



Stephen R. Olmsted, AICP
Planning Director
planning@pinecrest-fl.gov

VILLAGE OF PINECREST
Department of Building and Planning

September 10, 2013

Carlos M. Cejas, Vice President
Gannett Fleming, Inc.
7300 Corporate Center Drive, Suite 701
Miami, FL 33126-1233

Re: US 1 Express Lanes Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study
Miami-Dade County
MDX Work Program Number: 20003
ETDM Number: 11480

Dear Mr. Cejas:

With regard to the US 1 Express PD&E Project Steering Committee Meeting # 4 that was held at MDX Headquarters Boardroom on Tuesday, August 6, 2013 and the Tier 2 Alternatives Workshops convened on August 13, 2013 and August 14, 2013, I have reviewed the artistic renderings and graphics that were presented to both the Steering Committee and general public. I am pleased to provide additional comments and suggestions for your consideration.

As an appointed member of the Project Steering Committee, I have previously expressed concerns regarding the negative impacts that the potential project could have on the Village of Pinecrest. The diagrams and illustrations presented to the Steering Committee on August 6, 2013 underscore again the magnitude of the project and reaffirm that it will have a very profound impact on the existing and planned character of the Village of Pinecrest if constructed as shown.

At the Steering Committee Meeting and subsequent Public Workshops, it was revealed that the existing proposed design of the potential managed lanes facility includes interchanges for access at the Palmetto Expressway ramp in the Village of Pinecrest and at Southwest 140 Street, south of the Village. Widening of the Palmetto Expressway

12645 Pinecrest Parkway, Pinecrest, Florida 33156
T: 305.234.2121 | F: 305.234.2131
www.pinecrest-fl.gov



ramp will potentially impact one or more commercial properties in the area as well as residential property. No other points of access are included in the Village of Pinecrest.

The current proposed design includes elevated express lanes on elevated columns where it traverses existing intersecting streets and on elevated embankments along the corridor away from intersecting streets. North of Southwest 104 Street, the design is mostly elevated on column structures. The elevated toll way would include either two or three lanes of traffic. If two lanes, both lanes would be north bound in the morning to accommodate peak period, peak direction traffic and would reverse to accommodate southbound peak hour, peak direction traffic in the evening. If three lanes, the third lane would be reversible to accommodate off-peak period, off-peak direction traffic in the opposite direction of the other two lanes.

The current design shows that a southbound lane for local buses would be included at the ground level on the west side of the managed lanes facility and a northbound lane for local buses would be included on the east side. Express buses would travel with automobile traffic on the elevated express lanes. One of the project handouts provided at the recent public meetings, on page 26 of 34, indicates "enhanced transit service" as a goal. While the proposed facility allows for transit buses to use the elevated express lanes, it represents a major investment in another expressway for automobiles and does little to improve the existing situation regarding surface level buses that will have to continue to stop at all intersecting streets. Creating a fresh competitive advantage for auto travel would be contrary to the project's original predominant purpose of making transit more efficient. Transit improvements included within the project come at a considerable cost in terms of the elevated expressway for automobile traffic and the associated impacts that it is expected to have on the Village of Pinecrest.

During review of the proposed design boards, it became apparent that the design speed of the expressway extension is 45 miles per hour and that a dividing barrier between northbound and southbound lanes will not be included. As discussed at the public workshop meeting on August 14, 2013, the current proposed design could allow for two cars travelling at 45 miles per hour to collide head-on which is the equivalent of a lethal 90 mile per hour crash into a stationary object.

As you are aware, Florida Power and Light (FPL) is seeking to install numerous 105-foot concrete pylons that are each 4 feet in diameter within the Pinecrest Parkway Corridor. The pylons would be designed to support multiple 230,000 volt transmission lines. The proposed MDX design boards do not show or incorporate proposed FPL transmission lines and support poles. A realistic assessment of the potential impacts of the expressway extension project should take into consideration other structures that may be constructed

within or adjacent to the busway right-of-way including the proposed FPL transmission structures.

During a previous steering committee meeting, committee members were assured that landscape architects would work to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the project with trees and landscaping. Given the proposed width of the proposed expressway extension and the limited width of the busway right-of-way, it does not appear that sufficient width exists to allow for adequate landscaping. This would be contrary to all of the past and recent efforts of the Village of Pinecrest and FDOT to beautify the Parkway including recent planting of landscaping and pine trees within and adjacent to Pinecrest Parkway.

It is currently unclear where bus shelters would be located adjacent to the busway within the proposed project. For illustration purposes, it would be helpful if you could provide a graphic that shows a cross section of the proposed project that includes bus shelters, the proposed FPL power lines, and landscaping and shade trees.

The Village of Pinecrest has requested a copy of the graphics that were displayed at the recent public workshop meetings. You and Mr. Brick-Turin both agreed that the graphics would be given to Pinecrest at the conclusion of the meetings. While Mr. Brick-Turin has transmitted some of the graphics including the interchange graphic in electronic format, the Village continues to request the remaining graphics that show the proposed busway along its entire length within the Village of Pinecrest. Please provide that information by September 20, 2013.

In summary, as previously expressed, I continue to recommend that alternative solutions be developed that are more transit oriented, less reliant on the automobile, and more respectful of the negative impacts on the Village of Pinecrest.

I look forward to discussing my comments and concerns with you in the near future at a time that is mutually convenient. If you have questions or require additional clarification, please advise. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Stephen R. Olmsted, AICP
Planning Director

C/ Yocelyn Galiano Gomez, ICMA-CM, LEED-GA, Village Manager

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY BLANK

