



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Marion County Commission Auditorium
601 SE 25th Avenue, Ocala, FL 34471

November 24, 2015

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

Members Present:

Commissioner Earl Arnett, Chairman
Commissioner Kathy Bryant
Councilwoman Penny Fleeger
Councilman James Hilty, Sr.
Commissioner Stan McClain
Commissioner David Moore
Commissioner Carl Zalak

Members Not Present:

Commissioner Michael Goldman
Mayor Kent Guinn
Councilman Brent Malever
Councilman John McLeod
Councilwoman Mary Sue Rich

Others Present:

Greg Slay, TPO Director
John Voges, TPO Staff
Kayleen Hamilton, TPO Staff
Kellie Smith, FDOT
Mounir Bouyounes, Marion County Administration
Bruce Phillips, City of Belleview Public Works
Kevin Smith, Marion County Planning
Wally Blain, Tindale-Oliver and Associates
Darren Park, City of Ocala Public Works
Oscar Tovar, City of Ocala Engineering
Tracy Straub, Marion County Engineering
Tony Chau, City of Ocala Traffic Engineering

Others Present (continued):

Eddie Esch, City of Dunnellon Administration
Tamara Fleischhaker, Ocala Chamber and Economic Partnership
Darlene Weesner, Shady Greenway Conservation Alliance
Michelle Shearer, Shady Greenway Conservation Alliance
Doug Shearer
John Rudnianyn
Joe Hanratty

Item 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Arnett called the public hearing to order at 5:16 PM. Secretary Kayleen Hamilton called the roll of members. A quorum was present.

Item 2. Proof of Publication

Secretary Kayleen Hamilton stated the meeting was posted on the Marion County, Ocala, and Dunnellon websites and on the TPO website and Facebook page.

Item 3. Year 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan

Mr. Slay introduced the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The comment period on the final draft of the LRTP had opened in September, and there had been no substantial changes to the plan since its presentation to the board at that time. Mr. Slay advised that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) had recommended approval of the plan as presented while the Citizens Advisory Committee recommended taking the SW 95th Street interchange out of the cost feasible plan.

Mr. Wally Blain from Tindale Oliver and Associates provided an overview of the LRTP schedule. Phase one had been a vision and big picture look with the board, committees, in grassroots meetings, and with stakeholders. Informational presentations had also taken place, and Mr. Blain reported that over 300 people had been involved in setting the framework for the plan. A vision statement for the plan had been developed along with goals and objectives to support the vision.

The LRTP included a needs assessment. Mr. Blain explained that there were many projects, including highway, transit, and trail needs, that had been identified. Mr. Blain reviewed available revenue from federal and state funding sources. Work had also been done to determine estimated fuel and impact fee revenues. A local option sales tax had also been discussed but was not included as part of the cost feasible plan. With the needs assessment and the available revenues, the cost feasible plan was developed.

The cost feasible plan included highway projects. Local construction projects were listed by impact fee district. Mr. Blain noted that the CAC had recommended removing the SW

95th Street interchange from the cost feasible plan. Gas tax revenue was all allocation to operations and maintenance projects. Transit projects were included in the cost feasible plan, and the cost feasible bicycle/pedestrian projects included the TPO's trail priorities.

Mr. Blain advised that a telephone town hall meeting had taken place during which about 100 people stayed on the phone through the entire call. Polling questions had been asked during the call. About 96% of the respondents reported that this was their first time participating in LRTP activities. Questions were received from twenty-one people, including queries about the LRTP, road maintenance, sidewalks, safety, and transit. Public comment was also taken during community meetings and a project website.

The TAC was recommending approval of the LRTP as presented. The CAC recommended adoption of the cost feasible plan with the SW 95th Street interchange.

rudnianyn - request that 95th st interchange included in cost feasible plan. greatest amount of growth in mc is in s part of county. saw tremendous amount of impact from 42nd/31st flyover from sss to sr 200. 484 and 200 interchanges close to being congested. going to have to have interchange there. almost all row is in place. appreciate 49th, will take traffic off 27. will need 95th.

Ms. Darlene Weesner of 655 SW 80th Street, Ocala, stated that the Shady Historic and Scenic Trails Association (SHASTA) had been following transportation and comprehensive plans for the last thirty years. Ms. Weesner provided copies of public comment forms for the LRTP. Ms. Weesner stated that the SW 95th Street interchange must never happen and needed to be removed from the plan. Ms. Weesner said she was also surprised to see an eight-lane configuration for I-75 through Ocala, commenting that she thought Florida wasn't going to do any more eight-lane highways. Ms. Weesner thought that some of the plan was not based on real future scenarios and added that SHASTA had consistently supported the protection of natural resources and opposed projects that would create urban sprawl in carst and recharge areas. Ms. Weesner stated that the springs were already stressed and that every road was a waterway to the aquifer. Ms. Weesner said that trails were not so much of a problem. Ms. Weesner urged the board to remove the SW 95th Street interchange and to adjust the trails through the Greenway to four- to six-foot trails.

Ms. Michelle Shearer of 2301 SE 85th Street, Ocala, said that the CAC was recommended removal of the SW 95th Street interchange because when the plan development had started, they were told that, because of predicted growth, they needed to decide what they wanted to save. Ms. Shearer commented that the State had said that the interchange justification report was not acceptable and that I-75 was not for local traffic. Ms. Shearer said that people wanting to get out of Silver Springs Shores were closer to US 301 than SE 95th Street and that Silver Springs Shores was growing so that people did not need to go into town as often. Ms. Shearer added that the SW 95th Street interchange needed to be removed because of schools and that four-laning of CR 475A needed to be removed, as well. Ms. Shearer said she had participated in the telephone town hall meeting and did not hear anyone say that they wanted the SW 95th Street interchange. Ms. Shearer also mentioned that the local equestrians would like as much as possible that the paved trails intersect where there are already trail intersections.

Mr. Zalak made a motion to approve the TAC recommendation of the Long Range Transportation Plan. Mr. McClain seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Slay thanked TPO staff and Tindale-Oliver and Associates for their work on the LRTP.

Item 4. Public Comment

There was no further public comment.

Item 10. Adjournment

Chairman Arnett adjourned the hearing at 5:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Kayleen Hamilton, TPO Administrative Assistant