

APPROVED
MIDDLESEX COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

MINUTES – February 23, 2016

Attendance Officers

Mr. Paul Larrousse, Chairman
Mr. Tom Vigna, Vice Chairman

Municipal Representatives

Mr. Dennis McFadden, Carteret Borough
Mr. David Cook, Cranbury Township
Ms. Susan Goetz, Cranbury Township
Mr. Mark Kataryniak, Edison Township
Lt. Gary Panichella, Highland Park Borough
Mr. Scott Derector, Metuchen Borough
Mr. Thomas D. Valenti, New Brunswick City
Mr. Allan Marcus, Old Bridge Township
Lt. Andy Montalvo, Perth Amboy City
Mr. Guadalupe Munoz, Perth Amboy City
Mr. Len Miller, South Plainfield Borough
Mr. Tom Cornell, Woodbridge Township

Others

Mr. Paul Onish, 14th Legislative District
Mr. Daniel A. Lebar, Esq, 18th Legislative Districts
Mr. Donald Newton, 19th Legislative District
Mr. John Ferguson, County Emergency Management
Ms. Denise Nickel, County Improvement Authority
Mr. Mike Kruimer, East Coast Greenway Alliance
Mrs. Ann Kruimer, East Coast Greenway Alliance
Mr. Peter Bilton, Highland Park Borough Resident
Mr. James Karamanos, Highland Park Borough Resident
Mr. Kevin Dunn, New Jersey Turnpike Authority
Mr. Zachary Subar, Rutgers University – Dept. of Transportation Services

Staff

Mr. George Ververides, Director, Office of Planning
Mr. Anthony Gambilonghi, Supervisor, Transportation Division
Mr. Bruce McCracken, Principal Planner, Transportation Division
Mr. Ryan Rapp, Principal Planner, Transportation Division
Mr. Richard Wallner, County Engineer, Office of Engineering

Total in Attendance – 30

I. Call to Order

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

II. Minutes

November 4, 2015 Minutes were distributed for approval at the next meeting.

Motion to approve the September 29, 2015 Minutes was made and seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Welcome/ Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Larrousse called the reorganization meeting to order in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Chairman welcomed all that were in attendance of the meeting and called for the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman acknowledged all new TCC members.

The following transportation planning initiatives and activities within Middlesex County were highlighted:

- Route 516 Bridge deck over Route 18 Replacement
- Exit 9/Route 18 Turnpike Reconstruction
- Middlesex County Greenway Extension
- Delco Lead Train Safe Haven Storage and Inspection Facility Project
- Middlesex County Yard Improvements Program
- North Brunswick Transit Village and Train Station
- Amtrak Gateway Program

Chairman Larrousse mentioned that for the first time in a decade Congress has approved a multi-year transportation funding bill. The 5-year plan will increase funding for highways by \$2.1 billion over the current \$50 billion level in the first year and \$6.1 billion in the final year, 2020. Federal transit funding will increase from its current \$8.6 billion rate to nearly \$10.6 billion over the same period.

Sign in Reminder

Chairman Larrousse reminded the public to sign the attendance sheet.

Correspondence – None.

Freeholder Comments – Absent.

Introduction of TCC Members

Mr. Paul Larrousse introduced himself as Chairman of the Transportation Coordinating Committee. Mr. Tom Vigna introduced himself as Vice Chairman. All persons and members in attendance of the meeting introduced themselves and what organization(s) they represented.

IV. Special Item: Middlesex County 2010 – 2016 Capital Transportation Program for State Aid

Presented by: Richard Wallner, Middlesex County Engineer

Mr. Wallner reported on the FY 2016 Capital Transportation Program State Aid. He discussed transportation projects throughout the sub region, which were categorized on a priority list for discussion. State funds are programmed at \$1.6Billion.

The Capital Program reflects the need to prioritize spending. Monies are applied to eligible projects in the region on a first come, first serve basis. Municipal infrastructure improvements go into a pool for when funding becomes available. Middlesex County received \$ 5,894,000 to implement awarded projects under the program.

The following criteria must be met for project eligibility:

- Municipal recommendation;
- Design phase completed;
- Acquired property;
- Municipal and State Permits obtained; and
- Projects should be in Bid phase.

Chairman Larrousse read into record the resolution to approve and send the resolution to the Board of Chosen Freeholders as a recommendation to endorse the implementation of FY2010-2016 Capital Transportation State Aid Program.

Motion made by Mr. Tom Cornell, Woodbridge Township and seconded by Mr. Dan Lebar, Esq., 18th Legislative Districts. Motion carried.

V. Special Item: Route 529 Corridor Study Draft Technical Report

Presented by: Ryan Rapp, Principal Planner

Mr. Paul Larrousse provided a brief synopsis of the two-year grant study awarded by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) for FY 2015 - 2016. The study explores ways to improve bicycling and pedestrian accommodations and intermodal mobility along the Corridor including connections between bus and rail and walking and bicycling trips that are made and to train services along the Northeast Corridor and Raritan Valley rail lines.

Mr. Rapp presented the draft technical report that outlines various approaches and recommendations to identifying ways to enhance transit services, bicycling and pedestrian improvements to the Route 529 Corridor study area. Existing and future growth in the Corridor is being examined to determine opportunities for transit service expansion along with bicycling and pedestrian improvements to serve points of interest and employment along the corridor and in nearby Counties including Somerset and Union. A general demographic summary was reported, in addition to passenger boarding counts and overall future trends within the study area. An inventory of various shoulders, pedestrian facilities (i.e. bus shelters, bicycle racks, etc.), signalized intersections and sidewalk classifications were described.

The study area begins at the southern end of Woodbridge Avenue at Plainfield Avenue, Stelton Road through Piscataway, onto Washington Avenue, toward Route 22 in Green Brook. Major roadways in the area include I- 287; US Routes 1 and 22; Routes 18, 27 and 28; CR501 (New Durham Road); CR 514 (Woodbridge Avenue); CR 601 (West Seventh Street); CR 609 (Metlars Lane); CR 665 (South Washington + others).

There is approximately 8.6 miles of roadway that encompasses nine municipalities in three counties, covering over 21 square miles; Middlesex County (Dunellen, Edison, Highland Park, Middlesex, Piscataway, and South Plainfield), Somerset County (Green Brook and North Plainfield), and Union County (Plainfield).

The study attempts to address what is lacking in transit services; looks at what can be done to improve transit along the corridor to serve existing and new developments and underserved activity centers, and explores better linkages between the Northeast Corridor and Raritan Valley rail services via the Edison and Dunellen train stations. Opportunities for improving existing fixed route bus service; although the corridor has limited north – south bus service, it is however crossed at various points with a number of bus routes connecting local and regional destinations. Other items identified included providing new shuttle service, bicycling and pedestrian facilities and access accommodations. Ways of improving coordination of transit information among service providers and improving service levels and safety of bicycling and pedestrian facilities to nearby points of interest are being examined.

Mr. Rapp discussed the role of the Steering Committee and reported on the following meetings:

- 1st Steering Committee Meeting was held on November 13, 2014;
- 1st Public Open House Meeting was held on June 15, 2015;
- 2nd Steering Committee Meeting was held on December 3, 2015;
- 2nd Second Public Open House scheduled for March 7, 2016; and
- 3rd Steering Committee Meeting to finalize report including recommendations to be submitted before April 30, 2016.

Staff Reports

A. New Jersey Department of Transportation – Uzoma Anuke

Absent.

B. New Jersey Transit –Thomas Clark

Absent.

C. North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) – Keith Hamas

Absent.

D. New Jersey Turnpike Authority – Kevin Dunn

Mr. Dunn reported on current activities within Middlesex County:

- Interchange 9 and Route 18; improvements to accommodate better existing and future projected traffic volumes utilizing the interchange and along Route 18. The ramp from Route 18 southbound to the Turnpike will be widened to two lanes, and Route 18 will be shifted to the east to minimize impacts to the adjacent residential neighborhood. The merge of Route 18 northbound traffic with vehicles entering from the Turnpike will also be modified to improve traffic flow. *Status: 85% completed.*
- Interchange 10; ramp improvements will be undertaken to accommodate existing and future projected traffic volumes utilizing the interchange. The ramp carrying traffic from the toll plaza to the southbound Turnpike will be widened to two lanes and other ramps will be realigned to minimize traffic weaving and improve traffic flow. *Status: 85% complete, and behind schedule due to change in contractor.*

- Interchange 125; reconfiguration to accommodate existing traffic volumes and the future growth resulting from the development of the National Lend property. New ramps from the Garden State Parkway southbound and to the Parkway northbound will provide full access to Chevalier Avenue and the waterfront development. Schedule:
Status: Advertising phase. 2-year project.

E. Rutgers – The State University – Jennifer Stuart, Leigh Ann Kimber

Mr. Subar reported on the transportation element of the Rutgers State University Master Plan.
Status: Analysis Phase.

F. KMM – Keep Middlesex Moving –William Neary, Morteza Ansari

Absent.

G. Middlesex County Area Transit Services – Laila Caune, Phil Sherdan

No Report.

H. Middlesex County Engineering Office – Richard Wallner

Absent.

I. Middlesex County Improvement Authority – Denise Nickel

Ms. Nickel discussed free technical assistance services funded by the US Fish and Wildlife Foundation that will support local efforts to increase resiliency to the water-related impacts of climate change. Ms. Nickel noted that letters will go out to municipalities about the services in early March.

The “Building Ecological Solutions to Coastal Community Hazards” program will assist municipal teams to analyze local assets, plans, policies and current resiliency measures to enhance resiliency for the coastal communities. Several ecological-based services are provided in the program:

- Coastal Vulnerabilities Assessments (CVA)
- Getting to Resilience (GTR) Assistance
- Ecologically-based Hazard Mitigation Planning Assistance

J. East Coast Greenway Alliance (ECGA) – Mike and Ann Kruimer

Mr. Kruimer announced upcoming events:

- 2/27/16 NJ Bike/Walk Summit in Washington, DC
- 3/9 – 11/16 National Bike Summit in Washington, DC
- 3/20/16 Trenton to Princeton; Spring Warm up
- 4/9/16 Trenton to New Brunswick ; Canal Walk
- 4/16/16 New Brunswick to Metro Park; Tween Walk
- 5/7/16 CJBC Farmlands Tour
- 5/15/16 Edison – Metuchen Bike Tour
- 5/15/16 Union County History Walk
- 5/21/16 Metro Park to New York City; Bike Walk

K. Middlesex County Office of Emergency Management – John Ferguson

Absent.

L. Academy Bus Co – Chuck Kassinger
Absent.

M. Suburban Transit / Coach USA – Michael Beltranena
Absent.

N. Business Development and Education – Kathaleen Shaw, Carla Cefalo
Absent

O. CR 529 Corridor Study Update –Tony Gambilonghi
Mr. Gambilonghi announced that the Second Public Open House meeting will be held on Monday, March 7, 2016 from 6PM to 8:30PM at the Stelton Community Center located at 328 Plainfield Avenue, Edison, NJ.

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

City is unlikely to seek limit on Uber fleet	Pg. 5
\$350B Transportation Bill	Pg. 7
Bridge discount between New Jersey, PA. goes into effect	Pg. 8
Obama signs law providing \$8.4B for Jersey roads and transit	Pg. 10
Sayreville: Plans ramped up for new Parkway exit	Pg. 14
Google disappointed over self-drive car rules	Pg. 22
NJ Transit board confirms interim boss	Pg. 26
Cuomo to back Penn Station redo	Pg. 29
Driver distraction is biggest killer on roads, report finds	Pg. 33
Freeholder back as chairman of transit agency for 2yr term	Pg. 41
Officials seek feedback on high speed rail plan	Pg. 43
Economic Shift from Suburbs to Cities	Pg. 47
Railroad Administration Plans Future of Northeast Corridor	Pg. 49

Q. Staff Activities – George Ververides
Mr. Ververides highlighted major project happenings in the region that impacts the growth of the County and transportation network: (1) Development of new warehouses; truck traffic and freight rail (2) urban centers being a major hub especially with development of seaports, i.e. Hoboken, (3) North Jersey Coastline Bridge and (4) pending New Jersey Transit strike. Mr. Ververides emphasized the continuous distress of traffic volume and congestion.

VI.

A. TCC Member Comments –

There was a question regarding freight funding projects. Mr. Ververides stated NJTPA established a subcommittee to discuss how funding would be allotted to the various regions, but was unaware of a March deadline to submit a grant application. There was further discussion on Parsons Brinckerhoff Engineering firm to meet with Middlesex County to assess the regions critical land resources to support waterborne freight and passenger transportation.

Mr. Cook discussed the New Jersey Turnpike project between Interchange 8 and 8a. He commented that Cranbury Township has 9 million square feet of proposed warehouse space on

the border for roadway being designed and prepared for construction. The township is being affected directly with increased truck traffic. 48,000 truck trips have been projected from warehouses located east of Route 130. Mr. Cook requested the assistance of Middlesex County and the TCC in responding to the needed action to mitigate the impacts of the truck traffic.

Mr. Onish inquired about completion dates for the Pulaski Skyway and Goethals Bridge Replacement Project. Chairman Larrousse replied that the Pulaski Skyway project is being carried out by way of contracts and is expected to be completed in year, 2020. The Port Authority has jurisdiction over the Goethals Bridge and is expected to be completed in year, 2018.

There was discussion on municipal bus shelters and who is responsible for the safety and maintenance of the structures.

There was discussion about traffic signals on Industrial Avenue, Roselle Avenue, and Harris Street in Carteret Borough. Chairman Larrousse stated that the County has jurisdiction.

B. Public Comments – None

VII. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn the meeting was moved by Tom Cornell, seconded by Mike Kruimer. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Danielle A. Britton, Secretary
Middlesex County Transportation Coordinating Committee