

APPROVED
MIDDLESEX COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

MINUTES – April 22, 2014

Attendance Officers

Mr. Richard Zipp, Vice-Chairman

Municipal Representatives

Mr. Paul Larrousse, East Brunswick Township/ National Transit Institute

Mr. Rizwan Baig, South Brunswick Township

Mr. Anthony R. Rodriguez, South Plainfield Borough

Mr. Thomas Cornell, Woodbridge Township

Others

Ms. Jael Davis, 6th Congressional District

Mr. Paul Onish, 14th Legislative District

Mr. Daniel A Lebar, Esq, 18th Legislative Districts

Mr. Michael Kruimer, East Coast Greenway

Mr. Morteza Ansari, Keep Middlesex Moving

Mr. Keith Hamas, North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority

Mr. Randy Fixman, Rutgers University – Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy

Mr. Joseph Steindman, Rutgers University – Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy

Mr. Sean Varsolona, Rutgers University – Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy

Mr. Andras Holzmann, Rutgers University – Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy

Mr. Chris Townley, Rutgers University – Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy

Ms. Dorothy Le, Rutgers University – Department of Transportation and Safety

Ms. Sherri Dawson, Rutgers University

Mr. Daniel Smith, Rutgers University

Mr. Michael Carrigy, Rutgers University

Mr. David Lira, Rutgers University

Ms. Kathaleen Shaw, Middlesex County Department of Business and Education

Mr. Steven Fittante, New Jersey Transit

Mr. Gary Johnson, Citizen Representative

Dr. Richard Brail, Former TCC Chairman

Staff

Mr. Anthony Gambilonghi, Supervisor, Transportation Division

Mr. Bruce McCracken, Principal Planner, Transportation Division

Total in Attendance – 27

I.

Call to Order

- **Statement an Open Public Meetings Act**
- **Pledge Allegiance**

II.

Minutes

March 25, 2014 Minutes were distributed for approval at the next meeting.

Motion to approve the January 28, 2014 Minutes, as amended, was made by Mr. Paul Onish seconded by Mr. Thomas Cornell and motion carried unanimously.

III.

- A. Welcome/ (Vice) Chairman's Remarks – Vice-Chairman Zipp called the meeting to order in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. He welcomed all that were in attendance of the meeting and administered the Pledge of Allegiance.
- B. Sign in Reminder – Members were reminded to sign the attendance sheet.
- C. Correspondence – Mr. Gambilonghi discussed a workshop held in the Borough of Dunellen sponsored by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority and New Jersey Institute of Technology on Transit Supportive Development. Dunellen is located in the area of the Route 529 Corridor, which is within the study area of an upcoming County study on transit and bicycling – pedestrian improvements. The PowerPoint presentation promoted transit services that can help leverage redevelopment and economic growth. An information handout was included in the packets.

Mr. Gambilonghi provided information concerning the closing of the Pulaski Skyway. Travel alert information is available in English and Spanish relating to alternate routes and real time traffic updates. A flyer was also included in packets.

- D. Comments – None

IV. Introduction of TCC Members –

Mr. Richard Zipp introduced himself as Vice-Chairman of the Transportation Coordinating Committee. All persons and members in attendance of the meeting introduced themselves and what organization(s) they represented.

- V. **Special Item:** Study on Transit Improvements for the Northwest Area of Middlesex County Presented by the Rutgers University - Transit Planning Studio Students. Facilitators included Mr. Paul Larrousse, Director, National Transit Institute and Mr. Steven Fittante, Director, Local Programs, NJ Transit.

Mr. Larrousse provided an overview of the Edward J Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy Master of City and Regional Planning (M.C.R.P.) Program at Rutgers

University. The Transit Studio project is for students to examine sections of northwestern Middlesex County and determine the urbanized area(s) that lack transportation services.

Students of the transit studio utilized a PowerPoint illustration to further depict the study. The goal of the study is to improve transit connectivity for those who live, work, or simply have a connection to the study area. The boundaries of the study area include:

- Route 22 – North
- Route US 1 – South
- Park Avenue (CR 531) – East
- Raritan River – West (Some areas within Somerset County that can generate transit trips to and from points in the New Brunswick – Piscataway area have also been included in the study).

Municipalities include: Bound Brook, Dunellen, Edison, Highland Park, Metuchen, Middlesex, New Brunswick, Piscataway, Plainfield, and South Plainfield.

Characteristics of the study area:

Raritan Valley Train Stations are located in Bound Brook, Dunellen, and Plainfield.

Northeast Corridor Train Stations are located in Edison, Metuchen, and New Brunswick.

Other areas of interest and transportation corridors:

- Raritan Center - Edison
- Hadley Center - South Plainfield
- Middlesex Mall - South Plainfield
- Middlesex County College - Edison
- Rutgers University –New Brunswick and Piscataway
- Park Avenue – Edison and Piscataway
- Centennial Avenue – Piscataway
- Talmadge Road – Edison and Piscataway
- Stelton Road – Edison and Piscataway
- Route 22 – Entire corridor
- Apartment Buildings – throughout all towns listed

Collectively, the idea is to create new transit corridors as an approach to provide more intermodal modes to the underserved areas due to demographic changes and demand patterns. The new service will fill in gaps with new intrastate bus service.

Four modified routes were discussed and six new routes were highlighted:

Route #1 – runs from Piscataway to Metuchen along Centennial Avenue and New Durham Road. Major trip generators include; Metuchen Rail Station, Shopping Plazas, Middlesex Mall, Piscataway Town Centre, and Centennial Avenue employers with 50 or more employees along the route. Transportation would operate in 30 minute headways all day, seven days a week, with fewer hours on the weekend.

Route #2 - runs between Hillsborough to New Brunswick. Major generators include; Downtown New Brunswick, Rutgers University-Busch Campus, Office Parks, Birchview Apartments in Piscataway, Bound Brook Rail Station, Bridgewater Promenade, Bridgewater Rail Station and Baseball Park, the Marketplace at Manville, and Hillsborough Promenade.

Transportation would operate in 30 minute headways all day, seven days a week, with fewer hours on the weekend. Access to both Raritan Valley Line and Northeast Corridor rail stations would provide connectively throughout the area.

Route #3 – runs from Plainfield into New Brunswick along Seventh Avenue, links to Route 18 and Busch Campus Center. Commuters currently use the Raritan Valley train line (westbound) to Bound Brook transfer to the County bus to get into New Brunswick. Trip generators include Downtown New Brunswick, Rutgers University-Busch Campus, Piscataway Municipal Complex, Centennial Avenue, and Plainfield Rail Station.

In addition, a meter bus transfer point located at the west end of Centennial Avenue was introduced. Transportation would operate in 30 minute headways all day, seven days a week, with fewer hours on the weekend.

Route #4 – Plainfield to Middlesex County College. Located on Executive Avenue are warehouse and industrial employers, the route would provide access to employment opportunities and connect to rail lines. Middlesex County College expressed a strong need for additional transit services to their facilities. Transportation would operate in 30 minute headways all day, seven days a week. Several trip generators include; Downtown Plainfield and Rail Station, Blueberry/ Edison Village Apartments, Edison Rail Station, and Wick Shopping Plaza.

Route #5 – North Brunswick to Edison. Trip generators include; DeVry Campus and Technical Center of NJ, Brunswick Shopping Center, North Brunswick Township Government Buildings, New Brunswick, Highland Park Cedar Lane Apartments, Edison and Kilmer Motor Vehicle Commission Offices, and Edison Station. Transportation would operate in 30 minute peak frequency, 60 minute off-peak frequency, six days a week

Route #6 –Edison Station Shuttle. Sufficient demand for additional peak hour services is needed. People would have access to the Northeast Corridor without the need for someone driving them to the station. Trip generators are single and multifamily housing in Edison and Piscataway, and concentration of jobs on Stelton Road and Ethel Road. Transportation would operate in 15 minute peak frequency (6am-8am & 5pm-7pm), 30 minute off-peak frequency (other times), five days a week. There would be three different shuttles that would accommodate various locations.

At the conclusion of the presentation, questions and comments were taken from members of the TCC.

Dr. Brail suggested that the final report include the following description of:

- Time transfer points where routes connect;
- Modal splits which identifies transit dependent riders;
- Shuttle services in some detail;
- Metuchen Borough parking impact relief provided by shuttles; and
- Some estimates of costs to provide proposed services.

In answer to questions from Vice-Chair Zipp, Mr. Larrousse stated that NJ Transit would give a metric to run, which is the primary goal to increase connectivity and access. The cost factor would be left to NJ Transit. It is up to NJ Transit to select the 45 passenger for peak and 20 passengers for off-peak hours, adjusting to road demands. He further explained that the driver is a large part of the fix cost and cost per gallon was not a large factor in bus size choice for operations. It is also understood that demands for bus service builds slowly with new startup service, possibly 3-4 years may be needed.

Mr. Johnson suggested a meeting with Somerset County (DASH) in regards to routes in Bound Brook, which serve Easton Avenue job locations and hotels that connect to New Brunswick. The connection to the Northeast Corridor at New Brunswick should be a threshold for new service such as bus lines 851, 852, and 853. There were further recommendations on possible connection service at Edison Train Station *via Stelton Road* over to Dunellen Train Station with variations to serve pickup points. Mr. Johnson noted he would send his comments in writing to County Office of Planning Staff for submission to the Studio Class prior to the final report.

Vice-Chair Zipp on behalf of the TCC commended Mr. Paul Larrousse, Mr. Steve Fittante, and the students of the transit studio for a job well done, and congratulated the students for completing a rather in-depth study. It was acknowledged that the study could potentially lead to new improvement(s) of transit services in a vital area of the County. Mr. Larrousse stated that the presentation is also scheduled to be made to NJ Transit officials at NJ Transit Headquarters, and copies of the final report will be given to the County as the clients of the study.

VI. Staff Reports

A. New Jersey Department of Transportation – Denise Peck
Absent.

B. New Jersey Transit – Steven Fittante
In response to an inquiry regarding the integration of transit and bicycling accommodations, Mr. Fittante reported that NJ Transit's intra State buses are equipped with bicycle racks which provide an important feature in moderate density suburban locations, such as the Study area of the Studio Class.

C. North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) – Keith Hamas
Mr. Hamas discussed an upcoming technology workshop that will be held at the NJTPA offices in Newark on May 21, 2014. The workshop will be on Developing Opportunities

for Information Technology (DO IT) and the focus will be on data sharing from real time bus information and its application(s).

Mr. Hamas also discussed the NJTPA sponsored Pedestrian Safety Campaign pilot program completion of the first phase that involved five municipalities including Woodbridge Township. Mr. Hamas reported Woodbridge Township had a 26% reduction in the observation and number of people “J” walking across the street. There also was a reduction in right-turn vehicle accidents. Mr. Hamas also reported on the solicitation that NJTPA has issued to its member subregions involving the FY 2015 and FY 2016 Local Safety and High Risk Rural Roads Programs that is being sponsored in collaboration with NJDOT. The application deadline is approaching. The programs involve the use of federal funds to address safety hot spots and deficiencies, signage, and so forth. Information on the Street Smart Program is available online www.beststreetsmartnj.org.

D. New Jersey Turnpike Authority – Richard Brundage

Absent.

E. Rutgers – The State University – Dorothy Le

Ms. Le noted that the Ciclovía event in New Brunswick will take place May 4th, July 12th, and October 12th, 2014. The event opens the street to residents and visitors by closing roads along a special route of about 3 miles, and on a specific day people can use designated streets to walk, bike, skate, dance, stroll and play without the presence of vehicles. Ms. Le also reported that the University will submit an application for more bicycles in year 2015 as part of the bike share program.

Mr. Fittante suggested that the bike program be included in Rutgers daily activities next year.

Mr. Larrousse suggested that the bus shelter pad across from Katsenbach Hall on Ryders Lane needs to be looked at for ADA regulations regarding accessibility for the disabled.

F. KMM – Keep Middlesex Moving - Morteza Ansari –

Mr. Ansari announced April 22nd as International Earth Day and distributed literature.

G. Middlesex County Department of Community Services – Laila Caune

Absent.

H. Middlesex County Engineering Office / Traffic Safety – Richard Wallner

Absent.

I. Middlesex County Transportation, Board of Social Services – Nancy Nicola

Absent.

J. TCC Bikeways – Pedestrian Task Force – Guy Gaspari
Absent.

K. Middlesex County Improvement Authority – Denise Nickel
Absent.

L. East Coast Greenway Alliance (ECGA) – Mike and Ann Kruimer
Mr. Kruimer reported on upcoming events:

5/3	CJBC 30 th Annual Farmlands Flat Bicycle Tour – Brookdale Community College
5/4	New Brunswick Cyclovia
5/10	Big Walk – 50 miles along the ECGA Route from Metro Park to NY Penn Station
5/18	Bicycle Tour of Edison/Metuchen
6/7	Times Square to Riverton Ride
6/14	CJBC's Longest Day Ride
6/19 – 6/20	Cabot Cheese Ride (from Jacksonville, FL to New York City, will also be in NJ)

M. TCC Transit Subcommittee – Paul Larrousse, Chairman and
Facilitator of Transit Improvement Study Presentation. No further comments.

N. Academy Bus Co – Chuck Kassinger
Absent.

O. Suburban Transit / Coach USA – Ron Kohn
Absent.

P. Business Development and Education – Kathaleen Shaw
No Report.

Q. Transportation News Update – Bruce McCracken
Mr. McCracken highlighted the following news articles that were distributed in the packet for information:

Distracted-driving campaign will target unsafe drivers	Pg. 1
Rutgers (College Ave) Construction	Pg. 2
Editorial: Hitting the brakes on red-light cameras	Pg. 3
Experts bullish on Citi Bike	Pg. 4
Tesla temporarily plugged back into NJ	Pg. 5
Route 35 repairs loom as roadblock to tourism	Pg. 6
PA broken by debt, pet projects	Pg. 7
Another Jersey Mayor is joining the fight to turn off red-light cameras	Pg. 8
Editorial: A closer look at red-light cameras	Pg. 9
Editorial: NJ red-light program	Pg. 10
Beneath the Pulaski – 82 years of Decay	Pg. 11
Editorial: Driven to Distraction and Danger	Pg. 12

Newark Liberty monorail, train to shut for repairs	Pg. 13
NYC bike-share program can't keep financial balance	Pg. 14
Marina racked by Sandy gets shipshape for summer	Pg. 15
Op.Ed Speaker: Nudge the gas tax to help fix our lousy roads	Pg. 16
Students launch 'Scarlet Zone' project safety	Pg. 17
Petition aims for free NJ Transit passes	Pg. 18
Editorial: Cell phone \$100 fine ineffective	Pg. 19
NJ aims to curb distracted driving era	Pg. 20
Skyway test is delayed by holidays	Pg. 21
"Carmagedon" nowhere in sight	Pg. 22
Transport Chief: Federal aid for highways will run dry	Pg. 23
The spending bender also known as the tax extender	Pg. 24

R. Staff Activities – George Ververides – Absent.

VII.

A. TCC Member Comments- None

B. Public Comments - None

VIII.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Paul Larrousse, seconded by Mr. Michael Kruimer and motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Danielle A. Britton
Middlesex County Transportation Coordinating Committee