



TAPPAN ZEE BRIDGE/I-287  
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

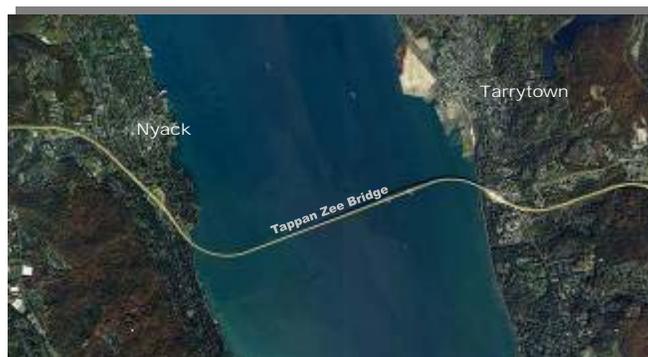
**New York State Department of Transportation  
Metropolitan Transportation Authority Metro-North Railroad  
New York State Thruway Authority**

**Meeting Minutes**

***Stakeholders' Advisory Working Group  
Bridge SAWG (#17)***

***Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor Project***

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**April 20, 2010**

<b>Attendance at Bridge Stakeholders’ Advisory Working Group Meeting April 20, 2010 Bridge SAWG 17</b>	
<b><u>Stakeholders’ Advisory Working Group Members</u></b>	
Philip Bosco Erik Simon (representing Harriet Cornell) Jan Degenshein Bob Dillon Marion Franklin Gil Hawkins William Helmer	Robert Hintersteiner Milton Hoffman Marie Lorenzini John Messina George Sherman Neil Trenk Ron Weinstein Cheryl Winter Lewy
<b><u>Project Team Members</u></b>	
Michael Anderson, NYSDOT Yvette Hinds, NYSDOT Kristine Edwards, NYSDOT Robert Laravie, NYSDOT Angel Medina, NYSTA Tom McGuinness, NYSTA	Mark Roche, Arup Allison Davis, Arup Rita Campon, Parsons George Paschalis, HSH

**INTRODUCTION**

The following pages outline the material presented at this meeting of the Bridge Stakeholders’ Advisory Working Group (SAWG). The meeting focused on the identification of reasonable locations for the transit components on the replacement Tappan Zee Bridge as identified in the *Scoping Summary Report*, published in May 2009 – the “configuration options” for the replacement Tappan Zee Bridge, the process used to eliminate unreasonable configurations from the larger set of options, and how we will ultimately determine the configuration of the replacement Tappan Zee Bridge through the DEIS,.

The summary of the presentation is followed by a record of discussions including the questions and answers that occurred throughout the meeting.

The presentation consists of three parts:

- Part 1 Introduction
- Part 2 Bridge Options Development Status
- Part 3 Extents and Challenges of the Rockland Landing

The venue: Valley Cottage Library, Valley Cottage

**1. Presentation**

**2. Review of the Constraints and Challenges at the Rockland Landing of the Replacement Bridge**

Following the presentation, members were shown working drawings of plan views of the 6 options at the Rockland landing. Everyone was reminded that these are working drawings and that no final decisions have been made on any of their content. It is likely that details will be refined as impacts are evaluated and better solutions to individual issues are identified. In assessing the extent of the 6 options in Rockland, the following can be identified:

- Dual Level with Transit Below (Option 6) would be the narrowest option. It would actually fit quite well within the existing right-of-way (ROW) on both the Westchester and Rockland landings. It also would be the tallest option. It would result in fewer property impacts but greater visual impacts.
- Stacked and Dual Level CRT North (Options 4 and 5) are slightly wider options since the BRT system would be operated on the top deck. These options would require a wider footprint and a tall structure. The boundary of the Thruway would be the top of the slope behind the trees of Ferris Lane in South Nyack.
- The Single Level Options (Options 1-3) would be wider than the dual-level options and differ in the location of the CRT and the number of piers necessary to support the structure. The landing of these options would start to impact the

existing grassy hillside between Ferris Lane and the NYSTA facility. In plan, the southern boundary of the necessary retaining wall would fall within Ferris Lane, presenting the potential for more acquisitions and possibly a realignment of Ferris Lane.

- Other features need to be added to the list of constraints and challenges. These include:
  - A shared use path on the north side of the bridge
  - Also on the north side, a temporary haul road for construction vehicles from Interchange 10 to the Hudson River, which would then become a permanent NYSTA access to the river. Without the temporary haul road, construction materials and future NYSTA access would be on local roads.
- The dual-level bridge options would be about 35 feet higher than the existing Thruway.

#### Interchange 10:

- Interchange 10 was built in anticipation of a larger capacity than it actually currently needs. Therefore, an improvement will be proposed to meet existing and projected traffic. However, the existing interchange would need to be maintained while the new one is built. This would limit the number of locations for Interchange 10 to keep its existing connections and maintain existing operations.
- We have assumed that South Broadway Bridge would be replaced and are evaluating this connection through a traffic study, accident study, and conversations with local communities.
- With Interchange 10 being redesigned, additional space would be available for other uses. It could be parking for bicyclists and pedestrians, or something else.
- The new Interchange 10 also would include a new eastbound exit ramp.

#### Franklin Street Bridge:

- We have not included the replacement of the Franklin Street Bridge and the only way to cross the Thruway would be via the redesigned Interchange 10 bridge crossing. We will assess if this crossing would provide sufficient capacity and whether it is appropriate. This assumption would be same for all six options.

#### Elizabeth Place Park

- One option includes the extension of Elizabeth Place Park through whole area.

#### Stormwater

- As part of a project of this size, we have to have a plan for handling run-off and stormwater. A management plan will be developed.

#### CRT

- A ventilation building would be required for health and fire/life safety. It would both clean the air and provide fire access. Space for the building may be available at the redesigned Interchange 10.
- Although freight is not planned for the project, it would not be precluded. State law does not allow us to develop rail without allowing for freight loads and clearance envelopes. We are evaluating the impacts associated with designing the bridge to accommodate freight loads. Exceptions to this law are possible but must be justified.
- Given the number of CRT-related facilities for access, space, and security, it would make sense to consolidate these needs in one area.

#### Noise

- The need for and location of noise barriers would be determined by the noise analysis that we'll be doing as part of the DEIS analyses. It is likely that the noise barriers currently on the north side would be replaced.

### **1. Comments, Questions, and Answers**

Q: In the Single Level CRT Center and CRT South Options (Options 1 and 2), how would you get off the CRT if there is an emergency?

A: It would be possible to go from one track to another in the event of a broken down train. There is also an access road on the CRT-only bridge that could accommodate an evacuation by buses. If there were an issue with the structure itself, bridge planks could be used to evacuate from one structure to another. We will be evaluating certain events and determining if responding to these events may be easier on one option or another.

Q: Where is the bicycle/pedestrian path on these 6 options?

A: Each option shows the shared use path on the far left side (north side) of the replacement bridge.

- C: Separating the buses from the highway would require separate approaches at the landings, which would impact ROW/space availability.
- Q: Where did the 9 bridge configuration requirements come from?  
A: These were developed by the team and are based on structural engineering and traffic operations criteria.
- Q: Did you consider phasing the CRT on the bridge? Is CRT phased in during Phase 2 or 3?  
A: At this time, we are assuming that all structures (highway with BRT, CRT) on the river would be built during the initial phase. The DEIS will evaluate the construction impacts associated with all structures in the river. The CRT would not be operational until the next environmental process is completed
- C: You can build the structure for it now and add the rail later.
- Q: The two-pier single-level option (Option 3) puts the greatest weight on the cantilevered areas of the replacement bridge. Is that possible?  
A: The bridge certainly can be “engineered” to support CRT on the cantilevers. The advantage of this form is that it would only require two piers in the river, which is an environmental benefit. However, a concern is that CRT is in a position that may not be the best for the structure. This option would probably be deeper than the single-level three-pier options.
- C: Loads would be different on Dual Level CRT North (Option 5) as there would be fewer piers in the river for the dual-level bridge due to the deepness of the structure.
- Q: Wouldn't fewer piers make it easier to get environmental approval?  
A: Dual Level with Transit Below (Option #6) would have fewer piers and would be narrower. However, environmental approval is only one facet of the analysis.
- C: Placement of buses underneath, as shown in the Dual Level with Transit Below (Option #6), would seem to be very pleasant.
- Q: How does Ferris Lane fit in with these options? Some of the extents from the different options seem to be approaching the Ferris Lane roadbed.  
A: Some of the wider options would affect the alignment of Ferris Lane. We have more work to do to determine exactly what those impacts would be and if there are any other, less impactful solutions.
- C: One of the Bridge SAWG and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Panel members presented her impressions of the paths on the Williamsburg Bridge, one of the structures visited during the panel's optional field trip:
- There seemed to be a piecemeal approach to the Williamsburg Bridge. The paths didn't seem like a welcoming place to be.
  - Subway trains seemed to have higher grade on the Williamsburg Bridge. Can something similar be accomplished for the replacement bridge?
- A: On the subway, every wheel has a motor, which allows it to handle higher grades. CRT has a locomotive.
- C: A concern in Rockland is that there is already an enormous number of bikers on the weekend. If you connect the shared use path closer to South Broadway, there would likely be a lot more bicyclists. It would be beneficial to have them away from River Road.
- Q: It seems like we are just adding this bike/ped path on the bridge. Where's the research on access, demand, Americans with Disabilities Act standards, etc. We shouldn't add a bike path just to have it on the bridge, but we should ensure that it connects to places. Who will use it? Who will commute on it? There are lots of opportunities associated with the new path.  
A: The EIS will have 3 subchapters, including one on non-motorized transit. Much research has been done and additional work is underway on the DEIS chapter. This is a link that doesn't exist now, which presents a difficult demand analysis; while we are doing projections, there is not a comparable precedent. We will not be undertaking a bike/ped network for the entire region as part of this project. By forming the advisory panel, the counties, regional bike groups and concerned citizens have been a part of this process. Municipalities have acknowledged this opportunity and are incorporating it into their plans for future connections. Of course, all connections we have presented will be ADA compliant and meet AASHTO standards.
- C: There are lots of bike clubs, and the new path will attract more bicyclists from other areas.
- Q: At the TOD workshops, South Nyack proposed a 300-foot-long connection over the Thruway as a linear park and as a reconnection of the community, which was divided when the Thruway was built. This esplanade would create more of an attraction than just the bike/ped path. Are we taking this into account?

- A: We are very much aware of this concept. The TOD initiative was not intended to get the communities to come up with specific enhancements with regards to transit although it may inspire communities and provide opportunities to come up with ideas for specific communities. We will continue to work with South Nyack (and other communities) to identify if the proposals are betterments or mitigations.. Proposals that are deemed to be “betterments” cannot be funded with project funds. However, we will strive to not preclude those future options. The South Nyack proposal is on the table, but we cannot provide a definitive answer at this time.
- Q: Has there been a preference to choose one path or two?  
A: We are currently leaning toward one, wide, single path.
- C: How do you patrol the proposed separation on the shared use path?  
A: With only a stripe, the segregation is difficult to enforce.. The width will allow space to minimize the interaction between modes.
- Q: Has anyone been on 9W to see how many bikers are abreast? We should understand how they operate on the road.  
A: Agreed. We recognize the issues in the river communities.
- C: This is a 3-mile bridge. It is unlikely we will have the same pedestrian volumes that are seen on shorter bridges. Newburgh would be a good example....they are getting a lot of sightseers who walk out for a short length of the bridge, take some photos, and move on.
- Q: Does allowing for freight mean a third set of tracks?  
A: No. Any freight service would be confined to the two tracks.
- Q: It seems as if freight is a new aspect of this project?  
A: State law requires that all rail lines be designed for certain loads (Cooper E80) and clearances (e.g., 23’ vertical). We recognize that this is a “transit project” and that there is no demand for freight in this corridor. Exemptions are possible and we are looking at the implications associated with designing for these loads and clearances. If there are substantial impacts, a non-exemption for some load and clearance criteria will be requested. This is simply part of the process. As the design is developed, we will try to meet all standards. When we find a significant issue, we will follow the necessary process to address it. This project will not preclude freight but it is not part of the project’s purpose and need..
- Q: Would there be greater noise impacts from the dual-level configurations?  
A: Potentially, and this will be evaluated in the DEIS.
- Q: Would Option 4 be the highest option over River Road?  
A: Yes, it would be at that point. The single-level options have a 15’-deep superstructure and need to allow approximately 15’ for clearance over River Road, with the result that the Thruway would be approximately 30 feet over River Road. Options 5 and 6 would be approximately 40 feet. Option 4 would be nearly 50 feet.
- Q: Why do you have to have 40 feet of clearance if 23 feet is what you actually need?  
A: The 40 feet includes both the roadway and the bridge.
- C: If the property line at the Bradford Mews is the pinch point (the narrowest point), the new highway would be laid out from this point south. Without a shared use path, you wouldn’t have to shift the bridge as far south.
- Q: How much cross-section is available at the narrowest area (at Bradford Mews)?  
A: We have 250 feet, but need 30 feet more.
- Q: In Option 5, can you put all the traffic on the lower level in the temporary condition?  
A: Potentially. We will be looking at the maintenance and protection of traffic during construction shortly.. However, getting the travel lanes reconnected with the Thruway may present issues.
- Q: Is there a reason we haven’t looked at the Westchester landing with the same problems?  
A: The Rockland landing is much tighter, although there are many similar issues. We thought we would be discussing the Westchester issues tonight, but these will likely be addressed at the next SAWG.
- Q: How many houses would you have to take on Ferris Lane?  
A: It depends on the bridge configuration selected and could range from 0 to 6 properties.
- C: It would seem short-sighted to narrow a piece of infrastructure to save a single property.

- Q: Can those driveways that directly access Ferris Lane be modified to access South Broadway?  
A: These are future details that need to be developed. We also need to consider that some of these houses may be historic.
- C: I recommend reconstructing the South Broadway and 9W intersection as it is unsafe due to visibility and grade issues.
- Q: Do we need both Interchange 10 and 11? Are both warranted?  
A: We have looked at eliminating Interchange 10 and preliminary results indicate that both interchanges are necessary so as to not overburden the remaining interchange.
- C: An Interchange 10 redesign and Franklin Street Bridge removal would be OK as long as emergency vehicles can cross the Thruway easily.
- C: A new pedestrian crossing would be needed. There might be safety issues if the pedestrian crossing is through the proposed roundabout, along the bridge at Interchange 10. Additionally, the Esposito Trail would have to be relocated, which could be an issue.
- Q: Would it be possible to provide a new bike/ped-only bridge in the area of Franklin Street?  
A: This is possible and will need to be evaluated.
- C: We also need to accommodate emergency vehicles that use Interchange 10 to access the eastbound travel lanes on the bridge.
- C: An eastbound exit ramp at Interchange 10 would reduce congestion at Interchange 11. However, it would likely put more traffic on Route 9W.
- Q: If eastbound traffic is redirected onto Route 9W due to the new exit ramp at Interchange 10, would more traffic elect to cross at the George Washington Bridge? Would this impact truck traffic?  
A: The addition of the exit ramp needs to be evaluated. Part of this evaluation will include a traffic analysis.