

**The next meeting of the Central Jersey Transportation Forum will be
March 18th, 2010
At the NJ Hospital Association
760 Alexander Road, Princeton NJ, 08543**

**ONE PAGE OVERVIEW
Central Jersey Transportation Forum
September 22nd, 2009 Meeting**

Introductions

There were over 62 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 at DVRPC, and Don Shanis, Deputy Executive Director at DVRPC, welcomed participants and thanked Hillsborough Township for hosting the meeting.

Route 1 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Near-Term Actions for Phase 1 of Implementation

Tom Marchwinski, Director of Systems Planning at NJ Transit, provided an update. NJ Transit is pursuing a near-term implementation plan that integrates small segments of BRT improvements into other area projects. The near-term plan includes upgrades of service on existing routes and the introduction of six new routes, as funding becomes available. NJ Transit is currently seeking municipal resolutions of project support.

Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy (R1RGS) Update

Danielle Graves, Project Engineer in NJDOT's Bureau of Statewide Planning, provided an update on the progress of the R1RGS. The current focus is on producing an agenda of actionable next steps to move in the direction of the shared vision. The final stakeholder meeting will seek to compile this list of actions, as well as a list of intractable policy issues and institutional impediments that will need to be addressed in order to achieve the vision.

Route 1 Forrestal Road to Aaron Road Project Overview

Gary Leach, Project Engineer at NJDOT, provided an overview of the Route 1 Forrestal Road to Aaron Road project. The main focus of the project will be on developing a strong purpose and need statement. The project will seek to add capacity to relieve bottleneck conditions, while also balancing environmental and transportation needs, and developing smart, sustainable, multimodal solutions.

Reducing Crash Fatalities in Central Jersey: Analysis Oriented to Action

Zoe Neaderland gave a brief presentation about safety in the Central Jersey area. On average, there were 13,000 crashes, 4,000 injuries, and 24 fatalities per year between 2005 and 2007. Aggressive driving was a factor in one-third of the fatalities in Central Jersey. Ms. Neaderland referenced the implementation table of the DVRPC Safety Action Plan for strategies to address aggressive driving and the other factors that lead to crashes.

Meeting Summary

Central Jersey Transportation Forum

September 22nd, 2009 Meeting

ATTENDEES: over 62 participants – Please advise if you attended but are not on the list.

Municipalities			
Bill	Neary	Executive Director	KMM
Theodore	Chase	Chair	Franklin Township Planning Board
Tom	Belanger	Engineer	Hillsborough Township
Gloria	McCauley	Committeewoman	Hillsborough Township, Township Committee
Richard	Krawczun	Township Manager	Lawrence Township
Mike	Costello		Monroe Township Environmental Committee
Tom	Vigna	Director	North Brunswick Township Community Development
Les	Varga	Director	Plainsboro Township Planning and Zoning
Anton	Lahnston	Chair	Princeton Borough Traffic and Transportation Committee
Mildred	Trotman	Mayor	Princeton Borough
Marvin	Reed	Chairman - Master Plan Committee	Princeton Regional Planning Board
Bernie	Miller	Mayor	Princeton Township
Bryan	Bidlack	Planner	South Brunswick Township
Pat	Ward	Coordinator of Community Development	West Windsor Township

Counties			
Matthew	Lawson	Transportation Planner	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 Dept of Transportation
Nora	Shepard	Supervising 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, Transportation 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			
Glenn	Reibman	Director of Policy and Planning	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
Sandra	Brillhart	Executive Director	Greater Mercer TMA
Cheryl	Kastrenakes	Transportation Planner	Mercer County TMA
Basil	Giletto	Chair of Transportation Committee	Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce

State Departments			
David	Bander	Chief of Staff, Assemblywoman Greenstein	NJ State Assembly
Jim	Requa	Director, Special Projects	NJ Department of Community Affairs, Office of Smart Growth
Danielle	Graves	Project Engineer	NJ Department of Transportation Bureau of Statewide Planning
Tineen	Howard	Principal Planner	NJ Department of Transportation Bureau of Statewide Planning
Gary	Leach	Project Engineer	NJ Department of Transportation DPPD-Central
Jim	Lewis	Manager	NJ Department of Transportation Bureau of Statewide Planning
Bob	Marshall	Central Region Manager	NJ Department of Transportation Project Planning & Development
John	Micikas	Project Engineer	NJ Department of Transportation Office of Transportation and Sustainable Communities
Teri	Jover	Director of Redevelopment	NJ Future
Raja	Waran	Intern	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
Jeffrey	Wilkerson	Project Planner	Plan Smart NJ

Other			
James	Hess	Consultant	AECOM Transportation (formerly DMJM Harris)
Raphael	Isaac		Citizen
Craig	Johnson	Project Manager	Dewberry-Goodkind, Inc.
Jeff	Hewitson	Project Engineer	Dewberry-Goodkind, Inc.
Martin	Hull	Senior Planner	IBI Group
Jim	Yeager	Department Manager – Traffic/Planning	Michael Baker and Associates, Inc.
Jerry	Lutin	Co-Principal Investigator	NJIT
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
Walter	Schmidlin	Corporate Real Estate	Sarnoff Corporation
Ron	Reinhardt	Account Executive	TransitCenter, Inc.
Tushar	Patel	Senior Project Manager	URS Corporation
Martin	Robins	Consultant	Transportation Consulting Services

1. Welcome and Introductions

Barry Seymour, Executive Director of DVPRC, and Don Shanis, Deputy Executive Director of DVRPC, welcomed participants and thanked Hillsborough Township for hosting the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves.

2. Approval of April Meeting Summary

There were no comments and the summary was adopted.

3. Route 1 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Near-Term Actions for Phase 1 of Implementation

Tom Marchwinski, Director of Systems Planning at NJ Transit, provided an update on the Route 1 BRT, beginning with a review of the alternatives analysis completed by NJ Transit in 2005. He noted that the Route 1 BRT system is included in the Long-Range Plans of both DVRPC and NJTPA. The capital cost if the system was implemented all at once is estimated to be in the \$700 million range. However, NJ Transit is not trying to implement the whole thing at one time. It is pursuing a near-term implementation plan that integrates segments of the BRT improvements into other area projects. The near-term concept plan includes upgrades of service on existing routes, as well as the introduction of six new routes as funding becomes available.

Mr. Marchwinski discussed specifics of the near-term plan. Upgrades to existing routes will include service frequency increases on routes 600, 603/613, and 605, and an extension of Route 603/613 to connect Trenton and Lawrence to the Carnegie Center and the Princeton Junction Station. Details of the six proposed new routes were discussed. Ridership forecasts for 2015 estimate over 10,000 trips per day on the BRT, and auto diversions of 4,600 trips per day. NJ Transit will incorporate unique branding, priority treatments, multimodal amenities, and low emissions buses as features of the BRT system. The near-term concept plan includes investment in 35 additional buses, as well as at least three newly defined station stops. These will include Princeton Junction Station, Princeton Station, and the Quaker Bridge Mall. A number of potential park-and-ride sites in outlying areas are being evaluated. Potential priority treatments, including shoulder lanes, queue jumps, signal pre-emption, and other road improvements are also being considered. Coordination with NJDOT's Route 1 Forrester to Aaron Road project, the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission's Scudders Falls Bridge project, and others, is underway. Unfortunately, current financial constraints will make even the near-term plan difficult to implement. Potential Phase 1 implementation of the near-term plan would include the frequency increase on existing route 600, and the extension of route 603/613 described above. Another step would be to establish a new proposed service (#655) between Princeton and Plainsboro.

A total of nine stakeholder meetings were held over the summer. The next round of meetings will refine the concept plan. NJ Transit is currently seeking municipal resolutions of project support and concept agreements on project details in order to advance to environmental review and design of the first elements of the near-term plan. Mr. Marchwinski said that NJ Transit staff is available to assist with crafting language for resolutions of support.

The discussion included the following highlights:

- Pam Hersh, Vice President for Government Affairs at Princeton Healthcare System, asked if the resolutions of support can include businesses. Mr. Marchwinski said that they could.
- Barry Seymour asked if NJ Transit was seeking financial commitments from towns, in addition to resolutions of support. Tom Clark replied that the resolutions are enough for now, since they can help to convince governments of the importance of the project, which can in turn help with funding in the future.

- Don Shanis asked when NJ Transit would begin branding the BRT as a unique service. Mr. Marchwinski said that the branding phase would begin after the environmental and other necessary studies were complete.
- Marvin Reed, Chairman of the Master Plan Committee at the Princeton Regional Planning Board, praised the series of stakeholder meetings held by NJ Transit. He said that these meetings succeeded in helping local leaders understand the potential long-range benefits of the BRT system. Mr. Reed said that discussions that resulted from the meetings have led to some good thinking about connecting town centers.

4. Route 1 Regional Growth Strategy (R1RGS) Update

Danielle Graves, Project Engineer in NJDOT's Bureau of Statewide Planning, provided an update on the progress of the R1RGS. Ms. Graves reviewed the process to this point, including the recent completion of the second round of subarea workshops. These workshops resulted in shared visions for future development and transportation improvement concepts in the Route 1 corridor. The current focus of the R1RGS is on producing an agenda of actionable next steps to move in the direction of the shared vision. The final stakeholder meeting will seek to compile this list of next steps, as well as a list of intractable policy issues and institutional impediments that will need to be addressed in order to achieve the vision. Ms. Graves said that the final outreach event will take place in November or December. The R1RGS project's deliverables include transportation and land use scenarios to support NJ Transit's BRT efforts and the Mercer County Long-Range Strategic Bus Plan (DVRPC). The R1RGS will also help provide the framework for the Route 1 Bottleneck Relief project (NJDOT). Project materials and presentations will continue to be posted at <http://policy.rutgers.edu/vtc/rgs>. She added that NJDOT is seeking resolutions of support for the R1RGS, similar to the NJ Transit BRT.

Highlights of the discussion included the following:

- Peter Palmer, Freeholder, Somerset County and NJTPA Board Member, stated that getting from the southern end of Somerset County to Route 1 is an intractable issue.
- Mr. Seymour said that DVRPC is actively tracking the Livable Communities Act, which would further integrate federal agencies that deal with transportation, smart growth, housing, and environmental issues. Mr. Seymour commented that the legislation as currently proposed looks similar to some of the work that the R1RGS has accomplished. Ms. Graves said that NJDOT is also closely watching this legislation.
- Lois Goldman, Director of Regional Planning at NJTPA, asked if the R1RGS will include a toolbox to help towns understand the benefits of mixed-use development. Ms. Graves said that the R1RGS team is considering what items could be added as tool kits.
- Mr. Reed asked if the final report would identify where individual municipalities planned to concentrate workforce housing. Ms. Graves said that conversation would continue in the next round of meetings, but that the final product will probably not reach that level of detail.

5. Route 1 Forrestal Road to Aaron Road Project Overview

Gary Leach, Project Engineer at NJDOT, provided an overview of the Route 1 Forrestal Road to Aaron Road project. This project will build on the many prior studies related to Route 1, including the R1RGS and BRT, with the goal of moving toward implementation. The main focus at this point is developing a strong purpose and need statement. This will clearly define the transportation problem and state the expected positive outcomes, as well as providing data and performance measures. The project will seek to add capacity to relieve bottleneck conditions present in this stretch of Route 1, while balancing environmental and transportation needs, and developing smart, sustainable, multimodal solutions. The study team will be led by Dewberry, Inc.

The study area faces numerous transportation deficiencies, including severe congestion and a high crash rate. Beyond these problems, the area faces many other challenges, including substandard lighting, outdated facilities, utility poles located too close to the roadway, and environmental constraints. Mr. Leach said that the project's aggressive schedule does rely on some assumptions, including adequate funding, support from the counties, environmental agencies, and other stakeholders, and the advancement of parallel studies and initiatives. He also said that breakout projects may become possible as the project moves toward implementation. Much like the BRT and R1RGS projects, this study will eventually need resolutions of support in order to move forward. Mr. Leach said that a website for the project will be forthcoming. He urged everyone to get involved with the process early and to stay involved to ensure the best possible project.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Mr. Shanis said that in reality, the study team should probably assume that funds will not be sufficient. Mr. Shanis added that goods movement and east/west movements are critical to the area, and should be considered in the study. Mr. Leach agreed, saying that pedestrian crossing issues are also very important.
- Joseph Fishinger, Principal Engineer, Somerset County, asked how long the process would take. Mr. Leach replied that it should take about 18 months for concept development, and that the process is already underway.
- Bill Neary, Executive Director of KMM, praised the project for its considerations of transit and intermodal connections.
- Mr. Seymour asked if the project is in the NJDOT 10-year capital plan. Mr. Leach confirmed that the project is in the capital plan.

6. Reducing Crash Fatalities in Central Jersey: Analysis Oriented to Action

Zoe Neaderland gave a brief presentation about traffic safety in the Central Jersey area. DVRPC is finalizing an update of its Safety Action Plan for the Delaware Valley, which identifies seven emphasis areas that were contributing factors to 96 percent of traffic fatalities in the DVRPC region. The Safety Plan also identifies existing programs and potential strategies to address each emphasis area. Ms. Neaderland performed similar analysis to what was done for the report for the 21 municipalities in the Forum area.

The analysis found that on average, there were 13,000 crashes, 4,000 injuries, and 24 fatalities per year in the municipalities in the Forum area from 2005 to 2007. Ms. Neaderland said that these crashes, in addition to injuries and death, can also result in

congested conditions on the roads of the Forum area. The analysis found that, just as in the Delaware Valley, aggressive driving was the primary contributing factor to traffic fatalities in Central Jersey. Aggressive driving was a factor in one-third of the fatalities in the Forum municipalities. Ms. Neaderland referenced the implementation table of the DVRPC Safety Action Plan for strategies and programs to address aggressive driving and the six other emphasis areas.

Ms. Neaderland also discussed another effective DVRPC safety program, the Road Safety Audit program. This involves analyzing a short section of a corridor with a high concentration of crashes. The program assembles a diverse group of experts to go out in the field and walk the corridor, looking for straightforward, low-cost solutions.

The discussion included the following highlights:

- Ms. Goldman talked about two upcoming safety events, International Walk to School Day and National Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day. She also said that New Jersey is updating its Strategic Highway Safety Plan this year, and urged Forum members to participate in this update. Ms. Neaderland praised New Jersey for its strong involvement in the Put the Brakes on Fatalities campaign.
- Anton Lahnston, Chair of the Princeton Borough Traffic and Transportation Committee, said that Princeton is focusing attention on bicycle safety, and thought that this issue would need more emphasis in the future. He said that proactively planning for bicycle safety could prevent safety problems as more people come to rely on that mode of transportation. Ms. Neaderland said that it was difficult to balance safety priorities while keeping the Safety Action Plan manageable, but that many of the strategies for pedestrian safety also apply to bicyclists.
- Sandy Brillhart, Executive Director of Greater Mercer TMA, asked if distracted driving was considered in the analysis for the impaired driving emphasis area of the DVRPC Safety Action Plan. Ms. Neaderland said that the Plan, which relied on data from the state DOTs, only accounted for Driving Under the Influence (DUI) and did not include data on distracted driving, although the issue is discussed in the report.
- Ms. Goldman mentioned the Plan4Safety Tool, which is available for free from Rutgers University. The tool allows access to a great deal of safety data, and is free to eligible users. Ms. Neaderland said she would send the group a link and more information about who is able to access the tool. [Follow up: Sarah Weissman, Program Manager for the Transportation Safety Resource Center at Rutgers University, provided more information about the Plan4Safety tool. Public agency personnel at any level of government, as well as those affiliated with academic institutions, are able to access Plan4Safety by clicking the link on the Plan4Safety website (cait.rutgers.edu/tsrc/plan4safety) that says "Request User Account". Employees of for-profit companies may contact Ms. Weissman (scweiss@rutgers.edu) for more information. Plan4Safety hosts training classes.]
- Ms. Brillhart made the point that senior mobility is an important safety issue (as highlighted in the DVRPC Safety Action Plan), but that funding is unfortunately down at the moment. She said that Greater Mercer TMA's Ride Provide service for seniors has about 700 riders per month.

7. Brief Updates

Steve Fittante, Director, Middlesex County Department of Transportation, talked about the need for money to implement transportation improvement projects. Middlesex

County is trying to creatively use New Freedom dollars for a new bus route with broad purposes. The Jamesburg/Cranbury/Plainsboro Community Shuttle provides an east/west linkage from Jamesburg/Monroe to the Plainsboro and Princeton markets. An East Mercer/Middlesex to Plainsboro Hospital route will begin service in spring 2010. Mr. Fittante is working with Mr. Marchwinski to complement the proposed new NJ Transit Route 655.

Teri Jover, Director of Redevelopment at New Jersey Future, said that action on the Smart Housing Incentives Act has been delayed while certain issues are resolved. There is a need for the legislation to be revenue neutral, and unfortunately, the developer's fee concept that would accomplish this goal became problematic. Talks are ongoing, and there is hope that a revised bill will be reintroduced in the next legislative session.

Mr. Reed said that the Princeton Regional Planning Board amended the educational and institutional land use components of its Long-Range Plan. The Plan now includes more emphasis on transportation demand management, and will seek to use existing parking lots for better uses. Princeton University is helping to reduce traffic in part by limiting parking permits for students.

Brian Wahler, Funding Administrator, NJ Turnpike Authority, gave an update on the Turnpike Authority's expansion projects. Final design and permitting have been completed for the widening project, which will add three additional lanes from exits six to nine, and one additional lane from exit 8A to exit 14. This is the largest construction project since the turnpike started. Groundbreaking is set to take place in July, 2010.

8. Dialogue

Mr. Seymour announced that DVRPC recently adopted the DVRPC FY 2010 TIP for New Jersey, which is for fiscal years 2010 to 2013. DVRPC also recently adopted an update of its Long-Range Plan.

There were no further comments, so Mr. Seymour adjourned the meeting, thanking Hillsborough Township again for hosting. 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.