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2 SOUTH FLORIDA EAST COAST CORRIDOR

TRANSIT ANALYSIS STUDY

3 PUBLIC HEARING

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10 GWEN MARGOLIS COMMUNITY CENTER

1590 NE 123rd Street

11 North Miami, Florida

November 9, 2006

12 5:30 p.m.

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18 Taken before SANDRA L. NELSON, Court

Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of

19 Florida at Large, pursuant to Notice of Public

Hearing.

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1           Thereupon, the following proceedings  
2 were had:

3           (Whereupon, the comments that follow  
4 were made directly to the court reporter  
5 before the formal commencement of the public  
6 hearing:)

7           MR. ROBERT INGRAM: My name is Robert  
8 Ingram, I-N-G-R-A-M. My concern is for the  
9 universities that are in the Miami Gardens  
10 area. We have both Florida Memorial  
11 University and you have St. Thomas  
12 University, and the corridors that they have  
13 designed does not accommodate in any way  
14 those two universities.

15           In addition to the universities, there's  
16 a huge warehouse district with a number of  
17 employees that could benefit from  
18 transportation in that area, and I would like  
19 for some consideration to be given to those  
20 issues; Florida Memorial University, St.  
21 Thomas University, as well as the -- and then  
22 the Opa Locka corridor itself. The City of  
23 Opa Locka is right outside that as well.

24           My address is Florida Memorial  
25 University, 15800 Northwest 42nd Avenue,

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1           Miami Gardens, 33055, telephone  
2 305-626-3104. Thank you.

3           MR. TOM BENTON: My name is Tom Benton,  
4 B-E-N-T-O-N, that's B as in boy, and I'm the

5 Village Manager with Miami Shores Village,  
6 and we want to go on record as opposing the  
7 Northeast 96th Street station. We would like  
8 to have it removed from all maps and  
9 publications, and we would also, in the event  
10 that this does go through without the  
11 station, we would like to have all  
12 environmental -- any and all environmental  
13 additions that could be made to the existing  
14 gate crossings to eliminate noise from the  
15 horns of the train. You know, there's things  
16 called quiet crossings, and, you know,  
17 methods like that we would like to have  
18 incorporated so that the single-family  
19 residential character of our community is  
20 protected.

21 MR. ERIC MINTZ: My first name is Eric,  
22 E-R-I-C, M-I-N-T-Z is my last name, and it's  
23 a very short comment to ask them to consider  
24 that when they actually build the system,  
25 that they make it adaptable to people who are  
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1 going to be doing bicycle commuting, so, for  
2 instance, if there will be places in the  
3 stations that are good to lock up bikes if  
4 you want to leave your bike; also, that they  
5 make sufficient space for or accommodations  
6 if you're coming to a station and you're  
7 riding your bike to a station, you want to  
8 take your bike with you on the train or the  
9 bus, that you have a way to do that.

10 Thank you very much.

11 MR. PATRICK MURRAY: My name is Patrick  
12 L. Murray, M-U-R-R-A-Y, and I live in Miami  
13 Shores, 725 Northeast 96th Street, just right  
14 across the railroad tracks.

15 I moved to Miami Shores with my family,  
16 my wife here, present, because we wanted to  
17 be -- to live in a nice, quiet, residential  
18 area in which only two or three trains or  
19 four or five were passing per day; nobody  
20 across the street from my house, a big  
21 community center, parking, a park for  
22 amusement of the kids and people. Three  
23 blocks away, there are a golf course. I love  
24 my quietness and peaceable life.

25 Now, with this prospective train, I will

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1 endure I don't know how many months or years  
2 of dust, machinery, and noise. The trouble  
3 that the crossing -- I don't know if it's  
4 going to be on the ground or it's going to be  
5 a bridge. In both cases, I'm going to have  
6 it in front of my house. 96th Street is one  
7 of the possible places for a station. This  
8 station will include also a parking lot for  
9 people from other neighbors, other  
10 neighborhoods which are not mine, who are  
11 going to be arriving, with all the commotion  
12 that it's going to be, taking out all of the  
13 niceties of the residential area and my  
14 house, and currently, just right now, because

15 of the fact of this possible new  
16 transportation coming in front of my house,  
17 to sell or to mortgage my house is very  
18 difficult, if not impossible, and the value  
19 of my house, just by the fact of this  
20 possible transportation, has come down; I  
21 don't know how much. I'm going to be  
22 suffering great damages at a very later stage  
23 of my life, which I thought I was going to be  
24 enjoying of peace and quietness. That's it.

25 MS. JULIANA BAGE: My name is Juliana,  
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1 J-U-L-I-A-N-A, Bage, B-A-G-E. My son wrote  
2 this out for me. I don't have my glasses on.  
3 We feel there should be only one type of  
4 transit system used across all three  
5 counties, Dade, Broward and Palm Beach. This  
6 would allow someone to ride from Palm Beach  
7 to Miami without having to transfer or exit.  
8 The route should be from Palm Beach, US-1  
9 south to I-595, I-595 west to I-75, and east  
10 to the port -- to the airport, I guess it  
11 would be Fort Lauderdale Airport, and the  
12 beach. It then should go south on US-1 to  
13 Miami and across I-395 to South Beach, with  
14 one more extension on 163rd Street from US-1  
15 west to the Park & Ride and east to the  
16 beach. That's it. And I don't think you  
17 have a camera to take a diagram picture.

18 THE COURT REPORTER: No.

19 MS. SARA KLEIN: My name is Sara,

20 S-A-R-A, Klein, K-L-E-I-N, address 1161  
21 Northeast 178th Terrace, North Miami Beach,  
22 Florida, 33162. Because of the hurricane  
23 season we experience every year in South  
24 Florida, I feel that it is most important to  
25 institute the fastest transportation in South  
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1 Florida to ensure that as many South Florida  
2 residents could evacuate as easily as  
3 possible.

4 MR. BRYAN FINNIE: My name is Bryan,  
5 B-R-Y-A-N, Finnie, F-I-N-N-I-E. I am in  
6 support of the study and very much interested  
7 in the FEC corridor placement. It's a good  
8 thing.

9 MR. SCOTT GALVIN: My name is Scott  
10 Galvin. I'm a member of the North Miami City  
11 Council. I reside at 13506 Northeast 24th  
12 Court in North Miami. The proposed stop  
13 locations for 125th, 135th, and 151st Streets  
14 are all in my City Council district, so I'm  
15 here because the expanded railway use will  
16 have an impact on the residents of my  
17 district. I'm most concerned with the 125th  
18 and 135th stop locations, as those are in  
19 mostly residential neighborhoods. At 151st  
20 Street, it's much more industrial, so my  
21 concern is less.

22 There's a former FEC railway train stop  
23 located at about 133rd Street and the  
24 railroad tracks. It's currently a U-Store-It

25 facility, so I don't know if it's available

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1 commercially. That would historically and  
2 logically provide for a good location for a  
3 train stop that would probably fulfill  
4 requirements for both 125th and 135th Street,  
5 as I recognize they have to locate it within  
6 a mile of either of those locations, so that  
7 one place would fall right about in the  
8 middle of those two, maybe could kill two  
9 birds with one stone in that case. So I was  
10 just here to learn tonight a little bit and  
11 suggest that thought and gave my card out to  
12 a lot of folk and hope that they'll keep me  
13 in the loop of whatever you have planned.

14 Related to this railway study or  
15 proposal is an ongoing battle that the City  
16 of North Miami is engaged in with Florida  
17 Power and Light. Florida Power and Light has  
18 two power substations located very near the  
19 FEC railway, which they want to connect with  
20 now upgraded 80-foot tall powerlines.

21 However, rather than run those powerlines  
22 underground alongside the railroad, which  
23 would be the shortest distance between the  
24 two points and the less invasive of  
25 residential neighborhoods, FPL has proposed

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1 running north, then west, and then south  
2 through the city's residential neighborhoods  
3 with 80-foot tall above-ground powerlines.

4 Obviously, the city feels that would be very  
5 intrusive for the residents and we are taking  
6 steps to go before the Public Service  
7 Commission sometime in the year 2007 to urge  
8 them to force Florida Power and Light to go  
9 back to FEC and work out an underground,  
10 alongside the railroad tracks connection for  
11 the two power stations, so we would hope that  
12 the FEC would be supportive of that and  
13 consider those options when they come forward  
14 sometime in the next 12 months.

15 (Thereupon, the formal public hearing  
16 commenced as follows:)

17 MR. SEEBURGER: We're going to get  
18 started in about two minutes, so if you can  
19 saunter over to a seat, we can get started.

20 Good evening and welcome. The time is  
21 now 6:30. The public hearing for the South  
22 Florida East Coast Corridor Transportation  
23 Analysis in Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm  
24 Beach Counties is now open.

25 First, what I would like to do is ask if

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1 there's anyone here who would like assistance  
2 in the Spanish or Creole languages.

3 (Discussion off the record.)

4 MR. SEEBURGER: Okay. This public  
5 hearing is being held to receive your  
6 comments regarding proposed transportation  
7 improvements in the South Florida East Coast  
8 Corridor between Miami and Jupiter, from

9 Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties.  
10 My name is Scott Seeburger. I work for the  
11 Florida Department of Transportation. Here  
12 tonight with me are representatives from our  
13 consulting, planning and engineering team,  
14 Rob Guy (phonetic) and Ian Fleming  
15 (phonetic).

16 At this time, I would like to recognize  
17 any elected officials here tonight. If there  
18 are elected officials this evening who wish  
19 to be recognized, if you would, please stand  
20 up and introduce yourself, and if you have  
21 comments that you want to make at the mike,  
22 we'll get those later. Elected officials,  
23 they're usually not bashful.

24 Okay. This public hearing is being held  
25 in accordance with the federal and state

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1 requirements listed on the screen and on the  
2 board behind me. The public hearing was  
3 advertised in Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm  
4 Beach County newspapers in accordance with  
5 federal and state requirements. The  
6 newspapers in which ads are placed are shown  
7 on the screen.

8 Notice of this meeting was also provided  
9 on the project website. In addition,  
10 adjacent property owners, interested citizens  
11 and elected public officials were notified by  
12 mail of tonight's meeting.

13 This meeting is also being held in

14 compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights  
15 Act of 1964 and Title VIII of the Civil  
16 Rights Act of 1968, as amended. Public  
17 participation at this hearing is solicited  
18 without regard to race, color, religion,  
19 gender, age, national origin, disability or  
20 familial status. Persons wishing to express  
21 their concerns relative to adherence to Title  
22 VI and VIII of the Civil Rights Act may do so  
23 by contacting Florida's Equal Opportunity  
24 Office at the address shown in the handout  
25 that you were provided at the registration

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1 desk. All inquiries or complaints will be  
2 handled according to department procedures in  
3 an expeditious manner.

4 The purpose of tonight's public hearing  
5 is to provide the latest project information  
6 to the public and to receive formal comments  
7 from the public. After the close of the  
8 comment period for the public hearing, and in  
9 consideration of the comments received, the  
10 environmental documents will be finalized.

11 This hearing is being held relative to  
12 the South Florida East Coast Corridor Transit  
13 Analysis, also referred to as Financial  
14 Management Number 417031-1-22-01, Federal Aid  
15 Number FTXA004 and Federal Transit  
16 Administration Grant Number FL-90-X372-07.  
17 This study is being conducted by Districts IV  
18 and VI of the Florida Department of

19 Transportation in conjunction with Region IV  
20 of the Federal Transit Administration. It  
21 was sponsored by the South Florida Regional  
22 Transportation Authority and the Metropolitan  
23 Planning Organizations of Miami-Dade, Broward  
24 and Palm Beach Counties, and conducted in  
25 coordination with the Federal Highway

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1 Administration, Federal Railroad  
2 Administration, U.S. Maritime Administration,  
3 U.S. Coast Guard, Federal Aviation  
4 Administration and the U.S. Environmental  
5 Protection Agency.

6 Input has been sought from Miami-Dade  
7 Transit, Broward County Transit, Palm Tran,  
8 the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional  
9 Planning Councils, the Tri-County Leagues of  
10 Cities, CSX Transportation and Florida East  
11 Coast Railway.

12 The public involvement program was  
13 conducted for this project in conformance  
14 with federal and state guidelines. This  
15 hearing is part of that program. Numerous  
16 meetings were held with affected and  
17 interested groups and individuals. Project  
18 information is available for review at nine  
19 locations in Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm  
20 Beach Counties until December 11th, 2006. A  
21 list of the locations is available at the  
22 registration desk here this evening.

23 Handouts and procedures regarding the project

24 are available at the registration desk as  
25 well.

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1 You were invited to listen to an  
2 introductory presentation describing the  
3 project earlier this evening, and that  
4 presentation will be incorporated into the  
5 final record of this hearing.

6 We welcome any oral and written comments  
7 that will help us make decisions regarding  
8 this project. You may make an oral statement  
9 tonight in one of two ways. First, you can  
10 make an oral statement during the public  
11 testimony session that follows my remarks.  
12 If you have not already filled out a speaker  
13 registration card and would like to make a  
14 statement, please raise your hand and our  
15 staff will provide you with one.

16 Second, you can make an individual  
17 statement directly to the court reporter to  
18 my right. The court reporter will be  
19 available to record your statement after the  
20 public testimony session.

21 Regarding written statements, written  
22 comments may be provided to us by completing  
23 and submitting a comment form either here  
24 tonight or take it home and mail it back  
25 later. Comment forms are available at the

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1 registration desk. Written statements or  
2 exhibits may be submitted for the record in

3 lieu of or in addition to verbal statements.  
4 If you think of other ideas later, you can  
5 submit them by either fax, letter or E-mail  
6 to that address as listed on the screen. You  
7 can also submit your ideas and comments on  
8 the study to the website, which is  
9 WWW.SFECCSTUDY.COM. Excuse me.

10 Written statements received at the  
11 district offices of the Florida Department of  
12 Transportation by December 11th, 2006 will be  
13 documented as part of this hearing. However,  
14 please be advised that the last day written  
15 comments will be received is December 11th,  
16 2006.

17 At this time, I would like to invite any  
18 elected public officials who would like to  
19 make a public statement relative to this  
20 project to please step up to the microphone.  
21 Please repeat your name and office for the  
22 reporter.

23 MR. TED WALKER: My name is Ted Walker,  
24 Commissioner for the Village of Biscayne  
25 Park. I commend the group for attacking this

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1 issue. We're only about 20 years late on it,  
2 but there's several things that are very  
3 important to our community that I'd like to  
4 address; more specifically, 107th Street.  
5 I'm sorry I missed the presentation, but  
6 that's a local community street. There's  
7 some indication, I'm told, that there may be

8 a station in that environment, and that would  
9 really destroy -- the traffic that would  
10 bring on 107th Street would destroy the  
11 atmosphere of our community. We'd like you  
12 to move it further north, say, somewhere  
13 between 119th and 121st Street. We would ask  
14 for a traffic plan to pass for development  
15 there to build an incredible station in an  
16 incredible environment. It would promote the  
17 whole restructuring of a depressed area.

18 As far as the method of transport, I did  
19 notice this in the paperwork. It seems that  
20 everything seems to be on wheels. Right now,  
21 there seems to be a movement from the feds to  
22 be more interested or an improved interest in  
23 magnetic levitation, which it has a lot less  
24 maintenance, it has a lot less noise; were it  
25 elevated, we wouldn't have traffic stops,

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1 and right now, as I understand it, there are  
2 23 trains per day with the FEC blocking us  
3 now, and if we add more trains, we have  
4 another problem. If we elevate and we make  
5 noise, we've destroyed our environment also,  
6 but if we can get a mag lev, this would solve  
7 a lot of those problems.

8 Additionally, I'd like you to take issue  
9 in the long term of maybe tunneling under the  
10 road at major intersections. One, you keep  
11 your vista; two, you don't lose real estate;  
12 and three, we can survive train crossings no

13 matter how many there are, but 107th Street  
14 needs to be a grade crossing to limit traffic  
15 that we have, because otherwise, there's no  
16 physical environment to accommodate the  
17 traffic or enlarged roadway. Thank you.

18 MR. SEEBURGER: Thank you. Before our  
19 proceeding, is there anyone here with a black  
20 Monte Carlo? I really like those cars.  
21 There's no one here with a black Monte Carlo?  
22 There's one blocking -- I guess  
23 outside that's blocking someone from getting  
24 out, so if you do, would you mind moving your  
25 car? Maybe we're all trapped; I don't know.

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1 Okay. Any other elected officials or  
2 public officials who wish to make a comment?  
3 You're a public official.

4 MS. LILIA MEDINA: Hello. Good evening.  
5 Lilia Medina with the City of Miami,  
6 representing the City Manager's Office and  
7 the Department of Capital Improvements and  
8 Transportation.

9 We, of course, are in support of the  
10 alternatives analysis and moving the project  
11 in the analysis as quickly as possible. You  
12 know, this is a rather large scale effort and  
13 also a very complex one. We, the staff of  
14 the City of Miami and the City Manager's  
15 Office, have been meeting with the core team  
16 throughout the inception of the project, and  
17 we realize that there's a lot more community

18 participation, more jobs that need to be --  
19 to take place to getting from the entire  
20 study area, residents and business community,  
21 but we are definitely in support of station  
22 stops in the City of Miami; in particular,  
23 bringing the station down to the Civic Center  
24 area and to the government area of the city  
25 so that it would connect with other premium

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1 transit, with MetroRail and MetroMover.

2 Thank you so much for the opportunity to  
3 speak on this matter.

4 MR. SEEBURGER: Thank you. Any other  
5 elected public officials? Okay. Persons who  
6 wish to make a statement or submit written  
7 views and/or exhibits regarding this project  
8 will now have the opportunity to do so. If  
9 you are holding a speaker registration card,  
10 please turn that in now so we can call you.  
11 I will call you by the cards. I'll call you  
12 up by the cards I receive. If you have not  
13 received a speaker card or wish to speak,  
14 please raise your hand and our staff will  
15 provide one to you. If, throughout the  
16 public testimony period here, if you find you  
17 want to say something, just raise your hand  
18 and we'll get cards to you. What I ask is  
19 that you please be respectful of everyone who  
20 wants to speak tonight by limiting your  
21 comments to about three minutes. We're not  
22 going to pull a book out, but about three

23 minutes or so. If you find three minutes  
24 isn't enough for what you want to say, if you  
25 would, I'd ask you to find a convenient place

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1 to stop and let other people get up to speak  
2 and then you can come up and speak some more,  
3 you know, after others that are in line get  
4 to speak. It's important for you to remember  
5 that we are here only to receive your input  
6 into the project record. Limited time and  
7 resources require us to restrict our  
8 responses to any questions you may have to  
9 those of clarification only. We will be  
10 available following the hearing to answer any  
11 questions you may have beyond those only for  
12 clarifications.

13 Okay. So when you're called, please  
14 state your name, address, and affiliation if  
15 you're representing a group. Okay. Charles  
16 Lowe?

17 MR. CHARLES LOWE: Good evening. My  
18 name is Charles Lowe. I live at 16800  
19 Northeast 15th Avenue, North Miami Beach,  
20 Florida. I'm glad you mentioned about the  
21 time limit. I had thought about that, so  
22 I'll just make some general comments and then  
23 talk about the two new issues that I want to  
24 bring up.

25 In general, I was thinking about the

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1 project on an overall basis, figuring that if

2 I were the federal government, how would I  
3 deal with what I say this project is if they  
4 can't do it or they're going to do it no  
5 matter what. Most likely, however, that it  
6 will be like a thing in the middle, and, of  
7 course, how, with anything in the middle,  
8 that you would think along the line, hey, as  
9 I have been talking about at the other  
10 meetings, about things about safety, about  
11 getting passengers on the train, about fares,  
12 about, of course, environmental friendliness,  
13 but I think the thing that the federal  
14 government is going to come down to, maybe,  
15 perhaps, and the thing that I would be  
16 thinking about would be that they might want  
17 to cut a few costs, and at the same time,  
18 have new sources of revenue, and, of course,  
19 I've discussed this with you, too. I think I  
20 had mentioned that just for the record. I  
21 think I want to go talk about the two new  
22 subject matters now that I do want to talk  
23 about, the first one having to do with -- I  
24 think the gentleman from Biscayne Park  
25 mentioned about, and that's to request you

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1 that you make a study doing the FEC study  
2 above as well as on the FEC track. I  
3 mentioned this -- I brought this up two  
4 nights ago at the City Council meeting, and  
5 that the mayor stated that he would not put  
6 that in a resolution, but he stated that he

7 did want to bring this up before the mayor's  
8 task force, to ask you to do this as well.

9 This is not as simple as it sounds,  
10 because as the gentleman from Biscayne Park  
11 mentioned, you also could think about  
12 using something of MetroRail, or thinking  
13 that if the station goes to the line, that,  
14 you know, that you might want to put just a  
15 line and bring it to the MDT. You can also  
16 think about segmenting it and about different  
17 types of routes, and, of course, the longer  
18 you have to do this, the better the results  
19 might be and the more thorough the analysis,  
20 and you also have to keep in mind that you're  
21 dealing with Broward and Palm Beach County  
22 and running south and land.

23 And the other point I want to talk about  
24 that was talked about was express service. I  
25 was looking over a map the other day of New

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1 York City, and I was surprised how little  
2 time it actually saves on the trains. I was  
3 thinking about this, and there's at least  
4 three disadvantages of using the express  
5 service, and maybe perhaps these are among  
6 the reasons that Tri-Rail and MetroRail don't  
7 use it.

8 The first one, of course, is some people  
9 will come and say at the stations, well, why  
10 don't you stop into my station. Somebody  
11 probably will say that. Secondly, that we

12 have a whole bunch of people from a lot of  
13 lands and all that, and it might be simpler  
14 for everybody to just have every train stop  
15 at every station. And lastly, it might come  
16 down to money, too, my cost to have an extra  
17 track; now, not only do they have money on  
18 it, but also extra space, and that you might  
19 be thinking, you know, that at the very best,  
20 express service is not going to give or  
21 skipping stations is not going to give as  
22 much benefit as would be expected. For  
23 example, in New York City, some of the times  
24 were reduced only like five minutes on 30  
25 minutes or 10 minutes on 45 minutes, and  
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1 that's all. Thank you.

2 MR. SEEBURGER: Thank you very much.  
3 John Van Leer.

4 MR. JOHN VAN LEER: Yes. John Van Leer,  
5 1200 Northeast 89th Street. I'm very much in  
6 favor of this project. My only complaint is  
7 that it's not happening fast enough. This  
8 evening, to get here took me an hour and a  
9 half from the University of Miami main  
10 campus, and I couldn't help but think that  
11 were the system in place right now, it  
12 probably would have been 20, maybe 25 minutes  
13 between the University of Miami main campus  
14 and a station perhaps right here within easy  
15 walking distance, and how much more enjoyable  
16 it would be to be able to read during that 20

17 or 30 minutes rather than spend my time tied  
18 up in traffic.

19 I'm certainly in support of the project.  
20 With 26 trains, I don't see how you can get  
21 around either having an elevated system to  
22 get over the grade crossings or tunnel under  
23 them, and with the water table as it is, I  
24 would imagine that the raised system would be  
25 the preferential one, and from a simple

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1 logistics point of view, it would be lovely  
2 to get on a natural MetroRail car and be able  
3 to ride all the way up into Aventura or  
4 wherever in one continuous ride.

5 It turns out today, if I go by bus, I  
6 have to get to the MetroRail station by bus,  
7 and then I have to go the length of the  
8 MetroRail out to 79th Street, then take  
9 another bus, and you come up with a situation  
10 where it's several hours to do what should be  
11 a simple thing, so I appeal to you not to put  
12 a whole bunch of segments in this thing where  
13 you have to keep getting off of one train and  
14 getting onto another. That tends to destroy  
15 the primary benefit of the whole thing, so I  
16 guess, in summary, I'd say I'm very much in  
17 favor of this whole thing. I'd like to ride  
18 it before I die. Thank you.

19 MR. SEEBURGER: Thank you very much.  
20 John Gorman.

21 MR. JOHN GORMAN: I'm John Gorman. I

22 live at 365 Northeast 125th Street here in  
23 North Miami, and I just have a clarification  
24 question. Twice in the presentation, I saw  
25 the term, environmental justice. This is  
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1 literally the first time in my life I have  
2 seen that term and I'm curious to know what  
3 it means.

4 MR. SEEBURGER: Do you know what it  
5 means?

6 MR. McMULLEN: Sort of. It's an  
7 executive order. It's an executive order  
8 from the president.

9 AN AUDIENCE MEMBER: Use the microphone,  
10 please.

11 MR. McMULLEN: That was an executive  
12 order from President Clinton to make sure  
13 there's no disproportionate impacts to low  
14 income and minority neighborhoods from any  
15 federal actions.

16 MR. SEEBURGER: Okay. Anyone else want  
17 to make comments? If you do, raise your hand  
18 and we'll get you a card. This is the last  
19 one I have here.

20 Scott Short?

21 MR. SCOTT SHORT: Hi. My name is Scott  
22 Short and I own a property at 44 Northeast  
23 46th Street in Miami, and I'm a member of the  
24 Buena Vista East Historic Neighborhood  
25 Association. I have one comment, and it's a

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1 big concern. I don't know if it's something  
2 that you can address, but it really impacts  
3 the municipalities that will be reacting to  
4 this transit, and that is that we're  
5 extremely concerned that these station stops,  
6 the locations and any future transit oriented  
7 development that occurs around them will be  
8 used to justify extremely high density in  
9 areas where we don't feel that it's  
10 appropriate, and we believe that studies show  
11 that these extreme high densities aren't  
12 necessary to have successful transit. In  
13 fact, successful transit can be accomplished  
14 with medium density, relatively low density  
15 according to some of the studies that we've  
16 seen on the Internet, so I just wanted to  
17 make a comment that we're extremely  
18 concerned.

19 We welcome transit, but we've been  
20 hearing we don't want it next to us if it's  
21 going to be used as a justification for  
22 extremely, extremely high, we're talking  
23 urban core high density, in our one and  
24 two-story residential neighborhoods. We love  
25 the idea of transit, but not if it's going to

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1 be used to those -- to justify those ends,  
2 and if it -- if that happens, then you're  
3 going to see a lot of residents in opposition  
4 to these transit stations, which I think is  
5 going to be a travesty, so I just wanted to

6 make that comment for the record, and I hope  
7 that our municipalities are listening to us.  
8 Thank you.

9 MR. SEEBURGER: Thank you. If you  
10 can -- You know, if you don't mind staying,  
11 we're going to -- at the end, we'd like to  
12 talk with you.

13 MR. SHORT: Thank you.

14 MR. SEEBURGER: Any others wishing to  
15 make a comment? If you would, would you mind  
16 filling out a card? I'd appreciate it.

17 MR. JAMES SWORA (phonetic): My name is  
18 James Swora. I live at 45 Northeast 92nd  
19 Street. I'm a member of the Miami Shores  
20 Property Owners, and I'd like just to second  
21 the comments of the previous speaker. I  
22 think high density is a factor, especially in  
23 the residential neighborhoods. As I see the  
24 proposed placement of the stops, I think that  
25 there are some important considerations about  
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1 using areas that are undeveloped versus  
2 specifically in the Miami Shores Community  
3 Center area on 96th Street. There are other  
4 areas that, you know, are eyesores farther  
5 down that I think should be considered.

6 MR. SEEBURGER: Okay. Thank you. I  
7 can't read this. Steve?

8 MR. STEVE HAGENS: Steve Hagens. I'm  
9 at 25 Northeast 73rd Street. Overall, I'm in  
10 favor of some sort of rail systems from Miami

11 Government Center to Jupiter, but in speaking  
12 with some of you tonight, I do have a couple  
13 of concerns, certainly for those people  
14 remaining fairly close to the system, and  
15 that is the noise factor. If this is to go  
16 forward, I would hope that a technology -- I  
17 guess this is into your second phase -- would  
18 be chosen that would be the quietest and the  
19 cleanest. I had discussions with some of you  
20 about there is no technology out there that  
21 recaptures the momentum going forward of a  
22 BFO, like a hybrid automobile. I would hope  
23 that that technology might come around in 10  
24 or 20 years.

25 I, too, am concerned about if our local

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1 governments use this as an example or a  
2 reason to build higher density. I mean, most  
3 of the rail systems that I've been on,  
4 whether they be in New York or Chicago, they  
5 go through neighborhoods that are, you know,  
6 one, two, three stories, maybe four and five  
7 and six stories, and I would think that that  
8 would be, you know, a logical height, and we  
9 would all be opposed, I think, if this is to  
10 become a system of, you know, loads of cities  
11 up and down the corridor.

12 MR. SEEBURGER: All right. Thank you.

13 Barbara Braggert?

14 MS. BARBARA BIGGERT: Thank you. My  
15 name is Barbara Biggert. I'm at 11342

16 Peachtree Drive and my property ends right  
17 along the FEC line, and I was thinking about  
18 when you're driving on I-95 and you see those  
19 large walls that have been erected in certain  
20 places. Is there any consideration to create  
21 some kind of a barrier? And thinking of  
22 environmental justice, hearing those words,  
23 the first thing I thought of was, you know,  
24 reconciling and trying to make a  
25 reconciliation between all of the pollution

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1 and the natural environment and creating more  
2 trees or hedges or something, so I just  
3 wonder what kind of studies you're making to  
4 work to help it be cleaner and quieter for  
5 people that live close to these -- to the  
6 railroads.

7 MR. SEEBURGER: That was two questions.  
8 Can we talk to you afterwards about those  
9 particular concerns? Would that be all  
10 right?

11 MS. BARBARA BIGGERT: I thought this was  
12 a public meeting, so I thought you were  
13 addressing people publicly.

14 MR. SEEBURGER: This is a public  
15 hearing. We're here really to take  
16 testimony. I can give some minor -- You  
17 know, I can answer certain things, like what  
18 does environmental justice mean, but when it  
19 gets --

20 MS. BARBARA BIGGERT: Oh, no, somebody

21 already answered the question about  
22 environmental justice. I just was asking you  
23 whether there was a lot of consideration for  
24 it. I think this gentleman talked about it  
25 erecting some barriers or something else to  
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1 be put around the area to sort of hedge  
2 against the effects of the system.

3 MR. SEEBURGER: I would be very happy to  
4 answer and talk with you about that, but  
5 after we close up the testimony period.

6 Okay. Patrick Murray?

7 MR. PATRICK MURRAY: My name is Patrick  
8 Murray, 725 Northeast 96th Street, just right  
9 across the railroad tracks. I think that the  
10 concerns of the community are different. I  
11 mean, one thing is to live 10 blocks away  
12 from the prospective transportation; another  
13 thing is to live across the street. I have  
14 many, many concerns, from the prices of the  
15 properties across the railroad tracks, from  
16 the change of the nature of a pleasant living  
17 neighborhood, but at this point, I would like  
18 to know how long would it take, and more or  
19 less what would have to be or will be the  
20 works that will be done in the railroad  
21 tracks, because I live just across, just a  
22 few feet. What do we have to endure and for  
23 how long. And secondly, the possibility of  
24 expropriation that might happen; maybe they  
25 need more land to make a parking lot or space

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1 for buses or whatever. What can we expect  
2 that we're going to be receiving in exchange.  
3 Those are the questions, more or less your  
4 idea of what are going to be the works, how  
5 much dust and noise from the machinery and  
6 for how long in case a station is done there,  
7 because there might -- there is a  
8 possibility, and I want to take the words of  
9 my neighbors here from Miami Shores; I'm  
10 highly concerned with the density also, so  
11 those are the two questions I have.

12 MR. SEEBURGER: Okay. Again, those are  
13 questions we can answer after I close out the  
14 testimony period.

15 MR. PATRICK MURRAY: Okay.

16 MR. SEEBURGER: We'll be here as long as  
17 you want to ask us questions.

18 Okay. Jasmine? Which, I guess, what;  
19 you're going to --

20 MS. ASSENTE (phonetic): Yes. I'm just  
21 trying to -- I have their names, so --  
22 Jasmine Assente translation -- translating  
23 for Janet Ja (phonetic), 6502 Northeast 2nd  
24 Avenue, Miami, 33138; Fromm Pierre  
25 (phonetic), 16000 Miami Drive, North Miami

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1 Beach, Florida; Marcel Sainthilaire, 1305  
2 Northeast 135th Street, North Miami, 33161;  
3 and Raul Clemot (phonetic), 1351 Northeast  
4 114 Terrace.

5 Mr. Sainthilaire is in support of the  
6 project. He feels this project should have  
7 been done earlier and we feel that it is long  
8 overdue. As a former resident of New York,  
9 with many transit options, we feel that  
10 Florida promotes the use of a private  
11 vehicle. We feel that not many people can  
12 actually pay for the private vehicle, so this  
13 is definitely overdue and should have been  
14 implemented already. In terms of the project  
15 that has been proposed, we prefer that they  
16 have wheels so that they can operate or run  
17 on shared tracks. We also feel the study  
18 team should try to do their best to implement  
19 the project prior to 2012. Thank you.

20 MR. SEEBURGER: Thank you. Anyone else  
21 wish to make a statement tonight?

22 Okay. I remind you that written  
23 comments and/or exhibits may be presented in  
24 addition to the verbal comments we receive.

25 A comment card is provided with the handout  
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1 that was distributed at the front door this  
2 evening. All written materials we receive at  
3 this public hearing or by mail will become  
4 part of the official public hearing record as  
5 long as they're received by December 11th,  
6 2006.

7 A verbatim transcript of tonight's  
8 proceedings, together with all written  
9 materials received as part of the hearing

10 record and all studies, displays and  
11 informational material provided at the  
12 hearing will be made a part of the project  
13 decision-making process and made available at  
14 the Florida Department of Transportation  
15 District IV and VI offices for public review  
16 upon request.

17 UNKNOWN AUDIENCE MEMBER: I have a  
18 question about the written comments. You  
19 have two separate addresses. You say there's  
20 an office in Lauderdale. On the card, it  
21 says North Bayshore Drive in Miami. Which is  
22 it?

23 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: If that's a point for  
24 clarification, can you get up and state your  
25 name for the record, please?

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1 MR. CHARLES DUNN: Charles Dunn,  
2 D-U-N-N. On the screen, you say send the  
3 written comments to the Department of  
4 Transportation in Fort Lauderdale. On the  
5 handout you gave us, you say send the  
6 comments to Jacqueline Kidd, North Bayshore  
7 Drive in Miami. Which is it?

8 MR. SEEBURGER: This one here, but if  
9 they go to Jacqueline, they'll get to me,  
10 too.

11 MR. CHARLES DUNN: Let the record  
12 indicate he's indicating the Fort Lauderdale  
13 address, please.

14 MR. SEEBURGER: I want to thank you for

15 attending the meeting tonight and providing  
16 your input on this project. It is now 7:07  
17 and I hereby officially close the public  
18 hearing for the South Florida East Coast  
19 Corridor Transit Analysis in Miami-Dade,  
20 Broward and Palm Beach Counties.

21 The study team will remain here as  
22 necessary to answer any further questions  
23 that you may have. Goodnight and thank you  
24 for coming.

25 (Whereupon, the comments that follow  
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1 were made directly to the court reporter  
2 after the closing of the public hearing:)

3 MR. JOHN VAN LEER: I'm John Van Leer,  
4 V-A-N, capital L-E-E-R, 1200 Northeast 89th  
5 Street, Miami, 33138, and I'm a very big  
6 supporter of this rail system. It's long  
7 overdue. It should have been built the time  
8 the rest of the MetroRail was built. It's,  
9 what, 20, 30 years behind what it should have  
10 been, and my concern is that the whole  
11 process is entirely too slow. I am now 66  
12 and I want to ride this system before I die.  
13 That's my feeling. The other -- The other  
14 issues I think that are important is that it  
15 has to be an electric system, because to run  
16 diesel units on this line is not only noisy,  
17 but it's also incredibly polluting. You  
18 know, if you're going to have seven and a  
19 half minutes between cars, then it's all

20 going to be starting and stopping and diesel  
21 loads, which is completely inappropriate. It  
22 might be much more appropriate to use  
23 electric, and particularly, it can be made  
24 regenerative, like my Prius. When I step on  
25 the brakes, it regenerates and it puts the  
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1 energy back in the battery, so when I  
2 accelerate the next time, away I go, and it  
3 doesn't make very much pollution because it  
4 has a little, itty-bitty motor. I would very  
5 much like to see something that is electric,  
6 and I think it has to be raised above grade,  
7 because with the seven and a half minute  
8 frequency during the rush hour that is shown  
9 by the study, it's just impractical to raise  
10 and lower gates, you know, more quickly than  
11 about half that time, so rather than cut all  
12 the traffic, since it can't adversely affect  
13 traffic according to the rules of the study,  
14 it means it's going to have to be either  
15 elevated or tunneled, and I think tunneling  
16 is way more expensive than raising it,  
17 especially in an area with a water table  
18 that's close to the surface as we have here  
19 in South Florida.

20 And let's see. What other -- And we  
21 need to -- we need to divorce the zoning  
22 density issues, because many local  
23 communities that are residential today wish  
24 to remain residential, and they don't want to

25 have a major high density development shoved  
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1 down their throat. It should be possible to  
2 have some stations that do have high density  
3 where it's appropriate and some others which  
4 are primarily residential. And while we're  
5 building the system, we should have bicycle  
6 paths and walking paths along the  
7 right-of-way so that people can walk or ride  
8 their bikes to the stations along the  
9 right-of-way, because it's going to be maybe  
10 six or ten blocks between stations. Since we  
11 already have the right-of-way, especially if  
12 it's a raised rail system, there's no reason  
13 we can't have bike paths under it like they  
14 are in South Dade, except that they should be  
15 straight bicycle paths for bicycle commuters  
16 rather than serpentine, because serious  
17 bicyclists don't want to slow down to go  
18 weaving in and out for no apparent reason,  
19 and integrated with not only bus systems, but  
20 also bike path systems and allow people to  
21 bring their bicycles on the trains like they  
22 can with the MetroRail.

23 I think that's it. Thank you.

24 (Thereupon, there being no further  
25 comments to record, the court reporter was

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1 excused at 7:45 p.m.)

2 CERTIFICATE

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5 STATE OF FLORIDA

6 COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE

7

8 I, Sandra L. Nelson, Shorthand Reporter,  
9 certify that I was authorized to and did  
10 stenographically report the foregoing proceedings  
11 and that the transcript is a true and complete  
12 record of my stenographic notes.

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14 Dated this 18th day of November, 2006.

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Sandra L. Nelson,

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Notary Public, State of Florida

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My commission expires: 8/22/10

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