



MEETING SUMMARY

TO: Scott Seeburger & Project File

FROM: Michael Brady

DATE: June 29, 2006

REFERENCE: South Florida East Coast Corridor Transit Analysis (SFECCTA)
Financial Project ID: 417031-1-22-01

SUBJECT: Public Workshop Series No. 1 (Palm Beach Gardens)

ATTENDEES: Refer to sign-in sheets (available upon request)

On Thursday, June 28, 2006, the second Public Workshop for the SFECCTAS held in Palm Beach County was conducted at the Palm Beach Gardens Municipal Complex, 10500 North Military Trail, Palm Beach Gardens Florida.

Invitation postcards for all five Public Workshops were mailed to 227,191 households and businesses within the vicinity of the study corridor, and approximately 59 people were present for the workshop which was scheduled for 6 PM to 8 PM. Electronic postcards were sent via email to municipalities within the study area, and requests were made to place the meeting date, time and location on the municipal calendars and bulletin boards.

Part I: Public review of project illustrations

Prior to the formal presentations, project maps were exhibited in the rear of the room and staff members were available to assist the public in examining the aerials and exhibits and answer any questions regarding the project during this "open house" period. The meeting handouts included the scoping booklet, project newsletters, Advance Notification, and fact sheets. These materials were also provided in Spanish and Creole.

Part II: Workshop

Mr. Hank Dufour with the City of Palm Beach Gardens recognized the four elected officials present and introduced the FDOT Project Manager, Scott Seeburger. The following elected/public officials or their representatives were present:

- Vice-Mayor Jody Barnett, City of Palm Beach Gardens
- City Councilmember Hal Valeche, City of Palm Beach Gardens
- City Councilmember David Levy, City of Palm Beach Gardens
- City Manager Ron Ferris, City of Palm Beach Gardens

- Nicole Williams, Rep. Brandenburg's office
- Eric Brodie, Rep. Brandenburg's office
- Alice Bojanowski, Town of Jupiter
- Randy Whitfield, Director, Palm Beach MPO
- Ann Perrotta, MPO Administrator, Martin County MPO
- Andy Hartmann, Palm Beach County Engineering Dept.
- Carl Hussey, Palm Beach County
- Jamie Marcus, Palm Beach County Planning Dept.
- Peter Banting, Palm Beach County
- Chris Gulam, City of West Palm Beach
- Kim DeLaney, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
- Joe Quinty, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority

The formal presentation was by Scott Seeburger (FDOT) and Tom Hickey (Gannett Fleming). Mr. Seeburger made concluding remarks and opened up the meeting to comments and questions.

Mr. Tyrone Holmes of West Palm Beach stated that his mother owns property near 25th Street and the FEC tracks. His questions were – how will you pay for the project, - have you looked at associated development, - what is the MPO's role, what agreements or interlocal agreements would be needed and – how will minority participation be addressed?

Mr. Seeburger responded that federal, state and sources of local funds will pay for the project if the project is approved. We would make application to the FTA and we will need to show local funding for matching. Mr. Seeburger responded that he was unsure as to the interlocal agreements and what documents would be required between agencies and MPOs. Regarding associated development, the study team will look at areas where stations could potentially be located. Mr. Holmes requested and received Mr. Seeburger's email address to submit additional questions in the interest of time.

Mr. Patrick McPoland of North Palm Beach stated that he used Tri-Rail three or four times to the Miami airport and that the system was not practical. The FEC corridor is much more practical because it is located where people will use it.

Mr. Pat Hughey questioned if there will be secure public parking areas at the stations. Mr. Hickey responded that safety and security is a priority when planning and operating a passenger rail system. Mr. Hickey commented that he would not charge for parking if it were his decision, but a small fee could be added to the price of a ticket and cover costs. The study team does not have any information on what the cost would be. It has not been studied at this point in time.

Mr. Victor Vilance asked who would administer the funds to do the project, the MPO? Mr. Seeburger responded that we don't have an answer at this time. Mr. Vilance also stated that he agrees with the person who questioned security. He currently rides Tri-

Rail and there are panhandlers at the station and the security is patrolling the employee parking area instead of the terminal.

Dr. Ilene Gerber of Palm Beach Gardens stated that in the Gardens area and north, most residents desire that I-95 be the alignment where the rail line is run. This would be away from the residential areas – “West Is Best”

Mr. John Burns of Jupiter is interested in train horn noise and quiet zones. He asked how many crossings have been updated. He understood that it was \$300 thousand per crossing to improve / comply with quiet zone regulations. Mr. Seeburger responded that there may be 1 or 2 rail crossings upgraded on the CSX line to the point where they come close to qualifying safety measures for quiet zones. He will get information to Mr Burns.

Mr. Jamie Marcus of Juno Beach expressed strong support for the study. It will ultimately alleviate congestion. He did not agree with Dr. Gerber that west is best. There is a need to redevelop the east corridor near U.S.1 and along the FEC. He agreed that the FEC corridor was more practical, creating jobs and housing for new populations. He supported semi-rapid transit systems.

Mr. Kevin Petrich of North Palm Beach stated that he works at FAU at the Broward campus and used Tri-Rail. He originally used the system 3 years ago and it was a 3 hour commute. Since double-tracking, the system is much improved, about 1.5 hour commute. How unusual is a 1.5 hour commute? Are there many like me who travel from North Palm to downtown Broward?

Mr. Seeburger responded that an hour commute is on the high end. There are not a lot of riders like you traveling to Broward. New York and in the Bay Area are the exceptions. We are mindful of creating a system that is complementary to Tri-Rail.

Ms. Ann Perrotta of the Martin County MPO stated that she supports transit in general and wanted to know are there models that focus around density?

Mr. Seeburger responded that density will be looked at as part of the study.

Ms. Kim Delany of the TCRPC stated that her organization is working with municipalities/local governments on land use designations. Those in attendance can visit their web site under special projects to learn more about the process.

Mr. Seeburger stated that it is an educational process. We, as a transportation planning organization, need to have a better understanding of development and land use.

Mr. John Chaplik of Palm Beach Gardens stated that utilizing the FEC corridor and implementing workforce housing pose conflicting goals and objectives.

Mr. Seeburger stated that the price of land east or west is sky high. A municipality can plan for workforce housing in a new development. Many depressed areas exist along the coast.

Ms. Carol Chaplik of Palm Beach Gardens stated that the study should forget about affordable housing and focus on transportation. Put the transportation where people are located. Scripps offers an opportunity where shuttles can move employees.

Mr. Phillip Forde of Palm Tran stated that you may want to double-track the FEC because that's where the people are. U.S.1 is the busiest route for Palm Tran. You could run the bus on the FEC tracks in the north end. There is a great need in north county because they have no transit services.

Mr. Seeburger asked if there any other questions or comments. He thanked all for attending.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.