



METRO Blue Line Extension

Meeting of the Community Advisory Committee

June 7, 2023

6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

CAC Members: Ellis Beck, Thomia Brown, John Chambers Dunn, Kathy Fraser, Jeff Guertin, Jonathan Hansen, Jericho Huggar, Audua Pugh, Ken Rodgers, James Voll

Agency Staff and Guests: Chris Beckwith, Nkongo Cigolo, Neha Damle, Bojan Mistic, Nick Landwer, Koehl Simmons, Jer Yang, Kaja Vang, Kjerstin Yager

Meeting Summary

1. Call to Order, Welcome

John Chambers Dunn, CAC co-chair, began the meeting at 6:06 p.m. Nkongo took attendance and provided an overview of upcoming events, including the Corridor Management Committee this month and several upcoming events in Minneapolis and Crystal.

2. Project Update (Chris Beckwith)

Chris Beckwith stated that the project team is still seeking comments on the anti-displacement report. The project team is working through the municipal consent process on the final route and is anticipating a 2029 opening date. Audua Pugh asked what was meant by a final route, Chris clarified that a corridor has been selected but there are still a few locations in Minneapolis where there are some route options, and all of these route options will be studied in the environmental process. Chris reported the project received \$50 million in funding from the most recent legislative session. The project has access to \$10 million to continue the design and will have access to the \$40 million after the project receives the Full-Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA). Chris discussed two things that came out of legislation: regular meetings with community groups and route alignment consultation. The project would need to have quarterly meetings in consultation with community groups and these would need to be documented and provided to the Corridor Management Committee (CMC). Representatives at these meetings would include Met Council, Hennepin County, MnDOT, and all corridor cities. The project team would need to coordinate with community groups and establish a framework for these engagement meetings by July 1st, 2023. Chris added that the project team is looking for suggestions for engagement strategies from the public. Another item that came out of the legislation was a route alignment consultation, which is most focused in Minneapolis. Chris emphasized that all cities will have the opportunity to present concerns and proposals to the CMC, not just Minneapolis. Chris added that the new legislation is in line with the project's engagement principals already.

Chris stated that the CMC wasn't able to get through the anti-displacement discussion at the last CMC so half of tomorrow's meeting will be dedicated for CMC members to share their feedback. John Chambers Dunn stated he has seen all these signs saying "No light rail on County Road 81" but he is under the impression that we are past the point of decision. Chris said that John is correct although there are some route options in Minneapolis there are no plans to evaluate a route that is not on County Road 81. Jonathan Hansen stated that this is a small, yet vocal group in opposition to the route.



3. Minneapolis Design Decisions (Bojan Mistic)

Bojan Mistic, Hennepin County, shared the Minneapolis design decisions – routing from Target Field Station to 21st Avenue or West Broadway Avenue; Route on 21st Avenue or West Broadway Avenue; number of stations (1 or 2) between Knox Avenue and Lyndale Avenue; and Penn Avenue station refinement. Bojan reviewed the different routes that have been studied that connect to West Broadway and 21st Avenue from Target Field Station. Bojan stated that although Lyndale works well from an engineering perspective, this is not the only guiding principle of the project and Bojan discussed the East of I-94 option and the new sub option. The East of I-94 option comes with several challenges, including narrow right-of-way and impacts to commercial property. The sub option would continue down 10th Avenue to Washington Avenue; have a station on Washington Avenue, south of Plymouth Avenue; uses existing infrastructure; and keeps at-grade LRT operation until the I-94 crossing. Bojan noted that the right-of-way in 10th is tight and would require limiting access to other vehicles on 10th Avenue.

Referring to the slide on engineering challenges for the East of I-94 option, Thomia Brown asked if there is a similar slide for the Lyndale Avenue Option. Nick stated tonight we are focusing on the East of I-94 option. Jonathan Hansen asked what impacts to traffic would be if the alignment went on Washington. Bojan said that is something the project team will evaluate. Nick clarified that light rail is designed to operate at-grade within the existing street network so the project team is really trying to make this work at-grade. Johnathan stated that it seems like an ideal route if you can make it work. Thomia stated that [Southwest Light Rail Extension] is above grade in Eden Prairie and asked why that cannot be done here. Nick stated this is a different alignment, more similar to the Central Corridor near the University of Minnesota. Thomia asked about building the light rail above I-94. Nick stated this would be extremely disruptive and not possible.

Jeff asked who would be impacted by the I-94 sub-route option. Nick stated that this is a new route, and the team hasn't had a chance to engage people in this area yet.

4. Anti-Displacement Discussion (Chris Beckwith)

Chris Beckwith stated about half of the CMC will be used to continue the discussion on anti-displacement.

5. Open Discussion

Thomia asked how small businesses are feeling about the West Broadway Avenue route option. Nkongo stated that businesses owners along West Broadway are concerned about the impacts to their businesses. Nick stated it is a priority of the project team to limit community impacts. That is why we are also looking at a 21st Avenue option, and the project team will continue to work with the community. Audua stated she does not want the Blue Line on West Broadway Ave or 21st Avenue; Nkongo thanked her for her comment.

6. Next Meeting: July 12, 2023

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.



Meeting Chat

Thomia Brown (Guest) 6:09 PM Can we get a list of events?

Thomia Brown (Guest) 6:09 PM All the dates please

Cigolo, Nkongo 6:11 PM

- Juneteenth outreach – June 17 Scavenger Hunt and June 19 on West Broadway
- June 18 Crystal Airport Father's Day Open House
- June 20 BLRT Workforce & DBE Meet & Greet
- June 22 Crystal Station Area Planning Open House
- Brooklyn Park Open House June 28 at the Brooklyn Park Library
- Minneapolis meeting on East of I-94 route options – to be scheduled likely in July

Ellis Beck (Guest) 6:12 PM Hi, sorry I'm late. Nkongo, please mark me as present when you get a moment!

Cigolo, Nkongo 6:13 PM Link: Meetings and Events - Metropolitan Council (metro council.org)

Link: Anti-displacement recommendations report | Your Blue Line

Thomia Brown (Guest) 6:33 PM Do you have a slide like this for Lyndale to compare with

Landwer, Nick 6:34 PM Tonight we have the east of I-94 options available

Thomia Brown (Guest) 6:35 PM Nothing to compare with?

Thomia Brown (Guest) 6:41 PM Eden Prairie LRT is up above the streets

Damle, Neha 6:41 PM Stepping out for a moment

Thomia Brown (Guest) 6:41 PM It is possible

Thomia Brown (Guest) 6:42 PM Across I-94

Jonathan Hansen (Guest) 6:43 PM Agreed

Guertin, Jeff 6:43 PM Good info. @john.chambersdunn@totalexpert.com - can we get this slide deck sent out to members?

Cigolo, Nkongo 6:43 PM Yes

Thomia Brown (Guest) 6:44 PM Building it above 94

Damle, Neha 6:45 PM back



Thomia Brown (Guest) 6:45 PM Yes

Thomia Brown (Guest) 6:53 PM How are the Small Business feeling about the Broadway Ave?

What is the feedback from BAC?

There was an article that a business owner did not know about it

Thomia Brown (Guest) 6:58 PM Has the anti displacement reached out to the Lyn Park community have they completed a survey?

Yager, Kjerstin 7:00 PM You can find the surveys here: <https://yourblueline.org/anti-displacement>

Thomia Brown (Guest) 7:01 PM Thanks for the link