



**Southwest Light Rail Transitway (SWLRT)  
Joint Business & Community Advisory Committee Meeting  
July 25, 2013  
Beth El Synagogue  
5225 Barry Street West  
St. Louis Park, MN 55416  
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM**

BAC and CAC Members and Alternates: Ann Beuch, Art Higinbotham, Asad Aliweyd, Bill James, Catherine Lechelt, David Greene, Derek Gunderson, Donald Eyberg, Elizabeth Ryan, Jeanette Colby, Jennifer Munt, John Erickson, Kandi Arries, Kelly Nelson, Linnea Sodergren, Matt Flory, Neil Trembley, Rolf Peterson, Steve Cramer, Vicki Moore, Vida Ditter, Brian Willette, Claudia Johnston-Madison, Ed Ferlauto, Jami LaPray, Julie Williams, Kathryn Kottke, Kathy Cobb, Lisa Walker, Curt Rahman, Daniel Duffy, Duane Peterson, Duane Spiegle, Gina Bystedt, Scott Gill, Will Roach, Timothy Brausen.

Agency Staff and Guests: Sam O'Connell, Sophia Ginis, Daren Nyquist, Dan Pfeiffer, Chris Weyer, Ryan Kronzer, Sarah Ghandour, Tom Domres, Deborah Ely-Lawrence, Jim Alexander, Mark Fuhrmann, Rodgers Adams, Matt Sanman, Paul Arneson, Cleo Wedge, Tom Radio, Ann Iverson, Tim Flugum, Stan Finklestein, Barb Rasmus, Marsha Finlepet, Shannon Gwen, Bill Beva, Kevin Locke, Sean Broom, Nancy Litwin, Paul Mogush, Jackie Cherryhomes, Julie Wischnack, Meg Beekman, Jay O'Brien, Katie Walker, Tania Mahtani, Danny Mam, LaShella Sims, Jeff Strate, Yvonne Selcer, Kerri Pearce Ruch, Lisa Walker, Ron Sutton, Nani Jacobson

**1. Welcome and Introductions**  
**a. Meeting purpose and format**

BAC Co-chair Roach and CAC Co-chair Colby opened the meeting at 6:07 p.m. Followed by open remarks from the co-chairs and introduction of BAC and CAC members.

- i. Rolf Peterson: I do have a quick question and it's about the taking of votes. I feel like we're going to talk about a lot of things tonight and I guess I was thinking more along the lines of the tough three issues and those are going to go back to the Corridor Management Committee and I feel it could be very subjective without something more firm like a vote or informal poll. So I was thinking along the lines of freight rail that after we have our discussion we just have a simple raise your hand on the viability of each of the options or something like that so we have something that you know and it doesn't have even matter how much, well it looks like a lot of people think that's viable, a lot of people, I just feel that if your trying to take everybody's comments back to the Corridor Management Committee, I don't know how you do that.

- a. Co-Chair Munt: In response, this committee advises two bodies, the Corridor Management Committee which will be meeting August 7 and the full Metropolitan Council which will make its decision on August 28. What will happen is that your comments, in totality, will go to those bodies. So for example, around this table there are people whose expertise may be the Eden Prairie alignment and how it affects businesses, others may have the perspective of the school district you weigh in on that, other people have expertise on knowing how bicycles and pedestrian connections will interplay. So we want to make sure that those committees don't just have a few bullets on a power point slide in front of Corridor Management and Met Council, we want to make sure that they get the totality of the comments from tonight. My colleagues on the Met Council are going to look at everything they get before they make a decision. And I want you guys to know that there are people around this table who have been part of this project for ten years, I had three people this week say "are we done now?", Oh no you're not done, this is just the beginning, but what's important to me is that we have a wide variety of opinions around the table, and you come here because you care about your community, your business and you care about creating a light rail line you'd want to take. For everyone that offers a comment tonight know that I as a Met Council member and we as Met Council staff in this room are going to honor everything that's said tonight around this table and make sure that the decision makers get the totality of the discussion.
- ii. Vicki Moore: I just want to remind everybody that when we were putting together our guidelines, that we would operate on consensus and would not take votes. And that there was a probability there would be issues that we might never agree upon but that we would seek as much information as to make informed comments and I will also remind everyone that a couple of months ago, I slipped up and tried to make a motion and this group reminded me that we had guiding principles of no votes and that we would allow everyone to speak their mind about the issues.
- iii. Matt Flory: How would do we reach consensus, how would we know we've reached consensus without taking a vote.
- iv. Vicki Moore: Then I don't think you understand consensus
- v. Matt Flory: I don't think you understand consensus, consensus suggests that either the group has consented or agreed with something, I would consent to a recommendation without a vote but I can't say that something is a recommendation of the committee if I don't know the committee feels that way.
- vi. Jeanette Colby: What we thought is that we would try to reach consensus, if it wasn't possible then we would talk about the pros and cons of issues and then stop there.
- vii. Matt Flory: Let's not call it consensus if there's obviously disagreement at the table, even if one person disagrees that's not consensus. I think even reaching consent on some of these issues is tough.
- viii. Vicki Moore: If we can't reach consensus we need to be respectful of each other's views.

## 2. Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) Update

Nani Jacobson provided an update on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Notice of Intent was published on July 22 in the Federal Register and shortly after in the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) monitor.

- i. Kathryn Kottke: Does the supplemental DEIS need to label the preferred route as preferred and if so, which route is the preferred route in the supplemental DEIS?
  - a. Nani Jacobson: We do not have to pick a preferred route in the supplemental DEIS
- ii. Kathryn Kottke: Will the at-grade co-location routes be included in the supplemental DEIS?
  - a. Nani Jacobson: What we're going to be taking from an overall project perspective are significant and substantive adjustments to what was put in the draft environmental impact statement that was out last fall through December. So we will look at anything that has significantly changed from that, co-location, LRT 3A-1 alternative was included in the DEIS so we will not be taking a look at that unless there are any significant changes to that particular at-grade design.
- iii. Art Higginbotham: Will there be public hearings on the supplemental draft environmental impact statement?
  - a. Nani Jacobson: Yes, we will follow the same process that we followed for the draft environmental impact statement. Where, once it's completed there will be a forty-five day comment period and public hearings.
- iv. Jeanette Colby: Right now we're in the scoping period, is that correct? Is there a scoping period for the supplemental?
  - a. Nani Jacobson: Scoping is done at the initiation and prior to completing the draft environmental impact statement. So prior to completing the DEIS there was a formal scoping period, the purpose of that is to make sure that we are taking a looking at all of these alternatives that are out there and I believe that was complete between September and November of 2008. With a supplemental DEIS you're not doing the same thing as a draft environmental impact statement, you're looking at the adjustments that have been made during the preliminary engineering and design phase. So we don't do formal scoping.
- v. Jeanette Colby: Is there public input on this supplemental?
  - a. Nani Jacobson: The public can submit written comments.

### 3. SWLRT Project Scope and Costs

Chris Weyer and Jim Alexander presented project scope and cost estimates for Technical Issues #1-21 and 24-25. Project scope refinement reflects input and coordination with public comments and city/agency staff.

#### TI#2: 9 Mile Creek

- i. John Erickson: Are you looking at cost estimates at the 60%, 90%?
  - a. Chris Weyer: The FTA at certain points will ask us to refresh the cost estimates. We will be redoing our estimate at Final Design, now Engineering, later this spring. I suspect we will be doing it one or two more times, especially as we seek the Full Funding Grant Agreement. They'll allow us to bring down the contingency ever so much as we move through the process.
- ii. David Greene: What, if any of this additional cost, can actually be covered by contingency?
  - a. Chris Weyer: What we're doing right now is kind of re-scoping the project, putting everything in that we think everyone is looking for in terms of park & rides, alignments, bridges, and all that. We are able because we've advanced the design to take a little bit of advantage of our design, because originally we had X amount in design cost for the project, now we've advanced our design we can

take some advantage, but we're not at a point where we can significantly reduce our contingency, that will come in the next phase.

- iii. David Greene: Does this necessarily increase the budget or does some of this get eaten by contingency?
  - a. Chris Weyer: Maybe when we get to the big numbers at the end we can go back and walk through this question.

### TI#3: Golden Triangle

- i. Kandi Arries: Can you speak about the Right-of-Way acquisition process?
  - a. Chris Weyer: We use a MnDOT team within our office for acquisition. Typically, we're not looking to acquire property until after the Record of Decision (ROD), that's historically the way New Starts projects work. There are some things we can do prior to that. That includes starting to work on appraisals, talking with property owners, and sometimes we're able to make an offer if the property owners. If those property owners are not willing sellers, we do have the opportunity to go through eminent domain to get the properties needed. We obviously are trying to minimize the property we take on a project as a whole but there are certain areas we just can't avoid it. That's a very high level, if you want more detail we will have to bring someone in to talk about it.
- ii. Dan Duffy: Since the station moved north, I believe there is a park and ride a little farther to the north. Is there any opportunity to move this station farther north to get closer to that park and ride to save costs?
  - a. Jim Alexander: If you're referring to the park and ride at Shady Oak Rd for Southwest Transit. My understanding is that Eden Prairie is doing some widening of Shady Oak in that area. I can't really speak to what is going to happen to that park and ride but I don't know if it's going to be in the same configuration once Eden Prairie completes their work. I wouldn't say that park and ride is the primary cost driver at this location. We're going to try to work with the local land owners here and the city to try to minimize our costs.
- iii. Kathryn Kottke: Interested in the Right-of-Way acquisition in Eden Prairie, the reason I am interested in it is that in the re-route plan there is so much Right-of-Way that is going to be acquired if the re-route is chosen. What percentage of right-of-way acquisition will you take in Eden Prairie?
  - a. Jim Alexander: We are not able to report that percentage, we have some images that show in general what we're going to be taking but I don't have that number.
- iv. Kathryn Kottke: What is the acreage, what is the amount of land you're taking because I would love to compare that to what you will have to take in St. Louis Park if the re-route is chosen?
  - a. Jim Alexander: I don't have that number in my head tonight. But we can certainly research that and report back to the group.
- v. Catherine Lechelt: With that park and ride further to the north and the bus company, is there any discussion about how that bus company will work with light rail, because I know how important that bus company is for access in Eden Prairie for residents?
  - a. Jim Alexander: It will be even more critical as we talk about Southwest Station. We are having discussions with the city and Southwest Transit to talk about scenarios and how we're going to fit all of our operations together.
- vi. Catherine Lechelt: Do you know, from your discussions, whether the bus company will still be able to have express service to Minneapolis?
  - a. Chris Weyer: Our discussions have specifically related to the station at that location and are ongoing. My understanding is that their board is considering

what their position is at this time and we will continue to have that dialog with them.

- vii. Kandi Arries: Can you break down the total right-of-way acquisition for the project into each community and by technical issues so we can better understand what pieces of this have more right-of-way acquisition?
  - a. Chris Weyer: We want to make sure everyone is clear on this. We are not yet at 30% of design, we're not at 100% of design. Our goal is minimize any right-of-way acquisition, so we can put some numbers together. But those numbers may not and will not likely reflect what we have when we are done with the alignment. We can put it together but we need to continue to design the project. If that is the request, we will honor that, but it will be a point in time analysis.

#### **TI#4: Shady Oak & TH 212 Crossing**

- i. Scott Gill: I didn't see cost numbers, is that cost neutral?
  - a. Jim Alexander: There are some that are coupled together, so stay tuned and we will get to it in a few slides here.
- ii. Scott Gill: Follow up question, so does the project get credit for saving the city money by not having to redo work, if you did the tunnel, you would be taking out work that the city just completed.
  - a. Jim Alexander: We're always looking for credits from the city if they're willing.
  - b. Chris Weyer: We're saving our project money by doing it that way. By not going back in and ripping out new infrastructure. That's where project coordination comes in so that we can avoid doing stuff like that.
  - c. Jim Alexander: We looked at a number of scenarios with how far out our project is compared to the Eden Prairie project and determined that this was the best scenario. The city can move along with their project that's fairly assured it's going to happen and is needed much quicker than our project is going to construction.
- iii. Catherine Lechelt: How far out does the project look at proposed public projects, do you look at five, ten years?
  - a. Jim Alexander: When we started on this project we started coordinating with the county, cities, and even watershed districts to understand what kinds of projects they might have on the horizon so that we can coordinate with them. It's hard to define a year timeframe, but any project that looks like it's going to happen or assured it's going to happen, we try to work around them as much as possible.
- iv. Catherine Lechelt: The reason I ask is that MnDOT will need to do this whole area at some point, the 62 and 212 area, and I'm curious if that has been looked at?
  - a. Jim Alexander: We understand there's always discussion about this area, where 62 and 212 meet and frankly our design does help accommodate that, but really there's nothing official from MnDOT on doing something but it's something that may happen in the future and we are trying to anticipate the horizon as much as possible.

#### **TI#5: City West & TH 62 Crossing**

- i. Scott Gill: Who has to sign off on closing highway 62 for construction?
  - a. Jim Alexander: We've started discussions with MnDOT, Minnetonka and Eden Prairie. We haven't said that we will need to close off highway 62 entirely, we may be able to construct with partial closures. Ultimately MnDOT will need to signoff. We want to keep all partners at the table as we work through it.

#### **TI#8: Shady Oak Station**

- i. Elizabeth Ryan: Just want to clarify, are you saying the location [park & ride] is flexible for TOD development or the structure is flexible?
  - a. Chris Weyer: I would suggest that at this level of design both are. We're validating a project we can build that has adequate parking and things will evolve overtime as things are adjusted.
- ii. Linnea Sodergren: How many football fields would hold 500 parking spaces?
  - a. Chris Weyer: It's about 80-100 cars per acre. So about 5-6 acres for 500 spaces.
- iii. Linnea Sodergren: That's just asphalt, in planning would you include things like rain gardens, park features or greenery and landscaping or just plain old asphalt?
  - a. Chris Weyer: When we use those projections for acreage we have to figure for storm water treatment, drive lanes, probably a shelter for buses coming in and out; we have to account for those items.
- iv. Bill James: I know that the forecasting for ridership is trending upwards right now on this project. So there's a recipe for so many park and rides based on ridership, so for the number of spaces you're showing for the various park and rides is that on the current forecast or the future forecast?
  - a. Craig Lamothe: Roughly the LPA had 3500 end-to-end spread over 15 of 17 stations. We now have less number of sites, a slightly higher number of spaces about 3600 and that is based off the new higher projections.
- v. Ed Ferlauto: I see a right-angled turn here, is there any concern about speed of the LRT or wheel squeal?
  - a. Jim Alexander: Yes, this is actually an improvement on what the LPA had. We have been looking at that, we want to maximize our speed as much as possible. What we are doing here is we are slowing down to pull into the station and starting to get up to speed as we leave the station so as opposed to the LPA we feel this is a better configuration. We are always concerned with wheel squeal but it becomes a bigger issue as the radius is much tighter like at the Mall of America. We have that as a consideration and on Central Corridor we have devices to add lubricant to minimize that wheel squeal.

#### **TI#11: Excelsior Crossing**

- i. Scott Gill: For clarification that is a bridge structure?
  - a. Jim Alexander: Yes that is a bridge structure over Excelsior Boulevard and the freight tracks.

#### **TI#12: Blake Station**

- i. Jeanette Colby: Are you guys [Anne Beusch, Blake Road] ok with 440 space parking structure; it seems like an awfully big structure there? Have you worked with the city on this parking?
  - a. Jim Alexander: We've been working with the city since early February on this station and others, talking about park and ride. It is a lot of spaces but we've been looking at modeling and see there's demand for park and ride at this station. My understanding is the city is accepting of that but they're also interested in the development of the area.
- ii. Jennifer Munt: If I could flush this out for a minute since it is in my Met Council district. This site is the highest density housing outside of Minneapolis or St. Paul, currently. There at the Cold Storage site is a 17 acre parcel of land which could be the highest density new housing site around. This is a really hopeful place because the watershed district has acquired the land, they're doing street scaping, the Collegeville Park Plan, and this is an opportunity rich area for new housing and much better transit connections. The county is looking at opportunities for complete streets. This is I think



- going to be one of the showcases of transit oriented development potential. And the large parking there would complement the development.
- iii. Jeanette Colby: It is such a rich area and its bleak now. I just hope there is adequate greenery or some sort of aesthetics, a human level appeal to it because there's lots of housing and development opportunities.
    - a. Jim Alexander: I would just suggest as Chris indicated, that we are early in the design and we are carrying an allowance for streetscape elements. We don't plan to just build concrete out there and be done.
  - iv. Neil Trembley: My memory is that the LRT is running at-grade across Blake Rd and the regional trail is also crossing there, I take it there will be bells and whistles?
    - a. Jim Alexander: We haven't fully worked out our operational plan, but, typically at the station platform what they do today is sound the bells.
  - v. Neil Trembley: Are there going to arms or gates at Blake Rd
    - a. Jim Alexander: Yes there will be gates
  - vi. Neil Trembley: Will the arms be on which side of the trail?
    - a. Jim Alexander: We haven't necessarily gotten to that level of design yet. But it is something we are thinking about.
  - vii. Jeanette Colby: I like the idea of grade separating the trail.
    - a. Jim Alexander: Yes, there is a scenario we are carrying in the design to grade separate the trail, but we are not carrying the costs in our estimates at this time.

### **TI#13: Louisiana Station**

- i. Jami LaPray: If you've found a place for the siding track that will have to be acquired along the corridor?
  - a. Jim Alexander: We have worked with the railroad to understand what the length is but we haven't necessarily worked with the railroad to identify a location. If there is some type of arrangement it will probably be a cost to cure process for the railroad to relocate that track as they see fit. We are assuming in our designs that the storage track is removed from the area
- ii. Neil Trembley: As we're going through this I'm noticing an awful lot of the adjustments include park and ride. Are these increases or additional park and rides that had not been thought of before.
  - a. Jim Alexander: The LPA had assumed 3500 park and ride stalls. It is really difficult to find locations for park and ride. As we furthered the modeling we have fine tuned the location of park and rides. We are seeing a higher demand at some stations which increases along with structured parking versus surface.
- iii. Neil Trembley: How much is this costing in increased spaces because it seems like that would be something good to know? If we're going from 450 to 500 how much does that cost in additional right-of-way and infrastructure cost?
  - a. Craig Lamothe: The LPA had 3500 spaces spread across every station except Royalston and Van White. In the LPA cost estimate, roughly 1/3 of the spaces were structured and 2/3 were surface. We've kept the roughly 3500 spaces and consolidated based on feedback from the cities.
- iv. Neil Trembley: It looks like a number of increases, can we get an estimate of the increase. If we go from 400 to 500 how much does that cost?
  - a. Craig Lamothe: Under the LPA 1/3 was structured and 2/3 was surface. We have now almost flipped that, about 2/3 structured and 1/3 surface. A surface space for a park and ride goes for about \$3500 and a structured space about \$18,000 to build. That's construction only.
- v. David Greene: Bill mentioned some kind of formula for ridership and the number of parking spaces per ridership, is that a federal guideline?

- a. Craig Lamothe: The ridership model generates ridership by mode of access. You're either accessing LRT line by driving, by walking or biking, or by transferring from a bus. And roughly throughout the corridor it is about 1/3 1/3 1/3 on this particular corridor. And it's because of the demographics and where people are going to. The park and ride is derived from that drive access and the remaining portion of that drive access is kiss and ride.
- vi. Dan Duffy: Before we go onto to Wooddale Station let me go back to Louisiana for a second. We moved the station to the south, is there any opportunity to bring it closer to the hospital and I wonder if we're going to be missing something if we can't get farther south?
  - a. Chris Weyer: That is a discussion we've had with the city and we do have another design that is further to the south. The additional right-of-way there is on the order of 15 to 20 million, so that's a value decision that if the people in the room want to make it we can certainly accommodate the design there, but it's a discussion on the cost. We do have an alignment we've explored with the city.
- vii. Matt Flory: Where's the housing in question? A south station is closer to the hospital but I'm not seeing the housing?
  - a. Chris Weyer: Further south, all the apartments near Excelsior Blvd.

#### **TI#14: Wooddale Station**

- i. Bill James: So you're not carrying the cost estimate for the trail underpass but you're carrying it in your design plan. I think in all sincerity, where I'm coming here from a pure mitigation standpoint and by that I mean, if you can put a little money into this experience for the trail riders such that their having today, that's a really good expenditure of funds. So I would push you guys to lean into those kinds of costs and bring those costs into your program. Because you've got people who use this trail a lot and if you can create the same experience after LRT goes in, the kind their having today, I think that would be a really great thing.
- ii. Curt Rahman: This is one of the most congested intersections today. We've got it down to one lane of traffic in each direction because of the number of pedestrians today. So if you add 220 trains and all the associated people coming to those trains you've got a lot of people. My experience is that if it's not a project cost it's not going to happen. So I think we need to put it into the project cost, any place where we're recommending trail underpasses.
  - a. Jim Alexander: I'll acknowledge that it is congested and we've had discussions with the city. This is a very tight configuration without LRT and we're going to introduce LRT. I cross this often as an avid bicyclist and it's a bit of a challenge. We're just suggesting that at this juncture we should carry it with the design but given as we get to the bottom line on numbers for the whole project we're trying to fit a lot into that and where the funds are going to come from to support that.
- iii. Jeanette Colby: I think that if I can use the word consensus, the consensus is that trails are really important and the safety of users.
- iv. Curt Rahman: Mostly it's the safety of pedestrians and these are pedestrians that are coming for light rail also.
- v. Kathryn Kottke: I was going to ask about that roadway at-grade, my husband has to cross the Hiawatha LRT line, and he sees lots of accidents with cars. I just think that with freight there at that intersection it gets so congested it just seems that there has to be something that can be done to separate the traffic from the train as well. I'm hearing you say you can't but I also hear with the re-route you can do anything.
  - a. Jim Alexander: Just to clarify from a geometric perspective it's really difficult to do with Wooddale itself. We have constraints up here and constraints down here



if you were to take Wooddale over or under. Physically there's a possibility to take trail and LRT underneath, we looked at Wooddale and there isn't much that can be done with raising or lowering it.

- vi. Neil Trembley: I think that's where I was going with the idea of the parking, what I see is an increase in park and rides, an increase in taking care of automobiles and what I would like to see is a real dedicated increase in taking care of bicyclists and people on those trails right next to the LRT. I think that I see so many people who go out there from, I just talked to somebody who was from California out on the trails. It is such an amenity, such a great thing and we're going to be having that LRT right alongside that trail or right-of-way and anything we can do to make sure that the children are safe because so many families go out there, there all over the place and so that was kind of, what you know, if we have to take a look where the ying and the yang and fully compare to, I would really like to see some push on the trails for grade separated crossing.
- vii. Bill James: On Wooddale is our southern fire station. So they use that intersection a lot to get onto 7 and to make runs into the northern part of St. Louis Park. So from a human safety standpoint, again we got a north station up on Cedar Lake Road area and the southern station is right down below there. I got freight trains, I got trails, I got LRT and I got traffic and now I have guys going through there with emergency lights on. You know it's a complicated wheelhouse, so anything you can do to, I understand the engineering side, we spent [money] rebuilding that overpass over 7, and anything you can do to mitigate the complexity of that area and allow good north-south transit for emergency vehicles, the high school is just on the other side of 7, so you have buses running across that intersection, so it's a heavily used intersection and needs some serious thought.
- viii. Curt Rahman: What' is the cost to run an underpass for pedestrians and the trail?
  - a. Jim Alexander: I don't know if I have a year-of-expenditure number on that, but \$4-\$5 million all built up carrying the contingency.
- ix. Kathryn Kottke: Curt, were you asking about the LRT and the trail going underneath?
  - a. Curt Rahman: I'm asking simply pedestrian, run the trail underground for pedestrians and bikers.

#### **TI#15 TH 100 Crossing**

- i. Art Higinbotham: Are you comparing the cost of relocation versus co-location are you taking into account for not having freight rail bridge across highway 100 would save you some bucks?
  - a. Jim Alexander: Yes, maybe we could talk about that when we get to the freight rail discussion. There's a lot of ties to that depending on whether its relocation or co-location, there are things implied when under co-locate that aren't necessarily implied under a relocate scenario.

#### **TI#16 Beltline Station**

- i. Art Higinbotham: If you have trail overpass at Beltline, there is a trail overpass on TH 7 how would you connect this overpass with people who are using the trail overpass on TH 7?
  - a. Jim Alexander: That's a good question, there would have to be a connection. But actually the folks using the bridge over here, the bikeway comes up on the west side and if we were to have a grade separation those folks would need to come back to the east to get over the bridge. Without the bridge you would come and T up as it does today.

- ii. Art Higinbotham: That makes trail difficult for people who don't want to be going up and down
  - a. Jim Alexander: It's kind of competing with the desire of grade separating or not grade separating

#### **TI#17 Westlake Station**

- i. Jeanette Colby: Could you talk about the pullouts, so are we putting bus pullouts on the bridge or how is that working?
  - a. Jim Alexander: We are suggesting a bus pullout to accommodate bus off load here and a ramp coming down into the station. The city has a strong desire to put elevators in here. This bridge doesn't necessarily meet ADA requirements so we would have to build up another series of ramps to get over freight, if it doesn't exist it might be a little easier. But it adds another cost in terms of project dollars.
- ii. Jeanette Colby: Is there a pull out area for the buses or are you taking away from some of the traffic lanes, how's that going to work?
  - a. Jim Alexander: This is an extension of the right turn lane in this location here. In the traffic lane going westbound. There is a bus stop there today in the traffic lane.
- iii. Art Higinbotham: If you have pullouts you're going to have those buses merging on the Lake Street overpass. That's a very dangerous situation. Considering that there are 31,000 vehicles a day that use Lake Street and Excelsior Boulevard. Are you taking that into consideration?
  - a. Jim Alexander: From traffic studies, our understanding is that traffic is about 26 - 27 thousand average daily vehicles on this roadway and going to about 30,000 in 2030. So we have done analysis in understanding how we can accommodate the bus traffic. There is a lot of push and pull; some would desire not having any buses coming through here. We see it as a mix; some routes would benefit connecting to the station and some going through.
- iv. Kathy Cobb: I'm assuming you've done some traffic studies, then you know that it is super jammed and if you have the buses that stop now are not picking up 40 or 50 or however many people are getting on or off a light rail train and you need some type of a shelter. I think if you have that many people, I think that you can't have those buses stopping in traffic. I think you should consider alternatives.
- v. Ed Ferlauto- you're going to have more issues on Excelsior Boulevard with buses and cars pulling in and out, any conclusion on the extra traffic
  - a. Jim Alexander: We don't have anything programmed in terms of additional signal timing. We don't have any new signals going in here. It's a fairly small number for the kiss and ride. This is a very busy area, it is a challenge with all of the traffic in a very tight space

#### **TI#18 Cedar Lake Parkway & 21<sup>st</sup> Street Station**

- i. Neil Trembley: Back to the parkway, grade separation of the LRT under the relocate scenario, would the trail also be grade separated from the parkway?
  - a. Jim Alexander: Under the relocation design we've accommodated for the trail to go underneath as well with a bypass on the north side to go around Cedar Lake.
- ii. Art Higinbotham: At the Cedar Lake – Lake of the Isles Channel you show the underpass from Cedar Lake Parkway comes back up to grade and cross over the channel which would create three bridges at-grade, LRT, trails, and freight under a surface co-location and even with a shallow tunnel. Have you taken into consideration this is a site that is on the National Historic Register and number two, the fact that the usage of that channel has multiplied by factors of two is high and increasing. I was at a

meeting overlooking the channel Monday night and a kayak or canoe went by every 30 seconds. And if people are out to enjoy our lakes and parks have 250 trains a day going over head and freight rail trains it's not a very acceptable solution. My question is, have you considered having the LRT instead of coming up out of the tunnel to crossover going down through a deep bored tunnel under the channel?

- a. Jim Alexander: We can answer your question Art when we get to the freight rail issue.
- iii. Kathryn Kottke: I just want to clarify, are we putting a tunnel in this area regardless of whether there is co-location or relocation?
  - a. Jim Alexander: If there is a relocate scenario for freight then we are suggesting that we have LRT going underneath Cedar Lake Parkway as opposed to the bridge that was carried in the locally preferred alignment. Also suggesting that since we are down there that the trail go underneath as well.

### **TI#20 Royalston Station**

- i. Duane Peterson: When we had the design that was at Glenwood Avenue now the station is back in the middle of the road in the center part of Royalston Avenue. With the amount of truck traffic from the light industrial businesses we have there and all those people waiting around that passenger station we all thought it would be a good idea to have the passenger station at Glenwood Avenue. It would be a nice shortcut to get to the farmers market and this station makes it a long ways to walk around. So is this in concrete, is this going to happen now or what?
  - a. Jim Alexander: I would say nothings in concrete, we're early in design, but this is our recommendation and we're seeking input from you all tonight and from the Corridor Management Committee as we look to get this design settled. We have a little ways to go before we get into concrete.
- ii. Duane Peterson: This is a very big concern with trucks moving in and out.
- iii. Jeanette Colby: Did the engineers go down there to meet with the businesses.
  - a. Jim Alexander: We had engineering meet with all the businesses. We're going to do some more analysis to make sure we have enough room to accommodate the vehicles. We understand the challenges that are out there on Royalston getting the truck traffic in and out.
- iv. Duane Peterson: All the truck traffic coming in and out and the passenger station with all the pedestrians going back and forth.
- v. Kelly Nelson: We've always talked about the traffic, pedestrian, ridership coming from 7<sup>th</sup>. As it is there, in the corner of the frame hopefully you are accounting for the ridership from the other direction. At a neighborhood meeting last night I realized just how many of us use Cedar Lake Trails expressway from behind the Bachelor Farmer to the exit of the trail right there and then on through Loring Park. So both traffic from the Loring Park neighborhood and expressway traffic from the north loop, I think there will be a lot of bike and pedestrian traffic coming the south side. And I'm sure that many have noticed how the NiceRide system has grown in Minneapolis over the last couple of years and this station will be crying out for a NiceRide Station, so hopefully that is something you are accommodating for.
- vi. Art Higinbotham: Have you considered how the Bottineau line will tie into this project?
  - a. Jim Alexander: Yes, let me clarify what all the line work is. The red lines depict tail track that allows storage for vehicles. The blue line is where Bottineau could go. What we looked at in working with the interchange project is trying to understand and accommodate the Southwest and Bottineau. So Southwest will come off the Interchange at this notch up on structure over 7<sup>th</sup>. Bottineau would

be starting lower in grade to be at-grade across this intersection here and proceed westward on 55. So we have designed this with Bottineau in mind should that project proceed.

- vii. Art Higinbotham: You can accommodate the number of trains on both lines?
  - a. Jim Alexander: Yes, we believe we can.
- viii. Neil Trembley: There are two places so far, as far as I know, that the trails are going to intersect with the LRT in a relocate situation. In both of those places you have them intersecting at-grade. And if we even put in the 4 million dollars the gentleman said it would cost to have a grade separated, I forget if it was a tunnel or underpass, which is preferable at least at the Cedar Lake Regional Trail. Considering the amount of money that we're spending on park and rides and I understand we are doing this to get people out of their cars and onto the LRT. But we also want to keep people on bicycles and if we can really look at how we can get grade separated trail crossings because there's two hundred and something trains that are going to be going down that line. And that's an awful lot of arms going up and down. I mean the Cedar Lake Regional Trail is used by 450,000 people a year and the Kenilworth Trail is used by like 600,000 per year and those numbers are just going to increase. And there's families, there's children, I think for safety's sake and for the sake of the city we really want to look at grade separated crossings of the LRT and trails.
  - a. Jim Alexander: I understand where you are coming from and we've had conversations about this in the past. It's just what can we fit into the project budget and so we will certainly take your input into consideration.
- ix. Vicki Moore: Backing up to the Van White Station for just a minute. The street that Jim referenced is Van White Boulevard and it will open sometime between August 21 and August 28. It will reconnect north Minneapolis to the rest of the city. I'm going to say that the Bryn Mawr neighborhood, the Harrison neighborhood, the small businesses, will be having some sort of opening day celebration. Once again everybody is invited.
- x. Vida Ditter: I have one comment about underpass versus overpass. Underpass is a very scary thing and I'm not sure that children, single women should be subjected to going in an underpass. I don't think it's safe.
  - a. Jim Alexander: If we were to do an underpass, we would design it as such that to make it as safe as possible, with proper lighting and good access in and out of it.
- xi. Dan Duffy: Royalston is so close to the multi-modal station. What is happening at the Royalston station that couldn't happen at the multi-modal station? I know it's a bus transfer station but couldn't that transfer to the multi-modal station. Maybe the station gets moved farther to the west and closer to the Farmer's Market as a destination point. I encourage you to really look at whether it has to be right there and maybe spread it out because it is so close to the multi-modal station.

### **TI#23 Operations and Maintenance Facility**

- i. Jeanette Colby: Have you gotten some feedback from the community in Hopkins around that site? We were just talking about what a great TOD site that is and that is awfully close to it.
  - a. Jim Alexander: The OMF has always been a challenging subject because it is a big configuration that we need to locate somewhere. The city of Hopkins staff has said that they're willing to accept this under certain conditions and impact to tax base is one of those concerns. As for TOD, it has been discussed and we are far enough away from the station that it's not so impactful. Down in Eden Prairie we've had lots of discussions in terms of an acceptable site. There are concerns about being next door neighbors to Eaton from a vibration perspective and we've

- had some discussions and tours to understand their concerns. City staff has not said this is a great site come on in.
- b. Jennifer Munt: The K-Tel east site would be near the Shady Oak Station not near the Blake Station. What the city of Hopkins is saying is that the city is four miles square, and there are only 17,000 residents. And there concern is that this would take a lot of their tax base and there are businesses there that they would like some assistance to make sure that those businesses can stay in Hopkins. We've heard from Eden Prairie that having an Operations and Maintenance Facility at the far terminus of the line would ensure that the line gets all the way out to Mitchell Road. So that's what we're hearing. To give people a since of the benefit of one, it comes with 180 living wage jobs. And I've heard Asad say can my people work there because we are near Mitchell Road.
  - ii. Catherine Lechelt: Mitchell Station is that a large park and ride I'm seeing there as well?
    - a. Jim Alexander: We've looked at a number of configurations and in one scenario you might have a park and ride in between the yard track. Other scenarios, we have considered if this is not the OMF site to locate the station on city property with the park and ride south.
  - iii. Catherine Lechelt- Are the numbers fairly high coming in from Chaska, Chanhassen, from the west to pick up the line at this location?
    - a. Jim Alexander: As we understand it there's probably 1200 stalls between Mitchell and Southwest Station and it kind of depends on the configuration and with Southwest Transit operations as well.
    - b. Craig Lamothe: We expect about 800 at this location, which is typical of an end of the line station. We have over 1000 on Hiawatha at the end of the line station.
  - iv. David Greene: Do you have an idea of how many of those riders would not drive to Southwest Station?
    - a. Craig Lamothe: Each of these park and rides have a unique market area. This would draw more down from the highway 5 and 212 corridor where the Southwest Station actually draws more from the southeastern portion of Eden Prairie. Two different markets, there could be overlap for various reasons; dropping your car off at on or the other, day care choices, etc.
  - v. David Greene: With the cost increases if Mitchell was cut out what does that lead to?
    - a. Craig Lamothe: If you drop Mitchell most people would go to Southwest, these two stations are fairly close together.
  - vi. Vicki Moore: I was talking about this with a neighbor and she could take it to Mitchell Road. She grew up in a rural area in southwestern Minnesota she said my parents could meet us at Mitchell Road so that they wouldn't have to come into the city and they could visit more frequently. And the parents of my neighbor could go to Mitchell station and ride the LRT to Mall of America. So we really need to look at the bigger picture. Yes, this does serve the metro area but there are people in this world that may not come to the Mall of America because they don't want to drive in the city that could come and pick up the line at the end. We need to keep that in mind.
  - vii. Dan Duffy: In your discussions with the city of Eden Prairie, has there been any thoughts in combining the OMF and the Eden Prairie maintenance into one. I realize it's a challenge, but can you design it in such a way to combine the facilities into one structure.
    - a. Jim Alexander: We really haven't talked about that. With how much room we need it doesn't really fit with what we are trying to accomplish. In this configuration, we take up quite a bit of that real estate and there's not really room to accommodate their facility as well.

- viii. Dan Duffy: Have you looked a tier, one on top of the other?
  - a. Jim Alexander: One of the things we've looked at and discarded for the time being is looking at putting the park and ride above the OMF. That has been done elsewhere but just due to their operations, they have big vehicles out there, and getting them up and over our facility. I haven't really thought about it, but I see some challenges to that. We've assumed that the city would be relocated to another site.
- ix. David Greene: Have you looked at expanding the facility in Lowertown [Central Corridor] and the possibility of that?
  - a. Jim Alexander: On Central Corridor we are building a facility that is really in a tight space. It is about 8 acres or so. And we really don't have much room to maneuver down there. The Hiawatha facility is much more flexible and has two loop tracks. Because the one loop track on Central Corridor in Lowertown we are looking to expand on our efficiencies so we are looking at dual loop tracks like the Hiawatha facility. People have asked "why can't you locate it all in one" and there's a challenge in that with getting all the vehicles in and out.
- x. Asad Aliweyd: A great benefit for people out west to have a station near Mitchell to get those folks bypassing driving through the city and using the LRT to the mall. Acknowledgement that folks out west want to ride the LRT and to intercept them at Mitchell.
- xi. Derek Gunderson: This OMF site with station provides trail access out west more than Southwest Station to get to the trails.

#### **TI#1 Eden Prairie Alignment**

- i. Scott Gill: I thought that because of where that building structure is, west of Southwest, is that not a dead in the water kind of issue?
  - a. Jim Alexander: That is something we will be analyzing. The LPA came out along this alignment [highway 212] out to Mitchell here. Where Southwest Condos is located right here, the alignment was very close, what we looked at doing was to scoot the alignment out as far as possible to get away from that condo but there still was that concern about noise and vibration. We're going to be doing some analysis, particularly with this alignment.
- ii. Scott Gill: Is it still plausible?
  - a. Jim Alexander: In our minds yes it is, but it has its challenges.
- iii. Catherine Lechelt: A couple of questions, so running down Technology, are essentially running down the center, replacing soils?
  - a. Jim Alexander: The LRT is on what we call a land bridge, at-grade but likely on a pile supported because the soils in this area is one of the challenges.
- iv. Catherine Lechelt: At Technology and Prairie Center Drive, has it been determined that it would be a bridge as compared to a tunnel because of the water table?
  - a. Jim Alexander: We looked at both scenarios of going underneath as well as over and at-grade. As I indicated traffic shows a need for grade separation, because of the water, the tunnel is not really a practical approach. So we are suggesting a bridge whether we come off of the comp plan or the Singletree alignment.
- v. Catherine Lechelt: At some point, would there be discussion of what the design of that bridge would look like, possibly different than what the Hiawatha bridge near airport because I feel a lot of residents will be concerned about the visual impact of the park water area that we've spent a lot of money on it
  - a. Jim Alexander: We haven't got to that stage, but there would certainly be consideration as we get into a more refined design.



## TI#21 Freight Rail

- i. Kathryn Kottke: It has to do with the first slide, my question is, what was the criteria for eliminating the other four options for Kenilworth.
  - a. Jim Alexander: Well I think in terms of criteria we were looking at what viable options here in terms of from what is technically sound as we've talked about, the relocation designs, there were a number of designs we looked at previously that the railroads said were not acceptable from a technical perspective, so we put those on the shelf. Brunswick West had a lot of impacts compared to Brunswick Central. So as we were narrowing down the field we suggested that Brunswick West be removed. On the co-locate, we heard that earlier on the there was a strong desire to get some kind of a tunnel for LRT up through the Kenilworth, if you allow me to go through all them I'd be glad to try to answer your question, so on the co-locate there was a strong desire to have a tunnel scenario, so we essentially narrowed that field down to a shallow and deep bore, acknowledging to those out there that the shallow tunnel is not a tunnel all the way through but we are trying to accomplish what we can within a certain budgetary amount.
- ii. Kathryn Kottke: I'm looking for the criteria, was the criteria a strong desire, because I can express a strong desire, as can the people who came to the open house last week, that we not have freight rail relocation. So how strong does that desire have to be and how can I express that to you.
  - a. Jim Alexander: I am not going to making the decision; that ultimately goes to our council. They will be using those guiding principles that we have laid out, I think that we provided that list; if you don't have a copy we can certainly get you one. But ultimately the Council is going to have to weigh in and maybe I could ask the Council Member to chime in on how you might go about that.
  - b. Jennifer Munt- I just heard you say it and Sophia has it up there. We hear you loud and clear.
- iii. Jami LaPray: I would like to clarify, one of the things that we in St. Louis Park were promised when the co-location and relocation were looked at, would be that the two routes would be compared equally and we look at the elimination of the four co-locations options that according to the slides from the meetings on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> were eliminated primarily because of property takes and above grade structures. So we can't understand in St. Louis Park why Brunswick Central is not eliminated. I understand the FTA letter so we don't need to hear that. But, what I'm wondering is, to be compared equally there should be a Kenilworth option that includes property takes and/or an above grade structure in case for some reason the tunnels cannot be engineered properly. We need to be treated equally and either the Brunswick Central needs to be eliminated or another option needs to be added to Kenilworth.
- iv. Art Higinbotham: The deep bore tunnel which is only recently been considered by the project office provides a solution for St. Louis Park, it means the freight rail doesn't have to be relocated, we can live with it, it is there on a temporary basis and we would hope that the regional rail authority would continue to look at that. It solves the problem for Kenilworth because we don't know what's happening; it is going underground for the same length as the airport tunnel. The only barrier is your cost estimate. \$320 - \$330 million dollars that compares with under \$100 million dollars, inflation adjusted, for the same length tunnel under a runway at the airport. At last week's meeting in Minneapolis, you said that the reconstruction of the Lake Street bridge would be \$8 million dollars that leaves \$312-\$322 million dollars for other stuff. We are at a loss to explain where you get those numbers and we would

appreciate details because the deep bore tunnel solves problems for both communities.

- v. Jami LaPray: I agree with that, we are just concerned that if engineering can't happen that St. Louis Park will be the only fallback position.
- vi. Art Higinbotham: Deep bore tunnels are common around the world, the Norwegians can do it, the Swiss can do it, the Japanese did it from (Honchu [sp] to Tikodo[sp]) and we should be able to do it here. The question is why it is such a high cost. Can I get an answer first.
  - a. Jim Alexander: A couple of answers, so a deep bore tunnel as we are suggesting, a deep bore tunnel we believe also from a technical perspective the deep bore tunnel is a doable option. We don't see any from a constructability perspective a fatal flaw in it. As for the cost Art, I'm not going to be able to go through all the numbers, but we have taken a look at the final cost for the tunnel that goes under the airport and the station, and at the end of the day we understand it is about \$115 million for that contract and that is based on the last pay voucher that we obtained that went us and the contractor. So if you were to escalate that, that was 2001 dollars up to 2015 when we anticipate awarding the contract, we also apply contingencies, the design fees that gets up to a fairly high number. Also there are other factors that contribute to our \$320 million, we are suggesting that under our scenario the West Lake Street Bridge needs to come out and a station needs to be submerged, so that's part of the cost. There is also other things that are tied to that deep bore tunnel, as they are tied to the shallow tunnel in terms of the cost of train tracks that need to be swapped, there is a delta for the type of track we would have in a tunnel versus at-grade, there are ped bridges that I spoke of that will go over Beltline and over Penn. There are other factors that go into that number that we calculate for both deep bore and shallow.
- vii. Art Higinbotham: The \$115 million updated for the airport includes the station at the airport. Here if we move this north of the West Lake Street Station, didn't have to reconstruct the West Lake Street Bridge, didn't have to put the Station underground, you have a cheaper scenario than you have at the airport and you're estimating three times the cost. How is that?
- viii. Vida Ditter: This is just a statement of my personal thoughts after some 10 years of advocating for the SWLRT and specifically for Penn and Van White stations. I've also been a strong supporter of re-location from the Kenilworth Corridor. When I first started working on this project – Hennepin County assured us that the freight rail would not be an issue, because it would not be in the Kenilworth Corridor. After lots of public meetings and deliberations in the CAC, the Preferred alignment was through the Kenilworth Corridor with stops at Penn and Van White, and with relocation of the freight line to St. Louis Park (supposedly, we were assured, this was the agreement with St. Louis Park back in 1993). With St. Louis Park so vehemently opposed to relocation, the Feds demanded that the SWLRT re-examine the issue of freight relocation and that the cost for the reexamination would be paid out of SWLRT funds. The newest study both set price and alternatives – 2 choices in St. Louis Park with loss of homes and businesses and 6 options in the Kenilworth Corridor, with no loss of houses, but with loss of aesthetics of a Corridor that has taken some 20 years to build. In an interview on MPR this past Friday, July 19th, I think, Susan Haigh, chair of Met Council was interviewed. At the end of the interview, she indicated that her personal preference was the shallow tunnel alternative, though this was in no way binding on other Met Council members when they make their final alignment choice. The shallow tunnel is a travesty of the Kenilworth corridor as we know it today. It is the worst

possible alternative as it reroutes users for the duration of the construction of the tunnel. No one from Hennepin County lied to us when we were told that the freight was not an issue for us to consider. And no one in Met Council is lying when they say that a decision on freight has not been made. We are here today with these choices because events have led us here, not design. It seems to me that if the SWLRT project can redo the Eden Prairie alignment to offer 3 alternatives to the Preferred alignment (and swallow the cost), because that would help that City the most with its development plans – with no risk to the entire project moving forward and without having to do extensive explanations to the Feds. And, if 8 options to the relocation/co-location can be developed and the costs swallowed by the project – then it should be possible to examine closely where else the freight line can be routed to (Freight in the Kenilworth corridor was not a part of the original SWLRT plan, so it should not matter to the Feds where it is relocated to) and should not jeopardize moving forward with the project. It seems to me that, at this point, there are only two ethical alternatives for moving forward – the step that would make right all the assumptions under which I and many others made choices on this line. The first of these is to do one more study. Look around very carefully and see if there is another line that would/could accommodate the freight line, so that it could be relocated out of the Kenilworth Corridor, and not to St. Louis Park either. And, if that doesn't work, The second ethical alternative would be to choose the deep tunnel alternative, regardless of cost, and if it is more expensive than currently determined, bite the bullet and pay the cost, but continue with the deep tunnel. These two choices have the merit of supporting the information provided by Hennepin County and Met Council to the thousands of folk who came to public meetings and worked on the various CACs and BACs. And even as I advocate for the deep tunnel, I will continue to argue strongly for a Penn Avenue Station and a Van White Station. Penn Avenue to accommodate the citizens of Bryn Mawr who do not need another transportation line going through the gut of their neighborhood without giving them access to that transportation and because it is the only station that is a destination station – the gateway to the Grand Rounds in the north. And Van White, because new development in the Bassett Creek Valley is dependent upon this station – to bring residents to and from jobs in the western half of the Twin Cities. Thank you for listening to me.

- ix. Matt Flory: I'm not sure I understood the questions that came earlier, I got the impression those property takings and unsightly structures were criteria for elimination of some of the co-location options, did I get that right?
  - a. Jim Alexander: Yes, there were several considerations.
- x. Matt Flory: Would you agree that the Brunswick Central will have property takings and potentially unsightly structures?
  - a. Jim Alexander: As we've laid out the designs, we acknowledged that there will be property acquisitions for that and the final form would be a bridge or berm up at 19 feet or so above the existing grade.
- xi. Matt Flory: You do understand why there's some questions about people treatment, if clearly property takings is one of the criteria or some of the criteria acknowledged are property takings and unsightly structures. Yet the St. Louis Park relocation might have property takings and unsightly structures but one is taken off the table before we even get through the public meeting process and the other community stays on, so it's sort of like property takings do not matter in St. Louis Park, do the unsightly structures not matter in St. Louis Park, does municipal consent even matter?
  - a. Jim Alexander: I would say they all matter

- xii. Matt Flory: That's just not the way I feel and I'll tell you quite honestly as a member of the CAC, I have changed my perspective through the process because I just don't feel like it's being heard and that may not be how it's intended but when you acknowledge at the public meetings that you took some options off of the table because of property takings to a community where you're going to be doing property takings with one of the options still on the table, it is really difficult to have a conversation where everybody really feels that their equal.
  - a. Council Member Munt: On behalf of myself as a Met Council member and my colleagues, municipal consent matters a whole lot. And it's our goal that we can work together with the cities to find a solution that is going to work. We looked at this two agency project folks, Hennepin County and the Met Council worked together for the past decade on 30 different alignments before getting to a locally preferred alternative. And there are folks who are saying let's go back to the drawing board. We want to work with everybody so we don't have to go back to the drawing board and we want to find a solution for Minneapolis that works for St. Louis Park that works for the neighbors along the line and I believe that with all the strong minds around this table we can get there. So I respect the process and I'm going to honor what I hear today. I know everybody here, comes here because you love your community, and because we need to work together to find a way to make sure this project goes forward.
- xiii. Kathryn Kottke: Vida I loved your statement but St. Louis Park never accepted relocation and I know that because I was part of the group that looked for a place where that was in writing. So I'm sorry that you were mis-lead. My request is, I respectfully request that the Brunswick Central, actually that both the relocation options be taken completely off the table. I think that it has been made to those of us in St. Louis Park that we have not been treated at the same level of respect and courtesy as the folks in Kenilworth and I think that St. Louis Park would be very happy to support Minneapolis with the deep bore tunnel. But I have a hard time sitting here listening to this tonight when we've been so clearly mistreated.
- xiv. Jami LaPray: I would like to add to that, the cost here do not include any type of mitigation. The St. Louis Park city council made a list of things that had to be fixed before they would even consider Brunswick Central and that needs to be taken into account when we talk about the cost. That goes to our point about the deep tunnel being expensive, if you're going to add up another \$75 or \$100 million in mitigation that's going to have to come from somewhere other than St. Louis Park. It's not 190 to \$200 million there's a whole other chunk of money that needs to be added to that cost which makes the Brunswick Central an inappropriate choice. So it needs to be taken off the table completely.
- xv. David Greene: So I was hoping to wait until they presented the total cost but its late and I have a baby to pick up. I went to both open houses, I think I have enough information so, ISAI AH isn't taking a formal position on this issue so this is my personal opinion subject to change with more information. I want to acknowledge that it is a really difficult problem with no easy solution and please understand that I'm putting these comments out in the spirit of working towards a solution. I'm basing this on the information we have, if that changes dramatically then I will re-evaluate. We would love to spend as much to please everybody but that's not possible. So I've had a lot of conversations with people since the open houses and I want to say there is a lot of talk outside this room and outside the open houses about acceptable costs to accommodate bikes and parks and all that, that doesn't necessarily represent my view of the situation but it is what people are saying. And I want to acknowledge that with tunnels the project is really bending over backwards to accommodate the parks and

bikes in a corridor that was previously reserved for transportation and that's just how I see it. And in my mind, avoiding property acquisition should be our priorities here. So it seems like a good compromise solution, it is not perfect but I think it is workable. \$100 million is a lot to spend, I'm ok with that, but I think we should seriously consider the shorter tunnel that is out there.

- xvi. Rolf Peterson: The Brunswick Central plan does not include mitigation to the extent that would be needed to mitigate noise. And the other thing I want to really make sure that people understand about St. Louis Park is the property impacts and what affect that is going to have on the school district, in the letter that I hope that everybody in the project office has had a chance to read. Taking that number of businesses and homes out of our tax base really spreads it out to everybody else and we talked earlier about that impact to Hopkins is going to feel with having the OMF there. It is going to be the same thing in St. Louis Park and I really think that needs to be looked at very carefully and the other thing I want to say is to Matt's point. I've had conversations with school board members subsequent to last Thursday night and they asked you know, I don't know how you do this and present the slides that were presented about property impacts and unsightly structures to a person, they asked what do they mean by that and I simply cannot defend that.
- xvii. Vicki Moore: I just want to make sure we don't lose sight of the big picture, this is all very important details and information. But I'm just going to ask from a show of hands, how many people live in a household without a car. We can't really describe this as a transit oriented group but there are people that are going to people that are going to ride this LRT that may not have a car, they may not be able to support car insurance or gasoline. This route opens the door for educational opportunities, for jobs and we have to keep that in mind. People who will be riding this train, it opens the door for many people. I believe that we have the brain trust and the creativity to solve whatever problem. Nobody in this room wants to shut those doors. I was in, we do small house meetings in our neighborhood, and one of the moms said oh you mean I can take LRT with my kids and get out and they can go to daycare in Eden Prairie and I can go to work out there and I don't have to worry about them being in the city at daycare while I'm in Eden Prairie working at United Health or someplace else and the answer to that is yes. The kids in my neighborhood can go to the schools in St. Louis Park without having to leave at 4:30 in the morning and take four buses to get to school. So we have to use our collective experience and intelligence and creativity and solve some problems. Southwest LRT is important to all of us in the room and we can't get caught up in details and need to get this together.
- xviii. Art Higinbotham: I would like to speak about the problems with the shallow tunnel of the LRT. Everybody has a hand out. Neil Trembley talked about the number of trail users, with the shallow tunnel they wouldn't be able to use the corridor for two years during construction. In addition to putting the underpass at the Cedar Lake Parkway you'd have loads of [?] and traffic backups throughout the lakes area would increase significantly. The tunnel will return to grade at the channel, we talked about three bridges over the channel in a historic area and an area that has a lot of canoe and kayak traffic. The deep tunnel would not cause that. During construction there going to be visibility, noise, vibration, and exhaust fumes for the residential property in Kenilworth as there would be in St. Louis Park. During construction, there will be limited access of emergency fire, medical, police service for portions along Cedar Lake. There's going to be a safety issue for children who live in the neighborhood with the open excavation for a shallow tunnel. This will not be the case with a deep tunnel. A number of other issues but I won't go into those, there listed but the bottom line is the project office should find a way to reduce the cost of the deep tunnel to a

competitive level with the airport so that it can take care of St. Louis Park's relocation problems and our problems with co-location at-grade or near grade.

- xix. Neil Trembley: I want to speak just a little bit about in response to David's remarks about the trail, less about parks, but what I heard you say was that there's a lot of concerns about spending on trails and parks and that the corridor was always a transit corridor. It is a transit corridor now. Those trails are transit. People use those trails to go to work all the time. The commuters are out there all the time and that is what we want. As much as we want them to get out of their cars and get on to the LRT we want people to bicycle and walk to work. We want to reduce the combustion and that's what's happening on those trails. That is one of the reasons why [inaudible] because I love bicycles and I use those trails all the time when I go to work. And so I think you need to realize that trails are a form of transit, a big form, and that thousands of people and we hope more and more as a percentage will use them. Both going into the city and reverse commuting to other places. I just, I kind of want just sort of bring that up. I guess I kind of heard more of the idea of it being recreational obviously it is used as recreational. Secondly, I want to say that the Kenilworth corridor, I think everybody along, I should clarify, Cedar Lake Park Association has been involved with the LRT for many years. I think it's fair to say that there was a pretty good idea that the LRT was going to come down the Kenilworth corridor. It had been a transit corridor since 1867, it just makes sense. That said, I think that many people along the Kenilworth corridor would say the LRT is a lot to take. The 250 trains a day. Now whether you put a deep tunnel in or a shallow tunnel that puts you through the little area Art, you still got them. And so when it comes up that Kenilworth corridor is going to be facing having the LRT, two tracks, lots of visuals, lots of noise, lots of trains going up and down, I think there's a fairness issue that the Kenilworth people see that also having the freight rail, which we were promised whether mistakenly, whether or not it was true that there was a piece of paper. I heard that there is. The fact is that we were promised that if the LRT comes down the freight would be removed. And so I think that a lot of people in Kenilworth see that as well take the LRT but we would like the freight relocated. Where it would be relocated is not an issue for us, we just want it relocated. Because it's going to be lots of traffic. It's going to change the park, Cedar Lake Park. It's going change that corridor and I think we need to now look at amenities as a vital part of what makes this city so unique. Makes this city so beautiful. I see people come here from California and ride the trails and go I can't believe you have something like this. It's a treasure folks and we really need keep it.
- xx. Bill James: I've been in these meetings for the better part of pushing seven years. Been learning as we go. I was an early adopter of riding transit. I grew up in the city of Chicago. Took my first subway ride when I was four years old. And used that train to get pretty much around the city and places like Wrigley Field to go to baseball games, to the parks which are phenomenal in the city of Chicago. So I believe a little bit of what Vicki said, I would really be thrilled in David's gets to ride the train to the University of Minnesota someday. I think that's a real neat scenario and I think it's also great that when he graduates he gets to one of the outstanding businesses that will be on this line, since 60,000, I'm not talking living wage jobs, 100,000 a year plus jobs. Specifically in the southwest quadrant towards SuperValu, United Healthcare and all the other employers. I also echo Kathryn and Jami's sentiments that the Brunswick option needs to come off the table and here is why. It feels to me like it is a, I'm sitting on death row and still listening to the gallows be built and so I can't get my head through into the next place where I need to be. Which is how do I build a transit line the fulfills all those other provisions I have for David's son going to school and a great job thirty years down the line. So I understand why that relo option is still



sitting there, you have to objectively present to the FTA that you've looked at co-lo options and relo options. But ultimately, the relocation option that is sitting there in my opinion has to be removed from the discussion. We can talk about the cost, we can talk about the complexity, we can talk about engineering, all very good valid subjects. At the end of the day, we will hate ourselves if we run that train through St. Louis Park, a freight train through St. Louis Park just to get light rail in. Trust me, you will hear that barking dog for sixty plus years, why did we do that, why was that the only option we looked at. So sincerely I implore the Met Council and the Southwest Project Office, you guys are doing phenomenal engineering and phenomenal analysis. We have to interject some of the human element into the discussion. Some rationalization needs to take place so that we make the right decision for David's son's kids. I'm looking out that far, two generations out.

- xxi. Curt Rahman: I want to say I agree with [?] and I want to talk about the human side of it. I attended the Minneapolis cost projection meeting. Jennifer, you were there obviously, the entire room was upset about having 220 trains a day, 250, whatever the number is, at-grade coming through Kenilworth corridor. It's a massive increase from whatever the freight traffic is today to add 220 trains to the corridor at-grade. So I just want to point out that if we spend 200 million dollars and co-locate the freight rail in St. Louis Park, move those five trains over to St. Louis Park, build a twenty foot wall down the middle of St. Louis Park, spend 200 million dollars to do it, you get 220 trains a day at-grade in Kenilworth corridor, so nobody's happy, it's a lose-lose. Minneapolis loses, all the trains are at-grade, St. Louis Park loses and the light rail probably loses because you spend 200 million dollars to make everybody unhappy.
- xxii. Asad Aliweyd: I would like to say that I think we have to think more about the potential benefit that Southwest light rail presents. Look at what is the ultimate goal of this project. Transit, jobs. We have to look at the best alternative but we also need to talk about the economic development and the potential benefit to communities. The workshops that we are doing in Eden Prairie around Southwest Station, Twin Cities LISC and New American Academy have come up with what we call [?] to focus on housing and jobs. We get about 50-60 people together and ask questions, what do want to see light rail bring to the community, what could be accomplished in the community at-large, what do we need to make the light rail work. So I think we need to look at potential added value to our neighborhoods and just look at the benefits.
- xxiii. John Erickson: I think that either tunnel option can work in the corridor. Because, frankly you take the issue of off St. Louis Park by keeping the freight in the corridor. I think there is a minor problem because there is co-location for a portion of that corridor and I think that with the right kind of adjustments between where the tunnel starts and the West Lake Street Bridge there is ways to correct that. So I think either one of those is a possibility. I think the one thing that's happened in Minneapolis, that I've seen, is that there's been an erosion of trust in the process and also an erosion of trust, depending on who you talk to, about what's being said. And I think that if that trust level was a little different there would be less of a concern here tonight. That may be just a part that's endemic to the process, something that we can't get over, something in the nature of the differences in us. I just wanted to lay that out, that those options have possibilities and underscore the notion of having it done right. Because I think there is paranoia about what your definition of done right and our definition of done right that somebody needs to work on. And the last point that I think some people have forget is that when the route selection process was going through the only person that voted against the Kenilworth corridor was the representative from the city of Minneapolis. All other 19 or 20 delegates of that committee voted for the Kenilworth corridor. We knew at that time that if the

Kenilworth corridor was not selected, that the freight rail would continue in the Kenilworth corridor even if we thought it was on a temporary basis, we presumed, the presumption was made in error that it would happen. And our assumption was that if we had a different route selection that particular issue might not be permanent. For whatever its worth.

- xxiv. Kathryn Kottke: St. Louis Park we were told we were not allowed to talk about the freight that that was something we couldn't consider in the DEIS, that it was something they were kicking down the road. We were never told that freight would come to St. Louis Park. Never ever.
- xxv. Kathy Cobb: I have probably a really stupid question. I want to know if you've truly, truly exhausted all alternative relocation route options. I mean are we stuck, is this relocation the only relocation in St. Louis Park.
- a. Jim Alexander: We've taken what we feel is a very concerted effort to try to understand from a technical perspective, I'm an engineer, I was charged with coming up with relocation designs and co-location designs per the FTA direction as we got into PE and so that's what we have done. We are working closely with the railroads to understand what can be done. Railroads expressed a lot of concern with the design in the DEIS. And we tried to modify that as much as possible to make that work, we couldn't do it. The reverse curves both horizontal and a lot of up and down, the railroads do not accept that. As we understand, it is not that we want to bow to the railroads, but we need to go through the Surface Transportation Board to approve that process and that's just a fact. So the railroads will have to buy off on whatever those changes may be. And so from a technical perspective we tried to come up with a technical, viable, admittedly it will go through some homes and businesses, but from a technical perspective we've come up with the West and Central designs to meet the railroads needs. There's been discussions about why not take the freight and reroute them somewhere else and again the railroads would have to agree to that for one and it's just putting the problem in another area. In this urban environment it's a challenge, it's a huge challenge to locate whether it is freight track or LRT track through an urban environment.
- xxvi. Kathy Cobb: I understand that, I guess I'm just thinking that the city is just ripe with old railroad pathways and tracks. And I'm just wondering if there was something that west and then south that would not hit such an urban core, but I guess you have exhausted, your answer is you have exhausted all alternatives, that is all I wanted to know.
- xxvii. Kandi Arries: We're all here today, we're all sharing our concerns and thoughts. My question is the next step is, where to go, what is the format of this information and how will you present this information to the decision-making bodies. This information as it is presented tonight and then the information as it was presented at the open houses it is so general that it takes such a working knowledge of these issues and these problems for someone to understand what is the underlying problems, so I want to know how you are taking that to Corridor Management and how you are taking it to the decision making bodies? And going back to, I just want to point out a couple of things from the open house. Things that were mentioned that we're concerned about, impacts or weaknesses being discussed in Minneapolis and not being put as a weakness or a problem in St. Louis Park. During the open house you gave us information, you said the deep bore LRT tunnel includes the risk of potential settlements to adjacent buildings, why is that not listed in St. Louis Park? Another one I noticed at the meeting yesterday is that the LRT, one of their weaknesses, for the

LRT in the tunnel is it requires a temporary detour of the bike path, why is that not an impact for St. Louis Park listed in the open house?

- a. Jim Alexander: What we did was we tried to take the individual options that were out there to understand the strengths and weaknesses. Obviously, we are not going to be able to capture all of them on a slide. But I will say in terms of how the council will make the decision, and I'll offer to have Council Member Munt to expand on this, is that as we have been moving through this process we have been working to get everybody updates such as yourself on the CAC, the BAC folks, the Corridor Management Committee, our Met Council, we have been regularly updating. So I think that the council members that have also participated in the open houses understand the issue between co-locate and relocate options that we've been putting forward. That folks have been brought along so that when that decision is going to be made these folks are well informed of the issues at hand. The power point we put together tonight was more of a summary level, as you can see we have a lot of slides, in the hopes that most of the group around here understand the issues we've been talking about. We're not necessarily trying to mask over anything just more of a summation here. Obviously, if I'm going to inquiry from all you folks we'll have a different series of strengths and weaknesses for all of those options depending on your perspective. We just try to take an unbiased look at each of the options.
- xxviii. Kandi Arries- Right now we're here today and there are issues even now with some of this information with it not being true comparison and you're going to take this to the decision making body and there's still mistakes, there's still flaws, and so maybe we need to still discuss this and talk about it and give it more time before it goes to the decision making bodies.
- a. Council Member Munt- Jim, maybe I can help with this, first of all what Jim is saying folks is absolutely true. When we give these presentations we don't give different presentations to different audiences. What ends up happening is when Jim gives you guys the presentation it is the same presentation he gives later to the Corridor Management Committee and to the Met Council. Now, if there are things wrong in those presentations, offer those to us in your comments and what we're going to do after tonight is we're going to type up everything we've heard tonight. It will take Sophia at least a half an hour to go through everything she's written down tonight. We don't have time for that, so what we're going to do is type it up, we're going to send it out to you and we're going to ask you did we miss anything. Are there things you want to add for the decision makers to see. Did we misinterpret anything you said and then we'll fix that. And that document will go to the Corridor Management Committee on August 7 and it will be shared with all of my Met Council colleagues. And I also want you guys to know, my inbox is plum full from community members, my colleagues are getting the same emails, I know because their carbon copying me. We're reading our emails, we're really listening. What we understand that the comments that come from around this table carry a heck of a lot of weight because there are people in this room who have been following this for a decade. You understand these issues inside and out and offer your comments in a thoughtful and are really well informed. We want to make sure we get that document right and you have a chance to look at it before we send it on to the Corridor Management Committee. And I want you to know we are going to honor everything that every person in this room has offered tonight. Your input is going to make sure that this light rail line is a better light rail line and I truly believe all of us can work together; we can reach a solution that everyone can live with.

xxix. Steve Cramer: I want to make a comment and ask a question. I make a comment as someone who doesn't live in St. Louis Park or Kenwood and whose main interest in this the Twin Cities and the economic and policy opportunities of this line and the overall regional economy that will occur. I think that if it ultimately happens that one or the other or both communities will not be satisfied if we clear the floor of all those larger regional benefits. That's my perspective on it, so from that perspective I guess my question is now that a new cost base has been established for this project do you guys believe in your professional opinion that somewhere within that range this project becomes uncompetitive for FTA funding. Because to me that is the important question as to where you end up on the various options.

- a. Chris Weyer: Council Member you know that is part of the mental discussions we are hopefully having on cost. It leads into it as far as what the total project cost are, I don't if you want continue this or get into that. That is up to Chairs how you want to handle but that is absolutely something we want to talk about.
- b. Will Roach: The building has graciously extended for us but the unfortunate reality is we need to be out of here in five minutes, the building needs to shut down.

#### **4. Summary of BAC and CAC Comments**

Summary of BAC and CAC comments did not occur because of time. Summary to be sent out to members via email.

#### **5. Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

#### **Next Meeting:**

- **BAC: Wednesday, August 28, 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM, Southwest Project Office**
- **CAC: Thursday, August 29, 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM, Southwest Project Office**