

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD  
Metropolitan Council  
390 N. Robert St., St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1805

Notes of a Meeting of the  
**TAC-PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
June 9, 2016

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Holly Anderson, Bob Byers, Jack Byers, Paul Czech, Jack Forslund, Lisa Freese, Elaine Koutsoukos, Michael Larson, Bridget Rief, Kevin Roggenbuck, Ann Terwedo, Katie White, Joe Barbeau

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Russ Owen, Neil Ralston (Metropolitan Airports Commission), Vince Anderson, Mary Rene Veirling, Dave Schultz (West Lakeland Township), Jonathan Ehrlich, and Mark Filipi

**1. Call to Order**

The Meeting was called to order by Freese

**2. Adoption of the Agenda**

White moved and Terwedo seconded adoption of the agenda. Item passed unanimously.

**3. Approval of the Minutes from the May 2016 Meeting**

White moved and Terwedo seconded approval of the minutes of the May 2016 meeting. Item passed unanimously.

**4. Action Items**

**2016-37: Lake Elmo Airport LTCP**

Russ Owen of the Metropolitan Council started the presentation of the item to the Committee. State statute requires Metropolitan Council review of long-term comprehensive plans (LTCPs) that impact adjacent development. An LTCP is a 20-year planning document required under the aviation planning process. The preferred alternative for the Lake Elmo Airport includes extension of the primary runway to 3,500 feet, which is able to be achieved with no property acquisition. It requires relocation of 30th Street North and wetland mitigation. The Metropolitan Council will determine conformity and consistency with Thrive MSP 2040 and the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP).

Neil Ralston of the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) continued the presentation, discussing the airport's role, plan alternatives, and next steps. He said that the 30<sup>th</sup> Street North realignment was met with resistance, leading to a shift in the runway alignment and a 100-foot length reduction.

Czech asked whether a more east-west alignment was considered, to which Ralston replied that wind conditions were not favorable for that option.

Roggenbuck asked who owns 30<sup>th</sup> Street North and whether that entity was included in public meetings. Ralston said that MAC owns the land on which the impacted section of roadway sits. Terwedo added that the road runs along the border between West Lakeland Township and Lake Elmo, which co-own it. Ralston said that those entities were included in the public meetings. Rief added that traffic on Neal Avenue was a concern and the design speed was made to be slow.

Jack Byers asked how many arrivals are unscheduled and whether most trips are for business or pleasure. Ralston replied that all arrivals are unscheduled and 10 to 15 percent of trips are business.

Terwedo said that Washington County is looking into expanding Manning Avenue to four lanes.

Freese invited citizens to address the Committee.

Vince Anderson asked that members read the full plan and not simply rubber stamp it, said that the plan is still a draft and not yet approved by MAC, and asked whether the Council process is open to comments. Rief said that the MAC Board has seen the draft plan and forwarded it to the Council; the MAC Board does not approve the plan until the Council does. Roggenbuck said that TAB and the Council have opportunities for public comment build into their agendas.

Veirling said that neighbors will continue to work with MAC and hope to come to a compromise.

Schultz, a West Lakeland Township Supervisor, said that the Township is opposed to the plan. Lake Elmo's Compressive Plan calls for the Airport to not be expanded. The land purchased in the 1960s was purchased through eminent domain. The current runway length probably would not be allowable today. No reduction in runway protection zones has occurred. The Baytown Township recommended at 3,280-foot runway.

Owen said that the Council will review the plan from the Thrive and TPP perspectives. The plan's purpose is to bring runways toward compliance with FAA standards.

Rief said that MAC will continue to review environmental elements of the plan and will continue to provide public input opportunities.

Jack Byers asked when the airport was established and when Lakeland Township was platted. Ralston said that the airport began operation in 1951. Terwedo said that the township was platted in the 1980s or 1990s.

Freese asked whether all environmental alternatives be carried forward into the environmental process. Rief said that is undecided, but likely several alternatives will be covered.

Jack Byers moved That TAC Planning recommend to TAC that the Final Draft Lake Elmo Airport 2035 LTCP conforms to the Council systems, is consistent with Council policies, and has a multi-city impact. White seconded the motion. Item passed unanimously.

## **5. Info Items**

### **Discussion of Activity Based Regional Model and 2018 Comprehensive Plan Update Traffic Forecasts, Part 3 – Jonathan Ehrlich**

Ehrlich presented the third part in a three-part series on the new activity-based model. He discussed local forecasting requirements; forecast coordination; and local options of using the Twin Cities Regional Travel Demand Forecast Model, a locally developed model or a trend analysis. The Transportation Research Board report, “Metropolitan Travel Forecasting,” acknowledges shortcomings in the travel forecasting industry, which the Council has tried to address. The new regional model breaks travel patterns into trips and produces a set of trips by such characteristics as mode and purpose.

Freese asked how transit route changes, which are more frequent than highway network changes, impact the model. Ehrlich responded that the Council uses the Transportation Improvement Program to update its network. The network is rebuilt every five to 10 years.

Roggenbuck asked for definitions of “synthetic population” and “tour.” Ehrlich replied that a tour is a collection of trips beginning and ending at the same location. Tours address the issue of recording non-home-based trips. Synthetic population is used to simulate choices made by every person.

Terwedo asked what the timetable is for the model to be available. Ehrlich replied that it should be ready in four to eight weeks.

Larson asked how much confidence there is in data off of the A-minor system. Bob Byers replied context is important; the Council is making choices about the principal arterials while locals need more details. Freese added that locals use the model for individual project decisions, though she questions the regional value. She said that her County would like to have one modeling effort with all of its cities. Ehrlich replied that the goal is to minimize the need for counties to develop models. Filipi added that expensive proprietary software is needed.

Freese said that she encourages the Council and MnDOT to facilitate public access so counties do not need to pay consultants too much money.

## **6. Adjournment**

Larson moved and Bob Byers seconded adjournment of the meeting. Item passed unanimously.