

Meeting Minutes

Southwest Community Advisory Committee (PAC)

May 27, 2009, 6:00 to 7:30 PM

Wolfe Lake Professional Center

Meeting Attendees

CAC Members and Alternates

See attached.

Southwest Staff & Consultant Team

Adele Hall (Hennepin County)

Oscar Gonzalez (HDR Engineering)

Dax Kuhfuss (HDR Engineering)

Kathie Doty (KLD Consulting)

Other Attendees

Gen McJilton (Ryan Companies)

Christopher Loch (Whittier Resident)

I. Member Updates

Art Higinbotham (West Lake Station Member) updated the group on the potential rerouting of the freight rail that currently uses the railroad tracks in the Kenilworth corridor. He commented that removing the freight trains from Kenilworth should be a part of the Southwest Transitway project costs. Ms. Doty responded that the two projects are completely separate, and that the HCRRRA is charged with resolving the freight issue regardless of whether Southwest is built. She told him that we do not have the information to address the issues he raises about relocating the freight rail. He was told to contact Katie Walker, Southwest Transitway Project Manager, for the contact information of the freight rail study project manager.

Vida Ditter (Van White Station Member) asked for minutes from the March CAC meeting.

II. Updates

Project

Kathie Doty (KLD Consulting) facilitated the meeting in Katie Walker's absence. Ms. Doty updated the CAC members on the project status. HDR, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement consultants, are progressing with the evaluation work so that the locally preferred alternative (LPA) selection can happen this fall. HDR has drawn up conceptual design plans, which will be reviewed by the group later in the meeting.

Three open houses are planned for early-mid August to hear from the public before a recommendation is made on the LPA. CAC members' assistance in spreading the word about these meetings is appreciated.

Committees (PAC and TAC)

The PAC met two weeks ago on May 13, 2009. CAC members are welcome at all PAC meetings, but are especially encouraged to attend the July 22 joint PAC/TAC meeting. The TAC last met at the end of March to review the conceptual design plans.

Legislative

Ms. Doty reported that \$21 million for transit projects was included in this year's state bonding bill. Of this amount, \$8.5 million has been reserved for Central Corridor and the Metropolitan Council will allocate the remaining \$12.5 million amongst the following eligible projects: Bottineau Transitway, Cedar Lake Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Red Rock Corridor, Riverview Corridor, Robert Street BRT, Rush Line Corridor, Southwest Transitway, and the St. Paul Union Depot.

III. Schedule for Locally Preferred Alternative Decision

Ms. Doty went over the Locally Preferred Alternative Selection Schedule handout with the group. There were questions about where the public outreach fits into the schedule. Ms. Doty transitioned to the public outreach plan.

IV. Public Outreach Plan (Deviation in Agenda Order)

Public Open Houses will be held along the corridor in August. Open house dates will be posted on the Southwest website as soon as they are finalized. News packets will be sent to major newspapers and neighborhood publications, as well as any publications requested by CAC members.

Ms. Doty commented that there has been some consideration amongst Southwest staff of attending community festivals like last summer. A CAC member suggested that Southwest staff attend the Urban League meetings. CAC members were also asked to suggest participants for a business forum planned for later this summer.

V. Conceptual Design Plans (Deviation in Agenda Order)

CAC members reviewed the conceptual design plans, commenting that it is really helpful to see the maps. Members were upset that the 3C sub-alternative was missing from the plans, but a smaller version was available for review.

A CAC member asked if BRT and LRT were ever considered in combination. Oscar Gonzalez (HDR Engineering) answered that the two technologies are not compatible together, so using them in combination on the same line would not work well.

Another CAC member asked if the Twins Baseball Club has a say in the alignment. They do not have a special voice in the alignment selection, though another CAC member commented that they are likely to get the service either via the 3A alternative, or the 3C sub-alternative.

VI. Open Forum

Christopher Lock, a resident of the Whittier Neighborhood in Minneapolis, came to the meeting to voice his support for the 3C alternative in a tunnel under Nicollet. He said that the density and abundance of destinations in his neighborhood make the neighborhood a better long-term location for LRT.