

**ONE PAGE OVERVIEW**  
**Central Jersey Transportation Forum**  
**May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013 Meeting**

Welcome and Introductions

There were over 60 participants, including representatives from nine municipalities, four counties, two MPOs, and various agencies and organizations (for-profit and non-profit). The group celebrated the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Forum by honoring eight members involved in its creation, five of whom are still active and four of whom were present. Marvin Reed, Forum Chair and Chairman of the Master Plan Committee for the Regional Planning Board of Princeton, welcomed everyone.

Action Items

Three action items were addressed to begin the meeting: The March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013 meeting summary was adopted; the Forum voted in support of enhanced communication about local and county route closures to as many residents and employees as possible during major events; and the Forum voted on two letters regarding bills in consideration by the New Jersey Legislature. The first letter was in support of cluster development bill A3761/S2608. The second letter was in support of a bill to create a pilot program to provide loans for certain gas stations to install wiring for back-up generators (A3930). There were also brief reports on the recent activities of the Rt1RGS and Transit Action Teams.

Northeast Corridor (NEC) High-Speed Rail Plan

Rebecca Reyes-Alicea, Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Project Manager for NEC FUTURE, presented an overview on the FRA NEC FUTURE Program, a long term vision for integrated passenger rail transportation in the NEC from Washington, D.C. to Boston, Massachusetts.

Together North Jersey Overview & Interactive Polling

Zenobia Fields, Director of Planning at NJTPA, gave an overview of Together North Jersey, a planning initiative currently underway in the 13-county North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority region of New Jersey. She conducted an interactive polling exercise involving twelve topics related to and/or impacted by transportation and land use.

Transit

Tom Marchwinski, Director of Systems Planning for NJ Transit, provided updates on the US 1 BRT and related projects. Chad Dixon, Senior Project Manager at Greater Mercer TMA, discussed the Job Access Mobility Program and gave an update on the Exit 7A project that includes getting workers to the new Amazon site.

Status of US 1 Improvements

Shing-Fu Hsueh, Mayor of West Windsor Township, gave a brief update about the NJDOT jughandle proposal in the Penns Neck area. Traffic analysis is being conducted by Stanford Research Institute (SRI). Mayor Hsueh and other involved mayors are working toward reaching a consensus about what can be done to improve the intersection with the limited funding that is available.

A Municipality's Experience with Smart Growth

David Kois, Zoning Officer/Assistant Planner at Hillsborough Township, discussed the municipality's adoption of the Rt1RGS resolution, as well as planning and design for a transit-oriented, walkable Town Center in Hillsborough.

Other Updates & Dialogue

The next CJTF meeting is anticipated to focus on Complete Streets. It will be in September or October; information will follow as soon as it is set.

**Meeting Summary  
Central Jersey Transportation Forum  
May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013**

**ATTENDEES:** over 60 participants – Please advise if you attended but are not on the list.

Mayors			
Liz	Lempert	Mayor	Princeton
Shing-Fu	Hsueh	Mayor	West Windsor Township

Other Municipal Staff			
Theodore	Chase	Councilman	Franklin Township Council & Planning Board
David	Kois	Zoning Officer/Assistant Planner	Hillsborough Township
Gene	Strupinsky	Business Advocate	Hillsborough Township
James	Parvesse	Township Engineer	Lawrence Township Engineering Division
Gail	Smith	Engineer	Montgomery Township
Tom	Vigna	Township Planner; Co-Chair, Rt1RGS Action Team	North Brunswick Township Community Development - Division of Planning
Arthur	Lehrhaupt	Planning Board Chair	Plainsboro Township
Marvin	Reed	Chairman - Master Plan Committee; Forum Co-Chair	Regional Planning Board of Princeton
Lee	Solow	Planning Director	Regional Planning Board of Princeton
Bryan	Bidlack	Planner	South Brunswick Township
Pat	Ward	Director of Community Development	West Windsor Township, Community Development Department

Counties			
James	Martin	County Engineer	Hunterdon County
Matt	Lawson	Transportation Planner	Mercer County Planning Division
Tony	Gambilonghi	Supervising Planner for Transportation	Middlesex County Department of Planning
George	Ververides	Director	Middlesex County Department of Planning
Bob	Bzik	Director of Planning	Somerset County Planning Division
Walt	Lane	Principal Planner	Somerset County Planning Division

Freeholder Peter Palmer represented Somerset County and the NJTPA Board.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations			
Rich	Bickel	Director of Planning	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Jesse	Buerk	Transportation Planner	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Lisa	MacCarrigan	Intern	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
Zenobia	Fields	Director, Department of Planning	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Lois	Goldman	Director of Regional Planning	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Mary K.	Murphy	Executive Director	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Peter	Palmer	Freeholder, Board Member	Somerset County, NJTPA Board

Other Regional Bodies			
Chad	Dixson	Senior Project Manager	Greater Mercer TMA
Bill	Neary	Executive Director	Keep Middlesex Moving TMA
Basil	Giletto	Chair of Transportation Committee	Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce

Joan	McGee	Watershed Policy Specialist	Stony Brook - Millstone Watershed Association
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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
Danielle	Graves	Project Engineer	NJ Department of Transportation, Bureau of Statewide Strategies
Jim	Lewis	Manager	NJ Department of Transportation, Bureau of Statewide Strategies
Sudhir	Joshi	Project 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
Paul	Ceppi	Senior Community Development Officer	NJ Economic Development Authority
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
Rebecca	Reyes-Alicea	Community Planner	Federal Transit Administration, Region II

Other			
Ruby	Siegel	Vice-President	AECOM
Danelle	Hunter	Senior Officer, Outreach and Communication	Amtrak
Katherine	Kish	Chairman	Einstein's Alley
Pam	Mount	Citizen, former Mayor	Lawrence Township Resident
Jerome	Lutin	Citizen	South Brunswick Township Resident
Dan	Baer	Senior Vice President; National Planning Lead	Parsons Brinckerhoff
David	Parris	Citizen	Penns Neck Community
Sheldon	Sturges	Managing Director	Princeton Future
Pam	Hersh	Vice President for Government Relations	Princeton Healthcare System
Kristin	Appelget	Director	Princeton University, Community & Regional Affairs
Andras	Fekete	Manager, Special Projects	RBA Group
Chip	Crider	Citizen	Spurts.org
Jack	Kanarek	Planning Manager – Philadelphia; Chair, Transit Action Team	Systra Consulting
Jerry	Foster	President	West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance
Alison	Miller	Board Secretary	West Windsor Parking Authority / West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance

## 1. **Welcome and Introductions**

There were over 60 participants, including representatives from nine municipalities, four counties, two MPOs, and various agencies and organizations (for-profit and non-profit). The group celebrated the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Forum by honoring eight members involved in its creation, five of whom are still active and four of whom were present (indicated by an asterisk and bold font text).

Those honored were:

- **\*George Ververides**, then and now Middlesex County Director of County Planning
- **\*Bob Bzik**, then and now Somerset County Director of Planning
- Peter Cantu, then Executive Director of Keep Middlesex Moving TMA; then and now Mayor of Plainsboro
- John Coscia Sr., original Chair, then Executive Director of DVRPC, now retired; DVRPC is now represented by Executive Director Barry Seymour
- Dennis Keck, original Co-Chair, then Assistant Commissioner of Planning at NJDOT, now Director of Project Development at Jacobs Engineering
- Keith Lynch, then at NJTPA, now Director of Program Development at FHWA-Pennsylvania; NJTPA is now represented by Executive Director Mary K. Murphy
- **\*Jack Kanarek**, then Senior Director of Project Development at NJ Transit, now Philadelphia Planning Manager for SYSTRA Consulting
- **\*Marvin Reed**, then Mayor of Princeton Borough (who wrote the first two letters in the Forum files), now Chair of the Forum.

There was a cake to celebrate, and the four active/present honorees were commended. Marvin Reed, Forum Chair and Chairman of the Master Plan Committee for the Regional Planning Board of Princeton, welcomed everyone.

## 2. Action Items

Three action items were addressed to begin the meeting:

- There were no comments on the March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013 meeting summary, and it was adopted unanimously.
- The Forum unanimously voted in support of enhanced communication about closures and openings of as many transportation facilities as possible to as many residents and employees as possible during major events. A summary handout of the proposed Forum action and some additional recommendations was provided in the meeting packets. Forum staff will arrange a meeting for its three county OEM directors to explore additional ways to share information on county and local road closures, potentially through coordination with statewide 511. [The meeting was held on July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013.]
- Tom Vigna, North Brunswick Township Planner and Co-Chair of the Rt1RGS Action Team, gave an update on the progress of the Rt1RGS Action Team. He noted that the Economic Opportunity Act resolution was passed by the Assembly. The Action Team will resend the Forum-approved letter from the 3/5/13 meeting to express concerns about the bill to the Senate President and the bill's sponsors. [After numerous amendments, this bill was provided to the Governor on August 19<sup>th</sup>. Whether the amendments are consistent with the Forum's comments is not yet known.]
- The Forum unanimously voted in favor of sending two letters. The first was in support of the Cluster Development Bill (A3761/S2608) [This bill has since been signed into law.] The second was supportive though with comments on a pilot program to provide loans for certain gas stations to install wiring for generators (A3930). Mr. Vigna summarized the bills and proposed letters which were provided in the meeting packets. Mary K. Murphy, Executive Director of North Jersey Transportation Authority, clarified that MPOs serve as staff to the Forum and are not signatories to the letters. Matthew Lawson, Transportation Planner for Mercer County, referred to a few related bills including one that would provide generators for traffic lights at significant intersections. These bills may be discussed at Rt1RGS meetings and letters about them brought for considerations by the full Forum.

Jack Kanarek, Philadelphia Planning Manager for SYSTRA Consulting, gave a brief report on the activities of the Transit Action Team (TAT). A bus stop design guidelines checklist and model ordinances for transit stops were discussed at the most recent TAT meeting. He said the TAT would prepare a questionnaire to send out to municipalities to determine bus stop and bus shelter needs. Gene Strupinsky, Business Advocate of Hillsborough Township, said that Hillsborough is interested in bus service particularly in preparation for the tourists that the NFL Super Bowl is going to bring in next year.

Mr. Reed added that there is interest all around regarding how locals deal with bus shelters and service, and this will be addressed at a future Forum meeting.

### **3. Northeast Corridor (NEC) High-Speed Rail Plan**

Mr. Reed introduced Rebecca Reyes-Alicea, Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Project Manager for NEC FUTURE to present a long term vision for integrated passenger rail transportation in the Northeast Corridor from Washington, D.C. to Boston, Massachusetts.

The NEC FUTURE effort, which launched in February 2012, focuses on improving passenger rail service between Washington, D.C. and Boston. It will define, evaluate, and prioritize future transportation investments to a horizon year of 2040. However, it will not go into full technical detail as it is preparing alternatives through the point of Tier 1 environmental analysis.

There has been and continues to be substantial collaboration with key stakeholders, such as Amtrak and NJ Transit, as well as outreach with the general public and NEC communities. The alternatives development process has been ongoing and includes data collection, public outreach, and evaluation. Fixing existing conditions is a priority over expanding the corridor, with an emphasis on reliability and resiliency. The final service development plan should be completed in 2015.

Rather than focusing immediately on infrastructure, the alternatives have been developed around three key issues: 1) markets, 2) service options, and 3) program investment levels. As of now, 15 preliminary alternatives have been defined through a data-driven process. All 15 maintain and improve service on the existing NEC spine. Alternatives 1 through 7 remain along the existing route; alternatives 8 through 11 focus improvements on the existing route and provide potential service to downtown Baltimore, Center City Philadelphia, and some off-corridor markets; alternative 12 adds a second NEC spine roughly parallel to the existing spine; and alternatives 13 through 15 add a second NEC spine on a new route. Next steps include a review of the preliminary alternatives with stakeholders and the public, development of a screening methodology to guide evaluation, evaluation of preliminary alternatives, and development of reasonable alternatives.

Mr. Reed opened the floor for questions and comments. Discussion included the following highlights:

- Barry Seymour, Executive Director at DVRPC asked if the benefits of connecting airports to primary rail corridors were considered. Ms. Reyes-Alicea said that this had been considered, and that the study will focus on places with good potential for connections. NEC FUTURE is currently working with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and has made that type of consideration for New York City airports.
- Jerry Foster, President of West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance, asked about the future of allowing bicycles on Amtrak. Danelle Hunter, Senior Officer of Outreach and Communication for Amtrak, said they are looking into a pilot study and would record the expression of interest.
- Mr. Reed suggested it might be necessary to resolve the issue of the tunnel into Manhattan for other planning to be feasible. Ms. Reyes-Alicea said this process will help define how much capacity is needed, but not how to meet the need. However, she said the Amtrak Gateway project will get into such matters. Mr. Reed also suggested that alternatives to the NEC such as reactivating the West Trenton line become more valuable if the NEC capacity is needed for high-speed trains. Ms. Reyes-Alicea noted she was familiar with the matter, having worked on that project in a prior position. Mr. Reed advised that mayors will be asked about the impacts of higher speed, louder trains on the desirability of nearby developments.
- Bob Bzik, Somerset County Director of Planning, raised the issue of regional growth and asked whether MPO long range plans are being considered. Dan Baer, Senior Vice President at Parsons Brinckerhoff, said that NEC FUTURE included MPO population and employment projections as well as Moody's in a series of low- and high-growth projections.
- Ms. Hunter highlighted the importance of this study, saying that it will help set the NEC operation course for the next 50 to 100 years. Amtrak has worked closely with the study, integrating elements into its own long-range planning. She noted that the 2012 NEC Vision Update is available at [www.amtrak.com/ccurl/453/325/Amtrak-Vision-for-the-Northeast-Corridor.pdf](http://www.amtrak.com/ccurl/453/325/Amtrak-Vision-for-the-Northeast-Corridor.pdf).

- Pat Ward, Director of Community Development for the West Windsor Township Community Development Department, asked how stations were selected for the station tour outreach effort that was described in the presentation. She noted that Princeton Junction was not selected even though it is one of the ten busiest stations in the country. Ms. Reyes-Alicea said the station tour had to cover a small but diverse set of stations and was not indicative of market share or planning.
- There was discussion about how high speed rail with few stops at major cities might impact New Jersey. Conclusions are unknown, but there probably wouldn't be stops within ten miles of each other. There was some discussion about how this would impact Trenton and Princeton Junction.
- Mr. Baer raised the point that the New Brunswick and Rahway stations are seriously physically constrained in respect to expanding the number of tracks. However, these types of issues are being worked out, and the NEC FUTURE study is working with local stakeholders who would be affected.
- Tony Gambilonghi, Supervising Planner for Transportation at Middlesex County, asked if NEC FUTURE was looking to expand multimodal capacity at stations, particularly by adding more bus connections for both public and private carriers. Tom Marchwinski, Director of Systems Planning at NJ Transit, said NJ Transit was coordinating with NEC FUTURE and actively assessing the markets especially of intermediate stations to ensure that service needs are being addressed. He is on the NEC FUTURE Market and Ridership Committee and Rich Roberts, Chief of Capital Planning at NJ Transit, is on other committees.
- Ruby Siegel, Vice-President at AECOM, encouraged all to visit [www.necfuture.com](http://www.necfuture.com) and sign up for e-mails if interested. She said that if groups want a presentation, it can be arranged. E-mails sent to [info@necfuture.com](mailto:info@necfuture.com) are read by her, Ms. Alicea-Reyes, Mr. Baer, and other project team members.

#### **4. Together North Jersey Overview & Interactive Polling**

Zenobia Fields, Director of Planning at NJTPA, gave a brief overview of the Together North Jersey project, which will develop the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (RPSD) and will be closely coordinated with NJTPA's Plan 2040 regional transportation plan update. Together North Jersey has begun an 18-month series of over 50 public workshops throughout the region. A consortium of local, state, and regional partners will work together to develop the RPSD. These workshops are an opportunity for the public to share ideas about planning for the future. The goal is to build stronger communities and local and regional economies, with better access to transportation, housing, jobs, and educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities.

Ms. Fields conducted an interactive polling exercise involving twelve topics related to and/or impacted by transportation and land use.

#### **5. Transit**

Mr. Marchwinski provided updates on the Route 1 BRT and related projects.

- He said the consultant team for the CR 571 BRT study would be under contract soon and that work would begin once the contract was set. The study should be completed by this fall.
- Mr. Reed asked about the status of the US 1 BRT plan, and whether or not it was recognized by NJ Transit and NJ DOT. Mr. Marchwinski said that both agencies recognize the BRT plan and that it was being approached incrementally, since there is not funding available for a major capital project.
- George Ververides, Director of the Middlesex County Department of Planning, asked about the status of the New Brunswick BRT project. Mr. Marchwinski said that he would follow-up with updates at a future meeting.
- There was a discussion of how municipalities can require developers to include BRT or transit-supportive elements, or at least set aside right-of-way. Mr. Marchwinski recommended arranging a meeting of NJ Transit staff with the developers and municipality early on. Mr. Bzik mentioned that the access code does not allow right-of-way set-asides to be mandated without specific information, which can be challenging. Shing-Fu Hsueh, Mayor of West Windsor Township, described how West Windsor was able to have some success with this issue. West Windsor used the 2005 BRT concept plan to decide where to require right-of-way to be set aside and where to define bus stops, for

example. This was done in collaboration with township traffic engineering staff and with input from developers. West Windsor has also worked closely with developers on a project by project basis, and has coordinated with other townships and state agencies. Mayor Hsueh said that although the exact needs are not 100 percent defined, they are defined enough to figure out where to require easements. Mr. Reed closed the discussion by emphasizing that the Forum is interested in how this group can be supportive of smart growth refinements in developments that affect the region.

Chad Dixson, Senior Project Manager at Greater Mercer TMA, discussed the Job Access Mobility Program and gave an update on the Exit 7A project.

- Mr. Dixson described a meeting Greater Mercer TMA held with nine companies (including Amazon), the State Business Action Team, NJ Transit, and others at the office park where they are located in Robbinsville, near New Jersey Turnpike Exit 7A. There are 21 companies in the two nearby office parks with two more coming.
- He discussed the mismatch between where potential Amazon employees live and Exit 7A job destinations. There is currently no transit service to the office park. However, solutions including ride-sharing, extended NJ Transit services, new services, and shuttles from transportation centers are being explored.
- Mr. Dixson summarized initial results of a recently completed survey administered to companies in the two office parks. They were surveyed on information including the number and types of employees and shift times. GMTMA will prepare a report to summarize the survey results. [Completed and being distributed to Forum.] Some initial findings were that there is a great range in the number of employees per company, many companies experience large seasonal employment peaks (Amazon projects approximately 1,000 employees, going up to 3,000 on a seasonal basis), and most employees arrive between 6:00 to 8:00 AM and leave between 3:00 and 5:00 PM. Most companies tell staff that day if they need to work overtime, which makes it hard to plan transit. However, the companies reported hearing of extensive use of formal and informal ridesharing agreements. Zip-code and address data have been useful in identifying clusters where commuters originate.

## **6. Status of US 1 Improvements**

Mayor Hsueh provided an update about the NJDOT jughandle proposal in the Penns Neck area.

- He gave a brief history of the ups and downs of the Penns Neck project over the years. Most recently, NJDOT Commissioner Simpson set aside \$2 million to implement the left-turn restrictions trial, which was halted because of the negative impacts on the Penns Neck neighborhood. Subsequently, Commissioner Simpson told the involved mayors that funds could be made available for a Penns Neck project, possibly on the order of \$32 to \$40 million. The \$300 million cost of the old EIS plan for Penns Neck remains infeasible.
- Mayor Hsueh explained that West Windsor Township is concerned with the impacts a jughandle project could have on the Penns Neck neighborhood, mostly relating to safety and quality of life. The Township is working with Stanford Research Institute (SRI), owners of the former Sarnoff property. SRI is performing traffic analysis that will hopefully be ready in the next month. The next step would be to reach a consensus between SRI, Princeton University, and the Township about what can be done to improve the intersection with the limited funding that is available. Whatever happens, a majority of stakeholders must be comfortable with the plan for it to move forward.
- Mayor Hsueh noted that the proposed jughandle design that some people may have seen online was merely one idea of many.
- Mike Viscardi, Senior Facilities Manager at NJ Transit, noted that NJ Transit has also been involved in coordination regarding the proposed Penns Neck improvements, with a focus on safe pedestrian crossings and identifying safe bus stops. Andrew Swords, Director of the Division of Statewide Planning at NJDOT, said that NJDOT looked forward to working with West Windsor Township to develop a solution.

## **7. A Municipality's Experience with Smart Growth**

Mr. Vigna introduced David Kois, Zoning Officer and Assistant Planner at Hillsborough Township. Mr. Kois discussed the municipality's adoption of the Rt1RGS smart growth resolution, as well as planning and design efforts to create a transit-oriented Town Center in Hillsborough.

- Mr. Kois began by describing a meeting between Hillsborough Township staff and officials with the Rt1RGS action team. Hillsborough was happy to adopt the Rt1RGS resolution without even having the Road Show presentation. He said that Hillsborough has already incorporated smart growth into its master plan and is working toward achieving the goals laid out in the master plan.
- Mr. Kois described the smart growth redevelopment opportunities that the US 206 Bypass project will enable. The bypass will allow for concentrated growth in a walkable, definable town center, and the opportunity for transit-oriented, or at least "transit-ready" development. The long-term goal is to focus TOD around a train station, but in the meantime, the town is incorporating a bus station.
- He described some of the challenges Hillsborough faces in working toward smart growth. Currently, the town has a large amount of strip commercial development and surface parking lots. However, a recent circulation plan update adopted a new street network that focuses on increasing connectivity and accommodating transit. He said the economy itself remains the primary challenge. Also, the township does not own the land where the town center is planned, so private redevelopment is needed. Despite having received an APA award, the plan has encountered some resistance from developers, who are reluctant to work outside of their comfort zones and take the risk of innovating.
- The Township continues to focus on its goals and to back up the plan with research indicating the benefits of smart growth. They continue to work closely with developers and are open to suggestions about how to make the plan work.
- He noted that the US 206 Bypass project is a crucial piece of the Hillsborough Township redevelopment plan, but it is out of the township's control.
- Mr. Bzik complimented Mr. Kois and the Hillsborough staff for their hard work and for winning a national APA award for their town center Master Plan.

## **8. Other Updates & Dialogue**

The next CJTF meeting is anticipated to cover the topic of Complete Streets, and will be held sometime in September/October. The Forum will be notified of the next meeting date as soon as it is set.

Mr. Reed thanked everyone for participating and making the Forum a success. There were no further comments and the meeting was adjourned.

*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](http://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.*