



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

**Meeting Minutes**

***Stakeholders' Advisory Working Group (SAWG)  
Land Use SAWG Meeting #9***

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

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April 6, 2010

Meeting Title:	Stakeholders’ Advisory Working Group (SAWG) Land Use SAWG Meeting #9
Meeting Purpose:	Discuss smart growth land use issues from the highway perspective and to exchange information through stakeholder discussion
Location Date:	<b>April 6, 2010</b> Palisades Center – Besso Community Room West Nyack, NY 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Agenda:	Item 1. Introduction (Page 2) Item 2: Presentation (Page 2) Item 3: Discussion (Page 3)
	Attendees:  <b><u>SAWG Members</u></b> Philip Bosco Rose & Len Cardillo Darcy Casteleiro (representing Ellen Jaffee) James Creighton Ed Dempsey Bob Dillon Eric Fang Patrick Gerdin James Hartwick Steve Higashide (representing Kate Slevin) Barton Lee Catherine Nowicki Steven Papas (representing Ellen Jaffee) Jeffrey Zupan  <b><u>Additional Attendees</u></b> Councilwoman Stephanie Hausner, Town of Clarkstown Councilman George Hoehmann, Town of Clarkstown  <b><u>Project Team Members</u></b> Yvette Hinds, NYSDOT Steve Munson, NYSDOT Russell Robbins, NYSDOT Angel Medina, NYSTA Joe Pasanello, MNR

Andrew Parker, AECOM  
Rita Campon, Parsons  
George Paschalis, HSH

Agenda Item 1  
Introduction

Russell Robbins (NYSDOT) welcomed members of the Land Use Stakeholders' Advisory Working Group (SAWG) and introduced the evening's agenda, which focused on a presentation on smart growth and transportation, by Steve Munson of the NYSDOT Statewide Planning Bureau. Mr. Robbins asked participants to introduce themselves and give their affiliation.

Agenda Item 2  
Presentation

Mr. Munson gave a PowerPoint presentation, titled "Smart Growth: Linking Land Use and Transportation" (see attached). There were also handouts on NYSDOT's Smart Growth Program.

Agenda Item 3  
Discussion

Questions (Q), Answers (A), and Comments (C):

Most of the questions and comments arose during Mr. Munson's presentation.

Q: You note the unexpected consequences of development as drivers seek alternate local streets when arterials become congested. How is this captured in traffic models?

A: Several traffic modeling systems predict this behavior and sometimes the detours are quite apparent. For instance, NYMTC's Best Practice Model (BPM) is a travel demand forecast model that uses a range of information, including travel surveys, to predict the diverse nature of trips in the region.

C: Local plans and zoning are often ignored or circumvented by exceptions and variances.

C: (in response to economic costs of congestion lowering speeds and impacting businesses) Slower speeds can also mean greater safety.

C: (in response to the community of Greece accepting a controversial divided median) The project was accepted because of the outreach efforts to the public demonstrating its safety and economic benefits.

C: (in response to a slide showing the evolution of urban sprawl around Syracuse 1960-2000) The extent of sprawl is even more significant because the region lost population, at least since 1985.

C: (in response to slide showing the external factors that may force change) Andrew Parker noted the *New York Times* Op Ed article by David Brooks today, citing authors who see the US adding 100 million new residents over the next 40 years, with emerging village centers in suburbia as accommodating much of this.

Q: (in response to slides comparing Clifton Park and Plattsburgh) How did the closure of the air base impact Plattsburgh?

A: The closure did have an impact, although Plattsburgh has regained some population more recently. Nonetheless, they still have a huge inventory of retail space per capita, which raises questions about their ability to maintain it. They already have a surplus of low-end/discount-type retail uses and the question will be: Can they survive \$4-\$6 per gallon gas prices?

C: Clarkstown has recently updated its Comprehensive Plan and it focuses on preservation of neighborhoods and strengthening hamlet centers. We recognize the value of smart growth and TOD but we are not planning for more density. We want improved highways, not development. The TOD element is being pushed because the TZB project needs transit ridership and revenues. It seems that all we are hearing is density, density, density.

A: Our programs are not designed to tell municipalities what to do. NYS is a home rule state and locals decide what development will occur. NYSDOT has a TOD Training initiative that was inspired by the New York Department of State's Smart Growth initiative. The intent is to provide resources to support local communities in which transit improvements are being made. State DOT officials felt it most appropriate to pilot the program in the TZB corridor. The Project Team (NYSDOT, NYSTA and MTA MNR) procured the services of three non-profit organizations and initiated the program in June 2009. Corridor municipalities were invited to express their interest formally if they would like to participate in the program and receive this technical assistance. The Town of Clarkstown submitted a substantive application, and we look forward to working with the Town on this program.

Q: (in response to slide showing conditions in Horseheads, NY) I am familiar with this town. How did the bypass change things?

A: Generally made things better as with the elevated Route 17.

C: Undertaken much work with the state to address flooding in the West Nyack area, and while the DOT is spending \$20 million on bridges in the area, it is unlikely to improve conditions when designed for 50-year floods and we have recently had a series of 100-year plus floods.

A: The improvements proposed along I-287 will require careful analysis of existing and future drainage conditions in the area, and will provide useful data to support a more comprehensive program in this part of the Hackensack River basin.

## **Adjournment**

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The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.