TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

The following is the TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS, taken before Rebekah J. Bishop, Notary Public, Registered Professional Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter, at the Minneapolis Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, Minnesota, commencing at 6:00 p.m. on January 19, 2016.
APPEARANCES

Metropolitan Council:
Adam Duininck
Gary Cunningham
Wendy Wulff
Carol Letofsky
Lona Schreiber
Sandy Rummel

Hennepin County:
Peter McLaughlin
Linda Higgins
Marion Greene
Jeff Johnson
Mike Opat
MR. McLAUGHLIN: Good evening, everybody.

Welcome to Hennepin County's Minneapolis Central Library. We want to welcome you here to this beautiful facility. I want to first introduce my colleagues on the county board. I'll start on this end with -- I'll just let you introduce yourself. How about that?

MS. GREENE: I'm Marion Greene. On the Hennepin County Board, I represent the southwestern portion of Minneapolis and St. Louis Park.

MS. HIGGINS: I guess I'm next. Linda Higgins; I represent District 2, and part of the Bottineau line comes right through our own district.

MR. JOHNSON: Jeff Johnson, western Hennepin County.

MR. OPAT: Mike Opat, northwestern Hennepin County.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: So these are my colleagues. They are -- have been heavily involved in the development of this and the other line. We're going to talk tonight about Bottineau LRT, which will be a vital component of the whole transit system for the region and for -- and in particular, it will be very important for transit service in Hennepin County. It'll have eleven stations in five different communities.
We've come to believe that this -- these lines provide access to jobs, support for businesses, so it gets people to jobs, and it gets employees to employers so that people can earn a living and their businesses can thrive.

It's an incredibly strong connection, not only to downtown Minneapolis, but to the VA Hospital, the airport, and other stops along the Blue Line. But, also, you can make connections starting at the Green Line to the University of Minnesota, a host of other universities along the Green Line, as well as connecting to the Capitol and the city of St. Paul, as well as connections to North Hennepin Community College and Hennepin Technical are right on the line itself. So it's a -- it's a great -- a great connector within the region as a part of this system that we're talking about building out.

It's also going to be -- we've worked hard to integrate bicycle and pedestrian connection and access to a number of parks, including Theodore Wirth Park, a large regional park.

In addition to that, I just want to thank my colleagues for their engagement on this project. And in particular, I want to thank Mr. Opat and Commissioner Higgins who have had -- who have been
involved in this process. The line runs through their
districts, and without their leadership on my board, we
would not be where we are today.

In addition to that, though, tonight we're
talking about municipal consent, which is a vote by the
cities and as well as the county board, on the line
itself and the direction it's going, and so we
appreciate the involvement of our city officials and
the community people along the -- along the entire
line.

We've got a lot of you, a lot of discussions,
and we -- I think we have a great product here not only
in terms of the line itself, but also in terms of the
station area planning that's going on so that actually
create great places along these lines.

We've seen -- we've seen the emergence of
that along our two lines that have developed so far.
There's plenty of planning and discussion along
Southwest as well, and so we think that's an integral
part of what we're doing.

So, again, it's going to be important that
this is one step along the way, and we invite you and
thank you for being here tonight and just taking
tonight's step. But there are other steps in the
future, including efforts to get state support, state
financial support for this line, and so we encourage you to stay involved and be part of the process here to bring this additional light-rail (unintelligible).

   And so I'll turn it over to my friend and colleague and resident of my district, as a matter of fact, Mr. Duininck from the chair of the Metropolitan Council.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you, Commissioner McLaughlin; I appreciate that. And it's my pleasure to be here tonight. I think the first thing I'll do is to take a page out of your book and just have my colleagues introduce themselves from the council.

We're joined by other councilmembers from around the region.

MS. LETOFSKY: Carol Letofsky from District 8, which is also where both Peter McLaughlin and Adam Duininck live.

MS. RUMMEL: Sandy Rummel from District 11, which is way on the other side of the region.

MR. CUNNINGHAM: I'm Gary Cunningham. I'm in District 7; that is downtown Minneapolis, north Minneapolis, south Minneapolis, and Robbinsdale.

MS. SCHREIBER: I'm Lona Schreiber; I represent District 2 on the Metropolitan Council. My district includes northern Hennepin County, which
includes the city of -- cities of Brooklyn Park and
Brooklyn Center.

MS. WULFF: Wendy Wulff, District 16 on the
Metropolitan Council, and my district includes a large
portion of Dakota County and a small portion of Scott
County.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you, councilmembers, for
being here. And I also want to echo my gratitude
towards Councilmember Cunningham and Schreiber who have
been engaged in this process from the very beginning.
This is -- the line also runs through their districts,
and they've had a lot of time and community meetings
around the region. And they're working on the Corridor
Management Committee as well.

I'm going to walk through a couple of
housekeeping items here, to talk a little bit about
format, then I'm going to introduce -- we'll all get
off the stage for a few moments. We'll come down and
sit here in the front row, and I'll turn it over to
project officer Dan Soler. He'll walk through a little
bit of a PowerPoint presentation kind of stating the
project, and then we will open it up to public hearing.

But I want to let you know if you're going to
speak today, make sure that you've signed up with the
sign-in sheet. We have the first one filled up here
tonight, so make sure you've done that, and our staff
will let us know.

As you all know, this is your opportunity to
provide input to the Hennepin County Regional Rail and
to the Metropolitan Council. Speakers will have up to
two minutes tonight to state your name, your address
for the record, and if you're representing a group,
please identify that group as well. I will be keeping
time up here to let you know about what your time is,
and I'll try to call folks two at a time to give you a
sense for who is coming up next.

I'm trying to think if there's anything else
in the housekeeping part. If there -- I think, you
know, we're not going to keep everyone to a strict time
limit, but, obviously, you're all respecting each
other's time, so try to keep it to two minutes as best
you can.

This isn't your only opportunity to provide
public input. If you live in one of the cities along
the line, they're all doing both open houses and public
hearings in each individual city as well. I'd
encourage you to participate in that part of the
process. And, obviously, we've collected a lot of
public input today, so -- (loud coughing).

Peter mentioned a real important step in the
process, a big milestone that I want to thank everybody up here up on stage for the work that it's take -- taken to get the project to this point. I look forward to hearing all the feedback again tonight.

So with that, I'll ask Dan Soler to come forward. And I think that everybody up here -- I think we're going to go sit down in the seats so we don't have a big, bright light in our face.

MR. SOLER: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair, Commissioner McLaughlin.

Tonight is really a public hearing, so it's really -- it's really for us to hear from the public, but before we do that, we really just want to run through a quick PowerPoint that has and identifies why we're here and then a little bit about the -- a little bit about the alignment.

I know folks had an opportunity to hopefully take a look at some of the boards out there and ask some questions. But we're here tonight to have our municipal consent public hearing, and this is for the Blue Line Extension. And I guess the Chair introduced me, but I'll introduce myself as well. I'm Dan Soler; I'm the project director for Met Council for the Blue Line Extension project.

And the Blue Line Extension is one of the
legs in our metro transit metro system, which is what we are terming our system of all-day, frequent-service pieces, and that -- that began with the original Hiawatha, which is the Blue Line, supplemented with a project that I had the great opportunity to work on for seven years, and that's the Green Line, the central corridor from St. Paul to downtown Minneapolis; those two make up the first two legs of that.

That's currently been supplemented with our first BRT project, which is the red line, from Mall of America down south into Dakota County. And we have two other LRT projects in the works, the Green Line Extension and the Blue Line Extension as well.

So real quick overview, the Blue Line Extension, it's a 13-mile project that adds an additional 11 stations and 13 and a half miles of track from downtown Minneapolis northwest through the cities of Minneapolis, Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, Crystal, Brooklyn Park, terminating -- terminating north of Highway 610 up near Oak Grove Parkway. 27,000 rides estimated by 2030, so that's our -- 2040, sorry. That's our -- that's our estimated ridership.

So tonight we're at the municipal consent process, and this is a statutory requirement that we have as leaders of a -- of a light-rail project in the
Twin Cities to have a formal public hearing on the preliminary design plans of the project. 

So what constitutes the preliminary design plans of the project? Well, what we know right now and what we're expecting to know at the time of the municipal consent are some of these more simple things:

Where is the track going to go? What's the alignment? How many stations are we going to have, and where are they going to be? Which roadways are we doing work on and improving as part of the project? Where will we build sidewalks and pedestrian crossings? Do we have an operations and maintenance facility on this project, which we do, and where is that located? How are we working with BNSF? And those typical elements.

So that -- this is not final design. This is not at its completion. We're at about -- we're at about between 15 and 30 percent design right now, but these physical design components are the pieces that are part of our municipal consent plan.

So a quick walk through the alignment on these slides shows that we begin and we start here. This is, obviously, Target Field, and so here is where Target Field is, right in here. Target Field Station, this is where the existing Blue Line and Green Lines
come together.

This blue bar is where we will take off, and by the way, this is southwest as it comes here overhead, and we move west from Target Field Station down at-grade and along Trunk Highway 55, Olson Memorial Highway.

We go over I-94 over the existing bridge, and we have two stations along Highway 55. We have a station here between Van White and Bryant, and we have a station here at Penn. And so as part of the project, we'll be reconstructing Highway 55. We'll be putting in the better sidewalks along there, improving the pedestrian crossings, improving the signals, bringing the speed down a little bit, trying to make it a little bit safer and easier to move along that roadway for pedestrians.

As we get near Theodore Wirth Park, we make a turn to the north and go underneath a new bridge on Highway 55, and for the next eight miles, we run the Blue Line Extension LRT Project in the BNSF rail corridor. So that's -- and that last exhibit, we were pointing to the north. Now, north is to our right. So we're moving along here; Theodore Wirth park is in here. We're on the railroad right-of-way.

We have a station here at Plymouth Avenue, at
the Plymouth Avenue bridge. We continue north along the railroad right-of-way, have a station at Golden Valley Road that now includes some level of parking here, a new Golden Valley Road bridge, a new Theodore Wirth park bridge, and a station.

We've got some wetlands in here. And on the next slide, you see to the north up here, we continue north, we keep going, here's what's termed as Grimes Pond, a wetland area in here that we're building a bridge through there for LRT.

We continue north into Robbinsdale, and that's where our next station takes place, right on the next slide between 41st Avenue and 42nd Avenue, with a station in downtown Robbinsdale. This is -- this is downtown Robbinsdale.

We're building a Park & Ride in here with some additional development, moving our bus turnaround; that takes place here. We're building a transit hub here in downtown Robbinsdale with a station platform at-grade and two crossings there at 41st and 42nd.

We continue north over Trunk Highway 100 on the new bridge. We continue north through a newly configured West Broadway intersection. West Broadway is on the west side of the tracks and then turns to the east side of the tracks here, so we're reconstructing
We're in the city of Crystal now. We continue north through Corvallis. We go up and over -- we go up and over the CP railroad tracks here to the next piece, which is a station in Crystal, and that is a station right at Bass Lake Road. This is Bass Lake Road, county roadway running east and west.

You can start to see Highway 81 now, County Road 81, Bottineau Boulevard, a little bit of where Bottineau LRT got its name as Blue Line Extension. We have the station here at Bass Lake Road. We continue north along Highway 81; again, staying on railroad right-of-way. We cross right here into the city of Brooklyn Park and then have a station right at 63rd and County Road 81. That's the 63rd Avenue Station.

There's an existing Park & Ride here that's just been sitting there, wonderfully waiting for this new LRT come and join it, and so we're happy to bring LRT at the station here and put that Park & Ride to much better use.

We continue north, still on the railroad right-of-way, still along with BNSF, north and underneath 694 up to what is -- this is 71st Avenue right here. This is kind of the continuation of West Broadway in here, and this is 73rd Avenue. And we
would be bringing LRT up and over a bridge over Highway 81 right in this location.

And this is where we transition from the railroad right-of-way, over a bridge, over 81, down at-grade, and now we transition onto West Broadway. So we run north in Brooklyn Park along West Broadway with a station here at Brooklyn Boulevard. This is Brooklyn Boulevard and 80 -- or Brooklyn Boulevard and West Broadway intersection.

We continue north, in the center of West Broadway, north to a station here at 85th Avenue; 85th runs east/west. We have a station platform here. This is North Hennepin Community College. This is the new Hennepin County Library that's under construction right now, and so that station takes place there.

We continue north along Brooklyn Boulevard with a station here at 93rd, another east/west county roadway that runs through there. And then right when we get past 93rd, we transition over to the west side and run along the west side of West Broadway over Highway 610. We build a new bridge at 610, and then terminate with the end of the line station here at Oak Grove Parkway.

This is the target north campus. These roadways in here are new roadways and are a new roadway
configuration with a very significant size Park & Ride here to kind of establish a new look for what might happen with redevelopment in this area. There's a lot -- there's about 300 acres that Brooklyn Park has in undeveloped property up here, so that's the end of the line station.

    Though we also have a maintenance facility, as I talked about, so even though we'll end daily train traffic here, unless we are going into the maintenance facility, we have some non-revenue track that runs along Oak Grove Parkway and then into a new operations and maintenance facility that we're proposing to build in north Brooklyn Park, along there.

So that's a real quick run-down of the alignment and the various pieces. We're here today on January 19th holding the joint public hearing for the County and the rail authority and Met Council.

    Cities -- all five of our cities that I mentioned, Minneapolis, Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park each also have public hearings scheduled for the LRT project. Those will take place within that 45-day time frame, and then the cities and the County will act on the municipal consent plans by March 4th. These two dates, 30 and 45 days, are both statutory dates.
I'm not going to go through this whole slide, but this gives folks an understanding of when the public hearings are in each of the cities and when each of the cities is expected to take an action either at their city council or county board for those particular pieces.

So as the Chair mentioned before, you can certainly give public testimony here today; that's what most folks are doing. We're also accepting comments until January 29 on these particular pieces and these other ways as well.

Is that everything? What comes after this?

Oh, we've got design. We've got a long way to go after this. We're not going to spend a lot of time on this, but, obviously, municipal consent is a point in time. The overall schedule for this project is to continue in advance design through 2017 and then have construction in 2018, 2019, 2020, to the 2021 opening day.

So that's a quick overview of the project, and I think now we'll go ahead and let the folks take their seats back up on the stage and open up the public hearing.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you for that overview.

And I also just want to echo -- give my
thoughts and thanks to a few folks from the Community
Advisory Committee, Business Advisory Committee, other
local elected officials that are here, and I saw a
number of them outside.

Thanks for being here tonight. I know you're
probably going to be at a number of other public
hearings and open houses here in the next six to eight
weeks, so I appreciate your help in the process.

I think what we'll do now is start the
public --

MR. McLAUGHLIN: I just wanted to add one
other thing. There was a mention there about one-seat
ride. For those of you who aren't into transit lingo,
that means that you don't have to -- if you come down
on the Blue Line from Brooklyn Park, you don't have to
change anywhere along the line to get to the VA or to
the airport. It's a -- it's a plug-and-play point that
we know that Target Field Station.

So you just keep going, which is why it's
called the Blue Line instead of the Blue from Bottineau
and then Hiawatha, because it's actually one line; you
don't have to get off. If you want to go to St. Paul,
you don't need to make a transfer at any of the stops
in downtown Minneapolis, and then you can get to -- get
the University of Minnesota or to St. Paul.
But it's literally a one-seat ride all the way to the airport or the VA Hospital or the Mall of America, so I just wanted to clarify that to people because sometimes people don't understand that if you have to change, the name of the line has to change.

Thank you.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you, Commissioner.

All right. So I think what we'll do is we'll get started here; I'll call out some names. And I apologize in advance if I have a hard time with pronunciation. My name is routinely mispronounced, so we'll have some -- be understanding with me.

The first two names on my list here are Alexis Pennie and Richard Adair, so we'll call them up. You have two minutes, and Sophie here will take time.

MR. PENNIE: Good evening. Thank you so much, Chair Duininck and the collective officials here. I want to say thank you, also, to the public that's here. I know it's really important that we have feedback, so kudos to everyone for being here.

Okay. So what I wanted to say today pertains to the Bottineau line. I'm sure there's no surprise that I'm here talking about this. Specifically what I wanted to do is to say I was on the Station Area Planning Committee for Bottineau, specifically around
Penn Avenue Station. I'm thankful for that; that was great.

During those conversations, I wish we would've been able to talk more about how transportation should be looked at from the lens of a Civil Rights Title VI, and it'd be vital to justice. Unfortunately, we never had those discussions, but that's all right, though, which kind of leads me to my next point of why we're probably having this discussion today.

With other projects, like, for example, with -- with Prospect Park, they came up with a plan called "Prospect Park 2020," which was their guiding economic divided -- development plan around intentional and coordinated public/private partnerships. Unfortunately, with the planning organization that we did for Penn Avenue and Van White Station in north Minneapolis looks nothing like that. It's not very visionary at all.

And sadly, just down the street from us over at the Target Field Station, you guys are -- you guys are melting your snow, creating water, creating steam, selling it to Target Field Station, selling it to the North Loop, creating money off of that with your partners at Covanta. And that -- that's legit; I'd
like to see that money happen in north Minneapolis, too, create some wealth over there.

I want you to work with your city partners to implement a development process along Olson Memorial Highway that's going to implement the community's vision rather than developers' visions about ground density. Even in north -- downtown Minneapolis, there's not that level of density that takes place.

In places like Nicollet Island -- Nicollet Island Organization, for example, Victor Grambsch, he wants to see higher density over in that neighborhood; that's great you have money for those neighborhoods. And if you want to see that in our neighborhoods, help us see that overall vision or help us buy into to that overall vision. For example, 30 percent of affordable housing in those new units that you're going to build in the new development, that's a good start, for example.

I know I'm running short on time; missed opportunity here with respect to creating safer intersections along Olson Memorial Highway. Got it. I want to make sure that everybody knows that this is -- even though it's a highway, there's schools, there's parks, there's children, there's people that are elderly, there's disabled people that live in these
development projects adjacent to it.

The light -- the lights that we have currently are not working for people in order to give them time enough to cross the street. I'm an able-bodied person; I feel that way.

And, lastly, I want you working with MnDOT to implement that protected bikeway that you're going to get from Van -- here over to the Van White Station. Work with MnDOT to get it over 94; get it all the way to Target Field. Do it right the first time.

Thank you. Have a great day.

MR. DUININCK: Next up is Richard Adair followed by Ron Williams.

MR. ADAIR: Richard Adair, 200 Uptown Avenue South, pretty close to the Penn Avenue Station. Two recent events underscore the importance of building this line. Last month, the nations of the world gathered in Paris to discuss how each could reduce carbon emissions and save the planet.

It's hard for me to imagine that we wouldn't want to be part of this process locally and by building an energy-efficient electric train which would be used for millions of trips each year.

Second, last month, racial demonstrations flared on Plymouth Avenue. Among other things, the
protesters asked for more investment in north Minneapolis, as the previous speaker did.

It's hard for me to imagine a more effective investment than a transit system that would get north-siders to jobs -- good jobs across the metro, and these jobs would be at -- you can only get to these jobs at speeds that are reachable by light-rail.

A large national study from Harvard recently released showed that all the -- looked at the different factors that could be -- that were associated with children born into poverty getting out of poverty.

The number one factor was not living in an area of crime or a lot of two-parent families or school test scores or anything like that. The number one factor was transportation, getting to and work -- from work quickly, getting home in time to parent your children, mixing around with other kinds of people.

So what we need is -- and you can watch my hand here -- we need both light-rail lines be built out, we need a bus rapid transit on Penn, and we need a circulator bus on Plymouth -- west on Plymouth, south on Penn, east on 394, and up on Van White.

The governor has appointed a legislative task force to look at -- to address racial disparities, and this is one issue with transit getting to work that
resonates with rural people and city people; it resonates with Republicans and Democrats because it -- being able to get to work is an issue of basic fairness.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you. Next up is Ron Williams, followed by George Puzak.

MR. WILLIAMS: Hello, I'm Ron Williams, and I live at 4368 France Avenue North in Robbinsdale. And I'm a Vietnam veteran; I'm retired from -- of -- from banking in 2010.

I -- I used the bus system for 30 years to get to work, and so I realize the value of -- of a reasonable transportation system.

My wife and I still are a one-car family, and I take the bus four or five times a week to go to the U of M as a student. And it's estimated that a family saves $8,500 a year by having just one car instead of two. Well, at that rate, for the last 20 years, my wife and I have saved $150,000. Well, that depends upon what the last presentation was. It depends on there -- a job being available for me and my wife together.

And the LRT is really important, I think, to extend those kind of opportunities to people in south Minneapolis and north Minneapolis, but then all the
jobs are downtown Minneapolis.

They -- they -- they need the extended network, which by the line will -- part of the extension, so I think that's really important for -- for job creation and people to get to those jobs.

Thank you very much.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you.

Next is George Puzak, followed by Jessica Treat.

Is George here?

All right. Jessica, are you ready?

MS. TREAT: I'm ready.

MR. DUININCK: All right. Jessica Treat, followed up by Chelsie Glaubitz.

MS. TREAT: Good evening, Mr. Chair, Hennepin County Commissioners, and Met Council members. My name is Jessica Treat, and I'm the very new executive director of Transit for Livable Communities.

We are a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization with over 100 -- 10,000 members across the Twin Cities metro. Our mission is to make it easier for people to choose transit, biking, and walking more often.

Transit for Livable Communities believes the Blue Line Extension Project is a key component of
growing a metro-wide system of transitways and expanded
bus service that will provide residents with viable
transportation options.

We strongly support the current plans for the
Blue Line extension and appreciate the hard work
undertaken by all the cities, Hennepin County, and the
Blue Line Extension Project Office to move this project
forward. This project will greatly expand affordable
transportation options and reduce transportation
emissions.

Travelers using transit rather than driving
on a regular basis can save over $4,000 per year, and
on a per-mile basis consume about half the energy and
emit a tiny fraction of the smog emitted by solo
drivers.

Light-rail is an efficient way to move large
numbers of commuters, with an estimated 27,000 weekday
rides in 2030. Light-rail, not buses or cars, is the
best transportation solution for this corridor.

We are pleased to see that the project plans
include essential considerations for pedestrian and
bicycle connections to stations and for future
transit-oriented development at Park & Ride facilities
and other locations along the line.

We believe this project is an important step
toward addressing our region's income and racial disparities because Bottineau LRT will prove -- improve access to jobs and opportunity in the corridor -- corridor where nearly half of the residents are people of color.

Additionally, construction of the project is expected to create 2,500 living-wage construction jobs.

Overall, the benefits far exceed the project costs. The build-out of a regional system of transitways is expected to generate nearly $3 of direct economic benefits for every dollar invested. The majority of these economic benefits are reduced traffic delays for cars and truck -- car and truck drivers.

Finally, we question the need for a Park & Ride facility at Golden -- Golden Valley Road. The station is less than three miles from downtown Minneapolis. We are concerned that a Park & Ride facility this close to the corridor will provide an incentive for drivers further northwest on the line to drive to this location.

If a Park & Ride is desired here, we suggest that its capital cost be paid for by users; for example, through parking fees so that limited funding resources can be devoted to enhancing transit, biking, and walking connections to the planned stations.
Thank you.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you very much.

Up next is Chelsie Glaubitz, followed by Linda Gant.

MS. GLAUBITZ: Hello. Thank you, Commissioners, and thank you, councilmembers. My name is Chelsie Glaubitz, and I'm the president of the Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation. And we represent the western seven counties of the metro area, the umbrella organization, and a hub for all union members and our families.

We represent the people who are going to build this project; we represent the people who are going to be driving these trains; and we represent the workers who will be using these trains to get to work, recreation, school, and all other necessities such as hospitals and -- and health care.

We strongly support municipal consent, but ask you guys who continue to make your deliberations to challenge the status quo and ensure that this project is meeting the ridership where they are at in an equitable way with both your design and your implementation going forward.

We need the transportation system of tomorrow to be equitable, fair, reliable, and modern. Our
members will be providing you a very high-quality
service in its construction and its operation and the
development around it. And in return, we require high
expectations on this project as well, whether it is for
our retiring baby boomers and our membership or our
future union members who are coming up through the
ranks now.

Thank you for your leadership. It's these
types of decisions that are going to shape our future
economy, they're going to shape our future workforce,
and I hope that it is strong, diverse, and dynamic.

Thank you.

MR. DUININCK: Chelsie -- up next is -- next
is Linda Gant, followed by Tou Xiong.

MS. GANT: This is a public hearing about
comments on the municipal consent process.

First, I'd like to say when I explained what
was going on in the northwest suburbs, I'd tell people
before Robbinsdale, Golden Valley, Crystal, Brooklyn
Park, they're already 100 percent compliant to whatever
the Met Council wants regarding this, but it's a legal
requirement.

And, also, about the municipal consent
process, you're doing it before the EIS gets issued,
which is exactly what Southwest is suing you over. So
I wonder: Is there a different standard for the Blue Line which goes to a remarkably lower-income group and Southwest gets to have that environmental impact statement before the municipal consent process?

Another comment I've got about municipal consent was: There I was in Robbinsdale City Council many years ago when Marcia Glick was mayor, and a councilperson hearing about this project came up and said to her, "We can oppose her," and it -- or, "We can oppose this." And her comment was it wouldn't do any good; they're going to do whatever they want anyway.

And then I hear in the media that there's no opposition to this project, and what I -- what my question to that is: Is the only thing you find as opposition a lawsuit?

The other reason Southwest is suing you is because you've used the EIS process to completely eliminate BRT as instead of doing LRT, and that's the other thing.

So there's another way that the north side is not getting the same standard of scrutiny that Bottineau is, and the -- so -- so much for that.

The other thing I want to comment on -- well, I guess you don't have to -- I don't have time to talk about what's happening in Sochacki Park already, but
already we know how you intend to treat our wildlife
habitat because we're really disgusted with what has
already happened.

MR. DUININCK: I know that the ground rules
are that I -- that we aren't going to respond things,
but I want to be clear for the audience to take a look
at the judge's order from last summer on the Southwest
LRT lawsuit, and you will see we've been pretty good
about that situation. So --

MS. GANT: Read the lawsuit.

MR. DUININCK: The next speaker is --

MS. GANT: Read the lawsuit.

MR. DUININCK: -- Tou Xiong, followed by

Denetrick Powers.

MR. XIONG: Good evening, councilmembers, and
good evening, Commission. My name is Tou Xiong; I work
for the Harrison Neighborhood Association, and here are
the Harrison residents. Could you please raise your
hand? We've got some in the back there, too, and we're
all here; we're all excited about this great project
that is going on for our community.

However, the Harrison Neighborhood
Association also has lots of inputs from residents
within the Harrison -- the Harrison area, and there
are -- Harrison stands with the Harrison neighbors --
neighborhood in demanding that, you know, one, all new
development and zoning for future development should
require 30 percent of all dwelling units at the current
affordability metric.

The second piece is that all current
residents be given first right of refusal in new
housing that might displace them.

The third piece is the construction of towers
or high rises taller -- taller than five stories be
prohibited.

And the next piece is environmental concerns
of Harrison residents. Harrison residents would like
to see clearly defined plans for mitigation in terms of
pollution for air quality and ground water.

The third piece, Harrison residents would
like to see any trees that should be replaced -- any
trees that should be displaced would be replaced in
Harrison near north and Heritage Park.

And the fourth piece, you know, Harrison
would like to see concrete goals for increasing access.
For -- for instance, you know, job opportunities for
Harrison residents and near -- nearby neighbors.

And the fifth piece, Harrison residents would
like to prioritize current business and housing
structures that currently exist and supplies --
supplies available housing for Harrison residents.

And, finally, it was mentioned earlier by -- by another speaker is that Harrison residents would like to see safety and access safety measures put in place, because even though it's on Highway 55, there are schools there, Sumner Library, there are libraries there, there are day care centers there, and we would like to see a more comprehensive plan in terms of safety measures that would be in place once the line gets put in there.

So that's it, and thank you -- thank you for the opportunity.

MR. DUININCK: Denetrick Powers, followed by Matt Schirber.

MR. POWERS: Good evening, councilmembers and Commissioner. My name is Denetrick Powers; I'm a transit-oriented development organizer at Harrison Neighborhood Association.

Harrison neighborhood is an environmentalist community that is 70 percent rental-based, 65 percent people of color, 40 percent people below the age of 25, and 17 percent people with disabilities.

Over the last year, Harrison Neighborhood Association has engaged over 1,500 residents, hosted several open houses, served on community working
groups, Health and -- Health Equity Engagement Cohort, the Blue Line Corridor Management Committee, Community Advisory Committee, and the Redevelopment Oversight Committee for -- Committee for Bassett Creek Valley.

The community we live in is home to public institutions such as libraries and schools -- schools, as well as public housing developments and elderly communities as well. Members of our communities are frequent users of public transportation, and efforts to improve access and safety should be prioritized. There is yet to be clear -- there is yet to be clear answers on pedestrian crossing times.

Members of our communities are concerned -- are also concerned about environment -- environmental issues such as air pollution -- air pollution and water pollution from line construction. There is yet to be clear answers to mitigate these issues.

We ask that a concrete goal of a minimum of 30 percent affordable housing investments are made using current AMI figures and cost and earning analysis to determine affordability.

We also ask that the preservation and integration of existing structures are used to prevent increasing residential and commercial rents.

Finally, we ask that efforts are made to
guard against future fare increases. Current and future users of public transportation should not have to pay for the line now.

Thank you very much.

MR. DUININCK: Thanks, Denetrick.

Matt Schirber, followed by Nestor Garcia.

MR. SCHIRBER: Hello, my name is Matt Schirber, and I live in Harrison neighborhood.

As a resident of Harrison, I support the work that Harrison Neighborhood Association does to make sure that the Blue Line Extension and future developments benefit me and my community.

I see the importance of housing -- affordable housing in the neighborhood, and I ask that there be at least 30 percent affordable housing in the neighborhood based on the average median income.

Every day, I take the 19 bus on Olson Memorial Highway, and it's very dangerous to cross the highway. There's not enough time, and I see that as a very important part of the new development of the line, that there be ample time to cross.

So thank you so much for your time.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you very much.

Next is Nestor Garcia, followed by Belle Phillippe. I'm sorry, I can't pronounce the last name
right.

MR. GARCIA: Good evening, everyone. I'm also a Harrison resident, and I was reading -- the development plan states that one of the benefits to the public would be employment opportunities. I would like these jobs that are created to support the community of Harrison with earning a living wage.

In 2015 -- for 2015, fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Minnesota is $894. In order to afford this level of rent with utilities, paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing, a family must earn $35,765.07, which -- which equals out to $17.20 for a 40-hour week, earning hourly. So, yeah, that's a big concern for me.

And another thing is we don't want families to be displaced or any kind of gentrification in the Harrison community, and it would be nice to see local businesses that will benefit from this.

And, also, Harrison Neighborhood Association and the residents will also like to have a say in the rezoning for zones R-5 and I-1 and also touch on the bus fare staying where it's at, hopefully it won't increase, and the safety of the residents at Park Plaza about the air pollution and the water as the construction is being -- being done on the line.
MR. DUININCK: Thank you, Nestor.

Next is Belle Phillipe, followed by Logan Quiggle.

MS. PHILLIPE: Hi, good evening. I'm a resident of Harrison Neighborhood, and I live at Park Plaza, and I have been for 17 years.

My concern I would like to ask you is this: As you begin construction, you've heard a lot of people say the elderly, the children, and I would like to add that babies are constantly born.

But my one concern is: Would you -- would you consider giving us air conditioners? Because our buildings are brick and concrete, and in the summer, I don't know, I heard someone say that we have double-pane glass in our windows -- our windows, and I would like to say to you that once you shut them in the summer, it's an instant oven.

You would have to have them cracked, but with the construction, there will be debris and things floating in the air. And as I said, I've lived there 17 years, and I can attest to you that the elderly will not be able to.

I have seen oxygen trucks that do go to clients' or people's apartments, and so, therefore, please consider the air conditioner of our building.
because we will not be able to withstand closing them
in the summer once you start with construction from the
noise and the -- you know, the dirt and all of the
stuff that follows up into the air.

So in closing, I would just like to say
again, if you could please consider coming to our
complex with air conditioning -- conditioners or
helping us, like, affording them because they are
pricey. And we do live, like, 30 percent, like,
low-income, and we would really not be able to afford
to put at least one or two in our units.

MR. DUININCK: Next is Logan Quiggle,
followed by William Crenshaw.

MR. QUIGGLE: Hello. My name is Logan
Quiggle, and I live in north Minneapolis. And as a
resident of Harrison Neighborhood, I support the work
that the Harrison Neighborhood Association does to make
sure that the Blue Line Extension and future
developments benefit me and my community.

And first off, I'd like to voice my concern
for a need for a bike lane, similar to what the first
speaker was talking about, between Theodore Wirth Park
down to downtown.

I know that right now in the preliminary
drawings outside it shows a sidewalk and potential for
a bike lane in the future; however, with the cost of building the light-rail now, I think it's wise that we build and construct that now, and especially in a state that advocates for transportation outside of vehicles. And walking and biking, I think that's a necessity.

Second, I think the crossings on Highway 55 are too short. This has been reiterated before. I think there needs to be a more comprehensive look at crossing times to ensure that not only healthy people but people with disabilities aren't subject to danger because they cannot cross the road in time.

And then, finally, I'd like to encourage green design in terms of adding as much plants and trees to restore an aesthetically pleasing environment in the Harrison Neighborhood between the Penn Station and the Van White Station.

Thank you.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you very much.

Next is William Crenshaw, followed by Richard Panzironi.

MR. CRENSHAW: Hi, I'd like to thank you all for being here. My name is Willy Crenshaw; I live in the Harrison neighborhood.

And as a north-side resident, I'm part of a community that's disproportionately impacted by air
pollution. There are many mature trees in the middle of 55 that are going to be taken down to make way for the train, and we'd like each tree taken down to be replaced in our neighborhood and green space preserved and steps taken to minimize construction dust.

Another concern I had was for people's foundations during construction because a lot of houses are right by the line, and with pile driving, I think people's foundations could be compromised, so that's one consideration.

Thank you for your time.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you very much.

Next is Richard Panzironi, followed by Ayan --

MS. IKAR: Yeah.

MR. PANZIRONI: Good evening. My name is Richard Panzironi; I'm a long-term resident of the Harrison neighborhood. I've lived on the north side of Minneapolis for 36 years, and I've seen the neighborhood go through a lot of ups and downs.

You've got a lot of good, honest, hardworking families that live in the Harrison neighborhood, and raising families has not been easy these days with the cost of everything going up.

This light-rail is going to be real
improvement to the neighborhood. I've been told that
there's a 99 percent probability of this being built.
I hope that's a reality.

I just want to echo some of the concerns that
my colleagues at the Harrison Neighborhood Association
have as far as station development and the work
environment as it's going to be over the years as they
build this light-rail.

I thank you very much for your time and for
listening to me. I'll let my other colleagues talk.

Thank you.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you. Next is Ayan.

MS. IKAR: Hello, my name is Ayan Ikar. I am
in the Harrison neighborhood. I'm representing the
Harrison Neighborhood, talking about the issue about
the safety.

Bus 19, I go every day with everybody, so
when it comes to nighttime, it's risky because the
large population being there is Somali people, and
they -- they stabbing two people, so they don't go to
the 19 at night, the bus. So I talk to them because
of -- it's not a one-time happen, so it was alarming.

Second thing is they don't -- we don't have
the grocery shopping because the only grocery closest
we have is a (unintelligible), and we would like to get
a grocery shopping.

And I live in Park Plaza, which is a Harrison community.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you.

The next speakers are Angela Bonfylio (phonetic) --

MS. BONFYLIO: Bonfylio --

MR. DUININCK: Bonfylio, thank you. And followed by LaShella Sims.

MS. BONFYLIO: Good evening. My name is Angela Bonfylio, and I work at Redeemer Center for Life in the Harrison neighborhood, and I'm also part of the Harrison Neighborhood Association for the last five years.

As a community, historically, we've seen significant disinvestment in our infrastructure in our community, and this is a really positive step to bring significant resource into our community. But we want that to happen without displacing the people that are currently there, and we want to see that come -- that -- that it benefits the people who are currently there and not push people out. And some of the different plans we have seen as a community give us different messages about that.

And we -- despite all the disinvestment, we
find ways to really be connected to our neighbors. And we see that in the recent Fourth Precinct protest that we were really able to connect as a community, and we continue to do that, like we have all these people here today together.

And -- and some of the points I want to bring up, such as the crossing times, those are things that can be worked on now. We don't have to wait for the light-rail, and that's a real concern for youth in our community that I work with.

We also don't want to be physically separated from the rest of north Minneapolis. We want the 55 to slow down so that we're really building on the community that's already there and the aesthetic of a neighborhood feel where people are -- can walk and be between.

We don't want anything above five stories because that will -- really doesn't add to what we already have.

We want community to benefit from the jobs that come from just building a light-rail.

We want the 30 percent affordability housing based on current numbers of what affordability would be. We don't want that to change as the light -- as people who have more wealth come in, we want to
maintain that.

We want to maintain community assets that we have and build on more assets like Summit Academy and businesses.

So we -- as a community, we look forward to working with you to continue this commitment and afore gentrification and displacement.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you very much.

Next is LaSheila Sims, followed by Frank Lorenz.

MS. SIMS: Greetings, everyone. You know me as MICAH. I'm a community organizer with MICAH. I'm also a member of the Blue Line Extension CAC, the Blue Line Corridor, Penn Avenue Works, and a member of the Broadway Transit Study.

Keep in mind that the train going through -- down Olson Highway is only about 10 to 12 blocks, no more than 15, but it's a key component within this light-rail itself because you can't get to downtown Minneapolis without going through our neighborhood.

Our neighborhood is very concerned about safety and equity in regards to the schools there, our children, our elderly, and the design of the stations and the road itself should be very, very aware and concerned of those issues as we are. We don't want
Highway 55 to be a speedway for the cars coming in.

And in terms of the budget, we always get back to the budget. I don't think we are asking that much in comparison to the other cities.

One thing that strikes me is a Park & Ride. Someone told me at a meeting, whether it was an engineer or what, that the construction of a Park & Ride, just one pull-in -- pull-in spot for a car costs $23 to $24,000. And if we have 5 or 500 pull-ins, that's more than I'm worth, but that Minneapolis really is asking for and all the things.

Now, remember, we already have the train going through, we have a rock crusher, we have a -- the city car lot and the garbage burner, too. We're looking forward to positive things in our neighborhood, just like any other neighborhood.

Thank you.

MR. DUININCK: Next is Frank Lorenz, followed by Alyssa Rich.

MR. LORENZ: My name is Frank Lorenz. I live in -- my business is located in the southeastern Edina next to Richfield.

The LRT lines that exist now, the line to the Mall of America, the Blue Line, the Green Line, have cost about $100 million a mile, Bus Rapid Transit, and
another option that Met Council is experimenting
with -- and the name escapes me. It's a higher-speed
bus that will run from Roseville to -- help me out.
What's it called?

MR. DUININCK: A Line Arterial BRT.

MR. LORENZ: Arterial BRT costs one-tenth of
that per mile. In other words, you can build either
one of these alternative bus technologies for one-tenth
of what you're going to spend on LRT, and they will
employ more people over time, more bus mechanics and
drivers than the LRT building and construction will
ever employ.

We will not be able to get rid of our
existing roads because we will need them and need to
plow snow and everything else in order to get fire
trucks and police and ambulances and delivery vehicles
within 50 feet of people's houses, so LRT is the wrong
technology to solve our problems.

And if you spend this $100 million a mile,
you're spending money that would be better put into
real, affordable housing. The need in the -- in the
seven-county metro area is probably $3 billion you're
going for affordable housing. You're going to spend
$9 billion dollars plus half will get us that much in
interest as you build out LRT.
The average person will live seven miles from an LRT station. They'll have to ride a bicycle to and from the LRT station because you won't allow them to have cars, and this isn't working.

It isn't working, and you're not serious about providing affordable housing. And you're going to waste almost $10 billion building the LRT for the simple reason that it's trendy.

MR. DUININCK: Next is Alissa Rich, followed by Madeleine Shaw.

MS. RICH: Hi, my name is Alissa Rich. I live at 824 Vincent. My home is between -- it's going to be between 10 and Plymouth Stations, which is exciting to me, but also a little bit concerning because the light-rail is going to wrap around the community that I live.

One of the reasons I bought my home was because of access to Theodore Wirth Park. Not only am I concerned about the environmental impact; there's a lot of wildlife, deer, waterfowl that I see out walking. It's quiet, even though living in the city you can't hear anything.

So I'm just concerned about the impact it's going to have on not only the wildlife, but just the noise. A lot of people use the trails back there, and
there's easy access to Theodore Wirth at this point in time.

So I'm just interested in seeing how not only access but the environmental issues are going to be played out in this.

Thank you.

MR. DUININCK: Next is Madeleine Shaw, followed by Thomas Siburg -- Siburg.

MS. SHAW: Hi, good evening. My name is Madeleine Shaw; I live over on Fourth Avenue and Newton Avenue North in the Harrison neighborhood, and I'm here with the group of folks from Harrison and HNA.

And I agree with a lot of the points that my neighbors have already made, but a couple other things I wanted to mention are making sure that the line that goes in is accessible to residents. There are some folks that live pretty close to where the Blue Line is going to be going but might need bus routes to connect them so that they can actually use that line.

Again, I wanted to emphasize, too, safety and ample crossing time on Highway 55. And like Angela said, that's something that can be addressed sooner. It's something that's really a safety concern. I work at Northpoint, the clinic, and I cross that highway every day. And I know as a person who is able-bodied,
it's easy, and for folks who are disabled, it's a really hard and scary thing to cross.

The other thing I was going to say is that I really appreciate this community engagement process, and I know there's certain mandated steps where you kind of have to get -- you know, have a hearing and check in with the community. But I also -- from what I know, there are no rules limiting how much you can engage with the community, and I really want to encourage all of our elected officials and folks who are involved in this process and on the council to engage with the community throughout this whole process and to really take seriously the concerns at every step and to stand up for the residents and listen to what they have to say in terms of development benefiting them, things like maybe trying to see that a certain percentage of the jobs constructing the line could go to local residents so that this project is actually benefiting the community that it's going through.

So thank you.

MR. DUININCK: Thank you.

Thomas Siburg, followed by Steve Cramer.

MR. SIBURG: Good evening, councilmembers and commissioner. I'm Thomas Siburg, and I am a resident of the Harrison neighborhood. And I am on staff with
Redeemer Center for Life. I live and work in Harrison. I am a north side resident. I have lived here and been part of this community for a number of years now.

And I would -- and I am saying on behalf of myself and Redeemer that we are in support of the neighbors of Harrison that have already spoken. We are in support of HNA. I am in support of HNA.

And that in addition to the crossings, the pedestrian safety, and additions to the at least 30 percent affordable housing if developed based off of current cost -- cost-burdened households in addition to health and air quality that will have -- that are concerns.

In addition to everything that's been listed, I would also like to bring up as development continues and will begin, the traffic will be rerouted to Glenwood Avenue, and there is concern with continued pedestrian traffic on Glenwood, and, of course, Olson with this increased traffic and concerns with current bike paths through the neighborhood, as Glenwood is a hub for bike travel. And it's a terribly maintained bike road -- bike accessibility.

In addition, I am concerned with the development on Olson being too high that it divides the Harrison neighborhood and some of the Glenwood
neighborhoods from the rest of north, creating a
physical barrier for the residents for us from the rest
of our neighbors up in north.

   But, anyway, thank you. Have a nice night.

MR. DUININCK: Next is Steve Cramer, followed
by Candy --

MS. BAKION: Bakion.

MR. DUININCK: Bakion. Thank you.

MR. CRAMER: Good evening, Chair Duininck,
Chair McLaughlin, and councilmembers and commissioners.

My name is Steve Cramer; I'm the president of
Minneapolis Downtown Council.

   Many of you are familiar with our 2025
intersections plan and goals to try to ensure that
downtown Minneapolis stays a very strong, vital core of
a strong, vital, and competitive region.

   And one of those goals is to modestly lead
the nation in transportation options, so we certainly
see this project that we're talking about tonight as a
critical contributor to that -- to that important
vision.

And I would just amplify the point that
others have made tonight and in other forums: Each --
each line of the regional system that was described
earlier as utility in and of itself, you have to pass
through rigorous federal funding standards and the
like.

But I think the real value is we're beginning
to build the system out, Brooklyn Park to Bloomington,
Eden Prairie to St. Paul, Rogers to Lakeville, multiple
mode -- multiple modes, is there's an amplifying effect
to that network. And that's what's really exciting,
and that's what -- also from a parochial standpoint,
all of those lines intersect downtown Minneapolis, so
that's a good thing from our standpoint. It reinforces
the core as the center of this vital region.

So for all those reasons, we're very in
support of this project and continuing to fill out the
network, and you'll certainly be seeing us at the
legislature fighting for the resources that are
necessary for this project and many others.

Thank you.

MR. DUININCK: Next is Candy Bakion. And
right now, that's the last person who is signed up.

MS. BAKION: Okay. I feel like I'm on the --
what is that? Come on down.

MR. DUININCK: You just might win a new
light-rail.

MS. BAKION: I do got to take this hat off
first because I got to tell you this.
Well, my name is Candy Bakion, and I am a resident of north Minneapolis. I live in Heritage Park. I am car-dependent. I do not take the bus unless it's free, and I do not take the train unless it's free.

And I would like you guys to keep in mind with the safety issues and with the other issues -- man, you got to make this fun and pretty. I want a party train with disco lights and music and (unintelligible).

Now I got to put my hat back on.

As the interim director of Heritage Park, I have to let you know about my constituents and the people that I serve and what they want. And, of course, they want safety, accessibility.

They'd like you to look at the health impact assessments and equitable score card when you're using and making decisions about the environment and about people.

I'm done.

MR. DUININCK: That is the last person who is signed up, unless anybody else in the room wants to speak.

Otherwise, I just want to take this opportunity to close, then, and say thanks to everyone
who came out tonight. It takes a lot to get out here
and make your voice heard. I appreciate everyone who
took the time to do that this evening.

I want to also thank my fellow county
commissioners from Hennepin County and the Met Council
members who came tonight.

Your testimony is all being recorded and
submitted as part of the full project record. The Met
Council record comments are open until 4:00 p.m.
Friday, January 29th. There are other local processes
that are playing out beyond then, so if you have any
other questions, feel free to see us or our staff
afterwards.

But thanks, everyone, again, for making it to
our public hearing tonight. And with that, we are
adjourned for the evening.

(Proceedings concluded at 7:09 p.m.)
STATE OF MINNESOTA )
    ss CERTIFICATE
COUNTY OF ANOKA )

BE IT KNOWN that I, Rebekah J. Bishop, Registered Professional Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter, took the foregoing TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS;

That the foregoing TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS is a true record of the testimony given by said witnesses;

That I am not related to any of the parties hereto, nor an employee of them, nor interested in the outcome of the action;

That the cost of the original has been charged to the party who noticed the TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS, and that all parties who ordered copies have been charged at the same rate for such copies;

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL this 28th day of January, 2016.

________________________________
Rebekah J. Bishop, RPR, CRR
Notary Public
My Commission Expires 1/31/2020