

## Southwest Corridor Management Committee - August 28, 2013

Discussion of Saint Louis Park's Promise to Accept Freight Relocation

Mayor Jim Hovland:

This may be for the Met Council or for you: Has anyone got a copy of, or seen any kind of agreement between St. Louis Park...? This came up as a result of an op-ed piece that was in the paper a week or so ago. Has anyone seen or do you have in your possession a copy of any agreement between St. Louis Park and Hennepin County and/or the State, that provides for the clean up funds being given to St. Louis Park for the Golden Auto site being contingent upon St. Louis Park accepting a freight rail relocation? Is there any kind of written agreement or legal agreement to that effect? I haven't found one. I've looked hard for it and can't find it.

Commissioner Gail Dorfman:

Madam Chair, there are agreements around when we provided the 4.75 million dollars from the Environmental Response Fund with the City about their redevelopment of that site.

Mayor Jim Hovland:

My understanding is that the money, that the agreement was St. Louis Park would look at the feasibility of relocating freight to St. Louis Park, but there was no commitment to relocating freight to St. Louis Park, but there is no legal document that requires them to do so.

Commissioner Peter McLaughlin:

That's not the understanding in Hennepin County. The understanding in Hennepin County was that St. Louis Park was going to accept relocation. That was the working understanding and there are documents that reflect that. They may not be, and I would say they probably aren't, legally enforceable. But you know, I'm kind of an old fashioned politician and a handshake is a handshake. And so that's the understanding. Now, what we face here today is, you know, ambiguity. We face a change in the freight railroad market that maybe things are a little different here. But the fact of the matter is; there was a quid pro quo agreement about fixing up the Golden Auto site, and the acceptance of the freight relocation. Now, you know, the railroad market has changed some, so there's some difficulties here. And safety standards may have changed, so there's some difficulties here with that. But in fact that was the understanding. And there is a trail of paper that suggests that that is what it was about, including the legislation which was passed. So, that's the understanding. What we do with that today is another question. And I think it's important to have a clear understanding of what our understanding was. If we want to get into that argument, we can do that.