

Health District Transportation Meeting
September 12, 2007 at 8:30 am
Jackson Health System, West Wing Conference Room

Minutes

1. Health District Future Development

Pieter Bockweg, from the City of Miami Building, Planning & Zoning Department, reviewed a map of the Health District area and described recently completed projects, and projects that have begun the City's permitting process. He called upon stakeholders to discuss their future development plans as outlined below:

(See Attached Map for Location of the following sites for future development)

Samir Elmir, Department of Health:#23

64K SF new facility with 200 new parking spaces.

Total employees: 500

Start date: October 2008

Completion: 24 months

Doug Maddox, Jackson Health System: #7

New 20-year master plan,

Relocates main entrance to 19th Street

10% increase in employment

Madeleine Pumariega, Miami Dade College, Medical Campus: #24

Approximately 5 acres undeveloped parcel

College will invite private sector for joint development for possible academic/retail/office/hotel

Development could include 160K SF for college and 2,400 parking spaces

Dawn Thompson, Kristi House: #22

Proposed expansion includes 18K SF and 24 K SF within a 13.5 K SF footprint

202 parking spaces

Mark Bailey, Merrill Stevens: #19

Expanded yacht repair, training center, riverwalk and maritime museum

Start date: 2009

Ron Bogue, University of Miami

Parking Garage (1,500 spaces) and 20-ton chiller plant under construction -#13

182 K SF Wet Lab under construction - #15

Future 182 K SF Wet Lab II #25

Miami Life Science Park with 1.4 M SF starting with Phase I 250K SF - #20

Peter England, Camillus House: #18

275 KSF 340-bed overnight shelter, treatment and feeding center

300 new parking

Start date: 2008

Completion: 2011

2. **Discussion Topics:**

Ysela Llord, Assistant County Manager, Miami-Dade County, explained the transportation jurisdictions as follows:

Expressways:

SR 836 under jurisdiction of MDX

I -95 under jurisdiction of FDOT

Bridges:

12th Avenue Bridge under jurisdiction of FDOT

17th Avenue Bridge under jurisdiction of Miami-Dade County

Streets:

NW 7th Avenue and NW 12th Avenue is under jurisdiction of FDOT

17th Avenue and 20th Street are County Roads

All other streets in Health District are under jurisdiction of City of Miami

Mass Transit:

Metrorail under jurisdiction of Miami-Dade Transit Department

I-95 Expressway

NW 14th Street Ramp Expansion/dedicated right turn at 10th Avenue:

Ron Bogue, Assistant Vice President for Facilities, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, discussed issues related to I-95/SR 836 access. He expressed concern about traffic backing up onto I-95 South as vehicles queue to exit at NW 14 Street. He recommended that the 14th Street ramp be expanded to 2-lane and that a dedicated right turn lane be added at 14th Street and 10th Avenue. The University of Miami owns the property adjacent to the existing ramp and would be open to discussing using a portion for the ramp expansion.

Proposal for New Exit Ramp at NW 20th Street:

Mr. Bogue also discussed the need for an additional exit ramp from I-95 at NW 20th Street which allow vehicles to access the Jackson Health System's new main entrance at 19th Street and relieve some of the pressure at the 14th and 12th Avenue exits. This possible new ramp would also allow emergency vehicles better access to the Ryder Trauma Center and VA Emergency Room. Doug Maddox from Jackson Health System emphasized the need for better access to the Trauma Center.

Additional Signage:

Another issue is the need for additional I-95 signage to give drivers more time to move to the right to exit from the north.

Pedestrian Safety

Susan Ward from the Veteran's Medical Center, expressed concern about pedestrians safely crossing streets due to cars not stopping, and signals that do not allow enough time to cross the street.

Esther Calas, Director of Miami Dade County Public Works Department, reported that a new traffic signal will be installed on 14th Street and 11th Avenue.

Bridge Closures/Traffic

17th Avenue Bridge

Jeff Cohen, Miami-Dade County Public Works Department, reported on the recent closure of the 17th Avenue Bridge. The County had to close the bridge due to concern about safety. The county plans to start repair soon and anticipates completion by June 2008 if all the work passes safety tests. Mr. Cohen distributed a pamphlet about the closure and detour map (see attached).

12th Avenue Bridge

Mario Cabrera from FDOT reported on the progress of the 12th Avenue Bridge replacement. Construction began in 2006 and the work is ahead of schedule and should be completed by early 2009. They plan to open the northbound lanes later this year. He advised that fire and rescue vehicles should use designated routes with automatic signal priority to provide emergency vehicles quick clearance.

City of Miami Transportation Projects/

Basis of Design Report

Jose Gonzalez, City of Miami Assistant Transportation Coordinator, discussed transportation projects underway.

- The City of Miami will seek approval from the Commission in October, 2007 to issue an RFQ for the Design/Build of the Streetcar.
- The health district rubber tire circulator feasibility study is complete and the City has requested seed funding from FDOT to operate the shuttle. If funded, the circulator would be operated by outside vendor.
- City requested FDOT to extend its 12th Avenue Bridge Replacement landscaping project to 20th Street..
- City hired EDAW to create Basis of Design Report (BODR) for streetscapes, gateways and signage. The BODR is 90% completed. City has allocated \$10M for first phase of construction of streetscapes.

3. Civic Center Metrorail Station

Harpal Kapoor, Director of Miami-Dade Transit, reported on partnering with UM and other agencies to make improvements to the station including painting, xeroscape landscaping, adding music in the station and having digital clocks announcing next trains. Design concepts will be presented in early October. There was agreement that all stakeholders should encourage employees and visitors to use Metrorail and take advantage of special passes and incentives.

4. University of Miami Charrette

Andrew Zitofsky, a design consultant for the University of Miami, reported on the upcoming charrette which will take place from September 12 – 20, 2007. All stakeholders are invited to participate in the visioning process. Rick Hall, transportation consultant for the charrette, emphasized that transportation will play a major role in the charrette process, and even though the focus of the charrette is the UM campus, the surrounding areas need to be studied regarding how they connect to the campus.

5. Discussion:

Jose Mesa, Director of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, offered to assist with re-establishing the Civic Center Transportation Management Organization like the one that was active in the 1990's.

Johnny Martinez, District Secretary for FDOT, recommended that a master plan for the area be developed including transportation improvements to support the future development. An ongoing study sponsored by MDX and FDOT is studying SR836 and I-95 and may be able to review the area as part of the study.

Alice Bravo, FDOT District Director of Transportation Systems Development, reported that 2 Project Development and Environment Studies are underway: one study focuses on I-395 east of I-95, however it will include the interchange with SR 836 which serves the Health District; and the other study concentrates on creating managed lanes along I-95. FDOT would need a traffic plan to be able to input values into both these studies. She described the upcoming managed lanes project that will expand I-95 from 10 – 12 lanes and will include 2 "hot lanes" in each direction that will allow vehicles to maintain speeds of 50 MPH. All transit buses, carpools/van pools and hybrid vehicles would be allowed to access these lanes free. Single occupancy vehicles would pay a fee based on time of day. This project will begin in mid 2009 in Dade County.

Parking in the area is an issue for the State Attorney's Office. Employees, victims and witnesses do not want to come to the area because they feel there is no parking. Luis Choter from the Miami Parking Authority stated that there is a parking study of the area underway.

Ed Astigarraga from the Department of Corrections also voiced concern about the need for parking closer to its facility especially for its late shift that has to park at remote locations which is a safety issue.

6. Short Term Options

Ysela Llort, Assistant County Manager, suggested the following:

- a. MPO, under direction of Jose Mesa, convene a smaller working group to prepare a scope for master plan and traffic improvement study. The group, which should convene within 2 months, would be divided into 2 parts: one group would concentrate on land use; and the other group would focus on transportation.
- b. Designate a champion for this area
- c. Interim Improvements:
 - i. Improve detours to provide traffic alternatives during construction of bridge
 - ii. Improve pedestrian safety
 - iii. Improve information about detours or other traffic issues
 - iv. Provide transportation information on stakeholder websites