



**New York State Department of Transportation
Metropolitan Transportation Authority Metro-North Railroad
New York State Thruway Authority**

Meeting Minutes

***Stakeholders' Advisory Working Groups (SAWGs)
Traffic and Transit SAWG Meeting #5***

***Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor
Environmental Review***



November 27, 2007

Meeting Title: Stakeholders' Advisory Working Groups (SAWGs)
Traffic and Transit SAWG Meeting #5

Meeting Purpose: Exchange of Information

Location Date: Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center, 3 Executive Blvd, Suffern, NY
November 27, 2007

Agenda:

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Attendees:

Name

Charles Borgman
Patrick Centolanzi
Sherwood Chorost
Joan Connors
Hon. Harriet Cornell
Heather Cuffel
Syrette Dym
Michelle Ernst (S. Higashide)
Jay Fallik
Patrick Gerdin
Orrin Getz
Ben Gross
Julius Levine
Maureen Morgan
Mary Jane Shimsky
Arthur Winoker
Janet Zagoria

And the representatives of the agencies and consultant team.

Agenda Item 1

Introduction

Mr. Anderson welcomed attendees and introduced Mr. Coyle of Earth Tech. Mr. Coyle indicated that the meeting would be focused on the Commuter Rail Transit alternatives being considered in the TZB/I-287 DEIS. Mr. Coyle turned the floor over to Mr. Lambert who provided an overview of the concepts underlying the CRT alternatives, following which Mr. Lambert turned the presentation over to Mr. Rubin to review the specifics of the CRT alternatives identified thus far.

CRT Concepts Presentation

Mr. Lambert began the PowerPoint presentation by explaining the components of CRT systems, highlighting their use of existing investments in the corridor and their major components. He then showed where the CRT alternatives could meet the existing MNR system.

CRT Alternatives Presentation

Mr. Rubin described the CRT alternatives routing and station locations through the corridor, focusing on areas where specific issues were addressed.

Agenda Item 2

Technical Presentation

*Agenda Item 3
Questions and Comments*

- Question: How is the impact of Stewart Airport's expansion being considered in this project?
- Answer: The underlying demographic and travel projections include Stewart Airport. The expansion of that airport is projected in the Transportation Improvement Plan that is the basis for those projections.
- Question: Is this project going to shift traffic from I-84, further congesting I-287?
- Answer: The projections of traffic are based on the approved transportation projects, which include improvements to the highway as well as the transit system. Because this project would reflect increased tolls on the Tappan Zee Bridge, it would not make this crossing more attractive to traffic that would otherwise choose another crossing of the Hudson River.
- Question: There is tunnel proposed from Syosset to Long Island. It would dump traffic on I-95 and I-287. How is this being reflected in the project?
- Answer: The proposed tunnel is not a project that has been approved, so it is not reflected in the Transportation Improvement Program. That means it is not reflected in the project.
- Question: Why doesn't the CRT Alternative have a direct connection to the Pascack Line?
- Answer: It was agreed that this would be discussed at a later date.
- Question: There is about 9 miles of tunnel in Alternative 4A in Westchester County. Does this not make it realistically infeasible?
- Answer: There is significant tunneling required to cross Westchester County, but that does not necessarily make it realistically infeasible. The question is whether the added cost for tunnel construction is offset by the additional ridership such a line might attract.
- Question: Should the CRT alternative not accommodate freight rail service?
- Answer: Many commuter rail lines are operated on freight rail lines, operating within specified hours and impacting both the commuter service as well as freight operations. When that is the only option available, it is reasonable to make that compromise. However, when a new commuter rail service is planned that will not operate over existing freight rail tracks, accommodating freight rail operations would constrain the commuter operations unnecessarily. Furthermore, where MNR allows freight rail operations over their tracks, they have to impose significant restrictions on the freight vehicles as well as their operating hours to avoid clearance problems with third rail or catenary power and station platforms. Since this project is intended to address the movement of people in the corridor, it has focused on passenger service and not addressed freight issues.

- Question: Would bi-level cars not have longer dwell times than single level passenger cars?
- Answer: Yes. They would only be used where longer trains are impractical. For example, no matter how long the platform might be in the corridor, the maximum platform length at Grand Central Station would impose a practical maximum length on trains. It is not anticipated that bi-level cars would be needed to meet projected demand in the corridor since they are not needed in other established MNR corridors.
- Question: Could the CRT Alternative connect to the West Shore line?
- Answer: It was agreed that this would be discussed at a later date.
- Question: Could the Hudson Line not be connected to the east in Alternative 4A?
- Answer: It appears feasible but is not reflected in the current designs.
- Question: The adequacy of the Grand Central Station as access to the east side was questioned?
- Answer: It was agreed that this would be discussed at a later date.
- Question: Lee Sanders has indicated the MNR Hudson Line and New Haven service may be connected to Penn Station. Is this correct?
- Answer: It is being considered.
- Question: Would there be parking at the station adjacent to the Tappan Zee Bridge in Tarrytown?
- Answer: Yes.
- Question: Why not stop the CRT line in White Plains? Would that not save money for the segment between White Plains and Port Chester? Aren't the densities of development east of White Plains lower than to the west?
- Answer: It would be possible to do this. The question is whether the savings reduce ridership and travel time savings more than the value of those savings. This will be addressed later in the study.
- Question: Can we review the NIMTC data you are using for this study?
- Answer: Yes. The data was provided in a previous meeting. We will be happy to review them with you.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9 PM.