

## **Transit Development District Steering Committee meeting minutes February 15, 2023**

### **Location**

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0Q0uQRxxdM>

### **Present**

AJ Monroe, Trent McCain, Lee Ann Mellon, Tim Corcoran, Debbra Gritters, Michael Barry. Brian Poland, Skyler York

### **Election of Chairperson**

AJ Monroe was elected as 2023 chairman

### **Minutes**

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

### **Regional Development Authority Update**

Vince Dolan of KPMG provided an update on the rail projects. He noted that the design on West Lake is about 83% complete. Construction is focusing on the central segment at the moment. About 18% of the overall project is done. The project is still on schedule.

Double track has completed one construction season and the second should start in a couple weeks. Michigan City rail realignment is complete. The 11st parking garage design is complete and bids have been issues on some precast items. The Gary Miller station east parking lot is complete and the station is under construction. Portage Ogden Dunes lot is complete as is the new lot at Dune Park. Project remains on schedule.

A question was asked about issues at the Miller station regarding the busses being used to ferry passengers between stations while construction is ongoing being unable to stage in the parking lot. RDA was unaware of any issues but would raise the issue with NICTD.

### **Discussion**

The meeting then moved to an update on the TDD boundary process. RDA CEO Sherri Ziller began with some opening comments outlining our general plans for 2023, including a “road show” to all our communities and a forthcoming guide for developers, as well as plans to advance the remaining unfinished TDDs this year.

A question was raised about how development around the stations would impact municipalities' needs for increased police, fire and public works etc. and that the TDD dollars could only go to capital projects. There was talk that that might change and allow the money to be used for salaries etc. What is the RDA doing on that front?

RDA said it was not seeking any amendment to the TDD legislation to that effect. Policy Analytics' David Reynolds noted that there has over the years been over the years similar discussions over TIF districts and broaden the use of TIF dollars for operating uses. But there are no changes to the TDD legislation being proposed.

MKSK's Aaron Kowalski then provided details of the upcoming engagement activities for spring 2023. There was a question regarding what was meant by a process guide for developers. Aaron said it would be more about the RDA and the municipalities and how they would work together to fund projects in Lake and Porter counties.

He noted that we are working on an interactive online map for developers covering all the TDD boundaries. This would be through ESRI online and would be on the NWITDD.com web site.

A question was asked as to the types of development that developers are focusing on, mixed use, residential, industrial, office, etc? In general, we are hearing interest in mixed use/multifamily/townhouse near the stations. We have also seen interest from industrial employers in areas that are historically industrial who see the stations as a workforce connector. We are working to attract more commercial/office development.

Hoping to complete the Gary Metro, Hammond South, Dune Park and Beverly Shores TDDs this year.

There was discussion of the South Bend station and work being done in South Bend to identify the new location of the station at the South Bend airport and what kind of development might be appropriate there if that happens.

Aaron then reviewed the process of creating a TDD. He then moved to an update on TDD implementation and planning.

David Reynolds (Policy Analytics) then presented a legislative update on SB 434 and HB 1046. 434 would provide funding for reconstruction of the Gary Metro station. 1046 would allow the RDA to establish a TDD in Valparaiso around the ChicaGo Dash transit center.

A question was asked about what kinds of development offered the best returns back to the TDDs and that we should benchmark against something like that to help with future planning. The team thought tracking development by land use and development type will be very important. The other thing that might be helpful is that different types of development yield different types of property tax benefits. That's another way we could approach that. Could be integrated into the developer process guide.

Also important to think through the different infrastructure that may or may not be in place in each TDD and how that impacts the ROI. So tracking will be different urban vs greenfield.

It was noted that many communities represented on the steering committee are also making investments in the Marquette Greenway and tying that in with rail to increase the ROI of that investment would deliver a better project at the end of the day.

The meeting was adjourned.