

Transit Development District Steering Committee meeting August 18, 2021

Note

The meeting can be viewed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a1Cu8_DcqnM

Location

Conducted via Zoom

Present

Richard Morrisroe, Lee Ann Mellon, Michael Barry, Tim Corcoran, Brian Poland, Carolyn Saxton, Michael Barry, Skyler York, AJ Monroe

Minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Regional Development Authority Update

RDA COO Sherri Ziller updated the committee on the progress of the rail projects. Both projects have achieved full funding grant agreement status and are moving toward construction. She updated the committee on the status of acquired and remaining parcels on the West Lake extension. On double track, she notes that the initial bids for the main construction contract were rejected due to costs and that the RDA, IFA and NICTD had made revisions to the project to lower costs and had put the project back out for new bids in August.

Sherri also updated the committee on the status of outstanding TDDs and the RDA's public engagement efforts.

Carolyn Saxton requested more information on the revisions made to the double track project to lower costs. Sherri said that the changes included several value engineering modifications and changes to the commercial and legal terms. She noted that the RDA and NICTD were in the process of scheduling times to go into greater detail about the modifications. Carolyn asked if the RDA could submit a report to each of the communities detailing what changes had been made in each case. Sherri reiterated that the RDA and NICTD would be meeting with each community to go through the changes.

Discussion

Marc Bleyer from KPMG gave a preview of the RDA's upcoming Industry Days, which are virtual meetings with the development community intended to inform developers about the TOD opportunities in NWI caused by the expansion of the South Shore rail line. The first industry day would feature Munster and Portage.

There are three goals to industry days: showcase the opportunity and make the developers aware of the TDDs; linking investors with local communities; and help developers understand both the RDA's and the community's roles goals.

Marc provided some examples from the presentation we would be giving.

Brian Poland had a question about Hammond not being included in the initial industry day. Marc noted that the communities chosen had approved TDD boundaries. Brian noted that the Hammond TDD had just recently been approved as well. Sherri Ziller spoke up to note that she had seen that Hammond had just approved their boundary and to thank him for that, and said that now that we have that sign-off we can start working on a Hammond industry day.

Aaron Kowalski provided an update on the DD website, NWITDD.com. The site had been updated with revised boundaries and more information for communities that have held public engagement sessions and completed any final revisions to their boundaries.

Aaron also provided an update on which communities now have defined boundaries, and which remain to be completed.

Sherri Ziller presented on the new NICTD/RDA & 1.5 million TOD planning initiative, funded by a FTA grant to NICTD for TOD planning. The contract for the work was awarded to MKSK.

Aaron Kowalski, who is leading the effort at MKSK, went on to explain how everything was being set up, how the program would work, who would be involved and what the timeline for each community was.

Lee Ann Mellon had a question about meetings with individual communities. Were they planning on meeting just with staff or with elected leadership? Aaron said they would look to each community to decide on who should be involved.

The meeting was adjourned