

Meeting Notes

Freight Rail Study Project Management Team (PMT)

Meeting #1

July 22, 2010

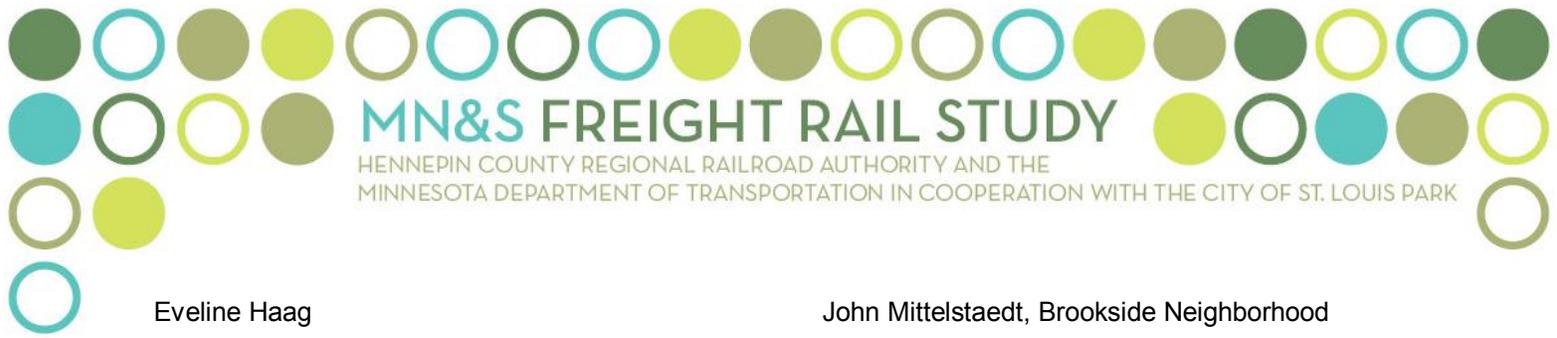
PMT Members/Alternates Present

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|---|--|
| Birchwood Neighborhood, Karen Hroma | City of St. Louis Park, Kevin Locke |
| Blackstone Neighborhood, Chris Johnson | Hennepin County, Katie Walker |
| Brookside Association, Tim Dunsworth | Hennepin County, Ia Xiong |
| Cedarhurst Neighborhood, Kristi Rudelius-Palmer | Mn/DOT, Timothy Spencer |
| Lake Forest Neighborhood, Lynne Carper | Mn/DOT, Peter Dahlberg |
| Lenox Neighborhood, Jeremy Anderson | Twin Cities and Western Railway, Bob Suko |
| Lenox Alternate, Kandi Arries | CP Railway, Amber Backhaus (Leonard Street and Deinard) |
| Sorenson Neighborhood, Lois Zander | Kimley-Horn and Associates, Jeanne Witzig |
| Sorenson Alternate, Joe LaPray | City of St. Louis Park School Board, Rolf Peterson |
| Safety in the Park, Jami LaPray | |

Others Present at Meeting

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Claudia Johnston | Brian Driscoll |
| Cleo Wedge, Sorenson Neighborhood | Marc Berg, Birchwood Neighborhood |
| Jim Beneke | Greg Suchanek, Birchwood Neighborhood |





Eveline Haag

John Mittelstaedt, Brookside Neighborhood

Mike Rozman, Lake Forest Neighborhood

Mike Hough, Sorenson Neighborhood

Jeff Roy, Lenox Neighborhood

Commissioner Gail Dorfman

PMT Members Not Present at Meeting

Bronx Park, Robb Enslin/Catherine Kotki

Brooklawns, Jake Spano

Eliot, Marjorie Douville

Eliot View, Margaret Heil

Elmwood, Paula Evensen

South Oak Hill

Triangle, Kristin Rohman Rehkamp

Wolfe Park

Safety in the Park, Thom Miller

BNSF, David Wolter/Doug Perry

TC&W, Mark Wegner

City of St. Louis Park, Meg McMonigal

Introductions

- General welcome and introductions of Project Management Team (PMT).
- Name of study “MN&S Freight Rail Study (previously referred to as Kenilworth Freight Rail Relocation Study).
- Review agenda items, including standing Open Forum agenda item.
- Jeanne Witzig, Kimley-Horn and Associates, will serve as the chair of the PMT, on behalf of Hennepin County and Mn/DOT, in cooperation with the City of St. Louis Park
- Commissioner Dorfman welcomed PMT participants, and thanked them for their participation.
- Kick off meeting will not get into technical issues, but rather review the overall framework, scope of study and role of the PMT.

Roles/Responsibilities

- PMT Roles and Responsibilities (Charter) and PMT Membership Summary handed out and reviewed.
- PMT membership reflects diverse group, with varying interests.
- To manage the size and provide equity, each neighborhood on the PMT will have one “seat at the table”, with a designated alternate to serve, as needed.
- Role of the PMT reviewed “*The role of the PMT is to provide input and guidance that is representative of the various groups sitting on the PMT, but that also works toward collaborative solutions that effectively and feasibly balance the interests of the varying project stakeholders.*”



- The PMT provides the forum to discuss key project issues, set goals, educate, and develop project alternatives. **NOTE: PROJECT ALTERNATIVE(S) REFERS TO THE PROPOSED ACTION/SCENARIO(S) UNDER EVALUATION FOR THE MN&S CORRIDOR.**
- PMT meeting materials will be posted on the project website (current access on Hennepin County webpage, and type in freight rail in search bar). St. Louis Park webpage also has a link.
- **Action: Asked PMT members to identify ways the project team can assist their respective group in getting the word out regarding the project.**
- **Action: Hennepin County will check into providing a more user friendly web address for the project.**

Purpose and General Scope of Study

- Several handouts distributed under this agenda item: Minnesota Freight Railroad Map, Twin Cities Area Freight Railroad Map, Twin Cities and Western Railroad Company service map, MN&S Freight Rail Study area map (aerial), Outline of Study Process, and Project Management Team Meeting/Area of Focus Table.
- Three key elements of the study: Project Coordination, Environmental Analysis and Conceptual Preliminary Engineering
- Reviewed purpose of this study: To develop and evaluate alternative(s) to relocate TC&W trains from the Kenilworth Corridor to the CP – MN&S corridor in St. Louis Park. The recommended project alternative(s) will undergo environmental review (impact evaluation and development of mitigation measures), in compliance with the state environmental review process.
- General overview of project development process (environmental review phase and conceptual preliminary engineering):
 - Define Purpose and Need for Project along with Project Goals/Objectives and Evaluating Criteria
 - Assess and Document Existing Conditions of MN&S corridor (what it is today)
 - Develop potential project alternatives
 - Evaluate impacts
 - Develop and incorporate mitigation measures
 - Throughout the process conduct project outreach. Key elements include: PMT, neighborhood work sessions, freight rail and resource agency coordination and open house meetings.
- General discussion items relative to the scope of this study:
 - Concern raised that there will be an apples to apples comparison with the Kenilworth study currently underway.
 - This study will focus on proposed alternative(s) in the MN&S Corridor. The impact evaluation will be based on existing conditions in the MN&S Corridor and the project alternatives proposed. The mitigation measures will be developed through the process based on impacts and alternatives that best meet the project purpose and need/goals objectives.
 - General question: Does the current consultant contract have a budget to “get the word out”? **Response:** Yes, this study will include preparation and distribution of information postcards and project flyers. The city of St. Louis Park will also be supporting the outreach efforts.



- Safety issue is of main concern for the railroads, the community, and the stakeholder agencies. Although not specifically mentioned in handout materials it is a key element in the design standards required for railway projects; and will be a key area of focus relative to mitigation for the project.
- At-grade rail crossings will be evaluated in the study. State and federal safety requirements will be followed relative to grade crossing requirements.
- Evaluating criteria developed through the PMT process, will define how project alternatives are compared in this process.
- The project alternative(s) developed for the MN&S corridor must be workable and feasible for the Railroads.
- A “wider right of way” could be an alternative defined in the process. If the direction is to study a wider ROW, it would need to be fully evaluated in this study.
- The EAW process does not result in “approval of the project”; but rather approval that proposed alternative(s) in the MN&S corridor have been adequately evaluated. Mn/DOT will be the agency making the final environmental determination under the state environmental review process (called the Responsible Governmental Unit).
- Temporary and permanent impacts will be evaluated in the EAW.
- Detailed costs (line items for easy reference) will be developed for the alternative(s) evaluated in the EAW.
- General goal of the process: to effectively incorporate appropriate mitigation measures directly into the design.
- **Action: Based on interest raised by the PMT; Commissioner Dorfman recommended bringing the findings of the two separate studies underway, (co-location in Kenilworth and alternatives to the MN&S corridor) in response to requests by the City of St. Louis Park, to the PMT for information (anticipate at PMT Meeting #5).**
- **Action: Provide clarification on existing railroad ROW in MN&S Corridor.**

Project Schedule

- Project schedule was reviewed along with Scope of Study handout/discussion. Focused on the link of key areas of focus for upcoming PMT meetings – roughly a 6 to 8 month project schedule.
- Reviewed areas of focus for August/September meeting; including development of Purpose and Need statement (goals, evaluating criteria), general rail requirements, existing conditions (both rail and resources/land use), input of key areas of concern, upcoming coordination activities and standing Open Forum item.
- Up to four neighborhood work sessions are a part of this study. PMT will be involved in providing direction regarding the format for the meetings, along with the best time, topic and location. Suggestion made to consider holding a meeting with high school students as one of the four neighborhood work sessions.

Next PMT Meeting

- The next PMT is scheduled for Thursday, August 26, 2010 at 6:00 pm, in the City of St. Louis Park Council Chambers.



- The group agreed to meet on a monthly basis. The September 2010 PMT meeting will be a field review of the corridor. The corridor will be viewed from selected locations. The field review will not take place on railroad ROW, but rather from public and other private locations (with appropriate permission). General suggestion to hold in-field review on a Saturday morning.
- October meeting date set for October 28, at 6:00 PM, in the City of St. Louis Park Council Chambers. November meeting date to be determined.
- **Action: Coordinate with CP Railway on best time to view corridor from a safety perspective. Work with PMT members to identify most appropriate locations to view the corridor.**

Running List of Questions

- **Action: General request to bring or submit questions to be addressed at upcoming PMT meetings. Questions can be submitted to: slprail@co.hennepin.mn.us**
- **Action: Question asked if the meetings can be televised. The city will check on the policy to televise project committee meetings.**
- Question: Will areas of pollution adjacent to the tracks be evaluated? **Response:** Yes, the EAW will first conduct an existing conditions assessment, which will identify contaminated areas (known) in the project area. Through that information, we will evaluate the potential impact of the project.
- If you would like to receive PMT meeting information directly (via e-mail), please indicate “yes” by your name on the sign in sheet and/or request the meeting information through the e-mail address noted above.

Open Forum

All PMT meetings will include an Open Forum Discussion.

- General question relative to the status of the Southwest LRT Corridor. The Southwest LRT Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is currently under review by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).
- General comment that the Triangle Neighborhood would benefit from the freight relocation.
- General comment that more neighborhoods should be involved on PMT. **Response:** In effort to keep the PMT a manageable/workable size, and provide equity to the varied stakeholders, fifteen neighborhood organizations were identified to serve on the PMT. Emphasized that all PMT meetings are open to the public, with a standing Open Forum agenda item.
- Question: If a bridge goes over the Golden Auto site, will it impact the existing caps? **Response:** Potential impacts to site(s) of concern relative to soil contamination will depend on the design of the alternatives, the type of contamination/mitigation in place and/or the construction techniques for the project.
- Question: Is it conceivable to propose that it's not feasible to relocate TC&W freight operations to the MN&S Corridor? **Response:** That specific question will be addressed through the supplemental study currently underway for the 6 alternatives evaluated in the



2009 Study (per request in SLP resolution). Purpose of this study, is to understand the impacts and mitigation required to relocate TC&W freight operations to the MN&S Corridor.

- TC&W comment: There were/are several alternatives identified in the 2009 study that would not be practical operationally for TC&W.
- TC&W comment: Safety is priority #1.
- Question: Will this study address the cost of adding ROW to the MN&S corridor, to provide a comparable analysis to Kenilworth? **Response:** The definition of the alternative(s) in the MN&S corridor will occur through a multi-step process. If the alternative(s) to be evaluated in the EAW require additional ROW, the impacts, including cost, of the proposed acquisition will be identified.
- CP Railway owns the tracks in the MN&S corridor. CP is a key stakeholder/decision maker in the process; as the proposed project would be on their ROW. BNSF also key stakeholder, and participant on the PMT.
- Question regarding Kimley-Horn and Associates and RL Banks credentials and location. **Response:** Kimley-Horn is local engineering/planning firm, with transit expertise. AECOM is on the Kimley-Horn team, and has significant rail engineering experience. RL Banks is a highly regarded national firm specializing in rail projects.
- Question: How has Mn/DOT been involved in project? **Response:** Mn/DOT is funding a portion of this study. Mn/DOT is working with Hennepin County in cooperation with the City of St. Louis Park on this study; and they are serving as the Responsible Governmental Unit (RGU) for the environmental review process.
- Who will fund the project? **Response:** It is anticipated that funding for the project will come from multiple sources, including the federal government, possibly through the Federal Railroad Administration.
- Will this project be a part of the Southwest LRT budget? **Response:** The cost to relocate freight rail from the Kenilworth Corridor is not included in the Southwest LRT project. Throughout the LRT process, it has been disclosed that freight rail operations would be relocated under a separate action.
- Question: Who is legally responsible to make sure the railroads are “happy”? **Response:** The next PMT will focus on General Railroad requirements. This question will be addressed in future PMT meetings.



Summary of Action Items

| Action Item | Responsible Party | Timeline/Status |
|---|--|------------------|
| PMT #1 | | |
| Asked PMT members to identify ways the project team can assist their respective group in getting the word out regarding the project | PMT Members | On-Going |
| Hennepin County will check into providing a more user friendly web address. | Ia Xiong/Hennepin County | PMT Meeting #2 |
| Check on policy to televise PMT Meetings on City's Cable network | Kevin Locke/City of St. Louis Park | PMT Meeting #2 |
| Recommendation to bring the findings of the two separate studies underway, (co-location in Kenilworth and alternatives to the MN&S Corridor) in response to request by the City of St. Louis Park, to the PMT for information (anticipate at PMT Meeting #5). | Hennepin County/City of St. Louis Park | PMT Meeting #5 |
| Provide clarification on existing railroad ROW in MN&S Corridor. | KHA Team in Consultation with CP Railway | PMT Meeting #2/3 |
| Coordinate with CP Railway on best time to view corridor from a safety perspective. Work with PMT members to identify most appropriate locations to view the corridor | KHA Team | PMT Meeting #2 |
| General request to bring or submit questions to be addressed at upcoming PMT meetings. Questions can be submitted to: slprail@co.hennepin.mn.us | PMT Members | On-Going |
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