

Public Meeting Summary

Blue Line Extension (Northeast Corridor) Light Rail Project

University Hills Baptist Church
1500 Suther Road
Fellowship Hall
Tuesday, March 24, 2009

Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church
101 West Sugar Creek Road
Fellowship Hall
Tuesday, March 31, 2009

1. Purpose and Intent

CATS' Art-in-Transit program is focusing on the LYNX Blue Line Extension light rail project and the potential art for each station and the surrounding area. The purpose of these meetings was to share the goals of CATS' Art-in-Transit (AIT) Program. Community members were invited to learn about the transit art program, the artist selection process, the oversight committee, and how community members can share their knowledge of the proposed station area's past, present, and future.

Community representation is a critical component of the artist selection process. Collaborations with community centers, neighborhood associations, and local residents provide the historical content and social perspectives that guide a selection panel's decision-making process. Artists, too, engage in community research and interaction to make the connections reflected in a finished project. Open dialogue between the public and the project team was encouraged. The program ended with a question and answer session.

Federal Transit Administration policy Circular 9400.1A encourages the inclusion of art in transit systems: "The visual quality of the nation's mass transit systems has a profound impact on transit patrons and the community at large. Good design and art can improve the appearance and safety of a facility, give vibrancy to its public spaces, and make patrons feel welcome."

2. Meeting Date, Time, and Location

The public meetings for the Blue Line Extension Light Rail Project were held on March 24 and 31, 2009 from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm, at the University Hills Baptist Church at 1500 Suther Road and the Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church at 101 West Sugar Creek Road, respectively, both in Charlotte, North Carolina.

3. Public Notices

3.1 Communications

The Charlotte Area Transit System employed the following meeting notification methods:

- CATS' press releases promoting the public meetings were sent to Charlotte area media outlets on March 13, 2009.
- E-mail meeting notifications were sent to 1,904 e-mail addresses listed in the CATS rapid transit planning database for the Blue Line Extension and AIT on March 13, 2009 to notify citizens of the public meetings.

- The public meetings were listed on the CATS' Blue Line Extension web page (www.ridetransit.org).
- The public meetings were listed in three separate places on the official City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County web site (www.charmeck.org): (1) The web site's front page on the "Charmeck" news list – with a link to a press release (2) The City of Charlotte events calendar and (3) The public meeting and press releases links from the Charlotte Area Transit System main page.
- The public meeting notification was sent to City Council Members.
- Informational flyers (a.k.a. "Rider's Alerts") about the public meetings were placed on 10 CATS bus routes serving the Northeast Corridor, posted on CATS website, and emailed to electronic subscribers on March 17, 2009.
- Bulletins for the public meetings aired regularly on the City of Charlotte's Government Channel 16.
- Notification about the public meetings was listed electronically in the City's C-mail on March 4, and 18, 2009.

3.2 Handouts and Displays

Blue Line Extension public information materials were provided to each meeting attendee. These materials included the following documents:

- Art-in-Transit Brochure
- Appendix A - FTA Circular 9400.1A
- Blue Line Extension Transitions Newsletter, Summer/Fall 2008 Edition
- Notify Me Card

The following displays were set up prior to the meeting and were available for viewing throughout and following the meeting:

- An area map of the corridor showing the alignment options, station locations, and historic properties
- History at Light Speed Project Boards

4. Meeting Procedure

4.1. Presentation

A formal presentation was given at 6:00 pm. Pallas Lombardi, Art-in-Transit Program Manager, opened the meeting and introduced the evening's agenda. Andy Mock, Assistant Project Manager for the Blue Line Extension, reviewed the BLE alignment and proposed station locations. Ms. Lombardi explained the AIT program, art opportunities for the BLE, and the artist selection process.

A question and answer period followed the presentation. The meetings adjourned at 7:30 pm.

4.2. Attendance

Ten (10) people attended the meeting on March 24, 2009, four were local artists.

Thirty-seven (37) people attended the meeting on March 31, 2009, about half were local artists.

5. Summary of Public Input

5.1 Question and Answers

Highlights from the question and answer periods include:

1. Will some of the art be the same as the Blue Line?
We would like to spread the wealth, opportunity, and creativity. We are looking for art that is designed for that station and community and the history there.
2. How do you see art in the NoDa area?
There is less land and visibility in the NoDa area compared to the South Corridor's South End area. CATS will focus on the platform and fixtures. We want the artists to work with the community for ideas about the area's past, present, and future.
3. How will we be notified about the Call-to-Artists?
CATS has a registry of approximately 600 artists, 177 of whom are from the Carolinas. We will send an email out to this registry, as well as anyone who signs up under the "Notify Me" link on CATS website to receive information about the Art-in-Transit program or the Blue Line Extension project.

Based on survey results from artists in our registry, CATS will be utilizing an on-line system called "Café" for the Call-to-Artists. The entire process will be managed electronically.

4. Is CATS getting any push-back or hearing concerns or is there support for the art program? As with any city project, there are some people who disagree. Some people take the time to write to their elected officials to share their concerns. However, there is also a lot of support for this program. Everyone here is showing support for the art program.

Andy Dulin, Councilmember, was in attendance. He shared that he is in attendance because of the importance of this program. He also expressed that he would love to hear from community members. His e-mail address, along with other councilmembers' email addresses, are posted on the Char-Meck webpage. Mr. Dulin concluded his comments by saying he is enjoying the art on the LYNX Blue Line.

5. Will the art at the UNC Charlotte station be different?
There are two proposed stations on the UNC Charlotte campus. This would be the time to email the Chancellor with your comments about the UNC Charlotte stations.