



Martin County

Old Palm City

Neighborhood Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Palm City Community Center
2701 South West Cornell Avenue, Palm City, Florida

Monday, August 18, 2025

PRESENT

Position	Name	Term Expiration
Vice Chair	Chris Pinkston	May 9, 2027
Members	Jane Landrum	October 24, 2027
	Chuck Smith	September 11, 2029
	Douglas Legler	September 11, 2029
	Mike Searle	September 11, 2027
	Oscar Torres	September 11, 2029

ABSENT

Position	Name	Term Expiration
Chair	Rex Sentell	September 11, 2029
Member	Colleen Pachowicz	April 19, 2026

STAFF PRESENT

Position	Name
Assistant CRA Manager	Jordan Pastorius
CRA Specialist	Dianne Racek
Assistant County Attorney	Frank Moehrle
County Commissioner District #5	Edward Ciampi

* Indicates a motion

** Indicates a vote

*** For the record comment

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION

* O. Torres motioned to approve the proposed June 16, 2025; meeting minutes as presented.

**M. Searle seconded, and the motion carried UNANIMOUSLY.

COMMENTS

1. PUBLIC

- None

PRESENTATION

Agenda Item: 25-1260, OPC NAC - RESILIENT MARTIN PRESENTATION ON MARTIN COUNTY'S VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Amy Eason, Environmental Resources Engineer with Martin County Public Works presented the updated vulnerability assessment along with identifying adaption strategies in Martin County.

COMMENTS

D. Legler- Are you talking about an upstream location?

A. Eason- No, I'm referring to the Roosevelt Bridge, where USGS provides real-time water data. I can track high tides and compare them to storm surges and rainfall. The graph isolates tidal data by excluding other factors.

O. Torres – Where exactly is that gauge located?

A. Eason- It's on the Roosevelt Bridge, but I'm not entirely sure of the exact position. I saw it on a map, but not the specific location on the bridge itself.

C. Pinkston- What does USGS stand for?

A. Eason- United States Geological Survey. It's a federal agency. They have gauges at the Roosevelt Bridge and at South Manatee.

C. Pinkston-It's a federal entity? They have a gauge there.

A. Eason- Yes. And so does South Florida Water Management.

D. Legler- And its electronic. They read it electronic.

A. Eason- Data is on the South Florida Water Management District's DBHydro site, showing daily tide levels. For detailed data, including tide and rainfall, use the USGS gauge.

NEW BUSINESS

Agenda Item: 25-1259 CORNELL AVE STREETScape PROJECT

Jordan Pastorius updated the Committee on the Cornell Avenue Streetscape Project, reviewing past discussions and presenting recent findings, including photos, videos and diagrams. He highlighted options like not shifting the road to allow a wider, more pedestrian-friendly sidewalk.

Joe Capra of Captec Engineering, the project engineer, attended to support the presentation and offer technical input.

COMMENTS

O. Torres- What is multi modal?

J. Pastorius- A design that accommodates more than one form of transportation—such as a bike and person—safely and efficiently on the sidewalk.

J. Landrum- What will happen with the e-bikes, do they stay on the road or the sidewalk?

J. Pastorius- Deputy would you like to discuss e-bikes, since this is more of an enforcement issue? Where are they allowed to travel?

Deputy Paladino - E-bikes are allowed on sidewalks if they meet the 28 mph and 750-watt cap.

J. Pastorius-Those faster "dirt-bike-style" e-bikes, without pedals, are illegal on roads and sidewalks.

Deputy Paladino-Those should only be used on private property.

J. Landrum- But everything else can go on the sidewalk?

J. Pastorius- Yes, things like strollers, rollerblades, wheelchairs, certain bikes, etc.

J. Capra- The 6-foot sidewalk is not multi modal.

J. Pastorius- For grant purposes it's not considered multi modal.

C. Pinkston- The adjacent park will be redeveloped as a community gathering space, so we need eight-foot sidewalks to accommodate increased foot and recreational traffic like bikes, skateboards, and scooters.

B. Sorel- As east side residents, we support the eight-foot sidewalk for its long-term benefits and have no issue with shifting the road five feet west due to existing utilities. We're comfortable moving forward with this plan.

C. Wernlund- We support a six-foot sidewalk as a reasonable compromise. It preserves Cornell's residential character and minimizes impact to our property. We oppose shifting the road west and believe the burden shouldn't fall solely on the east side.

C. Smith- And you want the street to remain the way it is, not move.

C. Wernlund- Moving the street would be ideal, but likely too costly. A six-foot sidewalk with a six-foot setback feels like a workable compromise.

C. Pinkston- We do care about the funding, as we still need to get the property we participated in purchasing to sell.

J. Pastorius- As you know our funds are depleted due that property. It's under contract so once it sells, we will be getting our funding back.

Commissioner Ciampi- You haven't lost any money yet.

C. Pinkston- How much are the grants?

J. Pastorius- It depends—we work with a grant coordinator and will see what funding they can secure.

C. Pinkston- Are we looking at \$50K, \$100K, \$500K, or even millions?

J. Pastorius- We've received matching grants before, like for Ripple, totaling around \$300,000 to \$400,000.

C. Smith- Are there grants available if we kept it six-foot?

J. Pastorius- Grants are available at various times, often prioritizing multi-modal projects. While a smaller sidewalk may lower our score, it doesn't prevent us from getting one.

C. Pinkston- A smaller shift, like two feet, could fit an eight-foot sidewalk with less impact. More design options are needed to balance cost and community concerns.

J. Capra- Road shift costs are minimal. An 8-foot sidewalk supports grants and multimodal use. Coordination with utilities is required. Multiple designs will be shared for community input. The 60% plans are in progress.

J. Landrum- How can we reduce traffic speeds on Cornell Avenue while keeping the neighborhood safe and residential?

J. Capra- To reduce speeds, options include speed tables (which may delay emergency response), flashing speed signs, chicanes or road narrowing, and slight road offsets. A strategic combination could be most effective.

J. Landrum- Yes, I would like this panel to keep this in mind for the future.

C. Pinkston- I agree to limit road shifts to twice. An 8-foot sidewalk, trees for calming, and road meandering makes sense. Should we address lighting?

J. Pastorius- We will explore that moving forward.

C. Pinkston- Joe, what's the timeframe? I know you're coordinating with county projects and the timeline is uncertain, but when are our deadlines? Is the next deliverable the 60% plan?

J. Capra- 60% plans expected in 1–2 months, with final plans by year-end. Utility coordination is key, water and sewer is first; then road resurfacing.

J. Pastorius- It can take up to two years, as the entire project must be completed before the vacuum pump house can be activated.

C. Pinkston- Our goal tonight is to complete 60% construction documents for the October meeting and finalize 100% CDs by year-end.

O. Torres- We approved eight-foot sidewalks before, with Jane and me opposing. The consensus remains, so no new vote is needed. A vote may be needed on a two-foot road shift.

C. Wernlund- I oppose the eight-foot sidewalk. Six feet is sufficient and more appropriate here. Eight feet feels excessive and might encourage high-speed traffic. We don't want this to become like Mapp Road. I'm also concerned about placing trees at the road's edge, which can complicate turns.

Commissioner Ciampi- I appreciate tonight's discussion, but this group is only a small part of the community. Many residents near Cornell may be unaware of these talks. We need a larger public meeting to share design options and get broader feedback to avoid opposition. Joe and Jordan should prepare several options. What is the current sidewalk width?

J. Pastorius- 4 feet.

Commissioner Ciampi- A six-foot sidewalk is already two feet wider than current. Increasing to eight feet and shifting the road may raise concerns among many affected residents not here tonight. It's important to consider all those impacted. He discussed the need for more community engagement, suggesting another public meeting. He noted grants help but won't cover all costs and affirmed commitment to keeping the project feasible and affordable.

C. Pinkston- Where do we go from here?

Commissioner Ciampi- The goal is to move forward this fall before the next NAC meeting. He stressed preparing concept examples—not full plans—to support public input, noted no consensus yet, and emphasized sending letters to all affected residents.

M. Searle- Jordan, did we send out letters to everyone on Cornell?

J. Pastorius- I sent a letter to those that had potential conflicts.

J. Landrum- To get input, this group must lead outreach. Turnouts have been low despite efforts. If people don't engage, their influence is limited—and that's fair.

Commissioner Ciampi- I want to be clear—I'm not referring to all of Old Palm City, only the corridor directly affected by this project.

MOTION

* M. Searle motioned to do more community outreach and send a letter to surrounding properties.

**O. Torres seconded, and the motion carried Unanimously.

* O. Torres motioned to move the road two feet and have it meandering.

**C. Smith seconded, and the motion carried one opposed.

COMMENTS

1. Public-

C. Schaul- We should ask ourselves why we are doing this project.

2. Members-

None

3. Staff-

Commissioner Ed Ciampi provided several key updates. The Martin Highway property is under contract, with restrictions to ensure community-oriented development. Park improvements are underway, including enhancements at Charlie Leighton Park and the addition of a dog park at Justin Wilson Park. Music in the Park will return in September, and a 7-foot sculpture has been approved for the community gathering space.

ADJOURN – Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Recorded and prepared by:

Dianne Racek, Community Development Specialist

Date

Rex Sentell, Chair

Date

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