

CENTRAL CITY LINE STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING

Minutes of October 24, 2019 Meeting
SRTC, Paulsen Building
421 W. Riverside Ave., Suite 504

MEMBERS/ALTERNATES PRESENT

Kevin Brockbank, Spokane Community College
Stephanie Curran, Spokane Public Facilities Dist.
Lars Gilberts, University District Dev. Assoc.
Collen Gardner, Chief Garry Park Neighborhood
Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane
John Lemus, People First
E. Susan Meyer, Spokane Transit Authority
Mark Richard, Downtown Spokane Partnership
Jon Schad, Washington State University
Harlan Shellabarger, West Representative
John Sklut, Gonzaga University
Frank Tombari, East/Valley Representative
Amber Waldref, Logan Neighborhood Council

MEMBERS ABSENT

Visit Spokane
Kathy Fritchie, Browne's Adn. Neighborhood
Gordon Hester, Downtown Business Rep.
Riverside Neighborhood Council
Drew Repp, Greater Spokane Inc.
Scott Simmons, City of Spokane
Steve Trabun, Avista Corporation

STAFF PRESENT

Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning & Development
(Secretary)
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Director of Communications and
Customer Service
Dan Wells, Deputy Director of Capital Development
Don Skillingstad, Capital Projects Manager
Mike Tresidder, Associate Transit Planner

CONSULTANTS/GUESTS

Chris Batten, Citizen
Toby Hatley, Citizen
Sabrina Mitchell, SRTC
Jason Lien, SRTC
Katherine Miller, City of Spokane
Terrell Black, City of Spokane

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND AGENDA REVIEW

Chair Amber Waldref called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM. Chair Waldref created today's agenda with Ms. E. Susan Meyer and Mr. Karl Otterstrom. There are three parts: updates since the last meeting, what is coming up in terms of design and construction, and acquiring Committee feedback regarding public engagement. Technically, the Board of STA put this meeting into place until operation of the Central City Line.

2. MILESTONE AND COMMITTEE RECOGNITION

E. Susan Meyer reminded the committee that this project is dependent on federal funding to build. STA has been working with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the past eight years as STA pursued a Small Starts grant which is a part of the Capital Investment Grant program. They provided a list of tasks to accomplish in order to qualify for the funding; Ms. Meyer announced that all of these tasks have now been completed in order to execute a grant for \$53.4M in December or January. Critical

third party agreements have been completed, with the most recent agreement completed with Gonzaga University for a very important section of Cincinnati Street. Thank you to our partners at Gonzaga University. Mr. Karl Otterstrom, Mr. Dan Wells and Mr. Don Skillingstad still have much to do, but the Committee celebrated this significant milestone of the Central City Line, with a much bigger celebration to follow when STA receives the actual check to share with the whole community. This marks the end of the Project Development phase and the end of what is required for the grant. STA is most appreciative for this Committee's role in the process.

Mr. Lars Gilberts asked how Initiative 976 may impact the signing and/or implementation of this project. Ms. Meyer responded that this initiative would eliminate funding generated from motor vehicle excise tax fees beyond what the initiative identifies as \$30 car tab fees. Transit only receives fee revenue from the state; whenever the state gives money to STA or any other transit agency, it's from fee revenue, not gas tax revenue. Eliminating the fee revenue would put the legislature in a position of having to decide what to do without the expected revenue. STA has special needs transportation which we receive as a result of formula funding; that is, it is based on rides and population and use it for Paratransit service. STA has applied for significant regional mobility grants and have won many of them. STA has many projects underway such as Cheney High Performance Transit Line (which could be impacted). The other is what's remaining on the state's commitment of \$15M to the capital cost of the Central City Line. STA has about \$11.7M left of the funding they committed. We have an agreement; we're drawing the money. However, Ms. Meyer's sense is that "nothing is safe" if the revenue is eliminated. Whether it is in the current biennial budget or whether it is committed to or not, and it is and it has been. Even still, the \$11.7M and Paratransit could be at risk. Between now and November 5, it will be interesting to discover FTA's assessment of the risk. Ms. Meyer, Mr. Otterstrom, Mr. Ropez-Betty and four board members met with the FTA officials last week. They are very aware of Initiative 976 and we'll see what happens on November 5. It will likely require some action from the STA board if the ballot measure passes and the funding is eliminated.

Ms. Meyer talked with Senator Billig and he stated that the Central City Line is a priority for him and the rest of our delegation; however, the lack of money is the lack of money that the legislature is faced with. All the items that are funded by fee revenue in the multi-modal account are at risk including funding for the state patrol; it is an interesting mix of transportation and non-transportation recipients.

Mr. Ropez-Betty has produced the ballot information that STA is allowed to share with others. The impacts are significant.

Chair Waldref questioned that other pieces of our Moving Forward plan could potentially be impacted. Ms. Meyer responded that those projects in construction now should be fine. The FTA in Washington D.C. and Seattle keeps in close contact with Mr. Otterstrom. They have a lot of confidence in the STA Board to do what is necessary to complete projects and they have seen STA overcome obstacles before. In fact, Mr. Otterstrom spoke with them this morning.

3. PUBLIC EXPRESSION

None.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

Chair Waldref presented the July 17, 2018 meeting minutes for approval. **Ms. Colleen Gardner made a motion to approve the July 17, 2018 minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. John Lemus and passed unanimously.**

5. COMMITTEE CHARGE

Mr. Otterstrom explained the Committee charge. While there have been a few times when he indicated via email that this would be the last meeting, he double checked the charter that the STA board and the City Council created in 2015, and it states that this group shall exist until revenue operations of the Central City Line. This led to a discussion about the value of continuing this Committee through construction to maintain the discussion, awareness, and involvement of the community as a whole. A key question is frequency and size of the group. Currently, the committee has 21 members. Some members have not been able to attend as regularly as usual. Are there recommendations for changes to the Committee as it continues until May of 2022?

Ms. Gardner asked if anyone has reached out to those who haven't been able to attend on a regular basis. She would like to see the neighborhood councils continue involvement as much as possible but perhaps on a more limited basis, since Mr. Otterstrom sends out great information. Ms. Lori Kinnear suggested reaching out to the Riverside Council as they have a new chair and they are very active right now. Mr. Gilberts and Chair Waldref agreed that as much as possible this Committee should support creating awareness and providing knowledge on how to use this new service in order to prepare for the Central City Line's success from day one. Mr. Frank Tombari encouraged more public engagement than ever before regarding construction. Continual dialogue before and during – providing alternative routes for driving home. Mr. Gilberts shared, "Where there's lack of information, people fill in with their own narrative." Mr. Mark Richard agreed that the need for the Committee still exists. Theoretically this is phase one of a future network, so there may be value in having representatives from West Plains, etc. Chair Waldref felt there was value in having at least an annual meeting and that the meeting needs to be a partnership between STA and City of Spokane (COS). Ms. Kinnear shared that the COS had a point person for projects, but that person submitted their resignation. She hopes that the new administration will assign a person for this position that will be a direct link between the City and the constituents. STA may be interested in having an "ombudsman" for this particular project. Mr. Lemus agreed with an annual check-in with a request for notification if there are major changes that impact the disability community.

Chair Waldref asked what is useful to STA? Mr. Otterstrom responded that this discussion was very valuable and re-enforced the wisdom of the original charter that requested that this committee keep going until opening day. Based on today's conversation, Mr. Otterstrom would recommend two meetings for next year, one prior to construction (once the contractor is on board) and one after the bulk of summer construction is completed. Some organizations may opt out when they see that they are not needed. Mr. Otterstrom asked that the charter quorum count be revised to reflect the total number appointed rather than the total slots available. This way, if there is attrition now, but may want to participate later when wayfinding, land use, and/or policies are addressed. The route is "locked in" now, but there will be opportunity for feedback regarding wayfinding, etc. Mr. Mark Richard suggested the value of penning a value statement regarding the Central City Line.

Chair Waldref asked if STA is open to additional stakeholders (organizations, constituencies) that have not been engaged thus far but shows interest in the route at some point. Mr. Otterstrom agreed. For

example, SNAP has reached out to STA regarding risks and opportunities for affordable housing along the Central City Line.

Ms. Meyer shared that this Steering Committee is charged with providing policy level advisory input and direction to the STA board, the City of Spokane, and their respective staff members at key decision points. Ms. Meyer said STA can send the charter out again.

Ms. Gardner stated that, as a neighborhood council leader, part of her responsibility is to ensure that the current City Council members for her district see that documentation and realize that their involvement in this process is huge and a part of their responsibility. She's concerned that she will have to take the initiative to tell them it is a part of their job.

Chair Waldref said there is a new city election coming up – new mayor and new council members. It would probably be a good idea for next year to refresh the resolutions, modifications (if any), etc.

Ms. Meyer suggested more than twice per year for meetings depending upon construction status.

6. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Mr. Otterstrom provided a project development update. Much of this has been shared with the Committee via emails throughout the year. Activities during 2019 included: 95% of the plans completed, right-of-way acquisition acquired, temporary construction easements acquired, all critical agreements executed, design details based on City reviewed finalized, required implementation plans (PMP, CMP, SEMP) finalized, Design Review Board approval acquired.

Mr. Otterstrom reported on the PMOC Review /FTA Rating, notable station refinements, station identification, and the Systems Engineering Management Plan (SEMP). The station identification kick-off meeting took place in December 2018. There has been extensive community outreach including 16 neighborhood group meetings, two community-wide tabling events, an online/digital outreach and one online/digital survey. The (SEMP) addresses numerous technology systems required to initiate revenue service; it is a living document and includes fare technology, fare enforcement, cameras on the bus, platforms, etc. This will include battery electric bus charging infrastructure. STA intends to buy off of an existing contract to procure the vehicles; the state of Washington was expected to have a contract in place for a 60', five door, electric battery bus a month and half ago and unfortunately, that went into protest and they'll have to rebid. At this stage, there is no risk to the overall schedule.

Mr. Lemus expressed concern regarding the potential for station artwork to be vandalized. Mr. Otterstrom responded that STA works extensively with SpokaneARTS. This organization is an expert in creating artwork that can be easily replaced if vandalized and ensuring that an anti-graffiti coating is used. Every neighborhood will have the same components – banners, light poles, etc. The SpokaneARTS recommended bronze or black as the paint for the stations.

Mr. Otterstrom reported that the other corridor that STA will deploy is the Monroe-Regal Corridor is in progress and the Moran Station (currently under construction) will have the capability to charge electric buses in the future.

7. REVIEW UPCOMING MILESTONES

Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the upcoming milestones:

- Oct. 2019 -- Readiness Report Compete
- Nov. 2019 -- FTA Administration Review
- Dec. 2019 -- Congressional Review
- Dec. 2019 -- Grant Agreement Execution
- Dec. 2019 -- Project Out To Bid (*before Christmas*)
- Jan. 2020 -- Project Bids Due (*late January – to get ahead of school projects which go out to bid in February*)
- Feb. 2020 -- Contract Award
- Mar. 2020 -- Contract Execution
- Apr. 2020 -- Pre-construction Open House (*April*)
- May 2020 -- Construction Start

Mr. Richard wanted to comment on station identification. Given the likelihood that some of these stations are going to be in front of or adjacent to store fronts, Mr. Richard requested that stations not obstruct store fronts or store front signage. He was impressed with the transparency of Seattle's bus stations; that the design was completely see through and did not prohibit lines of site from a safety aspect and out of respect for the businesses that pay a lot of money to be on high traffic count areas. When thinking of artwork / station identification, please consider this. Mr. Otterstrom responded that there will be a maximum threshold for how much capacity can be blocked out. Downtown could opt to have less capacity or to only have artwork on side walls, etc.

Mr. Tombari asked if STA has satisfied the parking concerns of the business owners downtown? Mr. Otterstrom responded that a compromise was arrived at; in the case of Numerica, the bus stop was shifted 80 feet to the west to provide for curb side parking in front of their building. The length of platform will be reduced to 50 feet. At other locations, STA worked with Main & Division business owners to adjust to that group's concern.

Mr. John Schad mentioned that due to the research that takes on place on campus in the pharmaceutical and biomedical building on Spokane Falls Boulevard, we need to talk early about construction schedules and impacts because those research environments are very sensitive to noise and vibration which could have significant impact on the schedule. Mr. Dan Wells responded that that conversation has already been started.

8. OBTAIN COMMITTEE INPUT ON CONTINUED COLLABORATION AND ENGEEMENT

Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the Preliminary Construction Phasing Projects for 2020 and 2021. STA has identified civil stations that will be built in 2020 and then in 2021. It's a preliminary list that is subject to further coordination with the Engineer, Contractor and City, and it will likely change. Ms. Katherine Miller shared that the hope is to break ground on Riverside in 2021. Curb cuts and stations can be reviewed online.

STA will prepare a Communications Plan for construction in coordination with the contractor and the City of Spokane. STA is considering a project office in the downtown core for STA, construction management and contractor staff to encourage accessibility. Ms. Kinnear suggested that the office may need to move as the project develops.

Mr. Otterstrom posed the following question: What do you see as effective outreach and engagement during construction? Who has done this well? Ms. Gardner responded that the current Avista project has been done well. Communication has been excellent. STA has already done a great job with the Chief Garry Park neighborhood. Chair Waldref's experience has been that the business community can be one of the best vehicles for communicating. Mr. Gilberts suggested that the most difficult part of the Central City Line will be that it is decentralized. Ms. Gardner suggested mailings. Ms. Kinnear suggested the importance of addressing their concerns right away. If you can solve their problem right away, you've got an advocate. Mr. Tombari believes this is an opportunity to design a communication / marketing system that others want to recreate; this hasn't been done yet. Mr. Richard recommended having meetings at several different times to catch a broader group of constituents. If there is a point person, make sure they are truly available. We've had this in the past and when the person isn't responsive it makes the public angrier than if it hadn't even been offered.

9. CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. Chris Batten had a chance to meet with Ms. Meyer, Mr. Otterstrom, and STA staff to address Numerica's concerns about the Riverside & Stevens station. Mr. Batten thanked them for taking the time to do so. Numerica is pleased that the City has come to the table and decided to keep Riverside as a two lane concept and STA has agreed to move the station of concern. It is critical for their business to not have a shelter in front of it.

Chair Waldref summarized the meeting: most attendees saw value in continuing this Steering Committee as needed several times next year. Members should be polled to see if they are still interested in being engaged at this level. There should also be outreach to others that could be on the Committee that have not yet been included. Mr. Otterstrom added that there should be some form of celebration when STA receives the actual check.

10. ADJOURN

Chair Waldref adjourned the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning and Development
Steering Committee Secretary