

17th Street Mobility Plan Working Group, 6th Meeting
“Evaluate establishing a southern parallel street to SE 17th Street”

Monday, February 27th, 2018
Fort Lauderdale City Hall | 8th Floor Cafeteria

INTRODUCTIONS

Commissioner Rogers introduced Sarah Spurlock, the City’s Nighttime Economy Coordinator, who will be assisting with coordinating all aspects of major events in the city. This includes those events that impact the Beach and 17th Street both directly and indirectly.

BRIDGE OPENINGS

Commissioner Rogers reported that Glenn Wiltshire communicated working group concerns related to the 17th Street drawbridge opening improperly to the US Coast Guard. The Coast Guard stated that they had not heard of any complaints about the bridge. The group moved to assign further coordination with the US Coast Guard related to draw bridge operation to the Marine Advisory Board, which Commissioner Rogers will communicate to Lee Feldman.

The Commissioner also reviewed the Bridge Opening and Closing Summary document which was based on the existing statutory language. Jonathan Ford from FDOT clarified that all drawbridges crossing the Intracoastal in the city limits should have signs indicating opening and closing times within the next 30 days. Bill Cole expressed concern that the bridges are being opened out of schedule and Marilyn Mammano expressed interest in modifying bridge opening and closing times, to which Diana Alarcon responded FDOT has worked with the City on this in the past during certain situations, including special events.

Annette Ross stated that bridge tenders have issues with tourists who do not speak English not listening to orders to move away from the bridge opening area, increasing the amount of time it takes to open the bridge. She suggested signage at the bridges that could communicate the message either by including multiple languages or by utilizing symbols. Diana requested that Jonathan Ford look into this request.

SIGNAL TIMING

The signal timing adjustment letter was sent out with many of the adjustments already completed. Bill Cole and Annette Ross stated that SE 15th Avenue may not be properly timed or synchronized, especially with the pedestrian actuated crossing. Jonathan Ford clarified the synchronization process and the impact that pedestrians have on perceived synchronization, including an explanation of how the pedestrian actuated buttons currently work. This explanation included that a pedestrian may press the button but leave the intersection without crossing, creating a perceived synchronization issue. Jonathan agreed to request a study of this light’s synchronization with the rest of the corridor. There was also discussion of preempting the signal at Harbor Inlet Drive to allow vehicles to cross from north to south or to make an eastbound turn when the 17th Street Bridge is up. Finally, Jonathan also offered to look into initiating a flashing red arrow at Mayan Drive in order to allow for more convenient access to those communities after hearing concerns expressed by working group members.

A brief discussion regarding access to Harbor Shops was held with the clarification that Cordova Road design will kick off in the Summer of 2018 and that adjustments to this turning movement were raised by the 17th Street Corridor Mobility Plan.

HIGH CRUISE DAY TRAFFIC

Diana Alarcon and Karen Warfel expressed concern over high cruise day traffic on February 24th and 25th. Diana noted serious congestion at Eller Drive while Karen noticed congestion on US1. Some of the issue was related to large trucks using port entrances clogged with passenger cruise traffic rather than freight-priority entrances. Natacha Yacinthe stated that she would look into potential reasoning for gate closures that Diana perceived and ways to make quick improvements in these situations.

ORIGIN AND DESTINATION STUDY

Commissioner Rogers provided an update on the O&D Study, including the new technology that utilizes cell phone location data to provide a wider view of where vehicles are traveling. The technology also allows data to be pulled from any time, including high-season days. This technology will be used to get a better idea of how passenger vehicles are moving along the corridor as freight movement has been studied in great depth by other partner agencies. Following a discussion of the O&D Study, the board voted to allocate funding to the O&D Study.

OTHER

Commissioner Rogers clarified that he did reach out to Staff regarding truck restrictions. The effort is currently pending further review.

Diana Alarcon provided an update on Waze, stating that the agreement which would enable us to better route visitors and delivery drivers through the City is on hold pending Legal review. After a discussion of improperly parked delivery vehicles and buses, Diana requested that anyone with a truck-related issue send her a picture so that she could reach out to the trucking company.

BYPASS ROAD PRESENTATION

The following is a general summary of comments received related to the concept bypass road, which includes two one-way streets in and out of the Port property via 20th and 21st Streets and utilizes a pair of flyovers. The concept was presented as such – there has not been a deep level of planning or engineering vetting of the concept by the City of Fort Lauderdale as presented.

The summary below is not intended to be read as meeting minutes or direct quotations from participants.

Note: "A.C." relates to responses by Alan Cohen.

- Alan Cohen stated that there is a possibility of creating an additional southwest entrance into Village East to accommodate the SE 20th Street changes. The current entrance is on the northeast corner. Village East will also receive a sound wall in place of its existing chain-link fence under the current proposal.
- Christina Currie: Does allowing vehicles to go over the secure area instead of through it impact the secure area?
 - A.C.: Bridge will be designed so that it's enclosed
- Dana McDonald: On 22nd Street, how does the US1 connection work?
 - A.C.: I don't have a particular answer for you, we are not anticipating southbound Federal traffic to turn in. Northbound US1 traffic will require full study.
- 22nd Street was potentially vacated and may not be a public street; more study will be required to understand the implications of the potential vacation.

- Marilyn Mammano: We asked that you study removing the proposed overpass along Miami Road at SR84 at a previous meeting public meeting, instead moving the security gate on Spangler east to facilitate the northbound entrance avoiding Miami Road altogether. Have you looked into this possibility?
 - A.C.: We shared the idea with the consultants, though the feasibility has not yet been studied.
- Carlos Gonzalez: How will this address existing back-out parking and neighborhood compatibility?
 - A.C.: These elements require further study, including further direction from the City.
- Carlos Gonzalez requested the study of impacts to Andrews Avenue and 20th Street as the intersection seems dangerous, especially if traffic is directed to use this intersection. He stated that it might be desirable to create the connection to Andrews Avenue to the west in order to improve access to and from Downtown.
- Pamela Miller from Village East expressed that the association isn't opposed to signal timing but is concerned that people won't go to US1 and instead turn down Miami Road and go to SR84. This would negatively impact the neighborhood.
 - A.C.: We can mitigate this effect by directing traffic with signal timing to use 20th rather than Miami Road.
- Don Cross: Who is going to commit to maintain the overpasses?
 - A.C.: If completed, this will be either a County or City road .
- David Wells: How does this help the neighborhood along Miami Road? How does it improve the neighborhood? How does converting certain streets to one-way increase the ability to move around? This project as proposed cuts the neighborhood in half.
 - A.C.: The project provides potential easier access in and out of the neighborhood.
 - Comm. Rogers: Dispersing traffic is a good thing, especially when the traffic is properly calmed. We need to look at the big picture here and how this impacts the entire corridor.
 - Marilyn Mammano: This isn't a neighborhood improvement project. This project is intended to remove traffic from 17th Street. The advantage to the community is that all of the diverted traffic will utilize this road only – they won't cut through neighborhoods the way they do today.
- Jack Loos clarified that the reason for the apartment complex (1919 SE 10th Avenue) included one-way pairing was to allow the project to incorporate 10' wide sidewalks and increase landscaping to result in a more pedestrian friendly area. This roadway configuration was chosen in coordination with the neighborhood.
- David Wells: Village East is a compound and won't have cut-through traffic. How much of this is studying how to push traffic all the way through to Andrews Avenue and SW 20th Street?
 - Jessica Josselyn: A street network helps distribute trips – congestion on 17th Street is due to lack of a street network. Improving the network distributes vehicles across the board.
- Dr Sorenson: Could the County Administrator's Office send the diagram to the group and provide summaries of each meeting?
 - A.C. to follow up with digital concept
- Natacha Yacinthe: What's the timeline?
 - A.C.: A concept will be presented for formal review later this year. There are other regulatory agencies that need to review in addition to the City including the US Coast Guard/Homeland Security, County Environmental, etc.

Alan Cohen will present the concept again at the March 6th meeting of Harbordale Convention Center (Embassy Suites).

ADDITIONAL ITEMS DISCUSSED

N/A

ACTION ITEMS

1. Request that the Marine Advisory Board coordinates discussion to address bridge opening and closing issues when not opening at prescribed times
2. Staff and FDOT to research signage to better educate non-English speaking visitors of bridge opening and closing procedures
3. Natacha will look into why vehicles may have been backed up on Sunday, February 25th including why a gate may not have been open and how to better inform trucks of high cruise volume days
4. FDOT to look into the following operational improvements:
 - a. Signal preemption at Harbor Inlet Drive/23rd Avenue when the bridge is open to let the neighborhood out
 - b. The possibility of converting the Mayan Drive left turn light to a flashing red
 - c. Further enhancements to NE 15th Avenue signal timing coordination
5. Diana to coordinate with the Hilton Hotel and Alan Cohen with the Broward County Convention Center regarding Academy buses parked on Grande Drive
6. City Staff will research the vacation of SW 22nd Street
7. Alan Cohen to provide access road diagram to be shared with the entire group
8. Alan Cohen to provide summaries of neighborhood meetings

FOLLOW UPS FROM PREVIOUS ACTION ITEMS

1. Sarah Spurlock, City's Nighttime Economy Manager, was introduced to the group and will continue coordinating with agency partners
2. Glenn Wiltshire shared bridge opening timing concerns with US Coast Guard partners
3. Signs stating bridge opening and closing times will be placed at all Intracoastal Bridges by FDOT
4. City Staff will work with Kittelson & Associates to develop an O&D Study scope
5. Bridge opening and closing summary per 33 CFR 117 was distributed to the group