AGENDA

Technical / Community Advisory Committee Meeting

Date/Time: January 22, 2013 – 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM

Location: Minneapolis City Hall, Room 333 (Mayor's Conference Room)

I. Welcome and Housekeeping **3:30 PM**

A. Introductions

B. Approve December 12, 2012 Meeting Notes

II. Detailed Definition of Alternatives **3:35 PM**

A. Alternatives (No-Build, Enhanced Bus, Modern Streetcar, Starter Line Modern Streetcar)

B. Stop Locations

C. Service Plans

D. Cross-sections

E. Other/Next Steps

III. Second Round of Public Open Houses **5:00 PM**

A. Dates, Times, and Venues

i. Tuesday, February 12, 2013 from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM at MPHA Parker Skyview Community Room, 1815 Central Avenue NE

ii. Wednesday, February 13, 2013 from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM at HCMC Whittier Clinic, 2810 Nicollet Avenue South

iii. Thursday, February 14,2013 from 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM at Minneapolis Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall

B. Format

i. Open House with a formal presentation

ii. Stations

- Purpose and Need
- Alternatives Considered and Definition of Alternatives with cross-sections, simplified service plans, and stops
- Further education of "What is Enhanced Bus" and "What is Modern Streetcar"

IV. February 2013 Meetings **5:25 PM**

A. T/CAC during the week of February 18, 2013 and PAC during the week of February 25, 2013

V. Other/Adjourn **5:30 PM**

MEETING NOTES

Technical and Community Advisory Committee Meeting #04

Date/Time: December 11, 2012 – 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM

Location: Minneapolis City Hall, Room 350 South Fifth Street, Room 333

Attendees

See attached attendance sheet.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Anna Flintoft welcomed Committee members and reviewed meeting purpose and expectations. The Committee also approved the notes from its November 13, 2012 meeting.

II. Alternatives Recommended for Detailed Definition and Evaluation

Anna Flintoft and the consulting team reviewed the alignment and transit mode alternatives recommended for detailed definition and evaluation as presented during the Committee's November meeting. Anna also reviewed the rationale for moving forward with Nicollet Mall as the downtown alignment and as part of responding to the questions raised regarding potential impacts of streetcar construction and operations to deliveries, curbside access, utilities and areaways in downtown. Mark Dorn of the consulting team reviewed engineering solutions used in other cities to address these questions. Given that these aspects are not fatal flaws, the recommendation is to move forward with developing Nicollet Mall as the downtown alignment.

Anna also indicated to the Committee that she had spoken with Bob Greenberg (committee member not in attendance who had raised these issues at the November meeting) separately about this topic. Anna reported that Bob appreciated the follow-up information and was comfortable proceeding with Nicollet Mall as the downtown alignment option for detailed evaluation. Bob would also like a better understanding of streetcar operations during events such as Holidazzle, vibrational impacts to areaways and how the overhead contact system could be integrated in the Mall's urban design.

The outcome of this discussion is to move forward with Nicollet Mall as the single downtown alignment option in the Detailed Definition and Evaluation phase.

Comments and questions from the Committee on this topic included:

- What do we know about the impact of utility modifications on project [construction] schedule? Mark indicated that utility modifications do not typically have major impacts on schedule; other factors/considerations will be covered later in the meeting.
- Concern regarding business impacts.
- At what point will the type of streetcar technology be identified? Desire to be as advanced a technology as possible? Is there streetcar "wireless" technology that would allow the car to charge at the stop in lieu of traditional overhead contact system? Mark indicated that this is typically done during preliminary design, which is about a year from now. Efficient "wireless" technology doesn't exist yet. Seattle will use a hybrid streetcar vehicle (wire and wireless) but it does not comply with Buy

America requirements. Oklahoma City is looking at compressed natural gas, but that is also under development.

- What about induction technology? Mark indicated that it is a very expensive system.
- What is Mark's experience with hanging catenary wire on buildings? Mark responded that agreements/easements need to be in place. Varies by individual case, from pole to pole.
- Is public art required? Mark stated that public art is required for FTA-funded projects (one-half percent of project cost).

III. Overview of Defining Alternatives in Detail

April Manlapaz of the consulting team reviewed the elements defining alternatives in details, specifically for the Enhanced Bus and Streetcar ("Build") alternatives. These elements include runningway (bus lanes, track), transit vehicles, stops and amenities, use of technology, fare collection system, stop locations, and service and operations. April reviewed these aspects for the Enhanced Bus alternative, as defined in Metro Transit's 2012 *Arterial Transitway Corridors Study*; some of these elements are common with streetcar, such as fare collection and level of stop amenities.

Mark Dorn (also of the consulting team) then reviewed physical characteristics of streetcar including vehicles, stop design considerations, bike interface, maintenance facility requirements, and substation requirements. Following are questions and comments from Mark's presentation:

- Maintenance Facility
  - Consider publicly-owned land first. Challenge is finding a location that is proximate to the streetcar line.
  - A Committee member asked if it could be part of mixed-use development. Mark indicated that Seattle is doing this, with air rights above the facility for mixed-use development.
- Substations
  - Clear space on one side of the substation is required for service.
  - Can be located 200 feet to 400 feet away from the streetcar line.
  - Could be located within remnant parcels, parking garages; last resort is to bury substation.
  - Typically smaller units than LRT substations, but then spaced more closely than LRT (every one-half mile).
  - What is wattage to operate streetcar and what are potential safety concerns? There is a protocol for maintaining the system. No safety concerns, although there is anecdotal evidence that service dogs have felt current on track.
  - Jen Wendland requested to see examples of a substation in tight area and integration with urban design. Mark will provide images. She noted that there have been similar conversation recently regarding substations in the Midtown Greenway and how to design them to enhance, rather than detract from, the environment.
- Streetcar vehicle
  - A Committee member asked about vehicle life of streetcar compared to bus. Gavin Poindexter of the consulting team indicated that FTA uses 25 years for rail vehicle and 12 years for bus.

IV. Workshop: Street Design Considerations

Mark led this portion of the meeting and started with a review of physical characteristics of the alignment that included right-of-way width, street width and lane configuration by major segment from north to south. This workshop only applies to the streetcar alternative due to the fixed nature of its runningway.

Mark also presented a preliminary comparison of streetcar alignment options for Central Avenue, which has four lanes of traffic. The purpose of this discussion is to present considerations that go into identifying whether a streetcar alignment would use the right or left lane. Considerations include impacts to on-street parking, traffic circulation, property access, platform and pedestrian environment, utilities, integration of streetcar and bus stops, bike interface and capital cost. Mark indicated that this level of alignment definition is determined during Preliminary Engineering, and that his review of the various considerations using information available at this time did not indicate fatal flaws with either left or right lane-running streetcar.

Following are questions and comments from Committee members:

- First/Hennepin Avenues near Main Street – Concern regarding narrow width of lanes and safety, narrow sidewalk.
- What is the value of converting First and Hennepin Avenues to two-way operations if it is not needed for streetcar operations? Are there cost implications to streetcar if these two streets are not converted to two-way operations?
- A Committee member expressed that since the one-way conversion of First and Hennepin Avenues, businesses there have suffered, traffic is fast, and it doesn't have a neighborhood feel.

Potential Priorities

Mark reviewed potential priorities with the Committee, with the overarching assumption that existing street widths will remain the same under the streetcar and enhanced bus alternatives. These priorities will be used to develop conceptual sections for the alternatives. Following are comments and questions during this discussion:

- Overarching priority: Improve quality of life.
- What is desired scale of TOD/development?
  - Central Avenue has more opportunity for redevelopment. There is desire for more development along this part of the corridor, including the northwest corner of Central/Shoreham Yard; from 27th to 29th Avenues (east side); north of 37th Avenue; and south of 27th Avenue.
  - Whittier: There is controversy with scale of development; concern regarding change, chain businesses moving in and driving out local businesses due to higher taxes; gentrification/loss of existing neighborhood identity.
- Leverage transit infrastructure for other amenities.
  - Develop master plan for district phasing and implementation of betterments.
- Level boarding is preferred over near-level boarding.
- Make boarding/deboarding faster than local bus to reduce energy requirements.
- Use sustainable design.
- Reconstructing sidewalks means more impacts on building (business) fronts during construction.
- Near-level boarding at stops is equivalent to a ten-inch high platform and entails use of a bridge plate. Deploying bridge plate will add to dwell time, although would still be faster than boarding a local bus.
- Level boarding entails construction of 14-inch high platform. Presents challenge in integrating streetcar and bus stops and with sidewalks for right lane-running streetcar alignment.

- What is the ADA community's input on near-level and level boarding? Anna indicated that in one of her meetings with them, the community expressed desire for maximum accessibility, i.e. level boarding (14-inch high platform).
- Central Avenue: What are strategies for adding to street life?
- Nicollet Avenue/Eat Street: This segment already has dense development and can sacrifice some on-street parking to accommodate streetcar.
- Whittier: Examining parking requirements to identify potential changes; streetcar could help with this process.
- Whittier: Businesses feel that they can take care of their own parking.
- Downtown/Loring Park: Do not want to pit parking against bike.
- Nicollet Avenue: Need to preserve access to businesses (center turn lane).
- Nicollet/28th Street to Near Northeast: Enhance pedestrian experience; maximize transit ridership; focus on bikes; minimize focus on auto trips.
- Make cars feel "unwelcome" to focus on pedestrian, bike and transit trips.
- Enhance sidewalks and landscaping.
- Minimize construction disruption.
- Improve air quality.
- Calm traffic.
- Strengthen neighborhood identity; provide guide to neighborhood.
- Central Avenue: Need to be sensitive to commuter traffic. Improve appearance of the street. As for bike accommodations, Broadway and Spring are main bike artery; keep bike facility on-street.
- Overhead contact system will help scale down the feel of Central Avenue.
- There are other ways to travel south by car. I don't think that improving transit hurts my driving options.
- Central Avenue: There is ample parking for businesses, such as the church lot at Central/Lowry. Issue is sense of safety and unfamiliarity with the neighborhood. Desire to slow traffic such as Central Avenue segment between 26th and 30th Avenues to identify the neighborhood.
- Regarding bike lane vs. parking: If there is a business district, then parking should be provided?
- Central Avenue is and feels like a large corridor; scale it down to enhance transit and pedestrian experience.

V. Next Meetings

Anna and the consulting team are meeting with individual agencies represented by the TCAC to discuss technical aspects of alignment details on December 12, 2012. The next TCAC meeting is scheduled on January 8, 2012.

Sign-In Sheet

Technical and Community Advisory Committee Meeting #04

December 11, 2012, 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM

Minneapolis City Hall, Room 333

Name	Agency/Group	Initial
Adam Harrington	Metro Transit	
Allan Klugman	Minneapolis Public Works – Traffic and Parking	ASK
Betty Folliard		BF
Becky Rolloff		
Bob Byers	Hennepin County	✓
Bob Greenberg		
Christine Levens		
Cole Hiniker	Metropolitan Council	
David Frank	Minneapolis CPED – TOD	DF
David Sternberg		
Dean Michalko	Hennepin County Transit and Community Works	
Dore Mead		DM
Ed Newman		EN
Erica Christ		EC
Henry Jimenez		
Jason Orcutt	Anoka County	
Jeff Sargent	Columbia Heights	
Jen Wendland		JW
Joe Bernard	Minneapolis CPED – Community Planning	present

Sign-in Sheet (Cont.)

Name	Agency/Group	Initial
Joe Surisook		JHS
Katie Hatt		Katie Hatt (late)
Kevin Hansen	Columbia Heights	
Kevin Upton		
Mark Stenglein		
Matt Brown		MCB
Michael Nelson		
Mike Corbett	MnDOT	MJC
Sheila Cartney	Columbia Heights	
Tom Johnson	Hennepin County Transportation	

Project Management		
Anna Flintoft		present
Peter Wagenius		present
April Manlapaz		[illegible]
Dan Meyers		[illegible]
Gavin Poindexter		present
Mark Dorn		present