



TAPPAN ZEE BRIDGE/I-287
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

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

Meeting Minutes

***Stakeholders' Advisory Working Groups (SAWGs)
Environmental SAWG Meeting #8***

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



December 2, 2008

Meeting Title:	Stakeholders Advisory Working Groups (SAWG) Environmental SAWG Meeting #8 – Air Quality
Meeting Purpose:	Exchange of information
Location Date:	Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center 3 Executive Blvd, Suffern, NY December 2, 2008
Agenda:	Item 1. Introduction (Page 2) Item 2. Technical Presentation (Page 2) Item 3. Questions and Comments (Page 19)
Attendees:	Name Phil Bosco Bob Dillon Melanie Golden Richard May Gregory Price Marysue Robbins Joan Schroeder Marion Shaw Kathleen Sullivan Lee Prisament Alan Rosenfeld Lydia Rosenfeld Sal Fazzi And the representatives of the agencies and consultant team.

Agenda Item 1

Introduction

The meeting started at 6:15 PM. Mr. Robert Laravie of NYSDOT first briefly discussed the recent progress of the project and particularly reminded attendees of the recently uploaded information on the project website. Mr. Jim Coyle of Earth Tech then started with the technical presentation on air quality analyses that will be carried through the EIS process.

Agenda Item 2

Technical Presentation

The technical presentation is attached.

Agenda Item 3

Questions and Comments

Question: Does the air quality analysis take into account alternative fuel vehicles, such as electric cars?

Answer: The electric car is not included in the vehicle distribution used for emissions estimates. Therefore the analysis is conservative.

Question: It is my understanding that Rockland County now has a permanent air monitoring location, is that true?

Answer: A permanent location has not yet been established. DEC is working with the county to select a permanent site for ozone and PM_{2.5} and hoping to start running it in the coming spring. However, we may not use that data as DEC requires the station to have at least 3 years of operation to verify its use as the ambient background levels.

Question: The monitoring station near the Palisades mall will show very high results. It would be the worst case location and the data from the station does not reflect likely levels at typical residential areas which should be lower.

Answer: The comment is noted. It is up to DEC and the county to decide.

Question: I had thought they would set up an air monitoring location near the bridge.

Answer: The results near the bridge might be skewed by the bridge traffic.

Question: The area near the bridge is where residences are and the mall location is a temporarily visited location.

Answer: Yes, the location choice is complicated.

Question: Do the air emission trends contain information from off-site emissions?

Answer: No, the trends shown reflect tailpipe emissions only.

Question: Is it a given that the emission factors will decrease in the future?

Answer: Yes, the government specifies that the emission factors will decrease in the future due to implementation of federal emissions control programs.

Question: Will rail transit be diesel or electric?

Answer: The rail transit will be principally electric.

Question: What will the buses run on?

Answer: They will most likely be diesel. We will assume they are diesel in our analysis which will be conservative.

Question: What is the VMT versus air toxic emissions graph based on?

Answer: It is based on historic trends, forecasts, etc.

Question: So if the recession lasts for ten years then these trends might be different.

Answer: Possibly.

Question: Has there been any thought to revitalize the older and existing railroad lines and therefore revitalize the station areas?

Answer: Yes, we are looking into those possibilities like reworking the Piermont line. Another part to that is where the stations will be located.

Question: Any thought about reworking the CSX line?

Answer: The CSX line is an active freight line.

Question: Has there been talk of covering the heavy polluting areas along the thruway and diverting emissions out of a tunnel stack?

Answer: That would be concentrating the emissions and then putting them in other areas where conditions will get worse. It is not a feasible option.

- Question: Stationary trucks emit more emissions. Will the analysis consider it?
- Answer: Yes, we are looking at several locations in the analysis that include trucks operating in stationary mode. For example, we will look at the stop and go traffic conditions at the toll plaza.
- Question: What about the elimination of the toll booth, not the toll collection, but the booth itself. Is anyone looking at alternative ways to collect tolls?
- Answer: That kind of question can not be answered here because it is beyond the scope of this project. However, the DOT and the Thruway are looking into several design options for the toll booths. And a configuration or configurations will be selected and used in the air modeling.
- Question: How to ensure that air, noise, traffic detour effects to the community during construction would be addressed?
- Answer: The project team has a construction management plan that looks into all those things together. The DOT is considering adopting more stringent requirements on the contractors such as requiring using cleaner and newer equipment, etc.
- Question: What if a local area finds a reduction, but the overall area has an increase.
- Answer: We have to look at the standards. We have to meet the NAAQS in a local area, even if there is an increase. But on a regional basis, we must compare the build to the no build conditions. If there is an increase between those two scenarios on the regional level, the build condition will not work.
- Question: Does the DOT have a requirement to use low sulfur or ultra low sulfur diesel for off road equipment?
- Answer: The DOT is looking into those kinds of elements.
- Question: What will be analyzed for air toxic concentration?
- Answer: No air toxic concentrations will be calculated because there are no ambient standards for air toxics to compare with. Only emissions for air toxics will be calculated but not exposure concentrations like those for criteria pollutants.
- Question: What is the EIS timeline and when the analyses will be finished?
- Answer: We are fully evolving the alternative analysis. Realistically it will be complete in a couple of years.
- Question: When is the draft report coming out?
- Answer: It will probably be out in 2010.
- Question: Some attendees expressed concerns over flooding issues based on existing project experience.
- Answer: The flooding issue will be discussed and as the study advances, addressed by the team in collaboration with the relevant agencies.
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Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.