

Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway
Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC)

MINUTES

Regular Meeting at
URS Corporation
7th Floor Board Room
7650 West Courtney Campbell Causeway
Tampa, FL

March 25, 2011
10:00 a.m.

Attending:

Jessica Lunsford, Senior Planner, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
Councilman Bill Jonson, Clearwater City Council
Lori Snively, Scenic Highway Coordinator, Florida Department of Transportation
Karla Price, Landscape Architect, City of Tampa Parks & Recreation
Ken Hoyt, Citizen, Hillsborough County
Felicia Leonard, Administrative Support Manager, City of Clearwater Parks & Recreation
Susan J. Miller, Bicycle/Pedestrian Planner, Pinellas County MPO
Councilwoman Mary Mulhern, City of Tampa and Hillsborough County MPO
Ron Gregory, Vice President, URS Corporation

Councilman Jonson mentioned there was a presentation given on the Courtney Campbell Trail Project at a public hearing held yesterday. This is a \$22 million project. The comments made were mostly positive. Ms. Snively stated the only difference between this presentation and the one shown at the hearing last night is this one offers a little more guidance. She added that this is for the PD&E study. A question raised at the hearing was what happens when they get to Ben T. Davis Beach, it just ends. Ms. Snively stated it does not end there because they have the resurfacing project that will be putting in the remainder of the trail. The PD&E is for the design/build of the bridges and it goes from Bayshore Boulevard to west of Ben T. Davis Beach and it is in support with federal highway and Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties' MPOs. The PD&E Study began in December of 2010 and the Feasibility Study was done in December 2008, at which time it was decided to go on the south side of the Causeway because the north side has more mangroves, more seagrasses and more environmental impact. The only environmental impact on the south side will be the bridge crossings for the seagrass, but that impact will be minimal because it goes through the deeper channels which have no seagrass. Workshops were held during the Feasibility Study and now through the PD&E Study. The next workshop will be Tuesday, March 29, at 5:00 p.m. at the Westin.

The recommended alternative, where there is no access road, FDOT will put one in on the south side and where there is an access road, if they can keep it, they will put it side by side. Where the access road cannot remain, it will be removed because FDOT will not remove the seawall. The purpose of the access road is for the stability and maintenance of the seawall, although FDOT has never prevented anyone from using it. Ms. Snively stated there are two structures out there,

structure No. 1 is the small one at 500 feet, and structure No. 2, which is the main span, both were built in 1974. The smaller bridge was refurbished in 1999 and that is why it has wider shoulders, while the main span was not refurbished and, therefore, has four foot shoulders. The proposed multi-use trail bridges are a little bit further apart, the reason being the structure on the right, whenever they go to rehab, they have allowed room for that.

Mr. Gregory commented that SWFWMD does not apply its impervious surface rules to recreational trails. Ms. Snively stated that some of the parking areas will be retained, but no parking is going to be paved, so that will keep permitting to a minimum. The PD&E Study should be completed by summer, after which it will go to the Federal Highway Administration.

Mr. Gregory asked if the CAC had made a decision regarding writing a letter in support of the project. Councilman Jonson replied he did not believe they had, but that was certainly something that could be done. Mr. Gregory stated this project is one the CAC has been advocating for a long time, and it certainly is exactly in line with the goals of the scenic highway. A motion was made that they CAC recommend to the Regional Planning Council that the Council officially support the trail project. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously. Mr. Gregory noted that the Westshore Alliance will be providing a letter of support also.

The subject of public art was discussed in relation to the project and Councilman Jonson asked if the group felt this should also be addressed in their letter. Mr. Gregory made a motion to include public art. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Ms. Snively concluded by stating design will be in 2012 on both projects, with construction in 2014 and 2016. She reminded the group that fund availability may change for the good or for the bad. There is a chance it could be moved up to 2014 for both projects, but that remains to be seen.

The question was asked how existing landscaping will be impacted. Ms. Snively replied that they are going to attempt to avoid any and all tree removal or relocation. At the same time, resurfacing will be occurring on both sides, the one going out to the county line is scheduled for 2012 for letting of the contract, and the other one is scheduled for 2014.

Councilman Jonson noted that the meeting got under way without approving the minutes from the last meeting, which was the last regular meeting of the group. The CAC had several meetings related to the updating of the Comprehensive Management Plan.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2010 meeting. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Old Business:

1. SHAC Comments on 5-Year CMP Update

Councilman Jonson reported that the CMP Update was submitted and some comments have been received. He asked Ms. Snively if there is any action that needs to be taken regarding these comments at this time. Ms. Snively replied there is not. The comments should be kept and filed until the next update is due, unless it something that can be worked into the annual report which is due in October. The overall reaction to the update was very positive. Councilman Jonson was concerned with how to measure their success, because it

is difficult when they have a project that is already scenic and has so few challenges. Ms. Lunsford wondered how to count it because when the Visitors Center existed they could keep track. Ms. Snively asked if the website had a counter. Ms. Lunsford said she will check. Mr. Gregory pointed out the tremendous parking problem at Ben T. Davis Beach, where people are parking all along the right of way. Councilman Jonson agreed since he has observed the same thing. He felt this should be listed under their potential problems category. Mr. Gregory stated that with tide gate issue being resolved, at least temporarily, by the DOT, you are connecting to a very large network of both parks and trails on the Tampa side. They have not yet determined where the connection will be to the Pinellas County trail system in that area. That location will be determined, but in the meantime there is the issue of how many people can actually get to that trail on that end, so he felt that is an issue, also.

Mr. Hoyt asked about the comment regarding the Comprehensive Plans. Ms. Snively replied she thought it was just an overall question because of what they had written in. Ms. Miller indicated she would bring it to Brian Smith once again. Ms. Snively stated that in the actual plan the three things that were mentioned were the City of Clearwater has adopted, City of Tampa has adopted and then, though not specific to the Courtney Campbell, Pinellas County's objectives and policies support the Courtney Campbell Corridor Management Plan. She added that probably next time they need to include them into the plans, showing that the support is there. Ms. Miller stated the general objectives are included in the county comp plans, but the specific references to the Scenic Highway objectives and policies are only in the city plans. Councilman Jonson asked if they should respond to this specifically now by stating they acknowledge this, or should they put it in the annual report? Ms. Snively noted the instruction state the comments should be addressed and noted in the next five-year update of the CMP which will be due in 2015.

New Business:

2. Planning for Public Outreach meeting

Councilman Jonson recalled that when they were working on the five-year plan, one of the things they reported in that plan update was that they really had not done a whole lot of outreach to the local community. A reception was discussed for the businesses in the area, and that they would invite those businesses to that reception when they had something to show them. The question is, do they still want to proceed with this idea or how would the committee like to do outreach to the public in this area. Mr. Hoyt suggested recognition of the enormous work done by the volunteers in the organizations who support the Scenic Highway. He felt the event for the businesses should be a separate thing. Mr. Gregory suggested that the CAC partner with the Westshore Alliance because they have been a strong advocate for everything about out here, and Ron Rotella is an avid biker. Ms. Leonard suggested doing public outreach during events such as the Coastal Cleanups. Since the parent organization of the CCSH is the Regional Planning Council, Mr. Hoyt suggested that perhaps the RPC could recognize these two organizations at one of its events by presenting them with certificates of appreciation. Mr. Gregory recalled the promotional video that was done when the Courtney Campbell was seeking designation, and he asked if that was still available on the website. Ms. Lunsford replied that it is, and located it on the internet. Mr. Gregory thought that when it becomes clear that the project to add the trail and the bridges is really underway, another type of imaging could be created around that. They could then make that available to local governments and organizations to make

them aware of what is happening. He asked Ms. Snively if FDOT is going to have a Community Awareness Plan (CAP) with the design/build phase. He explained that typically FDOT, on projects that are going into construction, will have a CAP to inform the community of what is going on in order to head off problems. If they have a CAP plan during the design/build phase, they could take some the basic information and work it into a brief three to five minute video explaining what the plans are.

Councilman Jonson suggested they discuss when they want to hold the next meeting since it was time to bring this one to a close. He asked Ms. Lunsford if, after the minutes are complete, she could distribute them with the actions rather than wait until just before the next meeting. Mr. Hoyt asked if there was a reason to meet. Ms. Snively reminded the group that the annual report will be due in October. She mentioned that she and Ms. Lunsford had spoken about grants, since they still have not received word from the National Byways. Ms. Lunsford remarked that she thought they had chosen the top five. Ms. Snively stated she has not heard and when she checks the website it states that they are still under review. Mr. Hoyt asked if the funds they are granting would be fiscal year 2011, because right now there is no approved budget for either of those years. Councilman Jonson suggested a reference should be placed in the minutes that they are still waiting for a response on their grants, and also that the annual report must be submitted in October. Friday, May 13 was suggested.

Ms. Snively reported that Florida Scenic Highways is holding a workshop in St. Augustine on June 8, 9 and 10, 2011, if anyone is interested. She thinks the registration fee is \$50. Apparently Tallahassee received a grant that will enable all of the scenic highway coordinators throughout the state to attend, so she will be able to attend. Councilman Jonson thought that, because this scenic highway is unique, perhaps it would be a good idea for someone from the chambers or the Westshore Alliance should attend, as well. Mr. Gregory stated he is the chairman of the Transportation Committee for the Alliance and he can put them on the agenda. The next meeting will be May 18. Mr. Hoyt stated if they were not going to recruit someone to go that he would like to attend. Ms. Snively said she would see that he got all of the information.

There being no further business, Councilman Jonson adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting: Friday, May 13, 2011, at 10:00 a.m. in the URS conference room.