

Meeting of the Central Corridor Business Advisory Committee September 17, 2007

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Kay Baker, Tanya Bell, Kathy Bjerke Denise Currie, , Lori Fritts, David Jones, Jeannine Kessler,, Brenda Kyle, Nell McClung, , Peter Latuff, Olesak, Karri Plowman, Sondra Reis, Jim Roth, Tom Chang Thao, Christine Wiegert, Khue Yang, David Youmans,

Members Absent: Julio Fesser, Ken Hinz, Sharon Johnson, Harry Melander, Guy Mingo, Brian Thoemke.

Others Present: Robin Caufman, Chuck Hymes, Shoua Lee, Rita Rodriquez, Nkongo Cigolo, Jessica Hill, Linda Jungwirth, Carl Kubel, Shawntera Nardy, Craig Orivera, Craig OBrian, Art Couson

1. Welcome

Brief welcome by Lori Fritts, Co-Chair Business Advisory Committee

2. Introductions

Committee members introduced themselves and were asked to tell the location of their business or property they owned or operated. Robin introduced guest speaker, Chuck Hymes, Design Manager, DMJM Harris. Chuck will be presenting the confirmed configurations of the Westgate, Raymond, Fairview, Dale, and Lexington Stations.

3. Metropolitan Council Update

Robin Caufman gave a brief update on planning and contract work at the Metropolitan Council, Central Corridor Management Committee and the Central Corridor Community Advisory Committee. She also talked about Metropolitan Council's plans to keep the LRT on the Washington Avenue Bridge. Constructing the LRT on the I35-W Bridge would be costly, add one mile of travel time, and decrease rider ship. MN/DOT is looking at future design plans that may be added to the bridge in the future. The Central Corridor Office is moving into the Griggs Midway Building October 1st and an Open House is planned for October 26th, details to follow.

Ms. Caufman noted that the BAC packets included a summary of comments made at recent public meetings. The communication and public involvement strategic plan identifies the importance of public involvement in the design and engineering of this project. The public involvement staff set up 10 meetings and a summary of those comments were distributed in a handout. They contacted key stakeholders in the corridor and asked Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members to host a meeting. Over 500 people attended one of the ten meetings.

4. Review Central Corridor LRT Key Issues Matrix

Robin Caufman reviewed handout of 37 key issues identified by the FTA that must have decisions made in the next 6 months in order to keep Central Corridor on schedule. These issues are highlighted and scheduled for resolution the fourth quarter of 2007 and the first quarter 2008. This would include background scoping, DEIS studies on station alignment, and New Starts Application. The matrix included the location, priority of issue description, key concerns, public involvement level, and public agencies involved. The issues shaded in yellow would be addressed this year and decisions will be made

by the fourth quarter of 2007. The issues in blue would be addressed and resolved in the first quarter 2008.

5. Review Planned Location and Configuration of 5 Stations

Chuck Hymes, Design Manager, DMJM Harris presented the planned location and configuration of 6 stations. They include Dale, Lexington, Fairview, Raymond, and Westgate station. The Snelling station included the DEIS proposed location and the alternative locations included Pascal and Simpson. DMJM requires further assessment of these stations and will submit their final report in the fourth quarter of 2007. In December 2007 and January 2008, the University of Minnesota (tunnel vs. at grade) and Downtown St. Paul (alignment to serve Union Depot) will be studied and the findings will be reported in the first quarter of 2008.

Chuck identified two configurations of station platforms; they include a center platform and a split platform. The split, far side platform, have been identified for stations at Dale, Lexington, and Westgate. The center platforms have been identified for stations at Raymond and Fairview. The Snelling station as proposed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) would be a split platform, and the alternative, Pascal and Simpson would require more analysis.

The decision on the configurations of the station platforms included discovery of the closet place to get amount of feet need to accommodate two and three cars. The Center platform would require 300 feet for three cars. The split side platform requires more length, must be straight, and be at least 600 feet.

The next steps include completion of confirmed locations and configurations, the engineering on intersections, tracks and utilities. October will include analysis of consistent station elements for the Capitol, Victoria, Western, and Downtown St. Paul stations.

The BAC members had the following comments or questions.

Where is the bus going to pull over? Transit planners are looking at bus connections.

How do pedestrians get to the stations? Pedestrian crossings will be incorporated into the station design.

What is going to happen to street traffic? Traffic engineers will be studying impacts on traffic.

Can we build a bridge over the street to gain access? There are a lot of challenges with building pedestrian bridges such as space needed for access ramps, cost of elevators instead of ramps and going over the overheard electrical wire.

How will the sections on University be divided up and tie up construction? Construction engineers will develop a staging plan.

Will business owners have to prepare for loss of income? The Met Council will be working with public on maintaining access and posting signage. Other project partners such as the Central Corridor Partnership, the BAC and the cities are looking at business mitigation. Karri Plowman addressed this issue in the second half of the meeting.

Will the split platforms loose left turns? A feature of split platforms is to maintain the left turns. A BAC member asked that the engineers keep snow removal and storage in mind.

What type of safety arms will be used to keep pedestrians away from the trains? Safety engineers will be developing safety features.

6. Business Mitigation

Karri Plowman talked about business mitigation which included a handout Central Corridor Business Outreach Plan. This plan focuses on business mitigation that is aimed at helping businesses get through the construction phase of the project, build capacity, foster relationships, and create businesses that will be around for a long time. The success of the Central Corridor LRT project depends on the execution of four objectives:

- 1) Communicating construction activities to businesses
- 2) Comprehensive outreach efforts (Community Outreach Coordinators are available to Business Owners)
- 3) Adequately assisting with or identifying technical assistance
- 4) Developing a schedule that is mutually agreed upon

Karri Plowman stated that construction mitigation will focus on communicating to residents, and business and property owner's information about construction schedules, impacts, utility disruptions, and property access problems. Council staff, with technical assistance from project partners, CCP and BAC, will take the lead in developing and implementing the construction mitigation plan.

7. Adjourn

Before adjourning, Mr. Plowman indicated that the next six months of BAC meetings will cover the following topics. The December meeting will be cancelled unless it is needed.

- Business mitigation strategies
- Station design standards, Capitol Area stations
- Western and Victoria alternative Stations and Mitigation
- Downtown Saint Paul stations
- University of Minnesota stations

Shawntera Hardy, City of St. Paul PED, talked about the planning commission establishing a Central Corridor station area steering committee to oversee the station area planning process. The purpose of the Steering Committee will be to ensure consistency in approach between station areas and with the Central Corridor Development Strategy. Organizations or individuals must submit nominations by Monday, October 1st to Brian Alton (fax: 651-228-3220). Contact Donna Drummond of the Department of PED if you have any questions. She can be reached at 651-266-6556 or donna.drummond@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Next meeting: Monday, October 15, 2007, 4:30-6:30 PM (Station Design Standards, Capital Areas/Rice/Regions Stations, and Mitigation)

Prepared by Rita Rodriguez, Community Outreach Coordinator