

Draft Meeting Highlights

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was held in the Brower Student Center at The College of New Jersey in Ewing, NJ. There were over 45 participants, including representatives from 10 municipalities, three counties, two MPOs, and various agencies and organizations (for-profit and non-profit). Bill Neary, Forum Chair welcomed everyone. Mayor Bert Steinman welcomed the Forum to Ewing. The Mayor noted the many changes on campus, especially in the last four years. The Brower Student Center is a new building and event space made available to the public.

Bill Neary, Forum Chair, reminded attendees that Voting and Steering Committee members along with MPO staff participated in a morning strategic planning workshop before lunch. Mr. Neary noted that the last strategic planning effort, conducted in 2010, focused on the structure of the Forum, creating voting bylaws, a Steering Committee, and Action Teams. Barry Seymour, DVRPC Executive Director, added that the goal of the morning facilitated workshop was to discuss priorities of the group moving forward, and to identify a short list of the best projects and initiatives for the Forum to focus on. Mr. Seymour also emphasized that DVRPC is committed to the Forum, and appreciates the engagement from all of its members.

New Brunswick New Developments

Anna Marie Gewirtz, Acting President & CEO of State Theatre New Jersey, discussed the celebrated successes and future needs of the New Brunswick theatre. State Theatre New Jersey was designed by renowned theater architect Thomas W. Lamb, and opened in 1921 as a large, art deco vaudeville / silent film palace. The theatre fell into disrepair following the multiplex boom of the 1960's, closed, and reopened as a non-profit in the late 1980's with the help of several elected officials.

Today, State Theatre is used 330 days of the year. More than 200 performances are presented each season. Over 5.7 million people have been served since 1988. The Theater is now beginning a new fundraising campaign and private/public partnership to support necessary renovations that will bring the theatre into the 21st century. Ms. Gewirtz unveiled the architectural renderings for the theatre's renovation, making the Forum the first public group to see the new design.

Attendees had several questions following the presentation:

- Curt Emmich asked whether there was an estimated economic impact of the theatre. Ms. Gewirtz said that all restaurants are packed on any show night. The current estimated economic impact is ~\$38M, and projections are for \$45-50M following renovations.
- An attendee asked if New Brunswick has a business development manager or coordinator. Ms. Gewirtz said that Mayor Cahill is very involved, and the New Brunswick City Center is the coordinator of downtown activities. Finally, New Brunswick Development Corporation (DEVCO) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization responsible for both real estate development and programming in New Brunswick.
- Bill Neary said that New Brunswick is promoting the theatre as one of the cultural advantages of visiting the Township, along with Middlesex County, which is actively promoting history, tourism and cultural arts.

Forum Business

Bill Neary asked for edits to the Draft Meeting Highlights from the May 4, 2017 Forum. One typographical error was mentioned and will be corrected. George Ververides made a motion to approve the highlights. Walt Lane seconded and meeting highlights were approved unanimously.

Bloustein-NJ TRANSIT Study: Central NJ Tri-County Urban Transit Studio Findings and Recommendations



Samantha Spagnoli, Brian Leckie, and Daehee Kim represented the graduate program at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy in its partnership with NJ TRANSIT to identify a transit vision and implementation strategies for a study area encompassing 14 municipalities in Mercer, Middlesex, and Somerset Counties; six NJ Transit lines; 12 community transit routes; and five Coach USA lines.

Ms. Spagnoli and Mr. Leckie presented the study's findings in place of Jim Gilligan, Director of Bus Service Planning for NJ TRANSIT, who retired the week before. Recommendations were informed by a demographic analysis, ridership and operations analysis, and stakeholder meeting held on March 3rd, 2017.

Recommendations from the study, detailed in the attached slide deck, included Inter-county Service Proposals and Commuter Service Proposals to individual transit routes and resulted in a revised service area map.

Attendees had several questions following the presentation:

- An attendee asked whether recommendations included increased frequency for NY commuter lines. The recommended lines were all new.
- An attendee asked whether recommendations included Park & Ride locations for new NY lines. The Hillsboro Promenade already exists for Coach USA.
- An attendee asked how old the ridership data was. All data was provided by NJ TRANSIT and was from in 2016.
- An attendee asked Cheryl Kastrenakes, GMTMA, if she saw any projects as viable options moving forward. Cheryl responded that GMTMA was working with the freeB Commuter route, and would look at the other recommendations in more detail.

Trenton250 plan update

Jeffrey Wilkerson, Trenton City, presented the Trenton250 Master Plan: a comprehensive plan that provides a long-range vision for the community and the built environment from now to year 2042. Mr. Wilkerson presented the Forum with a quick update on the plan about a year ago, when the visioning process began. The city began with clear objectives of having a community-driven vision and plan that was strategic in nature. In the past, stakeholders have felt a certain amount of "planning fatigue" from their participation in many plans, none of them cohesive. More recent tumultuous times in government had made planning non-existent. This process sought enough detail that the city government wouldn't need to expend effort interpreting the plan. Five topic reports and a land use strategy have been adopted as of this meeting. Mr. Wilkerson's office is currently working on topic reports on stormwater management, public safety, and public health – all of which will inform the master plan. The city is creating its first capital improvement plan based on actions, has divided the city in to five new planning districts, and has made the master plan to directly inform department work plans and their respective budgets. Along with these products, the plan will result in several implementation guides, a citizen guidebook, training modules, and workshops.

Attendees had several questions following the presentation:

- Bill Neary, Forum Chair, said that wayfinding signage would be helpful to those not familiar with the city. Mr. Wilkerson said that wayfinding was one of the plan's initiatives, and understanding the street network is central to the plan.

Brief Updates & Dialogue

- Danielle Graves, NJDOT, read a statement provided by the project managers on the Route 1, Alexander Road to Mapleton Road (formerly Penns Neck project), and the Route 206 Bridge projects including the Bridge over Stony Brook in Princeton Township, and South Broad Street Bridge over Assunpink Creek in Trenton City.



- Route 1, Alexander Road to Mapleton Road is currently in the construction and design (CD) Phase. It is being advanced to improve the safety and operational performance of this congested segment of the Route 1 corridor through high-level improvement for the corridor, but at a significantly lower cost to the former Penns Neck project (\$33M vs the original \$150M) with a reduced scope of work. The current plan has received consensus from the stakeholders and includes at-grade intersections. NJDOT anticipates completing CD by the end of the year and advancing through PE and FD with construction to occur around the summer of 2020.
- The two bridge projects are in various stages of CD. They are being advanced to rehabilitate structurally deficient and functionally obsolete bridges while also rehabilitating historic bridge features. The Route 206 Bridge over Stony Brook in Princeton is currently in construction to repair a historic bridge in poor condition. The rehabilitation project included emergency repairs as well as reconstruction and strengthening of arches to protect against future failure. NJDOT anticipates that the bridge will reopen to traffic in early November and be complete by the end of 2017 at a cost of \$10M.
- The Route 206 S. Broad Bridge over Assunpink Creek in Trenton is also a historic bridge. It is currently weight-restricted due to its condition. The bridge rehabilitation includes precast arch structures to remove the restriction. NJDOT anticipates the project will advance through the project delivery with construction beginning in 2020 and being completed in 2021 at a cost of \$8.8M.
- The Alexander Road project manager has noted that NJDOT is committed to the implementation of appropriate bicycle and pedestrian improvements within the project area. The proposed widening of the concept plan provides sufficient width to accommodate NJ TRANSIT's BRT system. The recently replaced bridge over the Millstone River was also constructed at a width to accommodate shared lanes for Bike/Ped use and BRT.
- No questions were asked. Barry Seymour, DVRPC, noted that these projects are ones to celebrate and count as wins for CJTF.
- Francis Guzik, West Windsor Township, provided an update on the planning board's handling of the Howard Hughes development proposal. Mr. Guzik gave an overview of project proposal as background for those not familiar. The Township was approached initially in 2014 about redevelopment, but the council was conservative and denied the request. In February of 2017, the developer submitted a concept plan to the planning board that involved two public hearings on May 10 and July 26. At the first, Howard Hughes representatives gave a presentation on how the proposed development would be laid out, and solicited public comment. At the second, the board and other stakeholders provided testimony, and agreed that the project was a major deviation from approved zoning over large area, and concluded that the Township would need to reexamine its master plan and then work with the developer to see what can be implemented. Several questions were asked following the update:
 - An attendee asked what the constraints of the 200 acre property were. Mr. Guzik said that waterways to the DNR canal made up most of the eastern border, but don't bisect the property or create difficulties for development. They do, however, constrain improvements on Clarksville Rd and on making connections to the train.
 - Matt Lawson, Mercer County, asked about the schedule for reevaluating zoning. Mr. Guzik said that a schedule would be announced in 2018. The Township is funding a consultant to do background work now, but no other work is expected the rest of the year.
 - An attendee asked if there has been coordination with Lawrence Township. Mr Guzik said that the Township plans to share information with Lawrence and Mercer County.
 - Marvin Reed asked if CJTF would send announcements of upcoming public meetings to the listserve. Jackie Davis said that emails would be send with upcoming meetings once they are scheduled.
 - Tom Vigna, North Brunswick, suggested that the Township look at North Brunswick as a case study (cited in the Smart Growth Best Practices Brochure) for incentive zoning. The city had great success in getting the developer to pay for major roadway improvements.
 - Tom Clark, NJ TRANSIT, suggested that, because the project is important to the Forum and the region, that CJTF convene a subcommittee to attend public and stakeholder



meetings and report back to the Forum, and to make an official recommendation on what components of the project are important from a regional perspective. Alison Miller, West Windsor Township council, responded that those decisions and reporting responsibilities should be left to the council, as per her request at the previous meeting. Bill Neary suggested that communication and ongoing conversation is most important. Chuck Latini, Ewing Township consulting planner, suggested that recommendations by the Forum to the council be made at Forum meetings and not be made public.

- Linda Jeevers, West Windsor Township council, added that it doesn't look as though the existing concept plan is the one that will be pushed forward, citing concerns with the impact on local schools, and the amount of proposed housing as being unacceptable to the council.
- Barry Seymour, DVRPC, mentioned that both DVRPC and NJTPA are both in the process of updating their TIPs and LRPs.

There were no further comments. George Ververides made a motion to adjourn. Noting consensus, Bill Neary adjourned the meeting.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, and related nondiscrimination statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. DVRPC's website, www.dvrpc.org, may be translated into multiple languages. Publications and other public documents can be made available in alternative languages and formats, if requested. DVRPC public meetings are always held in ADA-accessible facilities and in transit-accessible locations when possible. Auxiliary services can be provided to individuals who submit a request at least seven days prior to a meeting. Requests made within seven days will be accommodated to the greatest extent possible. Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice by DVRPC under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint. Any such complaint may be in writing and filed with DVRPC's Title VI Compliance Manager and/or the appropriate state or federal agency within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. For more information on DVRPC's Title VI program, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, please call (215) 238-2871 or email public_affairs@dvrpc.org.



Attendees

| Mayors | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-------|-------|
| Bert | Steinmann | Mayor | Ewing |

| Municipal Staff | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Linda | Geevers | Councilwoman | West Windsor Township Council |
| Alison | Miller | Councilwoman | West Windsor Township Council |
| Tom | Vigna | | Township of North Brunswick |
| Chuck | Latini | Consulting Planner | Ewing |
| Theodore | Chase Jr. | Councilman | Franklin Township |
| Davis | Kois | | Hillsborough Township |
| James | Parvesse | Municipal Engineer | Lawrence Township |
| Curt | Emmich | Chair, Planning Board | Millstone Borough |
| Bryan | Bidlack | Director of Planning | South Brunswick Township |
| Les | Varga | | Township of Plainsboro |
| Jeffrey | Wilkerson | | Trenton |
| Francis | Guzik | | West Windsor Township |

| Counties | | | |
|-----------------|------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Kenneth | Wedeen | Supervising Planner | Somerset County |
| Walter | Lane | Director of Planning | Somerset County |
| Matthew | Lawson | Principal Planner-Transportation | County of Mercer |
| Peter | Palmer | Freeholder Director | Somerset County |
| George | Ververides | Director | County of Middlesex Office of Planning |

| Federal Agencies | | | |
|-------------------------|---------|--|---------|
| Calvin | Edghill | Planning & Program Development Manager | FHWA-NJ |

| Metropolitan Planning Organizations | | | |
|--|-----------|--------------------|-------|
| Mike | Boyer | Associate Director | DVRPC |
| Jaclyn | Davis | Senior Planner | DVRPC |
| Barry | Seymour | Executive Director | DVRPC |
| Zenobia | Fields | | NJTPA |
| Nellia | Shakhmina | | NJTPA |

| Other Regional Bodies | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Basil | Giletto | National Account Manager | Mid Jersey Chamber of Commerce |
| Cheryl | Kastrenakes | | Greater Mercer TMA |
| Jack | Kanarek | Senior Project Manager | Dewberry, GMTMA |
| Bill | Neary | | KMM |

| State Departments | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|-------------------|---|
| Barry | Ableman | Principal Planner | State of New Jersey, Office for Planning Advocacy |
| Thomas | Clark | Regional Manager | NJ TRANSIT |



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|----------|----------|--|--|
| Danielle | Graves | Project Manager | NJDOT |
| Tom | Houck | Senior Transportation Planner | NJDOT |
| Monica | Etz | | NJDOT |
| Robert | Tessier | Project Specialist | Department of Community Affairs, Local Planning Services |
| Mike | Viscardi | Assistant Director Federal Projects Planning | NJ TRANSIT |
| Joe | Donnelly | | Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission |
| Robert | Terrier | Project Specialist, Local Planning Services | Department of Community Affairs |

| Other | | | |
|---------------|----------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Jim | Hess | | AECOM |
| Brian | Leckie | Planner, Transportation | Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy |
| Gregg | Fodale | Senior Project Manager | Dewberry Engineers Inc. |
| Patricia Ward | Prutzman | | The Hathaway Group |
| Jared | Kofsky | Reporter | Jersey Digs |
| Lee | Solow | | Princeton |
| Kristin | Appleget | Bloustein School graduate candidate | Rutgers University |
| Samantha | Spagnoli | Bloustein School graduate candidate | Rutgers University |
| Kim | Duehee | Bloustein School graduate candidate | Rutgers University |
| Anna Marie | Gewirtz | | State Theater New Jersey |