

## METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

A meeting of the Indian River County (IRC) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was held at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 12, 2008, in the County Administration Building, 1800 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Building B, Room B1-501, Vero Beach, Florida.

Present were: Chairman **Peter O'Bryan**; **Gary Wheeler** (arrived at 10:30 a.m.), **Sandra Bowden**, and **Joe Flescher**, Commissioners, IRC; Council Member **Sal Neglia**, Alternate, City of Sebastian; **Sabin Abell** and **Ken Daige**, Councilmembers, City of Vero Beach; **David Becker**, Councilman (arrived at 10:10 a.m.), Town of Indian River Shores; **Sara Savage**, Councilwoman, Alternate, City of Fellsmere; **Richard Dunlop**, Councilman, Non-voting, Town of Orchid; and **Debbie MacKay**, IRC School Board.

Absent were: Commissioner **Wesley Davis**, IRC; Councilwoman **Susan Adams**, City of Fellsmere; and Council Member **Al Paternoster**, City of Sebastian (all excused).

Also present was IRC staff: **Bob Keating**, Community Development Director; **Chris Mora**, Assistant Director, Public Works; **Phil Matson**, MPO Staff Director; and **Darcy Vasilas**, Commissioner Assistant, District 3.

Others present were: Claudia Dewitt, VMS, Inc.; Joseph DeFronzo, Erdman Anthony; Gregory Kyle, AICP and Eric Kleier, Roadway Design Engineer, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.; Eric Menger, Airport Director, City of Vero Beach; Monte Falls, Public Works Director, City of Vero Beach; Karen Diegl, Executive Director, Senior Resource Association; Herb Whittall, member of MPO Citizens Advisory Committee; and Jim Granse, Interested Citizen.

### Call to Order

Chairman O'Bryan called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m., at which time it was determined a quorum was present.

### Annual Election of Officers

**ON MOTION BY Councilmember Abell, SECONDED BY Commissioner Flescher, the members voted unanimously (8-0) to re-elect Commissioner Peter O'Bryan as the 2008 Chairman of the Metropolitan Planning Organization.**

**ON MOTION BY Commissioner Bowden, SECONDED BY Commissioner Flescher, the members voted unanimously (8-0) to elect School Board member Debbie MacKay as the 2008 Vice Chairman of the Metropolitan Planning Organization.**

Councilman Becker arrived at 10:10 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes of December 12, 2007 (02:11)**

**ON MOTION by Commissioner Bowden, SECONDED by Councilmember Abell, the members voted unanimously (9-0) to approve the minutes of December 12, 2007, as presented.**

**Review of Progress Report and Reimbursement Invoice #2 for the 2007/08 TDLCB Planning Grant (10:03)**

Mr. Phil Matson, IRC MPO Staff Director, referred to his memorandum of February 20, 2008, with attachments, contained in the backup on file in the Commission Office.

**ON MOTION by Commissioner Bowden, SECONDED by Commissioner Flescher, the members voted unanimously (9-0) to approve the Transportation Disadvantaged Planning Grant Progress Report and Reimbursement Invoice #2.**

**Discussion of Aviation Boulevard Extension (US 1 – Indian River Boulevard)**

Mr. Matson outlined his memorandum of February 18, 2008, with attachments, contained in the backup on file in the Commission Office.

Mr. Matson introduced Mr. Gregory Kyle, AICP, representing Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., and general Planning Consultant of the MPO. Mr. Kyle also introduced Mr. Eric Kleier, Roadway Design Engineer.

Mr. Kyle gave a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which is on file in the Commission Office. A summary of this presentation was as follows:

**Phase I** – included the development of four potential alignments for the extension of Aviation Boulevard to the east from U.S. 1 to Indian River Boulevard.

**Phase I Conclusions:**

- Each new alignment presented environmental conflicts and community impacts.
- Conceptual costs for the new alignments range from \$29 to \$69 million
  - Represent substantial portion of entire funding expected for road improvements in the County
- New alignments are not feasible to serve as reliever to Indian River Boulevard due to costs
  - Environmental, social, fiscal
- Long Range Transportation Plan will need to be revisited for this area of the County

**Phase II** – evaluated the three alignment alternatives proposed in “citizen’s report” to determine its:

- Feasibility
- Constructability
- Costs

**Phase II Conclusions:**

- Feasible alignment does not exist for the Aviation Boulevard Extension
  - Alignment 1 – requires taking of 19 residential properties in County Club Estates
  - Alignments 2 and 3 – safety concerns with insufficient design speed for vehicles from Merrill Barber Bridge
- Encourage local connector roads as development occurs in area to reduce congestion on adjacent roadways

Commissioner Bowden stated she did not feel the plan presented was feasible for long term needs.

(18:44) Mr. Monte Falls, Public Works Director, City of Vero Beach, gave a brief update of Department of Transportation (DOT) plans for the intersection at Indian River Boulevard and the Merrill Barber Bridge. He stated DOT would be installing traffic devices at the crest of the bridge and ones at either side of the crest of the bridge over the main canal which would alert DOT when there was a traffic backup. There would then be an advanced cue to the texting system resulting in a flashing light at the head of the bridge indicating drivers should be prepared to stop.

(19:28) Mr. Chris Mora, IRC Assistant Public Works Director, related other improvements with synchronization that would improve capacity on Indian River Boulevard.

(20:49) Councilman Becker inquired about the proposed plan for 6-laning Indian River Boulevard. Mr. Matson responded staff would be looking at any options for relieving traffic, as they were obligated to do under Federal law, in their next Long Range Plan (LRP) update which begins in 2009. He added north of the Merrill Barber Bridge was already in the plan for 6-laning.

(23:56) Councilmember Abell explained the plan DOT was currently working on was extending the right turn lane turning south over the bridge but his concern was the lane was not being extended back as far as it possibly could.

(24:25) Mr. Herb Whittall, member of the MPO Citizens Advisory Committee, related coming off the bridge currently, one must slow down to 25 miles per hour to make a left or right turn and if it could be increased to 30 miles per hour the traffic could flow more smoothly.

Discussion ensued regarding various speed limits which could be used and the repercussions of some of those.

(27:51) Councilman Dunlop asked about the possibility of 6-laning Indian River Boulevard south of the bridge to 17<sup>th</sup> Street to perhaps relieve some of the traffic. Mr. Matson responded that plan was on the table for the next LRP update beginning in 2009.

**ON MOTION BY Mrs. MacKay, SECONDED BY Councilwoman Savage, to ask staff to look at widening Indian River Boulevard south of the Merrill Barber Bridge to 17<sup>th</sup> Street in conjunction with the Royal Palm Pointe improvements and traffic light synchronization.**

**UNDER DISCUSSION**, Councilmember Abell recommended also asking staff to look into widening the bridge that was causing the bottleneck south of the Merrill Barber Bridge. He was also concerned that with the options presented, stating those that would require acquiring rights-of-way, should be planned for now.

Commissioner Bowden suggested lengthening the left turn lane going north from Indian River Boulevard onto 37<sup>th</sup> Street to decrease the backup on Indian River Boulevard. She also wished to express her displeasure that the County was paying for two links of S.R. 60 near Interstate 95 to be paved for the state and then would also be paying for the 6-laning of Indian River Boulevard.

Commissioner Wheeler clarified that the County was lending the money interest free to the state for paving the two links of S.R. 60.

Councilmember Daige felt all other alternatives should be explored before any road in the county was 6-laned. He felt it would be more productive to look at the current improvements being done after DOT finishes before making anymore decisions.

(40:35) Mr. Whittall expressed if a grocery store was built on the island the traffic would decrease dramatically.

(43:00)

**CHAIRMAN O'BRYAN RESTATED THE MOTION as asking staff to compile preliminary data looking at 3-laning southbound only Indian River Boulevard from Merrill Barber Bridge south to 17<sup>th</sup> Street. The members voted (4-6), thus the motion failed. Chairman O'Bryan, Mrs. MacKay, Councilwoman Savage, and Commissioner Wheeler voted in favor of the motion.**

(49:19)

**ON MOTION BY Commissioner Bowden, SECONDED BY Commissioner Flescher, the members voted unanimously (10-0) to approve staff recommendation of allowing staff to coordinate with local stakeholders on a future roadway alignment.**

Discussion was held regarding how the improvements would be paid for. Mr. Matson related most improvements would be paid for by developers as a condition for project approval.

**Letter from Pinellas County MPO Chairman** (57:51)

Mr. Matson reviewed the letter received by the Pinellas County MPO Chairman, Mr. Frank Hibbard citing statistics on Florida's pedestrian fatality problem. The letter urged support for several proposed bills pending in the state legislature (House Bill 89, Senate Bill 154) establishing that it was the responsibility of the driver to stop at all marked pedestrian crossings when pedestrians were present.

Mr. Matson explained the item was informational only, no action was required.

**ON MOTION BY Councilmember Daige, SECONDED BY Councilmember Abell, the members voted unanimously (10-0) to recommend Chairman O'Bryan write a letter of support for House Bill 89 and Senate Bill 154.**

**Quarterly Status Report of MPO Staff Activities**

Mr. Matson reviewed the Quarterly Status Report for October 1, 2007 thru December 31, 2007 included in the agenda packet and on file in the Commission Office.

**Status Report of Other MPO Advisory Committees**

Mr. Matson reviewed his Status Report included in the agenda packet and on file in the Commission Office.

Chairman O'Bryan wondered if the Status Report should be moved up on the agendas before dealing with the new issues. Mr. Matson agreed he would move it up to one of the first items dealt with after the approval of minutes.

### **Other Business**

There was none.

### **Comments From the Public**

There was none.

### **Next Meeting**

Mr. Matson announced the next meeting scheduled for April 9, 2008 would begin at 10:30 a.m. instead of 10:00 a.m.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:09 a.m.