

Community Oversight & Advisory Team (COAT) MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting 8 - Thursday, June 23 at 6:00 p.m.

Attendees:

COAT Members

John Biggie	Dave Mirantz
Lotus Boss	Rita Pickar
Jennifer Bramley	Brian Rosen
Todd Drosky	Eric Torella
Dan Glickman	Evan Wolk
Joan Maurice	Matt Wood
Gail Battle	Gail Bulfin

Public Attendees

Johnson	Thomas Good
R Cary	Dan Bogner
Joe Cutroni	Nicole Giordano
Carole Morris	Linda Herbert
Joyce Listro	Diane Wagner
Steve Williams	Vice Mayor Richard Rosenzweig
Celia Coulombe	Lu Venci
Enock Mtoi	Bernie Parness
Elizabeth Roberts	

Staff and Presenters

Paul Calvaresi-Broward MPO
Anthea Thomas-Broward MPO
Sheri Coven-Marlin Engineering
Jennifer Fierman-Marlin Engineering
Scott Peterson-Florida Department of Transportation
Anson Sonnett-Florida Department of Transportation

MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting Commenced at 6:06 p.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Sheri Coven opened the meeting and began introductions.

The COAT and staff members introduced themselves and Sheri introduced the FDOT representatives. Sheri also reviewed the meeting objectives and agenda.

JUNE 18 PUBLIC MEETING DEBRIEF

Jennifer Fierman gave an overview of the June 18 Public meeting. There were no questions.

DEVELOPMENT OF CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PD&E

Paul explained that the Deerfield Beach representatives developed a list of recommendations for the PD&E study at their pre-COAT meeting, which they provided and was distributed to the COAT members. Paul asked if the COAT would like to work from the draft recommendations that were developed by staff and emailed to the members prior to the COAT meeting or if they wanted to work from the document that Deerfield Beach developed.

The COAT agreed that they would like to work from the Deerfield Beach document ***Draft Consensus Recommendations Revision 1***.

All item numbers refer to the numbering in Draft Consensus Recommendations Revision 1 as distributed at the meeting.

To see changes that were made to the document, refer to COAT Consensus Recommendations to the MPO Board (with 'track changes').

Paul discussed some of the action verbs used in the recommendations list and explained that since the recommendation was to conduct a study, that a study cannot actually implement anything, but only take things into consideration.

A COAT member asked where in the recommendations it states that an objective of the study is to move traffic.

Sheri suggested that the concern could be addressed through a title change or by adding an item to the list of objectives to address the need to move traffic.

A COAT member asked what the FDOT criteria were for the capacity of the road in the future in order to frame the goal of the study.

Scott Peterson and Anson Sonnet explained that the desired outcome would be Level of Service C in the year 2040.

Paul mentioned that having an objective of Level of Service C is fairly standard for FDOT and a COAT member pointed out that much of what is on the list of recommendations is standard for what FDOT typically does in a PD&E study, and that the recommendations should ensure that the result is a study that evaluates increasing the capacity of the road.

Todd Drosky, the COAT selected spokesperson, explained that Deerfield Beach made the list as general as possible. He said that these were the core concepts that Deerfield Beach wants and that they had other recommendations that were left off of this list to ensure that the discussion moved forward. Todd explained that many hours of work went into the development of the list. He went on to discuss how after each meeting, the question was raised about why some of the lesser alternatives won't work; in particular the adaptive signal technology idea. Therefore, he said that as part of the COAT's recommendation to the Broward MPO Board, in addition to the list of recommendations, Deerfield Beach would like to recommend that signalization along SW 10th Street be studied and if improvements are warranted, they be implemented and that a three-month grade period be provided to explore signalization improvements before the PD&E recommendation moves forward. This would give the residents of Deerfield Beach the peace of mind to know that someone looked at the signalization technology and gave a definitive answer on whether the signal timing works or not and if needed, can be improved. Todd said that this was not intended to stall or obstruct the PD&E Study.

A COAT member asked if Todd was referring to item 8 on the list of recommendations, which was about implementing short term solutions, including signal timing and synchronization, and if so, the COAT could recommend to immediately starting evaluation of signal timing while the study occurs.

Todd said that Commissioner Bogen is spearheading this initiative to see if signalization will work or not work.

Paul asked for clarification on what technology Deerfield Beach was referring to: existing technology or something new?

Todd explained that in general, Deerfield Beach wants to know that signalization has been tried and whether or not it works. Let the residents of Deerfield Beach know that someone has looked at the signal timing and tell them if it can or can't work.

Paul asked if Deerfield Beach is referring to using current technology. Sheri clarified that this sounds like a distinction between item 8.1 and 8.2 on the draft list of recommendations and FDOT has agreed to work with the County to get an answer on whether changing the signal timing will improve traffic flow.

Todd stated that the requested signalization study was a separate issue from the list of recommendations.

A COAT member again expressed that this issue was not intended to delay the PD&E Study. It was explained that the COAT meetings in Deerfield Beach have been very public and that a county commissioner is suggesting that there may be alternatives, such as changing the signal timing, which may be effective. This commissioner stated that he can quickly implement a trial of the new signal timing to see if it works.

A COAT member asked if the intent of this three-month signalization recommendation was to find an alternative to making improvements on the roadway. They asked if the commissioner is under the impression that a fix for SW 10th Street will be found during this three-month period that will eliminate the need for other improvements.

A COAT member replied that there are short-term needs of the people along SW 10th Street who cannot get out of their neighborhoods and do not want to wait five years to see improvements. They explained that Deerfield Beach wants the county to try putting timers on the lights to see if there are improvements in traffic flow.

A COAT member pointed out that the commissioner stated at the recent public meeting that not all options have been explored and that there may be alternatives to making long-term improvements on SW 10th Street. The member said that they agree with the three-month period for trying a short-term fix, but that they would be against the short term solutions if the intent was to use those short-term solutions to avoid implementing long-term solutions.

A COAT member mentioned that FDOT and staff have said multiple times that signalization will, at best, improve SW 10th Street traffic flow by 10 percent. They said that if we are going to wait another three months, then this is just more delay. It is naive to think that the COAT will come up with some signal technology idea to significantly move traffic that no professional has previously thought of.

A COAT member said they understand the desire for trying synchronization up front and that there is no reason the COAT cannot recommend exploring synchronization while also agreeing to move forward with the study. Regardless of what happens synchronization will be needed. Looking at the signalization option is not in conflict with being able to start a PD&E Study. We don't need to stop the study in order to look at the synchronization.

A Deerfield Beach COAT member said they did not want the Deerfield Beach COAT members to be grouped with the previously mentioned commissioner, adding that what the Commissioner wants to do was his idea and does not represent the Deerfield Beach COAT members' ideas. We want to see the signalization improved so that people do not have long waits when trying to leave their communities on the weekend. The member added that the Deerfield Beach COAT members thought of the things

that were important to Deerfield Beach, having spent hours working on the development of the recommendations, which will affect many people on the COAT.

Paul referred to items 8.1 and 8.2 on the Revision 1 list as items that could be referred to as low hanging fruit, or the simplest things that can be done first. Adjusting signal timing could be a low hanging fruit item which can be both in the list of recommendations for the PD&E as well as a separate request to implemented immediately.

A COAT member asked how long it would take to get a PD&E started. Scott Peterson said that if the MPO approves a PD&E in July, it likely would not start until next July. Scott added that the committee is spending a lot of time discussing something FDOT can readily agree to do with regard to coordinating with Broward County on the signalization issue. He also said that FDOT can work to get to the bottom of the discrepancy over whether or not signal optimization has occurred along SW 10th Street.

A COAT member asked when taxpayer money would start to be spent on a study if it is approved. FDOT explained that the question was complex and difficult to answer, but likely not until July of next year.

Todd explained that he cannot agree with separating the signalization request from the overall list of recommendations because “we” owe it to the residents of Deerfield Beach to look at whether signalization is a viable alternative before allowing the PD&E Study recommendation to go into effect.

Sheri said that the way the recommendation was being presented made it sound like an ultimatum, as though Deerfield Beach wants to first try signal optimization and if it improves traffic on SW 10th Street, then they don’t want the PD&E Study. She asked if that was accurate and several Deerfield Beach COAT members said no.

Therefore, Sheri suggested that the COAT recommend that signal timing be looked at immediately but without the three-month window since FDOT can coordinate on this right away and it would avoid any misconception that Deerfield Beach was looking to stall the PD&E Study until the outcome of the signal optimization.

There was additional discussion about the signalization recommendation and the three-month window. Paul explained that the PD&E and the signalization timing request could be recommended at the same time. Todd explained that Deerfield Beach really wants to see the signal timing evaluated, with a definitive answer provided before recommending moving forward with a PD&E Study.

COAT members discussed the advantages of making improvements to the signal timing now and mentioned how it would improve everyone’s access and address short-term needs. Todd reiterated that someone needs to tell the public that signal timing isn’t going to work before making the decision to move forward with PD&E recommendations.

A COAT member asked about the significance of the three months if FDOT can start addressing the signalization issue right away with the county. Todd explained that while the answer may already be apparent, the desire is to have the three month period to get an answer and then allow the PD&E to go into effect.

Scott Peterson pointed out that evaluating signal timing now only gives a snapshot of 2016 traffic and the goal is to plan for 2040 traffic and that while adjusting signal timing may improve traffic flow in 2016, it does not meet the 2040 objectives a PD&E Study would address.

A COAT member said that they would be comfortable with moving forward with the list of recommendations as long as there is an understanding that only changing the signals is not going to meet the 2040 needs.

A COAT member said that they get the feeling that there is an ulterior motive for waiting three months to test the signalization. The COAT member stated that the commissioner has the power to get the county to adjust the signals right away and FDOT is also agreeing to look at it. The group is here for SW 10th Street because it is a local road between two expressways. Moving traffic is important, but ultimately there needs to be an express connection between I-95 and the Turnpike.

A COAT member said that they recognize the work Deerfield Beach has put into the recommendations that they developed and but stated that they are going too far to try to delay the study by 90 days because of the commissioner adding that it sounds like an ultimatum.

A COAT member said that the word ultimatum is not in anyone's mind and that they support moving forward with the recommendation document as is with some editing as appropriate.

Sheri said that there appeared to be consensus that the COAT should present to the MPO Board a list of recommendations for the PD&E Study as well as a request to look at traffic signal synchronization immediately. She asked if there is consensus on that and the COAT said yes and Sheri suggested that they move on to editing the list of recommendations.

Todd expressed frustration with the suggestion that the Deerfield Beach request for the three-month period was a delay tactic and insisted that it was not the intent of Deerfield Beach to cause delay.

Sheri reiterated that consensus had been achieved and Paul opened the discussion on the recommendations by starting with development of an overarching statement on the goal.

The COAT discussed suggestions that were typed up on a display of the draft document.

There was discussion that Deerfield Beach assumed that moving traffic was an objective and there was agreement to add it to the list. Consensus on item 1

Paul moved on to the “Public Safety and Accessibility” item. One COAT member thought it referred to police and fire access, but Steve Williams clarified that it referred to accessibility of the public to cross the road so that Deerfield Beach is connected with SW 10th Street, not separate from it. A COAT member suggested adding language about pedestrian and bicycle accessibility to make it more clear.

Paul noted that the action verb “Implement” may not be appropriate in the recommendations since a study cannot actually implement anything and suggested an alternative word be sought. A COAT member said that the word “explore” was too vague and that implement was a stronger word. There was discussion about the best word or words to use to convey strong direction. A COAT member asked why they need to make all of these small changes preferred not to see the wording changed at all.

Another COAT member responded, saying that the work of Deerfield Beach was appreciated but that not everyone on the COAT was from Deerfield and should be provided the opportunity to provide their input into the recommendations as well.

Paul went over a few words that could be used instead of “implement” and there was consensus to use the word “include.”

There was no comment on item 3.

There was discussion about editing item 4.1 and possibly combining it with item 5.

There was discussion about item 5. Paul said that it would be outside the bounds of the S.W. 10th Street study since it was east of I-95, but could be covered under the I-95 PD&E. The item was edited.

There were no comments on item 6.

Item 7 was discussed and FDOT was asked if noise treatments were a requirement. Scott explained that a noise study would be required and that noise is typically mitigated by noise walls if they are warranted and approved by residents. A COAT member asked if windows could be shored-up to reduce noise. Scott explained that this would be allowed by statute but that the approach is rarely used. Scott explained that FDOT explores all alternate treatments and determines which is the most cost-effective. Edits were made to item 7.

Paul explained that in item 7.2, FDOT does not consider landscaping to be a noise mitigation treatment. There was discussion about moving landscaping out of the noise category. FDOT clarified that landscaping and buffers are not a noise treatment

Item 8 was discussed. A COAT member asked to include adaptive signal technology as the name of a treatment (i.e., capitalize Adaptive Signal Technology). The COAT discussed moving item 8 to the top of the list to be number 1. Paul suggested waiting until the end to renumber the items.

There were no comments on item 9.

The COAT discussed item 10. A COAT member asked if the purpose of maximizing landscaping was for noise reduction or for beautification. Steve Williams explained that the intent of landscaping was to make SW 10th Street a gateway to north Broward County. He said the idea is to have intensive landscaping to make SW 10th Street a beautiful corridor. Item 10 was edited.

A COAT member mentioned that as part of the Deerfield Beach proposal, they were asking that landscaping be maintained by FDOT. Scott explained that there are cases where FDOT will install and maintain landscaping such as palm trees and xeriscape, but that they generally do not get into intricate landscape maintenance. The COAT and FDOT discussed the possibility of landscaping agreements and the feasibility of getting an entity other than Deerfield Beach to cover the cost of landscape maintenance. A COAT member suggested a recommendation that if the express lanes were to be a toll road, a portion of the toll revenue should be dedicated to maintenance.

There were no comments on items 11.

A COAT member asked about FDOT requirements to consider or include transit. Scott said that FDOT coordinates with the transit agencies to find out what routes are along the corridor and what the needs are. A COAT member asked if FDOT considers park n' ride lots. Anson Sonnet explained that they are considered.

A COAT member mentioned that they thought the mass transit item would look at some dedicated high speed rail facility or dedicated bus facility. Scott said transit vehicles are allowed to use the express lane so it may be difficult to justify providing a bus only lane.

The COAT discussed the West Wellfield.

A COAT member asked for clarification about item 14, and discussed signage for local businesses. A COAT member said that the intent was not to obstruct the view of the businesses. Item 14 was edited.

There were no comments on item 15.

A COAT member asked what item 16 meant. There was discussion about if the intent was to alleviate congestion on alternate routes during construction on SW 10th Street. Item 16 was edited.

A COAT member asked what item 16.1 meant. Paul suggested that 16.1 be deleted since it was very unlikely to happen. Todd said that he does not want to delete item 16.1. He explained that during SW 10th Street construction, Hillsboro Blvd will be used as an alternate route and the railroad tracks are a large impediment. Going under the railroad tracks on Hillsboro could alleviate congestion and it should be explored.

There were initially no comments on item 17, but then a COAT member suggested removing “where feasible.” Another COAT member said that they don’t think they would have a say in it and that it would ultimately be up to Florida Power and Light. Item 17 was edited.

The list was rearranged to change the order of the items as discussed earlier.

FDOT asked to make a request and Scott explained that the recommendations need to say somewhere that the overall goal was to connect the Sawgrass with I-95 or to construct express lanes. He suggested that the title of the document or item 1 explain the objective of the study, which was to connect the Sawgrass to I-95.

There was discussion about the wording of the study objective, which was to be item 1 of the list. After several minutes of discussion, Sheri suggested that the COAT table the item for a few minutes to allow for public comment and then come back to it.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Herbert-Nothing mentioned Powerline between 10th Street and Hillsboro Blvd. It should be looked at as part of this study.

Steve Williams-The word expressway is the stumbling point. I suggest saying “...an efficient traffic solution between Sawgrass, Turnpike and I-95...” Take the word expressway out of it.

Bernie Parness-It is my impression that it will take 3-5 years before the first spade is in the ground. Improving the lights in the meantime is a solution that shouldn’t be used for months but should be used until construction is done. If it improves traffic only 10 percent, it’s better than not improving it at all. Improving traffic lights is a good thing because it will help people that live in Deerfield and the people coming through Deerfield. If we can improve traffic even a little, let’s do it until the roadway is decided upon.

Bill Ganz- Nothing has been done in 30 years to improve traffic flow. The point of the 3 month wait was to get a new baseline of what traffic conditions could be after traffic synchronization. I can’t emphasize enough the negative impact this will have on surrounding areas. We use words like “implement” because we want to make it difficult for FDOT in the beginning. I don’t want to make it easy for FDOT to make something that negatively impacts Deerfield. This is not a standard FDOT project. This should be about the public input at this point. This project should be a gateway. It should be a beautiful project. It shouldn’t just be on the taxpayers of Deerfield to pay for the landscaping of the corridor. It should be on FDOT or all the users of the corridor. I want to thank all of you. It has not been easy. Thanks for sticking up for the citizens of Deerfield Beach. There are more things we could have done. We have been incredibly patient.

Vice Mayor Rosenzweig-Thanks for being here and for your patience. This is a state agenda that is coming through the MPO. I have a strong feeling that this will be a project that will be handled by the county as well as the citizens of Deerfield Beach. There's a one cent sales tax coming. Part of that should be for the maintenance of roadways in Broward County. Broward County is going to have a tremendous growth explosion in the next few years. We want this to be as attractive as it can. It will be a toll road. Thanks for your time patience and understanding. Ultimately SW 10th Street will have a local 10th Street and there will be an expressway to separate local traffic from express traffic.

FINALIZATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The COAT continued discussion about the wording of item 1 and the use of the word expressway. The COAT discussed that by not including the word depressed expressway, they are opening themselves up to a cheaper solution that doesn't separate the express traffic. Todd said that the mission statement should be as broad as possible. He suggested adding the word "creatively" and make FDOT think outside the box. Item 1 was edited.

There was more discussion about item 1. Sheri said that she realizes that some COAT members were uncomfortable with it, but asked those that were whether they could live with it. Their response was affirmative.

*The consensus document was titled **COAT Consensus Recommendations to the MPO Board.***

Sheri asked if there was consensus as a whole. The COAT said yes. Sheri explained that they now have consensus on moving forward with a PD&E study and a vision for SW 10th Street, as well as a recommendation to immediately investigating signal synchronization.

Paul said that this is step zero of a long process and that it has been a collaborative process because we are getting a project started from the ground up. He explained that Todd will present the consensus recommendations to the MPO board and invited and encouraged the other COAT members to attend.

Another COAT member asked for a monthly update on the synchronization progress so the COAT can keep track and stay involved. Paul said that updates will be provided.

A COAT member asked if Sunshine still applies. Paul and Sheri said Sunshine is over once the COAT meeting adjourns.

Sheri thanked FDOT and Paul thanked Commissioner Ganz and Vice-Mayor Rosenzweig as well as the public for their commitment to the project.

COAT ROUNDTABLE

Each of the COAT members gave their final impressions on the process, generally saying that they enjoyed getting to know one another, learned a lot, and looked forward to the next steps for this project.

Todd challenged everyone to stay involved. He said that this is just the beginning of the process. He told the COAT not to lose their passion for what they did here tonight and to come to future meetings. He also encouraged everyone to bring their residents and their boards and come to the July MPO board meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.