



Springfield Rail Improvements Project Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting #5 Summary Thursday, November 10, 2016

Overview

The fifth meeting of the Springfield Rail Improvements Project Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) was held at 5:30 pm on Thursday, November 10, 2016 at the Prairie Capital Convention Center. Twelve participants and four members of the study team attended the 90 minute session, which provided an opportunity to share information on project planning, design, funding and public engagement. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Present comprehensive updates on the project's progress;
- Share information about upcoming efforts and activities; and
- Solicit advisory group members' feedback.

Kevin Seals, of Hanson Professional Services Inc., 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:

- Gary Giacomelli S.I.U. School of Medicine
- Pat Grady State Representatives La Shawn Ford & Litesa Wallace's Office
- Teresa Haley NAACP Illinois
- Leroy Jordan Randall Court Neighborhood Association
- Shannon Karrick Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission
- Kim Luz St. John's Hospital
- Mark Mahoney City of Springfield
- Michelle Ownbey Springfield Business Journal and Enos Park Neighborhood Improvement Association
- Dan Sale Capital Area Association of REALTORS
- Darrell Schaver Springfield Public Schools-District 186
- Norm Sims Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission
- Hal Smith Congressman Darin LaHood's Office

Project Team Members:

- Jimmie Austin Hanson Professional Services Inc.
- Kevin Seals Hanson Professional Services Inc.
- Mandi Voegele Vector Communications Corp.
- Eve Blackwell-Lewis Project Ombudsman

Technical Presentation

After participant introductions, the project Ombudsman, Eve Blackwell-Lewis, presented on the land acquisition process and took questions from SAG members.

Following that, Kevin Seals – the project’s environmental and public engagement lead, and Jimmie Austin – Senior Technician – gave a presentation on the project’s technical components. Mandi Voegelé – the project’s public engagement consultant, presented on the public involvement and information distribution to date.

Presentation highlights included:

- A brief review of the project’s purpose and need, benefits, and approved alternative;
- TV news footage of safety issues on the current tracks;
- Information on funding and the project’s schedule;
- A time-lapse video of the completed Usable Segment I, Carpenter Street Underpass;
- A overview of the Carpenter Street Archaeological Site, history of the site, and next steps for completing the Section 106 process;
- An update on Usable Segment II, the Ash and Laurel Street Underpasses;
- Discussion of Usable Segment III, the Madison and Jefferson Street Underpass;
- An overview of the public engagement program to date, and resource center;
- The project’s DBE construction goals, minority workforce numbers to date, and minority training program including the Grow Our Own Minority Participation Program Workshop at Hanson on November 2, 2016;
- Other Springfield rail projects.

In response to the 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.

QUESTIONS DURING AND FOLLOWING PRESENTATION

Question / Comment	Team Response
LEROY JORDAN: I didn’t notice any people of color working on the project in the video. I have been going around looking at the construction site and I’m not pleased with what I see. As we look at the other sections going forward, I hope we can make sure there is representation of minorities.	JIMMIE AUSTIN: We have some numbers that we will show in a few minutes.
LEROY: Also with the stations where they stop and people get on the train, I hope they do that there too.	JIMMIE: The multi-modal station. KEVIN SEALS: It is the contractor’s responsibility for minority hiring.
LEROY: If the contractors can’t do it, we need to get other contractors. I go to New York, and I see people of all colors and hues working in all kinds of jobs. I	KEVIN: We do have some minority workforce charts that we will show you later in the presentation.

don't understand why we can't find the same kinds people to work on these projects here.	
HAL SMITH: I like the LED lighting at night [Carpenter Street underpass]. If you haven't driven by there, you should.	
LEROY: One thing I would hope, if I live that long, would be to see the school district and other organizations define what a riot is. If you are trying to run people out of town and kill them, that is a massacre, not a riot. It is something we need to clear up in American history in general. I would hope that we have the courage in Springfield to stand up. I hope that the school children will learn from it so we don't repeat history.	KEVIN: I had a history teacher say that very same thing that if we don't learn from history we will repeat it.
TERESA HALEY: For our 100 th Anniversary we had a group come here to Springfield and they referred to what happened not as a race riot. The new terminology was that it was a terrorist attack. A race riot is what happens when people of different races are fighting. When we talk about history and what occurred, we are using new terminology.	KEVIN: It's good to hear those things so we know what is going on. What is really sad about that is it was all based on a lie. A white woman falsely accused two black men of rape and it started the whole riot.
TERESA: When I tell it to students, I say, "imagine these two young black men walking down the street and someone falsely accuses them. Then the next thing you know your whole neighborhood is on fire." You have to put it into terms they understand because they aren't interested if you tell them to go look it up, you have to put it into terms they can understand and are relatable. You have to do that with young people.	
LEROY: There was a letter to the editor from Mr. Hahn that told the story from his grandfather's perspective.	KEVIN: I read that, it was really good.
NORM SIMS: I know the City and Mayor are trying to get things finalized. Is there now going to be a community group that makes a decision or final determination with the archaeological site?	KEVIN: That will be a final determination by the consulting parties. The first meeting was in July of 2015 and about 20 groups signed-up to be part of that process. There has been one meeting since where they have discussed what should be done with the site.
LEROY: St. John Hospital is planning to build a building on the other side of the archaeological site. I hope the race riot will be commemorated.	KEVIN: That is another project in discussion, to build a memorial or garden. There are a lot of things in the works. It will be memorialized, we just aren't sure how at this time.
LEROY: How will that be done at Laurel and where the old Wareco station use to be? Right now it's terrible and you have to turn around and go the other way. Will they stop all train traffic?	KEVIN: They will do it like Carpenter street. They move the tracks over a little bit before they start the bridge, that's called a shoofly. Then they move the trains back over to the new bridge and build another bridge, so the trains are always moving.
HAL: Will all the land acquisition be done once the condemnation is complete?	MARK MAHONEY: The ordinance was up Tuesday so I think they will be tearing that last house down.

	<p>KEVIN: I believe those are all commercial properties.</p> <p>EVE BLACKWELL-LEWIS: All but one.</p>
<p>NORM SIMS: I appreciate the look of the Carpenter Street underpass. However, the two streets related to the Madison and Jefferson underpasses are major gateways into the City. I would like to recommend that some real thought be given to the design of those underpasses and they not be engineered like the other underpasses.</p>	<p>MARK: We have heard that several times and there is still time to make decisions about that.</p> <p>KEVIN: We do want to make sure the underpasses are visually pleasing because this is our city and we want to be proud of how it looks. We want to make it welcoming to all the visitors that come to town.</p>