

APPROVED
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD (EDAB)
MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8TH FLOOR CAFETERIA
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2011 – 3:45-5:15 P.M.

Board Members	Attendance	Present	Absent
Dev Motwani, Chair	P	8	2
Sheryl Dickey, Vice Chair	P	8	2
Miya Burt-Stewart	A	9	1
Al Calloway	A	9	1
Christopher Denison	P	9	1
Cary Goldberg	P	8	1
Jason Hughes	P	10	0
George Mihaiu	P	7	3
Cort Neimark	P	9	1
Ralph Riehl	P	8	2
Adam Sanders	P	7	3

At this time, there are 11 appointed members to the Board, which means 6 would constitute a quorum.

Staff

Karen Reese, Acting Liaison, Department of Sustainable Development
 Patricia Smith, Secretary III, Department of Sustainable Development
 Wayne Jessup, Deputy Director, Department of Sustainable Development
 Laura Gambino, Business Development Coordinator
 Barbara Hartmann, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

Motion made by Vice Chair Dickey, seconded by Mr. Mihaiu, that the Board supports FDOT's initiatives for the FEC corridor development. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously. [This communication to the City Commission has not yet been approved by the City Clerk's Office.]

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Chair Motwani called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present. The Board members, Staff, and guests introduced themselves.

Wayne Jessup, Deputy Director of the Department of Sustainable Development, explained that the City is undergoing an extensive reorganization of its Departments. This has led to the consolidation of some Departments within larger entities. In the past, many Departments made decisions independently of one another; the new reorganization encourages them to collaborate and work together.

The Department of Sustainable Development includes the former Planning and Zoning, Economic Development, Building, and Code Enforcement Departments. Mr. Jessup advised that this will help businesses work through the City's system in a much smoother manner, as these formerly independent Departments are now organized under a single manager.

Chair Motwani thanked Mr. Jessup for his explanation, and asked if he might be available to attend a subsequent Board meeting so members could ask any questions they might have.

Mr. Jessup added that the Department of Sustainable Development is seeking a new Economic Development manager. He assured the Board that he and Ms. Reese would participate in Board meetings until this position has been filled.

II. Approval of September 14, 2011 Minutes

Motion made by Mr. Sanders, seconded by Mr. Denison, to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2011 meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

III. South Florida East Coast Corridor (SFECC)

Amie Goddeau, representing the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), invited the Board members to express any concerns and give any recommendations they might have on how FDOT can provide helpful information to the business community. She explained that FDOT was likely to make several similar presentations on transit projects in order to build up grassroots support.

Ms. Goddeau showed the Board a PowerPoint presentation, beginning with the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization's Long-Range Transportation Plan. This establishes the vision of future transit for Broward County. The intent is to create a seamless and integrated transit system, of which the FEC line would provide a backbone. She advised that while there are a number of other transit projects under study at present, the Long-Range Plan serves as the overall blueprint.

A map of the region shows the location of the project in the three counties. The project would introduce passenger service from Miami to Jupiter on the FEC line,

providing roughly 85 miles of service. The goal is to open up the transportation choices in the eastern corridor of the three counties, where the densest population resides. It also includes the Central Business District, employment and governmental centers, and areas that are ripe for redevelopment.

One of the FEC's major goals is to ensure that freight services are protected. The service has integrated with the Port of Miami and has signed a working agreement with Port Everglades. As the passenger service is designed, it must work in conjunction with these freight services so both are allowed to develop. FDOT has a close working relationship with FEC in order to achieve the efficient movement of both passengers and freight.

Ms. Goddeau advised that this project, with the potential for 52 stations, would be very expensive and must overcome lots of hurdles. To this end, it has been broken up into smaller, more manageable pieces to work toward. She noted that a major concern had been raised by the boating community with respect to a proposed fixed bridge. A potential solution would be to lock down this bridge during peak hours of operation.

Another aspect of the Long-Range Transportation Plan is the integration of the FEC system with Tri-Rail. These integrations would create a stronger north-south spine for the transit system. Riders would be able to transfer easily between systems, and the system would be able to access major destinations, including the Miami airport and seaport. FDOT is scheduled to go back to this MPO at a later time to discuss the issue further.

Mr. Mihaiu asked if the project would require additional tracks along the FEC corridor, or would use only the existing tracks. Ms. Goddeau explained that start-up service would use double tracks, which are currently located on most existing bridge structures and other crossings. For one early phase of the project, which would link Fort Lauderdale and Miami, FDOT would need to add 14 miles of new track to allow for start-up service.

At present, FDOT is working with its federal partners at the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) to develop a better model for predicting ridership. These projections are expected by the end of 2011, after which time they can develop building scenarios to determine which terminals produce the greatest ridership for the lowest cost.

If the federal process is followed, the project will be very slow in development, as the FTA receives approximately \$2 billion per year to allocate to transit projects nationwide. For this reason, getting FTA funding is a highly competitive and challenging project. Other funding sources would be sought in order to prevent the need to rely on the federal process.

Ms. Goddeau stated that there are potentially 52 stations, which are being refined, as FDOT would not be able to afford all of them for start-up service. She showed possible sites for some stations, noting that others would come online as ridership increased. Mr. Jessup noted other potential north-south locations as well, adding that parking would be required in order to move people from their cars to the trains. Other potential extensions for service were discussed, including Sunrise and Wilton Manors.

Mr. Riehl praised the Broward MPO, stating that the South Florida Tourism Council had worked with this organization some years ago to bring auxiliary transit services to the area.

Ms. Goddeau showed an aerial view of all the proposed stations in the different counties. These are approximate locations, as a great deal depends on how the land use develops. She explained that some land use changes have been made in advance around the prospective sites in order to increase their density, as this will increase ridership. FDOT is working to add generic language to land development codes in order to support transit-oriented development.

Ms. Goddeau stated that the project can be accomplished from an engineering standpoint; the biggest hurdle, however, is funding. The yearly cost of operations would fall upon local organizations. She advised that the 24-mile segment would cost roughly \$315 million in capital outlay, including vehicles, eight stations, double tracking, civil work, design, and construction. Operations would cost \$15-\$17 million each year. She noted that the 24-mile segment is split between two counties, and the estimated return in fares would cover approximately 20% of costs to offset. She concluded that the local entities would need to determine how they would cover the necessary costs.

Chair Motwani asked if any other municipality in the nation had developed this service with cost and ridership similar to the projections for south Florida. Ms. Goddeau said Denver could serve as an example, although she noted that in most cases, cities are willing to tax themselves as a funding mechanism. MPOs could provide capital costs, but operational funds are the challenge to bringing projects such as this one to fruition.

Mr. Denison stated that Florida has never seemed to be a good state for mass transit, noting that an aging population is less comfortable with these services. He asked if this has been analyzed as a consideration. Ms. Goddeau advised that the target market for Broward County Transit (BCT) is "captive riders," or individuals who do not have cars. Other services, such as the 95 Express, address the commuter market. She felt the FEC corridor would be more attractive to this market, which generally wants the permanency and exclusivity of rail service.

Mr. Jessup observed that a choice rider might be someone who lives in a more compactly developed area with several choices of things to do and places to go. This is a more urban than suburban lifestyle. The development that would accompany transit services would encourage these individuals to move into the community. Adding this new demographic to the mix could support the ridership.

Chair Motwani added that the success of future mass transit could depend on the success of what is currently available: for example, choice riders do not choose to ride BCT or similar services, as it does not offer the connections they need. Ms. Goddeau agreed, stating that while one system is reliable, dependence upon two or more systems is less attractive to a choice rider.

Mr. Denison said several studies were done in Portland before their system was launched; as a result, public awareness and grassroots interest in the system were raised. This involved the local communities in the project. Ms. Goddeau said FDOT has worked with the Broward MPO on their Transit Master Plan for Broward County. Some of its goals include the development of choice ridership, prioritization of transit projects, and determining how these may be achieved financially.

The Board discussed various trips and the projected time it might take to travel between key destinations, as well as connections between the various systems. It was noted that the average commute is 20-30 minutes.

Chair Motwani asked if any parking revenues or retail have been considered for incorporation into the stations to try and offset operational costs. Ms. Goddeau advised that the Sun Rail, for example, developed interlocal agreements in which FDOT purchased the rights-of-way necessary to accommodate enough parking spaces and the platform; this property was then turned over to local entities, who worked with developers to build it out. The only requirement was the maintenance of the parking area. This meant the local community could work with the land use to bring in the kind of development they wanted.

Mr. Mihaiu agreed with Chair Motwani that mass transit has been unsuccessful in south Florida because it has not met the needs of the population. He felt the addition of passenger service on the FEC corridor could be a great step toward meeting these needs.

Mr. Goldberg said he did not believe south Florida had the population to support mass transit, as it did not have the infrastructure or job base that is usually necessary. Ms. Goddeau said while this has been taken into consideration, the development that has occurred and the density around the existing corridor provide a good opportunity for mass transit to work. She added that Miami is very desirous of a mass transit project. Should the project be too long in coming, she

cautioned, development would already be in place and it would not be possible to increase density in a way that would support a system.

Mr. Denison asked what the cost of the entire system would be. Ms. Goddeau said the estimate for 85 miles is \$2.5 billion. The start-up service would determine if the entire project would be successful

Cleo Marsh of FDOT said the 95 Express has been very successful, noting that the parking lot for this express bus system is always full. Its riders are not typical bus passengers, but are often choice riders commuting to Miami for work. Chair Motwani commented that the cost of gas has probably contributed to this success, as it can cost twice as much to drive to Miami and park as to take the 95 Express. Michael Melendez of FDOT noted that the only negative feedback he had heard regarding this service was that there were not enough buses.

Ms. Gambino asked if FDOT had any information on the population makeup of the western community and how many riders come from the east and west. Ms. Goddeau said these details will become available as they work on the model to understand where riders are both coming from and going.

Mr. Riehl said FDOT had sent a letter of concern to the City of Fort Lauderdale regarding the use of sidewalk cafés on the beach. He explained that some restaurants have been more aggressive in the placement of their tables and signage and have located them in FDOT's 13 ft. rights-of-way. He stated that cafés have greatly helped business in the beach area; however, the receipt of the letter has caused the City's Code Enforcement Department to become stricter about this use. He asked how the businesses could satisfy FDOT's concerns.

Mr. Marsh explained that in addition to the tables being placed in rights-of-way, signs with menus are also a concern, as neither is allowed in these spaces. He pointed out that the agreement states the City, as lessee, has the responsibility of policing the area. While FDOT supports the use of the area's wide sidewalks to accommodate cafés, they still have to ensure that the pedestrians are accommodated as well. He concluded that the City must continue to police the area, including marking the limits into which the tables may encroach, as FDOT does not want to give away the right-of-way. Mr. Riehl thanked him for his feedback.

Mr. Denison asked about the New River Bridge railroad crossing, noting that he has an interest in the marina located on the south side of the crossing. Chair Motwani added that this and other businesses have been at their locations for a long time and have expressed concern about a project that would affect marine business. Mr. Denison said the bridge in question was structurally weakened when an elevated bridge was installed for Tri-Rail. Mr. Marsh said FDOT must

replace the bridge and are exploring every option to ensure they do not adversely affect the marine industry.

V. Old / New Business

- **Communications to the City Commission**

Mr. Mihaiu asked if the Board had any interest in sending a communication to the City Commission regarding FDOT's presentation. Chair Motwani said this could be done, and suggested that the Board could also invite representatives of the Broward MPO to keep them updated on the project's progress. Ms. Reese said she would reach out to the MPO and invite them to a future meeting.

Motion made by Vice Chair Dickey, seconded by Mr. Mihaiu, that the Board is supportive of the initiatives being moved forward by FDOT for the FEC corridor development.

It was clarified that the **motion** would also be a communication to the City Commission.

Mr. Riehl stated he was in favor of hearing more from the Broward MPO before the Board made any recommendations to the City Commission.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed 8-0. (Mr. Riehl abstained. A memorandum of voting conflict is attached to these minutes.)

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]