

**The next meeting of the Central Jersey Transportation Forum will be on
Friday, July 23rd at 9:00 AM
Sarnoff Corporation 201 Washington Road, Princeton, NJ**

DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

**Highlights of the
Central Jersey Transportation Forum
Meeting of April 23, 2004**

Attendees (56):

Name	Organization
Richard Amodei	STV Incorporated
Rosemarie Anderson	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Wendy Benchley	Princeton Borough Council
Brian Bidlach	South Brunswick Township
Martin Bierbaum	The College of New Jersey
Peter Bilton	Greater Mercer TMA
Sandra Brillhart	Greater Mercer TMA
Janet Campbell-Lorenc	SYSTRA Consulting
Hon. Peter Cantu	Plainsboro Township
Thomas Clark	New Jersey Transit Headquarters
Paul Cohn	New Jersey Department of Transportation
Mike Collins	New Jersey Economic Development Authority
John Coscia	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Lt. Frank Fechter	Hopewell Township Police Department
Hon. Frank Gambatese	South Brunswick Township
Anthony Gambilonghi	Middlesex County Department of Planning
Hamid Ghadimy	New Jersey Turnpike Authority
Basil Giletto	A-1 Limousine Corporate Offices
Gail Gimbel	DMJM & Harris
Erin Gold	Assemblywoman Greenstein - 14 th District
Danielle Graves	New Jersey Department of Transportation
Pam Hersh	Princeton University
Jim Hess	Regional Planning Partnership
Jack Kanarek	New Jersey Transit Headquarters
Dennis Keck	New Jersey Department of Transportation
Arlene Kemp	Hopewell Township Committee
Miki Krakauer	New Jersey Department of Transportation
Michael LaPlace	Township of Plainsboro
Steve Lenox	Assemblywoman Greenstein - 14 th District

Donna Lewis	Mercer County Planning Department
Bruce Looloian	The Advance Realty Group
Chris Marlow	West Windsor Township
Paula McGuire	West Windsor Transportation Alternatives
Alison Miller	West Windsor Township
Yina Moore	Princeton Regional Planning Board
Pam Mount	Lawrence Township
Robin Murray	New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
Diane Murphy-Atkins	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Zoe Neaderland	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
David Parris	Penns Neck Community
Tushar Patel	URS
Hon. Robert Patten	Hightstown Borough
Stanley Platt	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Pete Rayner	Greater Mercer TMA
Marvin R. Reed	Princeton Regional Planning Board
Tony Sabidussi	New Jersey Department of Transportation
Walter Schmidlin	Sarnoff Corporation
James Schwarzwaldner	New Jersey Transit Headquarters
Sandra Shapiro	West Windsor Citizens for Transportation Alternative
Linda Spalinski	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
Ron Tindall	North Jersey Transportation Authority
Paul Truban	New Jersey Department of Transportation
Herman Volk	New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
Pat Ward	West Windsor
Bob Wolfe	Princeton Forrestal Center
Jim Yeager	Michael Baker & Associates, Inc.

The meeting of the Central Jersey Transportation Forum took place on Friday, April 23, 2004 at Sarnoff Corporation in Princeton, New Jersey. Robin Murray, Assistant Executive Director of the New Jersey Office of Smart Growth, gave a presentation on State Plan Cross-acceptance process. Jack Kanarek, Senior Director of Project Development for New Jersey Transit, provided an update on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Martin Bierbaum, Executive Director of the Municipal Land Use Center of the College of New Jersey, presented the findings of the Land Use Sub-committee of the Logistics Council. The Forum was updated on the Penns Neck EIS, and the transportation problems and projects screening was discussed. After the Freight and Legislative committees updates the meeting ended with Mr. Coscia saying that the date of the next meeting would be distributed in the near future.

John Coscia, Executive Director of DVRPC, welcomed attendees and reminded them that their participation in the meeting was necessary to plan effectively for the region. Mr. Coscia thanked Walter Schmidlin and Sarnoff for the continued use of the facilities for meetings. Forum participants introduced themselves.

Summary of January Meeting Highlights

Mr. Coscia asked for amendments to the highlights of the January 23, 2004 Forum meeting. The motion was carried to approve the highlights as written.

Cross-acceptance: For the Preparation, Revision and Re-adoption of the State Plan

Robin Murray, Assistant Executive Director of the Office of Smart Growth, began her presentation by informing the gathering that Cross-acceptance is required by law; the State Plan needs to be updated every three years to keep it current. She said the current Plan was in good shape and the focus of the update is on new data and technical issues. She said Cross-acceptance is scheduled to take eighteen months and handed out the latest schedule. It is being prepared in conjunction with other state agencies and their planning documents, including the Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Transportation, and the Department of Agriculture. It is the State's intention to have the counties negotiate with their municipalities. Counties will take the information to the municipalities and bring municipal information back to the State. There are grants being provided to counties and ten cities to do this work. There will be no mapping of centers or nodes during Cross-acceptance. This will be done through plan endorsement. Ms. Murray stated that only designated growth centers with perimeters would be included in the map. She said counties will receive hard copies of the resulting draft maps and municipalities will receive the information on CDs. This plan has added "teeth" through the provision of additional funding in PA 1 and PA 2. Developers will not be reimbursed for installing utilities in PA 3, PA 4 and PA 5. Plan endorsement by counties did not occur in the last round, but approximately five counties have this process underway. Endorsing the Plan provides the county additional access to funding programs.

Mr. Coscia noted that the working map scale is at the quad level and asked what scale would be used for the adopted Plan. Ms. Murray responded that it would be the same as that of the working maps. They used 2002 flyovers to get additional details.

Peter Cantu, Mayor of Plainsboro Township, asked when would the department be ready for applications for plan endorsement and if municipalities can seek plan endorsement on their own. Ms. Murray said that the department would be

ready in July 2005 and municipalities can act independently, but they are encouraged to do so through the counties it makes for a faster process. She said however municipalities would not be handicapped if they choose not to do it through their counties. It will take the state approximately three to six months to process paperwork. It is hoped that all endorsements from interested municipalities will have been processed within the next five years.

Marvin Reed, Princeton Regional Planning Board, said Princeton was not happy that last time Cross-acceptance did not enable municipalities to deal with regional issues across township or county lines. The county met with the municipalities on a one-on-one basis and this created problems. He asked if this had been corrected and suggested using the Central Jersey Transportation Forum as a resource. Ms. Murray said that more meetings are planned to encourage communication, all comments will be posted on the internet, and planners are going through checking for consistency at county lines. Mr. Reed also asked if the Route 1 Regional Smart Growth Strategy would be incorporated in the State Plan. Ms. Murray said it would be and that the counties will get funding for regional planning.

Frank Gambatese, Mayor of South Brunswick Township, asked if C1 corridors can be changed and about the criteria. Ms. Murray said the information was available on NJDEP web site.

Pam Hersh, Director Community Affairs for Princeton University, said the Forum could be used as a source for Cross-acceptance meetings taking advantage of multiple representations. Ms. Murray said Cross-acceptance issues could be discussed at the Forum with conclusions brought to the counties or the state.

Mr. Coscia asked if the DEP would use the resulting maps for regulatory purposes. Ms. Murray said they partly do already, but it is their intention to make more use of them in the future.

Mr. Coscia said counties and municipalities should examine the maps carefully because they have the potential to affect their own plans and permitting processes.

Donna Lewis, Mercer County Planning Department, said the County is coordinating the start of its master plan update with Cross-acceptance. The county probably will be meeting with the municipalities in May.

Dennis Keck, Assistant Commissioner of Planning and Development for NJDOT, followed up encouraging the Office of Smart Growth to use the Forum as an opportunity for open discussion of cross-municipal and cross-county issues. Ms. Murray said many of the issues being examined are beyond just boundary issues.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Jack Kanarek, Project Development Division Manager for New Jersey Transit, gave an update on the BRT study. He introduced some of the staff working on the project. He primarily covered highlights of the BRT Subcommittee meeting held the week before. He said that a purpose and needs document is coming soon. The study team has defined a study area and a larger service market area. He said the DINKY is an early action item and focus is on the opportunities provided by the DINKY and its right-of-way. It has its limitations but some of the possibilities are double tracking or a busway along the existing rail line. The goal is for more frequent service and increased productivity. Public outreach has been the most active element of the work so far. Meetings were held with municipalities, elected officials, institutions, large employers and landowners. Speed and frequency of service is a key issue. Private developers are willing to host the BRT and design development around it and there is considerable interest in improving the DINKY. Mr. Kanarek told the Forum ridership work is underway and the study team is coordinating with NJDOT and the Smart Growth study. Three public meeting/open houses are scheduled for early June. He also said that a web site is being organized. Mr. Kanarek said that the study is focusing on short-term solutions.

Bob Wolfe, Princeton Forrestal Center, asked what other short-term improvements were being considered other than the DINKY. Mr. Kanarek said that, without wishing to preempt the study in any way, bus priority at signals could be done in the short term. He said the study team would be receptive to suggestions from the Forum.

Mr. Reed asked if the PowerPoint presentation would be made available electronically as he thought it was an excellent summary. Mr. Kanarek said it can be posted on the project web site once it is up and running. Mr. Coscia offered to post it on DVRPC's website.

Ms. Hersh commented that the DINKY improvements would serve more than commuter option. Pat Ward, West Windsor Community Development Department, added that people use it to go to meetings and theater events between West Windsor and Princeton.

Bob Patten, Mayor of Hightstown, said that the study needs to examine the broader region given the level of shore traffic, people coming from Monmouth County, and from the new homes in East Windsor. The thinking needs to be extended beyond what is happening now. He said that crossing Route 1 is difficult, and that Route 130 is getting to be as congested as Route 1. Paul Truban, NJDOT, followed up that point by encouraging examination of what markets the BRT is trying to capture, and what markets it needs to capture to be feasible.

Mr. Coscia stated that this would be considered as part of the ridership projections.

The Logistics Council

Paul Truban, Section Chief of the NJDOT Bureau of Mobility Strategies, gave a presentation covering the PowerPoint slides distributed with the meeting folders. The focus was a synthesis of the subcommittee conclusions. He covered the process that was followed and the common themes of the subcommittees.

These were:

- Make extended hours an operational reality
- Devise and implement multi-modal transportation solutions to produce optimal results
- Develop strategic logistics land use policies
- Better utilize toll incentives and coordination to influence truck routes
- Address safety, efficiency, and enforcement strategies within a common framework.

Martin Bierbaum, Executive Director of the Municipal Land Use Center of the College of New Jersey, gave a presentation covering the “Land Use Subcommittee” PowerPoint slides included in the meeting folder. He started by explaining he had started out involved in the Logistics Council while at the Governor’s Office. He praised the work of the Council and its participants. He described the process that resulted in the three goals and sixteen strategies/policies. The three goals were: establish the institutional capability for a meaningful and continuous planning process regarding logistics, freight issues and land use; upgrade connectivity among freight elements with key transportation links--air, waterway, rail, roadway; and advance the attractiveness of the state’s brownfields for redevelopment and selected greenfields for development for logistics related uses. The sixteen strategies/policies related to the three goals. They include policy actions, physical linkages and land use priority setting to improve logistics or place it on the same level as other land uses.

Herman Volk, Office of Smart Growth, who also served on the Council concurred about what a good experience it had been. He emphasized that twenty million people in the metropolitan area expect fast, efficient delivery of goods. He said it is essential to focus on where the public sector can best invest funds and to develop a public/private strategic framework. He said that it is important for the region to act because New Jersey is in competition with other areas.

Pam Mount, Deputy Mayor of Lawrence Township, commented that the security issue was not addressed in the work presented. Given it is alleged that there is only a three days supply of food in the state, alternate routes and different ways

of getting goods and services to the public should be addressed. Mr. Bierbaum said the subcommittee touched on it.

Ms. Murray said that two issues included in cross-acceptance came from the Land Use Subcommittee work: the industrial nodes and urban waterfronts issues. The Office of Smart Growth will be coordinating with NJDOT further on these issues.

Mr. Keck reported that the Governor signed brownfield legislation last week. He said some of the recommendations of the Logistic Council are being realized in that legislation and it is significant for the state.

In reply to a question from Stanley Platt, Manager of the DVRPC Office of Congestion Management, regarding truck lanes, Mr. Keck said they are difficult in a congested state like New Jersey because they infringe on communities.

Mr. Coscia said that it is important to consider air cargo. Although it is a small percentage of good movement it is of high value and is expected to have high growth in the future.

Penns Neck Area EIS

Anthony Sabidussi, Manager of the NJDOT Department of Environmental Resources, gave a presentation on the status of the Penns Neck Area EIS. Mr. Sabidussi started with the historical context of the Route 1 Millstone Bypass CMS that served as background to the Penns Neck EIS and helped start the Forum. Since then there have been three years of stakeholder meetings. Currently the preferred alternative is D.2.A. Route 1 in a cut. The Final EIS is expected at the end of the summer. Detailed information can be found on the project website. Mr. Sabidussi summarized that the preferred alternative was selected because it provides a reasonable level of transportation benefit while avoiding and minimizing environmental impacts. He said some temporary and permanent impacts may still occur as a result of construction but NJDOT will make every effort to avoid and minimize these impacts during final design and construction. He said the FEIS and Record of Decision will include a number of environmental and design commitments, some of which are: fund and implement a commute options package; utilize context sensitive design principles; undertake an on-going public consultation process to solicit input; and restore temporarily disturbed natural areas.

Jim Schwarzwald, Manager of Area Studies for New Jersey Transit, asked if the project could include widening of the DINKY bridge for the BRT project. Mr. Sabidussi said that the project stops at the bridge, but that this matter could be looked at some time in the future. There was concern that actually trying to add it

to the Penns Neck project might result in making the whole project too expensive to be funded.

Jim Hess, Regional Planning Partnership, commented that there is the possibility of making the DINKY corridor multi-modal and asked if the widening could be a part of the project. Mr. Sabidussi responded that the project is intended to accommodate all modes. Washington Road over US 1 will have bicyclist accommodations but does not have to be the only such location and the bridge widening could possibly be part of this process.

Sandra Shapiro, West Windsor Citizens for Transportation Alternatives, said she had heard that the project might not be done for ten years, and she wondered if parts could be done sooner. Mr. Sabidussi said that the project would probably be done in parts, with the highest priority probably being the Millstone Bridge as it is in deteriorated condition. This led to a discussion of that part of the project. Mr. Reed said he has recommended before that the bridge be built slightly south of the current location to minimize impacts on traffic flow during construction, but that he would have thought that should be included in the discussed road alignments. Mr. Keck said the DEIS was not intended for a discussion of alternatives for the bridge. He said it would be replaced with minimal disruption.

Transportation Problems and Projects

Zoe Neaderland, Senior Transportation Planner at DVRPC, gave a presentation covering the "Transportation Problems and Projects" PowerPoint slides included in the meeting folder. There was also a background spreadsheet in the folder titled "Specific Transportation Needs". Ms. Neaderland said this is an effort on behalf of the Forum to identify additional projects that serve regional goals but that are not yet funded or on a TIP. She discussed the draft methodology for choosing among the items provided by municipalities and counties. Further comments were requested by May 7th. There was also a discussion of coordinated related efforts with input by Ron Tindall, NJTPA, and Danielle Graves, NJDOT Bureau of Statewide Planning.

Mr. Coscia said that DVRPC staff will mail out a survey on the methodology to solicit feedback from the Forum.

Mr. Reed said that quick fix projects are all that seem possible to accomplish by 2006. He said that east-west access is one of the basic issues of the Forum and that the modeling done to evaluate future scenarios for the area showed gridlock. He continued to say the solutions were Smart Growth (which is underway), Penns Neck (almost underway), SR 92 and the Hillsborough Bypass (both of which seem to be going nowhere). He wants an update on the Bypass project. He also feels there should be a discussion of what happens if SR 92 does not get

built, even if it might blow up the Forum. Mr. Coscia noted that the EIS for SR 92 should address the impacts on the region for build and no build.

Mayor Cantu said that the Forum has already evaluated major studies and supported SR 92. It will be important to look at that EIS.

Anthony Gambilioni, Middlesex County Planning Board, asked about the schedule for the Smart Growth Assessment study. Ms. Graves said it should take 15-18 months.

Mr. Coscia said the BRT project should not be tied to the Smart Growth study as the results of the study may or may not be acceptable to elected officials.

Updates from Committees

Mr. Wolfe reported that the Legislative Committee celebrated the small victory of the passage of the Transfer of Development Rights bill. He thanked Mayor Cantu for his work on the bill. He noted that copies of the Committee's recent letters to the Governor were included in the meeting package.

Mr. Truban reported that turnout for the last Freight Subcommittee meeting was sparse and he encouraged anyone interested to participate. He said that the committee is fine-tuning a focused case study and speaking with Mr. Bierbaum and others about ways to fund it. Mr. Coscia requested a written scope of work for the Forum.

Next Steps

Mr. Coscia said that the next meeting would be in July and a notice with the date would follow.