



## Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

Meeting Notes

Thursday, October 20, 2011

1:30 - 3:00 pm

St. Louis Park City Hall

### Meeting Attendees

#### Steering Committee Members & Alternates

Vice-Chair Jim Hovland, City of Edina Member

Jan Callison, Hennepin County Member

Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority Member

Anne Mavity, City of St. Louis Park Member

Tony Wagner, City of Minnetonka Member

Jennifer Munt, Metropolitan Council Member

Mary Brindle, City of Edina Alternate

#### Other Attendees

Katie Walker (Hennepin County), Patrick Connoy (Hennepin County), Adele Hall (Hennepin County), Carol Lezotte Anderson (Hennepin County), Lisa Middag (Hennepin County), Mark Fuhrmann (Metro Transit), Karin Berkholtz (City of Minneapolis), Karen Lyons (Metropolitan Council), Dick Miller (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District), Jeff Casale (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District), Caren Dewar (ULI Minnesota), Kersten Elverum (City of Hopkins), Julie Wischnack (City of Minnetonka), Kevin Locke (City of St. Louis Park), Meg McMonigal (City of St. Louis Park), Brian Shekleton (Hennepin County), Chuck Salter (Hennepin County), Randy Newton (City of Eden Prairie), Jeff Benson (URS Corporation), Louis Smith (Smith Partners), Susan Hoyt (Metropolitan Council), Larry Blackstad (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District), Marc Hedman (University of St. Thomas law student), Clay Harris (Minneapolis Resident)

### I. Welcome & Introductions

Vice-Chair Jim Hovland (Edina Member) opened the meeting and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

### II. September 15, 2011, Meeting Minutes

Vice-Chair Jim Hovland (Edina Member) asked for review and action on the minutes from the September 15, 2011, Steering Committee meeting. Anne Mavity (St. Louis Park Member) asked that the minutes be amended to strike "Ms. Mavity conceded the point." Ms. Mavity then moved to approve the amended minutes; Peter McLaughlin (HCRRA Member) seconded this motion, and the minutes were approved on a voice vote, with Tony Wagner (Minnetonka Member) abstaining.

### **III. Updates**

#### Transitional Station Area Action Plans

Patrick Connoy, Hennepin County, noted that the Request for Proposals for Transitional Station Area Action Plans has been rescinded due to expressed conflict of interest issues with the Metropolitan Council's pending engineering services request for proposals process. The RFP will be re-released after the Preliminary Engineering contract is let. Mr. Connoy commented that he thought the revised timing would allow for more coordination between Preliminary Engineering and Station Area Planning work. Mark Fuhrmann, Metro Transit, concurred and added that the engineering services contract is expected to be let by the end of first quarter, 2012.

#### Hopkins Cold Storage Site Acquisition

Jeff Casale, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD), updated the Steering Committee on MCWD's recent acquisition of the Hopkins Cold Storage site near the proposed Blake Road Southwest LRT station. The cold storage facility houses a tenant with three more years on their lease. When the lease ends, the building will be razed, the creek will be restored, and the rest of the land will be available for development. The site will be rezoned mixed-use, according to the Hopkins comprehensive plan. Developers have already expressed interest in the site.

### **IV. Technical Implementation Committee (TIC) Update & Membership Recommendation**

Julie Wischnack, City of Minnetonka, said that the TIC spent time at the recent meeting working on a plan for Community Works internal and external communications. Several TIC members recently attended the Railvolution conference in Washington, D.C. and plan to share lessons learned at an upcoming meeting.

Ms. Wischnack moved on to review the membership structure that the TIC proposes for the Steering Committee. The TIC suggests that the membership be limited to 20, including ex-officio members, and that membership should retain the flexibility to be expanded and contracted as projects change. Ex-officio membership for the Urban Land Institute (ULI), the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) are recommended. Public and private members are welcome, but in order for an entity to be considered for membership they must have a vision or mission that aligns with Southwest LRT Community Works, and they must have the assets and authority to implement a Community Works project. Jan Callison (Hennepin County Member) commented that the flexibility of adding and subtracting members was a good idea, but questioned how members would leave the group. Mary Brindle (Edina Alternate) suggested that perhaps agencies and people who were project specific could participate on another committee level. Mark Fuhrmann, Metro Transit, commented that the LRT Corridor Management Committee membership stays fixed throughout the duration of the project, but that advisory committees are more flexible and sensitive to projects and issues. Peter McLaughlin (HCRRRA Member) added that the membership on the Midtown Community Works Partnership is fairly narrow, but that some new seats were added and two members stayed on. Caren Dewar, ULI-Minnesota, commented that the Steering Committee might want to hear Louis Smith's presentation on corporate involvement before deciding on the membership recommendations. Anne Mavity (St. Louis Park Member) noted that she would like to know more about the activities of the CAC and BAC. Katie Walker, Hennepin County, responded that the BAC has not yet been convened, but the CAC is an active group and their mission, membership, and meeting materials can be found on the Hennepin County Southwest LRT project website, southwesttransitway.org.

### **V. Corporate Outreach Strategy (agenda item moved)**

Louis Smith, Smith Partners, explained his charge to engage business leaders regarding long-term investment interests in the Southwest corridor. With input from city staff and using criteria such as number of employees, property ownership, and developers with stakes along the corridor, Mr. Smith developed a list of prospective businesses and is beginning to meet with them. The meetings are designed to get a sense of the businesses' commitment to the corridor, to make a connection with an upper level employee with the ability to make things happen within the business, and to explore the possibility of investment in the corridor.

Though he has not met with all of the prospective businesses yet, Mr. Smith has developed some insights about their potential involvement in Southwest LRT Community Works: they are likely not going to be interested in attending monthly meetings, and they likely won't have quite the same agenda as the Steering Committee members. A business leaders' investment forum that meets outside of the Steering Committee might be more appropriate. Jim Hovland (Edina Member) asked how this group would differ from the BAC. Katie Walker, Hennepin County, responded that though the BAC role and function is still developing, it will likely be more geared toward businesses along the line and those directly affected by the LRT engineering and construction. Mark Fuhrmann, Metro Transit, added that for the Central Corridor LRT project the BAC was composed of property managers and day-to-day operations staff, but not executive-level staff. Peter McLaughlin (HCRRA Member) noted that for developing the economic vision for the corridor, Mr. Smith's approach makes a lot of sense. Jan Callison (Hennepin County Member) asked if the forum would be a group that would work with Southwest LRT advocates at the Legislature. Mr. Smith said yes. Mr. McLaughlin reminded the group that these companies also bring lobbying resources to the table. Mary Brindle (Edina Alternate) asked if Metro MSP would be a good partner. Mr. McLaughlin responded that they have been using a lot of transit in their marketing, but that they have not engaged in lobbying efforts. Jennifer Munt (Metropolitan Council Member) noted that Governor Dayton is hosting an economic development workshop and the participating businesses would be a good place to look for participants. Ms. Callison brought the group back to the membership recommendation, noting that with clarification of the 20 member cap including ex-officio members and the Steering Committee using subcommittees to incorporate temporary project-based participants, she would like to move the membership recommendation. Anne Mavity (St. Louis Park Member) seconded, and the motion carried on a voice vote. Membership nominations can begin at the next meeting.

#### **VI. Coordinated Legislative Approach**

Katie Walker, Hennepin County, stated that the Steering Committee will be part of a coordinated strategy to advocate for Southwest LRT at the legislature. Jan Callison (Hennepin County Member) noted that the \$25 million Metropolitan Council bonding request to the legislature is the top priority. Peter McLaughlin (HCRRA Member) added that Metropolitan Council is organizing a tour for Senator Gimse and Representative Beard, the Counties Transit Improvement Board executive committee is working on messaging, and the St. Paul and Minneapolis Chambers just hired Will Schroeder to advocate for transit. Mark Fuhrmann, Metro Transit, added that Metro Transit staff just took Governor Dayton's staff on a tour, and is planning a briefing with the Governor soon. Caren Dewar, ULI-Minnesota, noted that the ULI does not lobby, but is affiliated with a national organization of real estate professionals who do.

#### **VII. Interchange Presentation**

Ed Hunter, Redhawk Consulting, presented on the Interchange project near Target Field Station in the North Loop Neighborhood of Minneapolis. The goals of the project are to provide improved transit connections, enhanced LRT operations on game days, necessary LRT facilities, and to incite development in the area. It is expected that during Interchange construction, Hiawatha LRT will use the Warehouse District Station as its terminus. The Interchange is anticipated to be operational on April 1, 2014, in time for baseball season. Details are available in the attached presentation.

#### **VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00. The next Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, November 17, at 1:30 pm at the St. Louis Park City Hall.