

**Meeting of the Central Corridor Business Advisory Committee**

**Monday, February 16, 2009**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Jim Roth, Sandra Reis, Julio Fesser, Jim Segal, David Jones, Brian Thoemke.

**Others Present:** Jim Alexander, Karri Plowman, Lori Fritts, Eve Vang, Rita Rodriguez, Jim Alexander, Hue Pham, Alicia, Linda Windsor, Linda Jungwirth.

**1. WELCOME**

**2. PROJECT UPDATES**

**Project Budget**

Jim Alexander gave a baseline cost estimate summary by reviewing slides 3-8 of the presentation.

Lori Fritts asked if inner track fencing was a new feature. Was it recommended by the community?

Mr. Alexander answered that it is a new feature, but it was recommended by the Safety Department at Metro Transit. Today, there are people are crossing University Avenue. With the inner track fencing, we hope to deter that movement and decrease the chance of accidents.

Karri Plowman stated that the chain should be as attractive as possible. Yes, the feature will be bollard and chain.

Julio Fesser asked what the contingency funding will be going towards. How much do we get and when do we get access to it? The intent of the contingency fund is for the unknowns when we get into construction. However, we only get access to it as the project progresses by an increment of 20%.

Jim Roth asked if the total budget is going to go up any further. The project budget is set at \$914 million.

Mr. Plowman stated he understands that contingency, once released and not needed for project costs, will be available for infill stations and streetscape improvements such as tapered poles instead of tubular poles.

Mr. Alexander responded that the project budget includes a baseline streetscape plan. Any betterment above the baseline plans or improvement desired by the city need to be paid for by the city. If money becomes available, additional stations are one of the first priorities.

### 3. TECHNICAL REPORTS

#### Streetscape

Alicia Vap gave an update on Streetscape, by reviewing slides 9-28 of the presentation. She reviewed the streetscape elements included in the budget.

Ms. Fritts asked where the fences are located. Protective railing will be located at the station platforms and secondary station access.

What groups came up with the input for the betterments? The Central Corridor Project Office design team has been working with the cities, counties, Capitol Area Architectural Planning Board and University of Minnesota on the master plans.

Where will the funding come from for the betterments? A third party.

Mr. Roth asked if there will be any special assessments to the businesses. The City would make the decision to use special assessments to fund betterments.

Mr. Plowman inserted that we will have to collaborate, but any type of assessment costs will have to go to elements that need to be built now as opposed to later.

Jim Segal asked if there would be a safety barrier on the sidewalk curb to protect the businesses. Mr. Soler responded that the roadway design includes a standard curb to separate traffic and the curb.

Mr. Plowman asked if there is going to be some type of visual cue to distinguish the road and sidewalk. Yes.

Mr. Soler stated that there will be six feet of sidewalk from building to boulevard. The boulevard itself will be four feet from the curb. This space will include streetscape elements such as bus shelters, street lamps, signage, meters, trees, bike racks, etc...

Ms. Fritts asked when we will know the exact costs of the betterments and the source of funding. Ms. Vap answered that we know when the betterments can best be incorporated. For example, the brick pavers will be best incorporated during construction. We are coordinating with the City to prioritize the streetscape improvements and develop cost estimates.

Mr. Segal commented that trees can block the façade of my building.

Mr. Plowman concurred and stated that he has heard similar concerns from businesses, i.e....it blocks signage. He also stated that this concern should go to the City, since they will be the responsible contact for the tree betterments.

Ms. Vap stated that streetscape is not yet complete. We will continue to refine the details including—design, cost, maintenance and funding, and will keep the BAC updated.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Street Advanced Relocation**

Dan Soler gave an update on Utility Relocation on 4<sup>th</sup> Street by reviewing slides 29-32 of the presentation.

Mr. Roth asked if this work will occur on University Ave. Not as extensively because the utilities on University don't run down the middle of the road. However, utilities may need to be relocated. For example, there's a water main on one side of the road that will need to be separated into two mains with one running down each side of the street.

Mr. Plowman introduced a sample document, "What You Should Know" for building owners. This will help reduce costs if they can find ways to share costs. Along with this, we can implement some creative things like collaborative marketing to bring customers back to the businesses during construction.

Mr. Soler stated that Dana Happel, the community outreach coordinator for downtown St. Paul, has made contact with all the business and property owners. We will be working with them during utility relocation and construction. Mr. Soler responded that utility relocation could start during mid or late-August 2009.

#### **Construction Packages**

Mr. Soler continued with an update on Construction Packages, reviewing slides 33-36 of the presentation. The administrative draft of the FEIS has been sent to the FTA for review. We hope to publish it on April 20<sup>th</sup> and receive a Record of Decision for FEIS in early June so we can enter Final Design. Heavy construction will begin late summer 2010 if we are on time.

Ms. Fritz asked when we anticipate putting the bids out for construction. Late September is when we'll have Final Design approved. We cannot approve bids until we have the Full Funding Grant and after Final Design is approved. May or June 2010 is the goal for starting on Civil East.

Mr. Segal asked if the contractors can provide input. Yes, the contractors and the engineers will have to work together. We will be open to ideas from the contractors on how well and how fast we can get the construction done.

Will there dollar incentives for the contractors to do their work more quickly? Mr. Soler replied that contracts usually include incentives and penalties to reach deadlines. We have businesses that need access and so we'll need to at least keep one side of University Ave open for traffic.

Mr. Plowman asked if the contractor would need permission from the city to work non-traditional hours (night and weekends). They would have to go through the contract holders, which is Metropolitan Council.

Will the business community have input on the timeline of the contractors' construction schedule? Yes.

Mr. Roth asked when businesses will know when the street is going to be torn up in front of his building. The outreach staff will work with businesses to give them as much as advance warning as possible.

David Jones asked if the construction timeline will take into consideration the holiday season or special events? Yes.

Ms. Fritz asked who will be the facilitator of the contractors and having them work together. Mr. Soler answered that will be Metropolitan Council's role.

Ms. Fritz stated that we need information from you all, so we can work with the businesses to mitigate impacts. We need to know who we can refer them to for anticipated issues and impacts.

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 5:30PM.

**Next Meeting: March 16, 2009**