



# SOUTHWEST LRT community works

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connecting people to jobs, housing, shopping, and fun.

## Southwest Community Works Steering Committee

### Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 15, 2016 – 1:30 – 3:00 PM St. Louis Park City Hall

### Meeting Attendees:

#### Steering Committee Members and Alternates

Chair Jan Callison, Hennepin County member  
Marion Greene, HCRRA member  
Mary Brindle, City of Edina, alternate  
Terry Schneider, City of Minnetonka alternate  
Kathy Nelson, City of Eden Prairie member  
Cathy Bennett, ULI-MN alternate

Linda Higgins, Hennepin County member  
Linea Palmisano, City of Minneapolis member  
Kristi Halverson, City of Hopkins member  
Tim Brausen, City of St. Louis Park alternate  
Kurt Rogness, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District alternate  
Meg Forney, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board alternate

Other attendees: Kathryn Hansen (SPO), Barry Schade (Bryn Mawr neighborhood), Vita Ditter (Bryn Mawr neighborhood), Margo Geffen (HC), Meg Beekman (Hopkins), Brian Schaffer (Mpls), Allyson Sellwood (HC), Larry Blackstad (MCWD), Warren Hanson (GMHF), Rachel Robinson (GMHF), Nkongo Cigolo (SPO), Jim Alexander (SPO), Oliver Smith (HC), Alisha Grey (Minnetonka), Julie Wischnack (Minnetonka), Kersten Elverum (Hopkins), Janet Jeremiah (Eden Prairie), Meg McMonigal (SLP), Michael Hayman (MCWD), Marney Olson (SLP)

- I. **Welcome and Announcements:** Chair Jan Callison called the meeting to order at 1:34 PM. She provided an update on Hennepin County’s current TOD round with applications due October 6<sup>th</sup>. She also reminded the group that Rail~volution is coming up October 9-12<sup>th</sup> in San Francisco and the Bay Area. A number of SW staff and policy makers are attending or presenting.
- II. **LRT Project Update:** Jim Alexander from the Southwest Project Office (SPO), provided an update on the current LRT project status. He noted that the local funding match had been secured and reviewed the various sources. He also noted that the environmental reviews complete. Mr. Alexander reviewed upcoming project milestones including the construction contracts and hiring for construction related positions. Questions from the Steering Committee included additional information on Certificates of Participation, commitment of federal funds to the project and questions relating to Light Rail Vehicles (LRVs).
- III. **Approval of May 2016 minutes:** Chair Callison asked for approval of the minutes; Councilmember Kathy Nelson moved the minutes and Councilmember Linnea Palmisano seconded. Minutes were approved on a voice vote.



**IV. Committee Updates:** An update on the Community Advisory Committee and the Business Advisory Committee was also provided by Jim Alexander. He noted that members recently attended the Governor's SWLRT Forum and that the groups would return to a regular meeting schedule. Kerri Pearce Ruch, Hennepin County, provided an update on the Technical Implementation Committee meetings, noting that the group has been discussing greenspace along the LRT corridor and development projects planned or underway at station areas.

**V. Finance Strategy Update:** Julie Wischnack, City of Minnetonka, provided an update from the staff group that has been working on finance tools and strategy. She began by providing an overview of different types of TIF districts and draft legislation that the group had developed. The draft legislation changes how a project would qualify for TIF and this would allow cities to work together and maximize their TIF benefits. Steering committee feedback included using broad language like "pedestrian amenities" for qualifying items, adding wetland enhancement and open space and avoiding the need to ask for TIF extensions. Ms. Wischnack noted that the group discussed adding open space and decided against it. Commissioner Callison commented that affordable housing needs should be mentioned and Councilmember Brindle from Edina asked that multimodal infrastructure and circulation connections should also be included. Questions included would the "substandard" designation include contaminated soils, can TIF districts extend into different cities and how do different cities along the corridor use TIF and how much.

**VI. Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) Fund:** Warren Hanson and Rachel Robinson from Greater Minnesota Housing Fund presented on the newly-created NOAH Fund. They noted that affordable housing is either subsidized in some form or naturally-occurring, due to low rents. There is a large concentration of naturally occurring affordable along the SW LRT Corridor. The NOAH Fund works to counteract the loss of naturally occurring affordable housing as either affordability periods run out or properties are sold to developers who will improve properties minimally and raise rents considerably which prices current tenants out of these properties. Considerable displacement has taken place in the Twin Cities recently due to loss of NOAH. This fund will be established by the end of 2016 with different sources, and it would keep 1,000 units of affordable housing affordable for 15 years.

The NOAH Fund is administered through the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund. It offers a lower cost of financing and is working with developers Aeon and Common Bond. Light rehab can be done on the properties purchased through this fund if needed, and the fund won't purchase properties that need a very large amount of investment (such as properties where former ownership was negligent with repairs/maintenance). AMI for renters in these properties will be around 60%-80%. Lots of development will occur with the SWLRT investment, but these types of NOAH properties usually redevelop out of the price range of their current residents. The NOAH fund would like to partner with all of the cities on the line to identify properties and areas where intervention is needed (these are known as properties in the "path of possible gentrification").

Questions from Steering Committee members included will the NOAH properties be brought up to code if they are currently substandard, is 15 years of affordability long enough and is this only for rental properties or home ownership opportunities as well.

**VII. Round Robin City Development Update** – postponed due to lack of time.

Commissioner Callison reminded attendees of the next meeting. Meeting adjourned at 3:05pm.