



TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ocala Citizens Service Center
201 SE 3rd Street, Ocala FL 34478

February 9, 2016

MINUTES

Members Present:

Mike Daniels
Eddie Esch, Chairman
Sue Farnsworth
Winston Schuler
Kellie Smith
Kevin Smith, Vice-chairman

Members Not Present:

Gennie Garcia
Dave Herlihy
Masood Mirza
Mickey Thomason

Others Present:

Greg Slay, TPO Director
John Voges, TPO Staff
Ken Odom, TPO Staff
Ann McGaffic, TPO Staff
Shakayla Jacobs, TPO Staff
W.T. Bowman, Tindale-Oliver and Associates
Paul Marraffino

Item 1. Call To Order And Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 AM by Chairman Eddie Esch. Secretary Shakayla Jacobs called the roll. A quorum was present.

Item 2. Proof Of Publication

Secretary Shakayla Jacobs stated that the meeting had been published online on the TPO website and Facebook page and on the city of Ocala, Belleview, and Dunnellon websites.

Item 3a. Transportation Improvement Program Amendment

Mr. Odom presented an amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP documented the phasing and funding of a rail safety project that will upgrade the infrastructure at the ‘at-grade’ crossing on SW 99th Place north of the City of Dunnellon. Mr. Odom mentioned that these upgrades are to include improvements on flagging, parts, labor and related costs to upgrade signalization.

Mr. Esch asked if the warning signal would be upgraded to a constant warning signal. Mr. Odom answered that considering the amount of funds granted towards the project it would most likely not include an upgraded constant warning signal at this time. Mr. Slay mentioned that he would check for confirmation but didn’t believe the upgrade would be included.

Mr. Daniels asked if there had been any known issues at the SW 99th Place railroad crossing. Mr. Slay commented that there had been no issues that he was aware of and that this was just a basic maintenance project.

Ms. Farnsworth made a motion to approve the Transportation Improvement Program Amendment. Mr. Schuler seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Item 4a. Belleview Corridor Study Presentation

Mr. Bowman with Tindale-Oliver and Associates presented the status and strategies for the Corridor Plan in the City of Belleview. The Belleview Corridor Study includes the study area is from US-301 to SE 102nd Place and focuses on US-441 and includes a section of the CBD. The objective was to develop a study vision and principles for improvements and strategies, enhance multimodal environment (accessibility, traffic flow, safety, walkability, and aesthetics), and to support infill and economic development.

Mr. Bowman stated that through existing condition studies there was ample vehicular capacity, crash “hot spots”, signal operational issues at US-301 and at Hames Road, significantly underutilized on-street parking, no transit services or bicycle facilities within the corridor. Mr. Bowman also mentioned that without significant redevelopment, future conditions will mimic current existing conditions.

Mr. Bowman talked about some key potential strategies which included speed reductions and modified lane widths. Mr. Bowman also stated that modified access management from US-301 to south of SE 55th Avenue, the RaceTrac Driveway, and SE 56th Avenue were also key potential strategies.

Mr. Bowman spoke about operational analysis at US-441 at US-301 and Babb Road and mentioned that short term progress would be to evaluating signal timings and phasing, mid term would be modifying Babb Road and Magnolia Road, and that long term would be evaluating the feasibility of a roundabout.

Mr. Schuler asked if on street parking had created any safety concerns for drivers not being able to see around parked vehicles. Mr. Bowman responded saying that after reviewing crash reports there was no detail stating that drivers could not see other vehicles due to on street parking.

Mr. Schuler asked if businesses in the area that utilized the on street parking for customers had enough space in there parking lots to accommodate the amount of traffic they would usually receive. Mr. Slay said that most of the business do have enough parking to accommodate customers but a few business did have tight parking space. Ms. Farnsworth mentioned that the businesses that utilized on street parking the most were the Subway, the Bellevue Hardware Store, and the Pizza restaurant.

Item 4b. SR 40- Silver Springs Corridor Presentation

Mr. Odom presented the State Road 40 Silver Springs Corridor Plan. The State Road 40 corridor plan was developed in coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Marion County, and the City of Ocala.

Mr. Odom stated the enhancement focus area was a mile and a half section from the west side of NE 49th Court up to East Silver Springs and that so far there had been a public kick off meeting held June 24, 2015 and alternatives development and evaluations had been completed during the summer and fall of 2015. Also, there was a Public Corridor alternatives meeting held on December 16, 2015. Mr. Odom said what would come of the recommendations was a corridor plan, corridor design, and construction.

Mr. Odom mentioned that some of the things that were discussed at the kickoff meeting were existing conditions at State Road 40, pedestrian enhancements and bicycle facilities, access management and median treatments, transit enhancements and street amenities, and State Road 40/Baseline Road operations and park access.

Mr. Odom talked about alternative development at the primary intersection at Baseline and State Road 40 and he mentioned that some years back the intersection had been redone and that from a safety standpoint one of the biggest areas of concern was the long crossings to get from east to west. Mr. Odom said several different alternatives were looked at to make it safer for pedestrians which included, a single roundabout, double roundabout, and pedestrian bridges.

Mr. Odom talked about the preliminary planning cost estimate for the different alternatives and stated that for construction, surveying and engineering, and construction engineering inspection would be about \$4.0 to \$5 million to complete.

Mr. Schuler mentioned that he noticed the scope of the project at State Road and NE 24th Street went to the signalized intersection at NE 49th Court Road and asked if anything had been looked at concerning the moderate level of pedestrians at the intersection that cross State Road 40. Mr. Slay responded that there were already pedestrian crossing signals in place and that the major concerns were scattered crossings and that potential midblock crossing would be looked at later within the corridor.

Mr. Schuler mentioned there was a lot of potential for commercial development in the area.

Mr. Daniels then asked about the water park and if there had been discussion about leaving the water park open. Mr. Slay said that as it stood the DEP had a contractor through the rest of the current year 2016 and their plan is to shut the water park down after the contract with the contractor had completed.

Item 5. Consent Agenda

Ms. Farnsworth made a motion to approve the Transportation Improvement Program Amendment. Mr. Schuler seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Item 6. Comments by FDOT

Ms. Smith reported that the right turn lane at the I-75 and Highway 326 ramp would be closed until late March due to construction which had caused some traffic congestion. Ms. Smith also stated that the I-75 Relief Task Force would be meeting in Gainesville, Florida on February 26, 2016 and said to visit their website at i75relief.org for updates and announcements.

Mr. Smith asked what a virtual scale and pull off was. Ms. Smith responded that it was the weigh station that was located at Highway 40 and that it was considered virtual because no one there at the location and it was all done through cameras and automation.

Mr. Daniels asked if there was money available for sidewalks in downtown Ocala. Ms. Smith said the safe routes to school program was back in effect however it probably would not apply to the sidewalks downtown but there was Transportation Alternative money available it just depended on the scope of the project and the costs and that an application would need to be submitted. Mr. Slay stated that an application had been submitted a couple of years back and that the sidewalks were on the priority list. Mr. Daniels said he would resend the priority list to Mr. Slay.

Item 7. Comments by TPO Staff

Mr. Slay advised the committee that the I-75 Relief Task Force held two meetings with the first meeting being organizational and the second meeting there was discussion about potential impacts and concerns the different counties had in terms of conservation areas. Mr. Slay said the

question was raised by the I-75 Relief Task Force as to when they would start looking at lines on a map. Mr. Slay mentioned that as he received information he would present to the committee.

Mr. Slay talked about the Future Corridor Program that had been presented a couple years back and there was a corridor that connected Jacksonville to Tampa and DOT has decided to cut it in half and is looking at connecting the Suncoast to I-75 and that the big concern was the long term future of I-75 and issues with safety due to heavy truck traffic.

Mr. Esch stated that the more immediate need for relief would be from the south end verses from I-75 to Jacksonville. Mr. Slay stated the origin and destination information that was received along the turnpike and I-75 did not show a lot of traffic that was going to Jacksonville but mostly going to the west.

Ms. Farnsworth asked if there had been any update on the railroad closure at Robinson Road. Mr. Slay answered that he had not received any update or timeline on the closure but would attempt to find out when the crossing would be reopened.

Item 8. Comments by TAC Members

Mr. Esch asked if there was any progress with the Cannon negotiations. Mr. Slay said there had been some discussions and because it was a family trust there had been some questions as to what the family wanted to do but he had not heard anything official.

Item 7. Public Comment

Mr. Paul Marraffino inquired about the status on the widening at US 441 and Dunnellon. Ms. Smith commented that the project was programmed for the fiscal year 2019. Mr. Slay said it would probably happen either late 2018 or early 2019 and was an estimated two-year job.

Item 8. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned by Mr. Esch at 11:33 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Shakayla Jacobs, TPO Administrative Assistant