

**ONE PAGE OVERVIEW
CENTRAL JERSEY TRANSPORTATION FORUM
JUNE 25TH, 2012 MEETING**

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

There were over 66 participants, including representatives from 14 municipalities, three counties, two MPOs, and various agencies and organizations (for-profit and non-profit). Forum Chair Marvin Reed opened the meeting.

FORUM BUSINESS

The Forum honored Jack Kanarek, Philadelphia Planning Manager for SYSTRA Consulting and former Senior Director of Project Development at NJ Transit, for his years of service at NJ Transit and his work to help develop the Route 1 BRT concept. Two action items were addressed to begin the meeting: The January 31st meeting summary was adopted and the annual election of the Forum Chair was held. Mr. Reed was unanimously elected to continue as Forum Chair.

COMPLETE STREETS

NJDOT Commissioner James Simpson spoke about Complete Streets in New Jersey and other matters of importance to the broad Route 1 corridor.

BRIEF UPDATE ON A FEW ROUTE 1-AREA NJDOT PROJECTS

Mark Rollo, Program Manager for the NJDOT Division of Project Management, provided updates about a number of projects in the Route 1 corridor, including the Route 1 left-turn restrictions Pilot Project. Details about the projects Mr. Rollo discussed were summarized in a handout distributed with the meeting folders.

STRATEGY FOR ROUTE 1

Dan Kennedy, Deputy Director of the NJ Department of State, Office for Planning Advocacy, provided an update on the status of the State Strategic Plan and the Advance Notice of Rules: Priority Investment Criteria. Tom Vigna, North Brunswick Township Planner and Chair of the Rt1RGS Action Team, provided an update about the progress of the Rt1RGS Action Team. The first Road Show presentation was given to the North Brunswick Township Planning Board on June 4th.

ROUTE 1 TRANSIT

Mr. Kanarek, Chair of the Transit Action Team, gave a report from the first meeting of the Forum's Transit Action Team. Kevin Wilkes, Princeton Borough Council Member, provided an introduction to the Alexander Street/University Place Transit Task Force. Tom Marchwinski, Director of Systems Planning at NJ Transit, gave a presentation about the new Route 655 bus, which was the first route to advance from the Route 1 BRT Phase 1 Near-Term Action Plan. He noted some of the unique partnerships that made the project possible, with emphasis on the project's innovative funding structure.

**MEETING SUMMARY
CENTRAL JERSEY TRANSPORTATION FORUM
JUNE 25TH, 2012**

ATTENDEES: OVER 66 PARTICIPANTS – PLEASE ADVISE IF YOU ATTENDED BUT ARE NOT ON THE LIST.

Mayors			
Janice	Mironov	Mayor	East Windsor Township
Steven	Kirson	Mayor	Hightstown Borough
Frank	Gambatese	Mayor	South Brunswick Township
Shing-Fu	Hsueh	Mayor	West Windsor Township

Other Municipal Staff			
Andrew	Feranda	Traffic Consultant (Shropshire Associates)	Cranbury Township
Theodore	Chase	Councilman	Franklin Township Council & Planning Board
Gene	Strupinsky	Business Advocate	Hillsborough Township
Richard	Krawczun	Township Manager	Lawrence Township
Mike	Costello	Trails Committee	Monroe Township
Gail	Smith	Engineer	Montgomery Township
Tom	Vigna	Township Planner; Chair, Rt1RGS Action Team	North Brunswick Township Community Development - Division of Planning
Les	Varga	Director	Plainsboro Township Planning and Zoning
Kevin	Wilkes	Council Member	Princeton Borough
Ralph	Widner	Board Member	Princeton Borough Traffic and Transportation Committee
Marvin	Reed	Chairman - Master Plan Committee; Forum Chair	Princeton Regional Planning Board
Lee	Solow	Planning Director	Princeton Regional Planning Board
Bryan	Bidlack	Planner	South Brunswick Township
Francis	Guzik	Township Engineer	West Windsor Township

Counties			
Andrew	Koontz	Freeholder	Mercer County Board of Freeholders
Matthew	Lawson	Transportation Planner	Mercer County Planning Department
Donna	Lewis	Director	Mercer County Planning Department
Tony	Gambilonghi	Supervising Planner for Transportation	Middlesex County Department of Planning
Steve	Fittante	Director	Middlesex County Transportation Department
Joseph	Fishingier	Principal Engineer	Somerset County Engineering Division
Bob	Bzik	Director of Planning	Somerset County Planning Board

Metropolitan Planning Organizations			
Jesse	Buerk	Transportation Planner	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Greg	Krykewycz	Senior Transportation Planner	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Zoe	Neaderland	Manager, Transp. Safety & Congestion Mgmt.	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Barry	Seymour	Executive Director	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Don	Shanis	Deputy Executive Director	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Lois	Goldman	Director of Regional Planning	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Mary K.	Murphy	Executive Director	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority

Other Regional Bodies			
Glenn	Reibman	Director of Policy and Planning	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
Cheryl	Kastrenakes	Executive Director	Greater Mercer TMA
Morteza	Ansari	Senior Transportation Coordinator	Keep Middlesex Moving TMA
Basil	Giletto	Chair of Transportation Committee	Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce
Chris	Sturm	Senior Director of State Policy	New Jersey Future
Lucy	Vandenberg	Executive Director	PlanSmart NJ
Joan	McGee	Watershed Policy Specialist	Stony Brook - Millstone Watershed Association

State Departments			
Robert	Tessier	Project Specialist	NJ Department of Community Affairs, Local Planning Services
Barry	Ableman	Principal Planner	NJ Department of State, Office for Planning Advocacy
Dan	Kennedy	Deputy Director	NJ Department of State, Office for Planning Advocacy
James	Simpson	Commissioner	NJ Department of Transportation
Sheree	Davis	Section Chief	NJ Department of Transportation, Bureau of Commuter & Mobility Strategies (Office of Bicycle & Pedestrian Programs)
Danielle	Graves	Project Engineer	NJ Department of Transportation, Bureau of Statewide Strategies
Jim	Lewis	Manager	NJ Department of Transportation, Bureau of Statewide Strategies
Mark	Rollo	Program Manager	NJ Department of Transportation, Division of Project Management
Simon	Nwachukwu	Principal Engineer	NJ Department of Transportation, Division of Statewide Planning
Andrew	Swords	Director	NJ Department of Transportation, Division of Statewide Planning
Gail	Yazersky	Transportation Planner	NJ Department of Transportation, Division of Statewide Planning
Tom	Clark	Regional Manager, Gov. & Community Relations	NJ Transit
Tom	Marchwinski	Director of Systems Planning	NJ Transit
Mike	Viscardi	Senior Facilities Manager	NJ Transit

Federal Agencies			
Sandy	Brillhart	Planning and Environment Team Leader	Federal Highway Administration

Other			
Pam	Mount	Citizen, former Mayor	Lawrence Township Resident
Jerome	Lutin	Citizen, former Senior Director of Statewide and Regional Planning at NJ Transit	Bucks County Resident
Kip	Cherry	Citizen	Princeton Township Resident
Chip	Crider	Citizen	Princeton Borough Resident
Dr. Diane	Campbell	Executive Dean for Student Affairs	Mercer County Community College
Krystal	Knapp	Reporter	PlanetPrinceton.com
Pam	Hersh	Vice President for Government Relations	Princeton Healthcare System
Victoria	Hurley-Schubert	Reporter	Princeton Packet
Kristin	Appelget	Director	Princeton University, Community & Regional Affairs

Karen	Jezierny	Director	Princeton University, Public Affairs
Andrew	Black	Legislative Assistant	Staff to Representative Rush Holt
Jack	Kanarek	Planning Manager – Philadelphia; Chair, Transit Action Team	Systra Consulting

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

There were over 66 participants, including representatives from 14 municipalities, three counties, two MPOs, and various agencies and organizations (for-profit and non-profit). Marvin Reed, Forum Chair and Chairman of the Master Plan Committee for the Princeton Regional Planning Board, opened the meeting.

Everyone in attendance introduced himself or herself.

2. FORUM BUSINESS

The Forum honored Jack Kanarek, Philadelphia Planning Manager for SYSTRA Consulting and former Senior Director of Project Development at NJ Transit, for his years of service at NJ Transit. In particular, Mr. Kanarek was honored for his work to help develop the Route 1 BRT concept. Mr. Reed presented a resolution and it was adopted unanimously.

Two action items were addressed to begin the meeting:

- There were no comments on the January 31st meeting summary and it was adopted unanimously.
- As per the CJTF Voting Bylaws, the annual election of the Forum Chair was held. Mr. Reed indicated his willingness to continue as Chair. Barry Seymour, Executive Director of DVRPC, asked if there were any other nominations. There were none. Mr. Reed was unanimously elected to continue as Forum Chair. Mr. Reed thanked the Forum, saying that the turnout and participation have been great since the restructuring effort.

3. COMPLETE STREETS

Mr. Reed introduced NJDOT Commissioner James Simpson.

Commissioner Simpson thanked the Forum for inviting him. He spoke about Complete Streets in New Jersey and other matters of importance to the broad Route 1 corridor.

Highlights included:

- Mr. Simpson spoke about the extreme weather events experienced in the past year, and how to better coordinate emergency response. Since Hurricane Irene, NJDOT has been meeting with the NJ Office of Emergency Management to improve emergency preparedness statewide.
- Mr. Simpson discussed the importance of reliable transit service. He said he has spoken with the Governor about improving reliability along NJ Transit’s Northeast Corridor rail line, specifically to address issues north of New Brunswick Township.
- Transportation options, including the ability to walk, bike, or take transit, are important factors that make Central Jersey an attractive place to live, Mr. Simpson said.

- The Commissioner spoke about the critical importance of improving transportation safety for all, including drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists, and transit riders.
- On the topic of Complete Streets, Mr. Simpson stated that NJDOT is committed to considering all modes with its projects. He cited several recent examples in which bicycle or pedestrian amenities were included in large projects.
- Mr. Simpson praised the new Route 655 bus project.
- He mentioned the Route 1 left-turn restrictions Pilot Project, saying that NJDOT will evaluate the results and will pull the plug if the trial is a disaster.
- He concluded by discussing the importance of using performance measures to evaluate how well projects have worked.

Mr. Reed thanked Commissioner Simpson for his time and inspiring words. He said that the Forum could help build consensus to move forward on the projects that are important to the Central Jersey region. He opened the floor to questions.

Pam Hersh, Vice President for Government Relations at Princeton Healthcare System, thanked Commissioner Simpson for his support and for listening to his constituents. She raised an issue about what to do when no one knows who is responsible for maintaining a roadway or bicycle/pedestrian path. Commissioner Simpson said that there is always a record of who is responsible for maintenance. He suggested contacting Sheree Davis, Section Chief of the NJDOT Bureau of Commuter and Mobility Strategies (Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs) to figure it out. Mr. Reed thanked Ms. Hersh for the question and said that this was a great example of how the Forum can help solve problems by getting people together to talk about issues and figure out solutions.

4. BRIEF UPDATE ON A FEW ROUTE 1-AREA NJDOT PROJECTS

Mark Rollo, Program Manager for the NJDOT Division of Project Management, provided updates about a number of projects in the Route 1 corridor. He began by discussing the Route 1 left-turn restrictions Pilot Project, which he said would start on Monday, August 6th. He provided some specific details about the project, which were summarized in a handout distributed with the meeting folders. NJDOT is already collecting data in the study area, including speed measurements using Bluetooth readers. Mr. Rollo said that Variable Message Signs as well as fixed signs to guide motorists would be deployed in mid-July. Traffic signals at the affected intersections will be retimed as necessary. Mr. Rollo said that he looks forward to receiving feedback about the project, and that NJDOT will keep it, tweak it, or kill it, as appropriate. More information is available at www.state.nj.us/transportation/commuter/roads/route1pilot/.

Mr. Rollo continued through his list of updates. The spreadsheet he referenced was included in the meeting folders as a handout.

Mr. Rollo opened the floor to questions:

- Chip Crider, Citizen, asked about the roadway resurfacing project on US 206 and if there was a way to figure out locations where wet spots repeatedly occur and cause potholes, in order to prevent the problem from recurring. Mr. Rollo mentioned the NJDOT pavement management system and other methods to evaluate roadway conditions. Mr. Reed said the next Forum meeting would include a focus on projects related to US 206.

- Frank Gambatese, Mayor of South Brunswick Township, asked about status of the New Road intersection improvement project. Mr. Rollo said that he didn't know the details yet, but that he would find out and get back to Mayor Gambatese.
- Shing-Fu Hsueh, Mayor of West Windsor, said that the group of Five Mayors (formerly 6, before the consolidation of Princeton Borough and Princeton Township) has not met recently. He discussed the Route 1 left-turn restrictions Pilot, lamenting that false information about the ability to take short-cuts through local neighborhoods had been printed in the local papers.
- Mr. Reed said that we owe NJDOT a good test and encouraged people to use the system NJDOT has set up for the pilot project.

5. STRATEGY FOR ROUTE 1

Dan Kennedy, Deputy Director of the NJ Department of State, Office for Planning Advocacy, provided an update on the status of the State Strategic Plan and the Advance Notice of Rules: Priority Investment Criteria. He said the criteria represent an early rule proposal for how the State Strategic Plan will work on the ground. The Office of Planning Advocacy has received comments and made revisions to the State Strategic Plan accordingly. The Plan is now being vetted at the highest levels. Mr. Kennedy said he does not know yet when the Plan will be adopted. He expects that there will be one more public meeting, possibly in August, followed by adoption of the Plan in late summer or early fall. Mr. Kennedy characterized the Plan as a framework and said more detail would be added over time, especially to the Priority Investment Criteria. He praised Somerset County's work to test application of the criteria. The State plans to work closely with the counties to apply the criteria. Counties will be the prime "Regional Partners." Mr. Kennedy suggested that the counties could work with the Forum to bring the region's shared goals into each county's plan. He also clarified that the "Regional Entities" were meant to be the counties and agencies such as the Pinelands and Highlands Commissions, rather than regional stakeholder groups like the Forum. He reiterated, however, his appreciation and support for the work of the Forum.

Mr. Reed asked Bob Bzik, Director of Planning at the Somerset County Planning Board, to present Somerset County's work with the Priority Investment Criteria at the next full Forum meeting. Mr. Reed said this would help the Forum envision what it would look like if Middlesex and Mercer counties did similar work. He suggested that the Forum could assist by reviewing overlap areas for consistency with regional goals. Mr. Bzik said he would be happy to present at a future Forum meeting. Mr. Bzik asked Mr. Kennedy for some clarification about the Regional Innovation Clusters. Mr. Kennedy confirmed that they will end up being similar to an overlay zone. He said that the State Strategic Plan should help encourage planners to look beyond traditional borders, coordinate state and federal investments, and help align zoning and planning efforts from the local level up. He said the State is interested in hearing feedback about impediments to either preservation or investment. Mr. Kennedy said the State will create a statewide layer to show where the Priority Investment Criteria are in effect. There will be no need for a cross-acceptance process. Mechanisms will be put in place to incorporate local information.

The floor was opened to questions. The discussion included the following highlights:

- Tom Vigna, North Brunswick Township Planner and Co-Chair of the Rt1RGS Action Team, asked Mr. Kennedy if municipalities should wait until the overlay map from the

state has been released before moving forward with using the Priority Investment Criteria. Mr. Kennedy said yes, but also suggested that a municipality could do the analysis in advance to preview the results.

- Mr. Reed asked whether a largely built-out area would qualify as an economic development area. Mr. Kennedy said it certainly could, that there are always opportunities to reuse, infill, and, if a community chooses, to increase allowable densities. Already developed areas are efficient for further development.
- Mr. Reed asked if the Route 1 Corridor could be designated as an economic development area. Mr. Kennedy said it could be.
- Mr. Seymour asked what Mr. Kennedy saw as the State's commitments in this process. Mr. Kennedy said it should result in faster, smoother permitting processes in priority investment areas, as well as better-integrated funding decisions across state agencies. In the past, decisions in designated growth areas were treated exactly like decisions anywhere else; the new Plan should help change that. He said linking funding to priority investment areas, including preservation investments in preservation areas, are what make this Plan more strategic than past ones. Mr. Bzik answered from the county perspective, saying that it will be very important to work with municipalities once the initial agreements are in place to identify areas, then drill down to look at specific assets and infrastructure, assess their condition, and figure out an investment strategy.

Mr. Vigna provided an update about the progress of the Rt1RGS Action Team. He said that he and Bill Neary, Executive Director of Keep Middlesex Moving TMA, gave the first Road Show presentation to the North Brunswick Township Planning Board on June 4th. The presentation went well and was well-received, although Mr. Vigna said he would still like to improve some of the slides in the presentation and provide more of a local focus, tailored to the specific town where the presentation is taking place. Overall, he said the goal is to make the presentation more impactful. Zoe Neaderland, Manager of the Office of Transportation Safety and Congestion Management at DVRPC, passed around a sign-up sheet for future Road Show presentations.

6. ROUTE 1 TRANSIT

Mr. Kanarek, Chair of the Transit Action Team, gave a report from the first meeting of the Transit Action Team (TAT). He said the TMAs will help the TAT reach out to the private sector. The TAT is interested in supporting Complete Streets and will work closely with the Rt1RGS Action Team. Building on the success of the Route 655 bus, the TAT has decided to focus its efforts on figuring out the next priority route to advance from the near-term BRT plans. The TAT will also help compile information, track the progress of transit project, and identify modest improvements that could improve transit reliability. Mr. Kanarek said that if anyone is interested in the meeting summary of the first TAT meeting, they should contact Jesse Buerk at jbuerk@dvrpc.org.

- Janet Mironov, Mayor of East Windsor Township, asked for clarification about who can participate in the TAT. She said the Central Jersey region is more than just Route 1. Mr. Kanarek agreed and said Mayor Mironov is welcome to participate in the TAT. Jesse Buerk, Transportation Planner at DVRPC, clarified that the TAT is not focused on Route 1—rather; it is focused on the Central Jersey region. He also encouraged Mayor Mironov to participate in the TAT.

- Mayor Hsueh stressed how important it has been to have the Forum working together to advance the Route 1 BRT concept. He said that while Route 1 and I-95 are crucial, the other connections are also extremely important. All of the communities of the Route 1 corridor need better transportation options and connections.
- Mr. Reed said the Forum is aware that US 130 and US 206 are vital corridors in the region with their own sets of issues.
- Mr. Seymour said Route 1 is the spine that runs through the region, but recognized that all of Central Jersey is important to the Forum's work.

Kevin Wilkes, Princeton Borough Council Member, provided an introduction to the Alexander Street/University Place Transit Task Force. He mentioned the ongoing issues in Princeton related to the University Arts District and the relocation of the DINKY station. A need was identified to develop plans to improve the connection with NJ Transit's Northeast Corridor rail line. A Task Force was formed and an RFP was put out to study how the DINKY could be developed strategically to advance transit to Nassau Street. He said the Task Force was in the process of evaluating the proposals it had received. The study will take about six months to complete. Mr. Wilkes said he expects to have recommendations from the study by the beginning of next year.

Tom Marchwinski, Director of Systems Planning at NJ Transit, gave a presentation about the new Route 655 bus, which was the first route to advance from the Route 1 BRT Phase 1 Near-Term Action Plan. He noted some of the unique partnerships that made the project possible, with emphasis on the project's innovative funding structure. He said it was the first time bus service has been funded with Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) grants from two MPOs. It was also funded in part by Princeton University, Princeton Healthcare System, Middlesex County, and Greater Mercer TMA.

Mr. Marchwinski thanked all of the various funding partners and asked for any comments from them. The discussion included the following highlights:

- Ms. Hersh said that she observed ridership for the service increasing quickly after the initial launch of the route, especially once the new hospital opened. She takes the bus when she can and thinks it's a great service. Feedback from riders has been positive. The hospital has been distributing free passes and tickets to help build ridership. Ms. Hersh said she hopes ridership continues to grow and that weekend service could be added in the future. She thanked all of the partners who helped make the route happen.
- Les Varga, Director of Plainsboro Township Planning and Zoning, praised the leadership, good communication, and teamwork that got the project done. He said it was a great example of a successful partnership.
- Tony Gambilonghi, Supervising Planner for Transportation for the Middlesex County Department of Planning, echoed Mr. Varga's sentiments and thanked Steve Fittante, Director of the Middlesex County Transportation Department (now with NJ Transit), for all of his hard work on the project.
- Karen Jezierny, Director of Public Affairs for Princeton University, wondered how much credit for the route's success will be due to the special graphics on the buses. Mr. Marchwinski said that NJ Transit will study the ridership numbers as well as why people are using the route after the first year of operation. Many of the marketing tactics used for the route are new and NJ Transit is interested in understanding their effectiveness.

- Pam Mount, Lawrence Township Citizen, said the Forum should take the positive lessons learned from the Route 655 project and build on them. Mr. Marchwinski mentioned that NJ Transit will work with the TAT to help select the next near-term BRT route to advance.
- Mr. Bzik asked Mr. Seymour and Mary K. Murphy, Executive Director of NJTPA, if the MPOs had examined other places where the methods used for the 655 project could be replicated. Ms. Murphy said that NJTPA is working closely with NJ Transit to understand which factors were critical to the route's successful implementation, in order to learn how to replicate its success. Mr. Seymour said that DVRPC is always looking at connections in the region and along the edges, because transit riders and travelers do not care about artificial boundaries. He stressed the importance of seeking out creative funding opportunities and partnerships.
- Mr. Reed touched on the importance of connections to and from transit services. He praised NJ Transit for making some adjustments to the schedules of connecting routes in establishing the Route 655 bus.
- Dr. Diane Campbell, Executive Dean for Student Affairs at the Mercer County Community College, talked about the importance of transportation connections for students and employees of the Community College.

7. DIALOGUE

Mr. Reed thanked everyone for attending and asked for a motion to conclude the meeting. There were no further comments and the meeting was adjourned.

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