

**Southwest Light Rail Transitway (SWLRT)
Community Advisory Committee Meeting**

December 5, 2013

St. Louis Park Recreation Center

2nd Floor Banquet Room

3700 Monterey Drive

St. Louis Park, MN 55426

6:00 PM – 8:30 PM

CAC Members and Alternates: Ann Beuch, Art Higinbotham, Barry Schade, Bill James, Bob Aderhold, David Greene, Donald Eyberg, Elizabeth Ryan, Jeanette Colby, Jennifer Munt, John Erickson, Kandi Arries, Kathy Cobb, Kelly Nelson, Neil Trembley, Vicki Moore, Julie Williams, Timothy Brausen

Agency Staff and Guests: Craig Lamothe, Jim Alexander, Robin Cauffman, Sam O'Connell, Sophia Ginis, Daren Nyquist, Dan Pfeiffer, Kathryn Hansen, Tani Mahtani, Kevin Locke, Katie Walker, Alan Cupp,

1. Welcome and Introductions

Co-chair Colby opened the meeting. Art Higinbotham suggested observing a moment of silence for the passing of Nelson Mandela. Meeting minutes approved from the November 7th meeting.

2. Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and Joint Development (JD) – Second Discussion

Craig Lamothe, Deputy Project Director, presents an update on the Metropolitan Council Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Strategic Plan. The Metropolitan Council has adopted a TOD policy (Nov. 13, 2013), established a TOD office, created an internal working group, and is in process of creating an external advisory group.

Kathryn Hansen, SWLRT Manager of TOD and Land Use, presented an update on the four potential FTA (Federal Transit Administration) Joint Development sites on Southwest LRT (SWLRT). FTA Joint Development is one tool in the TOD tool box that includes approximately 40 tools (See Metropolitan Council TOD Strategic Action Plan). Joint Development as defined by FTA is a transit project integrally related to commercial, residential or mixed-use development may include public, private or non-profit development associated with transit capital investments and FTA financial assistance equals a federal interest. Presentation included "Why Do Joint Development" and "Challenges of Joint Development" slides.

Barry Schade asked whether the development has to be physically connected to the transit station or can it be a half block away? Kathryn Hansen responded that the FTA defines the station area as a half mile radius and they are looking for either a functional or physical connection to the transit element.

Kathryn Hansen presented the identification and screening process used to identify the four joint development sites on the SWLRT project. The Southwest Project Office (SPO) met with each city and county staff to evaluate the Joint Development prospects, assigned each station to one of three tiers, these tiers reflect Joint Development opportunities and do not reflect TOD or Public-Private Partnership opportunities at stations.

Vicki Moore stated “I thought that we had a really productive meeting with project staff, county staff, and city staff to discuss this where we gave the project staff a lot of information they didn’t have which wasn’t considered. Looking at this it seems that it fell on deaf ears, Van White remains in Tier 3 as does all the other environmental justice communities along this line. So I’m going to clearly state that our support of the project will remain reserved as long as Tier 3 looks as it does and I’m sure that represents the other stations as well”. Kathryn Hansen stated that it was a productive meeting with the Harrison Neighborhood and the real estate developer who has options on the property around Van White came as well and we are working to pull together additional meetings with city staff.

Vicki Moore stated “ I just want to be clear, as long as Tier 3 remains as it is then our support has to remain reserved until we see some change”.

Jeanette Colby asked whether you could go back and ask the FTA for funding for the Tier 2 and Tier 3 stations? Kathryn Hansen responded that we are looking at federal funding as part of the New Starts Project but there can be stand alone funds used as the federal portion apart from the SWLRT New Starts project. FTA Joint Development is an entire program that exists beyond New Starts projects.

David Greene asked if there is no difference between Tier 2 and Tier 3 then why have different tiers? Kathryn Hansen responded that in effect there’s no difference in that there are opportunities at all the stations. David Greene asked why Tier 2 or Tier 3? Kathryn Hansen responded that the cities had very specific visions about what could happen at these stations and there was no one that had put these forward as part of a master plan. Tier 2 stations have joint development opportunity identified but one of the Tier 1 characteristics is not present. For Van White Station, the market support for timing of development in sync with construction and opening of SWLRT as it relates to the master plan that is in existence at that station, as office use as was discussed with Ryan development and office probably not happening until 2016 or 2017, not within our timeframe.

Vicki Moore stated that office is just one element, other elements include mixed-use low-income housing and daycare center, in fact it would be the only stop with a daycare facility. Kathryn Hansen responded that the project office is working with Harrison, the city, and the developer to see if some of the definitional elements that need to be present for a Tier 1 opportunity can be met.

Vicki Moore stated that she appreciates the effort but it’s not just office towers, it is mixed housing, you have a revenue generating element in the daycare center, the Met Council has programs to develop housing and until these things are clarified our support for the project has to remain reserved as will several other stations along the line.

Council Member Munt stated a key item to the Metropolitan Council is equity and the Council’s commitment to our Thrive development plan for the region is to focus our resources on racially concentrated areas of poverty. The Council wants to use TOD to transform station areas like Van White,

like Blake Road where public investment is necessary to jump start what's happening there. Our expectation is that when we offer grants, not just joint development, is that it's not just transit supportive but that it achieves equity goals in the region, creating equitable outcomes in the region. The project office is working to figure out the rules of joint development because they recently changed, the timeline for getting the funding and what projects do we have that meet those criteria. Joint development is not the only tool in our toolbox.

Elizabeth Ryan stated that this is not a ranking of what's most important, just a ranking of where a difficult tool to use might fit.

Vicki Moore stated that the developer at Van White stated that he feels that our work has put us at a disadvantage rather than being seen as an advantage, and that he is upset about it, the city and county are upset about it, there is a lot of finger pointing going on and unfortunately it all ends up back at the project office.

Jeanette Colby asked Vicki Moore if she was surprised to see Van White still listed as a Tier 3 and Vicki Moore responded absolutely. Jeanette Colby then stated that although it may have been a productive meeting with Harrison, it sounds like there is still miscommunication going on and that it would be helpful if that type of miscommunication was top of mind and an effort was made for it not to happen again.

Bill James asked Vicki Moore if there was an expectation based on the discussion that Van White was going to be moved off Tier 3. Vicki Moore responded that it was a very good meeting and staff was very surprised by the information and we would continue to move forward and the expectation was that we would not remain in Tier 3 and that was the consensus of the people in the room.

Bill James stated that the Tiers were discussed at the previous day's Corridor Management Committee meeting, and his understanding was that the cities weighed in very heavily on the four stations being in Tier 1 and it didn't mean that others weren't top of mind but there's only so much money to do joint development so they had to prioritize around the stations that fit the timeframe. His take-away from the meeting was that the cities had very strong opinions as to which to prioritize and the City of Minneapolis choose Royalston and West Lake. Vicki Moore responded that she had different information and that the Royalston businesses did not want Joint Development and around West Lake they do not want Joint Development and as long as Van White remains in Tier 3 the Harrison support will remain reserved.

Jeanette Colby stated that communication needs to be clear and expectations need to be clear.

Craig Lamothe stated that at the Harrison meeting the project office committed to meet with the city partners and Ryan Companies to reassess the assessment that was made on the applicability of joint development as the right tool for doing TOD at Van White. The project has had conversations by phone but has not met face-to-face discuss this. The project did not commit to move it differently than it was assessed but would verify, based on the information that was provided, that the assessment was the right assessment. The project is still in process of doing that. There is opportunity for it to move from a Tier 3 to a Tier 1 or Tier 2 based on the discussions that will occur. Most of the Tier rankings occurred because of where the cities thought this was the right tool to achieve what they want to achieve at each one of their stations. The project office cannot do this alone, if a city says they have a different tool in

mind for development around a station to achieve their vision, we need to consider that. The project office facilitates this process in coordination with the cities.

David Greene asked that the other tools being looked be shared with the group. Kathryn Hansen responded that the other tools can be found in the Metropolitan Council's TOD Strategic Action Plan appendix that specifically focus on making TOD happen. David Greene asked for specific tools at Van White. Craig Lamothe responded that this effort is just starting out and that a lot of this effort has been advanced by the TSAAP (Transitional Station Area Action Plan) effort led by Hennepin County working with the municipalities along the line. One of the functions of the TOD office will be to provide dedicated staff resources to help TOD throughout the region and specific station areas. The project office can support TOD but we are not solely focused on joint development. The project needs TOD all along the alignment. The project office will be working on TOD along the alignment with different partners and through the use of different tools throughout this project and TOD will continue after the project is built through the TOD office.

Vicki Moore asked whether the cities still needed to sign off by the end of December. Craig Lamothe responded that the project office needs to get packets outlining what the joint development opportunities are to the FTA this winter to maintain the schedule as it relates to joint development.

Vicki Moore stated that it seems there is such a turnover in the City of Minneapolis and that a lot of information is needed to inform the new Mayor and City Council.

Council Member Munt committed to Vicki Moore that the project office will take all the information that she shared with the project at the Harrison meeting and will make sure all of the partners, city and county, have the information about the Van White plan and how it's been provided. Our task won't just be whether we can or cannot do joint development can happen there but rather what tools are best suited for the kind of development that is envisioned at the station.

Neil Trembley stated that in looking over the presentation that was given noticed that the partner agency meetings began in June and the CAC was given a presentation for the first time in November and the CAC had no knowledge of what was going on until the last meeting and wondered whether the CAC could direct the staff, whether there are other types of projects that are going on, that perhaps staff feel are not important enough to let us know and allow the CAC some kind of input. Council Member Munt responded that the CAC knows everything that she knows as a Met Councilor and the development discussion started when we had a developer's panel. The results of these panels was shared with the CAC.

Neil Trembley asked that the co-chairs direct the project office to take a look at any other projects like this, in this category so that we don't get something given to us in November and be told we need to have any sort of response back by to them by December. Because it is time to move, this is something that citizens deal with constantly with government and this group wants to help government enhance its role and stature and these types of things don't help that. Craig Lamothe responded that the project would be willing to bring a preview to the next meeting of what will occur in 2014 in terms of products and deliverables.

Barry Schade asked about a transit oriented development packet that was created for Central Corridor (possibly referring to Saint Paul Transit-Oriented Development Guidebook for the Central Corridor, dated November 2011) that identified the potential sites was being put together for SWLRT. Kathryn Hansen responded that the Metropolitan Council is putting together a database of all the transit-oriented development that has taken place along the existing transitways between 2000-2010. Council Member Munt added that there is a great tool in the station profiles that Hennepin County created.

Vicki Moore stated she is happy to take the information back to her neighborhood and talk about it. But being an advisory group means that I'm not just taking information from you and giving it out, but it means I have an advisory role and that there's opportunity for input before you make a final decision.

Art Higinbotham stated that he shares Neil's concern about community involvement in developing the priority for joint development at stations. He doesn't believe that between June and November, the West Lake station area associations were asked about development.

Kathryn Hansen presented the Royalston Station joint development opportunity and the West Lake Station joint development opportunity.

Kathy Cobb asked about the 150 district parking stalls. Kathryn Hansen responded that each development, whether retail or housing would have a parking requirement associated with it, and district parking is a way to reduce the total parking at each individual component of the development and share parking with other uses.

Kathy Cobb asked whether any existing businesses would be removed in the realignment of Abott Ave. Kathryn Hansen responded that no businesses would be removed.

Kathy Cobb asked how tall would the building be and does the project have a developer lined up. Kathryn Hansen responded that we are a long way from lining up a developer, and probably if this were to go all the way through the process, a developer would not be in place until 2015 or 2016.

Kathy Cobb asked who the point of contact for the neighborhood will be as this moves along. Kathryn Hansen responded that the City of Minneapolis through CPED is the key partner and their responsible for land-use and zoning.

Art Higinbotham stated that CIDNA is considering an application for a high rise apartment development where Tryg's is located and that's additional traffic onto Lake Street and this development would put more traffic onto Lake Street and Excelsior Boulevard and there is no mention of traffic. Kathryn Hansen responded that there is no mention of traffic at this point in time because a developer would be responsible for taking this forward through the approval processes laid out by the City of Minneapolis. Kathryn Hansen added that at this time this is a concept and that there is no developer picked.

Art Higinbotham stated that if the community had input they would say that the traffic is already hyper saturated in the area.

Kathy Cobb asked about applications due by spring 2014 but no developer and is it possible to get the plan flushed out by then. Kathryn Hansen responded that the project office is working with the FTA to

identify to what level it needs to be flushed out by spring 2014, but would not anticipate that it needs to be flushed out to the nth degree at this point in time.

David Greene stated that at the Harrison meeting, Rick Collins from Ryan alluded that he thought that because that project already had a developer was hurting and this is an example why because this is a completely spec project, it is somebody dreaming up and here we have Ryan with actual renderings and site layouts and as Rick said they are realistic about it.

Neil Trembley asked if the land south of where Abott is currently is private property. Kathryn Hansen responded partially private partially Hennepin County.

Jeanette Colby asked what other local sources would be for funding. Kathryn Hansen responded that grants from the TOD resources, Hennepin County, and the cities would be putting together sources of funds like any other development. It would not be just the CTIB (Counties Transit Improvement Board), the State, and the Hennepin County Region Railroad Authority funding the local portion.

Tim Brausen asked if the \$64.2 million is an add-on to the \$1.55 billion project budget. Kathryn Hansen responded that the \$64.2 million is not included in the \$1.55 billion project budget.

Barry Schade stated that he understood from the last meeting that the \$1.55 billion project budget would become \$1.6 billion with these joint developments. Kathryn Hansen affirmed that statement.

3. Project Update and Next Steps

Council Member Munt prefaced the project update by stating that the project has been working with Governor Dayton, the City of Minneapolis and the City of St. Louis Park on three additional studies and the public engagement process to offer input before the analysis is completed and after the analysis is completed. Council Member Munt stated that she was encouraged by the process and seeing the partners working well together.

Jim Alexander presented an update on the Freight Rail Relocation Analysis, which will review existing studies/designs, assess viability of options considered, and identify any new options. The scope of the analysis was coordinated with cities, county, and MnDOT Office of Freight. The analysis contract was awarded to TranSystems.

Julie Williams asked if the consultants are going to be allowed to be potential bidders on any freight rail relocation. Jim Alexander responded that the consultant would not be precluded from bidding on the advanced design work nor are the current teams precluded from bidding on the advanced design work.

Kelly Nelson asked if when this study is done will the public be able to see what rendered those options analyzed unworkable in terms of dollars or whatever it may be. Jim Alexander responded that the project intends to get that information out to the Business Advisory, Community Advisory, and Corridor Management Committees and the public with opportunities to comment on a draft report. The project is also looking at taking public testimony at the Corridor Management Committee and the Metropolitan Council.

Neil Trembley stated that he hoped the project would get the consultant out on a walk of the freight rail corridor and asked if the consultant was invited to the CAC meeting. Jim Alexander responded that the

consultant was not brought to the CAC tonight but TranSystems would be before the CAC to present the results of their analysis and that they are scheduling to get out and look at the corridors in St. Louis Park and Minneapolis with the cities, county, and consultants.

Art Higinbotham asked that if the consultant finds that the existing options are not workable will the project advise the CAC or BAC of any new design options. Jim Alexander responded that is part of the analysis and that the consultant has been charged with looking at what has been suggested in previous studies, the project office designs and any other viable alternative that is identified in the analysis and the project will be bringing those forward to the CAC and BAC.

Vicki Moore asked whether the study would evaluate whether the freight rail should come through the city at all in terms of what they might be carrying in the future, and maybe they shouldn't be going through St. Louis Park or Minneapolis. Jim Alexander responded that the project has identified previous studies and designs to analyze, some of which go out and around the city, however, the challenge is that TC&W has shipping obligations within Minneapolis and St. Paul and it would be very difficult to just abandon that business.

Jim Alexander presented an update on the Water Resources Evaluation, which assumes the Shallow LRT Tunnels through Kenilworth and is specific to that design. The evaluation will conduct an independent assessment of potential impacts to the water resources in this area. The scope of this evaluation was reviewed with City of Minneapolis, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and Hennepin County. The proposal from Burns & McDonnell was reviewed by the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County.

Jim Alexander presented an update on the Kenilworth Corridor Landscaping/Greenscaping Analysis, which is being conducted by the current engineering consultants. The analysis will systematically identify existing vegetation and identify re-vegetation opportunities with the Kenilworth Shallow LRT Tunnels. The scope of work was reviewed with the City of Minneapolis, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and Hennepin County. Initial tree and vegetation inventory began on November 13. The second piece of the analysis is that if the Shallow LRT Tunnels are part of the project there will be community involvement in the design the landscaping/greenscaping.

Jeanette Colby asked who initiated this study. Jim Alexander responded that it came out of discussions at the Corridor Management Committee. Council Member Munt added that the discussion focused on 1000 trees and what kind of trees are there, what caliper, and what health. Jeanette Colby stated that there is a certain degree of cynicism that goes along with the tree study, but appreciates the second phase that will look at future designs.

Barry Schade asked whether there will be dueling water reports as the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is doing their own study. Jim Alexander responded that with the freight analysis there are consultants representing Hennepin County, City of St. Louis Park, and City of Minneapolis so they will all be involved in the process. On the water resources analysis the project understands that the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has hired a consultant and the project office will be whole heartedly sharing our information with these groups as the project moves forward.

David Greene stated that assuming the Corridor Management Committee meeting is at the regular time it is almost impossible for people to get there and the Metropolitan Council at 4pm in downtown St.

Paul is also pretty impossible for people to get to and asked that one or more change to a time and place that is more accessible.

Sam O'Connell presented an update on potential additional outreach activities including; SWLRT "Mobile Office", a direct mail campaign, Met Council listening sessions, and Elected Official town hall open houses/community meetings. Council Member Munt added that this outreach is directed to engage beyond the usual suspects, beyond those directly affected through non-traditional outreach techniques.

Jeanette Colby asked what the budget for this outreach. Sam O'Connell responded that the project had built in monies to do a mobile office and the project does have a public involvement budget. Jeanette Colby asked what the level of funding is for this. Sam O'Connell responded that the public involvement budget did have a placeholder of \$10,000 for mobile office and the exterior wrap will cost about \$5000. The direct mail campaign design is done in house, so most of the cost is in postage. The listening sessions will not be too different than the open houses in terms of cost, mostly staff resources to make sure it happens. The biggest expense is wrapping the bus. Jeanette Colby stated that staff time is by far the biggest piece.

Vicki Moore suggested grocery store parking lots as a way to engage people. Council Member Munt added that the project is looking for suggestions for places and events from CAC members.

John Erickson suggested using the bus to move people to the community meetings.

4. Hennepin County- TSAAP Investment Framework Update

Katie Walker presented an update on the Southwest Corridor Investment Framework, the product of the Transitional Station Area Action Plans (TSAAP), which is intended to promote opening day readiness by bridging the gap between current conditions and future needs by addressing; station platform locations, park and ride sites, future development potential, access and circulation planning, infrastructure planning, and stormwater management options. TSAAP was a 14 month process that was coordinated with preliminary engineering and included public engagement on a city by city and station by station approached.

Art Higinbotham stated the Southwest LRT serving the southwest part of downtown Minneapolis, it is not in the grey area, it is not in the yellow area, Target headquarters is more than a ten minute walk from Royalston Station and Beth Elliott [City of Minneapolis] made a comment that she had people who walked from the north side and he responded to her that if they walked from the north side you're going to ask somebody that drives to a parking garage downtown and they're going to take a fifteen minute walk from Royalston Station to their place of work downtown, he cannot see that happening. Art stated that the problem is with the route in that it doesn't serve any new parts of downtown. Robin Caufman, Assistant Director SWLRT, responded that the Southwest line is planned to be an extension of the Green Line and would be a one seat ride from Eden Prairie through downtown Minneapolis to downtown St. Paul and could get off at the Nicolette Mall station and be within the ten minute walkshed of Target Headquarters.

Jeanette Colby suggested that it would be helpful to present to the neighborhood associations.

Council Member Munt stated that she was excited for the Hennepin County GIS system which would allow the public to better visualize the areas around the station.

Vicki Moore asked whether the GIS system would be on the bus. Council Member Munt responded that it wouldn't be on the bus for public engagement in the three additional studies but could be in the future.

Neil Trembley asked if the possible TOD sites have been integrated in the Southwest Corridor Investment Framework. Katie Walker responded that the framework does mention joint development as one of the tools within the station area planning but the document shows the areas of potential redevelopment around the station.

Council Member Munt asked if the intent of the framework was to show what investments would be in place on opening day. Katie Walker responded in the affirmative.

David Greene asked if there was a plan to update this framework after five years. Katie Walker responded that the intent is that the framework is a living document.

Barry Schade asked if the investment framework is in addition to items included in the Southwest LRT project. Katie Walker responded that the table lists items, which will occur under the Southwest LRT project, as known today, and investments outside of the project.

Jeanette Colby stated that in terms of access and circulation, the Met Council has ideas of how people are getting to the stations beyond the ten minute walksheds and not a lot of people are walking to the stations and the project office has some idea of how many people are going to be coming to these stations and how they're going to get there and she asked Kerri [Hennepin County] about it and she was told that you weren't privy to that information and wanted to say that access and circulation is a critical element. Katie Walker agreed that access and circulation was important and that they should be talking more about right sizing of pedestrian paths and parking.

5. 2014 CAC Meeting Calendar and Location

Sam O'Connell presented the proposed 2014 Community Advisory Committee meeting calendar. The meetings will occur on the fourth Thursday of the month at the St. Louis Park Recreation Center unless otherwise noted.

6. Member and Committee Reports/Public Forum

Neil Trembley suggested delaying the Hennepin County Bike Taskforce report until the next meeting.

Bill James provided a quick update on the Corridor Management Committee meeting on the previous day. Presentation was the same with the exception of the Hennepin County presentation. One point made by Mayor Rybak at the Corridor Management meeting was to focus on the staff time primarily on the Freight Rail Analysis and the Water Resources Analysis more than the Landscaping/Greenscaping Analysis.

Jeanette Colby stated that in some places there are beautiful mature trees that need to be catalogued and replaced and in other areas it is more about the greenspace, the sense of place that could be lost. Council Member Munt responded that is why we're committed to working with the community on landscaping/greenscaping.

7. Adjourn