

The next meeting of the Central Jersey Transportation Forum will be on Thursday, November 2nd at 9:00 AM (Refreshments at 8:30 AM) Sarnoff Corporation - 201 Washington Road, West Windsor, New Jersey

**Brief Overview
Central Jersey Transportation Forum
July 20, 2006 Meeting**

Introductions

The new co-chairs, Barry Seymour (DVRPC Executive Director) and Mark Stout (NJDOT Assistant Commissioner of Planning and Development) each spoke briefly. There were seventy participants, including representatives for eleven municipalities, three counties, two MPOs, FHWA, FTA, a State assemblywoman, two TMAs, four colleges, several state agencies, authorities, and organizations (for-profit and non-profit).

Economic Development and Transportation

Linda Bentz, Assistant Director of Policy and Planning for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, spoke about their Strategic Plan. She focused on the relationship between transportation and the economy. The Forum had received related reports beforehand to assist in considering this subject in Central Jersey.

Advancing Route 1 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Jack Kanarek, Senior Director of Project Development for NJ Transit, provided a brief review of the findings of the Route 1 BRT Study and spoke about next steps. There was interest in a BRT Committee meeting for follow-up. The Forum unanimously endorsed the Study and continued progress on a Route 1 BRT.

Coordinating Route 1 Efforts

NJDOT Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy

Danielle Graves, NJDOT Principal Engineer for the Bureau of Statewide Planning, and Bill Beetle, DMJM + Harris, provided an update. This study is back underway after a hiatus.

NJDOT US 1 Millstone River Bridge Replacement

Ms. Graves provided a brief report on this element of the US 1/CR 571 Penns Neck Project. This element is scheduled for final design in 2007, to be awarded in 2008.

NJ Turnpike Widening Study, Exit 6 to Exit 8A

Steve Buente, New Jersey Turnpike Supervising Engineer, said an EIS is underway to expand capacity to three lanes per direction on the outer roadways to the vicinity of Exit 9. Exit 8 would be extensively reconstructed for capacity and a direct connection to NJ 133.

Forum East-West Corridors Update

Zoe Neaderland, DVRPC Senior Transportation Planner, said that the Forum's work on a CR 571 package was a factor leading to DVRPC selecting it for their annual New Jersey corridor study. She requested that municipalities interested in the next round of work on this Forum action plan work item contact her.

**Highlights of the
Central Jersey Transportation Forum
July 20, 2006 Meeting**

Attendees (70):

Name	Organization
Kristin Appelget	Princeton University
Bill Beetle	DMJM + Harris
Linda Bentz	Port Authority of NY & NJ
Rich Bickel	DVRPC
Martin Bierbaum	Municipal Land Use Center
Steve Buente	NJ Turnpike Authority
Peter Cantu	Plainsboro Township & Keep Middlesex Moving
Jon Carnegie	Voorhees Transportation Policy Institute
Tom Clark	NJ Transit
Paul Cohn	NJ Department of Transportation
Mike Costello	Monroe Township
Arch Davis	Princeton Borough
George Fallat	Mercer County
Michele Fisher	Office of Assemblywoman Linda Greenstein
Ernie Freeman	Plainsboro Township
Tony Gambilonghi	Middlesex County
Brandon Garcia	Mercer County
Linda Geevers	West Windsor Township
Basil Giletto	A-1 Limousine Corporate Offices
Danielle Graves	NJ Department of Transportation
Eric Grugel	DVRPC
Pam Hersh	Princeton HealthCare System
Shing-Fu Hsueh	West Windsor Township
Jack Kanarek	NJ Transit
Miki Krakauer	NJ Department of Transportation
Richard Krawczun	Lawrence Township
Walter Lane	Somerset County
Matthew Lawson	Mercer County
Joung Lee	Federal Highway Administration
Jim Lewis	NJ Department of Transportation
Russell Like	NJ Department of Community Affairs
Bruce Looloian	The Advance Realty Group
Jerome Lutin	NJ Transit
John Manzoni	STV Inc.
Jeannette Mar	FHWA
Craig Marshall	South Brunswick Township
Pamela Mount	Lawrence Township
Zoe Neaderland	DVRPC
Bill Neary	East Brunswick Township & KMM
Damien Newton	Tri-State Transportation Campaign
Tom Ogren	East Windsor Township
Natalia Olson	DVRPC
Jim Parvesse	West Windsor Township

Tushar Patel	URS Corporation
Robert Patten	Hightstown Borough
Pete Rayner	Greater Mercer TMA
Marvin Reed	Princeton Regional Planning Board
Noelle Reeve	Regional Planning Partnership
Glenn Reibman	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
Rebecca Reyes-Alicea	Federal Transit Administration
John Riggs	Monroe Township
Patricia Saulino	Dewbery-Goodkind, Inc.
Tom Saylor	NJ Department of Transportation
Walter Schmidlin	Sarnoff Corporation
James Schwarzwald	NJ Transit
Barry Seymour	DVRPC
Sandra Shapiro	West Windsor Bicycle & Pedestrian Alliance
Lee Solow	Princeton Regional Planning Board
David Stein	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Mark Stout	NJ Department of Transportation
Gene Strupinsky	Hillsborough Township
Ron Tindall	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Mildred Trotman	Princeton Borough
Carmen Valentin	Municipal Land Use Center
Sean Vroom	NJ Institute of Technology
Brian Wahler	NJ Turnpike Authority
Pat Ward	West Windsor Township
Jeffrey Wilkerson	Regional Planning Partnership
Bob Wolfe	Picus Associates
Jim Yeager	Michael Baker & Associates, Inc.

1. Introduction of Attendees

Barry Seymour, Executive Director of DVPRC, introduced himself. He gave a brief description of his fifteen years in Regional Planning at DVRPC and said he is excited to participate in the Forum. Mark Stout, Assistant Commissioner of Planning and Development, introduced himself. He had previously been the NJDOT Director of Capital Investment Planning and Development. Forum participants introduced themselves.

2. July Meeting Highlights

Mr. Seymour asked for any amendments to the highlights of the March 3, 2006 Forum meeting. The motion was carried to approve the highlights as written.

3. Economic Development and Transportation

Linda Bentz, Assistant Director of Policy and Planning at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) gave an overview PowerPoint presentation of their Strategic Plan: Transportation for Regional Prosperity. She noted that their planning area has a Gross Regional Product estimated at \$900 billion, larger than most global economies. By 2020, it is expected to grow by another \$500 billion. The PANYNJ plans for the forecasted demand for air passenger and cargo service, port capacity, PATH passenger service, and tunnel capacity. She noted that much of their system is already operating at full capacity at weekday and weekend peak times. The PANYNJ has five campaigns to address future needs: Exporter Services, Transit Capacity Expansion, Goods Movement, Infrastructure, and User Transportation. Ms. Bentz explained each one and provided some detail on how they plan to proceed.

The discussion covered the following points:

- Marvin Reed, Chairman of the Princeton Regional Planning Board Master Plan Committee, asked about the Manville Yard/Veterans Industrial Park Transload site in Hillsborough, New Jersey. Walter Lane, Principal Planner for Somerset County Planning Division, noted that they are building on previous work of the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) with a study that has been mentioned at the Forum before. He said they hope to be able to provide the promised report on progress this Fall.
- Bob Wolfe, Chair of the Forum Legislative Committee and President of Picus Associates, thanked Ms. Bentz for the presentation. He asked why Mercer County was shaded in a map of the PANYNJ region. She said it appeared to be a mistake as Mercer County is not in their 17-county region. [In a follow-up e-mail, Ms. Bentz clarified that the map shows a 31 county overview with a blue outline around their 17-county area, but said that the outline should shown be darker]

- Joung Lee, Transportation Planner for Federal Highway Administration-New Jersey Division, asked about use of systematic performance measures. Ms. Bentz said they are setting up a way to do cost/benefit analysis to help figure out which of the many needed projects to do, given limited funding.
- The PANYNJ report is available at www.PANYNJ.gov.

4. Advancing Route 1 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Jack Kanarek, Senior Director of Project Development for NJ Transit, provided a PowerPoint presentation reviewing highlights of the Route 1 BRT Alternatives Analysis Study, released in February 2006. [His PowerPoint and the Study's Executive Summary are available at www.Route1BRT.com and www.dvrpc.org/transportation/longrange/cjtf.htm. The CD of the full report had been mailed to Forum participants who requested it after the March Forum meeting and remains available upon request from NJ Transit.] The focus was on next steps. Mr. Kanarek spoke about how the BRT is a key part of the NJDOT Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy. NJ Transit is coordinating with various current projects (public and private) to preserve right-of-way for the BRT. He emphasized that this would be a phased project, citing potential incremental steps of establishing a supplemental DINKY service bus, moving forward with park and ride facilities, and developing a "brand" for the BRT system.

Discussion of Mr. Kanarek's presentation covered the following points:

- Mr. Kanarek clarified that the supplemental DINKY service being considered would be a bus sharing the existing rail right-of-way. It would supplement the existing service which is nearing capacity and provide additional service at the Princeton Borough end.
- Mr. Reed said that interim improvements such as new bus routes and expedited signals for buses are needed as soon as possible and there should be attention to intermodal transfer sites.
- David Stein, Director of Regional Planning at NJTPA, gave highlights of the New Brunswick BRT study. Bill Neary, Mayor of East Brunswick and Executive Director of Keep Middlesex Moving, said the New Brunswick BRT is needed and wanted. Mr. Kanarek clarified that the Route 1 BRT would join up with it, regardless of whether the southernmost stop was in North Brunswick or South Brunswick.
- Frank Gambatese, Mayor of South Brunswick, said he loves the BRT idea but can't wait for it to get built. That Township is starting a program in the fall with transit to two new park and ride lots. It would link to the BRT wherever the station is built.

The next part of this agenda item related to how the Forum wishes to proceed regarding the BRT. The discussion covered the following points:

- Peter Cantu, Mayor of Plainsboro, said that the BRT needs to advance, but it should do so in a comprehensive manner to provide certainty for

municipalities and businesses. Pam Mount, Lawrence Township Councilwoman, also spoke for committing to a whole BRT, adding that the BRT should be part of an approach to draw in well-paid jobs and that there is need for creative ways to fund the BRT. Mr. Kanarek clarified that he meant a comprehensive approach, but it still has to proceed in pieces and with private sector projects. Mr. Wolfe spoke for recognition that no one has the \$600 million it would take to build the full BRT now. Recognizing that will mean finding a little money to protect rights-of-way, keep the project alive, and help advance it as things are built. Mr. Stout agreed that that is important.

- Arch Davis, Princeton Borough Traffic and Transportation Committee, said transit overall needs improvement to be a viable means of transportation rather than a “poverty service”. He spoke about buses being unpredictably very late or early and routes not changing with current needs.
- Pam Hersh, now Vice President of Government Relations for Princeton HealthCare System, said that when she worked for Princeton University there were transit mandates for zoning approvals. She said creative zoning and ordinances are an integral part of making transit and the BRT happen.

A motion was made by Mayor Cantu and seconded by Mayor Gambatese to endorse the Route 1 BRT Study and encourage advancement, noting that elements are still being refined. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Seymour asked if the BRT Subcommittee wanted to meet to work on details about advancing aspects of the BRT. There was interest in such a meeting. It was requested that everyone be invited, specifically including North and South Brunswick. Matthew Lawson, Transportation Planner at Mercer County Planning Department, suggested hearing the next few agenda items and focusing on coordination.

5. New Jersey Long Range Transportation Plan

Danielle Graves, Principal Engineer at NJDOT, provided a brief update on the statewide Long Range Transportation Plan (SLRTP). She said they are developing a brief report and executive summary to be released through a series of public meetings for input. They hope to finalize this collaborative effort by the end of the year. See www.NJChoices.com for more information or there will be presentations at future Forum meetings.

In response to questions, Ms. Graves provided initial responses about projects in the SLRTP and then she followed up after the meeting. She clarified that it does not include a list of all projects. However, it does mention some high profile ones, including the Route 1 BRT. Projects included in MPO Long Range Plans, the STIP, the Governor’s projects of regional significance for public transit and

the Trans-Hudson Express Tunnel are the capital improvements included in the SLRTP 2030 scenario modeling for the Plan.

6. Coordinating Route 1 Efforts

a) NJDOT: Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy (R1RGS) and Other Projects

Ms. Graves introduced Bill Beetle, Associate Vice President at DMJM + Harris, who made a PowerPoint presentation about the R1RGS. He reviewed the projected future changes in transportation, demographics, jobs, and housing. He spoke about the opportunity zones and proposed growth locations that have been developed in the study so far and the results of zoning build out analysis given current zoning and an alternate scenario. Mr. Beetle said that future work will involve meetings, agreeing on a desired growth scenario, and establishing a compact regarding how to achieve it.

The extensive discussion that followed is summarized below:

- How will the vision of considerably more housing be met when it increases the tax burden? Mr. Beetle said that needs to be answered. Mr. Neary suggested a long term vision needs to be adopted and implemented by state agencies.
- Technical questions included whether increases in gas prices and telecommuting factored in, whether costs were developed in a way that reflect the importance of livable communities, and whether water and sewer infrastructure were an element in the analysis. The answer to all was no, although they are valid matters. There will be two more runs of the Regional Planning Partnership GOZ model and then the resulting land uses will be the basis for traffic model runs to find out how the scenarios would affect congestion and mode choice.
- Don Shanis, Deputy Executive Director at DVRPC, asked if it was really an alternate zoning plan. Mr. Beetle said it uses zoning as a mechanism to move to a better living pattern.
- Mr. Reed said various studies have established that the region is moving toward total congestion and that congestion is already slowing economic growth. He said it is necessary to address interconnections and parallel routes, in part so emergency vehicles can get to incidents on Route 1. He said the CR 571 package just brings more traffic for Princeton. He wanted to know how to have the US 206 Hillsborough Bypass project discussed at the Forum. Mr. Beetle said the next project workshop would involve asking participants for interconnection ideas.

Ms. Graves provided an update on the Millstone River Bridge Replacement and Route 1/CR 571 Penns Neck Projects. The bridge replacement is in the STIP as a hyperbuild project to be awarded in early 2008. It will be fully

funded by the State. The schedule of the rest of the project is uncertain due to financial constraints although preliminary design is anticipated in 2007 or 2008.

In the discussion that followed, Mr. Stout emphasized that the bridge was broken out in part because it needs to be fixed. In addition, with very large projects it is more practical to break of pieces, each with good public purpose. Mr. Reed and Ms. Mount said the whole project should move forward. In further discussion of the posters showing the bridge design it was clarified that there will be two general purpose lanes and a BRT lane. Sandy Shapiro, West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance, asked if money had been set aside for bicyclist/pedestrian access as discussed in the EIS. [Ms. Graves clarified by e-mail that a bicyclist/pedestrian study was a commitment in the EIS but is not currently underway. The EIS is available at <http://policy.rutgers.edu/vtc/pennsneckareaeis/products.html>]. Ms. Hersh expressed concern that the bridge should be done before the relocated hospital opens and Mr. Reed asked if the bridge will be open in five years. The answer was yes, and Mr. Stout said the project manager could be invited in for a more detailed presentation.

b) NJ Turnpike Widening Study, Exit 6 to Exit 8A

Stephen Buente, Supervising Engineer at the NJ Turnpike Authority and manager of the Exit 6 to Exit 8A Study, made a brief presentation. He said the Louis Berger Group is preparing an EIS and the Turnpike has met with the MPOs, DOT, and municipalities regarding the leading alternative. The intention of the Turnpike Authority is to construct new three-lane north and southbound outer roadways from the present terminus of the dual-dual roadway just south of Interchange 8A to a point approximately 2 miles south of the interconnection between the mainline Turnpike and the Pearl Harbor Memorial Turnpike Extension (referred to in the widening study as Interchange 6). The study includes analysis of interchanges 7, 7A, 8, and 8A, briefly summarized as follows:

- Exit 7 – No significant capacity needed
- Exit 7A – Widen toll plaza from 10 to 13 lanes. In the 2032 design year, widen ramps.
- Exit 8 – Add capacity and relocate plaza and ramps. The proposal is to relocate the toll plaza from the west side to the east with a direct connection to NJ 133 and connection to NJ 33 across an intersection. This would be on the south side of NJ 33 with ramps over NJ 33 in a configuration called a single point urban intersection.
- Exit 8A – No significant capacity.

The EIS is scheduled to be submitted to DEP in late August or September with public hearings on dates to be determined in September. There will probably be one in each of Burlington, Mercer, and Middlesex counties. Final

design would start in 2007 with construction expected to start in 2009 and capacity available in 2013, all dependent on environmental permitting schedules and other factors.

Ms. Shapiro asked if use of electronic payment technologies could reduce the need for built capacity at the toll plaza. Mr. Buente said Exit 8A is not the kind of situation where Express E-ZPass (toll payment without diversion) is appropriate but they do incorporate data about E-ZPass transponder use.

Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign, asked about the public process. Mr. Buente said they are not required to follow a DEIS with public comment period process because the project does not use federal funds.

c) Update of Forum Transportation Problems and Projects Database

Sean Greene, Transportation Planner at DVRPC, explained that he is updating the 2004 Database of Transportation Problems and Projects developed by the Forum. It is a database of small scale, primarily pipeline 4 projects focused on ones that currently do not have funding and that would help with east-west access. A mailing had been sent to mayors, planners, engineers, and county officials beforehand. Sean reminded those who had not responded to please provide information or contact him with questions.

d) Forum East-west Corridors Update

Zoe Neaderland, Senior Transportation Planner at DVRPC, provided a brief update on the CR 571 package endorsed at the previous meeting. She said that the Forum's endorsement and the productive existing working committee had contributed to that corridor being selected for DVRPC's annual corridor study. This study will build upon the work done and help move items toward implementation. She asked that municipalities interested in working with their neighbors on existing regional east-west corridors should contact her. She also used that work as an example of how the Progress Report on Forum Action Plan shows accomplishments of the Forum. It shows items from the Action Plan adopted in 2004, what has been accomplished, and next steps.

7. Dialogue

There was little additional discussion as it was getting late.

Next Steps

It was agreed that DVRPC would notify Forum participants of the next meeting date. [The meeting will be held on Thursday, November 2nd at 9:00 AM (refreshments at 8:30 AM) at the Sarnoff Corporation Conference Room.]