

[In these minutes: Central Corridor LRT Update, College of Veterinary Medicine Fundraiser]

ACADEMIC HEALTH CENTER STUDENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (AHC SCC) MINUTES

MARCH 23, 2011

5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

488 CHILD REHAB CENTER

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the view of, nor are they binding on the Senate, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Eric Moeker (chair), Samantha Berget, Brandon Burk, Sean Corvin, Patrick Day, Mark DeRocher, Kit Johnson, Erin Kasper, Chase Lembeck, Lynn Seuer, Paul Syverson, Leah Tacheny, Josie Thole, Lindsey Tischer

REGRETS: Junaid Ghouse, Grant Hennington, Eden Sonn

GUESTS: Tim Busse, communications director, University Services

OTHERS ATTENDING: Jarrod Call, Barry Park

I). Eric Moeker convened the meeting, and welcomed those present.

II). Members unanimously approved the February 23, 2011 minutes.

III). Mr. Moeker welcomed today's guest, Tim Busse, communications director, University Services, who was invited to provide information on the light rail and the impact it will have on the AHC as well as the whole University.

Mr. Busse began by saying that every effort is being made to get the word out about the Central Corridor LRT (CCLRT) constructed, which is expected to impact every member of the University community, e.g., faculty, students, staff, visitors. During construction, traveling to the University will be challenging, but, once completed, the light rail will be a great asset to the University of Minnesota. He used the Crosstown Project as an analogy for what light rail construction will be like on campus.

Mr. Busse provided the committee with an overview of the project and outlined the University's principles and objectives. He turned members' attention to the Metropolitan Council's Regional Transportation Network plan. The budget for the CCLRT project is \$957 million. Approximately half of the project will be funded by the federal government, and the remaining money will come from the State of Minnesota, Metropolitan Council and local county boards. Officially, the project kicked off last year in downtown St. Paul at the Union Depot. Construction has recently begun on campus and will continue to increase until the project is completed in 2013. Trains will begin running in 2014. The CCLRT will run from Union Depot in downtown St. Paul to Target Field in Minneapolis. There will be 18 stations on the CCLRT line and another five stations that will be shared with the Hiawatha Line. The two lines will hook up at the Metrodome Station. Once the CCLRT project is complete, the new system will link the major destinations in the Twin Cities: downtown Minneapolis, downtown St. Paul, Mall of America, the airport, and the University of Minnesota.

Using a series of slides, Mr. Busse walked members through the design and layout of the three University stations, West Bank, East Bank and Stadium Village. An extremely important part of the project for the University will be the Washington Avenue Mall on the East Bank. Once spring semester and finals are over, the section of Washington Avenue on campus will permanently close to traffic and never re-open again. When the train starts running, the Washington Avenue Mall will only be open to trains, buses, emergency vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists, which will be a major change for the campus. Interestingly, there are Board of Regent documents dating back to the 1920s that propose getting traffic off of Washington Avenue.

Other salient highlights from Mr. Busse's presentation included:

- On the West Bank, the train will run down the middle of Washington Avenue in the trench area at street level with one lane of traffic on either side of the tracks for vehicles.
- The Blegen Hall stop will be moved a bit to the West for two reasons: 1). Closer proximity to the West Bank neighborhoods and 2). Need for more space than was available at Blegen Hall.
- There will be an at-grade crossing on both sides of Washington Avenue at Blegen Hall across Washington Avenue to the station area, which will have a signal.
- The 35W/Washington Avenue loop will change into an intersection with a signal.
- Once the train starts running in 2014, traffic traveling from the West Bank to the East Bank be routed around the Weisman Art Museum where people can go either north or south on East River Road. East Bank traffic traveling west will have to exit on Walnut Street and then go either north or south on Walnut Street.
- The East Bank Station will be on Washington Avenue between Union and Harvard.
- Buses will be sharing the same lanes with the trains; therefore, buses will be running on the train tracks.
- As the buses and trains come through campus, the speed will be 15 mph.
- The Washington Avenue Mall will have seating areas, landscaping, plenty of lighting, different colored concrete, and fencing to control crossing on the Washington Avenue Mall.
- The Stadium Village Station will be a transit hub with parking, and eventually offices and retail space.
- Research concerns have been a point of contention between the University and the Metropolitan Council. Washington Avenue is a very important research area at the University with the approximately 100 labs and the 330 pieces of sensitive research equipment, which could be effected by vibrations and electro-magnetic interference. After considerable discussion with the Metropolitan Council, the University's concerns have been mitigated. During these discussions, the University was mindful to not to add significantly to the cost of the project or to jeopardize the project in any way. In the most sensitive areas on Washington Avenue, the train will run on a floating slab of concrete. This technique has worked effectively at other universities. Regarding the electro-magnetic interference, a split power supply will be used to break up the interference. Vibration tables and equipment are also being installed in some areas to help protect sensitive research and in two cases labs are being moved, e.g., the Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) facility will be moved from Hasselmo Hall to the Mayo Garage.
- During construction, pedestrians will be able to walk along Washington Avenue and be able to cross at specified points. The University has been assured that no two consecutive intersections, e.g., Harvard and Union, would be closed at the same time, and that intersections will only be closed for a limited period of time, e.g., 10 – 12 days.
- In an effort to keep people safe, Washington Avenue will be closed to bicyclists during construction as will the Scholars' Walk.
- During construction, the local Metropolitan Transit routes, e.g., 3, 16, 50, etc., will be redirected down Pleasant Street with the Folwell Hall/Knoll area being the new big bus stop. It is projected that about 100 buses an hour will run on Pleasant Street, which

includes local MTC buses, University and express buses. Bus stops will be expanded on Pleasant Street and a permanent stoplight will be installed at Pillsbury Avenue. This will be a very busy area.

- Express buses will continue to come to campus but rather than crossing on Washington Avenue, they will cross on 10th Street and go down University.
- The East Bank exit off of Interstate 35W going north will close in mid May and not reopen until 2012. Also, there will be major changes to the Cedar Avenue ramps with the north side closing and the south side will become two-way, one lane in each direction.
- Also, coming from downtown going east on Washington Avenue, the loop by Bobby and Steve's Auto World, which goes to Interstate 35W south will also close for the summer.
- With Washington Avenue closed, the number of delivery trucks on campus will need to be minimized. Deliveries to campus be reduced or consolidated.
- Construction on the Washington Avenue Bridge has already started and will continue through November 2012. The bridge is in the process of being reinforced. Half of the pedestrian level of the bridge is also open.
- Construction on the Washington Avenue Transit Mall will begin this summer and continue through the summer of 2012.
- Once construction on Washington Avenue is complete in 2013, it remains undecided whether buses will continue to be routed down Pleasant Street or whether they will go on Washington Avenue despite the fact that the trains will not start running until 2014.
- For more information about the CCLRT project and construction updates, members were encouraged to visit the following websites:
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/ccorridor/centralcorridor.asp> and
<http://lightrail.umn.edu/>
- The CCLRT project is a Metropolitan Council project and not a University of Minnesota project.

In closing, Mr. Busse stated that in an effort to communicate the changes that will be taking place on campus resulting from the CCLRT construction, he requested members let him know if they are aware of other groups that would benefit from hearing this presentation. In response to a suggestion, Mr. Busse reported that he met with Orientation & First Year Programs earlier today. They are advising students and their parents who are coming to campus during CCLRT construction to not rely on their GPS equipment or cell phones for directions because of all the changes that will be taking place.

A member asked about whether the CCLRT hours of operation will remain the same as the Hiawatha line, which stops running at 2 a.m. Yes, stated Mr. Busse, at least for right now; however, this will likely need to be re-evaluated as a matter of practicality.

Moving on, Mr. Busse handled several logistical questions.

Regarding a question about access for people with disabilities, Mr. Busse explained that Disabilities Services has been involved since the beginning of this project to ensure disability access. Disability access will be a significant concern up and down the line, and one the University takes very seriously.

Mr. Moeker thanked Mr. Busse for his informative presentation. Mr. Busse noted that an expanded version of his presentation is on the <http://lightrail.umn.edu/> website.

Members then took a few minutes to discuss the best way to distribute the information they heard today in an effort to get the word out. After some discussion, members agreed to share the information with their respective schools for the administration to distribute as it sees fit. From a public relations and financial perspective, it will be important that the schools not dissuade people from coming to campus, but to encourage them to plan accordingly.

A member asked how this information will be disseminated to patients. Mr. Moeker suggested sending this question to Mr. Busse for a response.

IV). Before adjourning the meeting, Mr. Moeker asked members whether anyone had any other business to bring forward. Paul Syverson stated that a College of Veterinary Medicine student group is planning to have a fund-raiser, and they would like to invite students from the other AHC schools to attend. He asked if anyone had ideas about the best way to advertise to or invite students from the other AHC programs. Members shared their ideas and then following the meeting, several members wrote down contact information for who they thought would be the best person in their school to contact. Ms. Dempsey, Senate staff, stated that she would also forward this request to Associate Vice President Brandt and Gina Kundan, assistant director, Center for Health Interprofessional Programs (CHIP), to solicit their ideas.

Hearing no further business, Mr. Moeker adjourned the meeting, and thanked members for attending.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate