

Metropolitan Council St. Louis Park Community Meeting Evaluation
Thursday, January 9, 2014
St. Louis Park Recreation Center

1. “What part of the meeting was most valuable to you?”

- Hearing peoples’ opinions and ideas
- The ability to air our concerns unimpeded, in a civil environment
- Opportunities to have people heard
- Hearing a lot of well-spoken people with a variety of viewpoints
- Good to hear different viewpoints
- Lots of voices
- Hearing some new viewpoints
- The diversity of viewpoints expressed
- Comment from the Eden Prairie woman
- Participant comments
- The comments from people that asked for better reports, engineering data, more openness to the process
- It was much of the same discussion I have heard for the past 3 years
- Nicely facilitated
- Seeing handouts of materials and opportunity to comment on study metrics
- Great conversation with Dan Pfeiffer before the meeting on what the charts refer to

2. “What part of the meeting was least valuable to you?”

- The first 15 minutes of talk amongst yourselves
- You wasted 55 minutes before anything substantive started.
- The unstructured time to review materials
- The initial time to review documents
- Not much added value
- When the same points were made over and over
- Going over the same ground I’ve heard before, why are we here?
- Realization of political inputs’ power!
- Lack of feedback from Met Council and politicians
- The story boards don’t really help me – handouts are essential
- Start time – too early - I had to take off work
- Passing the mic around (the format of the meeting) – I wish community members would have had a chance to dialogue and talk with one another (perhaps through small group discussions) rather than lecture each other.

- To hear varying points of view
- Rhetoric – but I don't know how you get around it. Many people seem to have a very narrow focus – no long range/big picture focus.

3. “What was not covered that you would have liked to have seen addressed?”

- Discussion on alternatives to the SWLRT. It should be routed through where ridership is, not through parkways.
- Alternative routes for light rail through MPLS
- Larger graphics of all alternatives, with prices
- Ridership issues – will this pay for itself ever!?
- Each plan option – with cost and engineering comments
- Have studies really proven the need for SWLRT?
- What the different government entities are in the decision making process and what is the communication between them and with the public
- Why co-location options were removed from consideration and why re-evaluation is limited to relocation
- Why routes were not considered
- Governor Dayton's role
- Opportunity for dialogue with the Council
- What is being lost by not moving forward. Communities in N. MPLS, Hopkins and E.P. are waiting for the line and would benefit from increased access to transit, the economic development opportunities that the line brings, etc. and this message is completely lost.
- Only three of the discussion questions were brought to the floor
- Get the reroute off the table

4. “What would you like to see the next round of community meetings look like, after the reports on water and freight rail are released?”

- Publishing reports and agreeing on discussion topics weeks in advance of a meeting so participants can review and understand them beforehand
- Reports need to be released in advance (at least 1-2 weeks) so people can review. I'd suggest an option where questions that have already been voiced get answered as part of a presentation, both written and as a PPT presentation. After should be Q&A. Allow enough time for the Q&A!!!
- I think we need community meetings before that to explain why co-location options were removed from consideration. Once reports are released, I'd like transparency, a release of reports with plenty of time to review before the meetings and then smaller group discussions for common man translation – hire an independent firm to translate the report into easily understood language.
- Feedback from Met Council
- Answers to the questions posed tonight. Define the types of freight and frequency.
- A discussion on alternative routes to the current SWLRT
- Report on each alternative option – with engineering and costs
- Many meetings with a smaller scope for each one, rather than one big meeting with an impossibly large scope.

- We've been doing this for years! Apparently to wear us down – that may not happen!!!
- This was a good format
- Facts, content
- Independent verification of data being presented

5. Additional Comments:

- Need to make sure you have adequate numbers of handouts for the group. Many didn't get the full packet, so won't have this info to refer to. I'd suggest trying to post the docs digitally so those with I-PAD, tablets or smartphones could download them as an alternative.
- Met Council should have responded at end of meeting.
- Great facilitation but WHY are here again. All these issues have been voiced....repeatedly. No new info exists – why have a meeting and re-explore the pain? What the heck? And then the posters downstairs ALL support the shallow tunnel and really question the studies. Really? You got the SLP people all upset for nothing – just to promote the idiot tunnel and pit it against the idiot berm. This is so unethical, it's beyond the pale. Both suggestions are idiot. Do something reasonable and just quit pitting people against people.
- Plan for size – room could have been twice as big and parking is a big problem – how about planning shuttlebuses?
- Meetings shouldn't start this early and weekend meeting times should be included. You limit who can attend with a 5:00PM start time. Is that intentional?
- The general feeling for why this topic has been reopened by Governor Dayton, is that his richest campaign contributors didn't like the final compromise, arrived at after years and years of study and deliberation by all communities involved. If we go through five more years of study and deliberation, only to once again find that co-location not re-location is the safest, cheapest, and easiest option for developing the SWLRT, will it once again be vetoed by the wealthy few who would rather give up St. Louis Park safety in favor of their undisturbed sight lines? Co-Location is the answer! Please take re-location of freight trains off the table!
- When I arrived there was a long line of people waiting for something. No one quite knew what. Someone said we had to register. So we all stood there waiting. Then I noticed a table, with clipboards on it, which to register. No line. I went up, registered and immediately walked in. Signage or verbal communication was needed. Once inside the room it was packed solid. There were boards to look at but no way to get to them. Boards need to be in open area or separate room. The meeting should be posted with something like this: 5:00PM – 5:30PM Boards and Handouts Available, 5:30PM Meeting Begins. And then start the meeting – no talk amongst ourselves.
- I believe in well structured dialogue and I'd hope to see that next time. Thank you for inviting citizen engagement. I trust that the Met Council and City Council are listening.

Content & Structure

Please rate the following aspects of your meeting experience on the below scale:

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 - Strongly agree | 4 - Disagree |
| 2 - Agree | 5 - Strongly Disagree |
| 3 - Neutral | |

1. I felt like I could share my thoughts openly and honestly **2.2**
2. Decision-makers and Met Council staff were present to hear the thoughts and concerns of my community. **3.5**
3. The meeting was well-facilitated. **1.8**