

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

**U.S. 1 CONCURRENCY, DEFICIENT LINK, SIX-LANE
WIDENING, PARALLEL NORTH/SOUTH ROADS AND
DEVELOPER’S AGREEMENT**

FEBRUARY 9, 2007

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February 9, 2007

PUBLIC WORKSHOP OF THE INDIAN RIVER COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Board of County Commissioners of Indian River County, Florida, held a Public Workshop at the County Commission Chambers, 1840 25th Street, Vero Beach, Florida, on Friday, February 9, 2007, to discuss US 1 Concurrency. Present were Chairman Gary C. Wheeler, Vice Chair Sandra L. Bowden, Commissioners Wesley S. Davis, Joseph E. Flescher and Peter D. O’Bryan. Also present were County Administrator Joseph A. Baird, County Attorney William G. Collins II, and Deputy Clerk Athena Adams.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wheeler called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chair Sandra L. Bowden led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. PRESENTATION & DISCUSSIONS

A. US 1 - CONCURRENCY

Assistant Public Works Director Chris Mora welcomed everyone and introduced Mr. Billy Hattaway, Corridor Planning and Engineering Practice Leader of Glatting Jackson who had been asked by the “development community” to come and present some ideas regarding improvements to US 1.

Director Mora, through a PowerPoint Presentation (copy on file), introduced some of the topics for discussion, namely: Concurrency (the near-capacity link, US1 between 49th Street and 65th Street); the proposed 6-lane widening of US 1; parallel facilities (and if there are any parallel roadways in the area that could possibly provide some relief to US 1); and developer's agreements that have been proposed to do the widening.

Director Mora presented a brief history of US 1, which goes back to 1914 when it was originally planned as part of the Dixie Highway system. He saw US 1 as an integral part of the County's transportation plan, and outlined some of the current projects on US 1 costing \$41.6 million.

Commissioner Davis wanted to know the amount of dollars in local funds (of the 22.5 million project) or whether it was an all-State project. Director Mora said it was State funding.

Director Mora continued, discussing different projects and their worth. He also discussed Short Range Projects (costing approximately \$22.6 million) on US 1, and Long Range Projects, which are not funded but would be needed at some point in the future (at a cost of approximately \$100 million). He also outlined the various locations for the long-range projects.

Director Mora responded to questions from the Board regarding how long a range encompassed the long-range projects. He stated that it was between 2011 and 2020 for one project and 2020 and 2030 for the others.

B. US 1 – DEFICIENT LINK – 49TH STREET TO 65TH

Director Mora discussed the link at US 1 between Aviation Boulevard and CR 510 that is not funded but getting close to capacity. He also talked about the peak hour / peak season traffic demand.

Commissioner Davis asked whether this would be enough (without any major changes to the Comprehensive Plan) to handle the capacity for concurrency for our Comp Plan if it does not change. Director Mora replied, “That’s what we are showing currently, if we 6-lane it, yes.” He felt it would be ok if we build-out in accordance with the Comp Plan.

Director Mora resumed his presentation discussing vested trips, capacity, and percentages. He also looked at historical growth patterns, the years left until capacity is reached, and responded to questions from the Board relative to those issues.

C. US 1 – SIX LANE WIDENING

Director Mora stated that the County’s long-range road plans include the widening of US 1 from 4-lanes to 6-lanes, thereby increasing the peak hour / peak direction capacity to 2,790 vehicles per hour. They are estimating that the 6-laning of US 1 between Aviation Boulevard and CR 510 would cost \$50-\$70 million dollars, and that widening is not currently scheduled or funded.

Chairman Wheeler inquired whether, on the Federal highways like US 1, the State handles that or was it Federal money. Director Mora said it was a blend of Federal and State funds.

Community Development Director Bob Keating inputted that the whole funding mechanism is a very complicated detailed structure. He explained how money for roads on the State highway system and Federal funds are used. He stated that these days funding is much more flexible and can spread over more projects.

Director Keating responded to Commissioner Bowden's question of whether the County has stepped in before and given money to the State for our roads.

Commissioner O'Bryan questioned the current capacity from 26th Street to 65th Street, which showed the capacity at 2,010, and then from 65th Street it jumps to 2,232 units. He wondered what changed in the road to add 200 more trips.

Director Mora explained the change and pointed out that these capacities are all the result of special studies called arterial analyses that have been done on each segment. Further, they do a much more critical evaluation of the roadway capacity than what comes out of the standard capacities that are in the DOT and tables. They look at speed, access and the number of signals and timing of those signals. He explained that the reason it jumps to 2232 is that as you get north of 69th Street the number of signals go down. Also studies have shown that the fewer signals on a segment of roadway the higher the capacity because the traffic does not get stopped.

**D. PARALLEL NORTH/SOUTH ROADS – OLD DIXIE HIGHWAY,
INDIAN RIVER BLVD.**

Director Mora talked about parallel facilities such as Old Dixie Highway and Indian River Boulevard that can add capacity or provide relief to US 1. He remarked that Old

Dixie is not continuous between Vero Beach and Sebastian and pointed out other obstacles like 4-way stops, not being an arterial roadway, and restricted access at CR 510. He felt that does not make it an ideal alternate route for traffic. Also Indian River Boulevard does not parallel US 1 until you get to 53rd Street and there were some links and intersections on the Boulevard that are approaching capacity.

Another option for providing relief to US 1 is CRALLS (Constrained Roadway at Lower Level of Service) which, if adopted, would change the level of service from current Level of Service “D” (L.O.S.D.), which is our current capacity standard to Level of Service “F” (L.O.S.F) the lowest range, thereby raising the number of trips allowed to vest on US 1. One drawback is that level of service “F” would result in increased traffic delays, stops and congestion and for that reason staff would not normally recommend it.

Chairman Wheeler talked about CRALLS and remarked that it seems logical to him that roundabouts made a lot of sense on some road. He asked if there was any validity to that, and whether there was any possibility of looking into that in the future for some roads.

Director Mora responded that roundabouts fall under the realm of traffic calming; they have a good use but where they break down is when we get higher volumes and you cannot introduce gaps for people to turn around.

Discussion ensued regarding roundabouts and how well they would work in low volume/low access situations but do not in high volume situations.

Commissioner O’Bryan asked how much more capacity would be added if we do go to level of service “F”. Director Mora explained that in the matter of US 1 we would probably have to go to E+ 40%, which would add 500 or 600 trips on US 1.

E. US 1 – DEVELOPER’S AGREEMENT

Director Mora announced that some developers have brought forth proposals to partner with the County and do the widening on US 1 themselves, and staff is now evaluating some of these Developer’s Agreements. He described the way the Developer’s Agreement would work if the County agrees: the County would obtain any additional right-of-way along US 1 if it were necessary, and the developers would actually design and build US 1 and possibly receive an impact fee credit. Mr. Mora talked about how much impact fee credit we could afford to give the developers, stating that if we were to allow an impact fee credit on US 1 they have estimated that the credit would probably be lower than the 45% allowed on 27th Avenue. He explained the reason for that.

Discussion ensued regarding impact fee calculations, whether US 1 is plugged in, whether to take this out of General or other funds, and budgeted amounts for roads/constraints.

The Chairman called a break at 9:34 a.m. and reconvened the Workshop at 9:44 a.m. with Attorney Collins absent.

Mr. Richard Bialosky, 940 Oyster Shell Lane, felt we needed to do some paradigm shifting (to a planning base solution to US 1). He thought decisions were being made based on the ease of commuting certain hours of the day and felt we needed to look outside the box and not look to staff for creative solutions to traffic and transportation problems. He talked about sustainability and urged the Board not to waste millions of dollars building something that in the long run may not be needed. He introduced Mr. Billy Hattaway of Glatting Jackson and thanked him for coming to speak on the issues of transportation.

Billy L. Hattaway, Corridor Planning and Engineering Practice Leader of Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin, was glad for the opportunity to speak about the issues at hand. He provided a brief background on his qualifications and expertise disclosing that he has been in the transportation industry for almost thirty (30) years, twenty-three (23) of which he spent at the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

Through a PowerPoint presentation **Mr. Hattaway** discussed “Livable Communities & Transportation Issues”. He compared conventional suburbs and traditional towns highlighting the differences in both, especially relating to “sprawl” and the way we have been doing things in the past. He talked about Functional Classifications for Arterials (State roads), Collectors (County roads), and Locals (City roads) looking at their major differences and intended purposes. He displayed an image showing conventional patterns that we have been building with, which put all the trips out onto the arterial because of gated communities and “big box” type development patterns. He remarked that sprawl development type patterns have contributed to our problems today.

Mr. Hattaway also displayed pictures depicting residential housing and commercial areas. He outlined parts of the problem in the transportation industry, which include mobility and land access. He discussed “functional classifications” expressing that the original arterials would be the State, the County, and the City. He also talked about pedestrian fatalities and speed, standard of living and quality of life. To highlight his point he recited a quote by John Nolen (1926), “ The solution of the traffic problem is to be sought not so much by wider streets as by proper plan of the town.”

Mr. Hattaway presented a Conventional Development Cycle model showing inputs and outputs by use of land use planning, growth, and transportation planning. He discussed transportation design showing comments from DOT Agency staff and County staff. Under the “Healthy Development Cycle” he disclosed that the smart growth model is to change

the way we develop our land and to look at how we develop our housing, which will also help us with the issue of affordable housing and our transportation system, so that we have options other than just the automobile. He saw the need for more connectivity in our network and the need to look at types of housing and retail mixes, parking, narrow lanes (to get the speed down so the environment is less hostile to pedestrians and bicyclists), and roundabouts, which he believed are a proven safety solution. He also outlined conflicts at four-way intersections.

A brief discussion ensued among members of the Panel regarding adding more lanes and the benefits of roundabouts.

Mr. Hattaway outlined conflicts at roundabouts and showed an image of how a roundabout could transform an intersection in a more urban place. He talked about the five (5) “Ds” Glatting Jackson uses in their collaborative process for community planning and design, namely: (1) **Desire**, the energy that directs a project towards a sustainable and community-oriented outcome; (2) **Discovery**, the process of developing a complete and common understanding of the situation and the future by the team and the stakeholders; (3) **Design**, the employment of people and their related skills; (4) **Discussion**, will generally occur simultaneously with design, if the right people and capabilities are present; and (5) **Documentation**, the stage during which the products are finalized. He also outlined the work being done by his Company, showing an example of a before and after project they did in Trenton, New Jersey, which initially was a historic waterfront park, and as they became more dependent on the automobile the park was replaced with a Freeway.

Chairman Wheeler was impressed with the presentation. He said it was logical and it made a lot of sense to him. He felt what we need today are streets and communities like we built a hundred years ago. He also commented on how strongly he felt about inter-connectivity.

Commissioner Davis remarked that it sounds like we should be having a discussion on whether to revamp our Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Hattaway also believed that the County might have to revamp its Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion ensued among Board members regarding higher density and what would be the best plan for the County. **Mr. Hattaway** said with higher density you have to pay a lot more attention to design details and could not do it the way we have been doing it in the past.

Chairman Wheeler would be interested in looking “outside the box” and doing some things that politically may be courageous.

4. BOARD DISCUSSION

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chuck Mechling, 1999 Pointe West Drive, thanked the Chairman for his comments regarding looking “outside the box”, because there were issues on US 1 and other places to deal with. He hoped the County would hire a consultant with experience to bring us some ideas. He wanted to see us come together as a group and to have that vision for the future as to what we want our community to look like.

Greg Burke, 1325 South Village Square, felt we were at a crossroads and the paradigm shift has to come. He used as an example the unforeseeable citrus problem in IRC arguing that better planning and design are going to be necessary and the Board would have to

think about what they were going to do. He believed widening the roads is not necessarily the answer to everything, and supported the Board getting a consultant to bring ideas forward.

Chairman Wheeler thought one of the things that is very bad for Indian River County is our solution to everything to either 4-lane, 6-lane or widen intersections and pumping more and more people into the arteries with less and less connectivity. He was interested in finding a workable solution.

Nancy Offutt, Treasure Coast Builders Association, was glad to hear what sounded like an attitude adjustment by the County. She argued that unless we want to use concurrency to stop everything then we have an opportunity to take a more realistic approach to the fact that we are growing but it does not mean we have to change the character of it. Further, if the requirements of concurrency are met then we could take different approaches. She believed high-density living is a choice that people should have if they want to live that way and hoped the Board would look at it as though they are a neighborhood. She urged the Board to “please build the roads” if the alternative is to do nothing.

Joseph Paladin, Chairman of the Growth Awareness Committee (a private sector organization) asked how some of these idea changes would affect developers agreements and how we proceed.

Commissioner Davis did not see how they could look at a modification of what was planned for on US 1 as far as our transportation needs, without re-addressing the projects that have been approved but not yet built.

Mr. Hattaway explained the projects that he has been involved with and how they were dealt with (they leave their current plans in place and set up codes to do things differently).

Discussion continued regarding plans for 6-laning certain roads. Director Mora discussed vested trips that are not on the roads yet and felt we have to look at developments that we have already approved.

Public Works Director Jim Davis valued Mr. Hattaway's expertise and opinion and thought what he presented was an excellent solution for sections of US 1, particularly between 37th Street and 4th Street where there is only one community to work with. He, however, believed some of the solutions were not practical for an 8-mile long corridor. He also discussed the risk of roundabouts.

Commissioner Davis agreed but felt maybe we should break down by communities and try to have some type of design/zoning like OCR.

Vice Chair Bowden felt one of the things they need to factor in was the Barrier Island, as they have to come over to the mainland to do business.

Chairman Wheeler wondered what they could do with Old Dixie Highway to help alleviate some of the traffic on US 1. He envisioned taking 27th Avenue and designing it with roundabouts, and wanted to see the Board take a strong approach on interconnectivity.

Director Davis talked about the vision of bringing the Boulevard up to 53rd Avenue and saw the need for a Consultant's advice on how to get traffic over to Old Dixie Highway, and how to use the Boulevard efficiently.

Chairman Wheeler again emphasized the need for more connectivity. He also felt the need for more direction and for this matter to be brought back at another meeting.

Richard Bialosky read a portion of an article that says, “Adding lanes makes traffic worse.” He talked about reaching a point of failure on the roads and widening the road but rewarding the problem. He also talked about what it means if it fails, commenting that better lifestyle decisions are forced in such events. He urged the Board not to be bound by statistical analyses that says they have to widen the roads, and should look at it differently.

George Christopher, Planning and Zoning Commission, liked the presentation but felt it was a tough problem and there was no easy solution. He referred to capacity percentages referred to earlier regarding amount of years left based on historic growth numbers and believed that not having the facts of what the approved projects would show is just putting blinders on. He could not understand the rationale without the numbers present. He talked about CRALLS, which he described, as “a scary word” and likened it to US 1 with its current construction.

Board members and staff compared medians and turn lanes in Sebastian and Vero Beach and discussed Commissioner Davis’ idea of bringing the same level of landscaping and calming effect to the Section of US 1 in Vero Beach as currently exists in Sebastian.

Director Davis responded to inquiries about resurfacing, median and landscaping projects. He stated that all resurfacing projects north of 37th Street will have landscaped medians, and the only thing US 1 will not have is on-street parking and it would be similar to what Sebastian has.

Chairman Wheeler believed Vero Beach lacked a grid system particularly downtown.

Mr. Christopher wondered whether it would work for County residents to limit the use of the automobile. He heard talk about having more commercial in developments and

felt it was wonderful. He also wished the Board could mandate the use of grids and urged the Board not go on solutions that are not realistic.

Chairman Wheeler called a break at 11:20 a.m. and reconvened the Workshop at 11:35 a.m. with Commissioners O'Bryan, Davis, and Attorney Collins absent. (NOTE: Commissioner O'Bryan and Attorney Collins returned at 11:37 a.m. and Commissioner Davis returned at 11:47 a.m.)

Jean-Louis Lacerte, President of Lacerte Homes, Inc., questioned failing links on US 1 and observed that demographics showed that we have 600-700 trips on Dixie Highway between 45th Street and CR 510 unused everyday. He suggested they find a way to reroute the trips/traffic on the failing artery of US 1 to Old Dixie Highway.

Director Mora replied that old Dixie was open to travel by anyone who wanted to use it but there were certain impediments to travel so people chose not to use it. He agreed that they could look at ways to divert traffic from US 1 to Dixie by making the access easier.

Mr. Lacerte argued that it would be cheaper for Winter Beach to build a bridge across US 1 and fall into Dixie highway. He felt widening US 1 was a huge cost we could not afford to do right now and then we would be locked in.

Peter Robinson, 315 Great Way, wanted to make a point that we have a grid in the Indian River Farms Plat and a lot of that grid was filled in within the City limits. He believed alternative roads needed to be looked at and commented on the "mess" on A1A with the increased traffic and the decision that it would have been kept small.

Joseph Schulke, Schulke Bittle and Stoddard, and Sebastian resident, never noticed an issue with US 1, and could not see how it is failing. He presented Old Dixie Highway as a viable alternative and encouraged Board members and Planning staff to look at solutions, namely: (1) to look at E+40 and project how long it would take us (maybe 10 years down the road assuming everything stays the same); or to get aggressive with comprehensive changes to encourage rezoning. He remarked that it was crazy not having amenities on the beach for people who live there to stay there and shop.

Commissioner Bowden interjected that it was the choice of the people on the beach.

Mr. Schulke felt the point was there are a lot of changes we could consider in this County that could deflect/redirect traffic to alleviate this problem. He would hate to see US 1 a 6-lane highway and thought maybe timing of opening and closing of businesses could help alleviate traffic problem.

David Hetteras, Sea Hawk Lane, suggested the Board do volume and design calculations to figure out what they wanted to do on US 1. He too did not think there was a problem on US 1 and did not think adding lanes may be the solution we want. He suggested the Board plan and take time to think about it rather than have a “knee jerk statistical reaction” based on a model that may not make sense.

Mr. Paladin questioned whether, on proportionate share, developer’s agreements, and Senate Bill 360 (SB 360) these agreements and SB 360 were for the purpose of going forward and creating concurrency, or could we do proportionate share agreements and have the developer’s agreement slanted towards better redesign of roads, and better lifestyles, and could that be incorporated into the same premise as trying to use proportionate share to get concurrency.

Director Davis replied, “Yes,” and explained that in all of our projects we are incorporating landscaping and aesthetics improvements along that corridor no matter which project it is. Further, all the proportionate share agreement projects would have input with landscape architect and environmental specialists that advises us on landscaping and aesthetics.

Chairman Wheeler inquired of the timeframe for paving various named streets. Director Davis explained what was complete, what they were currently working on and which ones were under contract.

Mr. Paladin commented on the issue of right-of-way acquisition policy and asked if we were supporting that, since we had already passed it (in Chapter 952) and now staff was using it at this point.

Director Davis replied that it was being implemented even more aggressively than what Mr. Paladin had proposed. He remarked that much of the right-of-way we acquire is not seen because they are on the face of new development Plats. Also, ninety percent (90%) of what Mr. Paladin presented, staff was implementing and the only thing that was probably not implemented was the aggressive eminent domain within thirty (30) days.

The Chairman asked if anyone else wished to speak. Seeing none, he closed the public discussions.

Commissioner Davis was still concerned with traffic counts going through Sebastian versus going through the 6-lane necessary portion of US 1 and whether there were any other alternatives to improving the aesthetic and quality of US 1.

Vice Chair Bowden did not want Indian River Boulevard 6-laned.

Commissioner O'Bryan felt we needed to find a more creative way to make it easier or more conducive to steer some of the traffic onto the under-utilized lanes off US 1. He requested that staff take a good look at how we could incorporate some of the traffic on US 1 to encourage use of Old Dixie Highway. He believed we might need to look at more mixed-use (residential/commercial) zoning to take some trips off the roads. He also believed we have capacity and just needed to do a better job of moving traffic to other roads.

Vice Chair Bowden felt these communities do not want gridlock on the roads and they needed to make wise choices and stick to them.

Commissioner Flescher was thankful for the presentation. He talked about the need for work and the lack of funding and would rather see creativity instead of CRALLS. He also talked about roundabouts and roadway management systems he experienced on some of his travels abroad and the need for us to look at creativity. He agreed with Commissioner Davis that we needed to look at the Comprehensive Plan to see where creativity can take the load off US 1.

Chairman Wheeler agreed that they could look at more ways of utilizing Old Dixie Highway. He asked how we could go about making connectivity with development into an Ordinance.

Director Keating said they could work at that and come back to the Board with some suggestions. Chairman Wheeler presented scenarios of how connectivity is important.

Director Keating suggested looking at this from two perspectives, short term and long term. He outlined three (3) short-term options/actions that could be taken, namely: (1) they could go to CRALLS and there would be a solution but that would not satisfy everyone; (2) they could pursue the 6-lanes, work harder on doing developer's agreements and see if they could get something in place quickly; or (3) not do anything and let concurrency kick in. For the long term

it would be great looking at other alternatives, to study alternative land use scenarios and see what they could do, as well as conduct a detailed corridor analysis looking at Old Dixie and looking at alternative facilities.

Discussion ensued among Board members and staff about the visioning process and what could be done for our County, the feasibility of allowing CRALLS for five (5) years, and other alternatives to be pursued.

Administrator Baird talked about the perception of various entities, which amounts to a lot of the problems we have. He thought it was best for us to continue the way we are going.

Mr. Barkett agreed that what Chairman Wheeler said about CRALLS is exactly how it has been used in other jurisdictions. He also felt it was a temporary situation while further plans were being developed and wanted Administrator Baird to add it to the list to bring back for consideration.

More discussions ensued regarding whether we could impose CRALLS on just one link and not the entire roadway.

It was explained to Vice Chair Bowden that staff was directed to bring this back before the Board for further discussions where Board members could take action.

Chairman Wheeler thought it was a good idea to look at these segments of US 1 as communities and see how we could go from one to the other.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the Chairman declared the Workshop adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

ATTEST:

Jeffrey K. Barton, Clerk

Gary C. Wheeler, Chairman

Minutes Approved: _____

BCC/Alt US1 Workshop/AA/2007Minutes