



Southwest Light Rail Transitway (SWLRT) Community Advisory Committee Meeting
June 14, 2012
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
St Louis Park City Hall, Council Chambers
5005 Minnetonka Blvd, St Louis Park, MN 55416
Revised Minutes

CAC Members and Alternates: Ann Iverson, Art Higinbotham, Barry Schade, Bill Neuendorf, Bob Tift, Claudia Johnston-Madison, David Greene, Derek Gunderson, Elizabeth Ryan, Jeanette Colby, Jami LaPray, Jennifer Munt, John Erickson, Julie Williams, Kandi Arries, Kathryn Kottke, Kelly Nelson, Kim Kang, Laura Jester, Linnea Sodergren, Lisa Walker, Maria Klein, Matt Flory, Maureen Hackett, Meg Forney, Mohamed Aden, Neil Trembley, Rolf Peterson, and Vicki Moore.

Staff and other attendees: Katie Walker, Mark Fuhrmann, Robin Caufman, Abdi Ahmed, Adele Hall, Ashley James, Jim Alexander, Larry Blackstad, Sam O'Connell, Kathie Doty, Susan Hoyt and La Shella Sims.

1. Welcome

Chairs Munt and Colby welcomed attendees and opened the meeting at 6:10 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes

The May 10, 2012 meeting minutes were approved with the following corrections:

1. Page 2: It was noted that Art Higinbotham asked the following correction to be made: Art Higinbotham asked Mark Fuhrmann if the proposal submitted to the FTA included all the infrastructural items shown in the video "A Virtual Ride from Eden Prairie to Target Field" in the \$208 million in capital costs shown on Line 10 of the proposal; Mark Fuhrmann answered in the affirmative.
2. Page 2: It was noted that Jami Lapray asked the question regarding the timing of the freight rail decision and not Randi Arries as indicated.
3. Page 2: It was noted that Maria Klein asked the question regarding DEIS and not Rolf Peterson as indicated.

3. Project Updates: Mark Fuhrmann and Katie Walker

Mark Fuhrmann reported that the Metropolitan Council will submit an application to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to fund the state's share of preliminary engineering activities. This is a competitive grant for which \$47.5 million in bond funding is available for capital projects. Applications are due June 26*. The SWLRT application will highlight the projects ability to serve 210k jobs today plus and additional 60k jobs in 20 years while promoting business development corridor wide.

**Please note: The deadline was extended to 4:30 p.m. on Monday, July 9.*

Neil Trembley asked what potential projects may be submitted from other sponsors and what are the parameters of the grant. Mark replied that we may see projects submitted from St. Cloud, Rochester and potentially a project for the Nicollet Mall.

Chair Munt asked CAC members to help promote and support the SWLRT application.

Jami Lapray asked about subsection 4 regarding detailed cost estimates. Does the cost estimates include the re-route? How will the application be finessed to cover the mitigation? Mark answered that the application asked for detailed estimates for preliminary engineering and not the entire project. The project is a \$1.25 billion, multi-year, multi-phased project and mitigation will be addressed throughout the project development process.

Matt Forney asked what was the SWLRT bonding bill request and what is the difference between the DEED application and the bonding request? Mark answered the bonding request was \$25 million and the DEED application will be for \$14 million. So far, \$47 million has been committed to the project.

Staff Action: Will send link to the DEED website for more information about the grant and submitted applications.

Katie Walker reported a request for proposal for \$800K to create a long range vision and an opening day of LRT vision for each of the 17 stations. Plans will address access and circulation between land uses and around the station area as well bike, walk, transit, park-n-ride stations, platform locations and storm water issues. Proposals are due late June. A pre-proposal meeting with 30 potential consultants was held. A late August selection is anticipated with the successful consultant to start in September.

John Erickson asked if Central Corridor informed this process? Katie answered yes in particular identifying issues and when they occurred during the project development process.

Neil Trembley asked what is the goal of this process? To identifying the stations have more viability/visibility? Which ones stay and go? Katie answered the study will focus different market needs and opportunities for future development as well as identify what are the uses today and how that might change to take advantage of LRT. The stations are like charms on a bracelet and this is opportunity to make each station shine.

Elizabeth Ryan commented that this work with the Southwest Project Office, communities other public facilities, the placement and joint development or any public facility parking needs to be balanced around station areas.

Chair Munt stated that she likes the analogy of charm bracelet and allows us to think globally.

Chair Colby asked Katie Walker to provide an update on the DEIS. Katie reported that an updated DEIS has been submitted to FTA for second screening and review. It is anticipated that FTA comments will be received approximately June 19 and will be resubmitted for legal review with public publication 6-8 weeks thereafter.

4. Review Revised Charter – Co-Chair Munt

Chair Munt asked members to review the CAC charter so final changes can be made to membership, roles and responsibilities and before approval.

Art Higinbotham commented that the charter is well written and that he supports what the charter doesn't say: the CAC is not an advocate for the Met Council and Hennepin Regional Railroad Authority.

Chair Munt repeated that the purpose of the CAC is to advise and we might not always agree with everything. Issues will be addressed and CAC will provide its input. Neil Trembley asked that in the charter's purpose that he asked two meetings ago to include parks and trails.

Linnea Sodergren commented if churches and other place of worship should be included and commented on the meeting time needs to be updated. Kandi Arries proposed striking "re-" from "freight relocation" within the charter.

Chair Munt called for a motion to approve the charter with changes. Motion was made by David Green and seconded by Maria Klein.

5. Review Revised Ground Rules – Co-Chair Colby

Chair Colby asked CAC members review the ground rules. Alternates were asked to no longer take an active part in the CAC meetings because of time constraints. It was then pointed out that the CAC charter, which had been adopted by the CAC, allowed for alternates to take part. **CAC Members.....“Attend a majority of CAC meetings (alternates will be allowed to participate in the committee discussions if CAC staff are notified prior to the meeting.)** Discussion followed about the role of alternates on the CAC committee. -Some felt that alternates should only be allowed to caucus with the member and speak during the open forum. Others believed that the committee should be open to all members and alternates present. The discussion was at times heated and emotional. A vote was taken to modify the charter and passed with Kathryn Kottke, Rolf Peterson and Kandi Arries opposing. David Greene, Matt Flory and Art Higinbotham abstained.

6. Discussion – Co-Chair Munt

Due to time constraints, the dot matrix exercise was modified. A survey will be sent to members to indicate their preferences for discussion topics at future CAC meetings. Vicky Moore would like to see more information on Environmental Justice included in the listing of topics. Chairs Colby and Munt asked that responses be shared with the CAC at the next meeting. The Chairs also requested that discussion topics be scheduled to allow the greatest CAC input for PE activities.

Staff Action: Will send a survey to CAC members to identify their topics of interest.

7. Reports

Community Works Steering Committee – Chair Munt reported the Met Council has allocated transit oriented development (TOD) funding for the region.

Art Higinbotham mentioned Commissioner Peter McLaughlin will be speaking at a TOD session on June 25th.

Corridor Management Committee – This meeting was cancelled.

Staff Action: Will send a link to Met Council's TOD grant information.

8. Open Forum

Jami LaPray handed out a Safety in the Park! brochure. For more information, please e-mail Kandi Arries for more information.

Art Higinbotham asked about project contingency and what are the fallbacks? Mark Fuhrmann stated that the FTA requires the project to carry a contingency. An example, is the installment of the floating slab to mitigate any possible vibration at the MPR Broadcast Center; project contingency was used to for this mitigation action.

Kathryn Kottke stated that the TC and W Railroad representative was uncertain about Hennepin County's cost estimate. How much is it going to cost? Where is the money going to come from? Mark Fuhrmann stated that this is a new chapter with FTA and the project partners have started to engage TC & W and the Canadian Pacific Railroad in broad parameter discussions

John Erickson asked who has authority over the railroads. Mark Fuhrmann responded that the Surface Transportation Board, a federal entity, regulates the activities of railroads under the umbrella of commerce and trade interest.

There was additional discussion regarding uncertainty and concern about the real cost of the SWLR project regarding what type of mitigation would be proposed in the DEIS and the costs involved. Mark Fuhrmann gave mitigation examples used for the Central Corridor and said similar considerations would be made in the DEIS.

Claudia Johnston-Madison pointed out that the mitigation examples cited by Mark Fuhrmann for the Central Corridor were mitigation for the light rail portion of that project. In regard to SWLRT, there is additional concern regarding the extent of the mitigation that will be proposed in the DEIS for the freight rail issue (relocation of freight to St. Louis Park or co-location in Minneapolis). Will freight rail mitigation encompass the requests made by residents of St. Louis Park City Council, residents of St. Louis Park and residents of Minneapolis? The uncertainty as to the outcome of freight rail mitigation in the DEIS comes from residents' past experience with the MN&S Freight Rail Study Project Management Team meetings conducted in 2010-2011 by Hennepin County where most of the mitigation requested by St. Louis Park City Council and residents was ignored and not included in the EAW at that time.

Staff Action: Will send a link to the freight rail study.

9. Adjourn

Chairs Munt and Colby adjourned the meeting at 8:10 PM.