



**Springfield Rail Improvements Project
Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting #1
Event Summary
Thursday, July 25, 2013, 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm**

Overview

The first meeting of the Springfield Rail Improvements Project Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) was held at 5:30 pm on Thursday, July 25, 2013 at the Prairie Capital Convention Center. Twenty-two participants and five members of the study team attended the nearly two-hour session, which served as the official launch of the project's community outreach efforts. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Acquaint advisory group members with the project team;
- Explain the project's purpose, activities, timeline and funding;
- Describe the project's public involvement program;
- Review the roles and responsibilities of advisory group members; and
- Solicit advisory group members' feedback.

Jimmie Austin, of Hanson Professional Services, opened the meeting with an introduction of the project team and a brief description of team members' responsibilities. He then invited meeting attendees to state their organizational affiliations. A list of meeting participants is presented below.

Advisory Group Members:

- Jamie Adaire – Bunn Park Neighborhood Association
- Mike Boer – Mid-Illinois Medical District
- Josh Collins – Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce
- Dr. Phil Davis – S.I.U. School of Medicine
- Bill Donels – Springfield Bicycle Club
- Dr. J. Kevin Dorsey – S.I.U. School of Medicine
- Tom Gihl – Illinois National Bank
- Pat Grady – Springfield South Corridor Neighborhood Association
- Bill Houlihan – U.S. Senator Richard Durbin's Office
- Leroy Jordan – Randall Court Neighborhood Association
- Ruth Knight-Anderson – Grand Improvement Neighborhood Association
- Bill Logan – Springfield Mayor's Office
- Richard Madden – Horace Mann
- Aaron McEvoy – Grand Central Neighborhood Association
- Hon. Joe McMenamin – Springfield City Council
- Polly Poskin – Harvard Park Neighborhood Association
- Dan Sale – Capital Area Association of Realtors
- Darrell Schaver – Springfield Public Schools, District 186
- Hon. Gail Simpson – Springfield City Council
- Norman Sims – Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission
- Reginald Taylor
- Hon. Doris Turner – Springfield City Council

Project Team Members:

- Jimmie Austin – Hanson
- Rebecca Bennett – Vector
- Shandelle Brown – Vector
- Jim Moll – Hanson
- Kevin Seals – Hanson

Technical Presentation

After participant introductions, Kevin Seals – the project’s environmental and public engagement lead – gave a presentation on the project’s technical components. Copies of his PowerPoint presentation were provided to attendees, but presentation highlights included:

- A review of the project’s history, purpose and need;
- An explanation of the approved alternative;
- A look at project costs and possible funding;
- An introduction to the project team and key decision-makers;
- A discussion of the project’s initial technical activities and schedule; and
- An overview of the public engagement program and other associated Springfield rail projects.

In response to Mr. Seals’ presentation, SAG members offered both questions and comments. Where appropriate, project team members provided answers and feedback. The exchanges are summarized on the following pages.

Question / Comment	Team Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gail Simpson – Will the neighborhood based land acquisition meetings be with everyone likely to be displaced in the city or only those near Carpenter Street? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Initially, our focus is on those near Carpenter Street.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gail Simpson – I get a lot of questions from individuals who live along 19th Street concerned about the taking of their homes. I have one lady who has medical conditions and she wants to refit her house to accommodate these issues, but is afraid to. She’s in a holding pattern. What do I tell her? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Everything hinges on funding. If funding comes, we’d like to have everything built between now and 2020. There’s no funding right now, but we’d like to have the underpasses built on 19th Street by 2020, within the next seven years.

Question / Comment	Team Response
<p>■ Gail Simpson – Minority involvement is an issue. There are no minority firms listed on your design team. This is not just Hanson’s issue, it’s the issue of the City. Alderman Turner and I are not part of the Steering Committee. I was not aware that the city of Springfield applied for the Tiger grant. We should have been made aware of this. We’ve taken a lot of heat because we’ve been in support of this project. Communication hasn’t been great. How many minorities are on the Steering Committee? This is critical. In terms of the monies that the city approved, how many minority engineering firms will be a part of the initial design phase.</p>	<p>■ There are not a lot of minority firms in the City of Springfield that have the capacity to do this work. One of our commitments is to try and keep the money in the city.</p>
<p>■ Gail Simpson – I applauded Hanson for going to St. Louis to get Vector, which has done an excellent job of public involvement. You can look outside of Springfield also for excellent, high quality minority engineering firms. Minority businesses need to be involved in this, especially as it pertains to the use of public funds. Again, I know that this is not just a Hanson issue, but a city issue.</p>	<p>■ This is something that we will bring to the attention of the project’s Steering Committee. These decision makers will need to determine how best to approach minority participation on contracting matters.</p>
<p>■ Gail Simpson – My constituents are asking me where is the minority involvement. I have an Illinois firm that I’ve recommended that is qualified, though it is outside of Springfield. If you went to St. Louis to get Vector, why not continue to look more broadly in Illinois?</p>	<p>■ Again, this needs to be an agenda item and topic of discussion at the next monthly Steering Committee meeting.</p>
<p>■ Leroy Jordan – We expect that this project will be very inclusive of the black community. We expect the city to take real action. I’m speaking for Randall Court and C. Lee Carey. I suspect that the first quiet zone will be along 3rd Street. At what point in the process will 19th Street get its quiet zone application in because that railroad is going to start running extra trains well before 2020? Is there going to be consideration given to the value of our properties today as opposed to after 9 more trains are running that shake up our foundations?</p>	<p>■ The order in which segments of the project get constructed depends entirely on how project funding comes in.</p>

Question / Comment	Team Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Leroy Jordan – You won't ask the NS to not increase their rail traffic? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We have absolutely no power over how many trains NS runs on its line. NS currently runs about 4 trains per day, but it expects this number to increase to 8.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bill Houlihan – I will make the recommendation that both Aldermen Simpson and Turner end up on the Steering Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No response required.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Phil Davis – I notice that the rail yard on the map disappears on the future map, what happens to it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We're buying it. It will go outside of the city.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Norman Simms – As property is acquired for the 10th Street corridor, on the land that is not built, could the leftovers be used as neighborhood amenities (green space)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We'll begin surveys of the properties necessary for rail consolidation. This data will be available probably sometime this fall. You'll be able to get a look at what's possible for the parcels for train development and right of ways or amenities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Doris Turner – We need to hold everyone's feet to the fire on taking action on minority involvement. We need an idea of how things are going to be phased in so that we can address constituents' concerns and help them make plans. During early discussions about this, the city made commitments regarding the 19th Street corridor. We need to remember these and put them into the planning as we look into what will be happening. This will give us a clear picture of all the funding that will be involved / targeted to this area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point well taken. We've got an 8 year time frame and are just getting out of the gate. We don't have a lot of answers yet, but we can incorporate your feedback into our planning and design process. As we meet with the city and state, we'll start to develop a prioritization of projects based upon funding, the direction we get from the Steering Committee, and input from the community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Doris Turner – With respect to jobs, I don't expect a large number of jobs will come out of this since the railroad will bring their own people in. But I want you to keep in mind that we want area residents to have access to these jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Yes, we need to get the community involved.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Polly Poskin – The total cost of this project is \$315 M. Will the flyover and 3rd Street be funded by this project too? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No, those additional projects will be paid out of the HSR federal monies. The railroads don't have to pay much.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gail Simpson – The formula that you'll use to determine the value of people's houses is what? Can you share with me what the formula is? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It's case by case and has to follow strict federal guidelines. We have to follow land acquisition laws and must provide fair market value for people's homes. We'll send out invitations to the land acquisition meetings to the affected property owners. We have specialist swho work for us and do this work.

Question / Comment	Team Response
<p>■ Gail Simpson – As an aside, we’re dealing with the Neighborhood of Hope and it would behoove us to consider this initiative if there are people who have to be relocated. Maybe this is an option.</p>	<p>■ Yes.</p>
<p>■ Gail Simpson – Is there any idea of what we can do with the 3rd Street corridor once its abandoned? How will it look and how can it enhance the city? Do you have any idea if the railroad would give up the land for a reasonable price?</p>	<p>■ We have looked at the possibilities as part of the first / earlier phase of this project. However, nothing has yet been decided.</p>
<p>■ Bill Logan – Right now everything is conjecture. Nothing’s been discussed or decided. That area should look very, very well and we should all work to make this happen.</p>	<p>■ No response required.</p>
<p>■ Gail Simpson – We need a strategy for getting the railroads to give us land.</p>	<p>■ No response required.</p>
<p>■ Bill Houlihan – We get the railroads to give land all the time, but they won’t be willing to negotiate until 8 years from now when their tracks are not in use.</p>	<p>■ No response required.</p>
<p>■ Darrell Schaver – Will there be any safety studies on the underpasses and overpasses? I’m concerned about access around Lampiere High School. When school lets out, it can be a little harry.</p>	<p>■ The traffic patterns will stay the same. We’ll meet current design standards on traffic lights and pedestrian crossings for safety.</p>
<p>■ Darrell Schaver – Have any studies been done on traffic volumes coming in and out of the school?</p>	<p>■ No, probably not. We won’t change your access coming in and out of the property.</p>
<p>■ Norman Simms – With regard to the Neighborhood of Hope, in other federal projects, displaced residents were offered the option of a buyout or relocation into new properties.</p>	<p>■ That’s interesting.</p>
<p>■ Dan Sale – Are you using in house appraisers or external appraisers to determine fair market value? I’d recommend that you use appraisers who are familiar with this market.</p>	<p>■ We do have in house, local appraisers.</p>
<p>■ Polly Poskin – What is the downside of hiring a minority firm from Illinois that is from outside of Springfield? I know you are trying to use as many locally based companies as possible, but I’m also very persuaded by the inclusion argument. It could bring a different perspective and expertise to the table. Is the downside cost and coordination?</p>	<p>■ It’s both of these things. Typically, it’s good to know the people you’re working with. We’re trying to get the project done in 18 months and work with people with whom we have existing relationships. Sometimes we go out of our area to find needed expertise. It can be done successfully, however, and is workable.</p>

<p>■ <i>Gail Simpson</i> – It’s absolutely workable. I’m recommending a firm that has expertise with engineering design. This is a company that has worked with Hanson in the past through a number of projects throughout Illinois. What should be considered is not whether they have a relationship with Hanson, but their portfolio.</p>	<p>■ We can bring this up with the Steering Committee. I should also note that we need firms that are prequalified with IDOT to do this type of work.</p>
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