



## Southwest Transitway

### Meeting Notes

Southwest Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)  
January 23, 2008, 8:00 to 9:30 AM  
St. Louis Park City Hall

#### PAC Members and Alternates

|                   |                                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Gail Dorfman      | Hennepin County, PAC Chair          |
| Jean White        | Edina                               |
| Jim Brimeyer      | St. Louis Park                      |
| Jim Benshoof      | Eden Prairie Chamber                |
| Ralph Remington   | Minneapolis                         |
| Keith Downey      | Minneapolis Regional Chamber        |
| Amy Vennewitz     | Metropolitan Council                |
| Brian Willette    | Cedar Lake Park Association         |
| Bob Corrick       | Midtown Community Works Partnership |
| Janet Jeremiah    | Eden Prairie                        |
| Brian Lamb        | Metro Transit                       |
| Kathy Nelson      | Eden Prairie                        |
| Nancy Tyra-Lukens | Southwest Transit                   |

#### Other Attendees

|                                             |                 |                 |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Katie Walker, Hennepin County Study Manager | Art Higinbotham | CIDNA           |
| John DeWitt                                 | Robert Vockrodt | Mn/DOT          |
| Meg McMonigal                               | Rodgers Adams   | CIDNA           |
| Elise Durbin                                | Ellen Hacker    | Hennepin County |
| Don Pflaum                                  | Blair Tremere   | Hennepin County |
| Kim Malrick                                 | Kathie Doty     | KLD Consulting  |

#### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Commissioner Gail Dorfman, SW PAC Chair, opened the meeting and asked attendees to introduce themselves. Commissioner Dorfman asked Kathie Doty to report on recent SW outreach activities, including meetings with the Whittier, Cedar Isles Dean, Lowry Hill neighborhoods and the Cedar Lake Park Association. Commissioner Dorfman also referred to a recent article in the Hill & Lake Press, saying that she takes issue with some of the statements in this article which was submitted by Art Higinbotham. Mr. Higinbotham responded with questions about the upcoming Environmental Impact Statement process, and how members of the public could have input.

Brian Willette commented that the Cedar Lake Park Association wants to be sure that park and trail amenities are preserved if the LRT A Alternative is chosen. Bob Corrick reminded the Committee that LRT A does not go through parkland, but he also agreed that the park experience of this area should be preserved.

#### **II. Funding Subcommittee Update**

SW PAC Resolution #4 requesting the Met Council to move SW up in their planned priorities, had been laid over from the December 07 SW PAC meeting. Revisions to this resolution were discussed, and the revised resolution was moved, seconded, and passed on a unanimous voice vote.

#### **III. SW TAC Recommendations**

Commissioner Dorfman asked Katie Walker to review the SW Technical Advisory Committee recommendations on subalternatives to LRT A and LRT C, and on LRT 3D. First, Ms. Walker talked about the SW TAC recommendations that sub-alternatives LRT A-1 (Hennepin Avenue) and LRT C-1 (2nd/Marquette couplet) not be retained for consideration in the upcoming Southwest Transitway



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Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Each of these recommendations was addressed individually, and both passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Ms. Walker then reviewed the SW TAC recommendation on LRT 3D. The SW TAC recommendation was that, since Alternative LRT 3D is not consistent with regional and local planning, especially the Southwest Transitway Purpose and Need Statement, does not attain the same level of performance as Alternative LRT 3C, and presents significant operational issues for the overall LRT system (Hiawatha and Central), this alternative does not warrant inclusion in the Southwest Transitway DEIS process. Keith Downey asked about whether an alignment traveling so far to the east would have an impact on Hiawatha ridership. Council member Remington indicated support for the SW TAC recommendation, but also voiced concern about a perception that a SW LRT line is perceived as serving mainly suburban commuters. He further stated that working on funding for streetcars to connect SW LRT A and Hiawatha would be helpful in addressing this concern. Commissioner Dorfman indicated that she was also hearing that concern from city residents, but noted that there are limits on how many areas can be served by one LRT line. Brian Lamb provided some transit data that shed light on this topic: 35% of transit riders use transfers, and 38% of Hiawatha LRT riders get to stations via bus. He said this supports the need for a system approach. Commissioner Koblick said that she felt it was important to clearly articulate who the SW LRT line will serve and how connections will work. Brian Lamb also pointed out that the bus system is the core part of transit service and is also integral in connecting transitways. He pointed out that the Chicago Ave bus route is the highest used route in the metro area, serving 18,000 riders per day with service frequency similar to Hiawatha.

Bob Corrick responded to Commissioner Koblick, saying that he and John DeWitt had co-written a piece on who LRT will serve, and he offered to make this available to SW PAC members. Art Higinbotham interjected that he agreed that LRT 3D is fatally flawed, and then introduced another alignment, 3E. Commissioner Dorfman thanked Mr. Higinbotham and indicated to SW PAC members that Mr. Higinbotham had provided written information about this proposal.

After further discussion, the SW PAC voted on the SW TAC recommendation to not include LRT 3D in the SW DEIS process. This motion was passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Jim Brimeyer commented that it would be helpful to develop a public information piece explaining how the Midtown connection is an important part of the proposed transitway system. Keith Downey suggested that the impact on the downtown Intermodal Station is also of interest, and that he would like to see a presentation on this at a future SW PAC meeting. Brian Lamb offered to assist in preparing a presentation on this topic.

#### **IV. Legislative Update and Strategy Discussion**

Commissioner Dorfman described outreach activities to engage legislators through letters and resolutions of support for SW. Katie Walker distributed a summary piece that showed that SW was not successful in gaining funding at the congressional level. Hennepin County continues to work on getting funding for SW in the State bonding bill. The County is working with many other partners, including business chambers.

#### **V. Committee Reports**

Katie Walker reported on recent SW Community Advisory Committee activities, and distributed a preliminary list of environmental and community issues identified by the SW CAC.

In summary, Commissioner Dorfman stated that 2008 is a big year for the SW Transitway project in terms of requesting funding from Federal and State partners, and conducting a study that will lead us to a preferred alignment. She thanked the SW PAC for their continued involvement and support.