

## **Meeting Highlights**

*Approved September 7, 2017*

### **Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was held in the Community Room of the Plainsboro Public Library in Plainsboro, NJ. There were over 50 participants, including representatives from 15 municipalities, three counties, two MPOs, and various agencies and organizations (for-profit and non-profit). Bill Neary, Forum Chair welcomed everyone. Mayor Peter Cantu welcomed the Forum to Plainsboro. Barry Seymour, DVRPC Executive Director, introduced Jackie Davis, who recently took the position of Forum program manager after joining DVRPC in late 2016. All attendees then made brief introductions.

### **Forum Business**

- The December 2, 2016 meeting summary was approved.
- Bill Neary, Forum Chair, took a few moments to remember two Forum members who passed away early this year. Frank Gambatese, South Brunswick's longest-serving mayor, passed away on Saturday, March 25, 2017. Ed Cohen, a long-time Forum representative from Monroe Township, passed away on Sunday, April 16, 2017. Bill recalled anecdotes from working with each of them to honor their legacy as representatives on the Forum.
- Bill Neary welcomed Millstone Borough as the Forum's newest voting member. Curt Emmich was in attendance to represent Millstone.
- Bill Neary reminded voting members and alternates to send in a letter from their mayors requesting membership and designating representatives for 2017. Members would be able to vote at this meeting without a letter. At the next meeting, only representatives with current letters will be allowed to vote.

### **Supporting Priority Investment in Somerset County**

- Walt Lane presented Somerset County's experience with supporting priority investment using a community based planning process. The presentation included key findings and implementation success stories. Somerset took a bottom-up approach on identifying priority investment areas. Several communities have updated master plans and zoning codes based on recommendations from the project.
- Bill Neary asked about the implications of home rule and whether there were any county grants available. There are county grants which are funded by NJTPA, but currently no municipal grants.
- Barry Seymour asked whether there was outreach to surrounding communities and whether there were any border-related issues. There were not many border issues and the county did try to coordinate with surrounding communities. There are opportunities for better connecting centers when a priority investment area is located near a regional rail station.
- Cheryl Kastrenakes asked about feedback from municipalities. Few communities pushed back, and most were appreciative and supportive of the project.

### **NJTPA Plan 2045 Presentation**

- Bill Neary announced that the agenda would be rearranged to accommodate personal schedules.
- Ted Ritter, NJTPA, provided an update on NJTPA's Regional Transportation Plan, Plan 2045, and discussed the approach, priorities, and goals for the latest long range planning update.
- Ted used interactive polling to ask the audience questions about their demographics, travel preferences, and safety concerns. Results of the survey are attached.
- The entire survey is available at [www.njtpa.org/plan2045](http://www.njtpa.org/plan2045).

### **Using the Smart Growth Best Practices Brochure**

- Bill Neary introduced Tom Vigna, who chairs the Regional Growth Strategy Action Team and has worked on the best practices brochure with the help of Forum and Committee members.
- Tom Vigna reminded attendees of the Smart Growth Road Show that he and Bill embarked on, and credited Lois Goldman, NJTPA, with pointing out the importance of engaging the audience while presenting information. This brochure was developed with elected and appointed



representatives in mind, and was designed to be an engaging, simple, and quick read. It is an introductory document that presents best practice overviews with links and contact information for those who wish to learn more.

- Each municipality and county member received 25 brochures and cover letters. At the December 2016 meeting, members voted to endorse the brochure and agreed to distribute copies amongst their elected officials, zoning and planning board members, and others in their community.
- Tom mentioned that the first step is distribution, but additional actions are possible. At the last Joint Action Team meeting, the chairs invited Sustainable Jersey to discuss opportunities for collaboration. Tom requested feedback on other potential next steps.
  - Katherine Kish from Einstein's Alley suggested that the brochure could be useful to employers and residents, chambers of commerce, political parties, and others, and would be a means of reaching the Forum's goal of engaging the public.
  - Bill Neary suggested that a webinar or training would be preaching to the choir and suggested a coordinated social media blitz to promote the document.
  - Jackie Davis, DVRPC, offered more printed copies based on demand and noted that a digital copy would be posted on the Forum's web page. Electronic copies will be available to forward by mailing lists, and can be highlighted on social media.
  - DVRPC and NJTPA offered to coordinate on promotion, but suggested municipalities and counties promote as well.

### **Strategic Planning Update**

- Bill Neary introduced the topic of strategic planning, noting the changes in Central New Jersey and within the Forum in recent years. With the question of how the Forum can contribute to positive change in the region, the steering committee has initiated a new strategic planning effort.
- Barry Seymour reminded attendees of the first strategic planning effort in 2010.
  - Three questions were asked during this process: 1) What should be the scale and scope of membership; 2) Should the Forum be structured in a different/formal way; and 3) What should the Forum be working on?
  - A survey of over 100 people pointed to three needs: 1) More support for municipalities; 2) Action teams around major themes; and 3) Formal actions to take as a group.
  - This effort resulted in the formation of our current steering committee, formal voting structure, and two action teams.
  - Barry suggested another facilitated exercise to see how things are working, identify issues the Forum needs to address, and to revisit structural/membership questions.
- Bill asked members whether a strategic plan is something they want to create, and suggested that a facilitator could help in providing direction.
  - Tom Vigna added that the steering committee held a scoping meeting to outline initial needs, but said that additional direction is needed.
  - Mary K Murphy, NJTPA, said that the two long range plan updates make this effort timely to identify disruptors, new methods of communication, and new opportunities.
  - George Ververides, Middlesex County, pointed out that alternatives to desired facilities must be identified if funding remains unavailable.
  - Matt Lawson, Mercer County, added that the Forum's value is in being a forum and strategic planning will be important in identifying the role it will play.
- Bill Neary asked for a motion to vote. Members voted unanimously to support the hiring of an outside consultant to facilitate a strategic planning workshop with voting members and steering committee members, and to develop a written strategic plan for the Forum in FY 18, using program budget dollars.

### **Letter of Support for NEC Future Preferred Alternative**

- Greg Krykewycz, DVRPC, provided an update on the NEC FUTURE Final Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and highlighted capital improvements in the Central Jersey region. Greg explained the difference between Tier 1 and 2 EIS. The first being a high-level strategic plan, and the second focusing on site-level, details work along the corridor.



- Jack Kanarek introduced the draft letter of support to the sponsoring USDOT Federal Railroad Administration, as drafted and recommended by the steering committee. Bill Neary added that the purpose was to support the continued progress of the NEC, maintain a state of good repair, and seek answers related to site-specific projects as the Tier 2 EIS begins.
- Bill Neary asked for suggested edits and a motion to vote. The only edit suggested was a change in date to reflect the May 4 voting day. Members voted to send the drafted letter on its behalf.

### **Brief Updates & Dialogue**

- A representative from NJDOT provided a handout and update on the Route 1 Hard Shoulder Running Operation planned for Independence Way to Raymond Road in South Brunswick Township, Middlesex County. The pilot project will run for 6 months and will expand if there are no major safety concerns. A Public Information Center will be held on Monday, May 15, 2017 from 4:00 to 7:00 PM at the South Brunswick Municipal Building, 540 Ridge Road, Monmouth Junction.
- Alison Miller, West Windsor Township Council, asked the Forum to engage with West Windsor directly on questions or concerns regarding the Howard Hughes development, stating that direct communications with the developer undermines the town's authority.
- Bill Neary provided updates on two new developments in New Brunswick: The Ferren Deck demolition, and the demolition and reconstruction of two of the city's theatres.

There were no further comments and the meeting was adjourned.

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### Attendees

<b>Mayors</b>			
Peter	Cantu	Mayor	Township of Plainsboro
Liz	Lempert	Mayor	Princeton

<b>Municipal Staff</b>			
Ann	Bell	Administrative Officer	Robbinsville Township
Theodore	Chase Jr	Councilman	Franklin Township
Curt	Emmich		Millstone Borough
Hal	English		Robbinsville Township
Francis	Guzik	Acting Director of Community Development	West Windsor Township
Davis	Kois		Hillsborough Township
Arthur	Lehrhaupt		Township of Plainsboro
Jerry	Lutin	Member	South Brunswick Planning Board
Alison	Miller	Vice-President	West Windsor Township Council
James	Parvesse	Municipal Engineer	Lawrence Township
Regine	Saintilien		City of Trenton
Gail	Smith		Montgomery Township
Lee	Solow		Princeton
Deanna	Stockton	Municipal Engineer	Princeton
Les	Varga		Township of Plainsboro
Tom	Vigna		North Brunswick Township

<b>Counties</b>			
Tony	Gambilonghi	Transportation Supervising Planner	County of Middlesex Planning Office
Walter	Lane	Director of Planning	Somerset County
Matthew	Lawson	Principal Planner-Transportation	County of Mercer, NJ
Peter	Palmer	Freeholder Director	Somerset County
George	Ververides	Director	County of Middlesex Office of Planning

### Federal Agencies

<b>Metropolitan Planning Organizations</b>			
Mike	Boyer		DVRPC
Jesse	Buerk		DVRPC
Jaclyn	Davis	Senior Planner	DVRPC
Lois	Goldman		NJTPA
Greg	Krykewycz		DVRPC
Mary K	Murphy	Executive Director	NJTPA
Ted	Ritter	Special Projects Manager	NJTPA
Barry	Seymour	Executive Director	DVRPC

<b>Other Regional Bodies</b>			
Basil	Giletto		Mid Jersey Chamber of Commerce
Kristen	Harding		RideWise TMA



Cheryl	Kastrenakes		Greater Mercer TMA
Bill	Neary		KMM

<b>State Departments</b>			
Barry	Ableman	Principal Planner	State of New Jersey, Office for Planning Advocacy
Thomas	Clark	Regional Manager	NJ TRANSIT
Danielle	Graves		NJDOT
Tom	Houck	Senior Transportation Planner	NJDOT
Mathew	Safer		NJ Transit
Robert	Tessier	Project Specialist	Department of Community Affairs, Local Planning Services
Mike	Viscardi	Assistant Director Federal Projects Planning	NJ TRANSIT

<b>Other</b>			
James	Constantine		LRK
Peter	Drinkwater		T&M Associates
Jim	Hess		AECOM
Jack	Kanarek	Manager, Rail and Transit Practice	Dewberry
Brian	McGuire	Associate State Director	AARP
Jack	Molenaar	Senior Director	Rutgers University
Christian	Schmidt		Princeton University
Kerri	Tyerman		HNTB
Yan Mei	Wang	Resident	West Windsor
Patricia	Ward		The Hathaway Group