



**Blue Line Extension Corridor Management Committee
Hennepin County Rockford Road Library
6401 42nd Avenue North
Crystal, MN 55427
Minutes of the May 12, 2016 Meeting**

Present: Chris Berne, Denise Butler, Gary Cunningham, Adam Duininck, Meg Forney, Rich Gates, Linda Higgins, Barb Johnson, Scott McBride, Mike Opat, Marika Pfefferkorn, Lona Schreiber, George Selman, Andy Snope, Peter Wagenius, Denny Walsh, Tim Willson

Not in Attendance: Jim Adams, Adam Arvidson, Pat Bursaw, Kate Catron, Gail Dorfman, Myron Frans, Shep Harris, Betsy Hodges, Jeff Kolb, Brian Lamb, Jeffrey Lunde, Peter McLaughlin, Regan Murphy, Jon Olson, Olga Parsons, Shaun Pearce, Scott Schulte, Aasim Shabazz, Liz Wielinski

1. Call to Order-Chair Duininck welcomed everyone and convened the meeting at 1:40 PM.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 14, 2016

Chair Duininck asked the committee to review the meeting minutes from the April 14, 2016 meeting and asked if there were any edits. Commissioner Higgins made the motion to approve the minutes; Committee member Snope seconded the motion. Meeting minutes were approved.

3. Chair's Update

Chair Duininck stated he was at the Capital this morning and there is momentum on the transit bill. Chair urges everyone at the table to keep phone calls and emails coming to the capital in support of the project. Chair is cautiously optimistic that the bill will go forward soon. Chair Duininck congratulated the City of Brooklyn Park for hitting the 80,000 person mark in the recent census update.

4. Safety and Security: Metro Transit Police Department – Dan Soler

Mr. Soler apologized that the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) is unable to present today due to a conflict. The MTPD has previously presented at the CAC and BAC committee meetings and Mr. Soler asked for feedback from Chris Berne, Chair of the CAC. Mr. Berne stated he thought the presentation was an excellent program and would be good for the CMC to have it presented.

5. Highway 81 Pedestrian Crossings at Bass Lake Road and 63rd Avenue - Dan Soler

Mr. Soler provided update on the Hwy 81/Bass Lake Road and the 63rd Avenue intersections. At the Bass Lake Road intersection, Hennepin County plans to implement improvements in 2016 that include a wider median, adding a pedestrian button in median, and keeping at-grade crossings. The issues are being addressed now because they are a problem, preceding the eventual pedestrian bridge determination. Tonight BPO staff meets with the Crystal City Council at a work session on various issues in design, and hope to bring a final recommendation back to the CMC.

Mayor Adams commented that the City of Crystal is not totally comfortable with the scope at this



time. Mayor Adams expressed concern about maintenance of this intersection and hopes to address these concerns tonight, working with Hennepin County and project staff.

Committee member Denise Butler asked for the statistics on existing pedestrian counts and projected pedestrian counts after project is completed. Mr. Soler did not have the numbers immediately available and will follow up with Ms. Butler and her request.

Mr. Soler discussed the recent April 26 Brooklyn Park pedestrian tour. Slides reviewed included the pedestrian bridge in Columbia Heights (built in 2011) that is owned by MnDOT and maintained by the City of Columbia Heights. Elevators were once considered but eliminated due to maintenance concerns. The pedestrian bridge is used fairly heavily with a number of schools in area.

Mr. Soler discussed the 66th and France intersection improvements. The pedestrian bridge project was awarded regional solicitation funds; at-grade improvements were constructed instead. Lanes were narrowed, wider crosswalks set back from intersection, median was widened and push buttons and decorative lighting were added. The tour provided the community members an opportunity to visualize plans and options.

Earlier this week an open house was held with the community and a technical presentation as given to the Brooklyn Park City Council. When community meetings and community outreach are completed, BPO will bring recommendations to the CMC that will include pedestrian crossing improvements with construction costs estimate (at-grade/bridge) and recommendations for operations and maintenance responsibilities.

6. Noise Walls - Kathryn O'Brien

Ms. O'Brien reviewed slides of noise walls and discussed the difference between retaining walls as a noise barrier vs. noise barrier only examples. Approximately 50% of noise walls will be part of the structures built in place (retaining walls) that will be used as base for noise barrier where possible. The advanced analysis indicates noise walls are needed in Golden Valley, Robbinsdale and Crystal as explained in slides.

Councilmember Snope asked to clarify plans at the west side of June Avenue and where the wall will be located.

Ms. O'Brien stated there will be a crash wall that will be used as a noise barrier; a crash wall hybrid. There are two homes in that area that will be impacted by noise.

Councilmember Snope asked about the other direction heading towards Golden Valley, and will there be plans to help with noise.

Ms. O'Brien stated after working closely with Three Rivers Park District and the cities affected, and as with the design for Sochacki Park, plans are in place to add vegetative buffers in the event it is needed.

Committee member Murphy asked if there will be additional conversations regarding noise walls.

Ms. O'Brien stated as they go forward in the design process, conversations around design materials, what they are made of, what they will look like, will be communicated. For the Plymouth Avenue station, after looking at engineering plans it was found not to be a cost effective strategy, so they are



looking at other mitigation alternatives.

Mayor Murphy asked when the walls go up, during or after construction of LRT, prior to start of operation of the LRT.

Mr. Soler responded, saying they could be built prior to the track build as long as they are not in the way. They are not there to mitigate construction noise, but noise during construction is addressed as part of a separate discussion. Mr. Soler offered to have a work session on this and other topics the Mayor and city council may have.

Chair Duininck asked Mr. Soler if the noise walls were included in the original scope and budget.

Mr. Soler stated the project was not at the level of design at that time to understand what noise walls would be needed. This will be addressed at a future CMC meeting.

7. Design Updates – Jim Toulouse

Jim Toulouse provided updates on the Traction Power Substations and Systems (TPSS) elements. The signal bungalows and grade crossing bungalows were reviewed in slides and are currently part of the Green Line in St. Paul as well as along Blue Line. The plan is to use Metro Transit/Met Council property first for bungalows and then the property of stakeholders, cities and county land. There are no plans in place to remove any property for these bungalows at this point. Mr. Toulouse discussed fencing and screening and provided slides addressing the locations along the line. There are 15 traction power substations; down from 17 in the corridor. There are 15 signal bungalows and 12 grade crossing bungalows. Mr. Toulouse pointed out proposed locations of TPSS and bungalow locations in each city along the project route. The project office will continue to work with project stakeholders to finalize locations; develop site plans, and investigate fencing and screening options as design advances.

Commissioner Forney asked the placement/location in regards to Plymouth Avenue station are they on either side of tracks. Mr. Toulouse said the plan is tentatively set for the east side of tracks, adjacent to our station.

Commissioner Forney had a question about Kewanee Way and whose property is involved. Mr. Toulouse stated in regards to Kewanee Way, the Golden Valley ROW will be used at the south end of the cul-de-sac. Mr. Toulouse clarified the TPSS would not be on Park Board property.

Councilmember Gates asked about the proposed site on I-94 and Hwy. 81 (east side of tracks) and his concerns over it being extremely visible, and to identify a spot in that area that is less visible. He asked to be included in discussions over screening options in the future.

Mr. Toulouse stated that they have been working with the Brooklyn Park staff addressing their concerns that will be addressed at CMC in the future.

Mayor Murphy asked if there has been any consideration of wrapping TPSS when at all possible as done in Minneapolis particularly traffic signal cabinets.

Mr. Toulouse stated fencing at TPSS's is required for safety and that wrapping them would not be practical.

Mr. Soler clarified the TPSS structures which contain numerous access doors as to why wrapping



them would be impractical, and the difference with signal bungalows, which are buildings with one or two access doors. They will take suggestions of screening and wrapping under consideration.

Mr. Toulouse provided an update on the Golden Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway intersection discussions; which has been discussed with BAC/CAC members. . Based on BAC/CAC, MPRB, Hennepin County and Golden Valley feedback, a signalized intersection option will go forward and plans for a roundabout option will not be. The next steps are to receive public comments regarding design details at public meetings this summer.

9. 2016 Outreach Overview – Sam O’Connell

Sam O’Connell provided an update on the Outreach projects. There have been over 100 community events so far, and we continue to receive feedback on project elements from the public. The key topics that will continue to be discussed going forward are LRT operations, Safety and Security, Environmental process and Impacts to parks. Communications continue through the use of newsletters, the website and community outreach presentations.

Corridor-wide outreach activities involve discussions on station design, 30% civil design, park and ride design, traction power substations/signal bungalows and fencing and streetscaping. Open houses, community meetings and presentations, newsletters and city council presentations continue to keep the communities involved and up to date on project planning.

Community specific outreach activities continue to address roadway modifications, aesthetics, environmental testing, operations and maintenance facility design as well as meeting with property owners.

Commissioner Opat stated that the Brooklyn Park library will be opening in June and he asked that Outreach have permanent displays of the project available onsite.

Ms. O’Connell will proceed with the plans to have a project display at the new library.

10. BLRT Advisory Committee Updates – CAC/BAC Co-Chairs

Chris Berne, CAC Co-Chair, addressed callbox concerns for the visually impaired during the BLRT tour recently. Mr. Berne requests an audible signal for those riders. An existing concern was raised by residents in Brooklyn Park and Robbinsdale around residential property values. These two cities were not included in those positive assessments in the recent press release.

Chair Duinck asked whether the two cities were included in the study or if the values of those two cities did not have the same impact?

11. Meeting Schedule – MarySue Abel

MarySue Abel updated the committee on the upcoming project schedule. An update on the Project Scope will be on May 31 at the TPAC. CAC and BAC have a joint meeting on May 31 as well. Recommendation of the Project Scope and Budget will be brought to the next CMC on June 2. Action on the Project Scope and Budget will be held at the second June CMC meeting on June 23.

Over the next few months, there are meetings with CTIB on June 15 and HCRRA and June 21. There will be an update on the CMC recommendation of Project Scope and Budget July 12 with HCRRA, then with the Metropolitan Council on July 13, and with CTIB on July 20. The approval of Project



Scope and Budget by the Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee is August 8 followed by the Metropolitan Council on August 24. The Blue Line Extension project posts frequent updates on the website BlueLineExt.org.

Adjourn - Chair

Chair Duinick adjourned the meeting at 2:30 pm.

Next meeting: Thursday, June 2, 2016

1:30-3:00 pm

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