

Metropolitan Council

City of St. Louis Park Chambers, 5005 Minnetonka Boulevard, St. Louis Park 55416

Meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee

June 5, 2013

Members Present	Susan Haigh, Chair	Jan Callison	James Hovland
	Nancy Tyra-Lukens	Lisa Weik	Terry Schneider
	Cheryl Youakim	Brian Lamb	Peter Wagenius
	Peter McLaughlin	Gail Dorfman	Bill James
	Jake Spano	Kathy Nelson	
Members Absent	Mayor Rybak		
	Keith Bogut	Jim Brimeyer	Jeff Jacobs
	Scott McBride		

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Susan Haigh called the June 5, 2013 meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee to order at 10:07am at the St. Louis Park City Hall.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Susan Haigh presented the May 1, 2013, Southwest Corridor Management Committee meeting minutes for approval. The motion for approval was granted.

3. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Chair Haigh gave a Legislative Update. There was some good news out of the legislative session for the Southwest LRT Project, where we received \$37 million in general fund dollars to allow for the continuation of preliminary engineering. We were also able to restore our base funding for our Metro Transit operations from the cuts of the last biennium. We came very close to getting the transit sales tax approved as it passed in the senate, but the house did not support that proposal. We need to go back again and work on transit funding investment, as well as roads and transportation investment going forward.

Chair Haigh introduced Judd Schetnan, the Government Affairs Director for the Met Council. Mr. Schetnan indicated there was difficulty in passing the \$800 million bonding bill that the house tried to bring forward, in which \$50 million in transitways would have been applied to Southwest LRT. We were looking at the sales tax to cover the Southwest LRT and to put forward the transit system that we had in mind. The senate passed the gas tax and a sales tax proposal. The governor's position is the ½ cent came to negotiations and the sales tax did not prevail in those discussions. It was clear amongst everyone that they wanted to make sure that Southwest LRT move forward, so rather than bonding, we received cash for Southwest LRT. This is great news, but the issue it creates, is that next year we will be working with the same legislature that did not pass the \$800 million bonding bill. Next year, Southwest LRT will need to find \$81 million to keep the project on time. We will need to work hard and also find the sales tax to build Bottineau and increase our transit service. Over the next few weeks, we should be getting some direction from our Administration. Peter Wagenius indicated The City of Minneapolis, with the support of Hennepin County and the Minneapolis Regional Chamber,

secured the first use of value capture for tax increment financing. It is not a substitute for the ½ cent sales tax, but we need multiple tools to achieve multiple goals.

4. FEIS CONSULTANT CONTRACT AWARD

Ms. Nani Jacobson gave an overview of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) Consultant Contract Award. We have awarded the Consultant Contract to develop and complete the FEIS to CH2M Hill. Ms. Jacobson introduced Stephanie Eiler, the CH2M Hill project manager and Leon Skiles, the lead environmental specialist. We are very happy to have them onboard. Our schedule, based on the Federal Infrastructure Permitting Dashboard, has November 30, 2014 as receiving the Record Of Decision (ROD). Commissioner Gail Dorfman asked as you begin this process and as an example, as the communities and cities consider the freight options on the table, at what point will there be an environmental assessment on the neighborhood impacts of those options? Will that come after municipal consent? Ms. Jacobson said we are working on how we are going to do the timing of the NEPA process with the project development process and marry those up. Mr. Chris Weyer said we are looking to marry up the FEIS work as quickly as we can. As we start looking at the alternatives, we will look more in depth at the cost, the impact, and where the different properties are. Then the FEIS team will start analyzing that in terms of what those impacts, potential avoidance, minimization, and mitigation would occur. It is coming very quickly right behind as the designs are being developed.

5. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL ISSUES

Mr. Jim Alexander presented a map of the Project Development Technical Issues and gave an overview of each of the technical issues as listed below.

a. TECHNICAL ISSUE #1 – EDEN PRAIRIE ALIGNMENT

Mr. Alexander presented aerial maps of the Eden Prairie Alignment that consisted of tier 1 and 2, Singletree Lane, Prairie Center Drive, Technology Drive, a comprehensive plan, and Wallace terminal. As part of our process, we are keeping the LPA on the table for all these alternatives we are looking at. As we look at costs and impacts, we are looking to see how that changes from the LPA.

b. TECHNICAL ISSUE #2 – 9-MILE CREEK CROSSING

Mr. Alexander presented aerial maps of the 9-Mile Creek Crossing.

c. TECHNICAL ISSUE #3 – GOLDEN TRIANGLE STATION

Mr. Alexander presented aerial maps showing potential Park and Ride locations. Mr. Alexander said our process for talking to local planning and economic development folks about their plans for these areas and how they are going to be used, is done through the issue resolution team meetings. We have had approximately 18 meetings with the City of Eden Prairie on both the technical and planning perspective, as well as working with the TSAAP process. We have been exploring the Park and Ride issue at all stations in terms of what the requirements may be in 2018. In this case, we have been looking at the idea of utilizing surface areas that might be available. We are thinking that down the road, there might be some development that would require some type of parking structure. Mr. Robert Ellis, with the City of Eden Prairie, added that the ULI hosted an exercise where they did an analysis of several locations along the corridor and offered recommendations on whether it was right for redevelopment yet or if it is too far into the future. We asked ULI to look at this site, as we thought it would be right for redevelopment once LRT came in and their analysis suggested not yet. Being this area is mostly office, they did not see much need or desire to have residential located in this area. Mayor Nancy Tyra-Lukens asked what kind of algorithm was used to determine the number of parking spots that you are looking for in this area. Mr. Craig Lamothe said the regional travel demand model utilizes and generates the mode of access for all the ridership for the line including walk up, bus, and car (kiss and ride drop-offs and park and rides). It takes into consideration the comprehensive plans from all communities along the corridor and adjacent to the corridor, essentially the 2030 employment and residential capacities in those communities. It generates the demand from that process and is the only

tool accepted by the FTA for these New Starts projects. We are proposing 3,500 spaces for the entire alignment which is what the model is telling us and it is spread over several of the station locations. We have mapping for our stations and some draw from a very tight knit area, while others will draw from 25 miles away.

d. TECHNICAL ISSUE #4 – SHADY OAK ROAD CROSSING

Mr. Alexander presented aerial maps of the Shady Oak Road Crossing.

e. TECHNICAL ISSUE #5 – CITY WEST STATION

Mr. Alexander presented aerial maps of the City West Station.

f. TECHNICAL ISSUE #11 – EXCELSIOR BOULEVARD CROSSING

Mr. Alexander presented aerial maps of the Excelsior Boulevard Crossing.

g. TECHNICAL ISSUE #12 – BLAKE STATION

Mr. Alexander presented aerial maps of Blake Station.

h. TECHNICAL ISSUE #19 – BASSETT CREEK VALLEY CORRIDOR: PENN STATION and VAN WHITE STATION

Mr. Alexander presented aerial maps of the Penn Station (co-location and relocation) and the Van White Station.

i. TECHNICAL ISSUE #20 – ROYALSTON STATION and THE INTERCHANGE PROJECT

Mr. Alexander presented aerial maps of the Royalston Station and the Interchange project.

Chair Haigh said the SWCMC will be making decisions about these issues at the August 7th meeting, so that we can get them back out for municipal consent by this fall. The SWCMC will be making recommendations that will ultimately go to the Met Council, then ultimately to the cities.

6. COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH UPDATE

Ms. Sam O’Connell gave an update on Communications and Outreach. The BAC and CAC meetings were held May 29th and 30th respectively and their concerns are in line with what the SWCMC’s concerns are. Mr. Will Roach listed some key comments made by the BAC. They have concerns with impacts to traffic and businesses along the Eden Prairie Alignment, they are in favor of a tunnel going under trunk highway 62, and have concerns about station viability at Penn Station. Mr. Roach provided a draft copy of the committees Success Factors. Ms. Jennifer Munt provided the CAC’s key comments. They have concerns with infrastructure costs and project budget impacts at the Eden Prairie Alignment, want to keep the 43 Hoops center and consolidate parking on the south side at Blake Station, concerns with grade separation at Cedar Lake Trail at Penn Station, to maximize TOD at the Van White Station, and to be sure station is close to N. 7th St. for better connections to attractions at Royalston Station. Ms. O’Connell noted that we held three open houses on the Operations and Maintenance Facility and there were approximately 175 attendees. We are consolidating the comments from these open houses and will share them. We will have a Freight Rail open house on June 13th and we will also be holding a series of Station open houses the weeks of June 17 and 24.

Chair Haigh asked to have a discussion at a future meeting about the station area plan work and the TOD work being done at the Council to get some input. Chair Haigh requested to extend the August 7th meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45am.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynne Hahne, Recording Secretary