

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE of the
COLLIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MEETING MINUTES
March 27, 2023, 2 p.m.**

1. Call to Order

Ms. Middelstaedt called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Siegler called the roll and confirmed a quorum was present.

CAC Members Present

Elaine Middelstaedt, Chair

Dennis DiDonna

Dennis Stalzer

Fred Sasser

Josephine Medina

Karen Homiak

Rick Hart

CAC Members Absent

Neal Gelfand, Vice Chair

Josh Rincon

Stephen Spahr

MPO Staff

Anne McLaughlin, Executive Director

Sean Kingston, Principal Planner

Dusty Siegler, Administrative Assistant

Others Present

Alex Showalter, Collier Area Transit (CAT)

Jacob Stauffer, CAT

Lorraine Lantz, Collier County Transportation Planning

3. **Approval of the Agenda**

Ms. Homiak moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Sasser seconded. Carried unanimously.

4. **Approval of the February 27, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Hart moved to approve the February 27, 2023 meeting minutes. Mr. Sasser seconded. Carried unanimously.

5. **Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda**

None.

6. **Agency Updates**

A. FDOT

No update from FDOT per **Ms. McLaughlin**.

B. MPO Executive Director

No update.

7. **Committee Action**

A. Review & Comment on Draft Bike-Ped Safety Ordinance

Ms. McLaughlin mentioned that CAC discussed the draft Ordinance at its last meeting and CAC determined that there is not an infrastructure system in place to make the changes reasonable and feasible. TAC and BPAC discussed this. BPAC met on March 21 and after three hours of discussion, with input from the County Sheriff's office and Naples Pathways Coalition, came up with a need for definitions and exceptions: power-assisted bicycles are a needed mode of transportation for many, and by putting them in the roadway, it elevates their danger. They found that the sheer number of exceptions needed made the Ordinance untenable. Enforcement and education would be difficult, and the system doesn't provide the infrastructure required. They felt that on the lower-speed roads under 30 mph it would be okay to share the road, but those over 30 mph without bike lanes should be excepted along with shared use paths, greenways, off road trails, and buffered bikeways. Other exceptions included the many uses of sidewalks along with the differences in available sidewalks. An ordinance would need to be simple to understand and with all these, it would not be simple.

Mr. Sasser agreed with BPAC, noting how cyclists and pedestrians use roadways the way they can and that the restrictions are confusing and nonsensical. **Ms. Middelstaedt** mentioned that visibility of bicyclists is difficult on roadways and a cyclist coming from behind is more difficult than from the front. **Ms. McLaughlin** mentioned that it is safer for cyclists to follow the direction of traffic. **Ms. Homiak** mentioned how e-bicyclists were driving recklessly.

Ms. McLaughlin brought up that TAC made a motion regarding the Ordinance earlier today. **Mr. Kingston** added that TAC motioned that the MPO Board consider an education campaign rather than an enforcement ordinance for similar reasons that BPAC stated in their motion, and that all road users, vehicular and non, should be included in the campaign. **Ms. Middelstaedt** commented that it's kind of like the "watch out for motorcycle" signs: watch out for motorcycles, watch out for pedestrians, everybody should be watching out. **Ms. McLaughlin** indicated that the committees expressed favor for education rather than an ordinance. **Ms. Medina** commented that most people do not read ordinances.

Mr. Sasser asked what a buffered bike way is. **Ms. McLaughlin** responded that the issue does cause confusion. Naples Pathway Coalition or Mr. Bonness, a member of BPAC, may be able to clarify, but it could be like a cycle track where two-way bicycle traffic is divided by a physical barrier. **Ms. Lantz** clarified, saying a separated bike lane is a separated path from the roadway and sidewalk, whereas a buffered bike lane could be on-road but separated by an engineering method or striping: an additional space between the vehicle and the bicycle. **Mr. Stalzer** recommended taking the bike paths off the roads, make the sidewalks wider, and then the bicycles go on the sidewalk, where they are protected from the road. **Mr. Kingston** mentioned that this follows BPAC's concern that the infrastructure does not accommodate for the Ordinance. **Ms. McLaughlin** mentioned that bikeways are shifting away from the roads and off to the sides of the streets. Further, FDOT stresses that bikeways should be buffered on roads with speeds higher than 45 mph.

Regarding Tamiami Trail, **Ms. Middelstaedt** mentioned a bike group goes from Fort Myers to Key West. There can be a problem with safety for large groups.

B. Review and Comment on Review and Comment on Draft FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Ms. McLaughlin explained in detail what is being presented in the narrative portion of the draft TIP, prepared by Mr. Kingston. **Ms. Lantz** elaborated on the prioritization of regional projects. **Ms. Middelstaedt** gave an accolade on the success of the TIP.

8. Reports and Presentation (May Require Committee Action)

None.

9. Member Comments

Mr. Sasser commented that in the TIP, the bike bridge for Freedom Park across Golden Gate Parkway seems like too much money. **Ms. McLaughlin** responded that the MPO Board deleted it from programming, and it should be removed from the draft.

Mr. Stalzer asked CAT attendees about switching to electrical vehicles. **Mr. Showalter** responded, explaining that scope for an electric vehicle plan is being prepared for a consultant.

Mr. DiDonna announced that the Brightline train is complete from Miami to Orlando airport. People keep going around the gates and getting killed by the train.

Mr. DiDonna asked for the other members' input regarding what they believe CAC is tasked with accomplishing as a committee. **Mr. Sasser** responded that it is to give feedback on projects that are underway, giving valuable input to staff and other committees. **Mr. Hart** added that it's also to communicate about what's happening in the County. CAC input can impact the decisions of the commissioners. **Ms. Middelstaedt** mentioned that the chair reports are a part of the MPO Board agenda packets. Chairs can also attend the MPO Board meetings and provide comment. **Mr. Stalzer** commented that CAC members should be speaking for their districts and communicating what their needs are. **Ms. Homiak** added that CAC is part of a process for funding, and to be a voice. **Ms. Middelstaedt** commented that it's a part of government regulation. **Mr. Hart** added that development is inevitable, as history shows. People object to it, but it keeps coming. For example, the parking lot for Seed to Table got built but no one wanted it.

Mr. DiDonna brought up the subject of the buildings that are being built in his northwestern quadrant of the County and that neighbors are complaining. **Ms. Homiak** responded, saying that a traffic impact study was already done. **Ms. Medina** mentioned that with her experience in working for a developer and the public sector, she can indicate that for these, there is a rezoning, a traffic impact study, and state regulations which prevent lawsuits, which often work in the favor of the developer.

Mr. Sasser indicated that he would be out-of-town for the next CAC meeting.

10. Distribution Items

A. Administrative Modifications to the FY 2023-2027 TIP (Transit Operating Assistance Corridor US 41)

Ms. McLaughlin acknowledged the modification; an item not requiring a formal vote. Item distributed.

11. Next Meeting Date

April 24, 2023, 2 p.m. –Transportation Management Services Bldg. Main Conference Room, 2885 S. Horseshoe Dr., Naples, FL, 34104 – in person.

12. Adjournment

Ms. Middelstaedt adjourned the meeting at 3:02 p.m.