

NORTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AUTHORITY, INC.

FREIGHT INITIATIVES COMMITTEE

FREEHOLDER PETER PALMER, CHAIRMAN
FREEHOLDER DAN SULLIVAN, VICE CHAIRMAN

Minutes

June 3, 2008

I. Roll Call of Members

Chairman Palmer called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. There were six voting members present.

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the March 31st meeting was made by Hudson County, seconded by NJ Transit, and carried unanimously.

III. Presentations:

1. Going Green at the Port of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ)

Chairman Palmer introduced Atef Ahmed, Manager, Environmental Programs, PANYNJ. With the aid of a detailed slide presentation, Mr. Ahmed provided an extensive overview of several PANYNJ efforts to improve environmental conditions in the Port area. He said that there are environmental aspects associated with all PANYNJ activities and they have developed an Environmental Management System (EMS) which drives environmental compliance by integrating environmental considerations into their overall business model. Mr. Ahmed noted that environmental and business goals are not mutually exclusive, and he said that part of the PANYNJ's proactive strategy for environmental mitigation includes forming successful working relationships with the Port's tenants, many of whom have taken independent actions that have positive environmental effects (electric cranes, solar roof panels, use of alternative fuels in handling equipment, etc.). Chairman Palmer pointed out the importance of the financial impact of the PANYNJ's "Green Initiatives" on the region's economy.

2. NJTPA Freight Rail Crossing Assessment Study

Chairman Palmer introduced project co-managers Scott Parker, of Jacobs Engineering, and Anne Strauss-Wieder of A. Strauss-Wieder, Inc. He acknowledged team member Bill Sheppard of Atlantic Rail Services, who was not present. The Chairman also thanked the members of the study's Technical Advisory Committee. He noted that the draft study report was distributed to the Committee members prior to the meeting.

Mr. Parker provided an overview of the analysis for the draft study report and described the grade crossing evaluation process. He pointed out that ranking grade crossings is not solely based on safety but also on operational issues and community quality of life. Mr. Parker reported that 64 grade crossings on five rail lines were ranked according to needs, and the five highest ranking crossings are: Inman Avenue, Edison; Cedar Avenue, Middlesex; Old Hook Road, Closter; Route 601, Montgomery, and St. George Avenue, Woodbridge.

Mr. Parker noted that the study delivers a toolbox for evaluating grade crossings and an issues/solution matrix that will be used to plot courses for advancing mitigation projects within the region and beyond. He said that another deliverable of the study is a comprehensive GIS database. Mr. Parker said that next steps include endorsement of the resolution by the FIC, approval of the resolution by the NJTPA Board, advancement of study recommendations, and provision of access to tools and data developed for ongoing evaluation of grade crossings. Chairman Palmer asked the members of the FIC and other Board Trustees if they had any questions about the study, and they did not.

Stewart Weiss, Inman Railroad Committee, reiterated his concern that New Jersey's existing rail system will not have the capacity to move incoming freight through the state, and he suggested that the PANYNJ and the NJTPA make efforts to implement a separate, high-speed freight rail system with no grade crossings. Chairman Palmer pointed out that, while the NJTPA and Nation'sPort deal with wider ranging freight movement issues, the authority of the PANYNJ is limited to the 25 mile radius surrounding the Port area. Mr. Weiss also expressed concern about the possible danger posed by a traffic light that was recently installed near the Inman Avenue crossing.

IV. Action Item

Approval of the Submission of the Freight Rail Crossing Assessment Study to the NJDOT, NJ Transit, Conrail, CSX Corp. and Norfolk Southern Corp. for their Review and Appropriate Follow-up.

A motion to approve the resolution was made by NJDOT, seconded by Hudson County and approved unanimously.

V. Other

Lois Goldman, Central Staff, invited all to the June 26th symposium on the future of transportation, which is one of the many activities planned for the development of the region's long-range plan. She noted that the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Northern New Jersey website could be accessed through a link on the NJTPA home page at www.njtpa.org.

Ms. Goldman requested the opportunity to invite the RTP update consultant team to the fall FIC meeting to explore issues with the Committee members and stakeholders.

VI. Adjournment

At 12:15 p.m. the meeting was adjourned by unanimous verbal acclaim.

FREIGHT INITIATIVES COMMITTEE

Attendance

June 3, 2008

VOTING MEMBERS	
Freeholder Peter Palmer (Chairman)	Somerset County
John Lane	Hudson County
Liza Betz	Union County
Talvin Davis	NJDOT
Rich Wisneski	NJ Transit
Steve Brown	PANYNJ
OTHERS	
Stewart Weiss	Inman Railroad Committee
Erik DeLine	MCDOT
Paul Truban	NJDOT
Kelvin MacKavanash	NJ Short Line Railroad Association
Paul Gessner	Gessner Transportation Consulting LLC
Scott Parker	Jacobs Engineering
Atef Ahmed	PANYNJ
George M. Ververides	Middlesex County
Anne Strauss-Wieder	A. Strauss-Wieder, Inc.
Robert Marcolina	NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection
Eric Bohn	NJ Transit
Amy Hillman	NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection
Ray Tomczak	HWTB
Christopher Titze	CS
Ronald S. Weening	A. Strauss-Wieder, Inc.
Linda Forrester	NJDOT
Walt Lane	Somerset County
Donna Orbach	Bergen County
WGM Goetz	CSX
Brian Wahler	NJ Turnpike Authority
Rich Brundage	NJ Turnpike Authority
Douglas Greenfeld	Jersey City
Mary K. Murphy	Central Staff
Karen Shannon	Central Staff
Cliff Sobel	Central Staff
Ted Matthews	Central Staff
Lois Goldman	Central Staff
Dave Dawson	Central Staff
David Behrend	Central Staff
Hamilton Meghdir	Central Staff
Anson Glock	Central Staff
Megan Kelly	Central Staff
Beverly Morris	Central Staff