



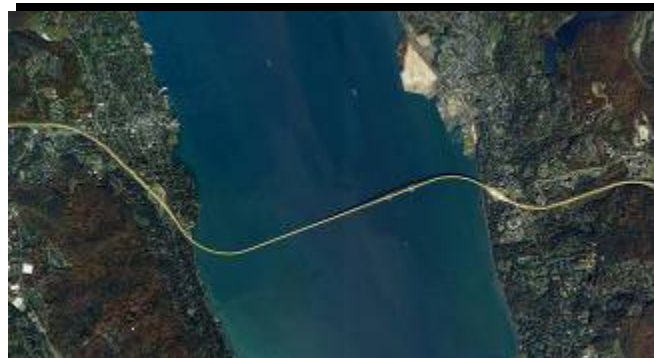
TAPPAN ZEE BRIDGE/I-287
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

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

Meeting Minutes

***Stakeholders' Advisory Working Groups (SAWGs)
Joint Land Use/Traffic and Transit SAWG Meeting #3***

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



June 10, 2009

Meeting Title:	Stakeholders' Advisory Working Groups (SAWGs) Joint Land Use/Traffic and Transit SAWG Meeting #3
Meeting Purpose:	Exchange of information
Location Date:	Valley Cottage Library Meeting Room 110 Route 303 Valley Cottage, NY June 10, 2009 6:00 – 9:00 PM
Agenda:	Item 1. Introduction (Page 3) Item 2. Technical Presentation (Page 3) Item 3. Discussion (Page 4)
Attendees:	<u>SAWG Members</u> Suzanne Barclay Phil Bosco Joan Connors James Creighton Bob Dillon Orrin Getz Richard Harrington James Hartwick Steve Higashide (representing Kate Slevin, Tri-State Transportation) Jane Keller Jon Marshall David Ordas Mary Jane Shimsky John Tangredi Arthur Winoker Jeffrey Zupan <u>Additional Members of the Public</u> West Nyack residents: Craig Cefola Marietta and Jim Flahine Steve Rieders Mary Scully Raymond Stormes Frank Surace Chris Cefola, Valley Cottage Civic Association Dennis Kay, Mayor of Airmont

Project Team Members

Michael Anderson, NYSDOT
Russell Robbins, NYSDOT
Craig Teepell, NYSDOT
Angel Medina, NYSTA
Brian Serman, MNR/MTA
Mark Roche, Arup
Andrew Parker, Earth Tech
Rita Campon, Parsons
George Paschalis, Howard Stein-Hudson



Agenda Item 1

Introduction

Craig Teepell (NYSDOT) welcomed members of the Traffic and Transit and Land Use Stakeholders' Advisory Working Groups (SAWGs) and introduced the evening's agenda, which focused on the two commuter rail transit (CRT) alignment options from the areas of Monsey to West Nyack. One option would place the CRT along the median of I-287, and the other would place it on the south side of I-287. The meeting was the third in a series of joint Traffic and Transit/Land Use meetings concentrating on the various options of the Transit Alignment Options Work Plan (see Slide 4). Mr. Teepell asked participants to introduce themselves and give their affiliation, and he then introduced Michael Anderson (NYSDOT), the director of the Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor project. Mr. Anderson thanked the participants for their continued attendance at the SAWGs and noted that the project had reached a significant procedural milestone today with the publication of the *Scoping Summary Report*. The report formalizes the scope of the project, describes the alternatives to be studied in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and includes comments received from the public during the extended comment period last year. Over 1,300 comments are summarized in the report, which is available for viewing on the project website, www.tzbsite.com. The publication of the *Scoping Summary Report* marks the start of detailed design and impact analyses. Mr. Anderson also announced the formation of a fifth SAWG that will focus on financing for the project and invited members to participate in this effort. This group will begin regular meetings in July and continue meeting throughout the DEIS.

Agenda Items 2

Technical Presentation

Andrew Parker (Earth Tech, environmental consultant) noted that the evening's discussion would center on the alignment drawings and maps. A brief slide presentation (see attached with annotated notes) recapped where we are in the DEIS process, the Transit Alignment Options Work Plan, and the seven major transit alignment options. These options will be screened using evaluation criteria focused on transportation, engineering, environmental factors, and cost.

The segment of the I-287 corridor between Monsey and West Nyack is characterized by a distinct topography, and residential uses line much of the area. In addition to residences, some of the environmentally sensitive features in this segment include three parks that abut the highway, the historic Strawtown Road area, several streams crossing beneath the highway, and Clarkstown South High School. The location of employment centers and concentrations of housing and/or population do not appear to be factors in readily differentiating between the median or south side CRT alignment options.

Agenda Item 3
Discussion

Mark Roche (Arup, engineering consultant) rolled out several large-scale engineering drawings of alignments, profiles, and typical sections, as well as aerial photographs of the study area, to explain the engineering issues to be considered in the design of a CRT alignment in this segment. Much discussion focused on the two proposed station locations: in the vicinity of Interchange 14 at the Garden State Parkway, and Parking Lot J of the Palisades Mall. Mr. Roche explained the importance of grades for a commuter rail system. A key element for the CRT is the need to go over North Middletown Road, then make the hill up to Monsey at the maximum grade. There is not much difference between the profile of the two (median or south of I-287) options in the eastern and western segments of the subject study area. However, in the central segment—between Middletown Road and Chestnut Ridge Road—placement of the CRT on the I-287 median would permit an at-grade alignment; if the CRT were on the south side, it could travel in a three-quarter-mile-long tunnel beneath the multiple ramps associated with Interchanges 14 and 14A. In both options in the vicinity of the Palisades Mall, the CRT would need to be elevated to cross the Hackensack River. To cross above the adjacent CSX (West Shore) Rail Line, its tracks would be approximately 30 feet above the grade of Parking Lot J.

Questions and comments included:

- Q. Why hasn't the CRT station been located where it could connect with the Pascack Valley Line?
- R. Regarding station locations, the Tier 1 transit analysis to be presented in the DEIS will provide a broad evaluation of planning level alternatives to determine the general effects on the human and natural environment resulting from the mode choices, alignments, locations and termini of facilities and services under consideration in the EIS. In addition, the general locations of suggested station areas will be identified and evaluated. These conceptual, planning level alternatives will be further evaluated in more detail in a future Tier 2 transit environmental process based on more refined engineering design. The alignments proposed do not preclude a connection to the Pascack Valley Line.

- Q. The elevated sections of the CRT could be built on slim columns (such as those that support the Airtrain to Kennedy Airport on the Van Wyck Expressway), reducing the need to widen the highway elements.
- R. True. By elevating the CRT footprint, there would be less need to expand the pavement for the highway shoulders, etc.

- Q. Could the proposed station at Parking Lot J in the Palisades Mall be located elsewhere in the vicinity of the mall? This does not seem to be an optimal location for encouraging transit oriented development (TOD).
- R. The proposed station could be located anywhere from Parking Lot J in the Palisades Mall to east of Route 303 (where the CRT would enter a tunnel to pass beneath the Palisades Ridge). This segment is relatively straight and level.

Q. Will the CRT be electric?

R. Yes. Metro-North operates both diesel and electric trains, as well as dual-powered engines. At present trains entering Grand Central Terminal (the destination of the proposed CRT service) must be electric. The proposed Tappan Zee service would connect with the Port Jervis Line, which operates on diesel. The character of future Metro-North operations will be determined later, but it can be assumed that there would be a third electric rail for service in Rockland County. Tunnels and ventilation systems would be designed to accommodate both diesel and electric service.

Q. What are the noise impacts of CRT?

R. CRT noise is anticipated to be more intermittent than typical truck traffic on the Thruway and, because of this pattern, usually measures as less. Truck noise would likely remain as the noisiest element. Detailed noise analysis will be conducted as part of the EIS, and noise barriers and other mitigation measures would be considered where appropriate.

Q. Visual impacts from the potential viaduct in the vicinity of Louise Drive in West Nyack would be significant and should merit screens to maintain privacy for residences.

R. Visual analyses also will be conducted as part of the EIS and, where impacts are considered significant, mitigation will be proposed.

Q. Cut-and-cover tunnels are highly disruptive with major noise impacts.

R. Construction impacts will be addressed in the DEIS.

Russell Robbins (NYSDOT) announced that the NYSDOT will be providing technical assistance to communities in the corridor to plan for community appropriate transit oriented development (TOD). Two municipal briefings are scheduled to explain the program to Rockland and Westchester communities.

The Rockland County Municipal TOD briefing is Monday, June 22, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. at the Technology Center at Rockland Community College, located at 145 College Road, Suffern, NY.

The Westchester County Municipal TOD Briefing is Tuesday, June 23, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. at the Evelyn and Joseph I. Lubin Graduate Center at Pace University Auditorium (Room 206), located at 1 Martine Avenue in White Plains, NY.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.