

Minutes from September 27, 2016

2020 Partners Membership Meeting

HGA, Ford Center

Meeting Minutes – Approved by The 2020 Partners on January 24, 2017

Attendees: Dave Albersman, Tim Bildsoe, Josh Brandsted, Pierce Canser, Alice Eichholz, Jamil Ford, David Frank, Brad Henry, Tricia Holden, Denise Holt, Dan Kenney, Brian Kimmes, Nick Koch, Rick Kreuser, David Loehr, Peter McLaughlin, Ra'eesa Motala, Mark Oyaas, Marilyn Porter, Neil Reardon, Kit Richardson, Rick Rud, Max Salmen, Dave St. Peter, Mark Stenglein, Ralph Strangis, Carletta Sweet, Albert Swintek, Marsha Wagner

1. Call to Order and Introductions – Nick Koch, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:13 pm.

2. Approval of Minutes from 2020 Partners Meeting on July 26, 2016

Minutes were APPROVED and have been posted on The 2020 Partners [website](#).

3. Transit Development Update

a. Southwest LRT – Commissioner Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin County Board

Nick introduced Peter by thanking him for his courage and tireless support. Peter began his remarks by thanking members of The 2020 Partners for consistently and vocally supporting funding for Southwest LRT (SWLRT), and added that the Governor and his staff also appreciated our letters of support. Governor Dayton played a pivotal role in putting funding for SWLRT on the table as a standalone item, holding a three-hour public meeting attended by mayors and city council members, labor unions, and business people. Both proponents and opponents of the project had a chance to speak. At the conclusion of the meeting Governor Dayton said we cannot let this project go. He asserted his leadership in taking responsibility for allowing the use of certificates of participation by the Metropolitan Council to close the funding gap, something they had earlier said they would not use in order to get legislative approval.

Ultimately, the \$144.5 million gap to fund the project completely (representing 10 percent of the total cost, 90 percent of which was funded by the federal government) was met in this manner: Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) and Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority each contributed \$20.5 million; Metropolitan Council used a quasi-debt instrument called certificates of participation (COP) to contribute \$91.5 million, representing debt service on the COPs; and CTIB agreed to service the remaining \$11.75 million of the Met Council's share. The funding needed to be resolved quickly to allay layoffs of project staff and meet the deadline to apply for the full funding grant agreement with the federal government. While they will attempt to change this funding plan during the next legislative session, that will not have any bearing on the federal government's decision to fund the remainder of the project. Because we have our funding lined up we will receive a high ranking on our local financial plan.

Regarding the Bottineau light rail line, Peter said that the corridor has been approved by all of the cities involved. Thirty percent of the engineering has been completed, and the federal government has issued its record of decision (approval) on the environment studies. This project is right behind SWLRT and will be submitted for federal funding soon. Two problems remain with the Bottineau Line: working with Burlington Northern Railroad to get the right-of-way we need from them, and \$148 million in state funding.

The Orange Line on 35W still needs state funding (\$37 million), but funding has been acquired for the remaining \$150 million plus \$25 million in road improvements.

b. Metro Transit – Marilyn Porter, Director, Metro Transit [[PPT](#)]

Metro Transit, Minnesota's largest transit provider, was the recipient of the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) 2016 Outstanding Public Transportation System Achievement Award, or Transit System of the Year. The award was presented at the 2016 APTA annual meeting in Los Angeles in September. It is in recognition of the successful launch of the Green Line; 85.8 million rides in 2015; and recent improvements in safety, vehicles and facilities. A special employee recognition event was held at Target Field Station on September 24. Attendees included transit staff, retirees, customers and partners, along with special guests State Senator Scott Dibble and Adam Duinick, Metropolitan Council Chair. On behalf of Metro Transit and Brian Lamb, its General Manager, Marilyn thanked The 2020 Partners for supporting transit as a group and as individuals.

4. Minnesota Twins Update – Dave St. Peter, President, Minnesota Twins Baseball Club

Dave announced that the Twins are getting close to finalizing the search for new leadership, and hope to introduce him in the near future, perhaps even bringing him to a future meeting of The 2020 Partners.

In terms of the ballpark, one offseason project—changing stadium lights to LED—will feed into ongoing sustainability efforts within Target Field, and they are hopeful that it will be a positive improvement from a neighborhood perspective in terms of spillage from lights. Dan Kenney, Executive Director, Minneapolis Ballpark Authority, said it builds on Target Field's LEED certification for operations. New lighting will also be installed on the underside of the canopy. It will be flexible in terms of colors, allowing them to change it for holidays and special events.

Dave concluded by announcing that the Downtown Improvement District recently completed its award season relative to all things green. Target Field Station received more recognition as the best active green space in downtown, which speaks to the programming and other things they are doing to activate the space.

5. Target Center Improvements Update – Brian Kimmes, Facilities Project Manager, Minnesota Timberwolves | Lynx [[PPT](#)]

Brian began his presentation by announcing that the Lynx, with 28 wins this season, received the first seed in the playoffs allowing them to bypass the first two rounds. They play their first two playoff games against the Phoenix Mercury, their biggest rival, at Xcel Center in Saint Paul due to a scheduling conflict at Target Center. If the Lynx continue to win the rest of their home playoff games will be played at Target Center.

The Timberwolves held their first day of training camp today [September 27] with a lot of buzz surrounding their new coach and president of basketball operations, Tom Thibodeau, and new general manager Scott Layden.

Brian presented a slide showing road closures and traffic impacts surrounding Target Center. Skyway renovations include doubling the width of the public walkway and tripling the number of entrance doors on the skyway level. The new premium level, which will be substantially completed by October 3, features the addition of thirteen Chairman's Suites with all-inclusive food and beverage; it is attached to a new club overlooking center court. Theater Boxes, another new feature, are smaller boxes for four to six people. They offer all-inclusive food and beverage, improved seating and reserved six-person dining tables.

The suite level is closer to the action than at Xcel Energy because Target Center has more seats in the upper level than the lower level.

The construction schedule has three phases. Phase One was the bowl and suite level. The bowl work finished the end of August with the unveiling of the new center-hung scoreboard which is three times the size of the old one. Four additional scoreboards were hung in the corners of the arena, creating in total seven times the amount of digital square footage. The lighting truss surrounding the center-hung scoreboard is on a separate hoist so it can be moved independently, lowering it down below the scoreboard to give the fans a special experience during team introductions.

At the end of Brian's presentation, Nick took time to thank our supporting organizations, including the Minnesota Twins and Timberwolves | Lynx, and said this organized actually got its start when Target Field was being built. Our newest financial supporter is Mayo Clinic.

6. Property Development / Neighborhood Updates

- Cooks of Crocus Hill recently opened in the North Loop.
- Hewing Hotel (Third Avenue North and Washington) is scheduled to open before the end of the year.
- New restaurants: Red Rabbit, an Italian restaurant (Second and Washington); Jun, Asian restaurant (730 Washington).
- A new building is going up across the street from the Lab Theater.
- Webster School received a visit by the Undersecretary of Education who ate lunch with the students last week. This year Webster enrolled three full kindergarten classes.
- Greco has a project under construction at 315 Seventh Avenue North: 144 units; 14,000 square feet of retail; planned opening August 2018.

7. North Loop Parking Concerns: Parking Task Force Update – Dave Albersman, Chair; Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. [[PPT](#)]

In the discussion following the presentation by Joanne Kaufman and Josh Brandsted at the July meeting, a task force was formed to study parking in the North Loop area. The Parking Subcommittee met for the first time immediately prior to this meeting. They discussed organizational issues, short- and long-term solutions, and the ultimate end product. They plan to meet an additional four to six times. The task force would like to incorporate the issue of parking into the 2020 Work Plan.

One of the things the task force discussed was the tension between parking and transit. Moving briefly through his PowerPoint presentation (originally created nearly ten years ago), Dave called out a couple of slides of particular interest. Slide 7 showed the number of available parking spaces in Minneapolis for employees, which was not much different than in Portland and Seattle, two cities that are often touted for their transit systems. Slides 8 and 9 were overhead views indicating the number of parking decks and surface parking lots in 2005 and 2016. It was clear that the number of surface lots has dramatically decreased due to development, especially in the North Loop, while the number of parking decks has not increased to keep pace with demand.

Looking at the transit mode split, Dave compared data from a study done in 1990 with numbers from 2007. The numbers did not change significantly in the four modes studied: transit, drive alone, car pool, and walk/bike. While transit ridership is increasing, it is difficult to get people out of their cars. Parking is needed if the city and North Loop continue to grow; we need to plan for both parking and transit. Even if transit ridership is doubled, there is still a need for six thousand new parking spaces by 2025, and ten thousand or more by 2030.

The task force will continue to meet over the next few months. They plan a robust use of the 2020 Partners' work plan as a forum for continued discussions. Task force members were asked to stand up to be acknowledged and thanked for their efforts.

Mark Oyaas added that the task force will dovetail its work with the efforts of the North Loop Neighborhood Association (NLNA), which is already underway, to ensure that they are starting to row in the same direction. Fundamental thinking is that no matter what happens there is going to be a parking crunch. They want to do a better job of identifying all of the various problems and working out short-term ("low hanging fruit" i.e. changing meter times and pricing) and longer-term solutions. The task force will use the data in Dave's PowerPoint presentation and replicate it for the North Loop, updating the figures hopefully with the help of 2020 Partners' resources.

Tim Bildsoe reported that the NLNA met with Council Member Frey several months ago to identify some of the issues in the North Loop, one of which was parking. Businesses and residents both complain about the lack of parking, and with more developments underway it will become more of a problem in the near term. NLNA met with CM Frey and Public Works to discuss solutions to the problem. Changes have been made recently in the vicinity of the Itasca Building; there are unintended consequences when a solution for one area causes problems for another area. NLNA has begun a conversation with the city about finding

solutions, made difficult because the city does not own the land in the area so there are not a lot of options.

In the ensuing discussion, the following suggestions and points were made:

- The task force would have a more compelling case moving forward if they could quantify the problem from a business case sense, i.e. what is the problem and how can it be resolved. (One of the takeaways from the task force meeting was to put all of the issue items on the table and come up with a strategic approach.)
- Looking at the genesis of the 2020 Partners, its constituency and support of business, government, neighborhoods and residents, it is ideally situated to collaborate with NLNA and the Warehouse District Business Association.
- Parking and transit have a close linkage to the economic vitality of these areas. Rochester has a similar problem, and is solving the problem of where employees park by building parking ramps up to twenty stories high. Grand Avenue in Saint Paul recently faced an issue with linkage between parking and economic vitality by putting parking meters on the street. In those cases it was not a well-thought-out planner solution but more of a political hot potato. Examining those communities and how they solved their issues might be insightful in how we look at our parking issues.
- At the July 26 meeting Lucy Galbraith from Metro Transit talked about [district parking](#). That could be a useful reference as it includes a benchmark study of what other cities around the country are doing in terms of district-scale parking, and it also included cost and financing.
- City permitting of surface lots was also mentioned as a problem at the July meeting. Dave said that the Parking Subcommittee will invite David Frank, Beth Elliott and possibly others to attend one of their next meetings. Integration with the city and neighborhoods is important.

8. 2020 Work Plan Update – Nick Koch

Ralph Strangis reported that the Steering Committee invited Tawanna Black, Executive Director of the Northside Funders Group (NFG), to attend its September meeting to discuss how our groups could collaborate. NFG arranges for or facilitates grants from major corporations and their foundations for development projects on the north side. The Steering Committee is looking for a partner with nonprofit status that could provide us with some financial resources or access to same, and other areas that we could partner on since we often talk about connections on the north side. There was a good conversation, but there was not a precise ask from us or a commitment from her.

Dan Collison, Director of East Town Business Partnership (ETBP), was also invited to attend the September Steering Committee meeting. ETBP has a model that is different from ours; it is funded in part by the Minneapolis Downtown Council (MDC), and Dan is the full-time, paid coordinator. Our Chair is a volunteer position without remuneration. Ralph suggested that members of the Steering Committee have a discussion with Steve Cramer, president and CEO of the MDC, about bringing resources together to deal with transit, connection and parking. With those resources we would be able to hire a contract specialist to lead our efforts.

Nick noted that it is interesting that in the history of this group supporting Target Field and vicinity, this area has not been under the umbrella or interest of the MDC or its Downtown 2025 Plan. It was clarified that the North Loop is not a part of the Downtown Improvement District (DID), which is a function of the MDC and funded by property owners. With the density of residents, office space and hotels there might be impetus to move the boundaries of the DID to include the North Loop.

9. 2020 Partners Meeting Schedule

The next meeting of the 2020 Partners will be on Tuesday, November 15, 2016, from 5:00-6:30 pm.