

Meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee  
**July 10, 2013**

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

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Susan Haigh called the July 10, 2013 meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee to order at 10:04am at the Hopkins Center for the Arts.

### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Susan Haigh presented the June 5, 2013 and June 12, 2013, Southwest Corridor Management Committee meeting minutes for approval. The motion for approval was granted.

### 3. NEPA UPDATE

Ms. Nani Jacobson gave a NEPA Update. In mid-June, at our monthly meeting with the FTA, they decided to develop a Supplemental DEIS (SDEIS) based on adjustments proposed to the project since publication of the DEIS last fall. Met Council and the FTA are in the process of developing the scope for the SDEIS. A Notice of Intent will be published in the Federal Register and the EQB Monitor as required by the Federal and State Laws. The Notice of Intent will include additional information on the scope of the SDEIS. Throughout this process, the environmental team will be working with the project engineering team on additional design adjustments and refinements, to capture the most up-to-date status of the project in the SDEIS. We are still targeting late 2014 for the Final EIS. Responses to comments received on the DEIS and SDEIS will be incorporated into the Final EIS, following the 45-day comment period for the SDEIS. *Chair Haigh requested to have a post meeting action from the 8/7/13 SWCMC meeting added to the 7/10/13 SWCMC meeting minutes. "The SDEIS Notice of Intent was published on July 22, 2013".* Once the scope has been developed, we will be developing a schedule. The SDEIS request was triggered by the work and updates we have been getting over the past 7 months that have been presented to the project's advisory committees, and determining if we have potential new significant impacts to environmental resources or new alternatives. The SDEIS will be utilizing the same consultant as the FEIS and will be included as part of the FEIS contract.

Mayor James Hovland asked if the cities and county staff could have a say before developing the scope and going to the comment period. Mr. Mark Fuhrmann said the FTA is the lead on defining the scope and we need

to follow their lead. Mr. Spano asked if people will be able to comment on the cost implications in the SDEIS. Ms. Jacobson said costs are going to be part of the FEIS and SDEIS as applicable to the scope items. To the degree that we include costs in the SDEIS would be determined by the scope and if portions of that scope need to have a cost with it or if it would be in the FEIS, I cannot say. As these adjustments are occurring, whether based on costs later this month, we will make sure that we have the latest in the SDEIS. Chair Haigh stated the EIS process is a slow and long process with our FTA partners and we have not yet had final approval of our EIS on the Central Corridor. We will keep moving this along and follow the law and keep doing what we need to do and use it as a way to get public comment.

#### **4. 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 #13, 16, 17, and 18 – SWLRT STATIONS: LOUISIANA, BELTLINE, WEST LAKE, AND 21<sup>ST</sup> STREET**

Mr. Alexander presented aerial maps of the SWLRT Stations. There are approximately 225 park and ride spaces needed at the Louisiana station, by means of surface parking. The Beltline station would require a high park and ride demand with about 500-600 spaces. There are no park and rides currently planned for the West Lake station, but rather a bus transfer and walk up-type station. Commissioner Dorfman said the Park Board has been doing a charrette looking at pedestrian and bike access to the lakes. It is a really congested area already and there are a lot of people who can walk to the station, but some live not too far away that might want to drive to the station and because there is no park and ride that will force Minneapolis people who live in that southwest area to drive to the Beltline station to park. Commissioner Dorfman encourages discussions with the city to see if there is a way to do a mixed use park and ride there. Businesses are concerned that commuters will be forced to use their parking lots. Mr. Peter Wagenius said we have had similar discussions related to other stations, on when is the market present: now, 5 years from now, or 10 years. With this station, the answer is no. Mr. Wagenius does not want everyone assuming congestion issues are addressed by a park and ride. They could also make the park and rides worse, with more people driving in. We may have other options that do not exist at other stations.

**b. TECHNICAL ISSUE #15 and 18 – TH 100 AND CEDAR LAKE PARKWAY**

Mr. Alexander presented aerials of the TH 100 project and Cedar Lake Parkway.

**c. TECHNICAL ISSUE #7 – MINNETONKA / HOPKINS BRIDGE**

Mr. Alexander presented aerials of the Minnetonka and Hopkins Bridge.

**d. TECHNICAL ISSUE #23 – OMF LOCATION: 2-3 FINALIST SITES**

Mr. Alexander presented the OMF evaluation criteria, the site selection process started with 18 sites and narrowed it down to 7. Three public open houses were held to review the 7 sites. Additional evaluation of the 7 sites was conducted to develop cost estimates and to look at current and adjacent land use (a key concern of the city). Common factors to all 7 sites include: site size to accommodate loop tracks on both ends of the site, private parcel acquisition, OMF use was not represented in the cities comp plan, and all the cities have a concern about tax base impacts. Mr. Alexander showed aerial maps of the 7 sites along with strengths and weaknesses for each site. Preliminary cost estimates were presented for the 7 sites showing the delta numbers to the LPA, which range from \$25 million to \$55 million. The FTA requires 30% contingency dollars at the preliminary engineering stage, which are included in these delta numbers. The delta numbers also include capital and right-of-way dollars, but not operation dollars. The primary cost drivers for the 7 sites include site demolition/clearing, yard tracks on structure, load tracks on structure, retaining structures, sewer interception relocation, site grading/earthwork, and special track work. Commissioner McLaughlin asked how you monetize the

operational costs for these 7 options. Mr. Fuhrman said we have not done that analysis and are more focused on the capital at this stage. Chair Haigh asked, as it relates to monetizing, at what point will that enter into the decision making. Mr. Fuhrmann said as we build out our LRT system, we need to look at it globally. Every time a leg of rail system is added, we add a lot more flexibility to rail operations, which allows us to be more responsive to passengers and more efficient in how we employ our human resources on the line.

The two recommended sites are 3-4 and 9A. We will be bringing a recommendation to TPAC on July 19<sup>th</sup>, the BAC/CAC joint meeting on July 25<sup>th</sup>, the SWCMC on August 7<sup>th</sup>, and then to Met Council later in August. The OMF would also be part of the recommended alignment. We are looking to keep the timeline for getting municipal consent plans done towards the end of September and public hearings will be held later in the fall.

## **5. COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH UPDATE**

Ms. Sam O'Connell gave an update on Communications and Outreach. Ms. O'Connell stated that a joint BAC/CAC meeting was held on July 25<sup>th</sup>. As the BAC/CAC walked through the co-location and relocation options, there were some main themes. Some of these include: Residential impacts with some of the options, aesthetics and noise, more openness to the deep bore tunnel option, school impacts, visual impacts with some freight elevation, impacts to businesses and residential properties. Mr. Will Roach indicated the committees want to select the best investment verses what is going to be the least costly option. Ms. O'Connell said there were also concerns about and multi-modal access, issues with parking and access to some of the stations, and development opportunities in the future. Mr. Wagenius indicated he encourages multi-modal access to the stations. The concern about pedestrian access particular to stations relates directly to some of our concerns about congestion and potentially not having a park and ride. At the West Lake station we have poor pedestrian access there particularly from the west and you can imagine what that will lead to. The people who feel there is no pedestrian access from the west, will have to walk over the bridge, see the station pass them by behind them, and then walk around to it. They are then likely to consider driving to the station or driving to the Beltline station.

Ms. O'Connell said that two freight rail open houses were held and over 300 people attended. We also received approximately 350 comments that were given to the engineering teams as well. We held community specific station open houses with over 300 attendees and about 240 comments received. We will be holding two more community meetings on the freight issue, one in Minneapolis on July 17<sup>th</sup> and one in St. Louis Park on July 18<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Tyra-Lukens asked if they will be getting information on the various alternatives and the impact that it has on the length of the ride and potential ridership. The SPO staff said yes.

Mr. Jake Spano presented an offer to anyone in the room, the City of St. Louis Park is considering and happy to host a tour for anyone who wants to get a better sense of both relocation and co-location issues.

Chair Haigh stated the next meeting date is August 7, 2013 from 8:30am – 11:30am at the St. Louis Park City Hall and there is also a second meeting on August 14, 2013, with time and location to be determined.

The meeting adjourned at 11:44am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lynne Hahne, Recording Secretary