

CENTRAL CITY LINE STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING 1:00 P.M.

Minutes of February 28, 2017 Meeting

SRTC, Paulsen Building

421 W. Riverside Ave., Suite 500

MEMBERS/ALTERNATES PRESENT

Anne Marie Axworthy, Greater Spokane Inc.
Lisa Brown, Washington State Univ. - Spokane
Collen Gardner, Chief Garry Park Neighborhood
Cheryl Kilday, Visit Spokane
John Lemus, People First
E. Susan Meyer, Spokane Transit Authority
Gary Pollard, Riverside Neighborhood Council
Mark Richard, Downtown Spokane Partnership
Harlan Shellabarger, Cheney Free Press
Scott Simmons, City of Spokane
Jim Simon, Gonzaga University
Steve Trabun, Avista Corporation
Amber Waldref, City of Spokane (Chair)

STAFF PRESENT

Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning (Secretary)
Don Skillingstad, Capital Projects Manager
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Communications
Kathleen Weinand, Transit Planner

CONSULTANTS/GUESTS

Mark Brower, CH2M
Ryan Farncomb, CH2M
Randy Knapick, IBI Group
Katherine Miller, City of Spokane
Paul Kropp, Citizen, SRTC Advisory Committee

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ryan Carstens, Spokane Community College
Kathy Fritchie, Browne's Addn. Neighborhood
Karen Byrd, Logan Neighborhood Council
John Sklut, Gonzaga University
Kevin Twohig, Spokane Public Facilities Dist.

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND AGENDA REVIEW

Chair Waldref called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Chair Waldref welcomed the group to the meeting. Meeting attendees introduced themselves.

2. PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS

Chair Waldref asked if any attendee wanted to speak. No one requested to speak.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

Chair Waldref asked if there were any comments on the December and January minutes. Chair Waldref called for a motion. **John Lemus made a motion to approve both meeting minutes. Gary Pollard seconded the motion. Chair called for a discussion. There was none. Chair called for a vote. The vote was unanimous.**

4. SMALL STARTS GRANT SUBMITTAL TIMELINE UPDATE

Chair Waldref asked Karl Otterstrom for an update on the grant application status. Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the project schedule and identified the major milestone upcoming is the preliminary ratings

package submittal in April. Mr. Otterstrom briefed the committee on a recent meeting with FTA and discussions about the submittal process and also the upcoming open house on March 9 at Gonzaga University to gather input on the project. Staff will also be attending the Spokane City Council work session on March 30 to seek the City Council's support for the application submittal.

Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the revised schedule moving forward which includes the City of Spokane, STA Board and Steering Committee approvals and endorsements in March and April. Mr. Otterstrom stated there was a delay of slightly less than 30-days from the original schedule.

Mark Richards stated the next meeting is proposed during spring break. Mr. Otterstrom indicated FTA is requesting as complete an application as possible to reduce the back and forth of the application review process. This will help to reduce the delay time in reviewing the package. Mr. Otterstrom explained the ratings process and the urgency to submit a complete and comprehensive submittal, which could result in a complete application and rating with minimal additional work needed.

Susan Meyer further explained the reasons for delaying the submittal and that it is important to get the application submitted this year as it is the last year of the current transportation budget authorization.

Chair Waldref agreed that it would be good to submit a complete application.

5. DOWNTOWN INFRASTRUCTURE CO-INVESTMENTS

Mr. Otterstrom explained that the current cost estimate for the project includes the core project costs, which includes a number of City infrastructure improvements throughout the corridor totaling almost \$8 million. Mr. Otterstrom further explained what some of those projects were.

Ms. Meyer explained that the team considered a number of City capital projects, possibly too late in the process. There was a consideration of adding City projects into the Central City Line project and overall project budget. These projects would have raised the grant request up to approximately \$100 million. Ms. Meyer further explained that FTA determined that may be an unacceptable risk to the project and the NEPA environmental process this late in the application process.

Mr. Otterstrom continued by reiterating that there will still be a strong partnership with the City throughout the project, that STA is very supportive of the City projects but the project needs to stay at \$72 million.

Lisa Brown asked if it was all or nothing by including City projects in the application.

Mr. Otterstrom explained that if STA were to add a generic number in the cost estimate and assume City infrastructure with no supporting information or documentation, FTA could consider the application incomplete which is a risk to the project.

Chair Waldref stated the street bond provides about \$5 million per year for street projects and asked how much is the gap to do some reconstruction while the CCL is going on.

Scott Simmons explained that the potential grant dollars would not necessarily replace the City's levy funding, it was more how could the City leverage their dollars and go after additional funds. Mr. Simmons explained that the street funding will complete projects, with additional grant funds, but there is no funding source for the vaulted sidewalks which are very expensive to fix.

Chair Waldref asked if it will be easier to get future federal funding if STA is awarded the Small Starts Grant.

Mr. Simmons stated the City and STA will continue to work together and that it's good to have considered the City projects and will continue to work together in the future.

Mr. Richard stated the City has money in the 6-year plan to address some of the City projects and asked if the vaulted sidewalks can be addressed at the platform locations as there are impacts to dealing with them from environmental standpoint and the impacts to the surface.

Mr. Otterstrom explained that as we move through the design process and finalize station locations we will have to deal with the vaulted sidewalks.

Mr. Simmons stated the City and STA will have to work together to coordinate improvements given there is not full funding for all the projects. Some improvements can occur in conjunction with the CCL improvements.

Mr. Otterstrom stated the committee will be briefed later on the cost estimate and how contingency is built in to safeguard against cost overruns and unknowns.

Ms. Meyer stated that FTA is clear that any cost overruns are on STA.

6. FINANCE UPDATE

Mark Brower reviewed the cost estimate and some of the outstanding cost items that still need work including the maintenance facility, Cincinnati Street and contingencies. Currently the estimate is at about \$68-\$72 million. Mr. Brower further explained the contingency built in to the estimate.

Randy Knapick gave a brief overview of the status of the finance plan. The basic assumption is that the project will be \$72 million. Mr. Knapick indicated that the CCL project cost and funding request is within the average with other small starts projects.

Mr. Otterstrom explained the current funding for the project and how FTA sees the funding in the grant application.

Mr. Knapick explained that STA stands out compared to other projects as the project has all of the local funding secured with no other approvals needed.

Mr. Knapick explained the assumed service plan will have 10-minute or better service during the peaks and mid-day. The increase in service hours is about a 15% increase in the number of service hours. There is no increase in the number of vehicles needed. Mr. Knapick explained that the service plan as the project moves forward.

Chair Waldref stated she was in favor of the increased frequency as that's what the voters wanted in approving the tax initiative and that was a selling point of the project. Ms. Meyer agreed. Mr. Otterstrom explained why the annual operations costs were lower now than they were in the previous proposal with overhead wires.

Mr. Simmons asked about the impacts to the system with a 10-minute service plan. Mr. Otterstrom stated people will wait less for the CCL however connections to other routes may require a longer wait times and may not hit connections consistently. At the Plaza during peak periods will be a good transfer environment, off-peak periods would require longer waits. This is still a benefit to the riders.

John Lemus stated the connections at the college are not good and as the planning continues for the CCL keep that in mind, especially the city loop. Mr. Otterstrom stated STA will be addressing some of these issues this fall.

Mr. Knapick continued to review the three major criteria that the application will be rated on. In the current financial condition criteria, it is estimated that the CCL will receive a medium-high to high rating. For commitment of funds criteria, the project should rate high as all of the non-5309 funding is in secured. In the financial capacity criteria, the bar is really high. This criteria shows the applicants ability to address cost overruns and to have financial capacity to pay for increased costs. The goal is to get a medium rating.

Mr. Richard as if it's possible to see how other projects have ranked that have been approved recently. Mr. Knapick explained other project have used a more simplified warrants approach. STA is using a longer financial ratings approach, which is required due to the fact that the operating costs is over 5%. The project is currently about 6% of the annual operating costs for the system.

Ms. Meyer stated any cost overruns are on the applicant. Mr. Knapick agreed, and stated that once STA signs the grant agreement they are committed to that scope and cost overruns are on STA.

Anne Marie Axworthy asked how closely does the FTA scrutinize the financial capacity of the applicants. Mr. Brower stated FTA will look closely at your numbers and it is a major category FTA will review. He further stated there is a lot of backup information being prepared to support the final numbers. Mr. Knapick stated this project is a relatively low risk project as there are no major improvements needed such as tunneling, however FTA will have an oversight role throughout the project.

7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/LAND USE UPDATE

Ryan Farncomb provided a brief overview the "Why CCL" presentation and the goals and purpose for the presentation. He indicated the land use and economic development portion of the grant application is complete. Mr. Farncomb reviewed the project justification criteria and the need for the chapter to help support a favorable rating and to show the coordination with City and neighborhood land use plans.

Colleen Gardner asked if Mr. Farncomb had received the neighborhoods action plan. Mr. Farncomb indicated he did.

Steve Trabun asked when the station locations will be finalized. Mr. Otterstrom indicated the team is still working through the design and outreach process to help define the locations. He indicated there are discussions going on with landowners where the stations are proposed to be located. Mr. Trabun asked if the Committee has seen the station locations. Chair Waldref indicated the station locations have been shown at previous meetings. Mr. Trabun stated it would be good for the Committee to review those locations at future meetings.

Ms. Meyer stated staff is meeting with the City, landowners and business owners regularly to discuss station locations. These station locations do not need to be fully defined by the time the ratings package is submitted.

Chair Waldref stated it will be important to that the shelters be transparent so the businesses are not blocked and that they are not blocking sidewalks and pedestrian traffic.

Ms. Meyer stated the economic study that was completed for the project found that the highest redevelopment opportunity was found to be at the station locations.

8. OUTREACH UPDATE

Mr. Farncomb indicated the “Why CCL” is complete and will be provided online. Further indicated an open house will be held at Gonzaga University to gather additional input on the project. Mr. Otterstrom indicated the open house is a community wide event and not specific to the Gonzaga campus.

Mr. Farncomb further discussed some future website updates that may be implemented in the near future to get more information to the public. One of the improvements will be an interactive map with the future improvement shown. There is also a promotional video being prepared for the future HPT service and the CCL.

Ms. Kilday asked if the video will have messaging about economic development and business support and type of users expected and how the project is supportive of the community.

Brandon Rapez-Betty stated the purpose of this first video is more of an educational tool about the user experience. There could be future videos promoting the project and its benefits. Mr. Rapez-Betty further stated the video does also focus on the user experience at the stations.

Mr. Lemus stated he had several meetings with disability agencies and asked if he could get the letters of support template emailed to him.

Mr. Otterstrom stated the letters of support are not needed for the initial ratings package but the sooner they could get submitted the better.

Mr. Otterstrom stated staff will be requesting the Committee’s endorsement at the next meeting. There will also be discussion about the Committee’s role in the future and how often the Committee should meet. The next meeting will be at the end of March, possibly the 28th or 30th.

Mr. Richards stated that several members may not be able to make the meeting due to spring break and asked if there was the possibility for a proxy vote to ensure a recommendation. Mr. Otterstrom indicated staff can look into that.

9. ADJOURN

Chair Waldref adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning
Steering Committee Secretary