



Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

Thursday, April 17, 2014

1:30 – 3:00 PM

Council Chambers, St. Louis Park City Hall

Agenda

- | | |
|---|---|
| I. Welcome and Introductions
Chair Jan Callison, Hennepin County | 1:30 to 1:40 PM |
| II. Approval of February 2014 Meeting Minutes*
Chair Jan Callison, Hennepin County | 1:40 to 1:45 PM |
| III. Southwest Corridor Investment Framework | 1:45 to 2:15 PM
(update & discussion) |
| IV. Southwest LRT New Starts Application Presentation
Kathryn Hansen, Southwest LRT Project Office
Karen Lyons, Metropolitan Council | 2:15 to 3:00 PM
(Presentation) |
| V. Adjournment | |

* enclosed

The next Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, May 15, 2014 at the St. Louis Park City Hall at 1:30 PM.



SOUTHWEST LRT community works

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www.swlrtccommunityworks.org

Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

2014 Meeting Schedule

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month at 1:30 PM at the St. Louis Park City Hall, Councilchambers.

January 16

February 20

~~March 20~~

April 17

May 15

June 19

July 17

August 21

September 18

October 16

November 20

December 18

**Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee
Roster (March 2014)**

Representing	Name	Member	Email Address
Hennepin County	Jan Callison (Chair)	Member	jan.callison@hennepin.us
	Linda Higgins	Member	Linda.higgins@hennepin.us
Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority	Peter McLaughlin	Member	peter.mclaughlin@hennepin.us
Metropolitan Council	Jennifer Munt	Member	jennifer.munt@metc.state.mn.us
City of Minneapolis	Linea Palmisano	Member	Linea.palmisano@minneapolismn.gov
		Alternate	
City of St. Louis Park	Anne Mavity	Member	annemavityslp@comcast.net
	Sue Sanger	Alternate	suesanger@comcast.net
City of Edina	James Hovland	Member	jhovland@ci.edina.mn.us
	Mary Brindle	Alternate	mbrindle@comcast.net
City of Hopkins	Jason Gadd	Member	jason@nexgenassociates.com
	Molly Cummings	Alternate	MollyECummings@aol.com
City of Minnetonka	Tony Wagner	Member	twagner@eminnetonka.com
	Terry Schneider	Alternate	tschneider@eminnetonka.com
City of Eden Prairie	Kathy Nelson	Member	knelson@edenprairie.org
	Brad Aho	Alternate	baho@edenprairie.org
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District	Dick Miller	Member	dickmiller@gmail.com
	Jeff Casale	Alternate	jcasale@minnesotahomes.com
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Anita Tabb	Member	atabb@minneapolisparcs.org,
	Meg Forney	Alternate	mforney@minneapolisparcs.org
SouthWest Transit	Nancy Tyra-Lukens	Member	ntyra-lukens@edenprairie.org
Urban Land Institute-Minnesota	Caren Dewar	Ex-officio	caren.dewar@uli.org
Community Advisory Committee	Jeanette Colby	Ex-officio	jmcolby@earthlink.net
Business Advisory Council		Ex-officio	

Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 20, 2014

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

Meeting Attendees

Steering Committee Members & Alternates

Chair Gail Dorfman, Hennepin County Member

Jan Callison, Hennepin County Member

Linea Palmisano, City of Minneapolis Member

Anne Mavity, St. Louis Park Member

Sue Sanger, St. Louis Park Alternate

Jason Gadd, City of Hopkins Member

Terry Schneider, Minnetonka Member

Kathy Nelson, Eden Prairie Member

Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin Regional RR Authority Member

Dick Miller, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Member

Jeff Casale, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Alternate

Anita Tabb, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Member

Meg Forney, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Alternate

Nancy Tyra-Lukens, Southwest Transit Member

Other Attendees

Commissioner Linda Higgins (Hennepin County), Katie Walker (Hennepin County), Kerri Pearce Ruch (Hennepin County), Chuck Darnell (Hennepin County), Julie Wischnack (Minnetonka), Meg McMonigal (St. Louis Park), Kersten Elverum (Hopkins), Larry Blackstad (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District), Vida Ditter (ROC/Bryn Mawr), Karen Lyons (Met Council), John Doan (Hennepin County), Eric Anderson (Hopkins resident), Kathryn Hansen (SPO), La Shelle Sims (MICA), Nora Riemenschneider (Met Council), Bob Wick (St. Louis Park), Sara Schmitt (KLD), Kathie Doty (KLD Consulting)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Gail Dorfman convened the meeting and informed attendees that this will be the last meeting at which she will chair. Chair Dorfman provided updates on Committee membership: Jan Callison has agreed to serve as the new chair of the Steering Committee; Meg Forney will be the new alternate for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board replacing Bob Fine; Linea Palmisano will be the new member for Minneapolis replacing Don Samuels and a new Minneapolis alternate will be named soon to replace Betsy Hodges.

II. Approval of December 2013 Minutes

Chair Dorfman asked for a motion on the minutes from the January 16, 2014 Steering Committee meeting. The minutes were moved, seconded and passed on a voice vote.

III. Partnership for Regional Opportunity (PRO) Presentation

Chair Dorfman introduced Nora Riemenschneider, the Metropolitan Council's Project Coordinator for Partnership for Regional Opportunity (PRO). Ms. Riemenschneider explained that the Project Manager for PRO is Mary Kay Bailey. She provided a brief history of the transition from Corridors of Opportunity to PRO. Ms. Riemenschneider described the three members Community Engagement Team which is responsible for recommending grants that support effective place-based initiatives that engage and involve under-represented communities. The Policy Board, chaired by Susan Haigh from the Metropolitan Council and Lee Sheehy from the McKnight Foundation, make final recommendations on grants. Ms. Riemenschneider noted that some members of the SW Community Works Steering Committee are also on the PRO Policy Board (Nancy Tyra-Lukens, Peter McLaughlin and Caren Dewar). In addition to the Policy Board, there are four workgroups, Regional Equity and Community Engagement, Shared Prosperity, Transit Oriented Development, and Transportation Funding, co-chaired by leaders from different sectors.

Ms. Riemenschneider described how this partnership provides loans and grants to support new and equitable transit-oriented development (TOD) projects. In order to reshape communities and policies to meet the needs of low-income residents, \$1.4 million was added to help housing along the Green Line and to promote business planning and marketing with small business loans being extended. A loan fund of over \$10 million has also been extended and 625 housing units have been funded. To align efforts toward a shared vision, the Opportunity Challenge Grant, which focuses TOD funds and a \$500,000 subsidy for rebuilding on vacant lots in the Promise Neighborhood are underway. Outreach to the traditionally underrepresented communities can be seen with the Fair Housing and Equity Assessment, which focuses on engagement and equity. The issues raised by the FHEA process will be woven throughout the Thrive MSP 2040 deliberation and will ultimately influence regional plans and policies.

Gail Dorfman asked about how we can be sure that we achieve equitable development. Ms. Riemenschneider offered that their community engagement efforts were effectively increasing public awareness, and a community advisory council had been formed. In addition, she mentioned LISC efforts to reach the Somali community in Eden Prairie, and that training on how to respond to a DEIS was offered. Terry Schneider stated the efforts have helped, citing outreach conducted for the Bottineau project. It was proposed that information for interested developers be added to the SW Community Works website.

IV. Walkshed Analysis Tool Demonstration

Chair Dorfman asked Katie Walker, Hennepin County, to report out on a 'walkshed tool' that was created using HUD Sustainable Communities grant funding. Ms. Walker stressed how this tool will be used to explore and evaluate possible development impacts, and she then introduced Charles Darnell from Hennepin County to describe the GIS-based tool and how it was developed. Mr. Darnell indicated that the goal was to create a digital tool to graphically depict the area accessible by a 10-minute walk from the station platform.

Charles Darnell explained how GIS data was used to create a 10-minute walkshed for each LRT station in which signal/stop wait times, gaps in the system and physical barriers such as freeways were considered. The Southwest Walkshed Analysis tool was used in the Transitional Station Area Action Plan (TSAAP) process as a strong visual to identify priority areas for investment. Mr. Darnell mentioned how in the future this tool will be used to evaluate the potential for infrastructure investments to enlarge the walkshed in addition to identifying job centers, housing, educational facilities, and other amenities that exist within a 10-minute walk from the stations.

Gail Dorfman asked if the tool could be used to look at safety issues. Katie Walker replied that it could with the physical nature of the pedestrian environment. Anita Tabb mentioned the benefits of including parks and also stressed the importance of being able to take into account closures during winter. Jason Gadd wanted to know how cities will have access to the tool. The response was that work with the city staff will be underway in the future in order for everyone to have access to these tools. Peter McLaughlin stressed how this helps us focus on the pedestrian experience. The overall consensus was that this tool shows a lot of promise as a way to better plan for pedestrian access to station areas.

V. Recognition of Service for Commissioner Gail Dorfman

Dorfman thanked the Committee and staff, and talked about her focus on catalytic community spaces that she hopes we can create through this project. She then turned the meeting over to the new chair, Jan Callison.

VI. Adjournment

Jan Callison adjourned the meeting. The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be held on March 20, 2014.



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Updates/Information

- StarTribune Article
- Target Field Station Event May 17th
- Southwest Project Office Update



Developers eyeing sites, building along Southwest light rail line

- Article by: [KELLY SMITH](#) , Star Tribune
 - Updated: April 5, 2014 - 10:00 PM
-

While the Southwest line hasn't yet gotten approval, developers already are pitching plans along the five-city route.

While the proposed Southwest Corridor light-rail line sits in limbo amid a dispute over its route, developers are already eagerly eyeing sites along the line's west metro cities — and some aren't waiting for it to get the green light.

The nearly 16-mile line, which faces a key vote on its route from the Metropolitan Council on Wednesday, is the longest of the three Twin Cities light-rail lines and the first to incorporate development planning into the engineering of the line from [Minneapolis](#) through the western suburbs of [St. Louis Park](#), Hopkins, [Minnetonka](#) and [Eden Prairie](#).

"We're essentially setting the table for development," said Peter McLaughlin, a Hennepin County commissioner.

Nearly 14 million square feet of new office space, 1.2 million square feet of retail and more than 13,000 new residential units are projected to go up along the line, according to the county. And while final approval and construction of the line is still far off — it's projected to open in 2019 — the cities that will host it are already seeing a boost in development near the 16 proposed stations.

St. Louis Park, for instance, has had an influx in condos, apartments and senior housing near a proposed station, and in Hopkins, a 163-unit apartment building is slated to open in May a block from a station.

Other developers are holding off to see if the line is approved.

"It's hard to plan if you have no idea if the line is going to happen and when," said Colleen Carey, president of the Cornerstone Group, a Richfield-based real estate company, which has talked to west metro cities about possible development along the line. But, she added: "It doesn't feel like there's any big rush."

Reshaping the area

As controversy swirls over the light-rail line's exact route, many city and county leaders have been working on a related but far-less-public effort — planning development and community changes.

In fact, it's one of the only light-rail projects in the country that has included planning of all 16 stations at once, said Katie Walker, who oversees light-rail community planning for Hennepin County.

Officials have been discussing everything from adding bike connections to improving sidewalks for pedestrians near stations, helping make the suburbs less car-oriented and more walkable, which could in turn boost ridership, she said.

"It's really reshaping the area," Walker said.

Also, nearly a dozen small changes were made to the engineering of the line to boost development — a strategy that wasn't part of the metro area's other two light-rail lines.

Park-and-ride stations were cut from 15 to seven so there will be fewer parking facilities and more space for development. Planners also shifted the station platforms slightly at Blake Road in Hopkins and along Shady Oak Road, on the border of Hopkins and Minnetonka, to open up larger parcels of land for redevelopment. That translates, Walker said, into less land acquisition needed for the line, which can save money and increase space for development.

"We're trying to optimize the cost-effectiveness of the line and development along the line," McLaughlin added. "We're trying to walk and chew gum at the same time."

Hennepin County already has invested \$28.5 million along the Southwest line, largely for environmental cleanup, affordable housing and transit-oriented development — more than was spent along the Green Line that goes from Minneapolis to St. Paul.

"There's a recognition that LRT is a game-changer and will be for that corridor," said Jan Callison, a Hennepin County commissioner for the area that includes Eden Prairie, Hopkins and Minnetonka. "We can't predict what private development would come in. But we know these lines are catalysts for development."

While some developers are holding off until light-rail plans are more concrete, others are building projects near proposed stations, encouraged by the possibility of a line that's projected to average 30,000 rides every weekday by 2030.

In [Minneapolis](#), city leaders say they're hearing from developers interested in sites near four of its stations such as the [Royalston station](#) near the farmers market. And an analysis is being done on the potential for development near the [Van White station](#) area.

A neighborhood transformed

In [St. Louis Park](#), the area of Hwy. 100 and W. 36th Street, once a tired industrial area, has been transformed with an influx of apartments and condos near where the proposed [Wooddale station](#) would be, Community Development Director Kevin Locke said.

"It's an added point of interest from them," he said of the light rail. "We'd expect that once light rail is committed or built, there will be even more development opportunities."

In fact, a proposal for the former McGarvey Coffee building off Hwy. 7 won't get approval, he said, until the line and stations are finalized because it's so close to a station.

Next door in Hopkins, construction is underway now for a 163-unit apartment building one block from the city's proposed downtown station, while an affordable apartment building project next to the planned Blake Road station is going through the proposal process.

In [Minnetonka](#), a proposed medical building off Shady Oak Road and Excelsior Boulevard also includes transit-friendly housing because it's near the station. And a medical-technology firm just moved to the city in part because it's near a future station, Community Development Director Julie Wischnack said.

Line was a draw for health titan

Light rail also was an attraction for [UnitedHealth](#) Group, which is building a \$250 million, 1.5-million-square-foot office development between Hwys. 62 and 212, near where a [station](#) will go.

But the big spike in light-rail-influenced development, Walker said, may not come until after the project is approved. A [recent analysis of the Hiawatha](#), or Blue Line, showed that light rail caused almost no increase in the likelihood of new development near rail platforms in its first six years. Yet, even researchers said development has taken off since 2010 — after the years they studied — likely because of an improving economy and the effects of light rail taking time.

Proponents like Locke, in St. Louis Park, say Southwest development is likely to be different because it's a longer line built after the economy rebounded and includes a lot of potential development sites.

“With the Southwest line being really the third element in the system, you start to see more potential,” he said. “The more extensive our light rail is, the more possibilities for development.”

Kelly Smith • 612-673-4141

Save the date



Saturday, May 17, 2014

Please join us at the grand opening of Target Field Station on Saturday, May 17.

There will be festivities before the Minnesota Twins game and other related entertainment and activities. More information will be provided closer to the date.

Please spread the word and share this message with others. Get more information about the construction project at www.theinterchange.net.

Regards,

Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority

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This email was sent to katie.walker@hennepin.us using GovDelivery, on behalf of: Hennepin County · 300 South Sixth Street · Minneapolis, MN 55487 · 612-348-3000

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Date: April 10, 2014

To: Southwest Community Works Steering Committee

From: Chris Weyer, Southwest LRT Project Director

Re: **Southwest LRT (Green Line Extension) progress report through March 2014**

Project Development

- Engineering and design staff evaluated final reports submitted by the independent consultants responsible for the freight rail and water resources studies.
- Community Advisory Committee, Business Advisory Committee and Corridor Management Committee developed comments and recommendations to the Council on project scope and budget.
- Project staff and consultants continued preparing preliminary design plan sets in anticipation of starting the municipal consent process in April.

Environmental Program

- Archaeological Survey consultant 10,000 Lakes Archaeology and Architecture/History Survey consultant Mead & Hunt submitted revised final reports to the Council, MnDOT's Cultural Resources Unit and the State Historic Preservation Office.
- Council staff reviewed draft report on Title VI equity analysis for the proposed operation and maintenance facility.
- Supplemental DEIS consultant CH2M HILL continued preparation of the SDEIS.

Joint Development

- SPO staff transmitted the first formal submission on the four Tier I Joint Development Opportunities (Blake, Beltline, West Lake, Royalston) to FTA for review and comment on March 10th.
- SPO staff participated in a 2 hour conference call with staff from FTA and their Project Management Oversight Consultant discussing and receiving feedback on the submittal on March 26th. A follow-up conference call and field tour have been scheduled for mid-April.

Advisory Committees

- Business Advisory Committee and Community Advisory Committee met on March 25 and 27, respectively. Main focus of these meetings was to develop their recommendations to the Corridor Management Committee prior to its recommendation to the Council on project scope and budget.
- Corridor Management Committee met March 26 to receive a New Starts Program update, overview of final independent consultants' reports and updates on project schedule and budget.

Other Outreach and Communication Activities

SPO staff engaged in the following outreach activities:

- Attended a transit equity forum hosted by Congressman Keith Ellison and attended by Metropolitan Council Chair Haigh and Councilmembers Munt, Duininick, Cunningham and Brimeyer as well as other local officials; approximately 75 members of the public were in attendance to discuss access to jobs, improved transit connections and development opportunities around SWLRT stations.