

MEETING MINUTES

Project Advisory Group (PAG) - Meeting No.1
September 18, 2014
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study
Venetian Causeway
from North Bayshore Drive to Purdy Avenue in Miami-Dade County
Financial Project Number: 422713-2-22-01
ETDM Number: 12756

ATTENDEES

FDOT District Six:

- Dat Huynh, P.E., Project Manager
- Barbara Culhane
- Aileen Varela Margolles
- Hong Benitez, P.E.

Project Advisory Group (PAG) Members:

- Scott Diffenderfer, President, Belle Isle Residents Association
- Jack Hartog, Venetian Way Neighborhood Alliance
- Mark Weithorn, Vice President, Venetian Island Homeowners Association
- Merri Mann, Costa Brava Condominium
- Hava Rivlin, Director, Venetian Islands Homeowners Association
- Michael Fryd, Stakeholder
- John Ballou, Stakeholder
- Nancy Liebman, Miami Beach United

General Public:

- Jeff Young
- Ken Gordon
- Vivien Hartog
- Eugenio Marrapodi
- Yael Neuwirth

Consultant Project Team:

- Rick Crooks, P. E., EAC Consulting
- Dinesh Dagly, P.E., EAC Consulting
- Rodney C. Devera, P. E., EAC Consulting
- Daniel Greenberg, EAC Consulting
- Tasha Cunningham, Cunningham Group
- Maria Fernandez Porrata, Cunningham Group

MEETING LOCATION

- 1000 Venetian Causeway (Clubhouse), Miami Beach, Florida 33139

MEETING SUMMARY

- Meeting began at 6:12 P.M.
- Dat Huynh, P.E., FDOT Project Manager introduced the project team. He welcomed attendees to the meeting. Mr. Huynh asked that if any of the attendees knew of any community organizations or other stakeholders that would like to become part of the Project Advisory Group (PAG) for the project, they should contact Mr. Huynh for more

information. Mr. Huynh asked if the current time of day and location works for the PAG for future meetings. The PAG requested that meeting times be changed so that they occur from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

- Mr. Huynh turned the meeting over to Rick Crooks and asked him to conduct a PowerPoint presentation specifically prepared for the PAG meeting. The presentation included the following topics:
 - PD&E Process
 - Presentation Overview
 - Meeting Agenda
 - Purpose of the Project Advisory Group (PAG)
 - Project Overview
 - Existing Conditions
 - Rehabilitation Parameters
 - Project Milestones
 - Project Timeline

During the presentation the following points were discussed among the Project Advisory Group (PAG) members and the public present:

- Mr. Crooks elaborated on the purpose of the PAG and stated that the group was made up of residents and other stakeholders in the immediate. The PAG was convened so that FDOT could hear from potentially impacted residents, business owners and other stakeholders who are considered an important part of the transportation process.
- Mr. Crooks indicated there would be a total of four PAG meetings. Mr. Crooks and Mr. Huynh discussed the goal of the first meeting, which was to establish rehabilitation parameters.
- Mr. Crooks discussed the existing conditions in the project.
- The PAG asked about the process for selecting an alternative for the project. Mr. Huynh stated that FDOT would weigh the pros and cons and also look at the cost.
- Mark Weithorn, a member of the PAG, asked if the historic designation of the bridge is
- Michael Fryd, a member of the PAG, asked if Miami-Dade County is bound by the alternative that is selected as a result of this PD&E Study. Mr. Huynh stated that it comes down to whether or not a permit could be obtained. He also stated that NEPA must be followed.
- Several questions were raised by the PAG and other present regarding the nature of the Miami-Dade County emergency repair project happening on the Venetian Causeway.
- Mr. Weithorn stated that there is no communication between Miami-Dade County and the residents regarding the emergency repair work being done.
- Mr. Crooks and Mr. Huynh elaborated on their knowledge of that project and advised attendees to contact Miami-Dade County for more information as FDOT was not involved in the emergency bridge repair project.
- Jack Hartog, a member of the PAG, asked about the West Bridge and whether it was rehabbed in 1999. Mr. Huynh stated that to his knowledge, it was.
- Mr. Fryd asked if the rehabilitation of the bridges done in 1999 should have lasted longer. Mr. Crooks stated that the usual service life is 25 years.
- Mr. Crooks then went through a number of slides that provided a detailed summary of the rehabilitation parameters for the project.
- The height of the railing was discussed among those present. They wanted the railings to remain at the same height or lower and not to obstruct the view of the area. Mr. Crooks gave an overview of the work that previously went into the railings on the bridge.
- Merri Mann, a member of the PAG, asked if the light poles along the bridge could be solar. Mr. Crooks stated that there are issues with that and ensuring that the bridge is properly lit.

- The PAG asked about the name of the Causeway and whether it should be called “Venetian Way”. Mr. Huynh indicated that the name is officially designated as Venetian Causeway. Mr. Hartog stated that he and a group of stakeholders were lobbying Miami-Dade County for the name change and to reduce the weight restrictions on the bridge.
- The height of the bridge was also discussed. Mr. Fryd asked if the bridge elevation could be raised. The project team stated that it would not be possible.
- Mr. Huynh stated that for the next three meetings, the PAG, the project team and the public will look at all alternatives and methods of construction, including materials that exist in the market. FDOT will study all pertinent details, then analyze and evaluate all alternatives. Each alternative will include costs and environmental classifications. He stated that the PAG was instrumental in helping to determine the best alternative for this project.
- Mr. Huynh stated that he would like to see all of the PAG members and those in attendance, governmental agencies including any participating municipal, state and federal agencies/organizations stay involved and committed to this project. He also asked that if any of the PAG members present could not attend a meeting in the future, to please assign a proxy to attend on their behalf.
- Mr. Huynh thanked all participants of the meeting, opened the floor for any additional questions, and announced that everyone will receive an invitation to the next proposed PAG meeting which is schedule to take place sometime in the winter of 2015. There were no additional questions or comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.