



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)
Land Use SAWG Meeting #6***

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



March 18, 2008

Meeting Title: Stakeholders’ Advisory Working Groups (SAWGs)
Land Use Group SAWG Meeting #6 – Focus on Local Land Use in the Towns of Greenburgh and Ramapo, and the Villages of Chestnut Ridge and Spring Valley.

Meeting Purpose: Exchange of Information

Location Date: Best Western Hotel, Nyack, NY
March 18, 2008

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Item 2. Technical Presentation (A. Parker) (Page 2)
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Attendees: **Name**

Land Use SAWG Members:

Altieri, Vincent
Barclay, Suzanne
Lewy, Cheryl Winter
Madden, Thomas
Higashide, Steven
Zupan, Jeff

Alternates and Additional Invitees/Attendees

Dempsey, Ed
Miller, Robert
Logan, Brendel (Rep. Mayor Darden, Spring Valley)

Members from other SAWGS in Attendance:

Schroeder, Joan (Env., Airmont)
Shimsky, Mary Jane (TT, Elmsford)
Connors, Joan (TT, Airmont)
Golden, Melanie (Env.)
Levine, Bruce (Env.)

Study Team:

Representatives of the agencies and members of the consultant staff.

Agenda Item 1

Introduction

Russell Robbins of the New York State Department of Transportation introduced the meeting by welcoming SAWG members and encouraged them to provide their comments on the project’s scoping materials. The facilitator, Paul Plotczyk of Work Systems Affiliates International, Inc., informed members that the project website (www.tzbsite.com) was updated. He then introduced the first presenter of the evening, Dr. Andrew Parker (Earth Tech, environmental consultant).

The first presentation focused on local land use in the Towns of Greenburgh and Ramapo, and the Villages of Spring Valley and Chestnut Ridge, New York. The second part of the meeting focused on project alternatives’ alignments and surrounding land use issues that are being considered at these same locations.

Agenda Item 2: A. Parker - Local Land Use in the Towns of Greenburgh and Ramapo and the Villages of Spring Valley and Chestnut Ridge, NY.

Technical Presentation

Dr. Parker began his presentation by providing a brief overview of the tiered DEIS process. He noted that Tier 2 will focus on the highway/bridge improvements and Tier 1 will focus on transit alignments. Generalized station locations will be considered in Tier 1 service plans but their localized impacts will not be evaluated until the Tier 2 Transit EIS; he added that Tier 2 Bridge/highway designs will accommodate the Tier 1 alignments and that station locations assumed in Tier 1 service plans will be considered to the extent they impact the bridge/highway improvements. The issue of stations will be addressed in greater detail in the separate Tier 2 transit DEIS, at a later time. Dr. Parker encouraged the group to think about potential station locations in their communities and to continue to provide their thoughts to the project team.

Dr. Parker presented a slide show on local land use in the Towns of Greenburgh and Ramapo, and the Villages of Spring Valley and Chestnut Ridge, New York. His slides are presented in annotated form below.

Agenda Item 3: A. Parker - Local Land Use in the Towns of Greenburgh and Ramapo and the Villages of Spring Valley and Chestnut Ridge, NY.

Questions and Comments

Comment In response to Dr. Parker’s presentation on the Town of Greenburgh, a member noted that there are approximately 300 affordable housing units operated by the town.

- Comment A member noted that a proposed interchange (14X) would create more congestion on Route 59, and that without adequate land use controls you would get more traffic. He added that towns and villages need new land use plans that complement the corridor project. A follow up question asked whether there was enough ROW to accommodate a new interchange.
- Response Dr. Parker noted there are pros and cons of providing a new interchange, of which the traffic effects are being considered by the project team. He also noted that there would be some acquisition and displacements (e.g., possibly at the storage facility and/or the tile store) in order to accommodate a new interchange. Mark Roche (Arup, engineering consultant) added that there are some design challenges to accommodating a new interchange such as the residential land uses on the south side of the Thruway, where a local roadway may need to be relocated.
- Comment A member noted that the proposed Super Wal-Mart project at the former drive-in movie site in Ramapo was denied and that the site is now a focus of redevelopment efforts, with potential for mixed, recreational, or high density residential uses.
- Question Why does the highway need to be widened?
- Answer Mark Roche noted that the highway needs to be widened to accommodate HOT lanes, and potential CRT or BRT. Bridges will also need to be raised to accommodate CRT. The great majority of the highway widening would remain within the existing right-of-way.
- Question Two SAWG members asked when the cost estimates and ridership numbers would be made available to them and whether or not there will be enough time to provide comments on them before the transit mode decision in May. A member added that it would be difficult to appease the public if the agencies made a decision on the transit without releasing information on a timely basis. Another member asked how SAFETEA-LU addressed the issue of releasing information and how this affected decisions on transit mode selection.
- Response Dr. Parker noted that the DEIS will scrutinize the options. Mark Roche noted that the team is currently submitting numbers to DOT and that this information will be analyzed. A DOT representative added that input into the scoping process can be done now, but that these issues will be added to the list of questions that need to be further addressed by the project team.
- Comment A member commented that any bridge improvements should be made in light of a long-term plan (100 years) to accommodate future changes.
- Response Dr. Parker noted that a long-term perspective was a key criterion of the project.
- Comment In response to Dr. Parker’s presentation on the Village of Spring Valley, a member noted that the Pascack Valley Line (PVL) and Route 45 serves as a major travel corridor for Spring Valley residents and for villages located to the north. The member hopes that a

CRT option would connect to the PVL for a one-seat ride to New York City from Spring Valley.

Response Mark Roche added that the project team's current work does not preclude potential options.

Comment During Dr. Parker's presentation on the Village of Chestnut Ridge, it was noted that the Edwin Gould Academy owns the vacant land adjacent to the Thruway near the former school. It was also noted that the industrial development adjacent to the Thruway near Chestnut Ridge Road is the location of an Empire State Development Zone.

Agenda Item 4: Mark Roche - Overview of Project Alternatives in the Towns of Greenburgh and Ramapo and the Villages of Spring Valley and Chestnut Ridge, NY.
Technical Presentation

(The group conducted this portion of the meeting in front of aerial photographs of the Towns of Greenburgh and Ramapo and the Villages of Spring Valley and Chestnut Ridge, New York.)

The next portion of the meeting gathered the group around a spread of large aerial photographs of the Towns of Greenburgh and Ramapo and the Villages of Spring Valley and Chestnut Ridge to discuss project alternatives including: potential transit alignments, and interchange improvements, and highway improvements in these areas. This was an open exchange between the project team and SAWG members.

Beginning in Rockland County, a SAWG member provided an overview of land use in the Spring Valley and Chestnut Ridge area. The member noted how drainage issues were a particular concern near the truck toll plaza and that the Rockland County Highway Department was planning a new facility on the north side of the Thruway near the Garden State Parkway interchange.

Mr. Roche then shifted the group's attention to Westchester County, where he described the two BRT/LRT options. A SAWG member provided an overview of land use in Greenburgh and noted that the town is currently rethinking their comprehensive plan which will consider future land use changes potentially resulting from the project.

Agenda Item 5: Mark Roche - Overview of Project Alternatives in the Towns of Greenburgh and Ramapo and the Villages of Spring Valley and Chestnut Ridge, NY.
Questions and Comments

(The group continued their discussion in front of the aerial photograph of Elmsford, NY)

Comment A member noted that a big issue for residents bordering the Thruway is noise impacts.

Response Dr. Parker noted that providing noise walls can provide significant mitigation for noise.

Comment In Rockland County, a member noted a potential station location is near where Route 45 crosses the Thruway.

Comment A member noted: that the Village of Elmsford is interested in redeveloping the industrial area located north of the Thruway for a transit hub; that vacant land on the south side of Route 119 in Greenburgh is the location of a proposed 50,000sf Stop & Shop and residential development; and also noted that there are 440 residential units planned for the Avalon II development off Taxter Road.

Parking Lot List: Questions and Issues to be addressed

- When will updated ridership and cost estimate numbers be available?
- What is the sequence of making ridership and cost estimate information available to SAWGs and other groups? What is the process/plan for rolling out this information?
- How/what impact does SAFETEA-LU have on this process?
- Change in Plan (Tier 1/Tier 2)?
- Decoupled costs from decision about transit?