



## Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 16, 2012

1:30 - 3:00 pm

St. Louis Park City Hall

### Meeting Attendees

#### Steering Committee Members & Alternates

Chair Gail Dorfman, Hennepin County Member

Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) Member

Anne Mavity, City of St. Louis Park Member

Terry Schneider, City of Minnetonka Alternate

Jason Gadd, City of Hopkins Member

Dick Miller, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Member

Jeff Casale, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Alternate

Jim Hovland, City of Edina Member

Mary Brindle, City of Edina Alternate

Kathy Nelson, City of Eden Prairie Member

Jennifer Munt, Metropolitan Council Member

Caren Dewar, Urban Land Institute (ULI) – Minnesota Member

Anita Tabb, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Member

Bob Fine, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Alternate

#### Other Attendees

Katie Walker (Hennepin County), Adele Hall (Hennepin County), Patrick Connoy (Hennepin County), Kerri Pearce Ruch (Hennepin County), Dave Nuckols (Hennepin County), Kevin Locke (City of St. Louis Park), Paul Mogush (City of Minneapolis), Julie Wischnack (City of Minnetonka), Jackie Cherryhomes (Royalston Businesses), Kersten Elverum (City of Hopkins), Barry Schade (Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association), Louis Smith (Smith Partners), Larry Blackstad (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District), Mark Fuhrmann (Metro Transit), Sam O'Connell (Metro Transit), Kathryn Hansen (Metro Transit), Janet Jeremiah (City of Eden Prairie), Randy Newton (City of Eden Prairie), Farveh Makhssous (City of Eden Prairie), Steve Hogan (City of Minneapolis), Cathy Bennett (ULI-MN), Karen Lyons (Metropolitan Council), Susan Hoyt (Metropolitan Council), Ashley James (Metropolitan Council), Joan Vanhala (Alliance for Metropolitan Stability), Tim Johnson (Pro Source Technologies)

### I. Welcome & Introductions

Chair Gail Dorfman (Hennepin County Member) called the meeting to order and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

### II. June 21, 2012, Meeting Minutes

Chair Gail Dorfman (Hennepin County Member) presented the June 21, 2012 Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee for review and approval.

Dick Miller (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Member) moved to approve the minutes; Ann Mavity (St. Louis Park Member) seconded this motion, and the minutes were approved on a voice vote.

### **III. Development Workshop**

Caren Dewar (ULI-MN Member) reported that the purpose of the workshop is to identify priority stations and look closely at housing and economic development opportunities in those stations. The workshop will aid cities in talking with developers, add to the Transitional Station Area Action Plans (TSAAP), and be a tool for Southwest Project Office (SPO) staff as the LRT project moves into Preliminary Engineering. Ms. Dewar added that ULI is working with Will Fleissig to create an outline for the workshop and are considering November 14 and 15 for dates.

Terry Schneider (Minnetonka Alternate) moved to direct the Technical Implementation Committee Principals to set the goals, identify participants, and set the agenda, then report to the Steering Committee at the September meeting; Mary Brindle (Edina Alternate) seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote.

### **IV. Business Investment Partnership**

Louis Smith, Smith Partners, presented an update on his work to explore interest in forming a Business Investment Partnership. The Partnership would be established by interested corporate leaders along the Southwest LRT line and is intended to provide a forum and vehicle for corporations to align their long-term investments in the corridor. Mr. Smith reported that many corporations along the Southwest LRT line have expressed strong support for the formation of the group. The group is expected to meet on a quarterly basis starting with an initial meeting on Thursday, October 11, 2012, from 8:30 to 10:00 AM, location to be determined. Mr. Smith extended an invite to James Campbell, former CEO of Wells Fargo, and he has agreed to serve as the chair of the group for the first year. To facilitate communications and integration with the work for the Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee, a member of the Steering Committee will be asked to serve as an ex-officio member of the Partnership and Mr. Smith will be asked to provide periodic updates to the Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee on the work of the Partnership.

Anne Mavity (St. Louis Park Member) motioned to appoint Chair Dorfman (Hennepin County Member) as an ex officio member of the Business Investment Partnership. Terry Schneider (Minnetonka Alternate) seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved on a voice vote.

### **V. City West Station Presentation**

Chair Dorfman introduced Janet Jeremiah, City of Eden Prairie, who presented on the City West Station, one of five proposed stations in Eden Prairie. There are over 70 acres of vacant land, 370 housing units, and 750,000 square feet of office space today. The United Health Group (UHG) office campus, currently under-construction, will add 1.5 million square feet of office space in four buildings. The buildings will be occupied in 2013 and 2014, before LRT construction.

The City of Eden Prairie negotiated with UHG to set aside over five acres of their site for LRT and park and ride after polling results showed that UHG employees would use LRT; The land is currently held by the City. There is also a conservation easement across the land to the south that could be available to the LRT project. In exchange for the land, the City allowed higher density development. In advance, the City did some concepts to see how LRT and parking would interface with the development, but UHG will pay for the integration of LRT into their campus.

UHG is building trails around the campus that will connect to the station. As part of the development, UHG completed a Transportation Demand Management plan, which includes bike parking, car pool preference, and improvements to nearby roads. UHG will pay for \$25 million in road improvements including the Shady Oak Road from the site south to Highway 212, the ramps to Trunk Highway 62, 62<sup>nd</sup> Street, and the Shady Oak bridge over Highway 212. The improvements are needed today and will become critical when the campus is occupied. A special service

district for streetscape, wayfinding, and other needs will be formed that will ideally involve other property owners, as well.

Ms. Jeremiah added that UHG has a shuttle between its Minnetonka, Edina, and Eden Prairie offices. The UHG Optum group building is near the Mitchell and Southwest, and Town Center stations, and UHG purchased the former ADC campus, as well.

## **VI. Station Area Profiles**

Katie Walker, Hennepin County, reported that staff from the cities, Hennepin County SPO, and Metropolitan Council are working to prepare station area profiles to be used by staff, policy makers, and community and business advisory committee members for public information, marketing, and tours. Information gathered for the profiles will also be used in the annual submittal of the New Starts application in the land use and economic development section. Peter McLaughlin (HCRRA Member) recommended that as the profiles are being put together staff should consult with greater MSP so that they can use the profiles, too. In addition, Mr. McLaughlin recommended that the route map include other rail lines including Hiawatha LRT, Central LRT, Northstar and the future Bottineau line. Chair Dorfman noted that the profiles will be put into a booklet that includes corridor information. Kathy Nelson (Eden Prairie Member) noted that the photos need to be attractive and of things that demonstrate what we want the corridor to be. Anne Mavity (St. Louis Park Member) asked how we will tie all of the stations together, but also have the unique identity of the station to come through. Jennifer Munt (Metropolitan Council Member) added that there is a real desire from the community for information like this—they want to know about their station but also the others.

Anita Tabb (Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Member) motioned to direct Community Works staff to work with City, Metropolitan Council, and Southwest Project Office staff to prepare station profiles for the September 20, 2012 Steering Committee. Ms. Munt seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously approved on a voice vote.

## **VII. Updates**

Corridor Housing Strategy: Cathy Bennett, ULI-MN, reported that Hennepin County received a \$25,000 Local Implementation Capacity grant for a corridor wide housing inventory. The Request for Proposals (RFP) was released in July and six consultant proposals were received. A consultant selection committee composed of representatives from the corridor cities, Hennepin County, Metropolitan Council, ULI-MN, Family Housing Fund and Local Implementation Support Corporation staff was assembled to review the proposals and recommend a preferred consultant. The housing inventory is anticipated to begin in late September and take two to three months to complete. The information generated through the corridor wide housing inventory will be used to develop the broader corridor wide housing strategy and as an input into the Southwest Transitional Station Area Action Plans (TSAAP). Anne Mavity (St. Louis Park Member) asked what format the report will be in. Ms. Bennett responded that the consultants have been asked to propose the best format for use and presentation of the materials.

RailVolution: Chair Dorfman asked Julie Wischnack, City of Minnetonka, to provide some background on the upcoming RailVolution Conference. The RailVolution Conference will be held in Los Angeles from October 13-17<sup>th</sup> and is a great opportunity to network with colleagues across the country and learn best practices. Many representatives from the Twin Cities, including Katie Walker (Hennepin County staff) and Julie Wischnack (City of Minnetonka staff) will be presenting at this year's conference. In 2014, the conference will be held in the Twin Cities and Southwest will be prominently featured.

Community Advisory Committee (CAC): Jennifer Munt (Metropolitan Council Member) reported that at their August meeting the CAC heard presentations and discussed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and the Final EIS and community comment on the documents. Top issues for the group are connections, station area planning, and bus route restructuring. The schedule the items so that they weigh in when appropriate.

Business Advisory Committee (BAC): The BAC held their first meeting in August; information was included in the Steering Committee packet. The group expressed interest in going on a Central Corridor tour and talking to those businesses.

Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Katie Walker, Hennepin County, reported that Hennepin County and Southwest Project Office staff is actively working with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) on the final version of the document. It is continuing through legal review now, then will be published, which is when the 45 day public comment period will start. Three official public hearings will be held in locations along the corridor. Those wishing to comment can attend a public hearing and provide verbal testimony or they can, email, fax, and mail comments to Hennepin County. Hennepin County will collect the comments, and then Metropolitan Council will respond to the comments through the Preliminary Engineering and Final Environmental Impact Statement processes.

Corridors of Opportunity Community Engagement: Susan Hoyt, Metropolitan Council, reported that a second round of Community Engagement grants will be awarded in September. The Community Engagement approach is being integrated into Thrive 2040, the updated regional plan.

Preliminary Engineering Services Contract: Mark Fuhrmann, Southwest LRT Project Office, reported that the Metropolitan Council canceled the existing contract three weeks ago due to concerns with public safety. The Council directed staff to reissue the request for proposals in three parts: seek new procurement process for two firms that will provide ES for two geographic segments of the line, then procure a third contract for reviewing all technical documents and oversight. Peter McLaughlin (HCRRRA Member) noted that there is still some ambiguity about what the new federal transportation bill means for the New Starts program. Funding levels in the new bill are about the same, but the structure of the program could change and there could be some easing of regulatory approvals. FTA will issue guidance, and then rules, then possibly congress would pass a technical fix bill. Eased regulations seem to apply more to roads projects, transit projects are less certain and we will use the old rules for the time being. There is now explicit recognition of a program of projects which would not be subject to the same review as New Starts projects, and there are core capacity projects for cities with aging systems— such as New York and Boston— that are now eligible for New Starts. This means more competition for the funds, but also perhaps a broader coalition for more money for the program.

Ms. Munt (Metropolitan Council Member) reported that the New American Academy is hosting a Dayton administration event in Eden Prairie. They are looking to bring in 1,000 people to tell the Governor how important transportation options are for getting to the University of Minnesota and for entrepreneurial opportunities.

Transitional Station Area Action Plans (TSAAP): Katie Walker, Hennepin County staff, reported that five proposals were received for the TSAAP work from AECOM, Calthorpe, Hay Dobbs, HKGi, and Stantec. The TIC Principals group acted as the selection committee, interviewed three firms, recommended one firm and Hennepin County staff are in the process of negotiating a consultant agreement. The TSAAP work is expected to begin in October and be completed in 12 months.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm. The next Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, September 20, at 1:30 pm at the St. Louis Park City Hall.