



Project Advisory Group Meeting No. 7

Date: Thursday, August 31, 2017
 Time: 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 Location: Miami Dade College InterAmerican Campus
 627 SW 27th Avenue
 Miami, Florida 33135
 Attendees: See sign-in sheets at the end of this document

Eileen LaSeur, Public Involvement Coordinator, Quest Corporation of America, acted as moderator and opened the meeting. Ms. LaSeur thanked the attendees for coming and reviewed the meeting handouts. A questions and answers document was developed with comments received at the June 22, 2017 Project Advisory Group (PAG) meeting. Additional handouts included illustrations and descriptions of the proposed alternatives and a comparative evaluation matrix that is being used to evaluate the alternatives. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the matrix.

Ms. LaSeur explained that the project team would like to have input from everyone and asked that the PAG members be considerate to allow everyone a chance to speak. It was explained that Isabel Gonzales would be recording the discussion to aid her in preparing the meeting minutes. No one had objections to the recording. The meeting was then turned over to Consultant Project Manager Vilma Croft, from HNTB.

Vilma Croft: Thank you Eileen. We have a new alternative, Alternative No. 5, and we have prepared a draft newsletter. We felt this was a good exhibit to have as you look at the matrix. The Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) passed a resolution to look at the reverse-flow alternative on SW 7th Street and SW 8th Street. I don't know if you had an opportunity to look at the matrix but, as you can see, the "No Build" is always considered the baseline as we compare all alternatives. Next to that is the Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSM&O) alternative, and then all of the build alternatives.



The criteria is shown along the left-hand side of the matrix. The first criteria on the table is safety, which is always a priority for the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and for this project. Next is traffic operations, which includes the multimodal level of service for all modes of transportation: pedestrians, bicycles, vehicles and transit. The next page shows the project costs which includes design, construction, right of way and utilities. The next group is environment, which includes social, cultural, natural and physical environment. To rank the alternatives, we take safety as an example and look at the TSM&O alternative to determine if is safer than the "No Build" alternative. We will do that with each criteria for each alternative.

Are there any questions, or would you prefer that I go over each one, or would you rather just look at the matrix?

Question: What is the purpose of today's meeting?

Ms. Croft: It's to review the matrix.

Question: Do you want our feedback on these options?

Ms. Croft: Yes.

Question: Is there an alternative that only applies, for example, to SW 8th Street but not to SW 7th Street?



Ms. Croft: All of the alternatives apply both to SW 8th Street and SW 7th Street. If you look at the newsletter, you'll see the graphics.

Comment: I understand that, but what I've been saying is that sometimes you might get more businesses on board if you apply one option to SW 7th Street and not necessarily the same option to SW 8th Street.

Ms. Croft: Some of the alternatives are a little different. For example, Alternative 3A is different on SW 7th Street than it is on SW 8th Street. On SW 8th Street there is a shared travel and parking lane, whereas on SW 7th Street we have the three lanes.

Comment: One of the things I've been saying is to have an alternative where it does not apply to both streets equally. There should be an alternative that applies only to 8th Street or to 7th Street, but does not apply to the other. Then these would not be all of the alternatives. More alternatives would be available. That concerns me very much because I have been saying this from the beginning: that what applies to SW 8th Street does not necessarily apply to SW 7th Street and vice versa. SW 7th Street is mainly residential and SW 8th Street is mainly commercial. Is there going to be an alternative for that?

Ms. Croft: We are working with the FDOT to add this alternative to the evaluation.

Question: Is that something that can be done?

Ms. Croft: We will discuss it with the FDOT.

Comment: Okay, thank you.

Ms. Croft: We added Alternative 5, which considers a reverse flow, where SW 8th Street would be used for the westbound traffic and SW 7th Street would be used for the eastbound traffic.

Comment: Can you explain why we lose parking on Alternatives 2, 2A and 3A? Is that correct? Are those the only alternatives where you lose parking?

Ms. Croft: In 3A there's a shared travel and parking lane, so it would only impact the parking during peak hours. Alternatives 2 and 2A are two-way options, parking is impacted in order to provide left turn lanes at the intersections.

Comment: You are saying that Alternative 3A only loses parking during peak hours?

Ms. Croft: Yes - 50% of the parking during morning peak hours.

Comment: Then alternatives 2 and 2A indicate losing 60% of the parking during peak hours. Is that correct? And you are saying in all the other alternatives there's no parking lost?

Ms. Croft: Alternatives 2 and 2A impact 60% of the parking at all times to create a left turn lane at intersections.



Comment: I'm just a bit concerned. You mention historic sites in some districts, but I'm concerned with the area between 17th and 13th where there is heavy tourism and tour buses. It throws off the idea of peak hours because, right now, those peak hours are happening all the time, throughout the entire day. It concerns me that throughout the whole section it's being looked at equally without looking at tourism and the impact tour buses have in this area.

Ms. Croft: In terms of tour bus impacts, are you referring to parking?

Comment: The fact that you can have seven or eight tour buses or more, at any given time, trying to park and bringing over a million tourists.

Ms. Croft: It's a shared parking and travel lane, and I understand that there are buses throughout the day. It's during the peak hours where you would need the three lanes of traffic.

Comment: People are de-boarding from those buses. It's not an area just for residents any longer. We have visitors coming in throughout the entire day. We have definite peak hours for tourists, such as 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. and, on the weekends, all during the day on Saturday. Those are different ideas of peak hours that relate to tourism. I am not seeing enough acknowledgement of the fact that this is the most visited spot in the City of Miami.

Question: I don't see here what the peak hour is right now. What times were the peak hours that were considered for this?

**Carlos Alba
 HNTB**

I believe it is from 7:45 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. and from 4:45 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.

Ms. Croft: The peak hour is based on the traffic analysis. It hasn't been defined yet as to what time would be best to use for parking in the shared parking and travel lane. One consideration is the peak hour and another would be an agreement with the city. How it would be enforced is a big part of the decision. It might be that the peak hour is 7:45 a.m. to 8:45 a.m., but you have to allow some time for enforcement, and having to turn the lane from one use to the other.

Comment: Right now, there are about seven tour bus stops. They all have to be on the same side of the street as the bike lane, otherwise people can't de-board safely. When you have a coach you have to be on the south side of the street, so this means that unless we have other ways to accommodate tour buses, if a tour bus happens to come in at the same time that a bike comes in how does it work? Does the bike go around the tour bus? We don't seem to have any coherent plan for the tour buses. It is the number one generator of revenue for our businesses, and I think there has to be some thoughtfulness with these bus stops. You can't make them disappear.

Comment: I actually have a solution, which is being used by other communities in South Florida with tour buses. The buses drop people off and then they come back in 30 minutes or an hour. The people re-board and the buses are parked at satellite locations. Whether that's under I-95 or wherever you have a satellite location, I don't know. It works in other places, and it could work in Little Havana.

Comment: The buses can come in at any time, and even if it's only for 10 minutes or 30 minutes, where are they going to go if there is a bike lane that has been set aside on the safe side of the street?

Comment: You'll find that they will comply and run on time. Buses run on time schedules.

Comment: Yes but you still have the bicycles that are coming in.

Comment: When I look at Alternative 3A, there is a bike lane where the tour buses have to stop. The tour buses would be blocking the bike lane. Is that what you're referring to? It cannot happen. Both of them cannot be in the same place at the same time. So, if we put the bike lane in, the tour buses cannot stop.

Ms. Croft: The buses are currently stopping in designated no parking spaces. It's not good that the tour buses would take up part of the bicycle lane, however, it would be safer. The buses right now stop on the parking lane that is 7 feet wide and actually block part of the travel lane. It's not ideal but it's better that the bus take part of the buffer bicycle lane than part of the travel lane.

Comment: There are two alternatives that remove the parking all the time. Does anyone agree with that option? Alternatives 2 and 2A remove 60% of the parking all the time. I haven't heard anyone here support either of those options, so I think we can strike those out, unless someone actually supports them.

Several in Unison: No, no.

Question: Do we actually need a bike lane on SW 8th Street?

Comment: Although it's actually outside of the scope of this project, but have you considered bike lanes on SW 6th Street?

Comment: Not dedicated bike lanes, just bike lanes that have the right of way.

Question: Is that outside of the scope of this project?

Ms. Croft: SW 6th Street is a City of Miami Street.

Comment: To make it simpler, I think there are two alternatives that no one supports. Is that right?

Ms. Croft: Some that support those alternatives might not be here today.

Comment: Can we make a note that no one here today supports it?



Comment: I would like to know if anyone else supports adding another alternative where SW 8th Street has one alternative and SW 7th Street another, for example.

Comment: I'm wondering, not to add more to the matrix, but if the matrix could look at a specific alternative on SW 8th Street and a specific alternative on SW 7th Street. Because, if I'm not mistaken, Alternative 4 keeps SW 8th Street the way it is. So it's picking and choosing whether Alternative 4 would be good for SW 8th Street and another alternative would be better for SW 7th Street.

Comment: I think many of us would agree that SW 7th Street might need a buffer between the sidewalk and the road so that we won't have flying pedestrians.

Comment: There are some alternatives that have some improvements on SW 8th Street and don't have any on SW 7th Street.

Question: Does anyone oppose an alternative where you have a different application for SW 7th Street than you do for SW 8th Street?

Question: At what point do we start removing alternatives? I think this is excellent, and we will work on the matrix, but at what point do we start striking out alternatives?

Ms. Wang: We discussed these alternatives at the last meeting, and this group concurred on moving these alternatives forward for the analysis. .

Comment: Right. We have further analysis today and thank you for this analysis. It makes it very easy to see when you remove 60% of parking, so excellent job on your part. But now that we are here, can we start removing alternatives? I mean if the will of the advisory group is to remove some of the alternatives based on your excellent work. . .

Ms. Croft: We need to take all the alternatives through the analysis.

Question: Is there any way we can agree to add one alternative?

Ms. Croft: Which alternative would that be?

Comment: The one where SW 7th Street and SW 8th Street can be treated differently.

Ms. Croft: How many lanes would you have on SW 8th Street?

Comment: Three.

Ms. Croft: So - three lanes on SW 8th Street and how many on SW 7th Street?

Comment: Two travel lanes plus a bike lane.

Comment: Alternative 3 on SW 7th Street and Alternative 4 on SW 8th Street.

Bruno Barreiro, Miami Dade Commissioner

Let me say this. Like all of you, we've been on this street and we drive it on a daily basis. I happen to drive it not only from 27th to 4th, but also from 4th down to Brickell Key. We are looking at the entire corridor. I ask you, not today, but to look at Alternative 5. With Alternative 5, there is an issue of capacity. You know I would love to go down to one lane each way or one lane two ways, but, realistically, we live in a high density community and this area is going to continue to grow. We need capacity to move the traffic along. A lot of the merchants around here for years have been telling me, "You know we need development, and we need our businesses to be maintained, and to keep growing, and we need 12 hours of substantial customer activity." But, I look around countywide, and I look at the areas that succeed. They channel the traffic to certain areas and those areas have patronage. You drive through and you stop and you shop and so forth.

Unfortunately, when you go to work, most of the time you are concentrating on getting to work. You might stop once in a while, but most of the time you're thinking of getting to work. In the afternoon, when you leave work is when you feel you can stop for happy hour, or you can pick up your dry cleaning, or you decide to do some shopping somewhere, and you basically patronize a store or a restaurant or whatever. Now, the way I see these two roads is that you're going home, and on SW 7th Street there's no commerce. On your way to work in the morning then you're driving through SW 8th Street, and you have to go to work, you might be late if you stop for something. Alternative 5 reverses that. People from Brickell and downtown would flow through SW 8th Street going west and patronize the shops, hopefully.

Many: We don't know that for sure.

Mr. Barreiro: We know right now for sure they will not patronize anything when they're on SW 7th Street. So, seriously consider this. That's on Little Havana, I-95 to 27th Avenue, from I-95 to Brickell, I don't see any representatives from Brickell or the downtown area here.

Comments: They never come to these meetings.

Mr. Barreiro: All right. Everyone is driving from Brickell Avenue, from Bayshore Drive, from Brickell Key, from different places trying to get to SW 7th Street to turn left and go westbound, either to get on I-95 or to pass I-95 and go west. When the bridge goes up on Brickell Avenue, it backs up. Second of all, when people do get to SW 7th Street and they are going west to get to I-95, on 3rd Avenue, they have to make a left, cross SW 8th Street to then get on the ramp to go northbound. If they are going westbound, they have to go underneath and make that famous left turn. There are many ways to look at this, but this is not only about one block. This is about the entire corridor.

Comment: I just want to say that I appreciate the Commissioner's comments, because I think something that drastic could be cool. My concern is that we have looked at that scenario previously. There is some room to talk about less friction coming into I-95. I would also like to hear from the business owners. How does George feel about the westbound traffic coming through the corridor? My concern as a neighbor is that, yes, I would love to have more people be able to come and park and continue having this as a destination, but does that mean that there will be more cars? I mean, it's more dangerous, and I've always thought about something that is more pedestrian friendly so I get concerned about that. I was also wondering if on SW 7th Street we could look at having parking lanes since rush hour on both thoroughfares is one part of the day, either the morning or the evening. I know that there are probably some scenarios that have that option, such as Alternative No. 3, I guess.

Comment: Commissioner, if I may, we've talked about Alternative 5 before, and one of the problems that we have discussed in dealing with the FDOT, is that if you reverse it, all the signs have to change and it is a nightmare. With all due respect, I know you work for the county. I just had work done in July, in front of my business, in an area where the sidewalk is half the size of the table for this sidewalk. It took them two weeks in front of my store: lowering my revenue, asking pedestrians to walk on the street, creating a backup with traffic. Now, imagine that scenario on a wider scale where you have to change everything. The impact to the businesses would be extremely detrimental. Any type of major work on SW 8th Street, I'll tell you right now, is what's happening on Flagler Street. It's going to be detrimental to business and, when I say businesses, it's personal. There are people that work in these businesses. They are affected and that's what I am trying to avoid.

Mr. Barreiro: Any construction or alternative here, whether it's 3 or 5 or whichever, that's a whole separate issue. I hope the FDOT has learned from Flagler Street and 1st Street. They have to do the work in very, very small segments. That's a whole separate issue. Now the issue is: what will be the best alternative for you. I live the construction every day, and it's a nightmare, but let's think about the long-term benefits more than the immediate benefits for the corridor.

Comment: I don't know you very well, I am sorry. I've seen you, but I don't know you personally. Let me say that if this work is being done in October, the long-term is we're done, that's it. And that's what I'm talking about. I mean if it's done during lunch time it will kill some businesses. Look how long construction takes with just a little sidewalk.

Comment: When you work in small increments, you can also time it so that you don't work from the period of October to January in front of your store, or whatever your time is.

Comment: In looking at this, maybe we should think about changing the name of SW 8th Street and call it I-95. Because that is what's going to happen. With all due respect to Brickell, they had no consideration for the traffic flow when they decided to have their nice, wide beautiful sidewalks and their green area in the middle and didn't worry about the rest of the area. Now do we have to turn SW 8th Street into I-95 to accommodate the traffic flow from Brickell? I'm sorry, but we live in Little Havana.

Mr. Barreiro: Under no circumstances is this taking or adding more traffic. The problem is that there is traffic flowing. Under no circumstance would I support one lane, but I may consider two lanes. Maybe adding a bike lane, maintaining parking and all that. I'm not here to benefit the level of flow, but the people are flying through SW 8th Street right now, just coming in.

Comment: We are trying to reduce the timing for the traffic lights. You just ignore us. We've been sitting here for months, talking about a lot of things. Now you show up and want to make your point. It's not fair.

Comment: A few meetings ago the consensus was that this project was about creating a more efficient driveway to and out of Brickell. It was obvious what was going on by what we saw. It could be that the people from Brickell don't bother to come because it doesn't matter what the PAG does. At the end of the day, it's about creating a more efficient roadway. However, as you know, when we had the Secretary of the FDOT here, along with Senator Rodriguez, we were assured that this was about pedestrian safety and this was about preserving the neighborhood and not dealing with the fact that the City of Miami allowed Brickell to become overbuilt beyond capacity to service them. What the answer is here, is just telling the businesses on Brickell that they're going to need to start an hour later or end an hour later for the rush hour. It's unfair to create a certitude on SW 8th Street or SW 7th Street for the benefit of Brickell just so people can get to work faster.

Comment: Another thing to consider is that people might come for happy hour now and then, but also people are going to be rushing to get home. We already have many pedestrian deaths on Flagler Street and on SW 8th Street and SW 7th Street. We've learned that lesson. We don't want to repeat that lesson.

Comment: Not only that, what's going to happen here with the bottleneck? If you have SW 8th Street with three lanes going west then everybody has to make a left on 27th and make a right on SW 7th. It does not make sense whatsoever.

Comment: Now we have another alternative. We have 5 now because somebody wanted 5, but it wasn't us.

Comment: I would like to go back to Fausto's point. Are we at a point where we are eliminating alternatives so that we can narrow this down to what we would like to see? Was that the goal here?

Ms. Croft: The goal here was to go through the matrix and the criteria.

Comment: What's the difference if we go through this if there is no support for certain alternatives?

Ms. Croft: We have some support for the two-way alternatives.

Comment: Today's purpose should be to evaluate the alternatives. If there's no support for an alternative, it should be eliminated.



Comment: I have to concede that the two-way alternative was pushed in and did not make it originally. We did look at it, so, yes, I do have to agree with you on that. Does anyone like the two-way alternative?

Comment: I like the two-way alternative. I only see one alternative that has a bus lane. If you want to deal with citywide, countywide issues on traffic flow, transit is a must. Right now, none but one of these gives us transit. You can't put a train down SW 8th Street, but if you designate a bus lane, it's going to move the flow better and less cars are going to come into Brickell and everywhere else in downtown. We still don't have the mentality that we want to get on a bus or get on a train, or we want to ride to work when many other major cities are doing it, and it's working for them.

It's not only good for business, it's an investment that cities are making, and people are moving to those cities because transit is available. Right now, we don't have any of this, and I think that's an issue. I'm a bus driver. I drive school buses all over Miami, downtown, Little Havana, and it is gridlock everywhere. There are construction projects within one mile of each other that have the city by the neck. You cannot move a city and make it grow and make great investments in that city if you have this problem of traffic.

Question: Can you do it on Alternative No. 4?

Comment: First, let me say I support the transit lane, because if you want to support Little Havana to have a future as an affordable neighborhood, you need to have more transit. I personally would support an alternative like No. 4 with a transit lane.

Comment: Why would you need lanes if you don't have buses?

Comment: Excuse me, Brenda. We do have transit. We have buses from 6 in the morning that run all day.

Comment: If we want to look at the future of Little Havana, we need to look at it densifying, but keeping it affordable, and for that we need transit.

Comment: I would also add that we need to look at our younger generation. They're using Uber, and we are going to keep seeing this trend. The cost of owning a car and car insurance in Miami or South Florida is horrific, not to mention increased traffic. People are going to say, "I just don't want a car." They might prefer using the bus or walking. I think we have to look at the trends happening nationally.

Ms. Croft: From what I understand, the Uber trend is less favorable for the bus. If you use Uber, you may have double the number of trips. If someone dropped you off and are coming back to pick you up the one trip in your car is actually now two trips.

Comment: One thing I wanted to mention about transit. I think 1st Street downtown just created a complete street that has transit and bike lane, and you see more traffic. But when you think about it, because it is transit, you're moving a lot more bodies through that corridor than if it was just cars. That's just the reality. If you have buses in a corridor, then you are moving more bodies than if it was just an individual car. You have the bus stops and you are moving those bodies but you have to consider more crosswalks because you have all this traffic and this makes it safer.

Comment: People are using Uber more also because our system is not working. Our system hasn't been updated; it's very antiquated. The taxi system hasn't been updated and neither has the transit system. It takes a bus the same time to get from downtown Miami to Aventura, 1 hour and 15 minutes, because there is no designated bus lane. But, at the same time, from Dadeland Mall to Southland Mall takes 40 minutes, because there is a designated bus lane. That's a lane where buses don't have to deal with the cars.

Ms. Croft: Going back to the matrix. You know this is a PAG meeting, and you all wanted to see the criteria and how the alternatives were going to be evaluated and chosen. We are not going to choose an alternative today. All of these alternatives are going to go through the same evaluation: traffic analysis, engineering, environmental, etc.

Question: How about safety issues?

Comment: I would just like to address something that I think is very important. If you remove a lane, you're are going to create a bottleneck. I keep saying this, but if we remove a lane to create a designated bus lane, we will create a bottleneck on SW 8th Street and SW 7th Street.

Comment: I thought the same thing, but I noticed something when I took my son to his piano lesson near the Home Depot. I noticed there are two lanes west of 27th Avenue. Regarding your idea about adding a transit lane, you're not technically losing a lane of transit if you're heading eastbound if you keep on SW 8th Street going east. Maybe we can consider turning it into three lanes at SW 8th Street as it is coming in. This might change the bottleneck from 27th Avenue east. Just a thought.

Ms. Wang: I would like to say thank you very much for all your comments. I understand that you are all passionate about this project, and we really appreciate that. All of your comments are being noted, and we will take them back to the FDOT District 4 office. But understand that we need to move this process forward because public involvement is just one of the components. Keep

in mind we still have the engineering analysis and the environmental analysis. We understand your concerns in different areas. I know we all have different comments and feedback. We hear that, and we are here taking notes as well. Today is not the time to make a final decision or to choose any of the alternatives. We will provide viable alternatives, and you can review them, you can take them back to your community and discuss them and get their feedback. That input can help the team develop the analysis further.

On the agenda, in the last item we have a due date for those comments to be received by September 15, 2017. You can either send comments to me or to Ms. Croft. In the newsletter handout there is contact information as well as the web page address. Comments will come to me from the web page. Please keep in mind that this is not a decision-making point in the study process.

Comment: Right now, at this moment, I refuse to put my neighborhood in the situation that Flagler Street and 1st Street are in. Absolutely not. I would rather it stay how it is than have to deal with that. I don't know if anyone else feels like that.

Ms. LaSeur: We'd like you to submit your comments and I've written down everything you've said tonight on a flip chart up front. I hope you are watching what I'm writing down. See if I've missed anything. If you have concerns that you would like to have documented, please write them down and send them in or email them to me.

Comment: What I'm saying is that right now, all that we are asking is if we can have some considerations, or if they can help us eliminate some, and you're telling us no.

Ms. LaSeur: The advisory group is not a decision-making group. We are going to have public meetings. At the next public meeting we will try to get input from everybody.

Comment: I apologize for interrupting you, but a common sense approach to this problem would be that if there's anybody at the table that would like to speak that has not had an opportunity yet, let's set aside 10 minutes, let's listen to those people, and then we will see.

Comment: And the reason people feel like this is because everybody knows that this is just a way of creating a more efficient roadway in and out of downtown.

Ms. LaSeur: That is not the purpose of this project at all.

Mr. Barreiro: You know, I realize that the default thinking is that Brickell does not care; that the only thing they care about is the benefit to their area, and that is not the case at all. As a commissioner in the area, let me tell you that no one on Brickell wants to even consider Alternative 5. So this is not like Brickell is wagging the dog and we are just the stepchildren. That's not the way it is. I can tell you that in speaking to other representatives, in every meeting that we have had, we are trying to make sure that Little Havana in this process is the first and foremost decision-maker. If you look at the make up inside this place, it's mostly Little Havana.

Comment: But if you are going to be considering all these alternatives, if we eliminate some of the ones that mostly everybody is against, isn't it easier to digest less options than all those you have here?

Ms. LaSeur: That's going to be discussed with all the input we are getting from you tonight. What is the main point that you wanted to make?

Comment: My main point is that we don't want. . .in two weeks you cannot organize the community and have a meeting in two weeks when we don't even understand this right now.

Ms. LaSeur: We are not going to have the public meeting in two weeks. . .

Comment: No, I know. But you just told us to go to the community and get feedback. You can't organize that in two weeks.

Comment: Plus the public is totally in the dark. They haven't been going to these meetings. They're just going to be bombarded in that one meeting, and they're not going to know what the heck is going on.

Comment: Taking into consideration what people have said on this side. If there is a deep analysis for the seven options we have right here, and we are getting the material the day before we are to discuss them, maybe if we were able to limit them to four, that might allow for the material to get to us sooner. It would allow us to spend more time researching those four options. It sounds like having us eliminate some options may be beneficial not only to FDOT, but also to the people that are putting work into the matrix. I'm just wondering why it isn't an option to eliminate some of the alternatives that we don't want. Then you wouldn't even have to worry about analyzing the others.

Comment: Because there are people that still want those other options.

Ms. Croft: Some of the concerns the FDOT has is that if you eliminate options in the beginning, then you start eliminating alternatives that have not gone through the whole process. That is the reason we are taking all of these alternatives through the process.

Comment: But a lot of you don't live or drive in Little Havana every day.

Ms. Croft: You'll have all the engineering information, you'll have all the environmental information. In January when we have the Alternatives Public Workshop where everyone in the corridor will be invited, then everyone that works in the area and lives in the area will have the opportunity to make comments.

Comment: I've heard a lot of people say Alternative 4 plus transit. You know that it would be a nice option, but if that is not one of the named alternatives here, then would that be a possibility in the future? Or does that need to be a set alternative before you start your analysis? Because it sounds like a lot of people would consider that before they consider one of the two-way alternatives. My concern is that we don't keep anything in that does not get analyzed later.

Ms. Croft: In terms of the analysis, that would be similar to Alternative 3. Alternative 3 has two travel lanes plus bike lanes. When we do the traffic analysis, which is one of the first things that we do, then that would be a similar alternative.

Comment: In that case, could we change one bike lane into a traffic lane?

Ms. Croft: Instead of a bike lane it could be a transit lane.

Comment: I apologize because maybe you touched upon this, and I got here late. But when we started with this, one of the big drivers of this whole project was to have this two-way traffic, make the sidewalks bigger so that we can have more pedestrian traffic. The neighborhood people can come, and we can have these outdoor cafes and all this. And that was really the big push at the beginning. But today, all I'm hearing is let's have a bus lane, and everyone is forgetting that other aspect. I feel that just among us, the group, we are confused. And really if it was up to me, I would keep it the way it is, because I'm scared of what we don't know.

We can keep throwing back to them, and they have provided us with this (the matrix and evaluation criteria), which is what we complained about and what we wanted. I haven't had a chance to read it, so I am unprepared, but we have this because we kept asking about the potential issues if we do one thing or the other, and we were unsure ourselves about the impact to our businesses and on our neighborhoods and just everything. So, they gave us what we asked for, but now what I see is confusion among ourselves, and now we are shifting gears completely. So I'm kind of at a loss. I'm not sure we know where we want to go.

Question: What's the timeframe of when you are going to start these projects?

Ms. Croft: In terms of construction?

Question: Yes.

Ms. Croft: Right now the FDOT is conducting the study. Once a recommended alternative and then a preferred alternative have been selected then. . .

Comment: Could you just give us a general timeframe?

Comment: How about finishing what you've already started.

Ms. Wang: Let me explain so you understand. This is a study. That means we don't have anything to design. So we are here trying to move this forward, trying to come up with a preferred alternative so that we can move to design. At this time we have nothing to move forward on. We are just at the very beginning of the study.

Comment: This is only my first meeting, and I'm very frustrated with Flagler Street and 1st Street, 12th Avenue and that whole area. So teach me, show me what does this process look like, and are we going to be done with that other stuff before we even start breaking ground on these alternatives for SW 7th Street or SW 8th Street? What is happening is that businesses are suffering, especially on Flagler Street, so why are we even contemplating or talking about starting another project, and starting something new if we haven't even finished another project? So teach me, because I don't even know how this works.

Ms. Croft: You have my contact information, if you want to talk to me directly. Everyone else that has been coming to these meetings and I don't really want to take their time to go over this information now. But in a nutshell, it is a Project Development and Environment Study, so we develop alternatives to address the purpose and need of the project. These are the alternatives. We have one that we call no action, there's one that contains minor operational improvements and then we have build alternatives. We analyze all the alternatives for engineering and environmental impacts and gather public input. At the end of the study, we select a recommended alternative that will go to a public hearing. After the public hearing, a preferred alternative is selected. A safety analysis is part of the study.

Mr. Barreiro: In the best scenario, the study would be finished at the end of 2018. After that, it would need to get added into the work plan for the funding and design. That would take another year or two.

Ms. Croft: Right, that needs to happen before the project goes to design.

Mr. Barreiro: Now you're talking about 2020, and then to start construction it would take another two years. That's 2022. So this is way early in the project. I believe, under no circumstances, would the FDOT or I support anything that would start any construction -- even if we all loved one alternative -- until 1st Street and Flagler Street are properly finished. So, you will not be seeing anything done on this project soon.

Comment: I'm just concerned, because I know you said safety is the number one concern, but in the matrix that was provided, under pedestrians, it says there is no impact pretty much across the board except regarding sidewalks. But, I would argue that when you have three lanes of one-way traffic, that is more dangerous for pedestrians because people are trying to cross the road and because a thoroughfare becomes a highway. I think that it should be reflected that safety for pedestrians is not based on sidewalks; it's also based on cars on the street and one-way lanes.

Ms. Croft: Remember what we said before, that the no action option becomes the baseline, and so you have to compare all other options to that one. For example, if the sidewalk is widened, then that would be considered better for pedestrians. If the sidewalk remains the same width, we show it as no impacts because we compare it against the existing.

Comment: I see. So it's a separate area for pedestrians. I see there are two areas for pedestrians.

Ms. Croft: Right. We are referring more to pedestrian accessibility, because it would require new mast arms, and those would likely require larger poles that may impact pedestrian accessibility.

Comment: I would like to know how we are going to come to a decision. We talk about analysis and running through this other analyses, but I think now is the time to start fostering at least some idea of how we start to come to some kind of decision. At every meeting we see there are very different opinions, which is completely understandable, but how do we go about bridging all these differences in opinion to move this project forward? From these meetings, I'm not really seeing a vision of how we start building together as opposed to just voicing concerns and throwing them at you. So, is there some type of plan that fosters collaborative decision-making?

Question: Where is this recommended alternative coming from?

Ms. Croft: It's going to be the result of the engineering study, environmental impacts and public input. But public involvement means everyone in the corridor. Everyone in the corridor within 300 feet will be invited to the Alternatives Public Workshop, and they will be able to make comments, either in writing at the workshop or they can mail them in. After that meeting, we will select a recommended alternative.

Comment: That's the thing. If the advisory group can't come to a decision, do you really think we should be talking about a community meeting?

Ms. Croft: Everyone is entitled to provide comments.

Comment: But if you, as facilitators, can't foster us, how do you expect a community to come together?



Judy Solaun Gonzalez

FDOT: Today we are seeking input from you on the criteria. Once we start filling this in and assigning points to each alternative, it will become more obvious which ones are better than others. So that's when you are going to see one alternative moving ahead of another one. I think that was your question, correct? You want to see how they start differentiating one from the other. You are going to see that at the alternatives workshop. Today we just wanted to see what is of concern to the community.

Comment: Michael, I think we already know the answer to your question. We had one meeting that was internal, and that shifted, thank goodness, to this process. I think we should have an internal meeting and have as high an attendance as we can, but have a meeting among ourselves and figure out what we are going to do with Jorge's opinions, with Frank's opinions, and just find a consensus. The answer is we are not going to agree on everything on this page, but we'll just bring back a consensus opinion and let them know so that they don't have to waste much more time on this.

Question: Following up on that, can you move the deadline for comments to September 15 or to October?

Ms. Croft: How about the first week of October?

Comment: Yes, the first week in October. Do you think that will give us enough time?

Comment: I think that's enough time to get the material that we can start disseminating, because the community will not have enough time with two weeks in advance to get this done, so I think we need a good month.

Comment: There should be a huge round of public input when you have your big meeting, and that should be fun, that should have everything under the sun.

Ms. Wang: We are going to upload the handouts you have today to the project website. We will try to update it by tomorrow or the latest on Tuesday of next week.

Question: Does that mean you will be doing some kind of press release to the community saying that it's available for review on the website? Or is this just for us?

Ms. Croft: Yes, there is already a place for electronic comments on the website.

Question: So we fill out the form and send it to you? That's all we need to do?

Ms. Gonzalez: Can we review and summarize what we've heard so far?

Ms. LaSeur: Do you want me to go through the notes I've taken and make sure that I caught what everyone is asking about and commenting on?

- What is purpose of this meeting?
- Could there be different alternatives, one for SW 7th Street and another for SW 8th Street.
- Which alternatives impact the parking and which ones don't?
- Concerns about historic sites.
- Concerns about tourist peak hours, and the bus parking.
- Keep in mind that this is a tourist destination, and that the peak hours are different for traffic and for tourists.

Comment: Hold on, I think we are the number two destination. Miami Beach would be number one. (Everyone chimes in at the same time).

Ms. LaSeur:

- There are tour buses and bike lane concerns - buses parking in bike lanes and how the bikes will get around the bus.
- Could buses park at satellite locations rather than having them on the streets?
- Alternative 3A - where will the tour buses stop?
- Two alternatives eliminate 60% of the parking. The majority of the PAG do not support Alternatives 2 and 2A. (Attendees confirmed that was correct.)
- When are we going to start eliminating some of these alternatives?
- Some prefer Alternative 3 on SW 7th Street and Alternative 4 on SW 8th Street.
- The Commissioner suggested that we look at Alternative 5. Westbound traffic brings more business to the area on SW 8th Street, while on SW 7th Street most of the people are going home westbound so that there is no commerce going on. SW 8th Street is people going to work and going into the Brickell area. Alternative 5 reverses that traffic.
- There is congestion with people going west on SW 7th Street to get to I-95.
- This is an entire corridor, not just a few blocks.
- If there are more cars, there will be less safety.
- Parking on SW 7th Street was proposed as an option.

- Alternative 5 would cause changes of all the signage, and that could make the impact of the construction even worse.
- The construction should be done in segments.
- Look at the long-term benefits of this project and not just today’s benefits.
- Work in small increments and time those increments to benefit the businesses.
- Concerning Alternative 5, there was a comment that it would cause too much traffic and it would make it like I-95 going through the neighborhood.
- Having the county regulate signals may be a way of getting the traffic through more evenly.
- Someone said the purpose of this project was to get the traffic in and out of Brickell but then it was said that was not true, that it’s not about capacity but about safety for pedestrians and preserving the historic nature of the corridor and the businesses.
- Brickell could have time shifts and that would help with some of the traffic.
- There was concern about pedestrian deaths, conflicts and other accidents.
- Someone pointed out the Project Advisory Group did not ask for Alternative 5.
- PAG members would like to start eliminating some of the alternatives so we don’t have as many to go through at every meeting.
- The majority of the PAG opposes the two-way alternative.

Question: Are you saying it indicates that the group didn’t ask for Alternative 5?

Ms. LaSeur: That was a comment from someone - that the PAG was not the one to request Alternative 5.

Comment: You should not let that reflect that we did not agree with Alternative 5.

Ms. LaSeur: All I am doing is writing down what the comments were. That was someone’s comment. Is that true?

Comment: Are those comments going to be uploaded on the website?

Ms. LaSeur: Yes, as part of the PAG meeting summary. How would you like me to word that?

Comment: Just note that the Commissioner supported Alternative 5, there were a few comments, and that it was discussed.

Ms. LaSeur: Okay, I’ll note that it was discussed. Is that better? You also wanted to know if there was a way to narrow down and eliminate some of the alternatives. Most members of the PAG don’t like the two-way alternatives. Is that true?

Comment: Yes - that was a comment. Most people do not support the two-way alternatives.



Ms. LaSeur:

- Transit is a must, and it's better to have a designated bus lane to benefit businesses and to move the work force.
- We cannot continue to accommodate more cars.
- Alternative 4 was suggested as a good Alternative.
- We need to look at the younger generation. They are not purchasing as many cars but are biking, riding buses and using Uber.
- Uber doubles the number of trips in some cases.
- There is concern about safety in the transit corridor.
- The transit system needs to be updated.
- The Alternatives Public Workshop has been moved to January.
- Removing a lane would create a bottleneck.
- Alternative 4 plus a transit lane was again suggested.
- Two-way traffic with a bike lane was suggested.
- What does the construction schedule or timeframe look like?
- You are concerned about the schedule and the other projects in the area because it has been difficult for businesses and traffic. Businesses are suffering.

Comment:

I have one more and it's an easy one. We should keep our eye on what other communities down here are doing. The Coconut Grove business improvement district spent \$400,000 dollars and purchased two trolleys, gave them to the city under the condition that the city would maintain them, and those are directly servicing Coconut Grove every hour, every day.

Ms. LaSeur:

Are you saying that's trolleys?

Comment:

Yes, because there are going to be options like this for Little Havana in the future. We should not forget when we look at bus lanes the fact that you might have four trolleys moving constantly, and why wouldn't people get on those and get off and get on again. That's all.

Ms. LaSeur:

I've added your comment.

- Make sure the matrix considers businesses are suffering with other projects and that there are safety concerns.
- There are a lot more concerns with pedestrians than just having crossing areas.
- How can we come to a decision? We can't seem to come to an agreement on what should be done and move forward.
- Where will the recommended alternative come from in the end?
- Some PAG members would like to have an internal meeting to discuss the alternatives and come to some kind of consensus.
- The response date for comments to the project team was moved to the first week in October.
- The matrix and handout will be uploaded online on the project website.

Please review the matrix and tell your neighbors. Have I missed anything? Please let me know, because I want to make sure we've got it all. I hope you feel like we are listening, because we are, and we do care. We really want your input. There are certain goals when we have these meetings that we would like to reach. We want to make sure you have the information so,

when you see the matrix, you can see what the comparisons are. We very much want to know your thoughts and ideas. Is there something else you wanted to add?

Comment: Yes, I am looking at the dates right now. So let's say, October 6th for the deadline to submit comments on the matrix?

Ms. LaSeur: Is everybody okay with October 6th? Yes, that's great.

Comment: My question is, still, why are we breaking, breaking, breaking, and we never see fixing? You are looking into the future but 8 years from now I might not even be alive. I work in an area right now where I have no idea how we don't have deaths on a daily basis because of the congestion and all this traffic. Really, just get up on one of my buses and spend a day or spend three hours. I invite you to do that so that you can see what's going on. It's the same issue. We're just not getting there. Sorry I got here late, but I'm the one that's suffering here.

Comment: Also, I don't know what company you're using to do the (construction) work on the street, but there are times when a bulldozer does not move for weeks at a time. We have pictures of some of the workers sleeping on the wheels of the bulldozers.

Luis Callejas, Legislative assistant to Representative David Richardson:

Just let me intervene with that, my name is Luis Callejas. I am the legislative assistant for Representative David Richardson. Miguel left already, but he had sent complaints to us and Senator Jose Javier Rodriguez's office as well. Go ahead and send those complaints to us. We have direct contact with the FDOT we will do what we can to reach out and say, "Hey, fix this."

Comment: Okay, that's perfect.

Comment: This is a concern that I have, and any business would have the same concern. David mentioned earlier about a timeframe to do the work. Let's say there is some construction to be done for this project. When the construction was done in front of my business, I asked the City of Miami to please do me a favor and work at night so it doesn't affect my business, or the traffic. They said, "Sure, we will look into that." That's all they said but, in the end, they did what they wanted. Is that something the FDOT can work out with businesses - to work at night instead of during the day?

Tish Burgher

FDOT PIO: Yes. I'm going to talk on behalf of the FDOT and address some of the concerns people are voicing based on some of the issues that are going on in Flagler Street. Representative Richardson and Senator Rodriguez have been very engaged with the Flagler team and with the FDOT to not only improve what's going on there today, but also to do lessons-learned for future projects.

Luisana Perez, Legislative Assistant to Senator Jose Javier Rodriguez:

Yes, regarding that, if you have any questions about what Tish is saying, like what is the bill that the Senator wants to do, I have copies and we can talk about it.

Ms. Burgher: I don't want to turn this into a Flagler meeting, but I want to tell you that the FDOT, takes into consideration maintaining access to businesses, the hours of operation, etc., when they are planning, and that's all done in the design phase before we go to construction.

Comment: But if it's anywhere near. If it's anything like the perfect Flagler rebuild, still you are going to have bulldozers sitting in the middle of the street. You're going to have lane closures, and we need to look at this, and see if something like this would happen.

Comment: I think those kinds of comments are important. They're comments that you have to put on the record throughout all these meetings so if we all agree on a project or alternative, then the next phase would be how to do it. You have to put those comments out there, that you want the least impact during business hours, construction at alternative hours, small segments instead of large segments.

Question: At the end of this whole thing, if there is some construction on SW 7th Street or SW 8th Street, will we have a number we can call to voice a concern if the people doing the project are not following what we want them to do, based on what we discussed? When they started working in front of my store, I had no place to call; I did not know who to call.

Ms. Croft: That was a city project, not the FDOT.

Comment: But you know what? Bureaucracy. It's going to happen in one place, and it's going to happen in the other. Flagler is a lot worse than what happened in my shop, and that is an FDOT project.

Mr. Callejas: I would give you a tip, go to your legislator. If it's a City of Miami issue, go to your city commissioner. If it's a county issue, go to your county commissioner. That's how we handle things in our office.

Comment: You need someone to contact, because I can't go through the proper channels to get to the person I need to contact, because it's going to take weeks. I need someone I can talk to.

Ms. Burgher: For every FDOT project, you will have a contact number and a person there. There is a direct contact for the Flagler Street project right now.

Question: Is it a PR person or something?

Ms. Burgher: It's a consultant who works with the FDOT. That person is on the phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Questions: Let's say I call and say that I want work to be done in the morning. Will that person give me a response?

Comment: The answer is that with the FDOT, there is a direct number to call, and you can call that number, but does it help?

Comment: I think also there are contractors on every project. But I think we want to know more about the process to choose these contractors. Something about the track record of these

contractors. Obviously, whoever is doing that work on Flagler Street should get a failing grade, but are they going to be awarded more work with this kind of track record? Is there some sort of data base, and what happens when, in their contract with the FDOT, they are breaking the rules of that contract? How can we be the whistleblowers and have some kind of impact on that contractor? Because, otherwise, they are just going to continue to get away with it.

Comment: I think you should call Commissioner Bruno. The deaths are increasing every year and they have been for more than 10 years in Little Havana.

Comment: Actually on SW 7th Street more than SW 8th Street.

Question: The 300 hundred feet notification radius from the project, can we expand that or is that law?

Ms. LaSeur: I do public involvement and I rarely stick to the 300-foot rule. I usually go out further.

Ms. Burgher: Yes you can expand it.

Ms. Croft: Is there a specific area that you want to include?

Comment: Yes, because most of the 300-foot radius is right on Calle Ocho and SW 7th Street. That means many property owners do not live or work in the area.



Ms. Croft: It's 300 feet on either side of the roadway. It's 300 feet on both sides of SW 7th Street and 300 feet on either side of SW 8th Street.

Comment: If you're talking 300 feet, most of that is all property owners, not the tenants on SW 7th Street. You have multi-families on SW 7th Street. Three hundred feet is not enough notification for a project like the size of what's happening on Flagler Street.

Mr. Barreiro: You're right. We have to take a look and see how many blocks in we should go, so we can get the right number of residents and their input.

Ms. Croft: If you go out too far, you have people making comments that don't live in the area.

Comment: Yes, but they're all going to be impacted.

Comment: I think we have to be comfortable enough to just try it. You don't have to make it a mile, but be reasonable.

END OF MEETING SUMMARY

This meeting summary is not a word-for-word transcript; it is a summary of the comments. If you feel that clarifications are necessary, or if this differs from your understanding, please notify Eileen LaSeur by telephone at 407-883-8257 or by email at eileen.laseur@qcausa.com within five (5) working days upon receipt of this summary.



PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP MEETING - August 31, 2017 - SIGN-IN SHEET / HOJA DE FIRMAS

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SR 90/SW 7th Street/SW 8th Street PD&E Study from SR 5/US 1/Brickell Avenue to SR 9/SW 27th Avenue
 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study, Miami-Dade County, Florida
 Financial Project ID No.: 432639-6-22-01, ETDM No.: 14230, FAP No.: 0202 054P



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