

Transit Workshop of the
Downtown Development Authority
Monday, December 4, 2006

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alan Hooper, Chair
Peter Feldman, Vice Chair
Jack T. Loos, Secretary
Doug Eagon, Board Member

ALSO PRESENT:

Chris Wren, DDA Executive Director
Elizabeth Veliky, DDA Planning & Design Manager
Phil Smelley, Parsons Brinckerhoff
John Lafferty, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Eric Liberman, Parsons Brinckerhoff

TRANSIT DISCUSSION

The workshop began at 1:45 p.m. and Mr. Wren went over the purpose of the meeting and reviewed the agenda. He noted that he wanted to give the Board members enough time to absorb the content so they can make an informed decision.

Mr. Smelley started off his presentation by explaining mistakes that were made with Portland's streetcar system so that these issues can be addressed early on in the Fort Lauderdale system. He then went over the comparative table that shows several components that were analyzed to arrive at the alignment recommendations such as, but not limited to: utility data, magnitude of relocation for each street, the right of way for each of the streets, contamination sites, archeological remains and the potential ridership for each of the alignments. Drainage concerns were brought up and Mr. Smelley said that a thorough analysis would be completed once the alternatives were narrowed down.

Mr. Hooper asked questions about the streetcar infrastructure needs. Mr. Smelley noted that the streetcar would need to be 18 inches below grade to function, with a total of 28 inches to the bottom of the duck bank. He did highlight concerns about existing utilities that are 3 feet below ground and the importance of identifying where possible conflicts could arise. Mr. Feldman mentioned that these possible conflicts could determine if the alignment should go on Andrews Avenue or 3rd Avenue or both.

Mr. Smelley then went over the possibilities for revenue within the duck bank. He noted that power and communication can be placed along the alignment and could bring in between \$1 million and \$3 million annually for fiber optic leasing. More dialogue was held about the potential revenue source and Mr. Hooper and Mr. Loos felt very strongly that it should be explored.

Mr. Smelley continued to summarize what the Parsons Brinckerhoff team has done to date. He explained the vissim modeling system. He said that once the technical committee members agreed on

the base model (existing traffic), the different alignments can then be put into the system to show traffic needs against existing traffic. This can help determine preemption/prioritization of streets. Once current day modeling is done, the team will then project what the traffic conditions will be through 2030. Mr. Liberman then showed the group examples of the vissim modeling software.

Mr. Smelley then explained that potentially all intersections along the chosen alignment would have to have street lights to accommodate the streetcar system. It is estimated that between 34 and 64 intersections will need between 12 and 42 new traffic signals. He clarified that these improvements are within the current budget. He then discussed that the existing poles could be used to support some of the catenary wires. Ornate poles are available and video cameras could be placed on them. Mr. Loos said that more modern street furniture should be used.

Mr. Wren then went over scheduling in terms of Board decision-making dates. He noted that decisions are not going to be made today, but they are looking for a decision to be made on the 3 alignments at the regular meeting on the 14th. He said that if the Board was not ready to make a decision in December, then January is okay to meet the current, aggressive schedule.

Mr. Smelley then went over the methodologies used for the alignment analysis and the feedback received from each of the technical appointees. Mr. Feldman then raised concern over the authoritative level of members on the Study Advisory Committee (SAC). Mr. Smelley explained that each of the committee members has to be in a management level and have authority within their organization to even be on the committee.

There was discussion held about the County and City scheduling and what each would actually be approving. It was clarified that the alignments would need to be approved.

Mr. Smelley started to review the highest ranking alignments: A, B-2, and D-3. Discussion was held about the direction the streetcars should go, the crossovers, parallels vs. loop systems, one-way vs. two-way pairing, and single vs. double tracking. Conversation was held about the durability of the bridges. Mr. Smelley said the Andrews Avenue Bridge would have to be modified to support the streetcar infrastructure. He also mentioned that the 3rd Avenue Bridge would need a locking mechanism installed for one panel to rest on the other and the counterbalance of each bridge would have to be altered to accommodate the weight. Mr. Smelley then went over the maintenance issues of the bridges once the system was built.

Mr. Smelley addressed the tunnel issues, to include: overhead clearance, fire safety, catenary cleaning and track installation. The group then discussed the platform orientation and location. It was suggested that depending on the location along the alignment, the placement of the platform (side vs. center) should change to address the given area's constraints.

Mr. Feldman was interested in a presentation of the traffic data counts and Mr. Wren said he would have that arranged during a future workshop or meeting.

Members told Mr. Smelley they wanted cross sections that show the 2-way pairing just as the 1-way pairing was shown.

As no decisions were to be made, the meeting ended at 5:25 p.m.