

Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee



[SR 211 Resurfacing](#) Public Meeting Briefing

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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How to Submit a Public Comment

Public comments must be submitted or postmarked on or before February 26, 2023 and will become part of the public record. After the conclusion of the meeting there are now three available options for submitting a public comment:

1. Online at <https://nflroads.com/virtualmeetings>; under “Which project are you most interested in?” select “State Road 211 resurfacing”.
2. Emailing Jeff Daugharty of FDOT at Jeff.Daugharty@dot.state.fl.us
3. Mailing your public comment to Jeff Daugharty at 2198 Edison Ave., Jacksonville FL 32204

Briefing From the Public Meeting

The public comment period began with an introduction by Angie Nixon, Florida House of Representatives District 14, which covers both Riverside and Avondale. The first public comments were made by Shannon Blankinship, Executive Director of Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP), who focused on the following key issues regarding the project as currently proposed:

- Removal of parking needs to be more surgical and based on crash data instead of wholesale removal based on site distance requirements from intersections and driveways.
- On-street parking helps with speed reduction and improves the walkability of the neighborhood.
- Better integrating crosswalks at areas where we know there is high usage including the installation of rapid flashing beacons or raised crosswalks at key areas like St. Vincent’s, Publix, and RAM.
- A road diet with a median near RAM to help with pedestrian crossings by providing a shelter midway across the road such as the one in front of the Cummer Museum. Peninsular Place does not warrant such a long dedicated left turn only, if any, for its use. This left turn only lane should be a raised median.

- A Riverside Ave Drainage Study from Osceola to Stockton is part of the City of Jacksonville CIP as a separate project already. Will there be any coordination with the city regarding drainage improvements along this project corridor that could be addressed sooner as part of this project?

The most contentious issue of the evening was with regards to the removal of street parking, most notably between Edgewood Ave to King Street where 62 parking spaces have been identified to be removed. The overwhelming majority of public commenters were in favor of keeping the existing street parking. A few key issues are:

- Removal of street parking would likely have the opposite affect of improving safety as studies have shown that cars drive faster when the road appears wider. Removing street parking would lead to the feel of a much wider road, particularly between Edgewood and King.
- Bulb-outs at key intersections (or even every intersection) would be welcomed as it would shorten the length pedestrians have to cross St. Johns Ave while also putting pedestrians in better view of drivers as they would be standing in-line with parked cars instead of along the right of way. These bulb-outs could also serve a second purpose in providing drainage improvements and landscaping along the corridor.
- A dedicated left turn into Publix is a must-have, the Goodwin left turn need not be so long. Traffic heading towards downtown will be consistently backed up if a left turn lane into Publix is not provided.
- Speeding is already a major issue along St. John's Ave due to how straight the road is here.
- Side streets along the corridor are already at or near capacity; removing parking along the project corridor will further lead to issues on side streets.
- Daytime parking for large trucks like landscape trucks, delivery trucks, contractors, and service industry folks would no longer have places to access the homes along St. Johns Ave. and would be forced onto smaller side streets with already at-capacity parking.
- The topic of resident parking decals came up, particularly near St. Vincent's hospital where many guests, employees, and contractors tend to park to avoid paying for parking in one of the many garages at the hospital.
- Wayne Wood remarked on the beauty and significance of St. Johns Ave noting that this street had been identified as Jacksonville's Prettiest Street. Changing the character of the street would be at a detriment to the neighborhood.
- Smaller driveways and on street parking is a part of the historic character of the neighborhood, build in the 1920's to accommodate Model T Fords. Changing this dynamic removes a part of our historic character.

The second most widely talked about topic was with regards to a proposed reconfiguration of Herschel Street between San Juan and the newly built roundabout connecting St. Johns Ave, Heschel, and Geraldine. The project currently proposes dedicated bike lanes running parallel to the traffic lanes while maintaining the diagonal parking on the opposite side of Herschel St from the shops. A local resident Susan Grandin, sketched up an alternative for this corridor which would move the diagonal parking over to the side where the shops are located eliminating the need for customers to have to bolt across Herschel. This proposal would have the traffic lanes shifted to where the diagonal parking is today. The existing sidewalk opposite the shops currently weaves through the right of way, apparently due to landscaping islands that existed long ago. Her proposal is to turn this weaving sidewalk into a wider two-way shared use bike path which would move bicyclist off the street and out of immediate danger from drivers backing out of the diagonal parking.



The following is a list of other topics brought up worth mentioning:

- The Shoppes of Avondale currently have stamped paver crosswalks. Would this resurfacing project replace these patterned crosswalks? The provided material only shows painted crosswalks.
- The recently installed mast arm in front of Memorial Park at Margaret and Riverside has been budgeted to be removed and replaced by a non-standard diagonal mast arm to appease some residents. Is this necessary? Could these funds be allocated for something more (~\$500k) or could the newly built mast arms be modified to make some appeasements to those with concerns (perhaps painting them)?
- Sharrows (shared bicycle lanes) are currently shown along St. Johns Ave. Should the focus be to emphasize Oak/Herschel as a biking corridor instead of painting bicycles on every street?
- One resident remarked that street parking does affect her access to her driveway at times and limits her vision when pulling out on to St. Johns Ave. (Could something like a 5' painted buffer be provided next to driveways in lieu of adhering to 60'/90' site distance requirements which would eliminate too much parking?)

Final Thoughts:

- It appears that no traffic accident study was performed for the project corridor and that these eliminated parking spots were solely based on FDOT design criteria for site distance from intersections and driveways.
- Eliminating street parking along the project corridor will not only lead to increased speeds, but who will enforce the no-parking parking that is bound to still happen?
- Where right of way parking occurs, we have seen a destruction of the landscaping in these areas due to cars parking there. As Mr. Wood pointed out, one of the defining characteristics of our neighborhoods is the aesthetic beauty of our streets. Comparing the well landscaped right of way of St Johns to the dirt, mud, and trash laden right of ways of many of our side streets should emphasize the need to maintain on street parking.

- The FDOT Design Manual (FDM) Section 210.2.3 On-Street Parking states that on-street parking is a key element of urban context sensitive streets like Riverside and St Johns Ave (C4 context classification) and that on-street parking helps manage traffic speeds and to leave existing on-street parking in place unless local plans call for its removal. Additionally, FDM Table 210.2.1 allows for a minimum travel lane width of 10 feet for a C4 context classified road. No typical sections were provided at the meeting for the project corridor, but if the designers are worried about safety and speeding, I would suggest they reduce the travel lanes to the minimum width of 10 feet for a 25-35 mph design speed road.

Notes compiled by Andrew Bilello, Chair, RAP Transportation & Infrastructure Committee