



Metropolitan Council

Brooklyn Center Community Center, 6301 Shingle Creek Parkway, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430

Meeting of the METRO Blue Line Extension Corridor Management Committee

March 12, 2015

Members Present:

Chair Adam Duininck	Gary Cunningham	Marika Pfefferkorn	Scott McBride
Aasim Shabazz	George Selman	Meg Forney	Scott Schulte
Andy Snope	Jeffrey Lunde	Mike Opat	Shaun Pearce
Barb Johnson	Jim Adams	Pat Bursaw	Shep Harris
Betsy Hodges	Jon Olson	Peter McLaughlin	Tim Willson
Brian Lamb	Linda Higgins	Regan Murphy	Kenya McKnight
Denise Butler	Lona Schreiber	Rich Gates	Mike Trepanier

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Adam Duininck called the March 12, 2015 meeting to order at approximately 1:20 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF February 19, 2015 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Linda Higgins made the motion to approve minutes. Council Member Lona Schreiber seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

3. ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Robin Kaufman began the presentation by going over the advisory committees and giving an update. We sent invitations to city staff and cities in January. Deadline for nominations was March 6th. We are still awaiting council meetings or appropriate approval processes, so hope to get those in the next few days. We would like to have our first joint kick-off meeting of the CAC/BAC on April 1st. Once we see the membership we will be appointing some At-Large Members to help fill out membership.

Recent large public meetings:

Golden Valley Road/Plymouth Avenue Station – over 150 people were in attendance. A short presentation was provided after which everyone broke out into small groups of about 8 people per table. A summary of the comments/concerns is shown in the presentation. Comments will also be posted on the web.

On March 4th, Maplebrook Townhomes held a meeting to present an overview of the project to their homeowners/community. A brief presentation was given followed by a Q&A session. Approximately 60 people attended.



On March 5th, West Broadway Road Construction/LRT Design – This meeting was held at the Hennepin County Community College where over 210 people attended. A short presentation was given, after which small groups were formed with staff. A questionnaire was presented for each group. Maps and photos were posted for attendees to view. Comments heard at this meeting will be posted on the web as well.

Commissioner Opat asked who we are talking to at St. Margaret Mary's. They are the biggest land owner nearby. It is important for us to make sure we are talking to the correct group of people who can make decisions about the property.

Ms. Caufman replied that Sophia Ginis, one of our outreach coordinators, has been working the Parish.

Ms. Ginis added that staff is meeting with the Parish's Board of Trustees next week Monday.

Council Member Snope added that a member of the Parish sits on the Golden Valley Advisory Committee and has for several years. They are involved at both levels.

Meg Forney added that as far as the CAC committee, there was an exclusion of the Minneapolis Park Board appointee.

Ms. Caufman apologizes for that oversight and said an invitation letter will be sent to President Wielisnki.

Council Member Snope added that Golden Valley has appointed two Community Advisory Committee members and one Business Advisory Committee.

Ms. Butler, stated that she noticed that Brooklyn Park does not have any representatives listed for the CAC or the BAC.

Ms. Caufman returns to the CAC/BAC nomination slide and clarified that the blank spaces were a gentle reminder that we still need names. Brooklyn Park will have three on the CAC.

Council Member Schreiber advised that she had attended the March 4th and 5th as it dealt with the North end of the line. There has been a lot of local concern because of the potential of takings and road widening that is occurring at the same time. I want to say thanks to the staff on the large meeting with 200+ folks. There were staff from Hennepin County, Brooklyn Park, and MetroTransit who all worked together to accommodate the people there. It was a very well run meeting, especially with the uncertainty that many people came with.

4. TECHNICAL ISSUE #2

Mr. Nick Landwer provided information regarding Olson Memorial Highway from the I-94 interchange to BNSF corridor. Highway 55 currently acts as a reliever from I-394 to the downtown and western suburbs. This section is currently a 6 lane road, with a 40 mph



speed limit, wide medians with trees, free right at eastbound Hwy 55 to southbound Lyndale Avenue and a network of frontage roads and alleys that run along the corridor. The roadway is perceived to be a barrier to pedestrians and non-motorized traffic due to the number of lanes, large lane widths, large intersections caused by lanes and widths, and causing a long distance pedestrians have to fully cross the intersection. Mr. Landwer then went through some slides in the presentation which showed photos of some of the areas of concerns/intersections.

We meet regularly through the issue resolution process with MnDOT, City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County to discuss the issues

Next we will seek input from BAC and CAC and plan to hold a community meeting this spring to discuss with the neighborhood and provide frequent updates to the CMC.

Council Member Snope noted that Minneapolis is included in the discussions and asked to include Golden Valley. Any restrictive efforts, whether it is putting a light at Thomas or reducing lanes will affect Golden Valley. Eastbound traffic right now will back up as far as Plymouth, the other side of 169. It is imperative to consider impacts to Golden Valley.

Mr. Landwer indicated we had reached out to Golden Valley. Our next IRT meeting includes Golden Valley staff. As we get traffic information, we will share it.

Mr. McBride noted that Highway 55 is a MnDOT Highway so I'd just like to acknowledge that we are fully engaged in this conversation. We are fully engaged in the IRT team, with a number of staff that are working on this. We have received some preliminary traffic information. We want to take a look at that and we have some questions on that and want to look further at that. A reduction in lanes will cause some congestion that doesn't exist today. That is clearly an issue for MnDOT. When you step back and look at 55, it is a very important piece of the regional system. It is a principal arterial from downtown Minneapolis to I-94 and 494, and at 494 it is a pretty intense regional job center. This presentation mentions the C Line ABRT on Penn, connect up with 55 and head into downtown. There is also a desire in the Western suburbs to create a bus rapid transit option on Highway 55. So a more congested 55 doesn't work well for transit. We are trying to weight all of these options. We do agree that a 6 lane highway is a barrier to pedestrians. We are just as concerned as anybody about that issue and want to work with the project team and try to figure that issue out. One thing I want to offer is that when we look at this stretch of Highway 55, we are looking at the design of the highway with LRT down the middle. We have these other regional transit pieces that are being talked about as potential plans. We have a ton of MnDOT owned land on the south side of this corridor. I don't think we have a vision for Highway 55. We really haven't talked about how we potentially might use that land or how that might change this corridor in the future. How transit might want to interact with that land, both this LRT line and these future potential RBRT. There are a lot of bigger regional questions that really ought to be answered with this. They all really come back to this 6 lane/4 lane question. We are fully engaged and look forward to continuing the conversation. We are getting good technical information from the project team and will continue to work with the team.



President Johnson noted that Olson Highway into downtown Minneapolis is convenient for a lot of people to get to work. I am very nervous about increasing congestion on that road. The other thing I want to say is that I think coming into Minneapolis after you go through Theodore Worth Park is a very pleasant experience because of all the green space. I really don't want to lose that in the long term. I was chatting with one of our former Mayors and he said the reason there is a lot of green space there is because the soils are really bad. There used to be a lot of houses there, but they were taken down because of soil conditions. We have a lot of thinking to do about what we want to see that street look like. I think we need to remember it is a major feeder to employment in our downtown and also as you come into Minneapolis it is a beautiful, pleasant experience and I don't want to lose that.

Mr. McBride responded to Commissioner Opat's question about what MnDOT's plans are for Highway 55. We really don't have any plans for Highway 55. It operates as part of the regional system and operates pretty well. We don't have anything in our 20 year/long range plan to do anything extraordinary to Highway 55. We are very open to work with the City, County and project team to try to create a future for Highway 55. This is the perfect vehicle to try to look at that. We are very open to be part of that conversation and we have no grand design for what Highway 55 should look like.

Chair Duinick mentioned that it is pretty clear that we need to take our time on this element of the project and be very engaged with the CAC, BAC and the CMC. I appreciate everyone's comments.

5. TECHNICAL ISSUE #7

Mr. Landwer advised that the next two issues will update the committee on stations. The first station is Bass Lake Road Station. Mr. Landwer talked about the progress of the design in this area.

This station is showing a center running platform with pedestrian and bike access to the area. By the station we are showing a loop with a few parking spots and a kiss and ride. We were asked to evaluate moving this station a little farther south from the current location. That layout didn't play out as well due to more difficult pedestrian access, not quite as visible from Bass Lake Road, coming off a bridge and getting back down to grade.

5. TECHNICAL ISSUE #11

Mr. Landwer continued with the 93rd Avenue (Park and Ride as shown in the DEIS) and the Oak Grove Stations. This configuration has the track coming up the center line along west Broadway, cross over to the location (by the park and ride). The train will cut back across all lanes to the west side of the road.



The DEIS showed the Park and Ride as assuming 800 spaces. This still needs to be confirmed as far as what is needed in the ridership modeling. That Park and Ride location will be able to be moved to the Oak Grove Parkway.

The Oak Grove Parkway Station diagram shows a white graphic (footprint still to be determined based on ridership modeling) which depicts the Park and Ride location. There was some request to look at moving this station a little bit farther to the south also, but we are again coming off a bridge and due to grades it is not feasible.

That concluded the updates on the stations.

Chair Adam Duininck shared that yesterday he learned at a Met Council meeting about a project that is happening in Hopkins along the SWLRT line where the city is looking at doing a rental housing development with a shared parking lot that will be used overnight for the folks that live there, but during the day the ramp will serve as a park and ride facility. This is something that the project office should keep in mind as they are talking to cities along the line as you are looking at how to manage your park and ride spaces along these stations.

Commissioner Opat gave Dan and staff a shout out because both the Maplebrook and Brooklyn Park were big meetings, a lot of people and a lot of different opinions, and a little bit of noise. People appreciate that this is where we are going to be and this is what we are going to build and we are going to look at the design and listen to you and may make some changes, but we are not going to stop. I think there were two good meetings.

Mr. Trepanier added that the Commissioner described it pretty accurately. Whenever you do something like this, some people are affected directly more than others. It is a big deal. It's going to keep going.

6. ADJOURN

Chair Duininck adjourned the meeting at approximately 1:57pm.

Next meeting will be on April 9th from 1:00 – 2:30pm.