

RAMSEY COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY

August 19, 2008

The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority met at 11:30a.m., Tuesday, August 19, 2008, in the Council Chambers, Third Floor Court House.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Jim McDonough
Commissioner Tony Bennett
Commissioner Toni Carter
Commissioner Rafael Ortega
Commissioner Jan Parker
Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt
Commissioner Janice Rettman

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Chair McDonough called the meeting to order at 11:30AM

AGENDA

Commissioner Carter moved approval of the Agenda of the August 19, 2008 Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Ortega. Roll Call: Ayes – Bennett, Carter, Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, McDonough – 7. Nays – 0. Motion accepted.

MINUTES

Commissioner Ortega moved approval of the Minutes from the July 22 and the August 5, 2008 Board Meetings, seconded by Commissioner Carter. Roll Call: Ayes – Bennett, Carter, Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, McDonough – 7. Nays – 0. Motion accepted.

1. Ratification of Report of Contracts

Commissioner Bennett moved approval of the Ratification of Report of Contracts, seconded by Commissioner Carter. Roll Call: Ayes – Bennett, Carter, Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, McDonough – 7. Nays – 0. Motion accepted.

WHEREAS, Administrative Code 4.3.50A requires a report of all contracts approved by the County Manager; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority hereby approves the Quarterly Report of Contracts for the period of April 1, 2008 through June 30, 2008.

2. **Approve First Amendment to the Grant Agreement with the Minnesota Department of Transportation for Rush Line Corridor Federal Funds**

Commissioner Reinhardt moved approval of the First Amendment to the Grant Agreement with the Minnesota Department of Transportation for Rush Line Corridor Federal Funds, seconded by Commissioner Rettman. Roll Call: Ayes – Bennett, Carter, Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, McDonough – 7. Nays – 0. Motion accepted.

WHEREAS, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority is a member of the Rush Line Corridor Task Force, and is administering the grant agreement for the Rush Line Corridor Alternatives Analysis study; and

WHEREAS, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority entered into a grant agreement with the Minnesota Department of Transportation to access \$400,000 in federal funding to conduct an alternatives analysis study for the Rush Line Corridor; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority hereby authorizes the Ramsey County Manager to approve and execute the grant amendment with the Minnesota Department of Transportation to extend the grant termination date to December 31, 2009, at no increase in contract cost.

3. **Approve Comments on the Central Corridor Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

Commissioner Ortega moved approval of the Comments on the Central Corridor Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, seconded by Commissioner Carter. A substitute motion was proposed containing changes to the original board documentation/resolutions. The modification was to add a new third Whereas, that states “Public input continues to raise issues such as pedestrian crossings, gentrification and economic disparity, number of stations and public art as important aspects of the project yet to be resolved”; The modification also adds a second resolve stating “That the Metropolitan Council must work with the neighborhoods, local businesses and other project partners to satisfactorily resolve outstanding issues”.

Commissioner Rettman pointed out that second to last resolve contains wording changes that differ from the original document, Resolution R06-33, dated May 23, 2006, and that the revised resolution would be included with the packet with the attachment. Roll Call: Ayes – Bennett, Carter, Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, McDonough – 7. Nays – 0. Motion accepted.

WHEREAS, The Metropolitan Council has prepared a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the Central Corridor light rail transit line; and

WHEREAS, Public hearings on the SDEIS have been held to gather comments on the project; and

WHEREAS, Public input continues to raise issues such as pedestrian crossings, gentrification and economic disparity, number of stations and public art as important aspects of the project yet to be resolved; and

WHEREAS, The Metropolitan Council has committed to continue to work with the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and other project partners to resolve outstanding issues; Now, Therefore Be It

RESOLVED, That Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority generally supports the changes outlined in the SDEIS and provides the following comments; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, That the Metropolitan Council must work with the neighborhoods, local businesses and other project partners to satisfactorily resolve outstanding issues; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, That Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority staff will continue to work with project staff to refine the LRT component of the Union Depot multi-modal transit hub; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, That Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority staff will continue to work with project staff to satisfactorily address the issues listed in Rail Authority Resolution R06-33, dated May 23, 2006, and those raised in the Preliminary Design Plan Public Comment Record compiled by Ramsey County in June 2008, and in the document entitled "Central Corridor LRT Ongoing Coordination and Project Partner Involvement in the Decision Making Process Beyond Municipal Consent;" And Be It Further

RESOLVED, That the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority will continue to work with the Metropolitan Council and other project partners to ensure the project, as built, best meets the needs of the citizens of Ramsey County.

4. Central Corridor Project Update

Dan Soler, who is an engineer at the Metropolitan Council Central Corridor Project Office, gave an update on the project. He stated that the SDEIS process will soon come to a close. Comments are due on Monday, August 25th. Also, the SDEIS process held three public hearings the previous week and the comments and transcripts from those hearings are being compiled. He said all of the comments for the SDEIS will be gathered and available by the end of the week of August 25.

Commissioner Rettman commented that one of the frustration points Metropolitan Council needs to hear is that the people who are not able to be present at the committee meetings had some concerns that the dialog is one way, and that comments are being presented but not responded to.

Dan Soler responded that he agreed a formal public hearing, such as the SDEIS hearing, does function in that manner; where people have the opportunity to be present, make a comment and pose questions but then those statements are not necessarily addressed. He said he would bring that concern to the Metropolitan Council on behalf of the people and the County Board.

Commissioner Carter added to Commissioner Rettman's comment by saying that they acknowledge the tremendous outreach effort Metropolitan Council and the team has made in seeking community input, especially by going door to door along the corridor to talk with people and businesses. However, she stressed that the community is confused about how their input is being translated into the plans for the project, and that the project has a responsibility to respond, incorporate and address their issues and concerns. She asked that Metropolitan Council look into a "community impact process" to help people understand how the partners, community and businesses not only stay informed but also have an impact on the the decisions and actions.

Dan Soler told the RCRRA that Central Corridor is moving along with the Preliminary Engineering (PE) and the New Starts submittal due on September 5th.

Commissioner Carter commented that at the previous Central Corridor Management Committee (CCMC) meeting it was mentioned that there had been a change to the Cost Effectiveness Index (CEI) requirement and she asked if there was anything further to report.

Dan Soler responded that he did not attend the previous CCMC meeting, but that he was aware that there were changes in the CEI as a result of the run-time and cost refinements. He said that those calculations are not completed and are what they plan to present at the next CCMC meeting.

Dan Soler updated the RCRRA on the loss of parking issues by saying they are working closely with the City of St.Paul on strategies to resolve the issues. He mentioned that the City is working on two potential community grant projects in the Snelling and Raymond area for parking sites. The east and west sides of the corridor are being researched for potential parking areas.

Dan Soler continued his update on public art and the public art process. He said the team has selected 10 proposers/artists to submit proposals that are due on September 10. The artists' proposals contain samples as well as comments about their proposed public involvement process and how they would each hope to engage the public around the stations where they would be working. Interviews with those artists are currently

being scheduled and will take place on September 15. The project team will choose up to 5 artists based on the outcome of the proposals and interviews.

Commissioner Carter commented on the integration of public art with the station design. She specifically expressed a concern that the overall design and concept for Central Corridor stations would be completed before the artist was engaged in the project, not giving them the opportunity to impact the design of the station. She also explained that the public has expected to have a greater role and influence in the public art aspect of the project. She asked if there was an update on the continued effort of the project team to refine these public art related issues.

Dan Soler responded by saying that determining how to utilize public art in station design process was previously discussed at the CCMC meetings. He explained that the ability for public art to influence the station design is still an open issue and that the project team is working to involve the artist, the communities and the public in the process.

Lastly, Dan Soler updated the board on the Cedar Street station. He explained that Central Presbyterian and St. Louis Church have expressed concerns about this station. Dan Soler and the outreach team have met extensively with the members of both churches to discuss the issues. The project team and the churches have established the main points of concerns, which are noise and vibration, pedestrian access issues, and how they access their funerals. Numerous vibration tests have been conducted and with the results, the team has recommendations that will be put into the plan to minimize and eliminate any vibration impact that might be caused by LRT running along Cedar Street. For the pedestrian access issues, they have resolved to leave the traffic signals at Exchange Street for pedestrians who would use the ramp and the west side of the Cedar Street area for parking. The team is still working on how to resolve the churches' funeral issues. The team has come up with some solutions and designs which they will present to the churches for follow-up. They have also met with Central Presbyterian's architect and facilities people to get a complete understanding of how they use their building and how all their uses can be served.

Commissioner Ortega confirmed with Dan Soler that Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) has conducted their own vibration test study. He then asked if Central Corridor Project Office received MPR's vibration study results and if the RCRRA could receive copies of their results and recommendations.

Dan Soler responded by saying that the available results would be given to Timothy Mayasich, as well as an outline of what the team is still recommending to do with regard to vibration tests.

Chair McDonough commented that the success of this project will be judged by how the line operates in the community, and that decisions were made for realistic and concrete reasons, and not based upon who had influence and at what level that influence pressured the decision making process. Chair McDonough continued saying that the

Project Office has worked tremendously to build up that level of trust, that everyone's interest and concerns are included and that the responses to people's input is truly based on engineering and what makes sense and works for the project as a whole. Chair McDonough commended the Project Office on getting to the the point where the community has that trust.

Timothy Mayasich spoke to recognize Alicia Vap and her years of service with the Regional Rail Authority. He said her last day with the RRA would be Friday, August 22, upon accepting a position with the Central Corridor Project Office to oversee the transit stations and public art. He added that an advertisement for her replacement would go out that Friday.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 PM.