

**The next meeting of the Central Jersey Transportation Forum
will be **July 16th, 2010 at 9:00 am**
at the **South Brunswick Public Works Building**
540 Ridge Road
Monmouth Junction, New Jersey**

ONE PAGE OVERVIEW
Central Jersey Transportation Forum
March 18th, 2010 Meeting

Introductions

There were over 75 participants, including representatives from ten municipalities, four counties, two MPOs, two TMAs, and various agencies and organizations (for-profit and non-profit). Barry Seymour, Executive Director, DVRPC, and Don Shanis, Deputy Executive Director, DVRPC, welcomed participants and thanked the New Jersey Hospital Association for hosting the meeting.

Route 1 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Progress

Tom Marchwinski, Director of Systems Planning, NJ Transit, provided a brief update on the Route 1 BRT, as well as other BRT projects in New Jersey. This included the New Brunswick BRT, Route 42/55/ACE South Jersey BRT, the Liberty Corridor BRT/Smart Bus (Newark), and Route 9 Bus Shoulders projects.

Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy (Rt1RGS) Recommendations and Next Steps

Danielle Graves, Project Engineer, NJDOT Bureau of Statewide Planning, and Jon Carnegie, Executive Director, Voorhees Transportation Policy Institute, updated Forum participants on the recommendations of the Rt1RGS and discussed potential next steps. A summary report, implementation agenda, and model resolution of support were provided and discussed.

Proposal to Establish a Forum Restructuring Committee

There was wide-ranging discussion of ways to make the Forum more effective. This discussion also included coordination with next steps for the Rt1RGS.

Transit on CR 571

Sandra Brillhart, Executive Director, Greater Mercer TMA and Bill Neary, Executive Director, Keep Middlesex Moving TMA, provided an update about an innovative coordinated approach to provide better transit service on CR 571 in the short-term. This approach was prompted by Coach USA's cancellation of the route to New York City that had provided transit service in this corridor, which was critical for East Windsor residents who rely on care from the University Medical Center Clinic in Princeton. The intermunicipal agreement idea from the CR 571 package also continues to develop.

Meeting Summary Central Jersey Transportation Forum March 18th, 2010 Meeting

ATTENDEES: over 75 participants – Please advise if you attended but are not on the list.

Mayors			
Peter	Cantu	Mayor	Plainsboro Township
Mildred	Trotman	Mayor	Princeton Borough
Bernie	Miller	Mayor	Princeton Township
Shing-Fu	Hsueh	Mayor	West Windsor Township

Other Municipal Staff			
Theodore	Chase	Councilman	Franklin Township Council & Planning Board
Craig	Marshall	Resident	Hamilton Township
Gene	Strupinsky	Business Advocate	Hillsborough Township, Economic & Business Dev. Commission
Barbara	Carpenter	Council Person	Jamesburg Borough
Edward	Cohen	Transportation Specialist	Monroe Township
Mike	Costello	Trails Committee	Monroe Township
Les	Varga	Director	Plainsboro Township Planning and Zoning
Anton	Lahnston	Chair	Princeton Borough Traffic and Transportation Committee
Marvin	Reed	Chairman - Master Plan Committee	Princeton Regional Planning Board
Lee	Solow	Planning Director	Princeton Regional Planning Board
Bryan	Bidlack	Planner	South Brunswick Township
Linda	Geevers	Council Member	West Windsor Township
Pat	Ward	Coordinator of Community Development	West Windsor Township
Alison	Miller		West Windsor Parking Authority

Counties			
John	Cimino	Freeholder	Mercer County
Donna	Lewis	Director	Mercer County Planning Department
Tony	Gambilonghi	Supervising Planner for Transportation	Middlesex County Department of Planning
George	Ververides	Director	Middlesex County Department of Planning
Steve	Fittante	Director	Middlesex County Department of Transportation
Anthony	Gamallo	Senior Transportation Planner	Monmouth County Planning Board
Joseph	Fishingier	Principal Engineer	Somerset County Engineering Division
Walter	Lane	Principal Planner	Somerset County Department of Planning

Freeholder Peter Palmer represented Somerset County and the NJTPA Board.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations			
Jesse	Buerk	Transportation Planner	DVRPC
Zoe	Neaderland	Manager, Transp. Safety & Congestion Mgmt.	DVRPC
Barry	Seymour	Executive Director	DVRPC
Don	Shanis	Deputy Executive Director	DVRPC
Lois	Goldman	Director of Regional Planning	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
David	Schmetterer	Senior Planner	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Peter	Palmer	Freeholder, Board Member	Somerset County, NJTPA Board

Other Regional Bodies			
Tracy	Noble	Public & Gov't Affairs	AAA Mid-Atlantic
Glenn	Reibman	Director of Policy and Planning	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
Katherine	Kish	Chairperson	Einstein's Alley
Sandra	Brillhart	Executive Director	Greater Mercer TMA
Cheryl	Kastrenakes	Transportation Planner	Greater Mercer TMA
Bill	Neary	Executive Director	Keep Middlesex Moving TMA
Basil	Giletto	Chair of Transportation Committee	Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce
Jay	Corbalis	Policy Analyst	NJ Future
Jerry	Lutin	Co-Principal Investigator	NJIT
Joan	McGee	Watershed Policy Specialist	Stony Brook - Millstone Watershed Association
Sarah	Weissman	Program Manager	Transportation Safety Resource Center
Jon	Carnegie	Executive Director	Voorhees Transportation Policy Institute

Federal			
Carolyn	Fefferman	Senior Advisor	US Senator Robert Menendez

State Departments			
James	Requa	Director, Special Projects	NJ Department of Community Affairs, Office of Smart Growth
Marty	Rosen	Sustainable Communities, Regional Planning (N.)	NJ Department of Environmental Protection
Brent	Barnes	Director	NJ Department of Transportation Systems Planning and Research
Danielle	Graves	Project Engineer	NJ Department of Transportation Bureau of Statewide Planning
Jim	Lewis	Manager	NJ Department of Transportation Bureau of Statewide Planning
Bob	Marshall	Central Region Manager	NJ Department of Transportation Project Planning & Development
Paul	Cohn	Manager	NJ Department of Transportation Office of Transportation and Sustainable Communities
Raja	Waran	Policy Research Coordinator	NJ Housing and Mortgage Financing Agency
Daniel	O'Connell	NJ Legislative Director	NJ State Legislative Board/United Transportation Union
Tom	Clark	Regional Manager, Gov. & Community Relations	NJ Transit
Tom	Marchwinski	Director of Systems Planning	NJ Transit
Mike	Viscardi	Senior Facilities Manager	NJ Transit
Brian	Wahler	Funding Administrator	NJ Turnpike Authority

Other			
James	Hess	Consultant	AECOM Transportation (formerly DMJM Harris)
Philip	Craig		Citizen
Chip	Crider		Citizen
Kerri	Tyerman	Consultant	Dewberry-Goodkind, Inc.
Gail	Yazersky	Consultant	GY Associates
Barry	Keppard	Consultant	Michael Baker and Associates, Inc.
Curt	Emmich	Associate	Princeton Forrestal Center, Picus Associates
Pam	Hersh	Vice President for Government Relations	Princeton Healthcare System
Kristin	Appelget	Director	Princeton University Community and Regional Affairs
Alain	Kornhauser		
Walter	Schmidlin	Corporate Real Estate	Sarnoff Corporation

Krystal	Knapp	Reporter	Trenton Times
Tushar	Patel	Senior Project Manager	URS Corporation
Martin	Robins	Consultant	Transportation Consulting Services
Anna	Lustenberg	Director, External Affairs	Verizon
Ralph	Sotomaior		Verizon

1. Welcome and Introductions

Barry Seymour, Executive Director, DVRPC, and Don Shanis, Deputy Executive Director, DVRPC, welcomed participants and thanked the New Jersey Hospital Association for hosting the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves.

2. Approval of September Meeting Summary

There were no comments and the summary was adopted.

3. Route 1 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Progress

Tom Marchwinski, Director of Systems Planning, NJ Transit, provided a brief update on the various BRT projects in New Jersey. Mr. Seymour mentioned the service cuts and fare increases proposed by NJ Transit, noting that the present meeting was not the venue to discuss these matters. Mr. Marchwinski announced the upcoming public meetings regarding these issues, and added that an additional public meeting was scheduled at the request of Middlesex County. Mr. Marchwinski referenced the one-page handout titled “Update on BRT Planning in New Jersey,” distributed in the meeting folders. He said that the Route 1 BRT project is continuing to refine and study capital costs and issues related to implementation. The New Brunswick BRT study is in the process of finalizing ridership estimates and analysis. Mr. Marchwinski said that intermodal improvements including bike racks and pedestrian improvements around the rail station are being funded. An Alternatives Analysis study to evaluate BRT along Routes 42 and 55 is advancing. The Liberty Corridor “Go Bus” BRT service is performing well. Finally, the Route 9 Bus Shoulders project is now in Phase 2, which will extend the successful bus shoulders south to near Freehold in Monmouth County. There are some environmental constraints, which NJ Transit is attempting to address early in the process. Improvements such as signal priority and optimizing the location of bus stops will be examined as the project moves forward, Mr. Marchwinski said.

Steve Fittante, Director, Middlesex County Department of Transportation, asked how the Go Bus is performing in terms of ridership. Mr. Marchwinski said that based on some preliminary counts, ridership seems to have increased. However, since it only opened in October, more time is needed to assess the full impacts. He also said the buses are currently operating without a formal timetable schedule, running every 10 minutes during peak hours, and about every 15 to 20 minutes off-peak. He said that so far, it appears that because of signal preemption in part of the corridor, buses are running faster than the schedule would indicate.

4. Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy (Rt1RGS) Recommendations and Next Steps

Danielle Graves, Project Engineer, NJDOT Bureau of Statewide Planning, and Jon Carnegie, Executive Director, Voorhees Transportation Policy Institute, updated Forum participants on the recommendations of the Rt1RGS and discussed potential next steps. Ms. Graves summarized the Rt1RGS study and its findings. A summary had been distributed in advance of the meeting and again in meeting folders. The final report will be issued in about another month. The report will be posted at the Rt1RGS website hosted by the Voorhees Transportation Center (<http://policy.rutgers.edu/vtc/rgs/>). Ms. Graves then turned the presentation over to Mr. Carnegie, who discussed two new documents included in the meeting folders. The first document was the Implementation Agenda, which lists four categories of actions to move the Rt1RGS forward, as well as specific actions under each category. In addition, four actions were identified as high priority next steps to implement the Rt1RGS. These included establishing a regional entity to “own” the Rt1RGS, identifying new sources of funding for transportation and other investments, constructing the BRT core system, and providing “carrots and sticks.” Mr. Carnegie then discussed the second new document, the Model Resolution of Support and Engagement, which NJDOT is asking municipalities, counties, and other participants to endorse. He compared the resolution to a similar one developed for the Sustainable Jersey Initiative.

Highlights of the discussion included the following:

- Mayor Shing-Fu Hsueh, West Windsor Township, said that the mayors will need more information about what the commitment means before they can sign anything.
- Pat Ward, Coordinator of Community Development, West Windsor Township, agreed, adding that the document would have to be discussed by local planning boards and township councils before anything could be signed.
- Brent Barnes, Director, NJDOT Systems Planning and Research, took the podium to answer questions and comments. Mr. Barnes said that this is the beginning of the next phase for the Rt1RGS, and that the ball is now in the court of the municipalities. Ideally, he said, a few municipalities could work together to hash out details, and present their shared vision to a group like the Forum.
- Alain Kornhauser asked if alternatives were analyzed in considering whether to use the DINKY right-of-way for the BRT in the future. Mr. Barnes said that at this time, nothing has been decided, and that replacing the DINKY with BRT is merely one idea that has been discussed. Further analysis will be required before any decisions are made. It was added that an alternatives analysis was prepared by NJ Transit in 2004.
- Mayor Peter Cantu, Plainsboro Township, asked Mr. Barnes how the Rt1RGS will be managed going forward. He added that with so many unknowns and variables, a resolution of support might need multiple pages of conditions and consideration of implications. Mr. Barnes replied that this point underscores the fact that in the next phase, the ability of municipalities and counties to work together will be critical. Several other participants echoed the importance of intermunicipal and intercounty cooperation.
- Mr. Seymour pointed out that the Rt1RGS Implementation Agenda should not be viewed as an all-or-nothing, final menu of options. Rather, it will be up to the communities in the Route 1 corridor to figure out which items have broad support, then act on those items.

- Martin Robins, Transportation Consulting Services, said that the documents and the Rt1RGS in general have the potential to be effective. However, he said that in his opinion, the next six months will be critical to the success or failure of the Rt1RGS vision. Of great importance is the question of who would take ownership of helping to facilitate coordination and dialogue within and between municipalities. In addition, he said, the participation of NJDOT, DVRPC, and NJTPA will be necessary for success. Mr. Barnes responded that NJDOT will continue to be involved. However, he said that NJDOT will no longer be in a position to lead the Rt1RGS effort. He recommended that county and municipal representatives stand together to move forward.
- Mayor Cantu and Mr. Robins stressed the importance of having strong participation from both MPOs.
- Lois Goldman, Director of Regional Planning at NJTPA, mentioned the Livability Task Force, which will be a new program in the NJTPA work program.
- Ed Cohen, Transportation Specialist, Monroe Township, spoke about the problems of uncoordinated planning and dealing with home rule. He said it would help to have some overseeing agency more involved, like a county planning board or group supported by the state legislature.
- Mr. Seymour and Mr. Shanis said that many of the ideas being discussed by Forum participants and in the Rt1RGS vision, are very consistent with some of the new directions being pursued at the federal level.

5. Proposal to Establish a Forum Restructuring Committee

Mr. Seymour began the agenda item by stating he has always been impressed by the number of people who consistently attend Forum meetings and that the Forum is one of the most engaged groups he has ever been a part of. He said that every group needs to stay relevant and useful to go forward. This can be done by having relevant agendas, by being a source of useful interaction and information, and/or by having impact. A group can be successful without having all three of those attributes, but there seems to be a desire that the Forum have more impact. Given this desire to move projects and policies ahead, a number of questions should be explored. These questions include:

- Is the scale and scope of the area included in the Forum correct?
- Should the Forum be structured in a different or more formal way?
- What should we be working on? Should the Forum try to advance all the recommendations of the Rt1RGS or are all of them too much?

Mr. Seymour said that there are many ways to approach these questions. One suggestion is to form a restructuring committee to examine the issues and report back to the larger group with recommendations. The floor was opened for discussion.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Katherine Kish, Chairperson, Einstein's Alley, said that bringing multiple municipalities together to engage in coordinated discussion is one very important role the Forum plays.
- Mayor Hsueh said that the Forum is fine for coordination and outreach, but groups also need to form to push for action, as the group of six mayors has done. The Forum should support and endorse the work of this and other groups.

- Mike Costello, Monroe Township Trails Committee, said that the Forum needs more participation from county freeholders. More representation from the US and state legislators is also needed.
- Mayor Cantu said that it is difficult to come to decisions in a group as large as the Forum, and suggested that action committees could be an effective way to make decisions. He said he supports a committee to evaluate how to restructure the Forum.
- Bill Neary, Executive Director, Keep Middlesex Moving TMA, agreed, adding that smaller groups could be organized around specific geographic areas, or around specific subjects, for example environmental issues.
- Anton Lahnston, Chairman, Princeton Borough Traffic and Transportation Committee, wondered if each mayor could nominate one knowledgeable person to represent their municipality. In addition, each county could nominate someone. Other agencies that participate should also be represented, such as NJDOT, DVRPC, NJTPA, and possibly one or two more, but not much more than that.
- Mayor Cantu suggested being careful that the committee doesn't become too large to handle its task. He said that a good rule of thumb is to designate a number close to the square root of the larger group.
- Marvin Reed, Chairman of the Master Plan Committee, Princeton Regional Planning Board, said the macro-level issues facing the Route 1 corridor need to be addressed. These include the mismatch between jobs and housing, the difficulty in agreeing on and subsequently funding transportation solutions, and the challenge of coordinating between two MPOs, three counties, many municipalities, NJDOT, NJ Transit, and all the other key players in the area.
- Jay Corbalis, Policy Analyst at NJ Future, said that the structure and work of the Forum should support the fact that the problems identified by Mr. Reed and others must be tackled at a regional level. The question is how best to accomplish the goal. He suggested a facilitated subcommittee meeting as a starting point.
- Mr. Cohen endorsed the idea of forming smaller groups to work on specific issues. He said that people could provide ideas for these groups, for example a group to examine truck traffic issues, or the transportation and land use issues on Route 33 that relate to Exit 8A. The Steering Committee could then decide which to pursue. Mr. Cohen supported the idea of a facilitated workshop session, such as what Mr. Corbalis described.
- Lee Solow, Planning Director, Princeton Regional Planning Board, said that one issue that's especially difficult to discuss and take meaningful action on is land use decisions. These home rule decisions have major impacts on the performance of the transportation network in the Route 1 corridor.

6. Transit on CR 571

Sandra Brillhart, Executive Director, Greater Mercer TMA, and Mr. Neary provided an update about an innovative coordinated approach to provide better transit service on CR 571 in the short-term. This approach was prompted by Coach USA's cancellation of the route to New York City that had provided east/west transit service in this corridor. This service was critical for East Windsor residents who rely on care from the University Medical Center Clinic in Princeton. Adjustments are being made to GMTMA and KMM shuttles operating in the corridor, to help fill the gap. While this project was relatively small, it illustrates that things can get done. The project involved coordination between multiple counties and municipalities, as well as both MPOs, and other players. Mr.

Neary said the Forum significantly contributed to being able to create this solution. He concluded that not all improvements come from large steps; they are also built from many small ones.

7. Brief Information Items

- Mr. Fittante updated the group about a new bus route that will begin operating in Middlesex County on May 15th, 2010. The route will run six days per week, once every hour, for 13 hours of the day, serving the Princeton Medical Nursing Center. He said that the Forum helped crystallize Middlesex County's thinking about the route, and got the project going. He also reported that the New Brunswick shuttle has increased ridership from 60 to 350 riders after some changes to the route. While this is not mass transit, he said, it still serves an important role by linking markets. Mr. Fittante said that Middlesex County will continue to put forth these kinds of ideas, and to work on implementation. Pam Hersh, Vice President for Government Relations, Princeton Healthcare System, thanked Middlesex County, the Forum, and the TMAs for all their work. She spoke about the need to work with mayors and municipalities to promote bus services, as well as the need to make transit chic in the eyes of the public.
- Gary Leach, NJDOT Project Engineer, gave a brief update about the Route 1 Forrestal Road to Aaron Road project. NJDOT and the consultants for the project have been working to compile information, and the Community Advisory Committee will meet soon to finalize the purpose and need statement for the project. Mr. Leach stressed that local input is needed, and asked for all who are interested to attend the meeting.
- Mr. Seymour mentioned the upcoming workshop for the Mercer County Long-Range Strategic Bus Plan project that is currently underway by DVRPC. He also mentioned the Mercer County Bikeability Map, and asked those with local knowledge to go online and help improve the interactive map.
- Jesse Buerk, Transportation Planner, DVRPC, gave a brief presentation about the Winter 2010 Planned Projects Status Report update, included in the meeting folders. The report gives details about highway and transit projects in the FY 2010-2013 TIPs for DVRPC and NJTPA, as well as information on projects by the NJ Turnpike Authority, and county and local governments. Major development projects in the vicinity of Route 1 are also summarized in the report. Mr. Buerk thanked all those whose knowledge contributed the report, and stressed its value as a planning resource that helps to paint a picture of the transportation and development projects taking place in the Route 1 corridor.
- Sarah Weissman, Program Manager, Transportation Safety Resource Center, talked about the Plan4Safety tool, which is free for officials at federal, state, county, and local governments to use. Consultants may also contact the Center to arrange to use the program at work stations hosted by the TSRC. The tool gives access to statewide crash data, and includes GIS integration. Free training classes are available through the Center. Ms. Weissman also mentioned the upcoming LTAP work zone safety conference.
- Mr. Barnes gave an update about New Jersey's recent adoption of a statewide Complete Streets policy. According to this policy, all transportation projects must consider all modes, not just cars. Projects that have already completed the environmental review process will not have to be redesigned, but all new projects and any in pre-environmental review stages will be covered by the policy. Common-

sense exceptions exist, so that projects where there is no pedestrian traffic, for example, would be exempt. In addition, if the cost of multimodal improvements exceeds a certain threshold, there is a process in place to obtain an exemption. NJDOT strongly encourages reciprocal policies from its partners at the county and local level. Mr. Corbalis said that NJ Future is helping promote how towns can implement their own Complete Streets policies. Joseph Fishinger, Somerset County Engineering Division, asked what kind of added costs this policy might represent for projects. Mr. Barnes said this will probably mean added costs, but it will also mean better projects. He said that the policy is really about creating sustainable places, and that it would likely result in long-term cost savings by diverting some highway trips. Mr. Seymour noted that beyond the quantifiable effects, there are additional hard-to-measure benefits of the policy. Ms. Goldman mentioned NJTPA's Walkable Communities program as another resource. A federal Complete Streets bill is currently in Congress, and there seems to be strong support from Transportation Secretary LaHood.

- Mr. Corbalis announced that NJ Future was holding a Forum on these matters the next day in New Brunswick.
- Mr. Neary noted that KMM provides grants to help municipalities start work on Complete Streets projects.
- Mr. Seymour updated the Forum on the HUD-DOT-EPA Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities, which is currently a draft federal program. He said that it looks at many of the same issues that the Rt1RGS grappled with, and that it could potentially be a source of funding for projects in the Route 1 corridor. He also noted that DVRPC and NJ Future are working on Transfer of Development Rights in New Jersey, and this could be covered in a future presentation.
- Paul Cohn, Manager, NJDOT Office of Transportation and Sustainable Communities, gave a brief update on TDR programs in New Jersey, and on the US 322 project in southern New Jersey. DVRPC and NJ Future recently received a grant to examine TDR programs in New Jersey, which may help more municipalities to understand and embrace the strategy, as well as influencing state-level policy.
- Carolyn Fefferman, Senior Advisor to US Senator Robert Menendez, said that the Senator is working to bring federal dollars to the communities in the Route 1 corridor. She provided a brief summary about TIGER funding and said there may be a second round. She said that if that happens, the Senator's office may be available to provide assistance with preparing applications.

8. Dialogue

There were no further comments, so Mr. Seymour adjourned the meeting. DVRPC will provide follow-up and notice of the next meeting once information is ready.

DVRPC fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. DVRPC's website may be translated into Spanish, Russian, and Traditional Chinese online by visiting www.dvrpc.org. Publications and other public documents can be made available in alternative languages or formats, if requested. For more information, please call (215) 238-2871.