

# Pine Ridge

*Property Owners Association, Inc.*

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5690 W. Pine Ridge Blvd. • Beverly Hills, FL 34465 • Telephone (352) 746-0899 • Fax (352) 746-0875  
*A Deed Restricted Community*

December 10, 2020

John Allocco, Chairman  
Hernando/Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization  
1661 Blaise Drive  
Brooksville, FL 34601

RE Suncoast II, Phase 2 Design Reevaluation Period

Dear Chairman Allocco:

As advised in recent forums, the Pine Ridge POA remains steadfast in support of the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners in their goal of expediting the Suncoast II, Phase 2 to the originally planned terminus of Red Level.

The PRPOA has consistently taken issue with the now intended but originally unplanned SR589 terminus dropping at CR486. The most recent rendering illustrates a T intersection 1500 feet east of Pine Ridge Boulevard, one of two main entrances to Pine Ridge. To their credit the Florida Department of Transportation modified a previous plan moving what would have been a cross (+) intersection at the Pine Ridge Estates southern entrance/exit opposite the Boulevard. It is not nearly enough.

This seemingly positive move at the behest of protesting homeowners is intended to mitigate the ever increasing traffic through Pine Ridge Estates. However, a subsequent real time analysis indicates what is now a local corridor through the heart of Pine Ridge Estates would become a main thoroughfare for commuters. Having any 486/589 entrance/exit at or east of Pine Ridge Boulevard is an invitation for commuters to filter through Pine Ridge as they jockey for the best access to and from the Suncoast. These are many of the same drivers already making their way to/from SR589/SR98 in Hernando County.

The attached position paper illuminates in detail how and why an equestrian crash causing serious injury or death is predictable. In every way, Pine Ridge will be altered forever. In this regard consider we all have a chance to positively affect the future.

Clearly, there are communities throughout Florida that were negatively impacted by unavoidable progress. Dare we say their vision was either absent or ignored. The PRPOA labors here to be on the record for any and all discussion occurring with the Hernando/Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Florida Department of Transportation, the Citrus County BOCC and our elected representatives in the Florida House and Senate. We are mindful of the budgeting process for FDOT projects and don't seek to interrupt any positive progress. We do however expect continued consideration and will be monitoring as follows.

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Perry-Allocco  
Hernando-Citrus MPO

The PRPOA Board intends to prudently monitor budgeting and expenditures as Suncoast II Phase 2 commences in 2022. The Board understands it is a work in progress and while the economy has been shaken by the challenges of COVID, we should expect an uptick in the Florida economy post virus. A best case scenario is funding for Phase 3 is established well before the originally unintended interchange at SR589/CR486 is constructed unnecessarily. The then savings can be added to the next phase funding.

Please consider the attached position paper which amplifies our concerns. It was submitted to FDOT in advance of their reevaluation public hearing at Inverness on December 8, 2020.

As always we can be reached directly as indicated in the header.

Sincerely,

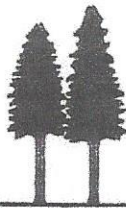
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Perry".

Michael Perry, President  
MP/cc

Attachment (or enclosure): PRPOA Position Paper

C      via email  
         Kevin Thibault, Secretary  
         Florida Department of Transportation





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PINE RIDGE PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION  
FDOT SUNCOAST II, PHASE 2  
POSITION PAPER AND TALKING POINTS  
December 8, 2020

- I. Suncoast II, Phase 2 remains a challenging concern for the PRPOA.
  - A. The reestablishment of the Suncoast II a few years ago was to inherit an issue some twenty years in the making.
  - B. Many current residents and property owners were generally aware but not specifically mindful of the expected impact to Pine Ridge.
  - C. This changed with the arrival of Suncoast II construction within Citrus County.
  - D. To their credit, FDOT positively managed the eminent domain impact to the fewest Pine Ridge properties.
- II. The immediate larger issue remains the negative impact of ever increasing traffic.
  - A. The unintended but now planned intersection of SR589 and CR486 would forever change the peace, tranquility and quality of life within Pine Ridge. It is likewise a serious safety issue for a unique community.
  - B. Prompted by Pine Ridge homeowners FDOT was accommodating by moving a previously planned interchange 1500 feet east from the cross (+) intersection leading directly into Pine Ridge Estates. It is not enough.
  - C. Pine Ridge is a unique gem as one of only four combined equestrian/golfing communities in the country. People moving to Pine Ridge for the charm, ambiance, golf and equestrian activity are from throughout the United States and the world.
  - D. Pine Ridge is primarily an equestrian community with horse trails intertwined within an area of 10,000 acres, 5,000 properties, 3,100 ~~residents~~ <sup>RESIDENCES</sup>, 165 road miles and 35 miles of horse paths.
  - E. To spook a horse being ridden on an adjacent roadway is an accident waiting to happen.
  - F. Ever increasing traffic through Pine Ridge will translate into higher probabilities of equestrian injuries and/or fatalities.
- III. Although well intended, the newest rendition of the CR486 intersection misses the mark.
  - A. Many north/south main arteries (US19, US41, SR200, SR491) are now funneling commuter traffic to and from SR98 and SR589---a relatively unpopulated area.
  - B. A 589/486 interchange/terminus will condition commuters to funnel through highly developed Pine Ridge to the new Suncoast entrance/exit. Exacerbation over time will be the ruination of Pine Ridge.
- IV. The PRPOA has provided feedback to MCORES, FDOT, Citrus County and Crystal River.
  - A. After evaluating information obtained by the State of Florida and Citrus County we fully support the Citrus government approach in continuing Suncoast II to the originally planned terminus at the Red Level site.
  - B. Bypassing CR486 altogether is both cost saving and prudent.
  - C. A US19/SR589 interchange at Red Level is a natural southbound access point from the north, northeast and east. Access to and from US19 at Red Level eliminates the need for 589/486. Impact to both Pine Ridge and Crystal River is minimized.
  - D. Access to and from 589/19 at Red Level further allows traffic to funnel from the east via SR488 (Dunnellon Road). This in turn minimizes traffic flow north and south on SR491, SR200, and US41 eliminating commuter desire to funnel via Citrus Springs and Pine Ridge.

- E. A macro view illustrates Dunnellon Road/SR488 is a logical interim link between I-75 and the Suncoast II.
- F. A Suncoast II interchange at US19, bypassing the southeast entrance to Crystal River via SR44, serves the dual purpose of maintaining the small town atmosphere of Crystal River while maintaining the peace and tranquility of Pine Ridge.
- G. It is consistent with the stated policy of moving around small towns and cities.
- H. Suncoast II intersections at both SR44 AND CR486 will funnel west bound traffic to the already over burdened intersection of SR44/CR486/N Dunkinfield Avenue causing all the more congestion.
- I. Predictable backups will cause local savvy drivers to use Meadowcrest Boulevard as a cut through impacting the Villages of Meadowcrest and their residents.
- J. There is growing support by many groups originally opposed to the Suncoast II overall to likewise expedite it to Red Level. Inevitability has a way of crafting the best identified outcome.
- K. Reestablishing Red Level as the only terminus considers the relatively unpopulated geography. Ironically, this was the original and still viable plan.
- L. The maturation of any future residential or business community can positively coalesce around US19 and SR589 at Red Level with mutually advantageous planned development.
- M. Citrus County government is already exploring improved zoning at designated interchanges.
- N. Eliminating the terminus at SR486 allows the intended expense to be applied to the ongoing build out of the Suncoast II toward the originally intended site.
- O. For those who suggest 589/486 interchange is temporary we need only explore all those 'temporary sites' since made permanent by the most recent driver behavior and evolving traffic patterns. To act now is to positively change future driver behavior.
- P. A worst case scenario for Pine Ridge and Crystal River, be it at SR44 or CR486, would be to have the current phase(s) of Suncoast II stall as previously happened.
- Q. Allocating or reallocating existing and future funding for a Red Level terminus can be realized by FY2024. (There is time even in this challenging period of COVID 19). Budgeting is always appropriate but it is proper allocation driving project management.
- R. Leadership now eliminates current and future friction and rancor.
- S. The Pine Ridge POA applauds the bold approach of our elected leaders specifically Commissioners Scott Carnahan, Ron Kitchen, and Jeff Kinnard our MCCRES representatives.

Prepared by Pete Cuccaro, PRPOA Roads Committee Chair

*After a successful career in law enforcement Pete entered the private sector forming Cuccaro Investigative Management Group, a nationally recognized consulting company. Before retiring fully to Pine Ridge, one of many notable clients was American Traffic Solutions an Arizona based company doing business throughout the United States. ATS specialized in traffic safety through observation technology. Pete became their designated expert and liaison to state, county and municipal governments within his home state. In this capacity he interacted with more than 100 jurisdictions guiding many on traffic flow analysis. This included traffic patterns at intersections and current and future driver modification via engineering, education and enforcement. Pete can be reached at his personal email: [petecuccaro@gmail.com](mailto:petecuccaro@gmail.com)*

  
Michael Perry, President  
Pine Ridge Property Owners Association