



**Southwest LRT Community Works Steering
Committee Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, June 19, 2014

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

Meeting Attendees

Steering Committee Members & Alternates

Chair Jan Callison, Hennepin County Member

Linda Higgins, Hennepin County Member

Ann Mavity, St. Louis Park Member

Terry Schneider, City of Minnetonka Member

Dick Miller, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Member

Jeff Casale, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Alternate

Linea Palmisano, City of Minneapolis Member

James Hovland, City of Edina Member

Anita Tabb, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board Member

Other Attendees

Katie Walker (Hennepin County Staff), Karen Lyons (Metropolitan Council), Elise Durbin (Minnetonka), Janet Guthrie (Ramsey County), Louis Smith (Southwest Corridor Investment Partnership), Amanda Kappes (MICAH) Emily Goellner (SLP), Larry Blackstad (MCWD), Kersten Elverum (Hopkins), Kathryn Hansen (SPO), Meg McMonigal (SLP), Patricia Fitzgerald (Hennepin County), Kersten Elverum (Hopkins), La Shella Sims (MICAH), Vida Y Ditter (ROC/BMNA), Michael Krantz (SPO), Kim Koempel (SPO), Janet Jeremiah (EP), Cathy Bennett (MN/RCM), Scott Ochsner (MEDA), Sara Schmitt (KLD), Kathie Doty (KLD Consulting)

Guest Panelists

Janet Guthrie, Yingling Fan, Louis Smith, Aaron Corcoran (for Mike Christenson)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Callison convened the meeting and reminded committee members about the recent opening of the Green Line (Central Corridor). She referred to a recent news article about significant development that is occurring along the Green Line. Next, Chair Callison provided updates on the municipal consent process; Hopkins is the first city to take action on municipal approval; Minnetonka is expected to take action next week; Eden Prairie has postponed action until July 14; St Louis Park is planned for July 7; Minneapolis has not scheduled their action yet. Two public hearings have been held by Hennepin County and the resolution to provide municipal approval was introduced past Tuesday and will likely be taken up the following week. Attendees also received a copy of the Equity Statement developed by a number of different groups interested in equity along the planned Southwest LRT line.

II. Approval of May 15, 2014 Minutes

Chair Callison noted that the draft minutes that were previously distributed had been corrected to show that member Linea Palmisano attended the May meeting. The minutes were moved, seconded and passed on a voice vote.

III. Panel Presentation and Discussion: Connecting Transit, Jobs and Workforce Development

Chair Callison introduced the panel members: Professor Yingling Fan from the University of Minnesota, Janet Guthrie from the Ramsey County Managers Office, Louis Smith with Smith Partners PLLP, and Aaron Corcoran, filling in for Mike Christenson from MCTC.

Panel members presented overviews of their work around job creation and increasing access to jobs.

Mr. Corcoran began with background on his work with Mr. Christenson on MCTC Works, a job connection program for students with an associate degree; the goal is to connect students with jobs after graduation. Mr. Corcoran asserted that approximately half to ¾ of jobs along the planned SW line could be filled with associate degree positions.

Professor Fan introduced her research work on accessibility benefits associated with transitway investments. One finding was that the Hiawatha line has had a significant and measureable positive impact on regional job accessibility. Professor Fan also emphasized that job creation near transitways is as important, if not more important, than developing new housing options. Louis Smith discussed his work with private institutions and how they can align their investments strategically along the corridor. He noted that business interests are not about charity but rather focus on long-term strategic interests. He works with the Southwest Investment Partnership, which is focused on connecting to future workforces through investments in the transit corridor. Janet Guthrie discussed how our regional transportation systems are not currently serving the low-income communities well. The Corridors 2 Careers project addresses a lack of connections between low-income residents and job opportunities in the Green Line corridor. Ms. Guthrie noted that a majority of residents surveyed had no knowledge of the workforce resources available to them.

Chair Callison started the discussion by asking Committee members for questions and comments. Terry Schneider questioned, given that we're looking at a future shortage of workers, why there's not more coordination and focus on developing long-term strategies. Janet Guthrie agreed that there are many stakeholders working on workforce development and a fragmentation of effort. She also noted that employers often do not see the benefits in or are ambivalent about investments in better transit infrastructure, while workers see a need for better access to jobs and better transit options. Anne Mavity commented that her experience indicates that disconnects between jobs and the workforce are related to education. Aaron Corcoran responded that many students have developmental needs that require extra effort. Ms. Fan said that employers should be motivated to locate along transit corridors, for one reason, to make them more attractive to young talent. Even though a majority of workers drive cars to work, they still want to live in a metro area that is well served by transit. She also noted that many employers in our region are unaware of regional plans to develop a system of transitways.

Louis Smith talked about two kinds of issues: those around regional economic competitiveness, and those related to addressing the mismatch between available jobs and available workers. Mr. Corcoran said that his analysis showed that there are lots of jobs in the Southwest corridor, but the question is whether we can get people to them efficiently. Ms. Mavity asked about what local government leaders should do to support a better match. Ms. Guthrie responded that there are significant gaps in knowledge and understanding between the public and private sectors around workforce development issues, and therefore, there is a need to find more ways to communicate and to work together. The Committee discussed a number of other issues around workforce development with panel members.

Chair Callison wrapped up the panel discussion, then concluded the meeting. She proposed that the August 21st Steering Committee Meeting be cancelled. The next meeting will be held July 17, 2014.