

Meeting of the Central Corridor Community Advisory Committee May 17, 2007

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Jerry Blakey (Chair) Kristen Denzer, Larry Englund, Readus Fletcher, Metric Giles, Steve Grans, Bree Halverson, Brian Hanninen, Richard Hanson, Brant Ingalsbe, David Johnson, Daniel Kirk, Xiongpaoo Lee, Laura Nevitt, Jeffrey Peltola, Ken Rodgers, Nick Rosenberry, Rozanne Severance, Seng Tchaa, Keith Thompson, Dave VanHattum, Chip Welling, John Wicks, Chris Worthington and ThaoMee Xiong.

Members Absent: Fredrick Blocton, Joshua Bunker, Veronica Burt, Denise Fosse, Doug Hennes, Margot Indieke Cross, Karen Inman, Richard Kleinbaum, Vanessa Levingston, Max Page, Ferdinand Peters, James Ruiz, Hussein Samatar, Art Sidner, JoAnn Tesar, Jessica Treat, Anne White, and Julie Wild.

Others Present: Robin Caufman, John DeWitt, Beth Elliott, Ken Erickson, Jennifer Jordan, Allen Lovejoy, Karen Lyons, Paul Mandell, Arlene McCarthy, Orlyn Miller, Jan Morlock, Sarah Penman, Joe Scala, Carol Swenson, Mark Voerding,

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

CAC Chair Jerry Blakey called the May 17, 2007 meeting of the Central Corridor Community Advisory Committee to order at 5:00 pm in the Goodwill Easter Seals offices at 553 Fairview Avenue North, St. Paul.

2. REPORTS

Arlene McCarthy gave the report of the Central Corridor Management Committee (CCMC). At the May CCMC meeting Ms. McCarthy gave a legislative update and Chairman Peter Bell led a discussion about the federal funding requests. At the end of the CCMC meeting, Mark Fuhrmann introduced the managers working on the project; several of them recently hired including the Manager of Communications Laura Baenen and Manager of Administration Gary Berger.

Larry Englund asked for an update on the status of hiring project consultants. Ms. McCarthy said that the Council would be acting on the selection of the Environmental Services Consultant at their May 23, 2007 meeting. The Council is reviewing the proposals for Engineering Services.

Metric Giles asked for a breakdown of past and future project expenditures. Arlene said that we can provide a breakdown of costs for preliminary engineering and project cost estimates. However, Ramsey County, as the previous project lead, would have the information about past expenses.

Larry Englund asked to define planning and clarify the difference between the preliminary engineering planning versus city planning. Ms. McCarthy said that the next portion of the agenda will answer this question.

3. LAND USE AND LRT PLANNING

Karen Lyon introduced the topic of land use and LRT planning by reviewing the Federal Transit Administrations (FTA) expectations for land use information in the project application. The FTA likes to see progress on land use planning activities during the engineering and design process. Ms. Lyon reviewed the 4 FTA land use components they use in the evaluation process, including:

- Existing Land Use
- Transit-supportive plans & policies
- Performance & impacts of policies
- Other land use considerations

Ms. Lyons also reviewed examples of each of these components before responding to questions.

Dave VanHattum asked where this information is used? The information is used in the “New Starts” application that was submitted to the FTA. A copy of the “New Starts” application will be available to the public in the Council’s library and the project office, once it is established.

Metric Giles asked if the FTA criterion considers past decision and policies such as Rondo and suggested that the Council consider going beyond the FTA minimal requirements. The land use information uses 2000 as base data.

Brant Ingalsbe asked what data is included in the land use section and are there any trends or red flags? The data in the New Starts application looks as trends such as number of vehicles per household, demographics, household income, density and employment. The data supports the proposed project, station location etc.

Larry Englund noted that many of the pictures in the presentation showed new development. Are there policies that support development or redevelopment, such as affordable housing? The cities are working on master plans and zoning updates along the corridor.

The next presentation was given by Paul Mandell, Principal Planner for the (CAAPB). He provided an overview of the role of this agency. The CAAPB was created by the legislature to address planning and design related issues with the historic Capitol area. Three of the stations fall under the CAAPB including the Rice Street, Capitol East and Cedar & 10th Streets Station. Projects the CAAPB is currently working on include (1) parking assessment and (2) upgrades and enhancements to the Capitol. After his brief overview, Mr. Mandell answered several questions.

Daniel Kirk asked how much of the \$130 million Capitol area project estimates are related to Central Corridor. The \$130 million is for the building rehabilitation. Mr. Mandell said that they will be working closely with the Central Corridor project staff, especially on connections to the Rice Street Station and pedestrian connections.

Chip Welling asked what the modal split was for the Capitol area. Mr. Mandell indicated that transit ridership is low due to abundance of low cost parking. However, there are 100 carpool parking spaces and some bus pass programs. The St. Paul Transportation Management Organization is working to increase ridership. Mr. Welling asked a follow up question about the future. Mr. Mandell said that they are trying to reduce the amount of parking.

Larry Englund asked for clarification on what “oversight on station design” means for this project and whether community input would be sought for the stations within the Capitol area. Mr. Mandell said that the CAAPB fully intends to involve the community in the design process. He also noted that the CAAPB includes community members and representatives from the Mayor’s office.

Jen Jordan and Beth Elliot presented the City of Minneapolis’ land use planning activities. Ms. Jordan started with an overview of recent planning activities. The City is in the process of reviewing broad policies in its comprehensive plan. The City is also reviewing small area plans of three neighborhoods along the Central Corridor including University Ave. SE, SEMI and Cedar Riverside.

Ms. Elliot talked about the process for developing the small area plans. The City is planning for 1 year to complete the plan and is involving the public in the process, starting with the West Bank small area plan. The City is looking at issues related to land use, transportation and transit. The Cedar Riverside neighborhood will be unique in the city because it will be the only one to be served by two LRT stations. The City is incorporating transit oriented development and pedestrian access to the station area into the plan.

Ms. Jordan discussed the SEMI area plan which is focusing on redevelopment of old industrial areas. The
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City is also addressing infrastructure issues such as stormwater management and transportation improvements to alleviate traffic on University. The plans are to promote it as an employment generator.

Ms. Jordan talked briefly about the 29th Avenue and University Avenue station. The City engaged the public in the land use planning decisions. The small area land use plan reflects the community's vision for the station area.

The City is also working on plans for the Downtown East/North Loop area that includes the new baseball stadium and lots of existing parking. The City already has regulatory measures in place to encourage transit oriented development around the station areas, such as all the development that has occurred in the historic mill district. Ms Elliot and Ms. Jordan responded to questions.

Rozanne Severance commented that she was glad that the City was looking at access to the West Bank Station. Hiawatha is a success and she wants to see Central just as successful and accessible to all people. Ms. Elliot noted that the task force includes representatives from the disability community.

Orlyn Miller, Director of Planning and Architecture at the University of Minnesota, gave the next presentation. Mr. Miller focused his presentation of three activities (1) status of the campus master plan, (2) Central Corridor LRT campus study and (3) developments along the line. The U of M is working on plans around the new stadium, which in the long term will result in the reduction of surface parking and creation of a transit hub with a structured parking ramp. Plans for future development include construction of potentially 1 million square feet of research/office facilities near the stadium. After reviewing the information in the slides, Mr. Miller answered several questions.

Kristen Denzer noted that the plans include future development on land that is occupied by existing buildings. Mr. Miller indicated that the U of M already purchased much of the property for infrastructure improvements. There may need to be some land acquired between Oak Street and University Avenue to accommodate LRT construction. Acquisition requirements will have to be determined during PE. Ms. McCarthy also clarified that the stadium is in the way of the DEIS proposed alignment and we will need to do additional design work to determine final alignment in preliminary engineering.

Jeff Peltola asked if the transit hub concept includes a LRT station. If so, would it replace the 29th or stadium Village Stations? Jan Morlock clarified that the transit hub would not be an additional station nor would it be a substitute for the proposed stations, but would provide pedestrian connections to the proposed Stadium Village station."

Chip Welling asked if we are considering keeping the route on University instead of diverting it to the north towards the UofM busway. Alignments in this area will be studied in preliminary engineering.

Allen Lovejoy, Principal Planner, presented the City of St. Paul's land use planning activities including the Development Strategy. Mr. Lovejoy presented highlights of the City of St. Paul's Development Strategy. The next steps include looking at station area planning. The plan is to catch up to the City of Minneapolis with station area plans and development regulations to promote transit oriented development so that we can update the new starts application to meet FTA expectations. The City will also look at pedestrian and bike access, especially north/south and radial links from the stations. Due to time, Mr. Lovejoy abbreviated his presentation. There were no questions.

4. CENTRAL CORRIDOR CAC TOUR DEBRIEFING

Chair Blakey asked if anyone had any comments they'd like to share regarding last months CAC bus tour of the route. He noted that the packets included email responses to several questions Ms. Kaufman sent out regarding the bus tour. Jeff Peltola thanked staff for compiling the CAC member's comments and sharing them with the committee.

Larry Englund said that he was still unclear after the tour about the location of the stops within the tunnel.

Ms. McCarthy said that the stations are in the mouth or trench going into the tunnel.

Rozanne Severance followed up with a question about how the decision about the tunnel and station locations will be made. These decisions will be made after detailed analysis in preliminary engineering.

5. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, June 21, 2007 5-7:00 pm, Goodwill Easter Seals.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jerry Blakey adjourned the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Prepared by Robin Cauffman, Manager of Public Involvement

Attachment 1: Future Meeting Topics

Responses to the following question: Identify the topics you are most interested in learning more about and presentation ideas for future CAC meetings.

- Flexibility in locating/adding stations (13)
- Reason for U tunnel (10)
- Job Opportunities (8)
- Issues of cost and under-lying assumptions (6)
- Connecting Bus Service (6)
- Construction mitigation (6)
- Future expansion (cut short now or extend system in future) (5)
- Access to businesses and community services during construction (4)
- Environmental Justice Analysis (4)
- Parking, including Hide and Ride (4)
- St. Paul's Development Plan (4) - Presented at 5/17/07 CAC meeting
- E.I.S. Presentation (3)
- Station information including design (3)
- Timelines with deadlines for decisions (3)
- Community Benefits Agreement (2)
- Gentrification (2)
- Historic sites along the line/route (2) - Pointed out historic buildings on 4/19/07 CAC tour.
- Residential development and safety (2)
- Signal pre-emption or prioritization for LRT (2)
- Summary Report on RFP process (procedure) (2)
- Access to line (1)
- Bike Lane (1)
- Techniques to reach all constituencies (1)
- Union Depot (1)
- Very detailed information must be provided (1)
- Visual simulations of corridor design (1) – Include at beginning of all CAC meetings.
- Working groups and clear outputs/products (1)
- Balance budget outcome with outcome of meeting people
- Best way to Reach ELL
- Communication Plan – Presented to the CAC on 3/15/07
- Discussion around overlapping service “sheds” for downtown stations vs. lack on parts of University (How was station placement determined).
- Equitable access
- Financing (other options)
- Streetscaping