

MEETING SUMMARY

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #1

Date: May 18, 2021
Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Location: Virtual

ATTENDEES

Committee Members

Name	Community of Residence or Affiliation	Present
Committee Members		
Safiyo Ali	Saint Paul, Ward 5	X
Abenezer Ayana	Saint Paul, Ward 3	
Katherine Bell	Saint Paul, Ward 3	X
Daniel Bruggeman	Saint Paul, Ward 2	X
Sam Burns	Saint Paul, Ward 1	
Stephany Carpenter	Saint Paul, Ward 2	X
Hanna Debele	Saint Paul, Ward	
Jason DeBoer-Moran	Saint Paul, Ward 2	X
Cristina Diaz	Saint Paul, Ward 2	X
Eric Ecklund	Bloomington	X
Amelia English	Bloomington	X
Kevin Gallatin	Saint Paul, Ward 3	X
Diane Gerth	Saint Paul, Ward 2	X
Sylvie Guezeon	Saint Paul, Ward 1	X
Mary Hogan-Bard	Saint Paul, Ward 1	X
Meghan Kress	Saint Paul, Ward 2	X
Matthew McMillan	Saint Paul, Ward 4	X
Negatu Merkuria	Saint Paul, Ward 3	
Bill Lindeke	Saint Paul, Ward 1	
Corrinne Ollman	Saint Paul, Ward 2	X
Lawrence Richardson	Saint Paul, Ward 3	X
Jay Severance	Saint Paul, Ward 2	X
Bob Whitehead	Saint Paul, Ward 3	X
Amanda Willis	Saint Paul, Ward 3	X
Adam Yust	Saint Paul, Ward 2	X

Project Team Members and Other Attendees		
Rafael E. Ortega	Riverview Corridor Project Team	X
Jennifer Jordan	Riverview Corridor Project Team	X
Ken Iosso	Riverview Corridor Project Team	X
Mike Rogers	Riverview Corridor Project Team	X
Kevin Roggenbuck	Riverview Corridor Project Team	X
Mona Elabbady	Riverview Corridor Project Team	X
Lyssa Washington	Riverview Corridor Project Team	X
Haila Maze	Riverview Corridor Project Team	X
Joe Scala	Hennepin County	X

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

1. Welcome

Commissioner Rafael Ortega welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Riverview Community Advisory Committee. Kevin Roggenbuck read the land acknowledgment.

2. Introductions

Ramsey County staff, participating members of the consultant team, stakeholders in attendance and the committee members introduced themselves.

3. Housekeeping Items

Kevin Roggenbuck reviewed several items with the committee including the group agreements, virtual meeting procedures and development of a file storage/sharing system.

Diane Gerth stated that while there is a lot of digital content, accessing digital files might be difficult for some people to access, and that the “digital divide” is real. It was noted that printed materials might be useful at times, particularly when there are detailed graphics to review that might be hard to view on small screens.

4. Community Advisory Committee Charter and Meeting Expectations

Kevin Roggenbuck provided an overview of the Community Advisory Committee Charter and noted that it is posted to the website. The committee is expected to meet quarterly and will receive a poll to choose a regular meeting date.

Bob Whitehead asked about potential dates and times for meetings. The response was that the meetings would likely on Monday-Thursday evenings for about two-hour lengths, with details to follow via the poll.

5. Project Overview

Jennifer Jordan reviewed the project history and previous studies, described the Locally Preferred Alternative and characteristics of a modern streetcar. Mona Elabbady described the engineering and design tasks in the current phase of work, project timeline and key technical

issues to resolve. The engineering and design work being done now is focused on refining the Locally Preferred Alternative and resolving the issues described. The project team will provide as much detail as possible going forward so the committee understands the project and can provide informed feedback.

Mona described the station area planning work scope, focused on planning for the areas around future Saint Paul stations on the line. She also described the key tasks to be done researching cultural resources to preserve the historical and archaeological resources in the project area.

Jay Severance stated that he understood that first 15 months are proof of concept, and that will be the time to resolve any issues on this project. Project staff clarified that during the first 12-15 months, through issue resolution teams, it will be determined if there are any major flaws to the project. The current focus is on the river crossing and how that's handled, how it will work with downtown and interface with Green Line, and how to connect at Union Depot.

Dan Bruggeman expressed interest in the potential alignment along the Canadian Pacific spur that parallels W. 7th Street. The project team will be addressing this possibility, and understanding pros, cons, and limitations. Railroad coordination is part of the project as well.

Diane Gerth asked if the end result of this process leading up to scoping document or draft Environmental Impact Statement, or something else. She noted that people were frustrated last time in terms of what information people had to respond to with comments. Mona said this process will require an Environmental Impact Statement, and that will be developed in the subsequent Project Development phase. The focus of this phase is on better defining the Locally Preferred Alternative, better understanding costs and ridership, and doing some pre-environmental work to help people make decisions. Diane followed up to request that the committee be supported with information they can use to engage the community.

Adam Yust requested elaboration on what turnbacks are. Project staff clarified that it is a term that refers to roadway ownership and a change. For instance, if portion of roadway should continue to be owned by MnDOT or "turned back" to the County or City of St. Paul. It was further clarified that this is not a roadway driving maneuver, just about ownership.

Jay Severance wanted to know when key technical issues in detail, especially for downtown, will those come before the committee. Mona said they will be brought at future meetings, though not all at once. Jay noted that if those are quarterly, there may need to be updates along the way as to progress. Additional information will be brought at public meetings, including this summer.

Lyssa Washington described the public engagement goals, approach, and strategies to reach stakeholders in the Riverview corridor. The committee discussed ways to raise awareness and interest in the project and committee members offered suggestions. Lyssa described how the project team will reach out to the public to make them aware of the open house planned for June 23 and will provide the committee with a flyer and other information that they can share with their network of neighbors, business associates, and others interested in the project. There will be a particular focus on reaching diverse populations and individuals in the area, and ideas were shared as to opportunities to do so.

6. Riverview Engagement Topics

Mona Elabbady described the Purpose and Need statement for the project, a document that contains data and analysis that shows the need for improved public transportation and the purpose of pursuing the Locally Preferred Alternative. Mona said the Purpose and Need document is available for public review and comment and encouraged the committee to provide individual responses and encourage people in their network to comment. Comments can be submitted via the project email address info@riverviewcorridor.com.

Lyssa Washington briefly described the planned open house on June 23 and asked the committee to attend and share the information with their network. The committee discussed whether email addresses could be shared among the members so they could communicate with each other, staff will discuss it further with the committee. Lyssa also noted that a variety of other engagement events will be planned for the summer.

Jay Severance wanted to know when and how engagement will happen. He has the impression that some people think this is a long time away, so some way of promoting interest in this project is needed. The project team is looking at various ways to get people informed and involved – including interactive mapping, local media strategy, and emails. The project team has had first round of meetings with District Councils and business associations (6-7 total) to share information and will be coming back to share information later. Community Advisory Committee members will be encouraged to share information on and encourage people to come to engagement events. The project team will promote the open hours and other events via website, social media, emails, media, etc. Lyssa will send a flyer on the June 23 open house to committee members to share among their networks and information regarding the potential for a group email list to share information with one another. The team will provide paper copies on request, especially for those working from a phone.

Diane Gerth noted that she is on Community Reporter board along with Adam, and that the June edition deadline is rapidly approaching. The deadline is usually mid-month for a monthly publication, and almost everyone reads it.

Sylvie Guezeon suggested reaching out to people who ride the public transportation every day. Go in buses/trains and hand out flyers or do vocal announcements (not everyone will read/take paper). The project team will look into this, as Metro Transit has rules about distributing information on their buses. Kevin has handed out materials at bus stops in the past for other projects.

Safiyo Ali recommended presenting information at big events and holiday events. People gather at Xcel Energy during holidays and it's a good time to present. Would like to hear more dates. July 19-20 is a holiday – big prayer gathering at the parks. Safiyo has connection with people who organize things, and it's a good opportunity. Youth and children are very important in her culture, and people have big families. The Neighborhood House is a potential partner in this.

Jay Severance wanted to know if the presentation will be available online. The project team clarified that it is available now, where the agendas are provided, and comments can be submitted via info@riverviewcorridor.com or use online email form on website. All responses requesting a response will be answered.

Safiyo Ali ask if materials and presentations will be on a SharePoint or just the website? Project staff said they will also be on the shared file site as well.

7. Next Steps

Kevin Roggenbuck said the members would receive a poll to choose regular meeting dates and times. Meetings would be scheduled for two hours depending on the agenda. Selection of co-chairs will be done at the next meeting through anonymous voting. The shared file site will be developed, and the agenda, presentation and other materials will be stored there. Kevin briefly reviewed what will likely be on the next committee agenda; review of public comments on the Purpose and Need, recap of the June 23 open house and discussion of design issues. The next meeting will be sometime in August.

The Community Advisory Committee ended at 8:10 pm.