



**METRO Blue Line Extension
Community Advisory Committee Meeting
January 9, 2017
Blue Line Project Office
5514 West Broadway Avenue, Suite 200
Crystal, MN 55428
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

Meeting Summary

CAC Members: George Selman, Chris Berne, Kaja Vang, La Shella Sims

Agency Staff and Guests: Dan Pfeiffer, David Davies, Juan Rangel, Nick Landwer, Sam O'Connell, Dan Soler, Rachel Dammel, MarySue Abel, Sophia Ginis

1. Approval of October 10, 2016 and November 7, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Minutes were approved with no edits.

2. 2017 Project Activity Overview

MarySue Abel presented.

2016 Major Project Milestones Achieved

- March
 - Received Municipal Consent from the five corridor cities and Hennepin County
- July
 - FTA and Met Council published the Final EIS
- August
 - Received local funding commitments
 - CTIB
 - HCRRA
 - City of Brooklyn Park
 - MnDOT
 - Hennepin County
 - Completed 30% design
 - Submitted FTA New Starts with materials demonstrating completion of Project Development
- September
 - FTA issued Record of Decision and Met Council determined Final EIS is adequate
 - Met Council adopted revised project scope and budget
 - Met Council applied for Entry into Engineering
- Staff participated in over 140 community events/meetings/advisory committee meetings

2017 Project Activity Overview

2017 will be the Engineering phase, and staff anticipates receiving the official letter from FTA next week granting Entry to Engineering. This phase will run through April 2018. With this project and SWLRT, our region is one of two in the country with two projects in the Engineering phase.

- Major 2017 milestones:
 - FTA grants Entry to Engineering: January 2017
 - Complete 60% civil and OMF design: March 2017
 - Complete 60% systems design: May 2017
 - FTA Risk Assessment: June 2017
 - FTA Financial Capacity Assessment: June 2017
 - LONP Submittal for Advanced Construction: June 2017
 - Complete 90% civil design: August 2017
 - Application for Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA): September 2017
 - Complete 90% OMF design: September 2017
 - Complete 90% systems design: October 2017
 - Complete 100% civil design: December 2017

- FTA New Starts 2017 Key Activities:
 - FTA authorizes Entry to Engineering
 - FTA conducts Risk Assessment
 - FTA conducts Financial Capacity Assessment
 - Met Council prepares and submits Full Funding Grant Agreement Application
 - Anticipate submitting in September
 - 3 things need to happen first:
 - Secure local funding (want to have complete by June)
 - All major agreements complete (e.g., BNSF, CP, Xcel)
 - Need to be in President's Budget and have appropriation from Congress (anticipate in September timeframe)
 - George Selman asked if there was progress on the railroad negotiations. Dan Soler said there is progress, but it's still complicated. BNSF feels like they were undercut by the Crystal connection, but that was a separate project so BPO is trying to figure out how to address that. The Governor has talked with BNSF and others will be brought in as needed. George Selman said he can bring up this issue at an upcoming legislative breakfast.

- Environmental:
 - Need to take everything in the Record of Decision and ensure mitigation is incorporated into plans and specs
 - Section 106 (Historic/Cultural Resources)
 - Complete interpretive plan design
 - Complete Construction Protection Plan

- Consult to meet Secretary of Interior Standards at 60%, 90%, and 100% design
 - Wetlands permitting
 - Submit permit request to USACE and local jurisdictions
 - Receive permit prior to advanced construction
 - Complete Phase II investigation
 - Receive Response Action Plan approvals from MPCA
 - Incorporate actions into contract specifications
- Agreements:
 - Railroads
 - CP
 - BNSF
 - Utilities (requiring substantial relocation)
 - Xcel
 - MCES
 - Construction Cost Participation Agreements
 - MnDOT
 - Hennepin County
 - Local municipalities

Design Advancement

Nick Landwer presented.

- 60% design plans
 - Plan production underway
 - March: distribute 60% plans for stakeholder review
- Design details to resolve prior to 90% plan production
 - Robbinsdale park-and-ride
 - Oak Grove park-and-ride
 - West Broadway streetscape
 - Olson Memorial Highway streetscape
 - Drainage north of TH 610
 - City of Brooklyn Park is working on regional stormwater plan, which will inform project design
- 90% design plans
 - April: begin production (already having discussions on the details that will be shown in these plans)
 - August: distribute 90% plans for stakeholder review
 - Need all outstanding design issues resolved by June to meet August distribution
- 100% design plans
 - September: begin production

- December: deliver
- Bid packages ready early 2018

Potential Advanced Construction Activities

- The following activities are related to how the project will be phased and critical path items (e.g., soils)
- Met Council Environmental Services (MCES) sewer relocation
 - Needs to happen before able to start Hwy 55 bridge construction
- Floodplain mitigation (trench area near Theodore Wirth Park)
 - Needs to occur before can fill floodplains
- Theodore Wirth Parkway bridge reconstruction
 - Completing this bridge will make it easier to retain east-west connections as the project advances and other bridge work begins
- Bassett Creek tunnel reconstruction
 - Tunnel is owned by MnDOT and is currently in critical condition – right under where Van White Station will be
- Procurement of Xcel transmission poles along rail corridor
 - There is a long lead time on the material for the replacement structures so we want to allow enough time
- Chris Berne asked what the timeframe is for these activities. Nick Landwer said they are starting to prepare the design now, and the bid packages would likely go out fall 2017.
- La Shella Sims asked if the Bassett Creek tunnel is currently used. MarySue Abel clarified that its used for stormwater, not people.

Proposed Construction Packages

- Civil 1 & 2: including roadway, utilities, LRT guideway, stations, and park-and-rides; West Broadway construction will happen at the same time
 - Civil 1: Target Field Station through CSAH 81 flyover bridge
 - Civil 2: Jolly Lane to OMF
- Systems:
 - Traction power
 - Overhead catenary system
 - Communications
 - Rail signaling
- OMF
 - Brooklyn park
 - OMF building
 - Yard track
 - Vehicle storage
 - Light maintenance
 - Paint and body bay
 - Franklin O&M building

- Overhaul bay expansion
 - Rail control center expansion
- BLRT/SWLRT Joint Contracting Efforts
 - Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) contractor: Rockwell Collins (ARINC)
 - Traction power substations
 - Target Field Station
 - Light rail vehicles
 - Fare collection
 - La Shella Sims asked who would pay for these joint efforts. Nick Landwer replied that each project would pay for their portion of each of the above.

Right-of-Way

- Appraisals and acquisitions prioritized based on:
 - MPRB property
 - Railroad parcels
 - Advanced construction parcels
 - Parcels that include relocation
- Kaja Vang asked if is there someone on the team that makes sure there is enough affordable housing in the corridor for relocations. Dan Soler replied that there are no residential locations for this project (except for the few along West Broadway done by the County). The project is partnering with the County and local municipalities regarding land use along the corridor. Nick Landwer added that they've reached out to any properties that will be impacted.
- La Shella Sims asked where the interaction between the Blue Line and Theodore Wirth Parkway ends. Nick Landwer said it doesn't go much farther than the Theodore Wirth bridge, and the intersection of Theodore Wirth Parkway and Golden Valley Road will also be reconstructed.

Public Involvement

- Sam O'Connell presented
- Support design/engineering activities
 - Large format meetings at 60% design (late Q2 2017)
 - Neighborhood meetings
- Staff project advisory committees
 - May meet less frequently as changes will become more minor
- Share project information through website and newsletters
- Coordinate project information sharing efforts with project partners

3. Updated Corridor Flyover Video: Preview

The last video was done in about 2012, so the project wanted to update the video to reflect current conditions and design. This video is about 85% done at this time. A narrative will be added that

explains what is going on with the project (e.g., at-grade vs. grade separated, number of spaces at park-and-rides, trail connections, etc.). It serves to show people relatively where things are and incorporates some of the station renderings.

La Shella Sims commented that it is helpful to see how close it is to houses and helps personalize it since you can see where you live.

George Selman asked when it will be ready. Sam O'Connell said they are working towards having it done by the end of the month.

4. 2017 Meeting Schedule

The CAC is scheduled to meet the Monday before the CMC meetings from 6:00-8:00 pm at the Blue Line Project Office. Some meetings may be canceled but meetings are currently scheduled for:

- February 6
- March 6
- April 10
- May 8
- June 5
- July 10
- August 7
- September 11
- October 9
- November 6
- December 11

Chris Berne said since participation has been down the last few meetings, he'd like to put together a questionnaire for members to see what the level of interest is going forward so we can get a better idea of attendance. Dan Soler said they did a similar thing with Central Corridor about halfway through where they thanked members for participating and gave them an opportunity to change representatives if they would like. George Selman suggested sending the letter/survey with the packet from tonight and copying the city council member or organization who appointed them. Dan Soler noted that the more people that attend these meetings the better so we can get more feedback. Chris Berne said that attendance at community meetings has also gone down, but that's because we've done a good job getting information out and addressing people's concerns. Sam O'Connell added that the CAC appointments were for two year terms so we are right at the end of the first term. George Selman suggested that if there are new members or members that want a refresher that we should have a "catch up" meeting.

5. Member Comments

Chris Berne noted that in the media lately there have been articles about Met Council's funding shortfall and what the tax revenues might bring in. Talking points about how this will be addressed would be helpful. Dan Soler said the chair's update at CMC this week will partially speak to this, so that would be a good opportunity for Chris to mention this again with policymakers in the room.

Chris also noted that some preliminary results of a U of M study show that gentrification is happening along the existing Blue Line and Green Line and asked how you explain this as it relates to keeping affordable housing in the corridor. Dan Soler replied that he has a lot of questions about the study to get the full picture of property impacts. Chris Berne said the Blue Line extension has been sold has a way to improve housing equity, so if other areas aren't experiencing that are we confident that it will happen along this project? Dan Soler said that this is a transit project in conjunction with a land use project so those need to work together. Once the FFGA was signed on the existing LRT lines was when development started in the corridors. Sophia Ginis added that there are a number of factors that influence housing prices so it can be difficult to determine what the actual causal factors are.

Kaja Vang noted that ACER is having a regional housing forum this Thursday and invited members to attend.

6. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 pm. The next CAC meeting is scheduled for February 6, 2017.