

The next meeting of the Central Jersey Transportation Forum will be on **Friday, March 16th at 9:00 AM (Refreshments at 8:30 AM)**
Sarnoff Corporation - 201 Washington Road, West Windsor, New Jersey

**Summary of Highlights
Central Jersey Transportation Forum
November 2, 2006 Meeting**

Introductions

There were approximately 80 participants, including representatives for thirteen municipalities, three counties, two MPOs, FHWA, FTA, two State Assembly representatives, two TMAs, several state agencies, authorities, and organizations (for-profit and non-profit).

Assemblyman John Wisniewski on Transportation Policy

Assemblyman Wisniewski, Co-chair of the Joint Legislative Committee on Government Consolidation and Shared Services, said that transportation is probably the single greatest issue facing the State this decade. He remains concerned about adequate funding. He expressed interest in helping with a Transportation Enhancement District (TDD) bill focused on the Route 1 BRT and offered to return in the future.

Route 1 Regional Planning

Chris Carew, NJ Office of Economic Growth, provided an explanation of the Planning Through Partnerships Project and how it relates to the Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy. George Hawkins, NJ Future, described their work as a consultant for the project. Jack Kanarek, NJ Transit, provided an update on the Route 1 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) effort and work with municipalities.

Coordinating Route 1 Projects

- Bob Bzik, Somerset County Planning Division, provided an update on projects underway in the US 206 corridor in Somerset County including their Goods Movement Study.
- DVRPC staff provided updates on tasks underway for the Forum action plan including a map of land use and transportation projects along Route 1, a database update of small east-west project needs, and facilitating agreements on how to help existing east-west corridors meet everyone's needs as best as possible.

**Highlights of the
Central Jersey Transportation Forum
November 2, 2006 Meeting**

Attendees (approximately 80):

Name	Organization
Glenn Reibman	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
Linda Spalinski	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
Ron Carle	Dewbery-Goodkind, INC.
Barry Seymour	DVRPC
Don Shanis	DVRPC
Eric Grugel	DVRPC
Sean Greene	DVRPC
Zoe Neaderland	DVRPC
John Boyle	DVRPC Regional Citizens Committee / Bicycle Coalition of the Delaware Valley
Bill Neary	East Brunswick Township & Keep Middlesex Moving
Joung Lee	Federal Highway Administration
Linda Beyer	Federal Highway Administration
Rebecca Reyes - Alicea	Federal Transit Administration
Kenneth Daly	Franklin Township
Alison Miller	Friends of West Windsor Open Space
Cheryl Kastrenakes	Greater Mercer TMA
Sandra Brillhart	Greater Mercer TMA
Pete Rayner	Greater Mercer TMA Board
Colleen Fitzgerald	Heyer, Gruel & Associates
Gene Strupinsky	Hillsborough Township
David Nettles	Hopewell Borough
Morteza Ansari	Keep Middlesex Moving
Elizabeth Donahue	Lawrence Township
Richard Krawczun	Lawrence Township
Donna Lewis	Mercer County Planning Department
Basil Giletto	Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce
Mike Silvestrov	Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce
Barry Keppard	Michael Baker & Associates, Inc.
John Hogan	Middlesex County
George Ververides	Middlesex County Department of Planning
Tony Gambilonghi	Middlesex County Department of Planning
Mike Costello	Monroe Township Transportation
Louise Wilson	Montgomery Township
John Wisniewski	New Jersey Assembly
George Hawkins	New Jersey Future
James Requa	NJ Department of Community Affairs
Russell Like	NJ Department of Community Affairs
Miki Krakauer	NJ Department of Transportation, Freight Services
Mark Stout	NJ Department of Transportation, Planning & Development
Paul Cohn	NJ Department of Transportation, Smart Growth Initiatives
Danielle Graves	NJ Department of Transportation, Statewide Planning
Jim Lewis	NJ Department of Transportation, Statewide Planning

Debbie Stevenson	NJ Dept of Transportation, Interagency Coordination
Patricia Snyder	NJ Dept of Transportation, Interagency Coordination
Chris Carew	NJ Office of Economic Growth
Daniel O'Connell	NJ State Legislative Board/United Transportation Union
Jack Kanarek	NJ Transit
James Schwarzwald	NJ Transit
Jerome Lutin	NJ Transit
Brian Wahler	NJ Turnpike
Ron Tindall	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Michele Fisher	Office of Assemblywoman Linda Greenstein District 14
Bob Wolfe	Picus Associates
Ernie Freeman	Plainsboro Township
Peter Cantu	Plainsboro Township and Keep Middlesex Moving
Mildred Trotman	Princeton Borough
Pam Hersh	Princeton HealthCare System
Marvin Reed	Princeton Regional Planning Board
Phyllis Marchand	Princeton Township
Kristin Appelget	Princeton University
Dianne Brake	Regional Planning Partnership
Jeffrey Wilkerson	Regional Planning Partnership
Walter Schmidlin	Sarnoff Corporation, Corporate Real Estate
Robert Bzik	Somerset County Planning Division
Walter Lane	Somerset County Planning Division
Craig Marshall	South Brunswick Township
Frank Gambatese	South Brunswick Township
Matt Watkins	South Brunswick Township
John Manzoni	STV Incorporated
Edward Cohen	Township of East Brunswick
Ron Reinhardt	TransitCenter
John West	Washington Township
Sandra Shapiro	West Windsor Bicycle & Pedestrian Alliance
Linda Geevers	West Windsor Township
Pat Ward	West Windsor Township
Shing-Fu Hsueh	West Windsor Township
Heidi Kleinman	West Windsor Township Council

Note: 86 folders were handed out so apparently some people did not sign in. Please feel free to advise if you attended. We appreciate everyone signing in.

1. Introduction of Attendees

Barry Seymour, Executive Director of DVPRC, welcomed participants and everyone introduced him or herself.

2. July Meeting Highlights

Mr. Seymour asked for any revisions to the highlights of the July 20, 2006 Forum meeting as distributed in the meeting folders. A website address had been corrected since the version distributed beforehand. There was one additional revision: Marvin Reed, Chairman of the Princeton Regional Planning Board Master Plan Committee, clarified that he had been speaking about having the Hillsborough Bypass project discussed at the Forum, not asking how to advance it as had been summarized on page 7. With that addition, the motion was carried to approve the highlights as written. [Corrected highlights available at www.dvrpc.org/transportation/longrange/cjtf/meetings.htm]

3. Assemblyman John Wisniewski on Transportation Policy

Mark Stout, Co-chair of the Forum and NJDOT Assistant Commissioner of Planning and Development, introduced Assemblyman John Wisniewski. Mr. Stout said he has always been impressed by the Assemblyman's breadth and depth of transportation knowledge and his ability to courageously deal with controversial issues. Assemblyman John Wisniewski represents the 19th District and has been the Chair of the New Jersey Assembly Transportation and Public Works Committee for five years and Co-chair of the Joint Legislative Committee on Government Consolidation and Shared Services.

Assemblyman Wisniewski said that transportation is probably the single greatest issue facing the State this decade. New Jersey has a dense, robust economy that traffic. it needs to solve its transportation problems. Studies are fine but funding is necessary. The Assemblyman described decades of "transportation triage" due to insufficient funding which has resulted in a tremendous backlog. He noted that the current solution to funding the transportation trust fund will only last five years and then, due to the way it was addressed, will leave the State back in the same situation.

Municipalities steadily need more funds for transportation and other needs, but with the only option really being property taxes, the result is a ratables chase that ultimately makes it more difficult to provide an efficient transportation system. As a result, he decided to co-chair the Joint Legislative Committee on Government Consolidation and Shared Service. It is widely agreed that shared services and regionalization are the answer, but he noted that that conclusion is often followed by "but not in my town."

Another conclusion is that it is still important to raise the gas tax to provide a reliable base of transportation funding. Some of the other ways to fund transportation include leasing or selling assets such as the Garden State Parkway. He noted that when Chicago pursued such an approach, tolls went up one hundred percent which probably benefited the private corporation.

The discussion that followed addressed his points and some of those made in the discussion of agenda item 5, Route 1 Regional Planning. The main points are included below with the Assemblyman Wisniewski's replies in brackets:

- Bill Neary, Mayor of East Brunswick and Executive Director of Keep Middlesex Moving, asked about support for transportation demand management approaches such as car pools and mass transit. [Demand management and operational approaches are very worthwhile.]
- Bob Wolfe, Chair of the Forum Legislative Committee and President of Picus Associates, highlighted that the Route 1 BRT has near universal support for at least the concept. He voiced concern that funds and appropriate approvals for large projects like the BRT are seldom simultaneously available. It will be essential to preserve rights-of-way so that the BRT can happen when there is funding. He asked whether there would be a way to commit to the BRT so that municipalities could plan for it with some security. Municipalities need to design and make land use decisions around the BRT which will likely be implemented at a later date. [One idea would be to legislatively create a right-of-way in which no major ratables should be built. Assemblyman Wisniewski said he would work with the Forum on this idea.]
- Diane Brake, President of Regional Planning Partnership, raised the example of the authority in North Carolina's Research Triangle that was able to build a key light rail system there. They used Transportation Improvement District (TID) and Transportation Enhancement District (TED) approaches. She also noted that a Proposal for Enhanced Regional Planning was provided as requested to the Governor three years ago and that state agencies would need to be keepers of this plan. George Hawkins, Executive Director of NJ Future, built upon Ms. Brake's comments to suggest a revised TED bill that uses Route 1 as a pilot for the state, tied to the accomplishing the much-supported BRT project. [Assemblyman Wisniewski said he would like to support TED legislation connected to the BRT]
- Peter Cantu, Mayor of Plainsboro Township and Board member of Keep Middlesex Moving, summarized that there is a lot of support and enthusiasm for the BRT. He said what is needed now is a focal point at the state level to develop a plan to advance the BRT. He is concerned that without a coordinated implementation plan, the BRT project might fail.
- Mr. Reed said that it is necessary to start doing pieces of the BRT, not just work on funding mechanisms.
- Frank Gambatese, Mayor of South Brunswick, emphasized that all the municipalities along Route 1 affect each other and need to work together.

- Zoe Neaderland, Senior Transportation Planner at DVRPC, asked what the Forum can do to address these issues. [All bodies need to be more receptive to regionalism. In today's world, town issues do not stop at municipal borders. Hearings by the Joint Legislative Committee have been underway for two weeks. He encouraged people to speak with their mayors and boards about this effort and the message that everyone needs to give a little so we can all get a lot.]
- Mayor Neary said that municipalities need to be looking at more than ratables. There are too many land use restrictions, but many municipalities would support regionalism if there were more incentives.
- It was asked if the Gas Tax could be raised three cents a year over five years rather than all at once. The Assemblyman said that having it come up and be debated and criticized each year would more likely mean that it would not happen.
- Donna Lewis, Director of the Mercer County Planning Department, provided refinement to the page in the meeting folders, "A Few Innovative Ways to Fund Transportation Projects." Mercer County is the only county with a Transportation Development District (TDD). She said it has taken effort, but it works. The existing TDD was done with three municipalities and focuses on the Merrill Lynch development. She said their experience is that it is important to define public and private responsibilities and it has to be a partnership. For TDD to be used for BRT, there would have to be a new legislative effort focused on those municipalities.

Assemblyman Wisniewski closed saying he had heard good ideas and would be in touch. He said that with support from various levels of government, the Governor, and the Legislature, the Forum would really be able to do things.

4. Route 1 Regional Planning

a) Route 1 Planning Through Partnerships Project

Mr. Stout introduced Chris Carew, Director of Government Relations for the NJ Office of Economic Growth, and the work of the Route 1 Planning Through Partnerships Project. He said that in recognition of the important work already underway for the key Route 1 corridor, the Governor dedicated some very high quality people and resources to help, such as Mr. Carew. Mr. Carew worked for the New Jersey Conference of Mayors and then for thirteen years at the NJ League of Municipalities before taking his current position.

Mr. Carew recounted that the NJDOT staff for the Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy held an internal meeting for state agencies early in 2006. Staff from the Office of Economic Growth participated and thought it sounded like a proactive opportunity to get involved and help the Governor reach the goals in the Economic Growth Strategy which was just being completed. The BRT project gets at the nexus of housing, jobs and traffic in the Economic Growth Strategy and is the type of targeted infrastructure projects discussed in the

Governor's document. Mr. Carew said that Gary Rose, the Chief of the Office of Economic Growth, would have come to speak to the Forum himself but had been called into a meeting with the Governor.

The objectives of the Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy are worthwhile, Mr. Carew emphasized, but the Office of Economic Growth wants to create more of a partnership with mayors and planning boards. This aspect is being referred to as the Route 1 Planning Through Partnerships Project. This work will include interviewing each of the 15 municipalities, counties, and MPOs involved in the BRT corridor. They want to understand the issues, and what can be delivered to municipalities in return for helping to reach regional planning goals such as the BRT, housing, and smart investments. He described this being done through negotiations with individual municipalities.

The process of interviewing each municipality is being done through a consultant contract of the Office of Economic Growth with NJ Future. Mr. Carew introduced NJ Future Executive Director, George Hawkins.

Mr. Hawkins said that NJ Future usually works from the outside, but the Economic Growth Strategy advances so many of the principles they had been advocating that they instead wanted to help. He said that the Governor's office is the only potential coordinator with resources and capability to organize agencies in the manner needed to have an effect. He hopes that municipalities will contribute in return. Mr. Hawkins said the Route 1 Planning Through Partnerships Project is building on work already done and hopes it will contribute back in return.

NJ Future will be interviewing each involved municipality, redistributing the write-ups for review, then summarizing them without names for the Governor. He said he will provide some thoughts on the themes and results but will keep that part separate. So far he has been hearing impatience and pressure to get results. The Governor has asked for a report in January on how to implement the Economic Growth Strategy.

There was joint discussion of this item and Assemblyman Wisniewski's presentation. This discussion was summarized with agenda item 3. In addition, Mayor Gambatese said he had already participated in the interview with NJ Future, it had gone well, and he encouraged other mayors to participate.

b) Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy Technical Evaluation

Danielle Graves, Principal Engineer at NJDOT Bureau of Statewide Planning, clarified that the outreach efforts of Planning Through Partnerships are an element of the Regional Growth Strategy. The current outreach efforts are in place of the workshops initially scheduled for last August. Technical work is

continuing and they are working on a web site. The Route 1 BRT will be a recommendation.

c) Route 1 BRT Update

Jack Kanarek, Senior Director of Project Development for NJ Transit, said they are moving ahead on specific next steps for the Route 1 BRT and working closely with communities. There has been need to deal with immediate matters, such as the Quaker Bridge Mall expansion and Princeton University's work near the Dinky station. In relation to that, Princeton University recently sponsored a survey of Dinky riders. Additionally, DVRPC and DOT are putting together funding to do site specific work and route planning. [This was later clarified as over \$250,000 in FY 2007 and \$335,000 in FY 2008 according to a January, 2007 review] Mr. Kanarek said that NJ Transit is advancing the BRT project as opportunities arise.

Mayor Cantu said he is encouraged that work is underway and some new funds are being allocated, but there is need for a comprehensive implementation plan and protecting right-of-way. He strongly recommended a single point of contact given authority by the Governor's administration.

Mr. Reed also spoke in favor of the BRT but said he wants NJ Transit to come meet with Princeton's town boards and organizations such as the DINKY Riders Club. He said this needs to be a team effort of all involved and Mr. Kanarek agreed. Mr. Reed said it is important that the BRT serve the people who live in the Route 1 corridor and do not want to be swamped by development.

Don Shanis, Deputy Executive Director of DVRPC, asked whether the Forum thought there was a need for a meeting of the BRT Committee to help keep municipalities and NJ Transit working together. It was agreed that that would happen.

Mayor Gambatese commended the work but said his municipality can't wait for the BRT. He said South Brunswick remained ready to coordinate once a BRT develops but they want to help their residents able to get around safely and not just in cars, so they are launching a transit system and creating park and ride lots.

There was further discussion of a TDD. Mayor Phyllis Marchand of Princeton Township said that the Princeton Regional Planning Board is an existing regional body that works well and she thought something like that might be a possibility to help make the BRT happen.

5. Coordinating Route 1 Projects

a) Somerset County Goods Movement Study

Bob Bzik, Director of Somerset County Planning Division provided a detailed update on the Goods Movement Study and activity along the 19-mile corridor of US 206 in Somerset County. The map distributed with this presentation provided location information as Mr. Bzik explained projects from north to south. In summary, the following projects are underway:

- Vicinity of the Raritan River - Redevelopment of the Somerville Landfill, Orlando Drive Vision Plan, Duke Farms Estate Master Plan
- Goods Movement Study of intermodal freight and economic development opportunities of the existing VA Depot, surrounding industrial zoned areas, and Manville Switching Yard. This study includes examination of improving safety of at grade crossings and quiet zones. An intersection option is to potentially grade separate some key crossings, such as CR 601 in Montgomery.
- Hillsborough Town Center Plan – Redevelopment along US 205 to create a main street/town focal point.
- Hillsborough Transit Village/TOD – Plan centered on a potential new rail station for new passenger service on the West Trenton rail line
- Montgomery Belle Meade Transit Village – Plan focused around the expected new rail station as part of an application of TDR.
- CR 518/US 206 Plan and Loop Roads – Center plan with loop roads to alleviate traffic congestion and provide a framework for mixed use development.
- Southern Route 206 Vision Plan – This NJDOT effort would build on the study Gladding Jackson did in the Princetons and Lawrence

Mr. Bzik clarified that the VA Depot site has been continually operated as a warehousing operation since the 1940s. A private company, IRG, signed a lease with the VA for 35 years and renewable for another 35 years. No shipping containers are sent to or from this location and there is not lifting equipment to do so. Products are offloaded from railcars onto trucks. The NJTPA Freight System Performance Study indicates that the majority of the trucks generated by this site would travel north on US 206 to access the I-287 and I-78 corridors.

The following matters were discussed after Mr. Bzik's presentation:

- Mr. Reed expressed his frustration that the VA lease went through without much public notice, and went on to ask about how to ensure that trucks would go north rather than south through the Princetons. Mr. Bzik replied that the County is working with the owner, leasees, and the township to minimize truck-related impacts while encouraging economic development. There is no lifting equipment currently or planned that would move railcars to trucks and there is an interlocal agreement that no containers will be stored on the site.
- Miki Krakauer, Administrative Analyst at the NJDOT Bureau of Freight Services, clarified that there had been a request for funding to make

related improvements to the rail line, but that request was withdrawn about a year ago.

- Mr. Reed encouraged consistency of plans for US 206 in Somerset and Mercer counties.
- The discussion included clarification that two efforts are underway. The US 206 Bypass is in the NEPA/Traffic Study process. South of that, NJDOT has started the US 206 Vision Study, which is similar to the study done in the Princetons. Mr. Stout said NJDOT is committed to building the US 206 bypass, to working with municipalities along the corridor and incorporating land use issues, and to serving regional mobility needs. Mr. Reed and Mr. Stout were going to further discuss how the Princetons would know about the potential effects of the bypass and be able to provide comments as that project proceeds. Mayor Mildred Trotman of Princeton Borough requested notices on related matters be sent as early as possible.

b) Map of Route 1 Land Use and Transportation Projects, and Planned Projects Status Report

Ms. Neaderland explained that agenda items b, c, and d are coordinated technical work advancing the Forum's action plan. For this meeting, the effort to better understand and coordinate transportation and land use projects is being presented separately from the every-other-meeting Planned Projects Status Report. In the future, the two will be integrated. She introduced Regional Planner Eric Grugel. Mr. Grugel presented the three parts of the draft package on Land Use and Transportation Projects Near US 1. It includes a map of all known major land use developments and transportation projects close to US 1 to facilitate discussion and planning. In addition, there are detailed descriptions from newspaper articles and a summary spreadsheet. He asked that participants provide additions or changes. Ms. Lewis expressed concern about using newspaper articles since they cover a wide range from ideas to real work. Mr. Grugel clarified that the map shows whether projects are in planning, approved, completed, or unknown phases. He offered to further divide those categories and added that he would like to refine the process to draw upon permit approvals and zoning decisions made by municipalities and counties.

c) Transportation Problems and Projects Database

Sean Greene, DVRPC Transportation Planner, provided an update on the Transportation Problems and Projects Database. He had presented the effort of reaching out to each municipality and county in the Forum at the last meeting. Mr. Greene asked that everyone review the resulting Draft Database and contact him with comments. He said that screening with the methodology agreed upon in the 2004 effort would be underway and proposed priority projects would be discussed at the next Forum meeting.

d) East-west existing corridors Task and Other Updates

Ms. Neaderland encouraged participants to review the Highlights of the Forum's Achievements and the Progress Report on Forum Action Plan included in the folders. On the Progress Report, one can read across from the agreed upon action to what has been done and to what is planned. She illustrated this with the east-west corridors action, which has resulted in the Forum's work on a CR 571 package. The Forum's work was a factor in DVRPC deciding to do its annual corridor study there and that effort is underway. The next east-west existing corridor task will be coordination among Hopewell Township and Borough, Montgomery, and Rocky Hill to focus on CR 518. [Franklin Township has decided to participate since that time]

6. Dialogue

Dan O'Connell, NJ Legislative Director of the NJ State Legislative Board/United Transportation Union, described the "Yield to Bus" decal program. Since 2004, New Jersey drivers have been required by law to yield to buses pulling out from fixed route stops. Since this is not well-understood, an eighteen month trial program put decals to this effect on the backs of buses, after which the organizers are reporting back to the NJ Legislature on effectiveness. Assemblyman Wisniewski was a sponsor of this program.

Mr. Seymour expressed appreciation on behalf of the Forum to Sarnoff Corporation for hosting the meeting.

Next Steps

The agendas for Forum meetings are developed with guidance from the Forum Steering Committee. The full Forum raised the following possible items for consideration:

- Update from Mr. Carew and Mr. Hawkins
- Update from NJ Transit on advancing the BRT
- Regional impacts of the US 206 Bypass and related projects or of the Quaker Bridge Mall expansion
- SR 92 EIS [with the project withdrawn since the meeting, the item might be more about what happens next]

DVRPC will notify Forum participant of the next meeting date once it is determined.