

Meeting of the Central Corridor Community Advisory Committee

October 18, 2007

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Kirstin Beach (Co-chair), Jerry Blakey (Co-chair), Veronica Burt, Kristen Denzer, Larry Englund, Denise Fosse, Ken Erickson, Readus Fletcher, Metric Giles, Steve Grans, Brian Hanninen, Richard Hanson, Margot Imdieke Cross, Brant Ingalsbe, Karen Inman, David Johnson, Richard Kleinbaum, Jacob McKnite, Jeffrey Peltola, Rozanne Severance, Art Sidner, JoAnn Tesar, Keith Thompson, Jessica Treat, Dave VanHattum, Chip Welling, Anne White, John Wicks, ThaoMee Xiong.

Members Absent: Fredrick Blocton, Joshua Bunker, Bree Halverson, Maricruz Hill, Doug Hennes, Xiong Pao Lee, Jackie Lunde, Laura Nevitt, Ken Rogers, Nick Rosenberry, Hussein Samatar, Ross Skattum, Seng Tchaa, Chris Worthington.

Others Present: Jim Alexander, Laura Baenen, Joey Browner, Nkongo Cigolo, Christina Morrison, Dana Dellis, Steve Dornfeld, Donna Drummond, Mark Fuhrmann, Oscar Gonzales, Shawntera Hardy, Jessica Hill, Wanda Kirkpatrick, Arlene McCarthy, Kathryn O'Brien, Dennis Probst, Rita Rodriguez, Dan Soler, Kyle Williams.

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Co-Chair Jerry Blakey called the October 18, 2007 meeting of the Central Corridor Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to order at 5:07 PM in the Goodwill Easter Seals offices at 553 Fairview Avenue North, St. Paul. Co-Chair Blakey welcomed two new CAC members, Jacob McKnite representing the West Bank Community Coalition and Jackie Lunde representing the Saint Anthony Park Community Council.

Manager of Public Involvement, Robin Caufman, introduced two newly hired Community Outreach Coordinators and one Community Outreach Coordinator Intern,

1. Dana Dellis: Community Outreach Coordinator for downtown Saint Paul
2. Joey Browner: Community Outreach Coordinator for downtown Minneapolis and the greater metropolitan area
3. Kent Hranicka: Community Outreach Intern

Ms. Caufman thanked CAC members for their public outreach efforts and added that the Central Corridor Project Office had spoken to 2500 people in September 2007.

Co-Chair Kirstin Beach stated that today's meeting format is a result of invaluable suggestions and feedback on the overall CAC process that the Metropolitan Council had received from several CAC members. Co-Chair Beach stated that several other adjustments resulting from CAC members' suggestions have been incorporated including a study of a potential station at Hamline has been added to the issue matrix and more time has been allocated to the Snelling station review.

Co-Chair Beach thanked all members for being a part of the CAC and acknowledged members role as leaders in their respective communities. Co-Chair Beach stated that the CAC is different from other committees because it is not a decision making body but an advisory body instead. The Central Corridor CAC was established consistent with national guidelines with only one deviation for its size; the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) recommends 20 CAC members, but the Central Corridor CAC has twice that number because the Metropolitan Council found it important to include all communities living and doing business along the corridor.

Co-Chair Beach advised that the Central Corridor Light Rail project work is not starting from scratch; this project picks up with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which analyzed and recommended the selected route, mode and station location. In June of 2006, the Metropolitan Council became the project

lead and is the agency accountable for delivering the project and justifying each and every cost to the federal government, and accordingly, it must reserve for itself decision-making authority on all major project components. The Council's decisions will be informed by the work of the CAC, other advisory groups, and its project partners. Also constrained by the Cost Effectiveness Index, the Metropolitan Council needs to bring costs down in order to qualify for federal funding, and the purpose of the CAC through this process is to get the first look at the latest engineering work and to identify community concerns, issues, and interests.

Co-Chair Beach stated that this summer CAC members have helped set up public meetings that more than 500 people attended. Ken Rodgers helped the Metropolitan Council connect with an agency that is able to make Braille maps available free of charge to the blind; Rosanne and Ken are part of another advisory committee, the Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Co-Chair Beach asked that CAC members who did their homework by meeting with their community groups report to the rest of the CAC.

- Ken Erickson (Capital Heights) stated that he regularly meets with his block group and town home association where he presents new information and answers questions. Co-Chair Beach thanked Mr. Erickson for his efforts and encouraged him to continue working closely with the Outreach Coordinator representing his area.
- Anne White (District Councils Collaborative) reported that the DCC passed a resolution in favor of equitable level of bus service for people living on eastern most side of University Avenue. In addition Ms. White reported that her community favored adding stations and requested that the level of public involvement be reviewed to allow input beyond public art.
- Kristen Denzer (University of Minnesota Graduate and Professional Assembly) reported that the UMGPA passed a resolution supporting a tunnel under Washington Avenue for the University of Minnesota alignment.
- Karen Inman (District 7 Planning Council) said she was not in favor of decreased frequency of bus route 16 service.

Co-Chair Beach thanked all members for meeting with their communities and encouraged other members to do the same.

2. REPORTS

Arlene McCarthy gave the Central Corridor Management Committee (CCMC) report; October 2007 CCMC meeting was hosted by the University of Minnesota. CCMC members toured the route through the University of Minnesota. The CCMC is organizing a trip to Salt Lake City and San Diego in early November; Salt Lake City has light rail alignment at grade through a university campus and San Diego has light rail alignment in tunnel through its university campus. Pictures and information will be gathered and shared with the CAC.

Karri Plowman, Director of Central Corridor Partnership introduced himself and mentioned that his role was to facilitate the Business Advisory Council (BAC) for the Metropolitan Council; the BAC's mission is to create a plan to assist businesses promote communication before, during and after construction.

3. Small Group Workstations

Ms. Caufman introduced the workshop format; there will be five different workshops each covering a specific topic. Each workstation will have at least one project engineer presenting on the topic and a community outreach coordinator recording all comments for later summary and report to the rest of the CAC. After CAC members acknowledged the process and indicated that they did not have any questions, Ms. Caufman introduced the workstations and staff:

1. Station Lay out: Jim Alexander, engineer and Jessica Hill
2. Station Design Elements: Kyle Williams, engineer and Kent Hranicka assisted by Robin Caufman

3. Three Snelling Station Options: Dan Soler, engineer and Nkongo Cigolo
4. Project Updates: Dennis Probst, engineer and Joey Browner
5. City of Saint Paul Central Corridor Development Strategy: City of St. Paul staff Donna Drummond, Shawntera Hardy, Christina Danico accompanied by outreach coordination Dana Dellis.

See Attachments 2-6 for a summary of the comments, questions and answers from each workstation.

4. Next Steps

Co-Chair Beach reminded members to set up meeting with your organization and notify your Outreach Coordinator.

Ms. Caufman identified tentative topics for next month's workstation:

- 2 or 3 car stations – Inform
- Substations – Inform
- Capitol Area stations – Inform
- Hamline/Western/Victoria Stations – Input
- UofM/West Bank – Input

Co-Chair Blakey asked CAC members if the December 2007 CAC meeting should be held on its regularly scheduled date of December 20 or rescheduled to December 13. Consensus was to move it up a week to Dec. 13, 2007.

5. NEXT MEETING

The next CAC meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2007 at 5:00 PM. Note date change based on CAC consensus to move the meeting up.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Co-Chair Blakey adjourned the meeting at 6:52 PM.

Prepared by Nkongo Cigolo, Community Outreach Coordinator

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) Noted need for 75 part time bus drivers and 26 mechanics due to transit demand following the collapse of the I-35 bridge, 8/16/07 CAC
- Issues of cost and under-lying assumptions (6) – Presented overview of project budget at 6/21/07 CAC meeting
- Connecting Bus Service (6) – Presented at 6/21/07 CAC meeting.
- 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) Initiated conversation 8/16/07 CAC; submitted summary memo at 9/20/07 CAC.
- Parking, including Hide and Ride (4)
- St. Paul's Development Plan (4) - Presented at 5/17/07 CAC meeting, Workstation to present updates at 10/18/07 CAC meeting.
- E.I.S. Presentation (3) - Presented at 7/19/07 CAC meeting.
- Station information including design (3) Presented Dale, Lexington, Snelling, Fairview, Raymond and Westgate station at 9/20/07 CAC. Station standard design and Capitol stations planned for 10/15.07 CAC
- Timelines with deadlines for decisions (3) Presented issues matrix at 9/20/07 CAC.
- 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) – Established meeting format with small workstations for more detailed discussion at 10/18/07 meeting.
- 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

Attachment 2: Summary of Discussion at the Station Layout Workstation

Prepared by Jessica Hill, Community Outreach Coordinator

Questions and Comments	Answers
Is there pedestrian access from both ends of the platform?	Pedestrian access would generally be located at intersection crosswalks.
If center platform is cheaper why not have all center platforms to allow traffic can to move through smoothly?	Split platform is used in dense area to allow better traffic flow and center platform need more physical space
What is the width of a center platform?	Depends on type of platform
How do the two configurations affect bus connections?	Configuration does not affect accessibility to the bus stations.
How will bus stops work at intersections?	Buses will stop at farside of an intersection, similar to current bus station location. Bus station location will be refined when transit planners look at bus operations.
How much traffic do we expect once LRT is in?	Engineers are conducting existing traffic counts to help them analyze traffic flow.
What mechanisms are in place if a car stalls trying to turn left across the tracks?	Central will include an emergency or contingency plan similar to Hiawatha LRT to maintain service until the car can be removed.
Would a train ever need to stop at an intersection with traffic?	Yes, trains will operate with traffic. If a light is red, the train will also stop.
Is there a list of the stations and what types of platforms are being considered?	The proposed station location and layout is identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Station
How long would the canopy be on the platform?	This will be determined in station design process.
How will the sidewalks dump out?	The sidewalks will connect to the station platform.
I would like to see something similar to Nicollet Mall on Washington Ave. through the UofM.	NA
How will snow be removed from the station area?	This will be considered in station design and operations.
What type of signage will there be on split platforms?	Signage will be consistent throughout the system to promote way finding.

Attachment 3: Summary of Discussion at the Station Design Workstation

Prepared by Kent Hranicka, Community Outreach Intern

Questions	Answers
Asked to incorporate art upfront in the plan rather than after construction.	Looking at opportunities to integrate art into station components.
Who maintains the station and the art?	The Metropolitan Council.
Asked if instructions will be in languages other than English?	Yes, similar to Hiawatha.
Suggested we look into Goodwill’s program, Art of Work – Work of Art initiative and asked if there is an opportunity to coordinate.	Kyle Williams took down contact information.
Is the Art going to reflect the character of historic districts or neighborhoods?	That is the current intent.
What is the budget set aside for art for the central corridor?	Not yet officially determined
Is there a procedure for cost overruns?	Contingency is built into the cost estimate.
When is community involvement going to begin relating to design of the stations?	Project office staff is developing a strategy for significant public involvement in the station art and design process.
Once the plan is in place, what is the likelihood that another station can be added?	Designated area could be planned for a potential station in the future
How is the aesthetic design of the stations going to be balanced with the functional design? Concerns regarding the aesthetics of the stations design	Aesthetic design will affect the functional design.
What was the decision process that chose “hybrid stations” rather than the Hiawatha process that allowed each station to reflect the uniqueness of the community? Who decided to have “hybrid stations?” Concerns relating to the standardization of the station design.	Desire to have consistency for maintenance. Each station will still be unique based on community involvement in the selection of the art and architectural applications.
Comments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern over crime on the train. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested street signage during construction. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns relating to art blocking vision of signs - Hiawatha LRT signs are easily visible; incorporate this into Central Corridor design. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestion to differentiate between art and color. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of place – riders should be able to step off the train and know where they are. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest fencing along the middle of the tracks to keep people from crossing. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about durability of construction materials. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest that funds for public art are distributed equitably between the stations. 	

Attachment 4: Summary of Discussion at the Snelling Avenue Station Workstation

Prepared by Nkongo Cigolo, Community Outreach Coordinator

Questions	Answers
How long will University Avenue be closed for construction?	Construction will be phased and some access points will be available
Where will the crosswalk be located for center platform between Asbury and Simpson?	At traffic light.
Would there still be a left turn at Simpson from the shopping area	No.
Would it be prudent to wait for Saint Paul's traffic analysis?	That will be fitted to one of the three options as soon as study is complete
Is there a difference in cost for center platform versus split platform?	Yes, center platform has only one platform, but split has two equal in size platforms
What is the platform length?	Approximately 300 feet if the system is built for 3-car trains. Split stations would have two 300 foot long platforms.
Are business owners comfortable with the three alternatives?	We are in touch with businesses at each station; they provide input and will be informed of all progress.
Is there a real measurement causing bus rerouting from Snelling to two other proposed stations?	Metro Transit is working on bus connections and if rerouted it would be to bring to and pick up passengers from light rail station.
How much bus traffic does Snelling have?	Snelling is highest volume transfer point for North-South traffic in the corridor.
Will there be bicycle access to the stations?	All stations will be accessible to bicycles.
Is it possible to have a center platform west of Snelling?	Center station west of Snelling would be closer to Fairview station and increase the distant from the next eastern station
How would pedestrian circulation work at intersections?	Pedestrians will access the station at signalized access points.
Why not consider other options other than those proposed in the DEIS?	Options were considered and recommended in the DEIS based on bus connections, pedestrian access, street configuration and traffic flow.
How much will north south traffic flow be reduced?	We are collecting traffic data that will be used in modeling traffic.
Comments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestion that having a station located in middle of shopping area will be good for shopping 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern that if buses are rerouted, this will cause major delay to route 84 (Snelling) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested looking at having a pedestrian tunnel under University be added for pedestrian safety? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested that north/south bus connections should be a priority 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snelling best for bus transfers, other proposed locations poor. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add bridge over Snelling for pedestrian access. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need long range planning for Snelling transit improvements. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about balancing pedestrian, bike and bus connections at station area? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentrating pedestrian movement at one intersection seems ideal. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No matter what the choice is; less traffic congestion, more cost effective and easier to mitigate with area bus is the best. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station at Snelling much more beneficial than elsewhere. 	

Attachment 5: Summary of Discussion at the Project Update Workstation

Prepared by Joey Browner, Community Outreach Coordinator

Questions	Answers
Along the corridor will the current bus routes be changed?	Central Corridor Light Rail will replace bus route 50; bus route 16 will run at a reduced frequency
What stations along the corridor will have signal lights and left turns?	This has not been determined yet and will be shared as soon as available.
Who determined where the station are now and why those locations?	The Draft Environmental Impact Statement through a series of technical analyses and review of public comments.
Where will the disabled accesses be along the corridor?	All platforms will be ADA accessible.
Can the public sit in on meeting when decisions are made about corridor?	Several committees such as the CAC and BAC have been set such to inform and engage the public comments and concerns throughout the process. The Central Corridor Management Committee and Metropolitan Council meetings are also open to the public and posted on our website. Public are welcome to stop by the Central Corridor project office to read public documents and talk to public involvement staff.
Which streets will be changed from through streets with left turns to only right turns?	This will be available once design has been finalized.
Who will cover the cost for corridor that will operate over the bridge?	The Metropolitan Council will engineer and build the Central Corridor over the bridge.
U of M what will the corridor be? Tunnel or At-Grade?	This has not been determined yet.
What will each station look like along the corridor and could it be changed if the community does not approve the design.	All stations design elements will be similar through the corridor; the community will have a significant amount of input in the selection of artists and public art.

Attachment 6: Summary of Discussion at the St. Paul Land Use Workstation

Prepared by Dana Dellis, Community Outreach Coordinator

Questions	Answers
Can City condemn property for redevelopment?	City can't condemn houses for redevelopment; it can only condemn private property for public purpose (utilities, parks, transportation improvements etc).
Concerned about the impact on property values and taxes,	There is a misconception that property values are going up due to Central Corridor. Property values are increasing throughout the region.
Does the cost estimate of the project include improvements along University?	The \$932 million cost estimate does include redoing buildings face-to-face (streetscapes, sidewalks up to buildings) for the entire length of the corridor.
What leverage does the city have in adding possible stations at Western, Victoria, & Hamline?	If these stations aren't included in the initial phase, the City would like to include the base infrastructure if they would add to it later. The City is a partner, but the ultimate decision maker is the Metropolitan Council.
Comments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned about the turn at University and Robert and the traffic pattern in that area. Wants drive through traffic to stay on main roads and not to go through neighborhoods. 	