

Metropolitan Council

Metropolitan Council Chambers, 390 No. Robert St., St. Paul, Mn. 55101

**Meeting of the Central Corridor Management Committee
November 14, 2007**

Members Present	Peter Bell, Chair	Toni Carter	Kathleen O'Brien
	Tom Hanson (Norm Foster –alt)	Rafael Ortega	Peter McLaughlin
	Reynaldo Aligada	Jim Westerhaus	Bob McFarlin
	Mary Hill Smith		
Members Absent	R.T. Rybak	Paul Krause	Chris Coleman

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Peter Bell called the November 14, 2007 regular meeting of the Central Corridor Management Committee to order at 1:10 pm at the Metropolitan Council offices at 390 North Robert St., St. Paul.

2. APPROVAL OF 11/14/07 AGENDA AND 10/10/07 MINUTES

Motion was made by Smith, seconded by Westerhaus to adopt the agenda for the 11/14/07 meeting and the minutes of the 10/10/07 meeting. The motion carried.

3. COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Robin Cauffman delivered the report of the Community Advisory Committee in the absence of Kirstin Sersland Beach and Jerry Blakey. A new format was used at the last CAC meeting in response to requests from the community to have an opportunity to provide more one-on-one conversations with the engineers and more detailed discussions. The technical updates and reports were given at the start of the meeting and then the bulk of the meeting spent at on small “workstations”. Five workstations were set up to provide opportunity to discuss station layout, station design, Snelling Ave. Station, City of St. Paul land use plans. Some of the concerns were: Station access, operations, safety; standard components of station design, public art and station maintenance; transition from bus connections to LRT. Future public meetings will be held regarding St. Paul public land use planning process. A fifth station was a general project update station to address questions not related to specific stations.

Robin also introduced two additional Outreach Coordinators that have been hired: Joey Browner and Dana Dellis; Robin now has a full complement of Outreach Coordinators on her staff.

4. BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT

Karri Plowman reported that the last BAC continued discussion about design principles. Many of the same issues that the CAC has are the same issues of the BAC, with these additional concerns: 1) the removal/limit of left turn lanes, 2) utility interruptions, 3) Snelling Station safety/access.

The BAC is working on their Business Mitigation Principles, with meetings to come to discuss them. A series of meetings will take place in December, after which the BAC will present the Business Mitigation Principles to the CCMC, city councils, and other appropriate entities.

In answer to Bell's question whether the BAC will be making recommendations regarding some of their concerns, Plowman replied that information is being shared orally and on cards at the meetings. If needed, information is passed on to the engineers and design personnel. If issue is of primary importance, it could be submitted in writing.

5. CCPO PROJECT UPDATE

Mark Fuhrmann gave a project update featuring the time sensitive Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS). Since June 2006, the FTA is updated each month with issues that are being examined, evaluated, assessed. The FTA has responded with a concern that some of those items have not been fully disclosed in the Draft EIS of 2006. The FTA & CCPO are discussing submitting a SDEIS, including an 8 item scope:

- 1) Hiawatha/Central Connection – Fuhrmann explained the various alternatives and some issues that have surfaced as a result of the I-35W bridge collapse.
- 2) U of M (tunnel vs at-grade) – the DEIS only considered a tunnel alignment, more information on the at-grade alignment must be provided.
- 3) Infill Stations (Hamline, Victoria, Western) – community and City of St. Paul have made it very clear that they want CCPO to evaluate some possible infill stations on the east run of the University Avenue segment.
- 4) Capitol Area Alignment/Stations – the DEIS assumed that the Capitol East Station was on Columbus Street, and that has moved as a result of building out of some of the new state buildings.
- 5) Downtown St. Paul Alignment/Stations – this is an outgrowth of the PE funding agreement, that commits CCPO to look at DEIS alignment plus two alternate alignments that take the LRT to the back concourse of the Union Depot facility.
- 6) Traction Power Sub-Stations – the DEIS did not disclose the whereabouts of traction power sub-stations.
- 7) 3-Car Train Requirement – FTA has expressed a concern that the 2-car approach may be adequate capacity to handle the demand that was forecasted.
- 8) Vehicle Maintenance Facility – the DEIS did not contemplate a vehicle facility to service the CC fleet.

Fuhrmann answered general questions from committee members including:

Q: Is it possible that there may be another SDEIS after addressing these 8 items?

A: There have been many discussions with the FTA about more items than these eight. The FTA has agreed in a telecom, that these eight are the major items. There is still a risk that a supplemental to the supplemental may be needed.

Q: Is there an opportunity to add to the list of 8 and still be on schedule?

A: This is the draft list of 8, not final, but anything added to list would have to be taken back to the FTA to discuss whether additional item is a major item that would require disclosure in the supplemental process.

Q: Please give an example of other items that were not part of the 8 listed.

A: Washington Ave Bridge Retrofit – The DEIS document contained a general statement that there may be some retrofit to that bridge to accommodate the tracks. The retrofitting that is proposed is not a major item because it was first disclosed, and there will be no visual impact to the Mississippi River Gorge or for the neighboring campus and residential area. Unless there is some major unexpected change, this would not be part of the list of 8.

Q: Will the SDEIS delay preliminary engineering?

A: It appears that the assumption of receiving FTA decision does not impact 2010 timing of securing the full funding agreement.

Q: Does this affect the committee's timeline for making decisions on scope?

A: Next month will mark the beginning of rolling out some of the scope considerations; this was discussed with FTA and we are in agreement that we can parallel during the final decisions on scope and the drafting of the SDEIS. At the end of the decision process in the 2nd quarter of 2008, the decision makers will need to

finalize those scope decisions so that the SDEIS can capture what those scope elements will be. Papers regarding these scoping decisions will be moving forward to the CCMC next month.

Fuhrmann also answered questions about each of the 8 items including:

U of M Proposed Station

Q: Will the SDEIS consider a multi-modal station at the Stadium Village?

A: The University and CCPO have been discussing a multi-modal station, but this is not part of the SDEIS. There is nothing on these plans that would preclude a multi-modal station.

Infill Stations

Q: Will the infill stations have an effect on the ridership numbers and the CEI?

A: There could be increased ridership due the more stations, or minus ridership because the train would stop more often affecting travel time.

Discussion regarding the fact that there is no requirement that the infill stations be built-out for “day-one” of operations. The stations can be designed to allow for future construction, if necessary. Discussion regarding the cost for prep work for future infill stations and the infill station impact, if any, on the CEI.

Capitol Area Alignment/Stations

The Capitol East Station has been relocated from Columbus Street to Robert Street, with the consent of the Capitol Area Architecture Planning Board (Cap Board). The Cap Board has asked for consideration in moving the Rice Street Station to the East side of Rice St. This will have impacts on the track location and analyses are being performed.

Q: How will the Capitol Board relate/interact with the neighborhood?

A: The adjacent neighborhood to the Capitol Board area will have input into the recommendations of the Capitol Board through neighborhood meetings.

Downtown St. Paul Alignment/Stations

The front approach to the Union Depot and two other options to the concourse are being evaluated; more information will be at the next meeting. On October 24th the City of St. Paul took action as part of a planning document to adopt the diagonal alignment at 4th, 5th, Cedar and Minnesota as the preferred alignment.

Fuhrmann provided the information on next steps and key dates for the project.

Snelling Station

Three stations were evaluated and taken to the communities for input. A strong majority supports the Snelling Station to be at Snelling Avenue, the key consideration being the interconnection with bus service. Most station locations from the City limits on the west to the Dale Street station on the east are “fixed” The stations from Marion Street and east locations are still being worked on. The CCPO is moving forward on the design of those stations whose locations are fixed.

6. REPORT ON SALT LAKE CITY/SAN DIEGO SITE VISIT

Peter Bell reported on the trip to Salt Lake City and San Diego. Committee attendees were: Bell, Smith, Westerhaus, Aligada, O’Brien. Others attending were: staff from the U of M and MC Staff – T.Weaver, A.McCarthy, R.Caufman, M.Fuhrmann, K.Beach. The attendees observed good representations in each site, but none were exactly the situation on the Central Corridor. The funding sources and agreements with the FTA were different, as well. O’Brien stated she was very impressed with the two cities securing a reliable funding source that allowed them to move forward in a timely fashion, and found it interesting that San Diego has less than 4 miles of the total track in street right-of-way.

7. INFORMATION SHARING

McLaughlin requested a future presentation about the funding sources and cash flow plan.

As the legislative session approaches, Ortega stated the need for the partners to be in sync when approaching the legislature with requests.

Aligada requested that information pertaining to scoping decisions be distributed to the committee members ASAP to allow the members as much time as possible to discuss with their constituents.

8. NEXT MEETING: DECEMBER 12, 2007

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bell adjourned the 11/14/07 CCMC meeting at 3:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
LuAnne Major, Recording Secretary