

Court International Building, Ground Floor-RM #150 2550 University Avenue West St. Paul

Meeting of the Central Corridor Business Advisory Committee

Monday, March 16, 2009

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Kathy Bjerke, Denise Currie, Lori Fritts, Sharon Johnson, Jeannine Kessler, Jim Roth, Brian Thoenke, David Youmans, Lao Lu Hang.

Others Present: Joey Browner, Robin Caufman, Gary Erickson, Wanda Kirkpatrick, Linda Jungwirth, Jack McCann, Craig O'Brien, Hue Pham, Karri Plowman, Rita Rodriguez, Dan Soler, Roderic Southall.

1. WELCOME

Lori Fritts opened the meetings at 4:00 PM and asked if anyone had comments on the February meeting minutes. There were no proposed changes.

2. PROJECT UPDATES

Public Art

Robin Caufman reviewed the status of the public art process by noting that the contracts with the artists have been executed. We are in the midst of holding a series of 14 visioning sessions, one for each station. She reviewed the next steps including another series of public meetings in May for the community to review the artists proposed concepts.

Lori Fritts asked if the artist selection committee (ASC) would be involved in the public art process. The Central Corridor Project Office design team continues to engage the ASC members.

Traction Power Substations (TPSS) and signal bungalow update

Gary Erickson reviewed the purpose of the TPSS and signal bungalows and provided an update on ones that have changed location due to public feedback. He reviewed the TPSS or signal bungalows that have changed since the previous presentation in December 2008. Two signal bungalows on University Avenue were relocated because crossovers were relocated away from residential areas to mitigate noise impacts.

Operations and Maintenance Facility update

Mr. Erickson reviewed changes to the Operations and Maintenance Facility location and layout by presenting slides 15 through 22 of the presentation. He noted that we have met with downtown residents and businesses and heard their concerns about future redevelopment, access, aesthetics and noise. He reviewed the proposed layout of the facility and types of uses including storage, light maintenance and office space.

Brian Thoemke asked about the status of the Snelling Avenue site. It is on the market. The OMF facility would not fit on this site because it is square and we need a more elongated site.

Mr. Erickson concluded the OMF presentation by reviewing next steps including the schedule municipal consent items at Ramsey County's March 17 meeting and the City of St. Paul's March 18 council meeting. Lori Fritts asked for clarification about the upcoming action items. Mr. Erickson explained that these actions are required under state law because there has been a significant change in the plans from what was approved last summer. Mr. Erickson noted that a task force was created, chaired by Patrick Seeb from the St. Paul Riverfront Corp., in response to concern over impacts to the Lowertown community.

Jim Roth asked why the action was tabled from last week's meeting. It was delayed to give time to discuss the issues with the task force. Mr. Soler and Mr. Erickson noted that the daily task force meetings have been productive.

4th Street Alignment Update

Dan Soler reviewed changes to the 4th Street alignment to connect to the Operations and Maintenance Facility by presenting slides 23 through 26 of the presentation. He noted that the trains would only pass on this segment when they are coming and going from the OMF facility at the beginning and end of the day. Trains will also be moving slowly so bells will only be used in an emergency situation.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Plan Update

Wanda Kirkpatrick presented an update of the DBE plan. She noted that she gave an overview of the DBE plan in early 2007. The purpose of today's update was to share what information has been done since 2007. She reviewed the outreach activities and accomplishments to date, shown on slides 27 through 30 of the presentation. Wanda noted that 2 of the 18 DBE's are within the 55104 zip code, many of the others are from the Twin Cities metro area.

3. BUSINESS MITIGATION

Karri Plowman reviewed work with business concerns. One issue raised at recent meetings is the need for a list of issues and who to contact. Mr. Plowman noted that he has started creating a table that identifies a list of issues, what has been heard and who they can contact for further information. This tool is being used to build relationships with business groups, timeline for decisions and what organizations can assist businesses with that issue. The draft matrix will be sent to BAC members for feedback, addition of issues etc...

Mr. Plowman noted that Jim Segal was unable to attend the meeting, but wanted to report on the recent activities of the University Avenue Business Association (UABA) so he asked Jack McCann to share information. Mr. McCann handed out a list of issues they've compiled as well as a letter they sent to the City of St. Paul regarding their concerns about streetscape. He also reviewed plans to establish a marketing campaign which is a proactive step they are taking to

address the concerns. Their intent is to have their call to action list pared down; which means that their questions have been answered.

Mr. Roth noted that the answers may be from a different source due to different roles and authorities. Mr. Plowman noted that the matrix was trying to boil it down to which government agency is responsible for what aspects of the project. Mr. Soler added that the Met Council is responsible for the constructing and operating the LRT system, but there are other entities that are responsible for other decisions such as street design and lane width that rests with the city or county that owns the roadway.

Kathy Bjerke asked if there are other programs available to businesses for training, funding etc... Mr. Plowman mentioned that a group has been formed and meets on a monthly basis to discuss and coordinate business mitigation efforts. The groups started with a few organizations such as the Funders Collaborative, Metropolitan Consortium of Community Development, Greater Frogtown Community Development Corp. etc... and has grown to about twenty-five organizations and agencies.

Denise Currie commented on the programs that were used for the I-35W bridge project to assist businesses. She said that low interest loans are not what businesses are seeking; Mr. Plowman agreed that loans should be the last resort for businesses.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:30PM.

Next Meeting: April 20, 2009