



## Blue Line Extension Corridor Management Committee Minutes of the February 11, 2016 Meeting

**Present:** Adam Duinick, Lona Schreiber, Linda Higgins, Andy Snope, Scott McBride, George Selman, Peter Wagenius, Meg Forney, Tim Willson, Denise Butler, Jeff Kolb,

**Not in Attendance:** Denny Walsh, Mike Opat, Myron Frans, Jeffrey Lunde, Gary Cunningham, Betsy Hodges, Regan Murphy, Scott Schulte, Jim Adams, Shauen Pearce, Chris Berne, Marika Pfefferkorn

1. **Call to Order**-Chair Duinick welcomed everyone and convened the meeting at 1:10 PM.

2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 14, 2016**

Chair Duinick asked the committee to review the meeting minutes from the January 14, 2016 meeting and asked if there were any edits. Committee Member Andy Snopes made the motion to approve the minutes; Commissioner Meg Forney seconded the motion. Meeting minutes were approved.

3. **Chair's Update**

Chair Duinick provided an update on the 2040 METRO system and Forecast and how it provides access to the growing and diverse population. Chair Duinick discussed how it impacts areas of concentrated poverty; and the goal to link people to each other and jobs across the region. 12 out of 14 Minnesota Fortune 500 companies are located along the transit routes.

4. **Municipal Consent Update**

Mr. Soler reviewed the updated Municipal Consent Schedule and stated the Municipal Consent process 45-day period for action concludes March 4, 2016. Robbinsdale, Crystal and Golden Valley have upcoming public hearings/open houses.

Chair Duinick asked if there were any questions or concerns about the schedule. No questions.

5. **63<sup>rd</sup> Ave/CSAH 81 Intersection**

Mr. Soler provided an update and follow-up from the November 12, 2015 CMC meeting. Brooklyn Park was interested in exploring the design of a pedestrian bridge at 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and County Road 81. CMC directed staff to do some investigation and analyze the feasibility, justification, environmental impacts, costs, public input, jurisdictional support related to the construction of a pedestrian overpass at 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and County Road 81. The project office developed a few options. The challenges include; generally flat topography, County Road 81 is designated as house moving route which requires higher structure than typical pedestrian bridge, and limited room to bring bridge down in the area prior to the station platform due to limited space between CSAH 81 and railroad tracks. City staff reviewed the bridge options with Brooklyn Park City Council at a work session and the result is that the City of Brooklyn Park was not supportive of advancing pedestrian bridge. City of Brooklyn Park requested at-grade pedestrian enhancements be looked at instead of building a bridge.



63<sup>rd</sup> Ave/CSAH 81 intersection enhancements were discussed and include; a wider median, removal of dual left turn lane, pedestrian crosswalks upgraded, add stop bars, streetscape enhancements on corner.

#### **6. Bass Lake Road/CSAH 81 Intersection**

Following the November 12, 2015 CMC meeting, CMC directed staff to investigate and analyze the feasibility, justification, environmental impacts, costs, public input, jurisdictional support related to the design of a pedestrian overpass at Bass Lake Road and County Road 81. Multiple options were considered, two options-brought forward following numerous work sessions with Crystal City Council, and both are feasible, but have similar challenges at 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue including; topography, clearance over CR 81 house moving route, and potential property impacts. Crystal City Council favors advancing pedestrian bridge options, and some form of at-grade intersection enhancements. At the 1/25/16 County Station Area Planning Open House community members expressed support of a pedestrian bridge. Hennepin County position is they will not own or maintain bridge. City of Crystal expressed that the pedestrian overpass is essential to the project and the City will not own or maintain bridge. Plans continue to be discussed. Ownership and maintenance is not resolved. Intersection enhancements were discussed including; additional signing and pedestrian connections.

Mayor Willson expressed the Brooklyn Center Council's interest in providing readily available access for populations of Brooklyn Center at both 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Bass Lake Road, and that Brooklyn Center supports the lead of both Crystal and Brooklyn Park. Discussion on maintenance of the Blue Line and why that maintenance would not continue to pedestrian bridges. Chair Duinick and Mr. Soler explained that the maintenance of roadway features; crosswalks, signage, etc. would be the roadway owner. The LRT facilities, tracks, platforms, gated crossings are the responsibility of Met Council. Ownership and maintenance of pedestrian bridges still needs to be resolved.

Council member Selman brought up the pedestrian bridge (39<sup>th</sup> Avenue North) that was built over Hwy 100. Original plan was not to build it, but community/city fought to have it built. Council member Selman believes that the City of Robbinsdale maintains it and plows it. Robbinsdale city staff in the audience confirmed maintenance and snow removal.

Denise Butler, Blue Line Coalition Representative, stated her organization has expressed need for pedestrian bridge at 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and the community supports it and feels it is needed.

Chair Duinick asked that Mr. Soler discuss the process moving forward. The project office has discussed with the cities how this affects the design process and the municipal consent process. Mr. Soler stated that the project's interpretation of the Municipal Consent statute is that the pedestrian bridges are not a transit element that needs to be in the Municipal Consent plans in order to go forward. BPO doesn't believe it needs to amend the municipal consent plans prior to action in order to move forward on the continued analysis, design and inclusion of a pedestrian overpass or the intersection improvements as discussed. The project is looking for consensus direction from the Corridor Management Committee to continue to advance the design efforts on these two intersections to give assurance to Brooklyn Park and Crystal that these issues are still continuing forward in the design process.

Chair Duinick asked if the City of Crystal has a preference over the two designs; two elevators



versus one. Council member Kolb stated there is no consensus on which design, consensus that the bridge is necessary. Mr. Kolb mentioned that this is all relatively new and that the project worked hard to get the City design options and the City hasn't had time to dig into it. Chair Duininck confirmed that the FEIS will include these options.

Mayor Willson asked whether a formal action was necessary to move forward. Chair Duininck responded that it could be a formal action or direction to staff and revisit at a later date for a formal recommendation.

Council member Kolb clarified that the City of Crystal is seeking an affirmative action.

Discussion ensued around the language of the motion. After some motion procedural discussion, Mr. Soler suggested a starting point for the motion language; as the CMC to direct the project office to continue to develop intersection improvements at 63<sup>rd</sup> and CSAH 81 and at Bass Lake Road and CSAH 81 to include a pedestrian bridge option at Bass Lake Road. Council member Snope moved the motion. Council member Kolb stated that Crystal was looking for more affirmative, the support of the CMC for the construction of a bridge with a design to be detailed later. Council Member Snope responded that there is more study that needs to be done on the options and other information, even the maintenance after the bridge is built. Council Member Snope asked if there was more to look at. Council Member Kolb responded that Crystal has eliminated only at-grade as an acceptable option, looking for support from this body for a bridge and that it should be directed as included as part of the design. Commissioner Higgins asked whether the money for the bridge is included in the cost estimate. Chair Duininck responded that it is not included in the current scope and cost estimate and that will be updated in June.

Chair Duininck stated that the challenge with this issue is that when the Crystal Mayor and Brooklyn Park City Council member brought it up two meetings ago it was done explicitly knowing it was not connected to municipal consent and what the committee is discussing is a bigger scope item for the project. The committee will have to decide more towards the summer whether the funding is available or whether the committee wants to add to the scope and cost estimate as it is today.

Council member Kolb noted that when this was first brought up by Mayor Adams, the City of Crystal had just completed its first station area planning meeting and that's where the ground swell of support for this idea came from; nearly unanimous at the first meeting and unanimous at the second meeting.

Council member Snope asked Mr. Soler for motion language that would make everyone comfortable. Mr. Soler summarized the two ends of the spectrum; one end is continuing to study, which doesn't appear to be enough, and the other end is fund and include into the project, which appears to be too far to the other side. Mr. Soler suggested language along the lines that CMC directs the project office to continue to develop the improvements at the 63<sup>rd</sup> and Bass Lake Road intersections as identified by each particular city for eventual inclusion into the revised project scope. Chair Duininck asked committee members to comment on whether it goes far enough or too far.

Denise Butler stated she feels it's gone too far to the other side and seems that the option of a



bridge at 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue is being thrown out of the equation after today. Denise Butler stated she suspected the Brooklyn Park council made their decision based on the discussion of ownership. Mr. Soler said he could not speak to Brooklyn Park's direction because the project was not at the particular Brooklyn Park work session. Denise Butler stated that both the mayor and Brooklyn Park council member spoke at various CMC meetings and said they wanted this bridge considered and put into the project cost. Mr. Soler stated that is correct and that occurred prior to the project bringing designs to the city staff.

Mayor Willson proposed a new motion to direct staff to continue to pursue the wishes of the two political bodies in what they would like to do with those two intersections, leaving it up to those two entities, that research should go forward and that at some point it will go back to this body for inclusion from the funding perspective and some final approval. Council member Kolb stated that language including "for eventual inclusion" would be a critical piece for the comfort level for the Crystal council to vote on municipal consent.

Denise Butler suggested separating the motion into a motion for each individual intersection so that it could be revisited at a future meeting when Brooklyn Park committee members are at the meeting. Mr. Soler noted that there will not be another CMC meeting before the municipal consent process is completed.

Council member Snope moved to adopt the new motion:

"Direct staff to continue its efforts toward development of an at-grade crossing or bridge crossing at 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and a pedestrian bridge crossing at Bass Lake Road for the eventual inclusion in the scope of the project."

Mayor Willson reiterated that the understanding is we are not precluding a decision being made by either Crystal or Brooklyn Park but that we will follow those two public entities lead in what they think is best for those intersections and eventually it still has to come back for a decision as to whether it is included in the funding and whether or not the CMC will officially support it. Council member Snope stated the motion is intended to direct staff to work with the cities.

Council member Selman seconded motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

## **7. Noise Analysis Update**

Kathryn O'Brien provided mitigation strategies pertaining to noise, which include quiet zone improvements at intersections shared with freight, wayside devices installed at quiet zone intersections, noise barriers, and interior testing at receptors where impacts remain (event with implementation of mitigation measures). Ms. O'Brien spoke on actions for each city as laid out in slides.

Council member Snope voiced concern over land in Golden Valley that runs N/S on west side of 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Requested sampling be done, where train runs through the park.

Council member Selman asked what a sound wall is and for an explanation of the difference of current highway walls. Ms. O'Brien explained sound walls are less massive than highway walls and



will differ based on topology, generally 8-10 feet in height.

Denise Butler requested visuals of sound wall plans. Ms. O'Brien stated that in the future these will be presented to the CMC as they are developed.

#### **8. Sochacki Park Update**

Kathryn O'Brien provided an update on Sochacki Park planning and the hard work that had been accomplished since September, 2015. Mitigation plans have been developed with input from staff at Three Rivers Park District, cities of Golden Valley and Robbinsdale, as well as the Park and Recreation Committees. The plan focuses on appropriate clean up and restoration of BLRT construction staging areas in Sochacki Park.

Council member Selman wanted to state that he serves on the CAC and sees struggles with attendance and representation. Need to reevaluate assigned staff for CAC meetings and remind them that attendance is important.

Council member Schreiber asked to share the New Federal Funding project packet, 2 of which are in MN as part of the New Starts funding. Copies are available to take to your council members. Chair Duininck added that we are in good standing.

#### **9. Adjournment**

The CMC committee meeting was adjourned at 2:28 pm.

**Next Scheduled Meeting:  
Thursday, April 14, 2016  
Hennepin County Brookdale Library  
6125 Shingle Creek Parkway, Room ABC  
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430**