



Southwest Light Rail Transitway (SWLRT) Community Advisory Committee Meeting

October 11, 2012

Southwest Light Rail Project Office

6465 Wayzata Boulevard, Suite 500

Conference Room A

St. Louis Park, MN 55426

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

CAC Members and Alternates: Ann Beuch, B Aaron Parker, Barry Schade, Bill James, Bob Tift, David Green, Donald Eyberg, Co-Chair Jeanette Colby, Co-Chair Jennifer Munt, Joe Fredkove, John Erickson, Kandi Arries, Kelly Nelson, Linnea Sodergren, Matt Flory, Matthew Fyten, Mohamed Aden, Neil Trembley, Rolf Peterson, Vida Ditter, Claudia Johnston-Madison, Julie Williams, Timothy Brausen, Vicki Moore, and Edward Ferlauto.

Agency Staff and Guests: Susan Hoyt, Robin Caufman, Sam O’Connell, Abdi Ahmed, Jim Alexander, Mike Franzen, Nani Jacobson, and Chris Weyer.

1. Welcome and Introductions: Co-Chairs Colby and Munt

Co-Chairs Colby and Munt called the SWLRT Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting to order at 6:05 PM. Co-Chair Munt asked if there are any comments or changes to the September 2012 meeting minutes. One change was made to the draft meeting minutes:

- Kandi Arries asked that paragraph 3 on page 2 of the draft minutes be amended to add:
 - Kandi attended the CCMC meeting and learned that the Midway Greenway was included as an alternative which included the freight re-route as an expense. She asked if there is engineering documentation to help her understand why?

Barry Schade made the motion and Rolf Peterson seconded to approve the minutes as amended; the CAC approved the September 13 minutes as amended. SPO staff announced the cancellation of the November CAC meeting to provide more time for all stakeholders to review and comment on the DEIS.

Claudia Johnston-Madison read a statement that from Matt Flory asking that “we have a clear communication plan and receiving information (ie press releases) when there is news.” She noted that the CAC heard about the DEIS availability via the media instead of Hennepin County. Claudia gave SPO credit for sending a notice out to the CAC regarding the engineering consultant proposals. Co-Chair Munt agreed with the need to have open communication and stated she wants to have a “no-surprises” policy; ideally the CAC should receive notices from the project office. SPO staff stated we will share press releases with the committee when they are sent to the media.

2. Corridors of Opportunity Community Engagement Grants: Susan Hoyt

Susan Hoyt presented on Community Engagement Grants and acknowledged that several grant recipients are included on the SWLRT CAC such as Mohamed Aden from New American Academy (NAA) and Ann Beuch from the Blake Road Collaborative.

Mohamed shared his experience and how NAA is engaging the Somali community in transit planning. They are working with NDC on entrepreneurial opportunities. Susan noted four grant awards have been made to organizations that will work on engagement and capacity building on the SWLRT. They include:

- La Asamblea de Derechos-Civiles
- Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha (CTUL)
- Metro Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAH)
- New American Academy

3. Community Station Spotlight: City West and Golden Triangle Stations, Mike Franzen

Michael Franzen, with the City of Eden Prairie, presented an overview of the City West and Golden Triangle station area planning activities. Started with a brief recent history of the city and development patterns with note that the higher density of development is in the northeast quadrant where there was initial access to sewer as well as freeway access. Mr. Franzen reviewed the stations compared to the 3 C's – compact, connectivity and complete.

City West Station

The United Health Group (UHG) development is compact and preserves the remainder of the site for open space and wetlands. Further, they dedicated and incorporated into the site planning a location for a future LRT station and parking. CAC had a discussion about the City West Station:

- Co-Chair Munt asked Mr. Franzen to show the walking path for a passenger to get to the office place.
- B. Aaron Parker asked how a non-UGH employee would access the station? The plans includes a park and ride to draw from adjacent residences. The city is not anticipating much redevelopment because most of the existing buildings are fairly new (1980's or more recent).
- David Greene noted that there is a lot of parking. Can the parking be converted to other uses such as retail? No because streets and parking is needed to accommodate the 6700 new jobs.
- Bill James asked how much investment is UGH in making in the site. \$300M investment in the building and \$30M in infrastructure as well as \$6M for the land donation.
- Co-Chair Colby asked if buses would serve the site? SW Transit is looking at adding a bus connection or circulator.

Golden Triangle

Michael reviewed the history of development and plans for redevelopment. He also reviewed concept plans developed as part of a capstone project that includes connectivity, environmental improvements, mix of uses including market rate, affordable and workforce housing. Additional work includes applying the LEED checklist questions to the neighborhood level visioning. CAC discussed the plans:

- Ann Beuch asked if the city was planning for affordable housing. Mr. Franzen noted that the goal is for 30% of the new housing units to be affordable. Increasing density decreases land cost

per unit which can reduce the cost of the housing. Co-Chair Munt provided a brief overview of the Met Council's review authority of cities' comprehensive plans as well as grant funds through the Livable Communities Development Account. Affordable housing is one of the criteria for rating grant applications.

- Vicki Moore asked about the city's criteria for affordable housing including definition of affordable and location and materials of units. City uses the same definition as Met Council's affordable housing definition and applies dispersal of units.
- David Greene noted that there is great potential for residents in Minneapolis and St. Louis Park to get to Eden Prairie for jobs. Encouraged the city to look at connectivity around the station area so people can get off the train and get to the businesses including sidewalks, trails and bus or circulators.
- Joe Fredkove restated two concerns – one of residents that live near the station and want to get to businesses elsewhere along the line and a second concern of LRT passengers getting to jobs.
- Vida Ditter encouraged the city to look at other modes of public transit to connect people to jobs in area outside of the 10 minute walk area. Co-Chair Munt noted that we will need to work with SW Transit to rethink the transit service.
- Matthew Fyten noted that he is a transit planner with SWLRT and wanted to assure the CAC that they are working with Metro Transit on bus service connections.
- Vicki Moore agreed with need for transit connections at the LRT stations.
- Ann Beuch noted the CCLRT current work on the transit restructuring and how Metro Transit worked with the public. Matthew said SWLRT and Metro Transit will go through a similar process and seek public input.
- B. Aaron Parker asked if the city has hired a consultant to develop a redevelopment master plan? Where is the city in the process? The city will work on over the next year or two to develop the plan and also seek input from developers.

Co-Chairs Colby and Munt thanked Michael for the presentation and opportunity to provide feedback; the CAC applauded and thanked him for the presentation.

4. DEIS Public Hearing Schedule and Guides to Commenting on the DEIS: Katie Walker/Nani Jacobson

Nani reviewed the DEIS slides including the date, times and locations of the public hearings. Nani noted that Katie Walker was not available to attend the meeting but SPO staff will compile the CAC comments and questions and share with Katie Walker to respond; Co-Chair Colby asked that Katie share the answers with the entire CAC via e-mail.

- Kandi Arries asked if someone from the FTA will be at each of the meetings.
- David Greene expressed his concern about transportation and access for all transit depended residents along the corridor.
- Joe Fredkove expressed concern about holding all of the meetings in government offices
- Kandi Arries asked how they should package the comments and what information is necessary if they hold a local neighborhood meeting.
- Kelly Nelson asked about the process for providing public testimony.
- Edward Ferlauto asked who will the public be addressing during the hearing.

The CAC questions were forwarded to Hennepin County staff following the conclusion of the October 11 CAC meeting for their response.

5. Project Updates: Jim Alexander/Katie Walker

SPO Engineering Consultants: Jim Alexander shared with the CAC it may be possible that the Metropolitan Council could approve consultant contracts in early January 2013 to begin preliminary engineering.

TSAAP: Hennepin County staff was unable to attend the CAC meeting; no update was given.

6. SWLRT Committee and Member Reports: Co-Chairs

Co-Chair Munt announced that a workshop in the planning stages which will focus on development opportunities along the SWLRT corridor. A question was raised if all stations will be reviewed. Beth Elliot shared that cities nominated stations to be reviewed and that Penn was the station chosen to be reviewed by Minneapolis. Vicki More stated that Van White should also be looked at as the community considers these two stations to be highly connected. Co-Chair Munt shared that she will connect with ULI to see if an invitation to the workshop can be extended to CAC/BAC members and alternates.

7. Public Comment Forum:

Co-Chair Munt invited members of the public to address the CAC; no one addressed the CAC.

8. Adjourn: Hearing no further items, the meeting adjourned 8:05 PM.