



Blue Line Extension Corridor Management Committee

Minutes of the March 9, 2017 Meeting

Present: Adam Duinick, Rich Gates, Linda Higgins, Scott McBride, Regan Murphy, Mike Opat, Shauen Pearce-Lassiter, Marika Pfefferkorn, George Selman, Lona Schreiber, Peter Wagenius, Denny Walsh, Liz Wielinski, Tim Willson, Chris Berne

Not in attendance: Myron Frans, Betsy Hodges, Brian Lamb, Gary Cunningham, Andy Snope, Meg Forney, Barbara Johnson

1. Call to Order

Chair Duinick welcomed everyone and convened the meeting at 1:31 PM.

2. Approval of January 12, 2017 Minutes

Chair Duinick asked the committee to review the meeting minutes from the January 12, 2017 meeting and asked if there were any edits or comments. Councilmember Higgins made the motion to approve the minutes; Councilmember Gates seconded the motion. Meeting minutes were approved.

3. Chair's Update

Chair Duinick reminded committee members that the Blue Line Extension Project was looking for reappointments from stakeholders to the CAC and BAC.

In addition, Chair Duinick commented on CTIB actions taken the day before, noting that the board had voted to adopt a resolution to dissolve CTIB. That resolution would be sent to each county for approval. It was noted that Dakota County had voiced their disapproval for the resolution. CTIB hoped to have all the resolutions passed by the end of March, and it was indicated that the sales tax would then go into effect by the end of 2017. Chair Duinick thanked Commissioners Opat and McLaughlin for all their efforts as part of this process.

Commissioner Opat indicated that a large part of the dissolution of CTIB would regard how to split money between the counties and how money for previously approved projects would be divided up. He noted that Dakota County still needed to vote, and that the hope would be, though it was not the deal they'd hoped for they would see how it was beneficial to them. Commissioner Opat also told committee members that each county would have to decide how much of a tax to impose, it could be up to half a cent, but could also be lower based on those county by county decisions.

Mayor Willson asked if public input on the dissolution on CTIB would still be taken.

Commissioner Opat noted that Hennepin County would hold a public meeting on March 21st, with the following meeting reserved for voting.



Chair Duinick turned his time over to Councilmember Schreiber who presented a handout addressing the Brooklyn Park 169/101 Interchange Project. Councilmember Schreiber related that at a recent TAC subcommittee meeting, the project had been taken out of the list of approved/going forward projects and placed in the “yellow light” awaiting funds category. The councilwoman stressed that the proposed project would not only benefit the roadway, but would also have positive effects on ridership for BLRT. She urged council members, who would be present at the next TAB meeting, to encourage the board to reconsider slating this project for construction immediately.

Scott McBride from MnDOT noted that the project was important to MnDOT as well. Though they had a full list of projects approved, the 169/101 Interchange Project would be added to the list of projects to be approved with the anticipation of further federal money becoming available. He noted that MnDOT would be supporting the project at the upcoming meeting.

4. TAAC Workshop Debrief

Alicia Vap presented an update on a TAAC meeting which took place recently with BLRT staff. It was noted that the membership of the TAAC included advocates for communities with a variety of disabilities. The meeting focused on a project overview with two breakout sessions to discuss Penn Ave Station (signalized crossings, Z-crossings and cycle track) and the Golden Valley Road Station (navigation and access). The goal of the meeting was to get feedback from TAAC members in relation to design and usage for those with disabilities.

Alicia Vap described key takeaways from the meeting which included general support for the design progressions. It was indicated that signage should be designed for all users, and that design details such as pavement treatments, stair widths and signage would be very important. The committee also stressed the importance of landscape placement and snow clearing to guide riders to the stations. In addition, it would be important to ensure safe and clear delineation between bicycle trail users and pedestrians.

Alicia Vap also presented a video that was shown at the TAAC meeting. This video guided viewers through the Golden Valley Road Station and access. Key design elements were visible in greater detail in the three-dimensional video. It was noted that the video would also be shown to the public at future meetings.

5. Construction Coordination

Jim Toulouse presented information on construction coordination, noting that as the BLRT project continued through design/engineering and into construction there would be several projects that the BPO would need to coordinate with. This was true specifically for those projects along the construction path for BLRT and those that would impact traffic.



Mr. Toulouse presented a map outlining the location and details of projects that would be taking place between now and the end of BLRT construction. Those projects included the southwest light rail project, C-Line BRT, The Hennepin County Glenwood Ave Project, and I-94 improvements. Due to the number of simultaneous projects, a large coordination effort would be needed. Jim Toulouse indicated that coordination meetings with relative stakeholder had already begun and that they would continue through construction of BLRT. Blue Line Project staff were also working on developing an Interagency Construction Communications Plan.

Jim Toulouse asked if committee members had any questions. Chair Duininck noted that naming of the C-Line BRT was still being determined.

6. Olson Memorial Highway Update

a. Stations

Alicia Vap presented information on Olson Memorial Highway, reminding meeting members of the past design for Penn Ave and Van White Stations. It was noted that since the presentation of those designs outreach work had been done with the public and comments back from the community suggested a desire for changes. The feedback had called for more unique stations, warmer color pallets that would add a “pop” to the design.

Considering the feedback BLRT project staff had continued to advance design incorporating those community requests. New designs for the stations were presented to the CMC members. The first featured dichroic film between glass which provided a sense of light and color to the station. It was noted that a similar treatment had been used on Amundson Hall on the University of Minnesota campus. A second design was also shown, which featured colorful metal panels. This treatment had also been used on the façade of Children’s Hospital on the University of Minnesota campus. Renderings of the station using stamped metal shingles on the canopy were also shown. It was noted that the same material has been used on the Walker Library in Uptown Minneapolis.

Alicia Vap asked if the committee had any questions regarding the presented designs. They did not. Alicia indicated that the designs would go to the community for discussion and feedback.

b. Trees

Alicia Vap then gave an update on trees and landscaping along Olson Memorial Highway. It was noted that 240 boulevard trees and 120 median trees would be impacted by the project due to reconstruction. Roughly 20% of those were Ash trees.



Due to the impacts the project office had been working closely with the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MPRB) to outline mitigation efforts. This mitigation would include planting an assortment of tree species in the boulevards to frame the street and provide an urban canopy. In addition, the project was working with the MPRB to relocate of over 50 existing median trees to nearby parks in North Minneapolis.

Councilmember Higgins asked if trees in the boulevards would also be replanted in the medians. Councilmember Wielinski from the MPRB, indicated that once trees grew to a certain size they were not transplantable, in addition the medians would not supply enough room for healthy growth. Therefore, the trees were proposed to move to surrounding parks.

Councilmember Pearce-Lassiter requested that some trees slated for relocation be placed nearer to Olson Memorial Highway, close to schools for instance. Alicia Vap noted that she would take that request back to the MPRB for further discussion.

c. Floyd B Olson Statue

Caroline Miller from the BLRT project's environmental team presented information on the indirect adverse effect finding regarding the Floyd B Olson Statue. As part of the Section 106 process, the Blue Line Project Office had committed to developing a treatment plan for the statue. That treatment plan included research on potential relocation sites, historic reasoning for the placement of the statue in the original median location and developing potential site designs.

Councilmember Pearce-Lassiter related that as part of the community's request for art and wayfinding, it would be beneficial if the statue could stay in the area as both a wayfinding element and as an anchor to the area along with the library and paths. Caroline Miller noted that the location of the statue would ultimately be MnDOT's decision as they were the owners. Though there could be some negotiation done if other parties were interested in taking on the maintenance of the statue.

Councilmember Pfefferkorn asked if the money for the mitigation of the statue came from the project's art budget. Caroline Miller replied it did not, that it came from the environmental mitigation budget.

7. Upcoming Open Houses

Sam O'Connell indicated that a round of open houses would begin March 20th. A flyer would go out to the public and was included in the packets for CMC members to review. The topics covered at this CMC meeting would be covered at the open houses as well as an overall project update. The open houses would also be in a true open house style, meaning that there would be no formal presentation and the public could come and go at their leisure.



8. Adjournment

Chair Duininck asked if there were any further questions or comments from the committee. Councilmember Wagenius shared information regarding a recently passed piece of legislation, House Bill 2229, which concerned freight rail safety. This bill provided a cap on liability for freight that ran alongside transit rail. The city expressed their concern regarding the legislation, as the cap was very low. He encouraged all committee members to pay attention to the bill as it moved forward. Councilmember Wielinski asked if that included trains running in the Northstar rail yard. Mr. Wagenius noted that separate legislation already existed for that area, where rail and transit shared tracks, and that this was different as it referenced freight and transit that ran beside each other.

Councilmember McBride suggested that all meeting attendees sign up for MnDOT's Constant Contact emails regarding the I-94 project, as there would be significant closures and impacts to traffic soon. Dan Soler, director of the BLRT project, asked what the timeframe was for southbound I-94 to westbound 394 closure. Mr. McBride was unsure of exact dates. Dan Soler noted that there was work on the Bassett Creek Tunnel that needed to be done and would call for temporary closure of Olson Memorial Highway. He wanted to ensure those two projects would not be happening at the same time, as it was assumed a lot of the traffic diverted from I-94 would flow to Olson Memorial Highway.

Councilmember Schreiber took a moment to remind CMC members to support the 169/101 Interchange Project at the next TAB meeting.

Chair Duininck asked if there were any further questions or comments from the committee. There were none. The meeting adjourned at 2:27 pm.

**Next CMC Meeting: Thursday, April 13, 2017
Hennepin County Rockford Road Library
6401 42nd Avenue North
Crystal, MN 55427**