

Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 15, 2014

1:30-3:00pm, St Louis Park City Hall

Meeting Attendees

Steering Committee Members & Alternates

Vice Chair James Hovland, City of Edina Member

Linda Higgins, Hennepin County Member

Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin Regional Railroad Authority Member

Jason Gadd, City of Hopkins Member

Ann Mavity, St. Louis Park Member

Terry Schneider, City of Minnetonka Member

Tony Wagner, City of Minnetonka Member

Dick Miller, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Member

Jeff Casale, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Alternate

Anita Tabb, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board Member

Nancy Tyra-Lukens, Southwest Transit Member

Other Attendees

Katie Walker (Hennepin County), Kerri Pearce Ruch (Hennepin County), Chuck Darnell (Hennepin County), Cathy Bennett (ULI), Barry Schade (Bryn Mawr), Kersten Elverum (Hopkins), Kevin Locke (SLP), Cathy Bennett (ULIMN), Jeanette Colby (KIAA/CAC), Janet Jeremiah (EP), Vida Y Ditter (Bryn Mawr/ROC), Kathryn Hansen (SW LRT Project Office), Karen Lyons (Metropolitan Council), Sara Schmitt (KLD), Kathie Doty (KLD)

I. Welcome

Vice Chair James Hovland convened the meeting and announced that Minneapolis appointed Council member Lisa Goodman as an alternate to the Committee. He also reminded members about the upcoming grand opening of the Interchange (new Target Field station) on May 17, and about the annual conference for the University Center for Transportation Studies on May 22 that will include Commissioner McLaughlin and Mayor Schneider as speakers. He then introduced and welcomed the new Metro Transit Transit Oriented Development Office Director, Lucy Galbraith.

II. Approval of April 17, 2014 Minutes

Vice Chair Hovland asked for a motion on the minutes from the April 17, 2014 Steering Committee meeting. The minutes were moved and seconded, and passed on a voice vote.

III. Corridor Wide Housing Gaps Analysis

Vice Chair Hovland asked Katie Walker, Southwest LRT Community Works Manager, to introduce the presentation. Elise Durbin, Minnetonka staff, and Brent Wittenberg, Marquette Advisors,

provided an overview of the work and preliminary thoughts on what we expect to learn. The funding partners for this work have contributed \$90,000 to conduct the analysis, and sit on a subcommittee that will guide the work. The work began in February, and a progress report will be made to Steering Committee at the July meeting. Mr. Wittenberg outlined the approach for the analysis, saying that we hope to learn more about who might want to live along the SW corridor in the future and compare those projections to the current housing stock, taking a forward-looking approach. Preliminary findings indicate that there is strong potential to provide a full range of housing options along the corridor, in part due to the emerging network or system approach. He cautioned, however, that it won't just happen; government leaders will need to set the stage for strong development. He outlined several challenges we will need to address, including high land values and how that makes development of equitable housing more difficult, and issues related to preserving naturally occurring affordable housing.

Committee members asked what we can do to preserve existing affordable housing. Mr. Wittenberg said there is no one strategy, but a range of options including structuring tax incentives. Members further discussed the challenges of incentivizing the development of affordable housing as well as preserving existing naturally occurring affordable housing, and how this issue is uneven along the corridor, with some areas facing much bigger challenges than others.

IV. New Starts Storyline Update

Vice Chair Hovland introduced Alene Tchourmof, Hennepin County, to provide an update. Ms. Tchourmof reported on a recent brainstorming session to capture key themes. Themes that emerged include: strong civic infrastructure that translates to a focus on innovating, strong partnerships, a commitment to building the "last mile", and commitment to funding projects. Member McLaughlin (HCRRA) talked about the possibility of using the fiscal disparities tool to use growth to capitalize "last mile" improvements. Committee members agreed that now is a good time to re-examine ways to pay for "last mile" improvements and affordable housing.

V. Southwest TOD Implementation Strategy

Vice Chair Hovland invited GB Arrington, GB Placemaking, to present on the need to develop a TOD Implementation Strategy specific to the Southwest Corridor. Mr. Arrington noted that our corridor is transitioning from planning activities to implementation. Strategies to consider include preparing master development plans and revising zoning codes. He proposed developing corridor wide strategies through workshops with key stakeholders. Member Schneider (Minnetonka) observed that some corporations are cautious about undertaking projects until a transit line is under construction. Members talked about how there is a growing interest from the business community as more projects move forward and the benefits become more visible. Vice Chair Hovland asked Janet Jeremiah, Eden Prairie staff, how Eden Prairie balanced the need for parking at the United Health development with the anticipation of light rail. Ms. Jeremiah explained the city's process and expressed that there were challenges in persuading United Health to limit parking. Member Mavity (St. Louis Park) raised a concern about lack of alignment between the Met Council LRT plans and the Investment Framework strategies. Committee members discussed and exchanged information about their specific experiences.

Adjournment

Vice Chair Hovland adjourned the meeting. The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be held on June 19, 2014.