sidewalk on one side of the road and a marked shoulder on both sides of the street for bicyclists. Mr. Baier also reported regarding Crescent Street. He stated that about five years ago, FMB staff worked with the MPO and applied for a grant to fund sidewalk and bicycle lanes in the Times Square area including Crescent Street. FDOT did not award the grant at the time, and instead they recommended that FMB develop a Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP). After that, FMB could apply for the highest priority projects at that time.

#### **6. Draft Recommendations**

Mr. Baier introduced Mr. Brad Davis. Mr. Davis asked if anyone from the committee had any comments or questions at that time. There were no comments or questions. He then presented an update on the results of the needs and opportunities analysis and assessment and design criteria. He stated they discussed their preliminary list of projects with FMB staff and MPO, and they recommended adding a more comprehensive interconnected network of walking and biking routes. Mr. Davis reported that the team still wants to build on the

successes, enhance crossings along Estero Boulevard, complete proposed roadway improvements, and identify project opportunities to enhance connectivity. Mr. Davis said that the recommendations are organized into four separate types of improvements. They are: Infrastructure recommendations, Design criteria, Programs, and Policy. He discussed some infrastructure recommendations including the bike boulevard. A committee member asked if the BPMP had been adapted since the last meeting to match the Comprehensive Plan regarding sidewalks and pathways. Mr. Davis responded yes, particularly in some areas on the southern part of the island. He went over some examples of design improvements for the crossings on Estero Boulevard. Several new slides were presented showing photo rendering of treatments that can be installed at major and minor intersections in Fort Myers Beach. This includes rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RFB), marked crosswalks, wayfinding signs, and pavement markings. A committee member asked if an intersection would require a full signal. Mr. Davis responded that it is a street where there is already a signal study being done. The committee member responded with the street name, Lenell Road. Mr. Davis stated yes that was the street. Mr. Davis said these were potential elements, but each street was unique and would require its own treatment. A committee member brought up the need to include trolley stops in the assessments. Mr. Davis said FMB has been doing a great job coordinating with LeeTran. Mr. Davis said that with regards to design, they will also give an additional layer of guidance from a policy perspective. Mr. Davis then presented the selection criteria that Lee County can use when identifying if a crossing is a major or minor crossing on Estero Boulevard or FMB staff can use for minor street crossings evaluating an intersection such as Crescent Street. He added that they will include criteria to make certain there is dedicated space even around the bridge. Mr. Davis stated that the PAC had questions at the last meeting on how FMB can better accommodate sidewalk riding in the heavy mix of pedestrian and bicycling activity on Estero Boulevard and other roads. Mr. Davis showed and described slides showing it can be done with pavement markings and signage. He asked if anyone had any comments on the ideas he presented. Mr. Baier said the information was shared with Lee County. He then asked Mr. Rob Phelan with Lee County Department of Transportation if he had comments. Mr. Phelan said he did not review the information yet. Mr. Phelan said he would forward it to the traffic department for them to review. Mr. Baker said he hoped the county would go forward with something similar. Mr. Davis said this was a low impact way to provide signage. A committee member said she was a resident and the cyclists would stay on the sidewalks. She asked how to make it safer for everyone. Another committee member questioned if the cyclists would actually follow the direction of traffic. Mr. Davis said cyclists still need to yield and follow the same guidelines pedestrians have. A brief discussion followed on the effectiveness of the signage. Mr. Davis said this would be a policy decision for the Town of Fort Myers Beach (FMB). Another committee member questioned if this would increase conflict for pedestrians and cyclists. Mr. Davis responded that there is already conflict. Mr. Gogoi said this treatment would only be recommended for the wider sections of sidewalks. Mr. Phelan said this would only be recommended for the sections that were greater than eight feet.

Mr. Davis then described a new design treatment called Advisory Shoulders. He explained the concept is to allow a shared space for walkers and bikers on existing residential and often narrow roadways located in FMB by using pavement markings and wayfinding signage. He stated that his team identified an interconnected system of this

treatment on the Bayside on the entire island. He stated this design treatment is something new that was developed by Alta and is under final review by Federal Highway. He stated this is perfect for low volume, narrow roads in FMB. Mr. Gogoi asked where the graphics treatment on the slide came from and if they came from NACTO. Mr. Davis said his company developed the Small Town and Rural Design Guide in conjunction with FHWA and Blue Cross Blue Shield. He also explained what the NACTO guideline was and how it was mainly used for urban areas. He said the new guide was created for small towns and rural areas. A committee member asked if Shell Mound Boulevard would be an example of this. Mr. Davis said any of the small neighborhood streets would be. He also said there might be a combination of treatments. Mr. Gogoi said this treatment is different, with maybe a slight overlap, than the treatment of bicycle boulevards. Mr. Davis agreed. Mr. Gogoi stated with proper signage and markings it would alleviate some confusion among the users. Mr. Davis said many communities are doing this as a pilot project. He said then if it works it can be implemented on a wider scale. A committee member asked if it would just make more sense, where space was available, to widen the road and paint a shoulder. Mr. Baker responded that residents of FMB would like to keep their landscaping and trees. He said it is a walking community with the roads being very active with pedestrians. He noted signage would help make drivers more aware. He reiterated that the community does not want sidewalks. Mr. Davis added that having a shared street forces people to slow down. Mr. Davis said this treatment preserves character and is cost effective. Mr. Davis said this concept also increases the interconnectedness of the community and provides a measure of safety. A committee member expressed concern for the practicality of the treatment. He suggested signs posted for speed. Mr. Davis responded the goal is for street design to line up with posted speed. The committee member noted many of the streets are dead end. Mr. Davis stated this would be for through streets or those with more traffic. The committee member asked for an example. Another committee member suggested Shell Mound Boulevard would be one because it loops. Mr. Davis said Avenida Pescadora would also be one. Another committee member said this was a better idea than trying to impact the infrastructure. A committee member responded he just didn't want money to be spent where it may not improve the condition.

Mr. Davis asked Mr. Baier to circulate a handout with a list of projects. Mr. Davis said it includes a set of dedicated sidewalk projects. He said it also includes a list of 13 crossing projects. Lastly, he said there is a list of advisory shoulder project locations.

Mr. Davis then described and showed on a map two design walking projects and about a dozen crossing improvements that will be included in the plan.

Mr. Davis then went on to describe the biking projects in the plan and on the map. This includes the Bike Boulevard improvements in the downtown/Time Square area on Crescent Street and other cross streets as well as the proposed "Cultural Loop". He mentioned that there should be a dedicated bikeway on the bridges to provide safe passage onto the island. Mr. Davis explained some of the connections on the map. Mr. Baier made a few additional comments on the hidden pathway concept. Mr. Baier said there will be planning level cost estimates included for all of the projects. Mr. Davis added notes will be included on the projects as well.

Mr. Davis then showed a map of the regional connections crossing San Carlos Boulevard to the north and east and to the south crossing Big Carlos Pass. Mr. Davis said that the state SUN Trail network Coastal Loop may connect Fort Myers Beach using Estero Boulevard in the future. Mr. Gogoi noted the Florida Office of Greenways and Trails was updating their master plan which includes the priority trail corridors. He stated any trail on this map could apply for funding. He announced that a draft priority map has been compiled, and he explained how the alignment on the map has changed slightly. Mr. Gogoi said all of the municipalities in the area along the trail, which includes Fort Myers Beach, will benefit since this will promote bicycle tourism due to the connectedness to other state trails. A committee member questioned if they will be included in the map and if funding will be available to them. Mr. Gogoi said potentially they could be part of the map if the draft is approved. He said funding would only apply to the southern end of the island. Mr. Phelan commented on the current projects on Fort Myers Beach and how they would affect the trail. Mr. Davis showed examples using pictures and graphics illustrating different types of improvements like roundabouts, pavement markings, and speed humps.

Mr. Davis then described examples of programs recommended in the plan that could be paired with improvements including wayfinding signage, safety campaigns, bike parking, improving visibility of pathways, and maintenance. He discussed the possibility of short distance shuttle service in addition to what LeeTran provides. He suggested incorporating art into the plan. He mentioned applying for bicycle and walk friendly designations for FMB. He listed examples of policy including FMB implementing a complete streets and maintenance policy, ongoing coordination with the county, focusing on development standards, requiring bicycle and pedestrian improvements in new developments, and dedicating a local pool of funds in a set-aside program for bicycle and pedestrian improvements or improved maintenance. He mentioned the tourist development tax could be used as a source of funding. Mr. Davis concluded his presentation. He then opened the floor for questions. Mr. Baier spoke briefly. He summarized the highlights of the presentation and added information on the funding report. He mentioned that the electronic copy of the draft plan will be out soon, and it will be forwarded to the PAC. Mr. Gogoi commented the advisory shoulders are low cost treatments that could be implemented during resurfacing.

The Project Advisory Committee then discussed the recommendations, asked questions, and provided recommendations to Mr. Davis and Mr. Baier including:

## **7. Committee questions and discussion**

- It was asked if the striping would just be a single white line on the road. Mr. Phelan said it is currently a single white line.
- A member questioned if small speed bumps could be added to separate the bike lane. Mr. Phelan said it will not have the audible treatment markers since generally those are not used in residential areas where noise complaints might result. He said they also cause problems for cyclists trying to cross.
- A member asked if they could keep motorcycles and golf carts out of the bike lanes. Mr. Phelan said it's difficult. A LCSO deputy said citations are issued. The

committee discussed adding vertical delineation treatments. Mr. Phelan said they are expensive to maintain.

- There was a brief discussion on the amount of space available and constraints for future bike lanes.
- The committee also discussed the way the bike lanes will be marked.
- It was asked if projects were added and prioritized since the previous PAC meeting. Mr. Davis said yes and asked for feedback on the top three. Mr. Baier said this is a realistic master plan so the list may be shorter than some anticipated. He said the committee could give feedback on the top three projects at the meeting or send them to Ms. O'Riley in an email.
- A member commented that a bike boulevard planned for his street was a futile idea.
- Ms. Simone Behr commented that she felt including the culture and art of the island was important. Mr. Baier said that type of interpretive signing was popular at the last public meeting.

## **8. Bike & Pedestrian Master Plan update**

Mr. Baier said that the Master Plan Report including other deliverables will be completed by the end of May and will be submitted to FMB staff and Lee County MPO staff for review.

## **9. Next steps**

Mr. Baier announced the evening workshop begins at 5:00 p.m. at the same location, 2525 Estero Boulevard. He stated that he would be at the meeting location an hour before the meeting if anyone would like to discuss the BPMP. He reported that the final presentation to FMB Council may be scheduled in June or later in the summer depending on scheduling. The draft final Master Plan Report will be completed by the end of May and will be submitted to FMB staff and Lee County MPO staff for review.

## **10. Public comment**

Mr. Baier thanked the PAC members for their time attending PAC meetings and providing input into the development of FMB's first ever Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan. Chelsea O'Riley reminded the committee of today's evening public workshop meeting. Ms. O'Riley said she will be in communication with the PAC members. She said she will send the date of the FMB Council presentation of the Plan and adoption meeting in an email. She also said she will send the draft plan to the PAC members next month for their information.

The meeting adjourned at 11:40 am.