

LMKA Membership Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2017

President Mark Riley called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. 35 members present.

Mark introduced the guest speaker, Marisol Ortega, the landscape design manager for Keith & Schnars who have the contract with FDOT to do the landscaping from approximately MM77.5 to MM81.4 (Jerome Ave). The project is expected to be started in late 2018. The conceptual boards demonstrated the before and after renderings. The project cost is \$1.2 million for plant material and installation as well as the care, fertilization and watering for the first two years. At that time the maintenance will be turned over to the village.

Currently the plans are at the 90% complete phase and are expected to be finalized to 100% in April 2017. At this point changes are still possible – contact the Islamorada Council with any suggestions or concerns.

The intent of the project is to enhance the Scenic Highway and Heritage Trail while protecting the existing mangroves. The plan is expected to delineate the Heritage Trail (bike path) to prevent parking on the trail. Landscape timbers (no higher than 4" allowed) will be placed strategically for this purpose. To make certain the view remains to the greatest extent possible only small trees and low shrubs will be used and will be strategically placed to keep clear views of the water where they currently exist. The village wanted to have the mangroves pruned as part of the project to create "view windows" through them but because of environmental issues that restrict FDOT this will not be part of the project. The trees and plants used are all native to our part of the Keys. No coconut palms as they are not native, too messy and a maintenance issue. However there will be other palms – Florida thatch palms and Keys thatch palms.

Members voiced several concerns – thought that large rocks and boulders would be more effective in delineating the trail – answer – not allowed as they are concerned about cars crashing into boulders. Also said that FDOT does not plant trees more than 4" in diameter for same reason.

Several members voiced objection to spending this money and effort at that location while ignoring the area from Sandy Cove to MM74 where a majority of Lower Matecumbe residents live. President Riley explained that the program was specifically chosen because members voiced concerns about the Fill at the last meeting. The scope of the project was based on the contract with FDOT and Marisol was only able to speak about the project she was hired to design.

There were concerns about the taxpayers cost to maintain the project after the two years.... Members were reminded that is why they use low maintenance native plant material. In addition FDOT does subsidize a portion of the maintenance via Monroe County who then provides funding to the village.

The boards that Marisol used to demonstrate the before and after look of the highway right of way will be provided electronically to the LMKA so the renderings will be available on the association website.

Business meeting:

Hermine Zavar read the treasurers report. The association has taken in \$2725 in membership fees since the beginning of the year. Expenses have totaled \$2700 including the cost of the printed newsletter and postage, the cost of the website for 5 years, D & O insurance, and office supplies. We now have \$3734.71 cash on hand.

Mark introduced the board members present. He then went over our complete list of projects and issues so that those present would know what the association is hoping to work on and what members can get involved with. He then had several members give short explanations of the status of several projects:

Mark Riley – got a new D & O insurance policy that saved LMKA about \$1200 over last year's policy.

Mark Riley – update on the bike path effort to get the “No motorized vehicles” signs back on the narrow sections of the bike path along with the boulders that prevented larger vehicles from driving on the bike path. They were removed while sewer work and repaving was underway. The village public works department is aware and will be taking care of the problem.

Sue Miller – membership report – 132 members have paid since the February newsletter was mailed. 27 are new members. About 6 members have made additional donations – several donated \$100.

Those who are on our email list but haven't renewed will get a reminder and then will be dropped if they don't renew.

Newsletter – Sue asked for help with ideas for the newsletter or for people to write stories.

Website – the new website, www.LMKA.org, approved at the Feb 13 meeting is up and running though far from completion. There are many features, stories, photos, maps, list of past accomplishments, current projects, meeting minutes, archive of old newsletters - –currently 6 -7 years back but more will be added. Suggestions welcomed.

No news on Parmalee property.

Mark Riley, Sue Miller – gave explanation and update on canal remediation work. Two canals on Lower Matecumbe have gotten permits to have weed curtains installed to keep weeds out of dead end canals on the ocean side of the island. Work is expected to be done in April.

Larry Zettwoch gave update on the Lucas device (automatic CPR) being purchased for the Lower Matecumbe fire station. He indicated they have \$2539 to go to reach goal of \$19,000. There will be a fundraiser on Wednesday at the Safari Lounge with a Lucas device on display.

Steve Holtje from Safety Harbor indicated he has a meeting scheduled with Village mayor Jim Mooney and will take a petition to the village with signatures of residents who object to the lobster trap and issues on the right of way from MM74 to Sandy Cove.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40.