



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

***Joint SAWG/Stakeholders' Committee Briefing
Post-Presentation Q & A***

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



January 29, 2009

Meeting Title:	Stakeholders' / SAWG General Meeting
Meeting Purpose:	Project Status
Location Date:	Wagner Library, 121 North Broadway, Tarrytown, NY (6:00- 9:00 pm) January 29, 2009
Agenda:	Presentation on Project Status Update (Page 2)

Post-Presentation Q & A

A meeting bringing together all four Stakeholders' Advisory Working Groups (SAWGs) was held to give an update on the following items:

- Scoping closure process
- Alternatives to be studied in the DEIS
- Transit Oriented Development training (TOD)
- Future SAWG meetings

Michael Anderson from NYSDOT opened the meeting to discuss the scoping process.

James Coyle from Earth Tech briefly described the alternatives that will be studied in the DEIS phase of the project.

Russell Robbins from NYSDOT provided an overview of the upcoming Transit Oriented Development (TOD) training program that will be initiated in the fall of 2009.

Paul Ploctzyk from WSA, facilitator for the SAWGs, presented the role of the SAWGs and provided an overview of the possible upcoming SAWG topics.

Michael Anderson then discussed the next steps and opened the floor to questions.

Questions and comments included:

Q: Where does SEQRA come into the process?

A: NYSDOT's guidelines for environmental review meet both NEPA and SEQRA requirements

- We do one analysis document.
- Federal process by statute covers it.
- We do issue SEQRA findings in addition to the NEPA ROD.
- We have established a proactive, ongoing relationship with DEC.

Q: When will public find out about air, noise, etc., mitigation?

A: The SAWGs will be working with us first hand on these issues

- Mitigation measures, as appropriate, will be defined in the EIS.
- Intention of SAWG is to get people involved.
- We take your input and involve participating/cooperating agencies involved also.
- All this information will be in the DEIS and will be discussed with the SAWGs as the mitigation plans are developed.

Q: Please discuss the Tarrytown train station improvements.

A: Increased usage at the Tarrytown train station will be considered.

- We are showing a connection and will be working with the localities and local officials in Tarrytown.
- Detail Level of Transit improvements in Tarrytown will be in Tier 2.

Q: In Tier 1 there are 2 bridge configurations – fewer than in the past. What kind of commitments can you make that transit commitments will be included in Tier 2?

A: Federal guidelines require that the project be carried in local plan.

- Federal Agencies have to be satisfied that funding is in place through an approved Finance Plan.

Q: What kind of input do you expect from Metro-North regarding funding?

A: A key objective of our financing study is to develop a plan for the entire project. Portions of this may include MTA Funding.

Q: Funding doesn't look like it will be available.

A: We're bringing in an outside financial consultant, Merrill Lynch, to develop a finance plan.

- We have best intentions to move this project forward.

Q: Bridge can be overbuilt (If no funding available for transit solutions)

A: Our intention is to build the entire project in shortest time with a funding mechanism that does not detract from other projects, which is why we brought in a financial consultant. Intention of all – government, agencies, etc. – to move project forward.

Q: What is going to happen to whole economy and bridge if you continue to ignore heavy freight?

A: Project will accommodate future truck and other traffic. While the project does not preclude rail freight in the future, this project scope does not include rail freight.

Q: What is timeframe after DEIS for record decisions?

A: Typically 6-month timeframe, dependent on controversy, funding mechanism, support, etc.

Q: What Federal agencies are involved?

A: The Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration.

Q: What about Mountain View Ave bridge?

A: Angel Medina from the Thruway addressed this project.

- Thruway is scaling back rehabilitation and only addressing most critical elements.

Q: Any plan to use rail to move trucks out of traffic?

A: Rail freight is not precluded from our plan.

- Need interested parties to improve rail.
- Federal Rail Administration understands our proposal.

Q: If the project Team is not going to know about funding until Tier 2, why did you not include BRT detail?

A: Level of effort for stations, depots, maintenance yards, etc. is extensive and requires detailed study.

- We have general station locations identified in Tier 1.
- Including it now would have added time and money to the project.
- Once we get ROD we will know how funding for bus & rail will fall out.
- When we go to NYMTC we have to give them entire a package for funding.

Q: Will you have full design done when you get through ROD?

A: No. We have resource considerations.

- We're showing a two-year procurement process.
- One possible procurement process would be design/build, which would require legislative approval. Such a strategy would expedite the construction and is likely to be less expensive. A funding source must be identified before design can be done.

Q: Do estimates used (\$16 billion) include carrying costs?

A: Actual detail will fall out as we develop the Funding Plan. Total cost that we used is in 2010 dollars.

Q: I think the range of bridge alternatives is too narrow.

A: We're at the beginning of DEIS.

- Engineers and SAWG members have been studying alternatives and have done their homework. We are on firm ground.

Q: Have you considered getting a legal opinion on SEQRA procedures?

- Have had extensive consultation with agency attorneys, NYSDOT, Metro-North and Thruway counsel. Also, Federal Highway counsel have weighed in.
- The burden is on the Project Team to deliver a product that meets the level of the law and we will do no less.

Q: Please elaborate on the calculations and data used by NYMTC.

A: We have done our forecast based on current economic and employment forecast.

- We will rerun our forecast with new demographic background information that NYMTC is pulling together.

Q: Who is doing financial analysis?

A: Consultant team is headed by Merrill Lynch.

Q: Will we get revised NYMTC forecast?

- All documents will be shared with the public once available.

Q: How many times does NYMTC update its forecast?

A: They look at it on a frequent basis and update forecast on five-year timeline.