

**MAY 23, 2002**

The Board of County Commissioners, Manatee County, Florida, met in SPECIAL SESSION (notice in writing) in the Administrative Center, 1112 Manatee Avenue West, Bradenton, Florida, Thursday, May 23, 2002, at 7:00 p.m.

Present were Commissioners:

Amy Stein, Chairman  
Jonathan Bruce, First Vice-Chairman  
Patricia M. Glass, Second Vice-Chairman  
Jane W. von Hahmann, Third Vice-Chairman  
Gwendolyn Y. Brown  
George L. Harris  
Joe McClash

Also present were:

Ernie Padgett, County Administrator  
Tedd Williams, Jr., County Attorney  
Susan G. Romine, Board Records Supervisor,  
representing R. B. Shore, Clerk of Circuit Court

Invocation by Commissioner von Hahmann.

**AGENDA**

Agenda of May 23, 2002, agenda memorandum and sign in sheet.

[BC20020523DOC001](#)

**UPPER MANATEE RIVER ROAD/FORT HAMER ROAD BRIDGE**

Mrs. Stein announced that this meeting is to make a funding decision (to maintain in the Metropolitan Planning Organization [MPO] pipeline, Phase I, two-lane dollars) in the context of the MPO budget process for keeping this project in its plan.

Larry Mau, Transportation Director, requested the Board make a recommendation to the MPO to include a four-lane option in the Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study Report. He reviewed the history of the project from 1968 to present. The scope of the project includes a bridge (two- or four-lane), a widening of Upper Manatee River Road between S.R. 64 and the curve at the north end of Upper Manatee River Road, and widening of Ft. Hamer Road from the bridge north to U.S. 301, including the intersection at Ft. Hamer/U.S. 301.

Mr. Mau responded to several issues raised previously (12/11/01):

1. Residents were not noticed of the proposed bridge and road widening – Prior plans were dated in 1960s; Wading Bird aka Waterlefe development was required to provide written notice to all buyers regarding the bridge (PDR-97-12 approved 5/22/01); Wind Song documents showed a future thoroughfare; Gates Creek developer donated right-of-way for widening the road;
2. Location too close to I-75 – Referring to a Manatee County map, Mr. Mau pointed out that the bridge is located 4.6 miles from I-75 and approximately 4 miles from Rye Road. As a matter of comparison the DeSoto Bridge is 3.7 miles from I-75;  
[BC20020523DOC002](#)
3. Amount of distance – Alternate options for a driver indicate driving from Waterlefe to Ft. Hamer Boat ramp or 14.5 miles one-way; Golf Course Road rather than I-75 is approximately 12 miles. Net difference in mileage is 8 miles or 16 miles round trip that each driver would have to make without the bridge;
4. Environmental impact – Bridge construction will impact 10 to 11 acres. Waterlefe development impacted 420 acres and contains 3 to 5 miles of roads within, plus houses and pads; and
5. Proximity to golf course – Reports indicate road would be no closer to Waterlefe than at other golf courses such as Greenfield Plantation, Heritage Harbour, River Club, Legacy on Lakewood Ranch Boulevard, University Park Country Club, and Palmetto Pines.

**Ben Walker**, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), used a slide presentation to review the Upper Manatee River PD&E Study. He discussed: **(1)** project approach; **(2)** 6-lane alternative; **(3)** present four-lane alternative; **(4)** project schedule; and **(5)** funding. He explained why the Ft. Hamer site is preferable to three other locations.  
[BC20020523DOC003](#)

Discussion: Four-lane alternative includes curb and gutter; environmental/historical analysis; identify sound barrier locations; noise analysis results will be available at the public hearing; archeological exploration will be pursued by Bill Burger; projected trips using Rye Road corridor; FDOT requested to review/report costs for the Gamble Creek crossing (C.R. 675 corridor north to S.R. 62 to Moccasin Wallow Road); environmental impact of Rye Road corridor; attract trips to corridor; growth is creating more north/south trips; congestion on I-75; impact on Lakewood Ranch area; I-75 service will be maintained for an additional 13 years with completion of this project; alternative to relieve I-75 congestion would include installation of general use lanes; language in Waterlefe documents; FDOT presentation on amended PD&E study scheduled for July; County Commission public meeting in October; etc.

Jerome Gostkowski, Planning Department, discussed traffic patterns and advised that without the bridge, eastbound S.R. 64 and S.R. 70 traffic will detour from congested I-75 and use Lakewood Ranch Boulevard as a cut-through. Construction of the bridge will ease I-75 congestion, especially north of S.R. 70.

**Alfred Owen** submitted a letter (5/23/02) of opposition for the record.

[BC20020523DOC004](#)

Speaking in opposition were: **John Barch**; **Don McFadden**; **Fred Fischer** (Lakewood Ranch) submitted a petition; **Ron Myers**; **Glenda Myers**; **Philip Compton**; **Emily Shute** (Save Our Neighborhood) submitted and discussed a copy of a memorandum from Larry Mau, Transportation Director, to Carol Clarke, Planning Director, (5/8/98); **Mark Charyn**; **Linda Johannsen** (Save our Neighborhood) submitted Westenberger Tree Service survey (4/26/02); **Fred Leggett**; **Ed Vehling** (Parrish Civic Association) read and submitted a Resolution (5/7/02); **Bob DuPree**; **Arlene Sweeting** (Sierra Club) submitted two photographs (3/9/02) of the proposed bridge site and discussed same; **Jono Miller**; **Al Harcharik**; **Tom Lincoln**; **Karen Ciemnecki** (Save Our Neighborhoods) submitted information regarding the PD&E study; **Melanie Curill**; **Bill Wellstead**; **Sheldon McCrae**; **Penny Jackson**; **Bill Jones**; and **Steve Patterson**.

[BC20020523DOC005](#)

(Mrs. Stein and Ms. Brown absent for a portion of the comments; Mr. Bruce presiding in the absence of Mrs. Stein.)

**Joe Formella**, **David Sessions**, **Steve Clift**, and **Mark Murphy** spoke in support of the bridge project.

### Motion

Motion was made by Mr. McClash and seconded by Mr. Harris, that the Board of County Commissioners of Manatee County, Florida, requests that the Florida Department of Transportation include a four-lane roadway alternative within the Manatee River Road/Ft. Hamer Bridge corridor for consideration with other alternatives, including the "No Build Alternative" in the Preliminary Design and Environmental (PD&E) Public Hearing and Study Report. The Board also requests, subject to the final PD&E findings and recommendations:

- A) That Florida Department of Transportation consider phased construction of the ultimate design alternative, if new construction is selected as the preferred alternative. The initial phase would consist of a two-lane bridge connecting the existing two-lane roadways north and south of the Manatee River, and the necessary intersection modifications for safe and efficient traffic flow at S.R. 43/U.S. 301 and the Upper Manatee River Road curve; and
- B) That Florida Department Transportation investigate funding alternatives for this initial phase to be constructed during the earliest possible year within the Work Program. Manatee County's local share of funding for the selected alternative may be advanced to the Florida Department of Transportation subject to the terms and conditions of a future Joint Project Agreement approved by the Board.

Discussion: Future impact must be addressed; best interest of the community; project has been in the program since 1993; right-of-way dollars would be in 2006-07 or moved to an earlier time if the system permits; PD&E study is controlled by federal guidelines; area was sited in the 1960s for a corridor and bridge; impact to environment reduced due to the decreased travel route to I-75; etc.

(Gavel to Mr. Bruce, presiding)

### Motion - Amended

Mrs. Stein moved to change the second sentence of A) to read as follows:

- A) The initial phase would consist of a two-lane bridge connecting a two-lane of a four-lane, landscaped boulevard with curb and gutter, sidewalks and bike lanes.

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Glass.

Discussion: Design language; outer lanes of four lanes could be constructed with curbs, sidewalks and landscaping in the median; two interior lanes could be built later if it goes to four-lane; more residential look; intersection reconstruction; incorporate landscaping, curb and gutter; increased traffic in Parrish and on surrounding roads; Ft. Hamer side is open ditch and swale with no sidewalks and the area deserves the amenities; funding for four lanes and right-of-way acquisitions; supplement project with County funds; intersection improvement for Ft. Hamer goes to Old Tampa Road to U.S. 301 and will be built as four lanes; connection from Old Tampa Road to the bridge would be the existing two-lane roadway; travel south of the bridge on two-lane roadway to S.R. 64 intersection improvements; etc.

The motion carried 7 to 0.

### Motion - Amended

Mrs. Stein moved to amend the motion to add C) as follows:

- C) That the right-of-way capacity should not exceed that needed for up to four lanes.

Mrs. von Hahmann seconded the motion.

Mr. Mau requested the understanding that, at intersections where more than four lanes are required, expansion is permitted. The motioner agreed and the motion to amend carried 7 to 0.

(Mrs. Stein presiding)

The original motion by Mr. McClash, seconded by Mr. Harris, and with the amendments incorporated carried 7 to 0.

[BC20020523DOC006](#)

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Adj: 9:40 p.m.  
/njh

Minutes Approved: June 18, 2002