

**CITY OF TREASURE ISLAND, FLORIDA
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL WORKSHOP MINUTES
March 19, 2009**

The workshop was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Mayor Minning.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Mayor Bob Minning

ROLL CALL:

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| Mayor Bob Minning | | Present |
| Commissioner Phil Collins | District 1 | Present |
| Commissioner Ed Gayton | District 2 | Present |
| Commissioner Carol Coward | District 3 | Present |
| Commissioner Alan Bildz | District 4 | Present |

1. DISCUSSION ITEM: Discussion of Alternate Bike Paths

Mayor Minning welcomed everyone to the meeting. City Manager, Reid Silverboard, introduced representatives from Volkert, who will be giving the presentation on the alternatives for the bike trail.

Mr. Rao gave a brief overview of the meeting that was held on February 24, 2009. There were 36 residents at that meeting. They must keep three elements in mind; safety, access, and mobility. (S. A. M.) The proposal includes low cost elements using existing signals. The accepted minimum level of service is a "D". The streets in Treasure Island are rated "C", which is a higher level.

Mr. Rao reviewed the planning level costs of each of the alternatives. The alternatives are 108th Avenue, 104th Avenue, and 107th Avenue. The proposed paths take advantage of some of the green space in the city. Alternative three, 107th Avenue, would convert four lanes of travel down to two lanes, one in each direction, in order to add a buffer lane and bike lane in each direction. This alternative would reduce a portion of 107th Avenue to a "D" level of service.

Mr. Rao then discussed a fourth alternative called Treasure Trails, which would create a trail network encompassing all of the other three alternatives. The estimated cost would be about \$64,000.

The system to connect to the Pinellas Trail is already in place. The City of St. Petersburg is working on a preliminary conceptual trail connection.

Mr. Rao explained the process to implement the project and went over the next steps. He then reported on the results of the "straw vote" that was taken at the February 24th meeting. 28

citizens voted for an alternative. 18 citizens either chose not to vote or voted for a “do nothing” approach. Alternatives 2 and 3 got the most interest. Some of the sidewalk system on Gulf Boulevard would be utilized. There is very little “hard” cost. Most of the cost is removing existing markings and installing new markings. A new alternative utilizing 106th Avenue was suggested at the February meeting.

Mayor Minning opened the meeting up to the audience for questions.

Jim Overby stated that he didn’t see a need to do this, or a gain in putting money into creating bike trails that would create a false sense of security. He doesn’t feel that there is a practical place to put bike trails without tearing something down. He requested that they consider the 5th alternative because there were other things that they could put the money towards that would be a better use.

Paul Shann stated that there were three groups at the last meeting. The first was a “do nothing” group. The second group was a group consisting of merchants whose businesses are located around the clock tower. The third group was local bikers and walkers who are interested in seeing this type of thing done. He feels that getting more bikers and walkers will bring more people in to the local businesses. We should avoid the clock tower area. Activities take place on the beach, and this would increase traffic for these special events. Bikers and walkers want special events. Bikers and walkers need parks, the trail, and the trolley stop. Folding bikes can be taken on the trolley if bike racks are full.

Clyde Smith spoke as a resident of Treasure Island and as the manager of the Bilmar Beach Resort. He bikes with his children. There are scary intersections. He is glad to see something going forward and thinks that it is good for Treasure Island. He is not in favor of putting this in the central area. It would be adding another obstacle in the way of the downtown business development. It would hinder the current goal of trying to redevelop the downtown. He is in full favor of the 104th Avenue alternative. He would love to see people come down to Treasure Island from the Pinellas Trail. He hopes we get the signal at 104th Avenue that we need.

Kip Vosburgh stated that he is a cyclist, and he and his wife log between 5,000 and 10,000 miles per year. The biggest danger that he sees is the 107th issue. To take two lanes and squeeze it to one would not help the businesses. The bike buffer is only a suggestion and does not have to be followed. 107th Avenue is curbed. He feels that it is a dangerous route, and as a cyclist he would not take it. He feels that the route that has been overlooked the most, and is the most economical, is the northern route. The only negative is the narrow bridge on the northern edge. Pedestrians are all on the other bridge. For the small length of space, to put everyone on the other bridge it would be dangerous as people cross 107th. To use the small bridge you would never have to cross 107th. He feels that their costs are understated on the other route. Using the other bridges and 108th would be the least expensive option and would be a win-win situation.

Heidi Horak stated that there is no problem in the downtown redevelopment that they can’t solve at this point. It is in the very preliminary stages. She agrees with Clyde in that to try to get bikes and pedestrians and motorists around the clock tower area is a dangerous situation. There are several types of bikers. There are the leisure riders, the serious riders, and the people that use their bikes for transportation. She is very focused right now on the downtown redevelopment as she is on the Planning and Zoning Board. She has been thinking about how slow the 107th area will get. She feels that the 106th alternative is the best from the safety option, plus they won’t have to cross Gulf Boulevard. There will be a very common crossing with a light just to the south of there. The least number of crossings is very important for a biker. She is not sure if this

needs to be done right now. She asked Mr. Silverboard where the money is coming from. Mr. Silverboard explained that funding was provided two years ago and is being held over.

A woman stated that she is a cyclist, and rides five days a week. There is no way to turn left by Walgreen's. There are hundreds of cyclists along the beach. If there was a way to get off the trail and get something to eat people would come here. If they advertise this as a place to bring their families people will come here. She feels that 108th is very safe and you can go all the way to Park Street. She encourages them to do something to encourage cycling. We want Treasure Island to be a place that people want to come to, and we want it to be a bicycle friendly city.

Commissioner Bildz asked if there is a bike trail, does it make it illegal to ride the bike in the street next to the trail. Mr. Rao stated that it is always legal to ride a bike on the street, but it is illegal to park or drive a car on a bike trail. Commissioner Bildz asked if skateboarders and roller bladers were allowed in the bike lane. Mr. Rao stated that they were illegal on the road. It is not recommended for a bike lane. They should stay on the sidewalk or on an off-road trail.

Commissioner Coward asked if walkers would be able to use the bike trail. Mr. Rao explained that all users would be permitted, and the lane would be wide enough for multiple users. On the Pinellas Trail there is a painted separation for bikers and pedestrians. Commissioner Coward stated that they have those arrows on Paradise for the walkers and bikers.

Commissioner Collins stated that he is a biker and rides three or four times a week. He has a fifteen mile route that he follows. He stated that he is opposed to spending any money for a bike trail. We have bike paths along the street. They are not super highways for bikes, but he doesn't think that the residents would want to see us spend \$35,000 for a bike trail that will not really change anything. He agrees that going down 107th is foolish. He has spoken to business owners on 104th, and they feel that it would interfere with their businesses. He asked if the Penny money that is allocated for this could be used for other things. Mr. Silverboard stated that it can be spent on any Penny qualifying project. Commissioner Collins stated that there are other projects that we could spend that money on. It is already easy to get on and off the island on a bicycle, and if people want to do it they will. He is opposed to spending money on this.

Commissioner Gayton stated that on the north side of the bridge it narrows. He has heard comments that when they are walking and a biker comes down they have a hard time stopping. He is surprised to see that there were 11 dots for 107th. We all know what happens when you get around the clock tower. He doesn't think the residents would accept taking lanes away there. He would like more input from the residents. He would like to make the handouts available. If people could have picked up handouts a week ago we would have had more comments from the citizens. He has two civic associations in his district. He would like to pass these out to the civic associations and get more comments. Give them the option that Commissioner Collins recommended. He knows that this is very important to cyclists, but he doesn't know how this would enhance the safety of cyclists. He asked how they would get to Park St. Mr. Rao explained that it would be at the signalized intersection. Commissioner Gayton asked if there is a concrete trail to get across the bridge. There is a sidewalk from Park Street to the bridge on the north side. You would cross at the light and go over the most easterly bridge and down the Causeway Isles back roads. There is a sign for the bike trail. Commissioner Gayton requested that these handouts be available to the civic associations and for pick up at the front office. Mayor Minning asked if it could be put on the website. Mr. Silverboard stated that it will be, and could be downloaded or e-mailed to anyone on the list. He will send a copy to each of the Commissioners, put it on the website, and send it to everyone on the e-mail list as well as

providing them to the public up front. Commissioners should let him know how many copies they need for the Civic Associations in their district.

Commissioner Collins stated that in the narrow areas most bikers will get off their bikes and walk. They can also do this at intersections.

Mayor Minning asked for a deadline for input. He suggested that this be readdressed at a workshop in May. This will be placed on the workshop agenda for the second meeting in May. He thanked the representatives from Volkert for their time. He also thanked the public for their input.

When the handouts are made available they will have a cover letter with contact information so that people can give their input. Mr. Smith suggested that there be a master copy for people to look at rather than providing hard copies to save money. Commissioner Coward suggested that a copy be placed at the Rec Center as well. Mayor Minning suggested that a copy be brought to the civic association meetings and ask people to let them know if they want a copy. Commissioner Collins suggested that they summarize the costs, and other projects that the money could be used for. Commissioner Gayton stated that he agrees with Commissioner Collins and suggested a three page non-color description of what we want to do. Mr. Silverboard stated that he will pull out the pages that will give the gist of it, and will only use color where it will make a difference.

Commissioner Bildz clarified that there are 5 alternatives and stated that we should not forget about 106th.

2. ADJOURNMENT:

The workshop was adjourned at 7:17 p.m. by Mayor Minning.