

Transit Development District Steering Committee meeting minutes August 16, 2023

Location

Conducted via Zoom. A recording of the meeting may be viewed here:

<https://youtu.be/RWxiJ72tDVw?si=88TtKn7y9Vy4ia6z>

Present

Trent McCain, Lee Ann Mellon, Tim Corcoran, Debra Gritters, Brian Poland, John Blackburn, Michael Barry, Beth Shrader, Scott Jefferson

Minutes

Minutes from the May 17, 2023 meeting were approved.

Regional Development Authority Update

Dave Wellman provided an update on the rail projects. He noted that the design on West Lake is about 88% complete. Construction continues to progress and is about a third complete. The project is still on schedule for a May 2025 completion date.

Double track is about two-thirds of the way through construction. Garage design for the 11th St. station in Michigan City is complete. At Miller the new station looks fantastic. Again, on track for a January 2024 completion.

Discussion

MKSK's Aaron Kowalski provided a TDD boundary update. We continue to move ahead working with the local units on boundaries that are already established. Have seen a number of potential developers express interest.

Still working toward completing the Gary Metro, South Hammond and Dune Park TDDs. Are planning to hold public engagement sessions for all three and then make changes based on that input. Still on track for the RDA public hearings this fall and get them approved before the end of the year.

Aaron previewed each of the three boundaries RDA was working on and presented a timeline for each for public engagement sessions, hearings and approval.

Aaron added that the RDA had begun conversations with the City of Valparaiso on its TDD, and conducted a walking tour with Valpo staff and officials. RDA is planning to move ahead with the boundary in early 2024.

In response to an opportunity for Q&A on the boundaries, John Blackburn of Beverly Shores wanted to make sure that Beverly Shores was still moving ahead and that there had been challenges in engaging with the neighboring Town of Pines, which they view as important to the district's success. He suggested that the RDA work to re-engage with Beverly Shore and Pines following the upcoming November elections.

John also noted that the town had recently updated its comprehensive plan and included working with the RDA on a TDD, so he believed the community will be supportive.

Aaron then moved on to TOD implementation planning. He noted that it was in the final stages with plans approved by most communities. The only task remaining in process was related to blight elimination around the Gary Metro station.

Finally, Aaron noted that the NWITDD.com site would be updated soon.

Lee Ann Mellon requested that the Munster Town Council be included on any communications between RDA and the Town.

Beth Shrader then provided a brief update on the new transit center in Valparaiso. The Journeyman Distillery project it is a part of was scheduled to open in October and the transit center shortly there after.

Trent McCain requested that RDA send him the link to video of this meeting when it was available.

The meeting was adjourned.