

**LEE COUNTY
BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN MEETING MINUTES
November 20, 2024**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dave Wheaton, Chair, At Large
Eric Spivey, Vice Chair, Bike Industry Representative, At Large
Jane Bowser, Secretary, At Large
Theodore (Pat) Connor, District 2
Paul Cohen, Affordable Housing Representative, At Large
Derek Felder, District 1
Steve Jansen, Walkable Community Representative, At Large

MEMBERS ABSENT

Damon Shelor, District 5
Paul Benvie, At Large

STAFF

Robert Price, LC DOT
Tom Marquardt, LC DOT
David Wagley, LC DOT
Bridgette Blanchard, LC DOT
Olivia Cassidy, Lee Tran

GUESTS

Ron Gogoi, LC MPO
Vana Deckter
Donna Crowder, Plantation Rd
Bob Crowder, Plantation Rd
Alex Borrego

Agenda Item #1: *Call to Order, Introductions, Review of Agenda and Motion to Approve Agenda:

Mr. David Wheaton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. in the Community Development/Public Works building, 1500 Monroe Street, Fort Myers, First Floor Conference Room 1B. Introductions were made.

Mr. Wheaton asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

**Mr. Derek Felder made the motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Paul Cohen.
The motion was called and passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item #2: *Approval of the September 18, 2024, meeting minutes.

Mr. Wheaton called for a review of the September 18, 2024 minutes.

Mr. Pat Connor stated in the minutes on page 3 of his motion it refers to projects 1 and 2. The BPAC list changes, so he said it would be best to state the project number, followed by the name of the project.

On page 2, under agenda item 3A Daniels Pkwy Eagle Ridge Rd, the comment states *David explains there will be further discussion on this project later in the meeting*, however Mr. Connor could not find this discussion in the meeting minutes. Mr. Wagley stated that the discussion was part of the BPAC prioritization. Mr. Felder pointed out that the BPAC prioritization was part of agenda item number 5B. Mr. Connor would like to see that discussion on Eagle Ridge added into the September 18 meeting minutes under agenda item 5B.

Mr. Connor also stated that he does not see Eagle Ridge on the BPAC list. Mr. Wagley stated that it is number 58, American Colony Blvd and Eagle Ridge. Mr. Connor stated that he thought American Colony Blvd and Eagle Ridge was much higher than number 58 during the September 18th discussion. Mr. Derek Felder shared that it is second in line for that road impact fee district. Mr. Wagley confirmed that it is number 2 in the road impact fee district, but number 58 in Tier 2.

Mr. Derek Felder made a motion to approve the September meeting minutes with the changes specified by Mr. Pat Connor. This motion was seconded by Mr. Paul Cohen. The motion was called and passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #3: Public Comments:

- (a) **Plantation Rd from Daniels Pkwy to Idlewild St** – Ms. Donna Crowder stated that she attended a BPAC meeting in November of 2017 for feedback on a sidewalk from Idlewild to Daniels Pkwy on Plantation Rd. She stated that she is aware that Tom will be speaking about the Plantation Road sidewalk at today’s BPAC meeting, and she will stay to listen to his presentation.

Agenda Item #4: Bike/Ped Facility Requests/Presentations:

The order of the presentations changed from the original agenda as Mr. Borrego arrived a few minutes after Ms. Deckter began her presentation.

- (a) **Loma Linda Dr/ Mandel Rd from McGregor Blvd to Sunrise Dr** – Ms. Vana Deckter stated the reasons why this road needs a sidewalk. There is a neighborhood, McGregor Groves, that has families with children and pets, as well as many elderly people. There are many cars and large trucks passing through this area as it provides a shortcut and a way to get around stoplights and the traffic headed into Cape Coral. The drivers are aggressive. It is Ms. Deckter’s hope that a sidewalk will be granted so that people will have a safe place to walk.

- (b) **Grant Blvd from SR 82 to Rainer Ave** – Mr. Alex Borrego shared that there is about 3 miles of sidewalk needed on this section of Grant Blvd. He stated that although he doesn't have stats to prove it, he has personally seen the traffic almost double in the last three years on the exit coming off Grant Blvd onto SR 82. There are many homes being built in the area and dump trucks on both sides of the street. Motorists often drive above the 30 MPH speed limit. Mr. Borrego stated that he is here to advocate for a sidewalk as it is a highly residential area, and he wants to keep kids safe.

Agenda Item #5: Other Business

- a) ***Plantation Rd Sidewalk Project** – Mr. Tom Marquardt presented slides sharing an overview on the Plantation Road Sidewalk Project, between Daniels Pkwy and Idlewild St. It's currently ranked number 12 and is the next project in the Central Road Impact Fee District. Mr. Marquardt shared the four projects currently funded through construction in the Central Impact Fee District, which includes: Tice Elementary, Orange River Blvd, Bell Blvd (SR 82 to Sunrise), and Bell Blvd (Sunrise to Albemarle Cir). Mr. Marquardt then discussed the original project overview which consisted of construction of a 5-foot-wide sidewalks along both sides of Plantation Rd from Daniels Pkwy to Idlewild St. The current construction cost estimate is approximately \$17.5 Million, plus right-of-way. Current project funding was to have it designed in 2026 through Gas Tax funds. There is approximately an \$11 million shortfall. If this project were to be funded, there would not be funding available to any Central District project for 5 to 10 years. The Central District has most of the projects on the list. Right-of-way would be required on both sides of Plantation Rd to construct the sidewalk and accommodate stormwater drainage. Right-of-way varies from 50 to 100 feet. Mr. Marquardt explained that there are 3 possible scenarios to move forward. The first scenario includes constructing the sidewalk on only one side of Plantation Rd. The west side requires less right-of-way, but the cost is much greater per square foot. The second scenario includes dividing the project into four smaller projects, constructing sidewalk on only one side, starting at Daniels Pkwy to the Crystal Dr roundabout. Subsequent projects from the Crystal Dr roundabout to Idlewild St. The third scenario includes delaying the sidewalk project until Plantation Rd is reconstructed and widened.

Mr. Derek Felder made the motion to go with scenario 3, delaying the Plantation Road Sidewalk Project until Plantation Road is widened. This was seconded by Mr. Paul Cohen. The motion was called and passed unanimously.

- b) ***Annual BPAC Project List Prioritization** – Mr. David Wagley stated that at the last BPAC meeting we discussed some staff recommendations, and the committee had voted to go along with what was recommended. Mr. Wagley stated that we need a motion to approve the BPAC list as is, with the exception of Plantation Rd.

Mr. Paul Cohen made the motion to approve the BPAC list as is, except for Plantation Rd. This was seconded by Mr. Eric Spivey.

Before the motion could be called and voted on, there was discussion regarding Leonard Blvd S-North Side project and whether it could be broken into three smaller sections and each section ranked separately.

Mr. Dave Wheaton asked for a motion to accept the BPAC prioritization list as is, with the change of removing Plantation Rd. Mr. Paul Cohen made the motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Steve Jansen. The motion was called and passed unanimously.

- c) ***Letter of Support for a Safe Routes to School Grant Application for Harns Marsh Elementary** – Mr. David Wheaton stated that we have written a letter of support in the past for other schools and BPAC will be supporting the Safe Routes to School for Harns Marsh Elementary. He has rewritten a letter used in the past, replacing the school’s name with Harns Marsh Elementary. The letter will go to the State and to The Safe Routes to School people.

Mr. Paul Cohen did mention that there is a typo that needs to be corrected before sending out the letter. Jillian Scholler’s name should be directly beneath Rob Prices name.

Mr. Wagley said the typo will be corrected.

Mr. Paul Cohen made a motion to approve the Safe Routes to School Letter for Harns Marsh Elementary, seconded by Mr. Derek Felder. The motion was called and passed unanimously.

- d) **MPO Update** – Mr. Ron Gogoi shared a presentation regarding the status for the JYLP Extension Project and the Caloosahatchee Bridge Sidewalk Project.
- JYLP Extension Project – Mr. Gogoi stated that 100% of the project design was completed in 2022, but the bridge aesthetics design review is currently under way. The project will be let in April of 2025, with construction most likely taking place in summer of 2025.
 - Caloosahatchee Bridge Sidewalk – Mr. Gogoi stated that the Caloosahatchee Bridge sidewalk is almost complete. The anticipated completion date is December 14, 2024. This will include completion of the sidewalk and the opening of all four lanes. The contract allows more time for minor tasks. Mr. Gogoi also wanted to point out that closing the Caloosahatchee Bridge over the summer advanced the completion of the project by 15 months.

Mr. Gogoi also wanted to share that the Lee County MPO’s Safe Streets for All will be developing a Safety Action Plan at a public meeting on Monday, December 9, 2024, at the Hilton Garden Inn Fort Myers Airport. Mr. Gogoi shared that the BPAC committee is invited to attend the meeting to participate.

Mr. Gogoi then asked Mr. David Wagley to present the next slide. Mr. Wagley shared that as part of the SUN Trail Network that runs through the state, the County submitted a grant application proposal for Littleton Rd between US 41 and Business 41. The proposal is to replace the existing sidewalk on the south side with a 12-foot-wide asphalt path. We were approved for \$500,000 for the design. The total amount for this project at the time of the submittal was about \$2.9 million, including construction and CEI.

Agenda Item #6: Member Comments:

- (a) Mr. Paul Cohen stated he needed to point out that Six Mile Cypress Pkwy on the BPAC list contains a cell error. The cell contains #REF! as a final score.

- (b) Mr. Derek Felder had questions regarding Six Mile Cypress Pkwy, Broadway St, and Harns Marsh Elementary School.

Mr. Eric Spivey wanted it on the record that he mistakenly asked for staff comments when he called on Mr. Derek Felder.

Agenda Item #7: Staff Comments

No Comments.

Agenda Item #8: Other Government Entity Comments

- (a) Lee County MPO – Mr. Ron Gogoi stated that FDOTs new work program came out. He said Lee County MPO had a large priority list, but they only had a few projects that got approved for funding, including a project from the City of Cape Coral for \$70,000.

Mr. Gogoi also shared that a project to build a new traffic signal at Alabama and 82, including intersection improvements, will be built in 2026.

Agenda Item #9: Upcoming Meeting Items

Mr. David Wheaton stated that our next BPAC meeting is on December 18th, which is a week before Christmas. It was decided that the December meeting would be canceled and the next BPAC meeting will take place in January 2025.

Next Meeting date - **Wednesday, January 15, 2025.**

Adjournment

Mr. Wheaton adjourned the meeting at 4:51 p.m.



BPAC Chairman

1-15-2025

Date



BPAC Secretary or Vice-Chair

1-15-2025

Date