

Metropolitan Council

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

Meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee
May 2, 2012

Members Present	Susan Haigh, Chair	Jan Callison	Terry Schneider
	Bill James	Brian Lamb	Peter Wagenius
	Peter McLaughlin	James Hovland	Nancy Tyra-Lukens
	Scott McBride	Lisa Weik	Jim Brimeyer
	Gail Dorfman		

Members Absent	Mayor Rybak	Cheryl Youakim	Jeff Jacobs
	Keith Bogut		

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Susan Haigh called the May 2, 2012 meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee to order at 10:01am at the St. Louis Park City Hall.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Susan Haigh presented the March 7, 2012, Southwest Corridor Management Committee meeting minutes for approval. The motion for approval was granted.

3. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Chair Susan Haigh gave a Legislative update. Everyone has been anxiously awaiting and reading the paper daily wondering if we are going to have a bonding bill, with SWLRT in it. Chair Haigh said, that unfortunately, she does not have anything more to report and we all will wait to see how the next several days play out. She would like to give a huge thank you to the members of this management committee, and particularly all the mayors for their support and resolutions of support from all the city councils. It has been extremely helpful and important to the process.

4. SWLRT PROJECT OFFICE UPDATE

Chris Weyer gave an update on the SWLRT Project Office. We did execute the lease back in February for the entire 5th floor at Park Place West in St. Louis Park and also began the demolition of the interior. In March, the build out and finishes were completed and we did a soft move-in of several people in April. Most of the cubicles have been erected, but we have quite a few moving boxes to be unpacked and some maintenance work being completed in the west end of the floor. The reception desk is in and the glass in the reception/lobby area was designed to give people a welcoming approach.

5. STAFFING UPDATE

Chris Weyer gave a Staffing Update. We have filled quite a few positions and completed the hiring of our Senior Project Management Team, who will be hiring managers and other staffers for help in delivery of the project. A couple of introductions are Melanie Steinborn, who has worked for Metro Transit for a few years on

Central Corridor, helped support Northstar, and is now working on SWLRT and the other person is Nani Jacobson, who is new to Metro Transit.

Melanie Steinborn gave an overview of her background and roles. Ms. Steinborn started with Metro Transit in 2005 and has gained experience working on many large and small projects. She has developed and monitored schedules, budget, and scope for various projects, as well as coordinating with regulatory agencies. She has also participated in contract and agreement negotiations with both private and public entities. Ms. Steinborn is the Assistant Director of Project Controls/Budget-Grants/ROW-Permits and will oversee the following areas: Monitor and make recommendations relating to project budget and schedule, lead activities in association with acquisition of necessary right of way, as well as develop and oversee Risk and the Contingency Management Plan. Ms. Steinborn will also collaborate on project scheduling, cost estimating, change controls, document and contracts management, and organization controls.

Nani Jacobson is the Assistant Director of Environmental and Agreements and she gave an overview of her background and roles. Ms. Jacobson has 14 years in the environmental science and policy field. She most recently worked at the Department of Defense overseeing environmental compliance, strategic planning and communications, and contract and project management. She had also worked for the Environmental Protection Agency and DOT as a regulatory information specialist. Ms. Jacobson will be managing the environmental program, including the NEPA process for the FEIS and Record of Decision. She will also be managing the agreements program of approximately 150 interagency, municipal, and other agreements.

6. ENGINEERING SERVICES PROCUREMENT UPDATE

Jim Alexander gave an update on the Engineering Services Procurement. Mr. Alexander is the Director of Design and Engineering and he will manage the engineering services consultant once the contract award is made. The Preliminary Engineering Services Contract is still in active procurement status; therefore, unfortunately, we are unable to discuss anything until a contract has been awarded.

7. COMMUNICATIONS/OUTREACH UPDATE

Robin Caufman, the Assistant Director of Communication/Administration/Outreach, gave an update. The Community Engagement Team Grants is part of the Corridors of Opportunity Program and the Policy Board designated \$750,000 in grants to assist community organizations to help engage underrepresented communities with transitway and land use issues. The Policy Board created the Community Engagement Team to advise and make recommendations to the grant program. In November 2012, 10 groups received \$397,000 in grants, including 2 groups on the SWLRT proposed alignment. The 2 groups are New American Academy in Eden Prairie and Blake Road Community Collaboration in Hopkins. Ms. Caufman introduced Asad Aliweyd, the Executive Director of the New American Academy.

Asad Aliweyd gave an update on New American Academy. The New American Academy was established due to growing needs, issues, challenges and demands of ever-growing Somali immigrants of Eden Prairie and the Twin Cities southwest area. The New American Academy has been reaching out and connecting members to one another, to preserve their culture while assisting them in adjusting to their new lives, new language, new social institutions, and healthy integration into the larger American society. New American Academy's community engagement and outreach activities consist of community gatherings for the SWLRT project, the forming of the Southwest Immigrant Community Council (SWICC) group in Eden Prairie, and developing business entrepreneurship classes/training. The SWICC consists of 9 immigrant members who set the time of the community meetings, conduct research for low-income communities, and report to the New American Academy executive director. Approximately 28 community gatherings for small and large groups were held to engage and educate the immigrant and other low-income communities on Southwest LRT. On March 24, 2012 a community engagement event was held that attracted 360+ attendees, including Eden Prairie Mayor Nancy Tyra-Lukens and City Manager Rick Getschow and Hennepin County Commissioner Gail Dorfman. The way New American Academy engages communities is by word of mouth and through the distribution of flyers to the

local shopping malls, mosques, and other gathering places. The benefits of SWLRT to New American Academy include bringing low and mixed income housing to the corridor, more jobs to the community, making it easier for immigrant communities to connect with other parts of the Twin Cities, and allows college students to travel safely, cheaper, and faster. Mr. Aliweyd gave a special thank you to Chair Susan Haigh for her time and effort to meet with New American Academy and take their recommendations wholeheartedly.

Mayor Terry Schneider said he is impressed with the amount of engagement New American Academy has and the diversity within the Somali group. Mayor Schneider asked if the New American Academy is focused on the Somali community only. Mr. Aliweyd said, most of the Eden Prairie community is Somali, but there is a small integration of other types of immigrant communities as well.

Mayor Nancy Tyra-Lukens congratulated Mr. Aliweyd on all the progress that New American Academy has made, the passion, and foresight for what they will be doing in the future. Mayor Tyra-Lukens asked Mr. Aliweyd to address any specific progress they have made with getting representation from all the Somali tribes. Mr. Aliweyd said they have all the tribes in this group and there are 12 people in the business class. The New American Academy requires the community to fill out applications that states what tribe they belong to making sure there is representation across all the Somali community.

Commissioner Gail Dorfman asked what the focus is for the Blake Road Community. Susan Hoyt said the Blake Road Collaborative makes up a broader range of ethnic groups as part of its proposal, with it being a more mixed, diverse community. The context for the Community Engagement Grants is that the opportunity grants generated by community organizations ask for funding from the Corridors of Opportunity. The grantees decide what they are looking to accomplish and address a certain type of community.

Councilmember James Brimeyer asked if all the funding is from grants. Chair Haigh said there is a specific grant for community engagement that came from the Corridors of Opportunity Policy Board. Councilmember Brimeyer asked if there are federal grants also. Chair Haigh said the source of the Corridors of Opportunity Policy Board grant is entirely federal.

Bill James gave a CAC Report from the first Community Advisory Committee Meeting that was held on April 12, 2012. Chair Haigh was in attendance to kick off the first meeting along with CAC Co-Chair's Jeanette Colby representing Kenwood Isles and Jennifer Munt with the Met Council. During the meeting, we reviewed the charter, went over ground rules, and went through the list of representatives. All the cities are represented by their various CAC reps and there are 37 primary and 7 alternate representatives. Mr. James will distribute the list to the SWCMC members. A homework assignment was issued to submit the top 5-10 topics of interest to the Co-Chairs, to help structure future meetings around specific agenda items. Mr. James said they will then bring in subject matter experts to address these topics. The next meeting is scheduled for May 10, 2012.

Craig Lamothe gave an overview of the LPA Alignment Video. This is a new communication tool that will have value for the organizations and constituents the SWCMC Members represent, other project stakeholders, partners, and the general public. The purpose of the video is to help folks understand where the train is going to run and where the stations are going to be located. This video is representing the locally preferred alternative that was recommended by the county in 2009 and adopted by the Council in 2010. Subsequently, it was also adopted by the Federal Transit Administration in 2011, for purposes of going into Preliminary Engineering and also for completion of the DEIS. Therefore, this is the alignment we have today and it is subject to change after we go through the Preliminary Engineering process. Mr. Lamothe showed a video of the proposed alignment with accompanying audio narration.

Mayor Schneider asked how we get access to the video. Ms. Cauffman said it will be posted to the swlrt.org website later this same day. We are also in the process of getting it in different formats such as for YouTube, iPhones, etc. for different users.

Chair Haigh asked SPO to provide a DVD copy of the alignment video to each of the SWCMC Members.

Councilmember Scott McBride asked if the preliminary design contract has work in it to update the alignment video as things change. Mr. Lamothe said no, but we anticipate that when we get too approximately 30% design municipal consent that there would likely be another iteration of this video and we anticipate this to be a living version over the course of time.

Commissioner Dorfman asked SPO to provide a couple page companion sheet of summary information about the station areas such as the businesses, jobs, people who live along the alignment, etc. to give us some more dialogue to talk about it. There are points on the line where the LRT will go through businesses, so we should be able to explain what is happening there.

Mr. Lamothe said we can provide a narrative script with talking points to go along with the video. Chair Haigh said that would be super helpful.

Chair Haigh asked SPO to provide a tour of the SWLRT alignment to the SWCMC Members by this summer.

It was asked if there has been any individual or collective thought given, as to what we would do if we do not get the preliminary engineering money in the bonding bill. Chair Haigh said we are taking the optimistic approach. Commissioner McLaughlin said the business community efforts have been noticed and they deserve a lot a credit.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55am.

Respectfully submitted, Lynne Hahne