

City of Fort Lauderdale



Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 15, 2021

4:00 PM

Las Olas Boulevard Vision Plan

City Hall - City Commission Chambers
100 North Andrews Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

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CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP

FORT LAUDERDALE CITY COMMISSION

DEAN J. TRANTALIS Mayor

HEATHER MORAITIS Vice Mayor - Commissioner - District I

STEVEN GLASSMAN Commissioner - District II

ROBERT L. McKINZIE Commissioner - District III

BEN SORENSEN Commissioner - District IV

CHRIS LAGERBLOOM, City Manager

JOHN HERBST, City Auditor

JEFFREY A. MODARELLI, City Clerk

ALAIN E. BOILEAU, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trantalis called the meeting to order at 4:19 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members Present: Vice Mayor Heather Moraitis (participated via communication technology), Commissioner Steven Glassman, Commissioner Robert L. McKinzie, Commissioner Ben Sorensen and Mayor Dean J. Trantalis

QUORUM ESTABLISHED

Also Present: City Manager Chris Lagerbloom, City Clerk Jeffrey A. Modarelli, City Attorney Alain E. Boileau and City Auditor John Herbst

OLD/NEW BUSINESS**BUS-1** [21-0607](#)

Las Olas Boulevard Vision Plan - (Commission Districts 2 and 4)

Mayor Trantalis explained the purpose of this Workshop is to address the eastern portion of *Las Olas Boulevard Vision Plan (Plan)* from *SE 12th Avenue* east. He noted prior Commission approval of the western portion.

Commissioner Sorensen discussed bifurcating the *Plan* from *SE 12th Avenue* to *SE 17th Avenue* for the purpose of Workshop discussions. He commented on alignment towards implementing a current comprehensive traffic study from *SE 12th Avenue* to *SE 17th Avenue* for a thorough analysis of traffic data prior to making changes.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' request for an update regarding a previous traffic study that resulted in changes to *SE 15th Avenue* at the Las Olas Boulevard and Broward Boulevard intersections, Ben Rogers, Transportation and Mobility (TAM) Department Director, commented on data from the *March 2019 Traffic Study (2019 Study)* that contributed to *Plan* recommendations addressing *SE 15th Avenue*. There is not an overwhelming consensus among the neighborhood regarding the closure of *SE 16th Avenue*. A new comprehensive study would focus on the *SE 16th Avenue* area to determine a definitive recommendation.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' question, Mr. Rogers explained details related to *The Corradino Group's (Corradino) A and B* recommendations were based upon stakeholder input to close *SE 17th*

Avenue. Mr. Rogers explained the second recommendation related to northbound traffic from *Las Olas Boulevard* towards *Victoria Park* and closing *SE 16th Avenue*. This was not included in the *Plan* due to neighborhood feedback. He confirmed the need for a secondary traffic study focused on *SE 16th Avenue*.

Mayor Trantalis commented on the impact of street closures in the *Lake Ridge* neighborhood and design of that portion of *SE 15th Avenue* that accommodates increased vehicle traffic. He noted the differing design of *SE 15th Avenue* from *Las Olas Boulevard* to *Broward Boulevard* in the *Colee Hammock* neighborhood and its inability to accommodate increased vehicle traffic due to the *bottleneck* design at *Las Olas Boulevard* and *Broward Boulevard*. Mr. Rogers confirmed.

Commissioner Sorensen discussed opposing taking property to address *SE 15th Avenue* traffic concerns.

In response to Mayor Trantalis' request, Mr. Rogers narrated a presentation explaining *Corradino* renderings illustrating scenario associated with the *Plan* recommendation to widen the *SE 15th Avenue* to incorporate turn lanes. Commissioner Sorensen commented on his opposition to this recommendation.

Mr. Rogers explained *Corradino's* updated modifications for *SE 15th Avenue (modifications)* that would *not* include taking private property. Those *modifications* repurpose the current traffic lanes with updated roadway striping, roadway arrows and traffic signalization. Further comment and discussion ensued.

In response to Commissioner Glassman's question regarding the ability to move forward with these *modifications* and other safety measures for the eastern portion of the *Plan*, i.e., crosswalks and bridge modifications, prior to *Plan* implementation, Mr. Rogers confirmed. Mr. Rogers commented on process details requiring coordination with *Broward County Traffic Engineering Division* that could begin now.

Mayor Trantalis commented on the impact of traffic leaving *Las Olas Boulevard* on *SE 15th Avenue* should *SE 16th Avenue* be closed. Mr. Rogers confirmed this would be part of the study and expounded on details related to *SE 15th Avenue* and *SE 16th Avenue* intersections at *Las Olas Boulevard*.

Mr. Rogers narrated a *Corradino* slide presentation illustrating several

scenarios impacting traffic at the *SE 15th Avenue* and *Las Olas Boulevard* intersection:

1. Current traffic conditions and going forward (slides 17 and 18);
2. Roadway pavement striping, directional arrows and traffic signalization *modifications* (slide 19); and
3. Widening the roadway and adding a lane on *SE 15th Avenue* (slide 20).

Commissioner Sorensen inquired about the north side of *SE 15th Avenue* and *Broward Boulevard* that would not include taking property. Mr. Rogers said he did not have those graphics. Commissioner Sorensen noted that dual left-turn lanes at *SE 15th Avenue* and *Broward Boulevard* are being explored, reiterating it would not involve taking property.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his perspective and noted that *SE 15th Avenue* and other streets in areas of *Victoria Park* were not intended to absorb large amounts of cut-through traffic.

Mayor Trantalis explained his position to suspend aggressive changes until there is a determination regarding the ability to build a vehicle traffic tunnel. He noted there are a number of moving parts related to these discussions and said a forthcoming vehicle tunnel proposal from *The Boring Company* is expected soon.

Commissioner Glassman commented on his perspective and the history related to these efforts. He put into context aspects and efforts towards addressing all character areas of *Las Olas Boulevard*, expounding on details. Commissioner Glassman emphasized this *Plan* is a conceptual design or vision. *Agenda items R-6 and R-7 on tonight's Commission Regular Meeting Agenda* relate to the Commission *accepting* the *Plan* versus *adopting* the *Plan* and is a starting point.

Commissioner Glassman explained the next steps in the process, including future planned infrastructure work and the possibility of future redesign. There would be public input every step of the way. He reviewed and commented on *modifications* to the eastern portion of the *Plan* presented on June 1, 2021. Alterations to *Plan* text included in *Commission Regular Meeting Agenda Item R-6* focus on safety improvements prior to *Plan* implementation. Further comment and discussion ensued on neighbor input regarding speeding, installation of crosswalks, landscaping improvements and rest areas along *The Isles*

segment of the *Plan*.

Vice Mayor Moraitis provided her perspective. She concurred with Commissioner Sorensen's comments. Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on working with *The Path Foundation* and Commissioner Sorensen towards having bicycle lanes throughout the City. She confirmed efforts for parallel path bicycle lane routing on streets adjacent to *Las Olas Boulevard* and connecting to *Las Olas Boulevard* at points north and south. Commissioner Sorensen concurred. Further comment and discussion ensued.

Vice Mayor Moraitis commented on input from neighbors living in the eastern area of *Las Olas Boulevard* related to *Emergency Medical Response (EMS)* times and reassured neighbors this is being considered.

Commissioner Sorensen explained positive efforts towards the concept of implementing an *EMS Substation* along *East Las Olas Boulevard* to reduce *EMS* response times in the Idlewyld area. Further comment and discussion ensued.

City Manager Lagerbloom clarified funds budgeted in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2022 Budget to staff the planned *EMS Substation* west of Federal Highway. Commissioner Sorensen reiterated the *EMS Substation* along *East Las Olas Boulevard* is currently conceptual.

Commissioner McKinzie confirmed his agreement with the concept of the *Plan*.

In response to Commissioner Sorensen's question regarding bridges in *The Isles* segment of the *Plan*, Commissioner Glassman explained details related to previous bridge redesign work by the *State of Florida* that inhibits visibility upon ingress and egress to *The Isles*. Language modifications in the *Plan* calls for a review of bridge railings and bridge walls to improve sight triangles.

Mayor Trantalis commented on his perspective regarding the previous bridge *Las Olas Boulevard* work done by the *State of Florida*. It included the unanticipated bridge heights to retain historical aspects that impacted sight triangles and obstructed views. Further comment and discussion ensued on addressing sight triangles in these areas.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Trantalis adjourned the meeting at 4:38 p.m.