



METRO Blue Line Extension

Meeting of the Community Advisory Committee

Wednesday, June 2, 2021

6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Microsoft Teams Meeting

CAC Members: Kathy Fraser, Cory Funk, Jason Greenberg, Gene Montanez, PeggySue Imihy, Adam Hutchens, Ellis Beck, Brett Buckner, Catherine Fleming, Ellis Beck, Caroline Kalloh

Agency Staff and Guests: Sophia Ginis, Andrew Gillett, Jason Tintes, Cathy Gold, Dan Soler, Jim Voll, Joan Vanhala, Kerri Pearce Ruch, Kristine Stehly, Nick Landwer, Sam O'Connell, Trevor Roy, Liz Morice, Jeff Holstein, Sam King, Olufunso Oresanya

Meeting Summary

1. Call to Order/Welcome and Introductions

Sophia Ginis, Metropolitan Council, welcomed the group. Jason Greenberg called the meeting to order at 6:06p PM.

2. Adopt May 5, 2021, Meeting Minutes

Brett Buckner asked to approve the minutes. Jason Greenberg seconded, and the minutes were approved.

Sam O'Connell provided a project update about the status of the project from FTA. The FTA classified the project as under review. This is a new classification. The project is still rated as part of the New Starts funding process. Adam Hutchens asked if there is a budget limit. Sam O'Connell shared that the old budget was 1.53 billion. Funding is based on serving the communities and ridership.

Sam responded to Catherine Fleming's question about the overall project timeline; the project is not on the same time, previously it would have opened next year. Jason asked if the current infrastructure bill impacts the blue line project. Sam clarified that it could. They meet with FTA regularly and that is an opportunity to learn about these updates.

3. Anti-displacement Working Group Update

Sam O'Connell shared an update on the Request for Proposal (RFP) for a facilitator and subject matter expert for the Anti-displacement Working Group. Cathy Gold shared a timeline for the RFP and how the selection process will work. Sam shared information about the role of the facilitator and the purposes of the Working Group. She shared how the group will be connected to the advisory committees and the way BAC and CAC members will provide input in the selection. She identified the preferred characteristics of the facilitator candidates. Sam reviewed the tasks covered in the RFP. Sam shared next steps and welcomed feedback from the group. Jason Greenberg welcomed the discussion from the group and confirmed that feedback could be sent to Sam O'Connell and Sophia Ginis.



Catherine Fleming asked what the goal or benchmark for this group will be. Will they eliminate displacement? Sam O'Connell shared that the goal is that the people in this neighborhood can stay to enjoy the benefit the project. Catherine shared that she works with youth and the under 40 age group does not seem as concerned about this issue. She said that it would be good to have immediate impact for the over 40 age group, since the under 40 group is not as concerned about it and will be there beyond them. Sam O'Connell agreed that there are many ideas of displacement so this working group will be defining it. The group will also be responsible for identifying benchmarks for the work.

Sam O'Connell responded to Adam Hutchens' question about the local connection for this consultant. Sam said that it is a preferred qualification is to have a candidate with local experience. Catherine Fleming asked if it will be a requirement for compensation for community members. Sam said she appreciated that comment, and she does expect that this group will work with the community engagement cohort.

Cory Funk asked what the history of this group was and if this had been done on other projects. Sam O'Connell said that this is the first LRT project that has had this specifically, but they will be building on a lot of work done on this topic locally. Cory asked about the timeline for the deliverables. Is this timeline open to the proposer? Sam shared that this will be developed as part of their workplan in their proposal. Catherine Fleming said that putting on her community hat, she was concerned about the actionable items of this RFP. Where is the funding and action fitting in with this RFP? There may be needed auxiliary services for businesses owners (staffing, training etc.). Sam said that in part those will be provided by Hennepin County and the Met Council and partners. Sam said that what she is hearing is a need to see commitment from these partners. Sam said that the city is a huge partner as well. Cory said that he sees it firsthand from the perspective of the Southwest area. He said that it would be great to head off the issues they're experiencing and what you've heard from the past Green Line efforts. Brett Buckner said that this is a "both/and" situation. There are long term policies needed and short-term efforts. He said that he heard recently from a shop owner on Broadway who is completely opposed because they think they will lose access. This work is needed to create equitable outcomes. Jason Greenberg said that this RFP will focus on the longer-term solutions, but it does not feel like it will help with the immediate issues. Is there any way to have this also be an immediate contact for information as this moves forward? Sam identified that is part of this and further resources needed.

PeggySue Imihy asked a question about how the work of the Working Group would be phased. Could it begin on the Brooklyn Park side of the route? There is so much work to be done by the working group, and both routes might be stretching them. Sam O'Connell confirmed that they shared the concern of stretching the group too thin. PeggySue identified that if this were the cheapest possibility with the least amount of impacts it would be streetcar or BRT. LRT was chosen because it is an economic development tool. The changes will happen immediately when the route is chosen. Sam said that this could be part of the approach of the consultant and a question for them. PeggySue asked if the working group can have a head start. Sam said that it would not be in line with project principles to do that.

Catherine Fleming asked about the local connection and if the language could be stronger. Sam said and they need to be open to where they come from due to federal funding. Sam said that this is why they would like to have a proposal reviewer from the CAC as well. Sam reviewed the role of the selection committee and what they are looking for from the CAC. Kathy Fraser volunteered for this role. Jason Greenberg asked for an alternate. Cory Funk offered to be an alternate. Brett Buckner said that out of one concern about the process that someone from Zone 3 should be considered. Sophia Ginis said that the BAC selected Felicia Perry who is



from area 3. PeggySue Imihy offered to be alternate and is from Minneapolis. Cory confirmed that would be fine.

4. Summary of March-May Engagement Feedback

Sophia provided an update on recent engagement. She reviewed events in May. There will be a full report available in July. She shared some summary statistics. She shared the breakdown in types of comments received in each area of the comment map. She shared several design concerns and consideration. She shared feedback on changes to the routes offered by the public, including north 21st, Third or Lyndale to Lowry Avenue. Adam Hutchens asked when the final choice of route will be determined. What will be the next step after that in terms of more specific feedback? Sophia said that in the fall there will be a report and a 45-day official comment report after that. Then there will be a final report toward the end of the year that will have some recommendations. There will be official times to comment.

Jason Greenberg shared the perspective of Robbinsdale. He asked the feedback received on Lowry and West Broadway determined the route? Sophia Ginis said think about this as beginning the conversation. This question will be asked repeatedly with engineering and as impacts are evaluated. Catherine Fleming asked for clarification regarding the percent 13.48% who support other routes. Sophia said this was more a question of if people saw their preference. Where they heard the most about other routes was from people creating maps and emailing comments. For the most part people validated the two options.

5. LRT Station Placement Discussion

Nick Landwer, Metropolitan Council shared an introduction to station placement. He showed an overview of the stations planned for the former route and general thoughts about the number and placement of stations. He shared graphics to show where people have commented they would desire stations. Catherine Fleming asked about more detail of where the station preferences are, and Nick provided clarification. Nick shared some characteristics of a good station area. He showed some features of what would be provided at station areas for amenities and connections. Catherine shared past concern about the Van White station. Nick discussed pedestrian friendly design. Cory Funk asked about Golden Valley. Nick said they would still be involved. Adam Hutchens asked if there will be different versions drawn for stations. Nick said that there will be visualizations and graphics to show these. Adam asked what the connections for businesses would be if the rail was elevated. Nick, talked about elevated creating more challenges with access. Catherine asked what the biggest engineering challenge is. Nick said that the biggest challenges are minimizing impacts to the community and safety for riders and for the community.

Jason Greenberg asked for more feedback about Anti-Displacement or other comments. Cory Funk asked if they could include a review of projects like the Green Line and impacts locally. Sam O'Connell identified that it could be included in the policy audit section. Jason shared a proposed update on the meeting content to the CMC. Sam added a few suggestions including pacing and timing of the depth of study based on the phase of the project. Catherine Fleming suggested that residents be paid for their time. PeggySue Imihy agreed that providing something like gift cards or some compensation. Catherine suggested that there also be funding for the communities already impacted by this project and the funding for past project commitments.

6. In-person committee Meet & Greet: June 16

This conversation was tabled until July because people will have more time to get used to a more post-COVID world. The group discussed the delicate balance between giving an opportunity to doing in-person and waiting



until everyone felt comfortable. Catherine Fleming asked about touring the route. Sam O'Connell shared there might be an opportunity to see the station locations at that point.

7. Adjournment

Jason Greenberg thanked everyone for the great discussion and adjourned the meeting at 8:27 PM.

Chat:

from PeggySue Imihy to everyone: 6:07 PM

sorry my internet cannot handle having video on RIP.

from Jason Greenberg to everyone: 6:08 PM

Thanks for trying!

from Adam Hutchens to everyone: 6:10 PM

Budget limit?

from Catherine Fleming to everyone: 6:11 PM

Are we maintaining the same timeline?

from Jason Greenberg to everyone: 6:12 PM

Will the current infrastructure bill negotiations impact the blue line project?

from Ginis, Sophia to everyone: 6:28 PM

If anyone wants to follow along word for word, the full RFP is in your packet.

from Adam Hutchens to everyone: 6:34 PM

This person/group will have some local connection to the area not an out of state option correct?

from Kathy Fraser to everyone: 6:43 PM

Yes, I looked at it.

from O'Connell, Sam to everyone: 6:46 PM

Connect with me on your thoughts/comments: sam.oconnell@metrotransit.org

from Gene Montanez to everyone: 6:55 PM

Well said

from Adam Hutchens to everyone: 8:18 PM

June or July

from PeggySue Imihy to everyone: 8:20 PM

I couldn't meet sooner, but would meet in person on the

from PeggySue Imihy to everyone: 8:20 PM

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from H Ellis Beck to everyone: 8:21 PM

Sounds good!

from Cory Funk to everyone: 8:24 PM

I like the idea. And the West Broadway location to get a better view of the area.

from Adam Hutchens to everyone: 8:27 PM

Good night everyone I have to go.

from PeggySue Imihy to everyone: 8:27 PM

thanks everyone!

from H Ellis Beck to everyone: 8:27 PM

thanks all!