



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)  
Traffic and Transit SAWG Meeting #4***

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

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October 10, 2007

**Meeting Title:** Stakeholders' Advisory Working Groups (SAWGs)  
Transportation SAWG Meeting #4

**Meeting Purpose:** Exchange of information

**Location/Date:** New York Power Authority, 123 Main Street, Jaguar Room, NY.  
October 10, 2007

**Agenda:**

Item 1. Introduction by Paul Stimson (WSA)	(Page 2)
Item 2. Presentation	(Page 2)
Item 3. Questions and comments	(Page 2)

**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

Members of the agencies and consultant team.

Agenda Item 1

*Introduction*

Mr. Stimson of WSA welcomed attendees and introduced Mr. Coyle of Earth Tech. Mr. Coyle indicated that the meeting would be focused on the bus rapid transit (BRT) 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 BRT alternatives, following which Mr. Lambert turned the presentation over to Mr. Rubin to review the specifics of the BRT alternatives identified thus far.

Agenda Item 2

*Presentation*

**BRT Concepts Presentation**

Mr. Lambert began the PowerPoint presentation by explaining the components of BRT systems, highlighting their use of existing technologies to create integrated high-capacity operations having distinctive and coordinated design elements and their focus on customer-friendly service. He then showed examples of BRT systems functioning in the United States.

**BRT Alternatives Presentation**

Mr. Rubin described the proposed BRT alternative's (Alternative 3) routing and station locations through the corridor, focusing on elements designed to provide a high quality service that makes accessing the system as convenient as possible. Mr. Rubin then focused on the White Plains segment, discussing the alternative routes studied and explained how the system would operate including the underlying bus operations and route structures. He also explained how the results of the BRT Workshop had been reflected in revisions to Alternative 3.

Agenda Item 3

*Questions and Comments*

Question: How many buses per hour can the BRT guideway handle?

Response: For an exclusive guideway (no other vehicles) buses can run on headways as tight as 20 seconds. That means 180 buses can use that guideway in one direction in one hour. We are not planning nearly that many buses for the BRT alternative.

Question: When you developed your run time estimates for the BRT alternative did you drive the alignment between 5 PM and 7 PM?

Response: No. We expect congestion to increase and run times to increase over the next 30 years. As a result, run times were estimated based on projected speeds on the network for 2035.

Question: Have you considered the needs of the Pascack Valley Line commuter in this project?

Response: This study is confined to the I-87/I-287 Corridor and is not addressing the needs of other corridors. However, the portion of the BRT alternative that uses a short segment of the Pascack Valley route would not prevent operations of commuter rail in that corridor. The right-of-way in the segment being proposed for BRT operations is 60-feet wide, more than enough to preserve rail operations as well as accommodate BRT operations.

Question: Have you looked at a bus ramp to the BRT guideway at Hemion Road?

Response: The option of having a station at Hemion Road has been identified and is being considered. If a station is provided, bus access to the BRT guideway would be provided at Hemion Road.

Question: Describe a BRT station. How big is it?

Response: Proposed BRT stations would be sized and equipped to match their locations and operating needs. Large stations could accommodate 200 waiting passengers and could feature system/route maps, seating, destination information, projected bus arrival times and other amenities. Smaller stations would be less elaborate and the smallest would be little more than a shelter.

Question: What about snow? Won't that shut down a BRT system?

Response: There are BRT systems in Ontario, Canada and Pittsburgh, which get just as much snow as New York. The busways would need to be plowed, but cold weather can be a challenge for any transit system.

Question: Are you working with the villages to preserve station sites?

Response: We have met with every village where a station might be located and have sought their input. However, this is a planning study and details like station locations and design issues will not be finalized until the preliminary engineering phase. Once we are in preliminary engineering we will go back to every jurisdiction to finalize details like station locations.

Question: Are there drawings that show the BRT alternative we can look at?

Response: The maps being shown tonight are on the project web site. More detailed designs are being developed for locations where there are potential design issues such as limited right-of-way. Those drawings are not ready but will also be placed on the project website when they are completed.

Question: Is the plan to build the bridge, the highway and the transit system at the same time?

Response: Any major project such as this requires careful staging of implementation, but staging plans for this project yet have not yet been developed..

Question: How long will it take to go from Suffern to Port Chester on the BRT?

Response: About 45 minutes, but that is not a firm estimate. We will post the actual projected run time on the web site.

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Question: Will jitney service to the BRT stations be provided?

Response: Selected stations will get jitney service; others will get regular bus service. A few may not get either, such as stations in downtown White Plains. Which stations will get which service has yet to be determined.

Question: Are the BRT lanes through White Plains taking traffic lanes from the streets they use? If so, that will be a real problem. There is already serious congestion and taking a lane would make it worse.

Response: Yes, an existing lane would be taken on each street where the proposed BRT route is shown. Attempting to put the BRT lanes where there is little traffic would limit ridership by not serving the key destinations in White Plains. There is a trade-off: moving more people or moving more cars.

Question: Could the BRT lanes in White Plains be put on an elevated structure, saving the street lanes?

Response: Yes, but it would create a “3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue El” situation with the streets under the guideway and the stations would be even wider than the guideway alone.

Question: Why is there no BRT station to serve Nyack?

Response: A station is proposed at Interchange 11. Putting a station at Interchange 10 would be very difficult given the terrain and site constraints. Based on the discussion tonight, we will take another look at whether a station can be provided at Interchange 10.

Question: The presentations did not address how the study is dealing with the looming energy crisis or dealing with global warming issues.

Response: The EIS will evaluate each alternative in terms of their environmental impacts, including emissions and energy usage requirements. The broader question of adjusting for possible future paradigm shifts is harder to manage in projects of this sort since we are constrained to base our projections on past trends and accepted and adopted regional plans and projections. The evaluation and alternative selection process will be open and inclusive and input by the SAWG, elected and agency officials, and the public will be reflected in that work, including input related to energy issues and global warming.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.