



TAPPAN ZEE BRIDGE/ I-287 CORRIDOR PROJECT

SUMMER 2010
NEWSLETTER

► Please join us for an Open House on June 28th and 30th! See back page for details.

Project Director's Message

Since the fall of 2009, a great deal of progress has been made on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which the project team is now in the midst of preparing. Much of that progress is due to the direct involvement of many of you in one of the many forums provided for public involvement. [Page 4 offers a brief synopsis of the Environmental Impact Statement process; more detailed information is available on the project website www.tzbsite.com.]

Each of the five citizen Stakeholder Advisory Working Groups, on the bridge, the environment, land use, traffic and transit, and finance, has continued to meet and provide their input on relevant issues. In addition, the project team has been engaged in a number of other outreach efforts, which are described in greater detail in other articles in this newsletter. These include several Community Working Meetings held with municipal leaders, planning and other local officials, as well as public working meetings with community members and other stakeholders in various settings across the corridor, from Suffern to Port Chester. The project team also held similar working meetings with those who fall under the federally recognized designation of Environmental Justice groups.

All meetings were intended to elicit stakeholder input. The information gleaned has been very helpful in informing the study, and has been factored in the extensive bridge, transit, highway and other analyses that have been underway. **Details of the Alternatives to be studied further in the DEIS will be presented at Open Houses on June 28 and 30, 2010. [See back page for more information.]**

A Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Panel was convened to derive a plan for fully integrating bicycles and pedestrians onto the new bridge. Together with the project team, members of the Advisory Panel visited several bicycle/pedestrian facilities on bridges and other sites, offering valuable input for such facilities on a new Tappan Zee Bridge.

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Project team member Tom McGuinness (NYSTA) discusses bridge configurations at a recent Community Working Meeting

Public Input Helps to Shape Alternatives

The project team has broadened its outreach efforts by holding various types of public meetings to expand both the range of stakeholders who are part of the process and the level of input into the study alternatives.

A series of more than 30 working meetings was convened to solicit community input on the various transit route options and bridge configurations associated with the four Build Alternatives under consideration in the EIS. These meetings focused on geographic areas across the corridor: The bridge landing communities of Tarrytown, Irvington, Nyack, South Nyack, Grand View-on-the-Hudson, and the I-287 Corridor communities of Ramapo, Clarkstown, Orangetown, Greenburgh, White Plains, Harrison, and Rye.

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SEE INSIDE

EIS & THE PUBLIC

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PANEL

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT



New York State Department of Transportation



New York State Thruway Authority



Metro-North Railroad

Transit-Oriented Development Training in Full Swing

The project team has launched the second phase of its ambitious initiative to provide technical assistance resources to corridor municipalities. The resources are being provided in the form of a series of workshops on the increasingly popular concept known as Transit-Oriented Development, which is receiving close attention from municipalities around the nation.

The project team launched the technical assistance initiative – “Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): Building Quality Communities around Transit” – in November 2009. Nearly 200 stakeholders attended the full-day, county-wide workshops, held in Westchester and Rockland counties. The program is designed to aid municipalities interested in preparing for and leveraging opportunities that the

Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor Project and other local or regional transportation improvements might bring. Additionally, participating community representatives may apply the technical assistance to their existing transit resources. This training is also intended to provide exposure to the concepts that offer local governments proper control over growth and other elements for improving quality of life.

The technical assistance program continues in 2010 with intensive, two-day workshops that are engaging specific municipalities throughout the corridor. As David Kooris, vice president of the Regional Plan Association has said, “This isn’t about one-size-fits-all, but about each community’s finding an appropriate strategy for itself.”

Participants at opening events and/or the smaller, more focused, workshops have included officials at the municipal, county and state levels, as well as representatives of various private, public and non-profit organizations. TOD professionals from non-profit industry leaders,

Stakeholders participate in various TOD workshops



White Plains Two-day Workshop



Orangetown/Nyack Two-day Workshop



Westchester County-wide Workshop



Tarrytown Two-day Workshop



Rockland County-wide Workshop

Project for Public Spaces, Regional Plan Association and Reconnecting America, are facilitating the events. Topics include: Transit-Based Community Design, Smart Parking, Station Area Planning, Context Sensitive Design, Complete Streets, among others.

The two-day training builds upon concepts introduced at the November workshops and features a hands-on community assessment tool and interactive design exercises incorporating local potential TOD sites. Workshops have already been held covering conditions in Tarrytown, Greenburgh, Orangetown, Nyack, South Nyack, and White Plains. Additional workshops to be held throughout the spring and summer of 2010 will concern Port Chester, Suffern, Clarkstown, Sloatsburg, Hillburn, Airmont, Elmsford, and Greenburgh.

To learn more about this initiative, contact the project office at 914-358-0600 or via email at tzbsite@dot.state.ny.us.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Panel Advises Project Team

In 2009, the project team announced the creation of a Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Panel to help finalize the plan for accommodating non-motorized transportation, including bicycle and pedestrian access on the new Tappan Zee Bridge. In keeping with its longstanding commitment to fully integrate bicycles and pedestrians onto the new bridge, the Project Team sought input of various local and regional bicycling advocacy organizations and local municipalities.

Over a dozen organizations participated and, over the course of three months, worked with project engineers to determine the best ways to accommodate the pedestrians and bicyclists in the design of the replacement Tappan Zee Bridge.

In addition to several meetings, the partnership included a fact finding tour of various regional facilities that featured bicycle and/or pedestrian access, including the following facilities in New York City: the George Washington and Williamsburg Bridges, the Route 9A/West Street Path, and the High Line.

Based on input from the Advisory Panel, the Project Team is developing a plan to:

- Create a wide path for both bicycles and pedestrians on the north side of the bridge, with access to bicycle and pedestrian facilities at both landings.
- Create a sense of place for pedestrians and bicyclists along the bridge, with overlooks, lighting and other amenities.
- In Westchester County, consider possible bicycle and pedestrian connections to the proposed Broadway BRT station, South Broadway, Route 119, and Van Wart Avenue, which links to RiverWalk.
- In Rockland County, consider possible bicycle and pedestrian connections to the Esposito Trail and South Broadway for further connections to River Road.

To learn more about the findings of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Panel, contact the project office at 914-358-0600 or via email at tzbsite@dot.state.ny.us.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Panel members visit various New York City facilities



George Washington Bridge



Williamsburg Bridge

The Environmental Impact Statement Process and the Role of the Public

WHAT IT IS, WHAT WE ARE DOING AND HOW YOU ARE PARTICIPATING

INTRODUCTION

Those who have been following our progress know that the project team is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

For those just joining us, a fair question to ask is: What is an EIS? And why is it necessary?

In a nutshell, an EIS is a document that describes the impacts on the environment as a result of a proposed action and evaluates alternative actions. This document is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which is designed to involve the public and gather the best available information in a single place so that decision makers might be fully informed when they make their decisions.

Public Involvement is critical to a study as large and complex as this. As a result, the project team has been committed to engaging the public throughout this important process, via briefings, public and small group meetings, Stakeholder Advisory Working Groups (SAWGs), the project website, various communication tools, including literature such as this newsletter and other hand-outs, Web blasts and community outreach centers. The following outlines the key steps in the EIS process and the opportunities for public involvement.

KEY STEPS IN THE PROCESS

Scoping

During this phase, open meetings are held with the public to help define what should be included in the Draft EIS (DEIS). According to NEPA regulations, which require that those preparing an EIS engage in a public scoping process, "An effective scoping process can help reduce unnecessary paperwork and time delays in preparing and processing the EIS by clearly identifying all relevant procedural requirements." The regulations further state that public hearings or meetings, although often held, are not required; instead, the manner of seeking public input is left to the discretion of the agency.

The Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor Project has engaged in a number of efforts to involve the public and obtain their meaningful participation during scoping. Following the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in December 2002—the start of the NEPA process—the project team held a series of meetings to solicit public input and identify feasible alternatives. Factoring stakeholder input received and results of their analyses, the team published the *Alternatives Analysis* (AA) report—which documented the screening that led to the identification of reasonable alternatives to be fully evaluated in the DEIS. These alternatives were presented to the public in February 2007.

The project team issued a revised NOI in February 2008 to advise the public of revisions to the environmental review process for the project, including the new role of the New York State Department of Transportation as another co-lead agency. Additionally, this action was taken to reflect new federal regulations (SAFETEA-LU, 6002) designed, in short, to improve efficiency in complex projects, facilitate efficiency among agencies and expand public participa-

tion. The NOI identified key components of the project, such as the exploration of bridge rehabilitation vs. replacement and the selection of transit modes to serve the project corridor.

To facilitate decision-making, the NOI also presented plans for a tiered analysis of environmental impacts: a Tier 1 transit analysis would identify the transit mode, its general route, and beginning and end points. It is also during this phase that the recommendation would be made as to whether to rehabilitate or replace the Tappan Zee Bridge. A Tier 2 bridge and highway analysis would simultaneously assess the site-specific impacts, costs, and mitigation measures of the bridge and transit accommodations and highway improvements.

Shortly after issuing the revised NOI, the project team held public Scoping Update meetings in February 2008. In September 2008, the team announced that it would a) replace the Tappan Zee Bridge and b) select Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Commuter Rail Transit (CRT) to serve the corridor. Next, the project team held Public Information Meetings in October 2008.

Scoping concluded in May 2009 with the publication of the *Scoping Summary Report* and the *Scoping Comments Report*, which summarized and responded to the more than 1,300 public comments received since the project's inception. The *Scoping Summary Report* identified the alternatives and the methodology for evaluating their environmental impact in the DEIS.

Draft EIS (DEIS)

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is the actual document that will outline and discuss in detail the potential environmental impacts of a proposed project. It will reflect the analysis of a number of project elements and will evaluate, in detail, the project alternatives.

The project team is currently developing the alternatives—including identifying the transit route, bridge options, highway improvements and accommodation of transit in the corridor—while continuing the environmental analysis. **Open Houses are scheduled for June 28 and 30, 2010 to update the public on the team's progress (see back page for details).**

Once the DEIS document is completed and published, the public will have another opportunity to review and comment, in a Public Hearing anticipated for sometime in 2011.

Final EIS (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD)

The final steps in the EIS process are the preparation of the Final EIS (FEIS)—which incorporates public comments received on the DEIS—and the Record of Decision (ROD), which is the final federal approval of the preferred alternative.

The FEIS and ROD could be issued as early as 2011.

For more details, visit the project website: www.tzbsite.com.

SCOPING

- Notice of Intent (Dec. 2002)
- Scoping Meetings (Jan. 2003)
- Public Workshops (April 2003)
- Public Workshops (July 2003)
- Stakeholders' Committee Meeting (April 2005)
- Public Workshops (Dec. 2005)
- Alternatives Analysis Report (Jan. 2006)
- Public Open Houses (Feb. 2007)
- Stakeholders' Committee Meeting (Feb. 2007)
- Stakeholders' Committee Meeting (Jan. 2008)
- Revised Notice of Intent (Feb. 2008)
- Scoping Update Meetings (Feb. 2008)
- Announcement of Bridge Replacement and Transit Mode Selection (BRT/CRT) (Sept. 2008)
- Public Information Meetings (Oct. 2008)
- Stakeholders' Committee Meeting (Oct. 2008)
- Scoping Summary Report (May 2009)

DEIS

- Stakeholders' Committee Meeting (June 2009)
- Transit & Bridge Municipal Stakeholder Meetings (Aug. 2009 - Dec. 2009)
- Community and Environmental Justice Working Meetings (Nov. 2009 - Dec. 2009)
- Bike/Pedestrian Advisory Panel Meetings (Jan. 2010 - Feb. 2010)
- Public Open Houses (June 2010)
- Submit DEIS for Federal Review (Nov. 2010)
- DEIS Public Hearing (Anticipated 2011)

FEIS & ROD

- FEIS (Anticipated 2011)
- Record of Decision (ROD) (Anticipated 2011)

— SAWG Meetings began in May 2007 and will continue to meet for the duration of the DEIS —

Project Director's Message

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Separately, the project team of the NYS Department of Transportation, the NYS Thruway Authority and MTA Metro-North Railroad launched a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) technical assistance initiative in November 2009 with two county-wide workshops.

We are also providing more advanced technical assistance and resources to several municipalities across the corridor. More information on this noteworthy effort, which will continue throughout the spring and summer of 2010, may be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

Many of you have been engaged in the process and we hope that you will continue to be involved. For those of you who have not been as active, we encourage you to participate in this Project by any of the means indicated on the back page of this newsletter, including attending the upcoming Open Houses on June 28th and 30th. Additionally, please keep an eye on www.tzbsite.com for further information on important meetings and Project developments.



Michael Anderson, P.E.
Project Director

Public Input Helps to Shape Alternatives

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Additionally, two public working meetings were held in both Westchester and Rockland counties specifically for individuals protected by Title VI and Environmental Justice regulatory provisions to assure non-discrimination on the basis of income, race, religion, national origin, English proficiency, or religion. Over 200 organizations and their entire memberships, plus individuals representing target stakeholder communities were invited to attend one or both of these meetings.

The project team also met with community leaders, interested stakeholders and members of various biking, hiking/pedestrian organizations throughout the region to discuss the project. The meeting led to the formation of a Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Panel. [See article on page 3 for more information on the panel's efforts.]

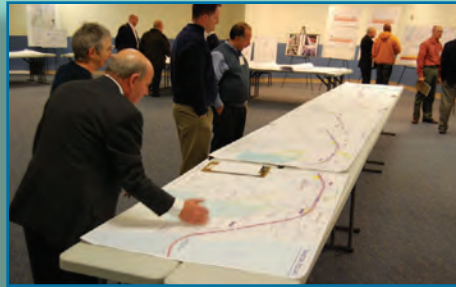
In addition, the team met with representatives of two national historic landmarks in the area, Sunnyside and Lyndhurst—including the

National Trust for Historic Preservation, which owns and operates Lyndhurst—both located in Tarrytown.

All told, over the course of five months, more than 400 people attended the previously mentioned meetings, reviewed working drawings, asked questions of and/or provided comments to the project team. The meetings proved instrumental in shaping the project team's understanding of local factors that stakeholders knew best, such as land use and transportation issues. They also helped to inform the study and the re-

ports that will document the transit alignment through the corridor (*Transit Alignment Options Report*), and reduce the number of bridge configurations under consideration (*Bridge Options Development Report*), both of which will be issued shortly. Final transit alignment options and current bridge configurations to be studied further will be presented at our upcoming Open Houses [see back cover for details]. We look forward to seeing you there! To learn more about the meetings, contact the project office at 914-358-0600 or via email at tzbsite@dot.state.ny.us.

Project team members solicit input on transit routes and bridge configurations at various public meetings



Rockland County Environmental Justice Meeting in West Nyack



Clarkstown Community Working Meeting in West Nyack



Ramapo Community Working Meeting in Spring Valley



White Plains/Harrison/Rye Community Working Meeting in Port Chester



Greenburgh/White Plains Community Working Meeting in Elmsford



Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor Project
Westchester Community Outreach Center
660 White Plains Road, Suite 340
Tarrytown, NY 10591

Please join us at the Tappan Zee Bridge/ I-287 Corridor Project Open House

We are pleased to present details of the Alternatives—including final transit alignments and current bridge configurations—to be studied further as we advance the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.



Westchester County

June 28, 2010, 4pm - 8pm
The Westchester Marriott Hotel
Grand Ballroom
670 White Plains Road
Tarrytown, New York 10591



Rockland County

June 30, 2010, 4pm - 8pm
Palisades Center
Adler Community Room
1000 Palisades Center Drive
West Nyack, New York 10994

Meeting facilities are accessible via public transportation.

For more information, including meeting directions and relevant technical reports, visit www.tzbsite.com. If you have special needs or other requirements, call 914-358-0600 or e-mail tzbsite@dot.state.ny.us.

Contact us

Please email us at:
tzbsite@dot.state.ny.us
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(914) 358-0600
or write to:
Michael P. Anderson, P.E.
Project Director, at the
above address

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How to Stay Informed

1. Visit www.tzbsite.com

2. Visit Our Outreach Centers:

Westchester

660 White Plains Road, Suite 340
Tarrytown, NY 10591
(914) 358-0600
Open Monday-Friday,
9:00 am-5:00 pm

Rockland

203 Main Street
Nyack, NY 10960
(845) 348-7714
Open Wednesday-Thursday,
4:00 pm-8:00 pm
Saturday, 11:00 am-4:00 pm