



Miami Shores Village

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THOMAS J. BENTON
VILLAGE MANAGER

March 2, 2006

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Planning & Environmental Mgmt
District Four

Mr. Gustavo Schmidt, P.E.
District Planning & Environmental Engineer
Florida Department of Transportation
Planning & Environmental Management
3400 West Commercial Boulevard
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309

Dear Mr. Schmidt:

This is in response to the Advance Notification for the South Florida East Coast Corridor Transit Analysis (SFECCTA). Miami Shores Village is a unique community along the study corridor, in that we are a completely built-out, predominantly single family upscale residential community that intends to protect the residential charm that our residents cherish. We realize that many of the communities within this study zone have a much different opinion as to how they perceive the implementation of mass transit within the study area.

In looking at the study area one mile on each side of the FEC railroad tracks, there isn't really another alternative within our community that we could recommend to you for serious study and evaluation. The FEC railroad tracks are currently double tracked through our community and roughly divide the Village in half. Adjacent to the railroad tracks are single family residential housing, our recreation facility including our 18 hole golf course, a residential townhouse complex, and a large Presbyterian Church including their pre-school; all of which abut the FEC railroad tracks. At the present time, the Village has no plans in the immediate future to change any of the zoning adjacent to the FEC corridor, as we wish to preserve the residential atmosphere of our community.

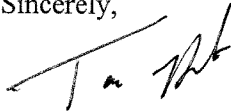
The other unique characteristic about Miami Shores is that the approximate one mile of track through our community has five railroad crossings within that short distance. As you are aware, each one of those crossings requires the blowing of horns and various safety devices in order to protect the public from the crossing grades. The train engineer no sooner gets through blowing the horn at one crossing when it is time to sound the horn for the next crossing. Without the implementation of "quiet zone" grade crossings, we have serious concerns that the introduction of passenger rail service, in addition to the existing freight service will have serious, detrimental impact to the quality of life and property values of the surrounding community.

We are also concerned as to the impact of vehicular traffic at the various grade crossings should the frequency or length of trains be increased to accommodate commuter passenger rail service. We are aware that in other parts of the Country there are bridges over the railroad crossings and trains that actually run under the roadway crossings to eliminate interruption to the roadway system. In our community, given the close proximity of the crossings, we believe that this would not be a practical solution.

We would therefore request that should the proposal to move passenger commuter rail service onto the FEC tracks be implemented, we would demand that all five of the above mentioned crossings be converted to "quite zone" crossings without cost to the Village taxpayers. We would also be opposed to any type of elevated train service or metro-rail type service as we believe that an elevated train would severely impact our quality of life through the additional noise and adverse aesthetics that an elevated rail system would provide.

In closing, let me state that we are aware of the popularity of this program throughout the study area and realize that as a small community, we may share the minority opinion on this project. Nevertheless, you should know that we will fight vigorously to protect our current quality of life. We would expect that whatever type of mass transit is selected, that the environmental concerns raised above are seriously considered and mitigated to the fullest extent possible. Should you need any additional information concerning these comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Tom Benton
Village Manager

TB:bae

Mgr-1566

Cc: Mayor & Council
Scott Seeburger, Florida Department of Transportation