

Conversation/Presentation Notes:

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1. **Mission** of Alliance for Metropolitan Stability: Ensure racial equity in transit infrastructure investments “The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability is a coalition of grassroots organizations that advances racial, economic and environmental justice in growth and development patterns in the Twin Cities region.”
2. **Background/Context**
 - a. Joan Background
 - i. started as neighborhood organizer-learned by doing it
 - ii. stopped a garbage transfer station from moving into neighborhood before working with Alliance
 - b. Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
 - i. premise and approach builds out of community organizing started during martin l. king era - we are “caught in an inescapable network of mutuality”
 - ii. Focus on racial justice and infrastructure investments and environmental justice communities
 - iii. Joan’s organizing with the Alliance, worked on equitable economic development around the light rail
 1. Minneapolis Blue Line (800 million dollars; worked to put that towards supporting the community in a real way) and the St. Paul Green Line (945 million dollars) = Central Corridor: mpls>>st. paul
 - 2.
3. **Central Corridor - Green Line: mpls>>st. paul**
 - a. A4S invited in by East St. Paul environmental justice community
 - b. There were not enough stops planned in the Historic Rondo community to benefit the locals that needed the transit access most; but still a big investment
 - c.
4. **Rondo Community**
 - a. 1930’s = largest vital black community in the Twin Cities
 - i. Location of one of the earliest Coops: [Credjafawn Co-op](#) 678 rondo ave. St. paul, mn; served black community
 - b. 1960’s- Highway 94 was routed right through the central business corridor, right down mainstreet - destroyed rondo neighborhood. 400 families displaced, to neighborhoods nearby - Frogtown, or in other parts of the Cities -North and South Minneapolis
 - c. Economy was never the same
- 5.
6. **Stops for Us!**
 - a. Stop for us! never wanted to repeat this past
 - b. Green line not stopping in Rondo neighborhood adding insult to injury
 - c. People involved
 - i. Peter Bell: Conservative republican who grew up in rondo is council chair of metropolitan council
 - ii. Nathaniel Khaliq: didn’t want train

- iii. Melvin Carter III: working to mitigate train
 - 1. Mitigate: being able to balance out harm of project by adding to community somehow

7. Messaging

- a. Green line was a once in a lifetime chance
- b. “The lightrail is for the people”
- c. “Stops for Us!”

8. Goals

- a. Securing 3 stops on university ave
 - i. As an organizer: needed to pin down the key issue
- b. Equitable use of a large investment

9. Strategy

- a. Understanding Environmental Justice in Federal Policy – connected with new EPA inter-agency EJ Working group
- b. Lots of demographic research
- c. Relationship based organizing
- d. Follow mission first, not Funding – funding structured around mission; advise against “joint fundraising”
- e. Supporting Coalitions - “Full and fair participation”

10. Strengths

- a. Always in direct communication
- b. Directly addressing racism and structural racism
- c. Broad coalition base
- d. Direct federal contact

11. How is this project building shared leadership?

- a. Supports diverse coalitions; provides access to technological/academic, political, social organizing expertise
- b. Takes a back seat - waits to be invited in and does not make decisions for the constituents
- c. Advocate for civil rights: Fighting displacement by gentrification
- d. “Land banking” is a strategy supporting community ownership of land; EX: Rondo Community Land Trust
- e. A4S has changed how federal government evaluates transit projects nationally through the Stops for Us! campaign
- f. LAW Transit investment cannot reduce environmental justice for transit communities; Tool of the Community = Lawsuit

12. Future Directions

- a. After the Win: coming together with groups in other focus campaigns
 - i. Blue Line coalition: N Mpls and Brooklyn Park
 - ii. Working with Frogtown: businesses, restaurants, senior housing
- b. Expand current lines - Regional system expansion
- c. Supporting *Transit Oriented development* regionally - in Suburban areas
- d. Work at Federal level to connect Light Rail and bus system more
- e. Address Gentrification in Econ dev near light rail areas

- i. Gentrification: can be good? sometimes as long as no one is displaced and community culture stays intact
- ii. focus on displacement and preventing it or changing it
- iii. land banking: public land in control of community (rondo community land trust)

13. CEI: measure formula

- a. Ridership + travel time
- b. Capital cost (project cost) = \$ #
 - i. if the project proposal didn't make \$ you weren't considered

14. What new connections are needed to advance the project?

- a. Suburban connections (community and rising political leaders)... need to address suburban structural racism & suburban displacement
 - i. EX: in Brooklyn Park and Eden Prairie the political leadership is all white and wealthy, though this is shifting
 - ii. Support people of color running for office in the suburbs
 - 1. EX: Liberian candidate
- b. More Cultural Corridors/ support marketing of culturally focused groups
 - i. Native American
 - ii. Asian businesses (Little Mekong, by Green Line)

15. BIKE RACK (ideas to be explored/conversations for later)

- a. Could public transit be reduced price for people who live near the stop? - Could be a collaborative effort among Take Action MN, U of M

16. More on the story: [Stops for Us!](#)