

Meeting of the Central Corridor Business Advisory Committee

Monday, January 18, 2010

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Lori Fritts, David Jones, Jeannine Kessler, Brenda Kyle, Nell McClung, Jim Segal, Brian Thoemke, Kay Baker, Christine Wiegert, Amy Stahley,

Others Present: Cecile Bedor, Robin Caufman, Michael McLaughlin, Karri Plowman, Jeff Pauley

1. Call Meeting to Order/Review Meeting Minutes

Lori Fritts, BAC Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. She asked the BAC members to review the minutes; there were no changes.

2. Project Update

Robin Caufman provided updates on three topics. First, the Metropolitan Council is holding two public hearings on January 29, 2010 regarding the Infill Stations Environmental Assessment. Second, she noted that the FTA has changed criteria for being eligible for federal funding. The CEI is still a factor but does not carry a pass/fail weight. Ms. Caufman also reported that several contracts, including Civil East and the Advance Traffic Improvements are out for bid with many of them being awarded this summer.

Jim Segal asked when the BAC be talking about resources to assist impacted businesses. He thinks that the two biggest issues facing businesses is parking and business mitigation fund.

Karri Plowman noted that monetary resources not typically given to businesses for transportation projects and asked that we hold the discussion because he thought the upcoming presentation by Jeff Pauley will get these concerns.

3. Business resource Collaborative Strategic Plan

Karri Plowman reviewed the history of the First Friday Group, an informal group of public, private and non profits leaders that has been meeting monthly since Aug. 2008 to talk about business issues and concerns. .

After Jeff Pauley introduced himself he presented the draft Business Resource Collaborative Strategic Plan. The plan includes a mission and vision statement, core beliefs and summarizes objectives related to three target areas of service:

- Construction mitigation
- Business support
- Economic development

Following the presentation, Mr. Pauley asked for feedback and questions.

Dave Jones asked if we know the current failure rate of businesses.

Lori Fritts noted that they are working on developing a baseline study. Mr. Plowman noted that they have asked for bids and have received estimates ranging from \$50,000 to \$2 million.

Nell McClung suggested doing a mailed survey. Ms. Cauffman Robin reported that the project office has conducted several mailings including a survey. We've been trying to maintain our business list based on returned envelopes. In May 2009, we received approximately 20% of the envelopes back so you can assume roughly 20% of the businesses move, close, relocation on the corridor.

Michael McLaughlin, SEBA staff, asked how the BRC relates to this group, the BAC. First, Karri noted that the BAC is going to be transitioning to quarterly meetings to provide advice on business support issues and that the Met Council will be creating smaller geographic based Construction Communication Committees. Second, the BRC is made of service providers and implementers whereas the BAC is made up of businesses that can provide feedback on implementation of the business support programs.

Mr. Pauley added that the BRC is about "WE." There is not one group or body that runs or has control.

Mr. McLaughlin suggested developing a matrix to help guide people to the right people or groups that can help them. This would also provide accountability and allow the BRC to see where the holes are so they can be proactive in filling them.

Cecile Bedor suggested adding money or budgets to each of the objectives to help prioritize, set expectations and start thinking about funding sources. .

David Jones stated that he assumed that the Met Council has primary responsibility over the construction mitigation activities and asked who has ownership over business support? Several groups were noted including:

- U7 and CDC's, other Universities working on training or tech support.
- CCP, Midway Chamber and AEDA working on marketing plans.
- Banks and CDC's can provide financial support

Ms. Fritts added that the collaborative allows people to band together.

Mr. Jones asked what message we want to convey to the CCMC about the BRC. He noted that the Met Council has been good at securing funds for construction of the line; what about business mitigation. Mr. Plowman responded that he has been providing updates to the CCMC as part of the monthly agenda item for providing BAC reports. Christine Wiegert added that she understands that it is not the Met Council's role and Ms. Cauffman laid out the challenges with the Met Council providing business mitigation funds including lack of statutory authority, precedence setting for future transportation project and constrained project budget.

Mr. Segal stated that he is pushing for mitigation fund

Ms. Bedor asked if anyone has laid out the logistics of the type of mitigation fund Jim is talking about. For example, are businesses willing to open their books monthly to a government organization, how much could businesses get, who is eligible, what are the criteria and what is included in the application?

Mr. Plowman reiterated the statutory procedure issues. He stated that he personally is not against such a fund, he just sees the challenges and is choosing to focus his efforts on activities where we can make progress.

Ms. Fritts added that she also is not against a fund, would rather focus on things that we can make progress on, such as incentives program.

Mr. Jones asked if anyone asked businesses if they want to relocate and is there assistance? If 20 to 30 percent of businesses are going to go out of business shouldn't we help them instead of going broke?

Mr. Segal acknowledged the road block with business fund, so suggested we focus on parking mitigation.

Mr. Pauley concluded that meeting by stating that the BRC talks about a new model. It is bold; based on businesses taking care of themselves. He noted that individually we can make small impacts but collaboratively, we can create solutions. This is where WE are being bold.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Lori Fritts adjourned the meeting at 5:35 PM

Next Meeting: February 15, 2010