Proposed Restoration of Passenger Rail Service on the West Trenton Line

Appendix K: Public Involvement

November 2007
APPENDIX K
Public Involvement

Database and Environmental Assessment Distribution
During the course of the project, the consultant team created and maintained an electronic database of individuals who were involved in the public outreach activities or who had indicated an interest in the project in some way. This database contains the name, contact information, and affiliation (if applicable) of each person as well as the members of the Technical Advisory and Community Liaison Committees, and elected officials from all levels of government. Approximately 350 names are included in the database.

The announcement of availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment has been distributed to the individuals and agencies included in the database. Repositories of the document have been given a hard copy for public viewing. These repositories consist of study area libraries and the planning departments of the two study area counties. These specific repository locations are listed in Section 7 as well as the list of key stakeholders and elected officials that received an electronic version of the Draft Environmental Assessment.

Newsletter
Three project newsletters, titled West Trenton Rail Line News, were published and distributed during the course of the project. These newsletters contained descriptive information about the project, proposed operating characteristics and service plans, and summary comments about the findings of the Environmental Assessment. NJ TRANSIT contact information for the project was also included.

The first issue of the newsletter was published in March 2000. It was distributed as inserts in the Trenton Times, along with the various weekly newspapers in the Packets Publications family (Princeton Packet, Tempo Middlesex-Somerset, Hillsborough Beacon, and others), with a combined circulation of about 103,000 readers in the Somerset and Mercer County areas.

The second issue was published in November 2004, and was mailed directly to all of the people on the project mailing list. A total of 575 newsletters were printed, of which 250 were mailed to the members of the various committees and the general public, while the remaining 325 were distributed to the Technical Advisory Committee member agencies and to the attendees of the two public Open House meetings.

Published in November 2007, the third issue of the newsletter was distributed in conjunction with the release of the Draft Environmental Assessment for public review and comment. Hard copies were mailed to all individuals on the distribution list, a total of approximately 300 mailings. Additional copies of the newsletter will be available to the attendees of two Public Meetings to be held in November and December 2007.¹

External Committees
A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was created for the purpose of providing technical input to the client and consultant team at key milestones during the project. The TAC consisted of NJ TRANSIT representatives, state and county planning staff, Federal representatives (including the Federal Transit Administration and Federal Railroad Administration), New Jersey Department of

¹The final round of public meetings, one in Mercer County and one in Somerset County, were scheduled prior to the release of the Draft Environmental Assessment to the public.
Transportation (NJDOT) and other state agencies, the two metropolitan planning organizations in the study area (the New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority for Somerset County, and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission for Mercer County), and the major freight railroads in New Jersey (CSX, Norfolk Southern, and Conrail). The Committee met twice during the course of the project – in the early stages of the EA in November 1999 and at the conclusion of the major technical work in November 2004.

A Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was assembled early in the project to serve in an advisory role on matters related to the project scope, study area, and other issues. The CLC included NJ TRANSIT representatives, state and county planning staff, elected officials, public advocacy groups, and neighborhood associations. The Committee met in November 1999 in the early stages of the project, primarily to provide input regarding the scope of the project and locations of proposed stations on the West Trenton Line, and on other elements of the project’s public outreach process.

Open Houses
Open House meetings were held at major project milestones to present key elements of the project to the public and give interested parties the opportunity to provide input. These meetings were announced in local newspaper advertisements and in the aforementioned project newsletters. Subsequent to these meetings, several local and regional newspapers reported on them.

Three rounds of Open House meetings were held. In March 2000, an overall description of the project was presented, including maps of the study area, preliminary station sites, and conceptual drawings of potential station buildings. The results of the Environmental Assessment process were presented at a second round of meetings in December 2004.

The final round (Round 3) of public meetings in November and December 2007 provide interested parties an opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Assessment. A Public Comments Memorandum will be produced and will become part of the Draft EA document.

The public meetings were also announced on NJ TRANSIT’s website in English and Spanish. The dates, locations, and times of all three rounds of meetings are listed below:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
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<td>March 22, 2000</td>
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<td>June 14, 2000</td>
<td>Historic Train Station, Hopewell</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Round 3</td>
<td>November 29, 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December 6, 2007</td>
<td>Ewing Community/Senior Center</td>
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Each round of Open House meetings provided adequate geographic coverage for residents interested in the West Trenton Line. NJDOT headquarters in Trenton and the Ewing Community/Senior Center were used for meetings in Mercer County, while the Somerset County meetings were held in the Hillsborough Municipal Complex.

An additional Open House meeting was held at the historic train station in Hopewell Borough in
June 2000 after the initial round of public meetings in June 2000, due to some specific concerns related to the proposed station site in the borough.

All Open House meetings had a similar format: visual displays were used to present project-related information to the public, and members of the project team (NJ TRANSIT and consultant staff) were present to meet the public and answer questions. Attendees were asked to sign in at the door, and comment sheets were available for anyone who wished to provide input on the project or request additional information. Any individual whose name and contact information appeared on a sign-in sheet was added to the mailing list.

**County and Municipal Meetings**

NJ TRANSIT and members of the consultant team met with officials from Somerset and Mercer counties and the study area municipalities. Multiple meetings were held with these officials during the preparation of the draft Environmental Assessment to brief them on project progress and to gain municipal and county feedback.

The meetings included topics such as proposed station locations and access, design and location of the rail storage yard, proposed and planned municipal/county development plans, infrastructure improvements in proximity to the proposed station sites, and potential impacts and mitigation measures. Input received at these meetings helped guide the evolution of the proposed project as described in this Draft Environmental Assessment.
Technical Advisory Committee Minutes
An agenda (attached) was distributed. The following presents the highlights of the discussion.

**Introductions**
Everyone introduced themselves and indicated which organization they represented. Roz Diamond, NJ TRANSIT’s Project Manager, reviewed the agenda for the meeting and gave some background about the West Trenton Rail Line Study.
Community Participation

Community participation tools for the West Trenton project consist of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the Community Liaison Committee (CLC), Open Houses, Newsletters and meetings with affected municipalities. The first Community Liaison Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 30th at Somerset County’s Freeholders meeting room. Tom Clark, NJT’s Regional Manager of Community Relations, will serve as the CLC’s chair. During that meeting, the CLC members will be given a project update and background information so that they can inform their respective organizations about the project. Two newsletters will be prepared as part of the project. The first one is expected to cover background information and will be issued shortly. Both newsletters are expected to be distributed through the local newspapers to allow for a wider distribution than could be expected through a mailing. Meetings with municipalities expected to host a station will be held along with Open Houses to inform and get feedback from residents of each county. A TAC member questioned whether the public and/or the press would be welcome at the CLC meetings. In general, the CLC meetings will be by invitation only; however, members of the public or the press will not be turned away.

Passenger Demand Estimates and Proposed Service Plan

Tom Marchwinski, NJ TRANSIT’s Director of Transportation Modeling, presented the passenger demand estimates and the service plan. NJ TRANSIT updated the North Jersey Transportation Demand Model that was also used for the West Shore project and worked with Cambridge Systematics Inc. (CSI) to verify the techniques used. The model is a multistate model, because jurisdictional boundaries are meaningless when making commuting choices. The model was also updated with Midtown Direct information and assumes that the Secaucus Transfer, the Hudson-Bergen rail line, Hamilton Station on the northeast corridor (NEC), and the new Union/Townley station in Union County are operational. The forecast year is 2020.

The service plan initially proposes seven trains in each direction, five AM inbound and five PM outbound trains, one AM reverse peak and one PM reverse peak train, and one off-peak train in each direction. The remainder will be diverted from existing lines. The West Trenton service also adds service to the Raritan Valley Line (RVL). This increased RVL service will also attract new RVL riders.

Tom Morgan, NJ TRANSIT’s Director of Rail Service Planning, said that other service plan options may be examined for implementation after service start-up, including a plan with more midday/off peak or reverse peak service.

John Dawson of DVRPC asked whether developments, such as the Merrill Lynch Development in Hopewell Township, were included as part of the ridership estimates. Tom Marchwinski noted that County staffs were consulted and, with their guidance, adjustments were made to the model. The Merrill Lynch development was included and has its own zone. Mr. Dawson also asked if Pennsylvania trip ends were included. Mr. Marchwinski noted that Pennsylvania trip ends were handled outside of the model and were included.

A question was asked about why the AM peak boardings were so low on Table 2 for the I-95 station. The response was that the model shows that most people would drive to Hamilton Station on the NEC Line for faster service to Newark and New York instead of boarding at the I-95 station.

A TAC member asked about increased ridership on the NEC due to the freed up parking spaces. Tom Marchwinski indicated that there is extra capacity available at the Hamilton and Trenton stations now, and therefore it is unlikely that the spaces freed at NEC stations by the West Trenton project would be the catalyst of new NEC riders.

A question was raised about whether the service could be extended to Jenkinstown in Pennsylvania since in the past it had been an active station. Jack Kanarek, NJ TRANSIT’s Senior Director of Planning and Project Development, said that the operational capacity has driven the current service plan. While NJ TRANSIT is open to suggestions about the proposed service plan, there are operational issues that make it difficult to consider service into Pennsylvania at this time. Also, the 1990 census data showed that there is
not much demand for service into Pennsylvania due to improvements to the highway network and also the new Hamilton Station.

A TAC member wanted to know whether the forecasts will be revisited after land use information is collected from the counties. Tom Marchwinski said that the forecasts probably will not be changed because the initial effort was based on information provided from the counties with their concurrence. Also, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) does not allow credit to be taken for it.

Jack Kanarek gave an overview of the line, discussed coordination with the freight operators, and discussed operational and infrastructure issues. NJ TRANSIT staff has been working closely with the railroad operators. The line starts in West Trenton in Ewing Township and is owned by CSX. CSX is anticipating significant long-term growth. SEPTA service terminates at the station, and freight service runs a double track north to I-95 and then single track to where it meets with the Lehigh Valley Line at Port Reading Junction. Former passenger service ran along the Lehigh Line to the RVL.

A question was raised about what type of crossing is expected at the Lehigh line. NJ TRANSIT was assuming an at-grade diamond cross-over. Norfolk Southern (NS) representative, Alex Jordan, indicated that NS would require a grade-separated crossing.

In response to a question about the location of the West Trenton train storage yard, Jack Kanarek stated that the yard may be located on a parcel south of Sullivan Way on State property. The parcel is controlled by the Treasury Department, and NJ TRANSIT has been given an initial positive indication that the property could be used for a train storage yard, but further work to establish this site is necessary.

A recommendation was made that the Lehigh Line flyover infrastructure improvements be coordinated with the Manville Yard improvement project.

A member asked how much traffic the Norfolk Southern expects on the Lehigh Line, and whether it is single or double tracked. Norfolk Southern representative, Alex Jordan, replied that there are currently about 40 trains, but more are expected in the future. The Lehigh Line is a single track today but it will be double and possibly triple tracked in the future, he noted.

In response to a question about whether SEPTA trains could continue north from West Trenton station to the Merrill Lynch development to provide a one-seat ride, NJ TRANSIT staff explained that the line is not electrified north of West Trenton station, and it is not envisioned for the start-up of this project. This could be explored in the future.

When a question was raised about the cost of the project as presented, Jack Kanarek noted that in this exploratory phase, it is premature to develop cost estimates. They will be prepared once the plan is finalized.

Stations
Roz Diamond gave an overview of the station selection process, which began by reviewing all of the previous stations that existed, all previously studied station areas, and other potential areas that had potential to generate riders. The list was screened based on ridership estimates, environmental issues, community concerns, etc., and six candidate stations have been selected for more in-depth analysis including:

- Hillsborough – potentially the largest ridership on the line, of about 400 riders.
- Belle Mead – located on the site of a former West Trenton Line station and is expected to have the second largest ridership, at around 300.
- Hopewell – located on the site of a former West Trenton Line station and the town is currently rehabilitating the original 1876 station building.
- Marshalls Corner – located on the site of the former Glenmore Station although no station structure remains.
- I-95 – located on the Merrill Lynch site. Reverse peak direction ridership is anticipated.
West Trenton – NJ TRANSIT owns a part of the station, which is the northern terminus of the SEPTA R-3 line, and the southern terminus of the West Trenton Line.

John Dawson expressed concern about the difficult turn into the West Trenton Station from Grand Avenue. As part of the traffic analysis, station access will be examined.

A question was raised about the travel times on the West Trenton Line compared with travel times to New York City from Trenton Station on the NEC Line. Tom Marchwinski explained that travel times on the West Trenton Line are expected to be longer than on the Northeast Corridor (NEC) line because the West Trenton Line would require a transfer at Penn Station Newark to reach New York City. The travel times are some of the reason for the low ridership on the line.

Related Corridor Studies and Projects
Roz Diamond opened the floor for members to provide information about related corridor studies and projects in the study area. A Mercer County representative indicated that they are updating the Transportation Development District (TDD) to include I-95 and the Merrill Lynch development.

A Somerset County representative explained that, in concert with Urban Land Institute, they are conducting a long-range recovery plan to have more transit-oriented development in the area where the line merges with the RVL in Bound Brook. In Manville they are doing a similar project along South Main Street and JFK Boulevard. They hope to revitalize the corridor and intensify development possibly generating enough demand for a future station stop. In Hillsborough they are looking to transfer density into the town center area in the hopes that ridership would improve as a result of this development.

The Regional Planning Partnership (formerly MSM) is working on a Transportation Choices Plan in conjunction with their year 2020 plan. It will look at existing and emerging transportation corridors where development and transit can be better coordinated.

The Greater Mercer TMA has had discussions with major employers about shuttles to train stations. NJ TRANSIT asked for the TMA to secure some firm commitments that could be incorporated into the overall plan. A member indicated that Hillsborough had expressed an interest in a community shuttle program.

A question was raised about whether NJ TRANSIT would be interested in partnering with communities for future new station development. Jack Kanarek explained that NJ TRANSIT is trying to get the idea of transit-oriented development into the communities and hopefully have communities revise their master plans to accommodate transit-oriented development. As part of the FTA criteria, NJ TRANSIT needs to determine whether communities are preparing properly for the project. This is very important because a better FTA rating means a greater chance of receiving project funding.

A member asked, as a follow-up, what assistance would NJ TRANSIT be providing to help communities “get ready” for the project. This is an evolving area with strong government support. The Office of State Planning (OSP) is making more funding available to communities for planning, and NJ TRANSIT has developed its “Planning for Transit-Friendly Land Use: A Handbook for New Jersey Communities” (copies of which will be provided to TAC members on request) and works with communities on transit friendly development. It is important to find out what communities need and then NJ TRANSIT or the OSP may be able to help.

Environmental Process
Julie Cowing, from Allee, King, Rosen, and Fleming, explained that the have just started the environmental assessment (EA) to identify impacts related to the project. The areas of study include the train storage yard site, stations, second track locations, traffic impacts, and the impacts of additional service on the RVL. The EA will consider a range of areas including traffic and transportation, pedestrians, parking, noise and vibration, land use and development, air quality, hazardous materials, natural resources, visual, historic resources, archeology, park land, and construction impacts.
In response to member questions, Julie Cowing indicated that there are highway grade crossings and that at-grade intersections would be examined as part of the traffic analysis.

A member asked about how many passengers were carried on the West Trenton Line before it closed. Tom Marchwinski said that in the 1980’s, two trains were operated that carried about 200 people on the New Jersey portion and about 500 on the Pennsylvania portion.

**Next Steps**
Roz Diamond explained that the next steps of the project would include meeting with community groups and individuals, preparing the EA, reaching out to TAC members throughout the process and at major milestones, and the CLC meeting on November 30th.

A suggestion was made that for the CLC meeting, additional background information should be provided detailing how the study reached this point. Also, CLC members should be given a clear understanding about their role in the project to share information to their respective organizations and keep NJ TRANSIT informed of questions or concerns.

At the suggestion of a member, the Princeton Chamber of Commerce will be added to the CLC. Any other suggestions for new CLC members should be directed to Tom Clark, the CLC Chairperson.

In response to a question about the status of funding, Jack Kanarek explained that Congressmen Franks has been successful in earmarking $2.5 million dollars of federal funds for planning and engineering work on the Line. This project will be competing with other local and national projects for funding so the project team is looking for TAC support to build a case for this project.

A question was raised about why Pennington Borough does not have a station. Roz Diamond indicated that based on the study’s initial investigation, there is no available land for a station at or close to the former Pennington Station site.
WEST TRENTON RAIL LINE STUDY
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

November 23, 1999

1. Introduction (R. Diamond)
   - Review Agenda

2. Community Participation (T. Clark/S. O’Donnell)
   - Technical Advisory Committee
   - Community Liaison Committee
   - Newsletters
   - Open Houses
   - Municipal Meetings
   - Proposed Schedule

3. Project Overview (R. Diamond/D. Fordham)
   - Operations/Schedule/Passenger Demand
   - Stations
   - Infrastructure
   - Coordination with Freight Operators

4. Related Corridor Studies and Projects (TAC Member Input)

5. Environmental Process (J. Cowing)
   - Overview of the Environmental Assessment process
   - General areas of assessment
   - Potential areas of impact
   - Proposed Schedule
   - Federal Transit Administration’s land use and transit-oriented development information

6. Next Steps (R. Diamond)
RESTORATION OF PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE ON THE WEST TRENTON LINE

MEETING MINUTES

To: Attendees                                      Date: November 19, 2004
From: Lisa DiTaranti                                
Meeting Location: NJ TRANSIT Newark, NJ
cc: File: 4360                                     
Re: SYSTRA Project # 4360

Meeting Title: Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2
Meeting Date: 11/19/04

Attendees:

TAC Member Attendees

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<td>Donna</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
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NJ TRANSIT and Consulting Team Attendees
The purpose of the meeting was to update the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on the progress of the restoration of passenger rail service on the West Trenton Line project since the last TAC meeting held in 1999. The meeting also served to inform TAC members of the upcoming activities and milestones, including two public open houses to be held in December, and the anticipated completion of the Environmental Assessment (EA).

The role of the TAC is to provide institutional perspectives on the strategies and approaches undertaken in the redevelopment of the West Trenton Line passenger rail service. The meeting minutes are not a sequential record of events but rather are intended to capture key themes and issues raised during the meeting by the participants.

Meeting Format and Attendance
The format of the meeting included a brief introduction by Roz Diamond (NJ TRANSIT) followed by a presentation delivered by Dennis Fordham (Project Manager – Consulting Team) and Lisa DiTaranti (Deputy Project Manager – Consulting Team). The presentation covered the planning process, proposed service plan, proposed infrastructure including new stations and rail, ridership forecast, draft capital cost estimate, and environmental impact findings. Upcoming tasks and anticipated milestones were also addressed. Questions and informal discussion occurred throughout the presentation between members of the TAC and the consultant team.

The presentation generated a number of questions and concerns from various TAC members. The questions and responses are listed below.

Question: What is the 5309 application?
Response: The 5309 application is a request for funding consideration under the New Starts program. The Federal Transportation Authority (FTA) receives, reviews, and ranks all 5309 applications. Irwin Kessman of FTA added that the 5309 process is exhaustive and requires several submissions. NJ TRANSIT submits the application to FTA to enter preliminary engineering. FTA reviews all 5309 applications and then FTA staff makes a request on Capitol Hill that the best 5309 applicants receive the funding requested.

The FTA funds only 50% of the cost of transit projects. In the instance of the West Trenton Line project, 50% of $195 million is eligible for federal contribution, regardless of the specific line item. That is, rolling stock, infrastructure, and administrative costs are all eligible for federal assistance, up to 50% of the total project budget.
Jack Kanarek of NJT added that currently, funding is not available for the engineering work associated with the project. As a result, NJT has not performed more detailed work, such as simulation analysis. Once the preliminary engineering work proceeds with the appropriate funding, NJT will be in the position to share the necessary detailed information with the freight railroads.

**Question:** How many new rail transit trips will be generated by the proposed West Trenton Line?

**Response:** The West Trenton Line anticipates 1,100 automobile diversions daily. *Correction:* The West Trenton Line anticipates 2,200 automobile diversions daily.

**Question:** Do we know how many of the diverted automobile trips are drivers who would otherwise travel south through Princeton to Princeton Junction? Do we know how many of Merrill Lynch’s employees are driving from Pennsylvania?

**Response:** Lisa DiTaranti and Tom Marchwinski answered that destination and origination studies were conducted as part of the traffic study associated with the environmental assessment (EA) document. The specific breakdowns of destination and origination were not included in the presentation for the sake of brevity, but the results of the studies are available upon request.

**Question:** On the portion that is double tracked, will the double track be shared with CSX?

**Response:** Yes, there is no exclusive use of the track within the project corridor.

**Question:** Is the Port Reading Junction and the grade separated crossing, also known as the Manville Flyover, the same thing?

**Response:** The Port Reading Junction as proposed is a diamond crossing. The flyover is a proposed option that would replace the diamond crossing. It is not currently part of the proposed project. Studies and modeling conducted in the evaluation of the diamond crossing indicate that there is more than adequate rail capacity to ensure that the diamond crossing would be functional. The inclusion of the flyover in the proposed project would likely eliminate the potential for a FONSI because of environmental impacts associated with noise, impacts to waters, and threatened and endangered species.

If in the future, a crossover is found to be necessary, additional environmental studies will be conducted at that time and additional negotiations will take place with the freight railroads regarding the implementation of a flyover. At this time, the flyover is not included as part of the project.

**Question:** Will the West Trenton Yard be a full-maintenance facility?

**Response:** No. The current plan is to provide some minimum servicing plus fueling of the diesel locomotives at the West Trenton Yard. It will not be a major shop. Complete maintenance will take place at the existing Meadowlands maintenance facility.

**Question:** Was sharing storage with SEPTA considered?

**Response:** Yes, very early on; however, it was determined that expanding the existing SEPTA storage facility located north of the existing West Trenton station for the sake of the five trains proposed by NJ TRANSIT was not worth the potential obstacles that the project would encounter. The area surrounding the SEPTA storage facility is already built out, and an expansion would raise noise and other environmental concerns.

**Question:** What is the status and ownership of the proposed rail yard site?

**Response:** The rail yard is proposed to be located on an 11-acre portion of Knights Farm, which is a preserved farm owned by the General Services Agency of the State of New Jersey. It is possible that the farm’s acreage was included in the recent open space inventory conducted by the State of New Jersey, but the deed restriction placed on the property includes a provision that would allow NJ TRANSIT to acquire
a portion of the property for transit use. The technical studies conducted for the EA indicate that there are no significant impacts associated with this change in use of the rail yard site.

**Question:** Have the traffic studies examined the impact of Merrill Lynch employee traffic on the accessibility of the I-95 station, particularly for the residents of the surrounding communities, such as Hopewell?

**Response:** The access and parking for the I-95 station via Scotch Road and the Merrill Lynch campus was designed primarily for commuters traveling on I-95. Access to the I-95 station from the community is via Reed Road, which does not typically serve the volume of traffic observed on Scotch Road.

**Question:** Who owns Hopewell Borough station site?

**Response:** Valley Oil, a home heating oil company, owns the Hopewell Borough site as well as the adjacent parcel on which they have a facility.

**Question:** How long would it take to get to Newark from Hopewell via the Princeton Junction station compared to the length of the ride from the proposed Hopewell Borough station?

**Response:** Total time from Hopewell to Newark via the Princeton Junction station is estimated at about 80 minutes. This includes a 30-minute drive from Hopewell to Princeton Junction, including looking for parking, and then a 50-minute train ride to Newark. The proposed West Trenton Line trip from the Hopewell station is shorter: approximately 68 minutes.

**Question:** Is there an explanation for the disproportionate number of parking spaces planned for the Hopewell Borough station?

**Response:** Unlike the other station sites which are a portion of existing properties and constrained by surrounding uses that limit the parking area, the land for the Hopewell Borough station is one tax lot that must be purchased in its entirety. It is most cost effective to develop the entire site at once than phase in parking facilities over time.

**Question:** Montgomery Township is considering a transit village on the other side of the Rt. 206 crossing. The Township has also received a County grant to explore a TDR program. Similarly, Somerset County has applied for technical study funds from the NJTPA to work with Montgomery Township in their efforts to establish transit oriented development. Is it possible for the Belle Meade station to be located on the other side of the 206 crossing?

**Response:** Dennis Fordham from Systra explained that the EA has evaluated the proposed location as the only location for the Belle Mead station. The selection of this site was achieved with careful collaboration with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). SHPO expressed their concern and interest in reusing the historic station buildings, and was consulting during the station location and design process. However, Jack Kanarek from NJT added that the plan is flexible at this point, so there may be opportunities to work with the county and these communities. However, if we are to finish the EA on time, we should stick with the current Belle Mead location. There are opportunities, even with the current location, for transit oriented development. Certain aspects have to be assumed to be fixed, such as the location of the 206 bypass and the location of the rail line.

**Question:** Are trackage rights included in the draft estimated capital costs?

**Response:** Lisa DiTaranti explained that trackage rights are an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) item and are figured later on during the O&M analysis. They are not included in the draft capital costs.

**Question:** Does the draft estimated capital costs include the costs of developing the rail storage yard?

**Response:** Yes, the costs include the development of the yard, the yard track, the small maintenance building, and the parking lot.
**Question:** The draft capital costs include a financing item. What does financing cover?

**Response:** Lisa DiTaranti explained that the financing item is the interest costs if NJ has to finance any part of the project. However, NJT usually does not finance their projects. Particularly in this instance, NJT is seeking New Starts funding from FTA for a portion of the costs. It should also be noted that as more information becomes available on the status of the funding for the project, the total amount dedicated to the budget item that includes finance costs will likely decrease or be eliminated.

**Question:** Why is such a large sum ($63 million) assigned to the “design, administration, flagging, contingency, and financing” item?

**Response:** The project is still in the early phases. Preliminary engineering has not yet begun, and as a result, room must be left for contingencies should something come up during engineering. It is anticipated that as the project moves forward, the contingency budget will decrease. Other costs, such as flagging (part of the $63 million) are not anticipated to decrease because a significant amount of flagging is anticipated due to the fact that the work will be conducted on an active rail line.

**Question:** What is the basis for the very low ridership projected for the Manville Station as part of the Manville Station option analysis?

**Response:** Tom Marchwinski of NJT explained that the NJT ridership forecasting models were used to determine the ridership for all of the stations studied, including the Manville optional station. The analysis determined that there are too many other transit opportunities in the immediate area to result in significant ridership numbers for Manville. Potential rail commuters can more easily access the Bridgewater or Bound Brook stations than a Manville station. The ridership number cited for Manville generally identifies people from the borough and those without cars who live in the Borough.

**Question:** Are there any other previously active station locations on the West Trenton Line that are not being used?

**Response:** Dennis Fordham answered that only the Pennington Station will not be re-used as a station stop on the proposed reactivated passenger line. The rest of the former stations were considered for a future station stop and they are reflected in the proposed alternative or as an option (Manville).

**Question:** Is the per-unit cost of the optional track section the same per-unit cost as the other double track sections?

**Response:** Yes. The per-unit cost is the same for all track sections. The total cost for the optional 4.4 miles of second track ($13 million) includes the cost for retrofitting the Hillsborough and Belle Meade rail stations that are currently proposed to be served by only one rail.

**Question:** Was additional reverse commute service considered?

**Response:** Ridership forecasts were used to determine the service plan for the West Trenton line. At this time, the forecasts indicate that 14 trains will be adequate to meet the needs of the riders that will use the line. However, there is sufficient capacity on the line to accommodate additional commuter trips if demand shows there is a need.

**Question:** The project proposes to take a train from the Raritan Valley Line. Was the impact of the loss of one train studied in the environmental assessment?

**Response:** Although the train will be relocated to the West Trenton yard, trains on the West Trenton Line travel to the Raritan Valley Line (RVL) and continue to Newark. Consequently, the train that is being “taken” from the RVL will still serve the RVL east of Bridgewater. The West Trenton Line anticipates diverting some riders who would have driven north to the part of the RVL west of Bridgewater station. As a result, the added capacity on the West Trenton Line does not result in a loss of capacity on the RVL line, even with the relocation of the one train.
**Question:** What is the status of a train station at the Mercer County airport? Does the EA from the West Trenton Line coordinate with the airport EIS?

**Response:** Locating a station at the airport was considered, but the rail is on the opposite side of the terminal from the runways. Additionally, the airport has a rather small use that would not result in significant demand. At this time, the EA for the West Trenton Line is not coordinating with other studies, including the Mercer County Airport EIS. If the circumstances change and coordinating with the airport looks to become an issue of concern, then efforts will be made to coordinate the two environmental documents.

**Next Steps**

Roz Diamond then summarized the next steps for the project. Two public open houses will be held in December. The first will be held on Wednesday, December 1 from 4pm to 8pm at the NJ Department of Transportation in Ewing. A second open house will be held on Tuesday, December 7 from 4pm to 8pm at the Hillsborough Township Municipal Complex. The public open houses are informal question-and-answer opportunities for members of the public to learn about the project. Members of the consulting team and NJ TRANSIT will be available to speak to the various aspects of the project and answer questions.

The project team anticipates completing the EA in early 2005. Once it is completed by the consulting team, the document will be submitted to the FTA for review. A public comment and hearing period is expected to begin in the middle of next year.

*These minutes represent the recorder’s understanding of the issues discussed. Please report any discrepancies to the recorder within seven days, otherwise the record will remain as written.*
Municipal and County Coordination Meeting Minutes
An agenda (attached) was distributed. The following presents the highlights of the discussion.

Introductions
Everyone introduced him or herself and indicated which organization they represented. Roz Diamond, NJ TRANSIT’s Project Manager, reviewed the agenda for the meeting and gave some background about the West Trenton Rail Line Study.

West Trenton Station
- Fred Walters inquired about the station ownership and was answered that NJT owns the station but that CSX owns the right-of-way.
- Dennis Fordham noted that it is proposed to add 25 parking spaces to the station on the east side to meet the anticipated West Trenton project demand. If that location was not acceptable, perhaps the industrial property could be looked into as an alternate. Bill Bennett from Ewing noted that a proposal for a 3-story office building is being reviewed for the industrial site. It was suggested that NJT talk with the developer to work out a potential joint arrangement.
- Charles Allen inquired if the 25 new parking spaces would be available to SEPTA patrons. Dennis Fordham responded that there would be no way to discriminate between SEPTA and NJT patrons. Mr. Allen then added that the 25 spaces would be insufficient because SEPTA patrons currently exceed the number of available parking spaces and park on the streets in the vicinity of the station. He was sure that the 25 spots would be filled by overflow SEPTA patrons. Kathleen Wollert asked if we would be able to expand the parking in the future if the need presented itself. Roz Diamond answered that we would have to consider additional parcels to accomplish that. She also suggested that the township
request the additional spaces from SEPTA. It was indicated that the township had requested it on many occasions but that SEPTA was non-responsive. Jack Kanarek noted that NJT is in the study phase and that they do not have the implementation funds that would be necessary to buy or lease additional property at this time. However, he noted that although we are years away from seeing customers at the station that NJT would support township efforts to acquire such parcels, perhaps in concert with SEPTA.

- Jack Kanarek provided an overview of the possible West Trenton service. He noted that it would be peak service only. Of the 120 projected riders at the station, many are transfers from SEPTA. He noted that the train will meet up with the Raritan Valley Line and would travel to Newark. Bill Bennett asked how many trains would run after 10 P.M. and Mr. Kanarek responded that there would be none. Mr. Bennett also asked what kind of trains would be run and Dennis Fordham responded that they would be diesel trains. He also noted that the diesel trains could not continue directly to New York and that West Trenton riders would have to change trains at Newark to get to NYC.

- Charles Allen felt that the overall projections for ridership at the station were low. Mr. Kanarek noted that NJT is working from the point of powerlessness with CSX. Since they own the right-of-way they have to consent to our service plan. We currently have a tentative agreement with them to run the 5 trains. Without consent from CSX to run more trains it is unlikely we could increase ridership at the West Trenton station. Lisa DiTaranti also noted that the ridership projections were based upon demographics provided by the county and also based upon estimates at the Merrill Lynch site.

- Fred Walters asked where the traffic counts/analysis areas would be and who would be doing the traffic survey. Lisa DiTaranti noted that a traffic program was being developed by subconsultant, Eng-Wong, Taub and Associates. She noted that the program would take into account critical traffic moves into and around the station and that we should have a good understanding of the program within the next few weeks. Mr. Walters advised that the township would not consider any traffic analysis as complete unless it took into account future projected volumes. Ms. DiTaranti noted that the traffic analysis would consider existing, future No Build (without the West Trenton project), future Build (with the project) and future mitigation scenarios. Mr. Walters also added that it will be important to show where the traffic is coming from and going to because they have a very active group of citizens in that area that are concerned with the existing traffic and noise problems.

- Bill Bennett asked if there were any plans for a terminal building. Dennis Fordham responded that there were no plans for a new building, however shelters would be provided on the platform level. Mr. Bennett also asked if the existing building had any historic significance. Mr. Walters responded that it did. Mr. Fordham indicated that the Environmental Assessment would address any impacts to the station building.

- Fred Walters asked what impacts (other than train traffic) could be expected. Lisa DiTaranti noted that since the ROW is already being used for transportation purposes, it was unlikely that any other impacts would be expected.

- Charles Allen asked if NJT would consider calling the station “Ewing” instead of “West Trenton”. Jack Kanarek responded that he could discuss that with NJT’s management and it would be likely that they would support it.

**Train Storage Yard**

- Dennis Fordham provided a summary of the possible plan for the storage yard. He indicated that NJT was considering a parcel of land at Knight’s Farm and that access would be provided by the existing roadway. He noted that operationally, this location was the best site because it was important to locate the yard south of the station. It was also important to have the yard be dual-ended yard and the Knight’s Farm site provided that capability. It was noted that Knight’s Farm was designated as preserved open space by the state and that NJT had initiated a preliminary agreement with the state to use the site.

- Mr. Walters asked if the SEPTA trains would/could be also stored at that location. Mr. Fordham responded that it was not planned and that although we did suggest it to SEPTA they were not initially interested. Mr. Fordham prompted the township to urge SEPTA to reconsider.

- Bill Bennett noted that SEPTA has $100,000 to build sound barriers at the existing storage site that they are required to put up on the west side of the tracks. He asked who owned the storage yard. Jack Kanarek noted that CSX was the owner.
Bill Bennett suggested that NJT consider an 8-10 acre landlocked site adjacent to Knight’s Farm that would be better from the township’s point of view. That site is in a ditch and would obscure the trains from view. He also noted that NJT would have less opposition if the yard was located on the private property and that they would have even more support if SEPTA trains were moved there. Mr. Fordham noted that it was important to have a yard that was accessible from the roadway and that the private site may preclude the yard from being dual-ended. There was also some concern about that site’s proximity to a streambed. However, it was agreed that NJT would consider the site as an alternate for the yard.

**Trenton Mercer Airport**

- Bill Bennett asked if NJT was considering access to the I-95 station from both Reed Road and Scotch Road. Dennis Fordham responded yes and that the access from Reed Road was intended more for residents.
- Tom Clark noted that NJT has been asked by a Mercer County Freeholder about not having a station at I-95 and instead locating the station at the Mercer County Airport. Dennis Fordham noted that consideration was being given to land on the west side of Scotch Road or by the armory guard. He noted that a shuttle bus would be required to the airport and Merrill Lynch if the station was located on either parcel. Chuck Latini noted that there may be a potential wetland constraint at the Scotch Road property.
- Councilwoman Wollert suggested that NJT consider terminating the line at Merrill Lynch (and not having a West Trenton station at all, considering the low ridership). Roz Diamond asked what sense she had of the residents in Ewing if the line was implemented without a stop in their town. Ms. Wollert responded that Ewing did not want to be the host of the storage site if relatively few Ewing residents would use/benefit from the service. She noted that if a low percentage of the riders at the West Trenton station were Ewing residents then it would be unlikely that the town would support it.
- Jack Kanarek inquired about the status of redevelopment of the General Motors site. Fred Walters responded that the site is in preliminary clean-up. The site will be ready for redevelopment when NJT is ready for service.
- Bill Bennett asked what economic benefit would Ewing Township see as a result of the West Trenton project. Roz Diamond responded that it is not possible to determine what type of redevelopment the town would experience as a result of the project. Jack Kanarek noted that NJT has found that the areas around train stations become more valuable after train service is implemented. He sited the towns along the Midtown Direct service as examples. Tom Clark asked if the town had an economic development council that might be interested in looking at the potential. Bill Bennett noted that the council had limited resources and could not address such a broad issue. Lisa DiTaranti noted that it was up to the town to determine how to make the most of the development potential associated with transit service. She asked if the town was having trouble selling ratables to the public because of traffic problems. Fred Walters responded that they were. He also noted that it seems as though train travel is taking a more prominent role in the everyday commute and that the town needs to set expectations of how to take advantage of train service if it comes to Ewing.
- Dennis Fordham asked if there were any plans to improve Scotch Road sought of I-95. Bill Bennett noted that there were plans in the immediate vicinity of the I-95 interchange, but nothing further south.
- Tom Clark asked what Ewing’s final thoughts were regarding the Airport as a station site. Fred Walters suggested that he will ask the council to investigate the issue further with the freeholders. Councilwoman Wollert agreed that she would.

**Next Steps**

It was agreed that NJT would conduct further investigation regarding the storage yard site and would get back to Ewing Township with a conclusion before any public meetings. NJT will also continue to coordinate with SEPTA and Ewing Township regarding parking demand at the station.
WEST TRENTON RAIL LINE STUDY
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Of
JANUARY 5, 2000

To:             Attendees                     Date: January 10, 2000
From: Lisa DiTaranti                                Meeting Location: Hopewell Boro
                         Hopewell, NJ

Re:              NJ TRANSIT West Trenton Rail Line Passenger Service Restoration Study
                  Municipal Information Meeting

Attendees:

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<tr>
<td>Roz Diamond</td>
<td>NJ TRANSIT</td>
<td>George Padget</td>
<td>Hopewell Boro (Mayor)</td>
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<td>Jack Kanarek</td>
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<td>Lisa DiTaranti</td>
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<td>Tom Clark</td>
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<td>Dennis Fordham</td>
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<td>Tom Dallessio</td>
<td>Hopewell Boro (Council)</td>
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An agenda (attached) was distributed. The following presents the highlights of the discussion.

Introductions
Everyone introduced him or herself and indicated which organization they represented. Roz Diamond, NJ TRANSIT’s Project Manager, reviewed the agenda for the meeting and gave some background about the West Trenton Rail Line Study.

Platform Configuration
- Dennis Fordham noted that NJT is visualizing an island platform at the station that would be accessed by an overpass from the station side. Tom Dallessio asked if we had any examples of an overpass that would help him visualize it. Jack Kanarek that we did have some but that they were not completely applicable to what is being considered for Hopewell. Mr. Kanarek also noted that CSX suggested that we pursue the island platform for flexibility and that the platform would be located____ of the station.
- Tom Dallessio noted that if one could not access the platform from the station then it could change the use of the station building. Jack Kanarek agreed that the proposed location of the platform deemphasizes the station.
- Dennis Fordham noted that the platform would have a canopy and shelter and agreed with Mr. Dallessio that they would be consistent with the historic character of the station.

Accessibility Needs/Parking
- Dennis Fordham went over possible scenarios for the location of parking. He noted that we needed about 75 spaces and that perhaps Lot 2 could be used in addition to the lot adjacent to the station. Roz
Diamond noted that the parking requirement may be higher at Hopewell if we lose the Marshalls Corner station.

- Mayor Padgett noted that the boro owns land along the tracks (parallel to Front Street) and suggested that NJT pursue it for the parking needs. He stated that the land was not at street level and would not result in a visual impact to the properties on Front Street. He also suggested NJT look into private parking. Mr. Kanarek responded that NJT would consider it only if the owner did not charge the patrons too much.

- Tom Dallessio asked if on-street parking had been considered. Mr. Fordham responded that we would use as much as the boro would allow. Mayor Padgett noted that the residents along Front Street were concerned about on-street parking. Mr. Dallessio added that they were concerned about traffic and sight lines and suggested that the intersection of Front Street and Railroad Avenue would have to be signalized. Roz Diamond indicated that a traffic study would be done.

- Mayor Padgett noted that parking at the proposed location was a problem because there were several development proposals being considered for those parcels, including municipal facilities. He suggested that there were 3 acres of private land adjacent to Valley Oil that could be feasible for parking since the platforms are moving away from the station building anyway. He noted that the site was tested by DEP and that it is clean.

- Tom Dallessio noted that the site of the Kooltronics factory is prime for redevelopment.

- Roz Diamond asked if the boro could sketch out on a map where they would be amenable to on-street parking. Mayor Padgett agreed.

- Tom Dallessio recommended that NJT bring any parking solutions to the boro before going to the public. NJT agreed. Mr. Dallessio expressed confusion regarding the parking and ridership numbers. He suggested that NJT look into the number of parkers. He also reiterated that Hopewell Boro wants a station even if it means more cars from adjacent towns. He recommended that NJT, the boro and the county all work together to develop a comprehensive traffic solution.

- Project implementation was discussed. NJT noted that if there were no implementation obstacles and funding were available today that service would be operational in 5 years. However they noted that this was not the case and that the project had many steps to go through and many funding hurdles to overcome before implementation could begin. It was hard to tell how long it would take to get through all of the project steps and secure funding.
WEST TRENTON ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
MEETING MINUTES

To: Attendees

Date: September 30, 2002

From: Lisa DiTaranti

Meeting Location: NJ TRANSIT

cc: File: 4360; Attendees

Re: SYSTRA Project # 5312

Meeting Title: West Trenton EA County Coordination

Meeting Date: September 27, 2002

Attendees:

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<td>Linda DiGiovanni</td>
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<td>Jack Kanarek</td>
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<td>Roz Diamond</td>
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<td>Rich Wisneski</td>
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<td>Peter Palmer</td>
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<td>Bob Bzik</td>
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<td>Alex DelPizzo</td>
<td>Representative Ferguson’s Office</td>
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<td>Dennis Fordham</td>
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<td>Lisa DiTaranti</td>
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Meeting Purpose:
The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the current status and next steps for the West Trenton Environmental Assessment.

Project/EA Status:

Roz Diamond and Jack Kanarek presented a background review of the project and its current status.

Overview
The project has been on hiatus due to changes in administration at NJT and freight coordination issues. A federal grant has been added to the project so that NJT can complete the Environmental Assessment. NJT wants to incorporate new issues into the EA. The purpose of the meeting is to brief the counties and then, with the county support, brief the municipalities that would host a station.

Freight Coordination
CSX is the owner of the West Trenton Right-of-Way; Norfolk Southern owns the Lehigh Line that is crossed by the West Trenton line; Conrail Shared Assets owns the West Trenton line from the Lehigh Line intersection east to the Raritan Valley Line.
In 1998, NJT launched discussions with CSX that helped to define the project and the 12 miles of double track. CSX/Conrail recommended that the project pursue reactivation of the former Reading Connector with a diamond (at-grade) crossing. Crossing of the two-track Lehigh Line at this location would result in less of an impact on the freight operators than a crossing further east near Bound Brook. Discussions with CSX at this point focused on peak period service. Although the freight railroads were comfortable with the concept, they requested an operations simulation modeling effort so they could see the interaction between passenger and freight rail. NJT provided the freights with this effort in 1999 and 2000.

In 2000, Commissioner Weinstein inaugurated a forum of coordination with the freight railroads on a statewide level that focused on various freight providers as well as passenger rail projects. Commissioner Fox is continuing the forum on the freight level only. During the forums, NS expressed a concern regarding the diamond crossing. NJT Transit worked with NS and showed them technical information that showed that there was sufficient capacity in the design for both the freight and passenger movements to occur efficiently. The work included assumptions about future NS/CSX service, as neither freight railroad would provide NJT with projections (their projections are of a shorter term than that of passenger rail studies). NS could not support the diamond crossing even with this information and thus, requested a flyover. NJT noted that NS operates diamond crossovers quite successfully in other parts of their network. Roz Diamond noted that the infrastructure that exists today on the West Trenton line is not sufficient for even future freight operations and the double tracking (and other West Trenton improvements) would be beneficial to the freight railroads as well.

Rich Wisneski provided an overview of the proposed West Trenton service and infrastructure noting that there will be intermittent expansion to two tracks separated by single-track sections, roughly 4 miles apart. Peter Palmer asked if in the future the single-track sections could be expanded to double track. Rich replied yes and noted that in some areas, expansion to three tracks was possible.

NJT updated the operations analyses when the proposed West Trenton service was expanded to daily (from peak) and included 30-32 trains/day. NJT discussed the expansion with the freights. CSX expressed concerns about the expansion, and then the entire project (even peak service). At this point, the freight companies had adopted a negative environment towards the provision of passenger service in freight rights-of-way. NJT is not pursuing all day service as part of the Environmental Assessment.

NJT did preliminary investigations of the flyover before the NJT administration change. There was concern that the flyover would result in significant environmental impacts in Manville and would push the project from an Environmental Assessment to an Environmental Impact Statement, requiring more significant analyses. In addition, without significant ridership the expected additional cost of the flyover ($25-30M) could severely impact the project’s cost-effectiveness ratio.

Peter Palmer noted that he is the leader of NJTPA’s freight committee and that the freights know that if they cooperate on passenger projects their own initiatives will be more favorably received. Some discussion followed about what other initiatives the freights may be interested in that NJT could provide. Double-tracking of portions of the RVL and improvements at Manville Yard were cited as examples.

The feeling at NJT is that they have to advance analysis of the flyover to see what costs and impacts ensue.

**Presentation of Flyover Concept**

Dennis Fordham provided an overview of the flyover using presentation boards that showed plan and profile. The total length of the flyover is approximately one mile and, with the train, would be roughly the same height as the adjacent homes. It was noted that the most expected impacts of the flyover would be in the categories of wetlands, noise and visual. Actual impacts will be assessed in the coming year as part of the
Environmental Assessment. The flyover design proposes a new Raritan River bridge, as the existing bridge in this location is historic and cannot be used/modified.

The BRI transfer station area was discussed. Mr. Palmer noted that the county has a financial stake/interest in the property and could use that stake to leverage on behalf of NJT if the property was needed or required modification.

Impacts to Manville were discussed. The Manville neighborhood adjacent to the flyover has been impacted negatively by Hurricane Floyd and by the EPA Superfund clean-up site. Some homes adjacent to the flyover have been removed as part of a post-Floyd buy out. Bob Bzik noted that the flyover would represent another impact to Manville with no benefit. He believes that Manville will raise the potential for a station to help them with their Main Street economic development plans. NJT noted that they had previously studied a station in Manville but did not pursue it because ridership was low (due to proximity to existing RVL stations) and Manville did not seem interested at the time. Mr. Bzik noted that he believes things have changed with respect to Manville’s support of a station. He also noted that there are no real complaints from the neighborhood regarding existing train noise but that there have been complaints about the vibration of idling freight trains. Ms. DiGiovanni noted that they may be interested in a bus park and ride instead of a station. Mr. Bzik stated that Manville may ‘inherit’ the Central Jersey Airport site and redevelop it to be freight friendly, which would be a real economic engine for Manville.

Mr. Palmer asked if it was possible to flyover the Lehigh Line at another location. Mr. Fordham replied that it was not practical. Mr. Palmer asked if it would have less impact if NS flew over the West Trenton line, but all agreed that the impacts would be equivalent or worse.

A brief discussion ensued regarding potential mitigation for the flyover. Mr. Fordham suggested that a berm with trees or other buffer would be most practical. Noise walls were also discussed.

Mr. Palmer asked about how much the flyover would add to the project. Mr. Kanarek stated it would increase the project by 25-30%, bringing the project to around $100M.

Mr. Bzik felt that NJ Transit and NJTPA and even the state should continue to pressure NS to accept the diamond crossing. He asked who NJT was dealing with at NS. Mr. Kanarek replied that they were working with key senior levels in the organization including Mr. Clayburg, Mr. Ingrim and Mr. Schaefer. NJT has “gone all the way up the ladder”.

Mr. Palmer asked what NJT’s and NJDOT’s agenda was with respect to freight negotiation. Mr. Kanarek replied that each project will be negotiated on its own with the freight operator.

Project Review

Mr. Fordham presented a summary of each of the station sites and the proposed storage yard in West Trenton. Various questions were raised about the sites. Mr. Fordham noted that new aerial photography would be acquired.

There was some discussion about Hopewell Boro and whether they would continue to want or support a station. Mr. Bzik said he would talk with Tom D’Allesio to see what the status is.

Mr. Bzik noted that there is some thought about making a transportation regional initiative that would tie the Central Jersey Transportation Forum’s Route 1 BRT project to a network of feeder buses to serve Hopewell and Montgomery townships. Together with the West Trenton project, it could be an excellent plan. He
advised NJT to think about working together to achieve this type of integrated improvement for Somerset County.

A comment was made that the Hopewell Township Planning Board wants to discuss the West Trenton project with NJT regarding development and access plans in the area around Merrill Lynch. It was also noted that Ewing Township has received a Smart Growth grant for redevelopment of the former GM plant.

Mr. Wedeen asked what the funding for this project looks like in light of TEA-21 legislation. A discussion of other mobility priorities led to the conclusion that immediate or short term funding of this project was not evident.

**Action Items:**

- Linda DiGiovanni to set up a meeting with Manville representatives to include the mayor, town administrator, town engineer, NJT, Somerset County, SYSTRA and Congressman Ferguson’s representative. The proposed location is the Somerset County Planning Board.
- Linda DiGiovanni to set up a meeting with Donna Lewis of Mercer County on the advice of Mr. Bzik.
- Bob Bzik to talk with Tom D’Allesio regarding Hopewell Boro support and get back to Roz Diamond on the findings.
- NJT to reopen coordination with freight railroads.
- SYSTRA to modify flyover graphics to better reflect the actual conditions in the area, including the freight lines.

**Key Decisions:**

- Flyover over the NS Lehigh Line should be studied but negotiations with the freight railroads should continue.

*Please report any discrepancies to these Minutes to Roz Diamond within seven days, otherwise the record will remain as written.*
Summary of Discussion:

The purpose of the meeting was to establish project progress-to-date as well as to understand the schedule relative to the completion of an EA by early 2005.

Jack Kanarek provided an overview of the project, focusing on West Trenton line ownership (CSX, but NJT has some rights to operate), proposed stations (West Trenton, Hopewell Twp. and Borough, Belle Mead, Hillsborough and optionally, Manville), operating plans (14 daily passenger trains sharing track with roughly 20 freight trains); equipment type (diesel locomotives with coaches) and infrastructure improvements (double tracking and an optional flyover at Port Reading Junction). Jack also noted that funding for this project beyond the current Environmental Assessment phase (with possibly some added engineering) is currently not available. It is not likely that funding will become available from either state or federal resources within the next 6 years. He also noted that currently there is no strong political advocate for the project.

Lisa DiTaranti provided project details as follows:

Mercer County Stations

West Trenton: The West Trenton Line would originate at the existing station in West Trenton. This would allow for a passenger connection with SEPTA R3 service. About 90 new parking spaces would be provided for NJ Transit customers as well as at-grade and mini-high platforms, a platform canopy, ticket vending machines and a pedestrian overpass with elevators. Access to the parking would be via Grand Avenue. Mercer County noted that there is currently a traffic study being performed to assess bypasses and diversions to alleviate traffic problems in the area of the station. They also noted that there is a DVRPC-sponsored West Trenton Station Transit Oriented Development Neighborhood Planning Study that will be performed in the coming year. Ewing Township will also be updating their Master Plan. NJ Transit has met with Ewing Township at an earlier date and they indicated their support.
The proposed I-95 station is located on and adjacent to the Merrill Lynch complex. The complex’s development plan included a set-aside for a transit station. Approximately 100 parking spaces would be included on the Merrill Lynch side of the rail line with an added 60 spaces on the Reed Road side of the rail line. An at-grade platform, mini-high platform, platform canopy, ticket vending machines and pedestrian overpass with elevators would be included. In response to questions raised, Ms. DiTaranti noted that parking at Merrill Lynch would be accessible to the public and that traffic analyses would be performed at adjacent intersections. It was noted that Merrill Lynch currently operates a shuttle to the complex from the Princeton Junction train station. Allene Kemp noted that Hopewell Township recently conducted an extensive survey of the major employers in town to assess travel patterns of employees. She recommended that NJ Transit review the results of this highly successful survey.

The proposed station in Hopewell Borough would be accessed off of Somerset Street on a vacant parcel adjacent to the oil company business. This site was recommended previously by the Borough. Approximately 100 spaces will be provided along with at-grade and mini-high platforms, a platform canopy, ticket vending machines and a pedestrian tunnel. Mr. Knights indicated the Borough’s support of the location and predicted that there would be minimal opposition to the site.

A train storage yard is proposed to be located south of the existing West Trenton Station in Ewing Township. The yard would be located on land currently owned by the State of NJ and preserved as agricultural land. NJ Transit has an agreement with the state to use part of the preserved parcel for the storage yard if this project moves forward. While there are some potential environmental impacts, they are currently believed to be mitigatable. Employee access to the yard would be via a new internal roadway and Grand Avenue.

Ms. DiTaranti noted that the Environmental Assessment (EA) document is on schedule for completion at the end of 2004 with hearings in early 2005. A newsletter will be produced and distributed in the fall and Technical Advisory Committee, Community Liaison Committee and Public Open House meetings will be held later in the fall.

Jack Kanarek fielded questions about project cost and funding. He noted that roughly $3-4 million had been earmarked federally for this study of this project through the EA. He noted that the project would cost in the $120 million dollar range, if it was necessary to include the optional flyover at Port Reading Junction. NJ Transit could not commit to a timeframe for project implementation because the funding picture is too speculative at this time. He noted that if funding was in place, it would take between 4 and 6 years for design and construction.

Mercer County representatives indicated their overall support of the project.

Action Items:

- SYSTRA to request copy of Hopewell Township employer survey from Paul Porgozelsky.

These minutes represent the recorder’s understanding of the issues discussed. Please report any discrepancies to the recorder within seven days, otherwise the record will remain as written.

END OF MEETING NOTES
Community Liaison Committee Minutes and Addenda
# WEST TRENTON RAIL LINE STUDY
## COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE
### Meeting Minutes
#### Of
##### NOVEMBER 30, 1999

**To:** Attendees  
**Date:** January 3, 2000  
**From:** Susan O’Donnell  
**Meeting Location:** Somerset County Freeholders Meeting Room, Somerville, NJ

**Re:** NJ TRANSIT West Trenton Rail Line Passenger Service Restoration Study
Community Liaison Committee Meeting

**Attendees:**

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An agenda (attached) was distributed. The following presents the highlights of the discussion.

Introductions
As the meeting was held in the Somerset County Freeholders’ Meeting Room, Laura Watson, from the Somerset County Planning Board, welcomed everyone, and introduced Tom Clark, the Regional Manager from NJ TRANSIT’s Office of Community Relations, who is serving as the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) Chairperson. He reviewed the agenda and introduced the project team.

Community Participation
Tom Clark discussed the importance of the CLC member’s role in this project, of sharing information learned at this and subsequent meetings with their community. They should also provide feedback from their communities to NJ TRANSIT so that their communities’ concerns and ideas may be taken into account as the project is advanced.

As part of the community outreach portion of the project, both the CLC and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) have been formed. The TAC is comprised of state agency, freight railroads and county representatives. The first TAC meeting was held on November 23, 1999.

Two newsletters will be prepared and distributed as part of the project. The first one is expected to cover background information and will be issued soon. Both newsletters are expected to be distributed through local newspapers to allow for a wider distribution than could be conducted through the mail. Meetings with municipalities of candidate station locations are planned, along with informational Open Houses in each county. The first Open House is expected in early 2000.

Project Overview
Roz Diamond, NJ TRANSIT Project Manager, thanked everyone for coming and was pleased with the high turnout. The project’s success depends on support from the public. The West Trenton Rail Line had passenger service that was terminated in 1983. Since then, growth and development in the area has generated significant interest in reactivating the service. Several studies have looked at the feasibility of reactivating the service. The current study is funded through federal grant. The Trenton Line is owned and operated by CSX, is currently restricted to freight. Consequently, one of the focuses of this study will be on developing solutions to effectively integrate the operation of freight and commuter rail service on the same line.

The environmental assessment process is now starting and is examining operations, candidate station locations, ridership, and train storage needs (see map, following). NJ TRANSIT is committed to comprehensive outreach process.

Passenger Demand Estimates and Proposed Service Plan
Terrence Sobers, Manager for Research and Forecasting with NJ TRANSIT, discussed the passenger demand estimates and the service plan. NJ TRANSIT updated the North Jersey Transportation Demand model that was also used for the West Shore project, and worked with Cambridge Systematics, Inc. (CSI) to verify the techniques used. The model is a multi-state model because jurisdictional boundaries are meaningless when making commuting choices. The model was updated with Midtown Direct information, and assumes that the upcoming Secaucus Transfer, the Hudson-Bergen rail line, Hamilton Station on the northeast corridor (NEC), and the new Union/Townley station in Union County are operational. The forecast year is 2020.

Initially, seven trains are proposed in each direction, five AM inbound and 5 PM outbound trains, one reverse AM peak and one reverse PM peak train, and one off-peak train in each direction. About 1,100 daily riders are projected on the West Trenton Line, of which about 25% (250 riders) would be diverted from auto, and the remaining 75% would be diverted from existing rail stations on the Raritan Valley Line or the Northeast Corridor. Other service plan options may be examined for implementation after service startup, including a plan with more midday/off-peak or reverse peak service.
Operational, Stations, and Infrastructure Issues

Dennis Fordham, the Project Manager for SYSTRA Consulting which is the prime consultant for the study, discussed coordination with the freight operators and operational and infrastructure issues. The proposed passenger service would operate from the existing West Trenton Station, where the SEPTA R3 service terminates, to Newark Penn Station. Currently, the line is single track but it formally had four tracks and the right-of-way still exists. An operations simulation analysis was conducted to assess how to coordinate the passenger service with the freight operations. Discussions with the freight operators as to what infrastructure improvements will be needed are still ongoing.

The station selection process began by reviewing all of the previous stations that existed, all previously studied station areas, and other station areas that have the potential to generate riders. The list was screened based on ridership estimates, environmental issues, community concerns, etc. and six candidate stations have been selected for more in-depth analysis including:

- **Hillsborough** – located on Hamilton road on land owned by the Department of Transportation (DOT). Minimal impacts to the surrounding area are expected. The station is expected to have about 400 passengers per day -- potentially the largest ridership on the line.
- **Belle Mead** – located on the site of a former West Trenton Line station. There are two small station buildings that may be reactivated and renovated. Commuter parking would possibly be located on the eastside of the right-of-way with access from Route 206. This station is expected to have the second largest ridership with about 300 passengers per day.
- **Hopewell** – also located on the site of a former West Trenton Line station. The town is currently rehabilitating the historic 1876 station building. There is room for parking on a town-owned site on the eastside of the right-of-way with possibly some parking on the westside. About 75 to 80 passengers per day are anticipated.
- **Marshalls Corner** – has good highway access off of Pennington-Hopewell Road. Parking is proposed for the westside of the right-of-way. About 120 riders per day are expected at this station.
- **I-95** – located on the site that Merrill Lynch is developing for an office park. Riders from I-95, and reverse peak riders are anticipated from office park employees commuting from destinations to the north. The project team has had discussions with Merrill Lynch regarding commuter parking on their property, and highway access from Scotch Road.
- **West Trenton** – NJ TRANSIT owns a part of the station, which is the northern terminus of the SEPTA R-3 line, and the proposed southern terminus of the West Trenton Line service. Additional parking is being investigated on the west side of the right-of-way.

A candidate train storage yard location has been identified on Knights Farm, on the west side of the right-of-way, just south of West Trenton Station. The property is state-owned and approximately 10 to 15 acres would be required for the yard. In response to a comment about Knight’s Farm becoming deed restricted for open space, NJ TRANSIT noted that it is working with the Department of Treasury to resolve this issue.

Environmental Process

Robert White, from Allee, King, Rosen, and Fleming, explained that the environmental assessment (EA) process to identify impacts related to the project is underway. The areas of study include the possible train storage yard site, candidate station locations, possible double track locations, projected traffic impacts, and the potential impacts of additional service on the Raritan Valley Line, along with noise and vibration, land use and development, air quality, hazardous materials, natural resources, visual, historic resources, archeology, park land, and construction impacts.

Transit-Oriented Growth

Jack Kanarek explained that NJ TRANSIT needs to adhere to the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) prescribed process. The Environmental Assessment is the key element for funding. This project will be in competition with projects around the country. To better assess each project, the FTA has developed evaluation criteria. The focus is toward “smart growth” and “transit-oriented growth.” The FTA is looking for communities to establish transit-oriented land uses around stations. NJ TRANSIT has a handbook,
“Planning for Transit-Friendly Land Use: A Handbook for NJ Communities”, to help communities plan better development and maximize ridership. Copies of the handbook were available at the meeting for CLC members or by calling Roz Diamond, Project Manager at 973-491-7795.

The Office of State Planning (OSP) has a program to assist communities interested in transit and pedestrian-oriented development. David Hojsak from the OSP showed a guide that describes their program entitled “What a Difference a State Plan Makes! A Citizens Guide to the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan”. As part of this project communities have the opportunity to create well-defined transit nodes with viable land uses and more than just parking lots. The OSP has a three million-dollar planning program called Smart Growth, and they have design professionals on staff to assist towns with design schemes. Interested communities should contact the OSP at (609) 292-5248 if they are interested.

Related Corridor Studies and Projects
CLC members were asked to report on any planned or ongoing related activities and studies in their communities and counties.

Bill Wright mentioned that Art Rueben had recently passed away and that he had been a former Somerset County planner, and had put a lot of effort toward restoring the West Trenton passenger service.

Bill Wright asked about locating the train storage yard on DOT property east of West Trenton Station with rail access via an existing industrial track. Dennis Fordham responded that the project team had investigated several locations but had not specifically investigated that site. The current site on Knight’s Farm seems most promising since the yard needs to be very close to the rail line and away from residential areas. If for some reason the current site does not work out other sites would be considered.

Jim McManimon stated that in late October, Governor Whitman and the Mercer County Executive made an announcement that Knights Farm has been designated open space for its entirety. The project team is aware of this announcement and has been in discussions with the State Treasury Department who indicated that it may be possible to take a 10 to 15 acre strip of the land adjacent to the right-of-way, but discussions are still ongoing.

Andrew Carten requested that both the Light Rail project and the West Trenton project coordinate and consider extending the lines to the State House, and design stations to accommodate light rail potential. Jack Kanarek responded that light rail and freight cannot run on the same track at the same time due to Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regulations.

A member commented that the handout which compares travel times on the Northeast Corridor Line (NEC) and the West Trenton Line does not take into account the drive times along the heavily congested Route 1 corridor and other highways. This should be considered to give more weight to the project.

A comment was made that more reverse peak service should be considered to connect low-income workers living in urban areas to suburban job sites. Jack Kanarek responded that NJ TRANSIT would like to provide more reverse peak service, but NJ TRANSIT is still trying to reach an accommodation with CSX as to the infrastructure and operating needs. Since the freight business is growing, CSX would like to add more freight trains also, and there is a finite amount of capacity.

In response to a question from Jim Savage, Dennis Fordham indicated that there is a small existing train storage yard at West Trenton Station that is used by SEPTA to store and turn the R-3 trains. This yard is too small to accommodate NJ TRANSIT trains, and also is too close to residential properties.

A recommendation was made by Jim McManimon that NJ TRANSIT consider property close to Trenton Mercer Airport for a station and perhaps a train storage yard because there are future plans for development around the airport. Another member added that the airport is in a free trade zone so commercial development will be considerable. NJ TRANSIT agreed to investigate this possibility.
A question was asked about the scoping process related to this project. For an Environmental Assessment project, the federal regulations require NJ TRANSIT to coordinate with interested agencies and others to advise them of the scope of the project and receive input. The regulations offer that NJ TRANSIT may do this through an early coordination process or scoping process. The public participation process developed by NJ TRANSIT for this project fulfills this requirement of the regulations.

Jim McManimon commented that the West Trenton Station has parking that is free, uncontrolled, and fully utilized. Dennis Fordham responded that the project team is exploring the possibility of parking on the east side of the station.

Jon Edwards commented that the proposed station at Reed Road is called the I-95 Station but there is no I-95 interchange to access it. Passengers will need to travel on roads that will be already congested with Merrill Lynch traffic. Since only a few people from Merrill Lynch will be using the station, why not move the station closer to I-95 and to the Trenton Mercer Airport? Jack Kanarek responded that the station will gather some I-95 commuters but conceded that the station will primarily benefit employees of the Merrill Lynch office park. NJ TRANSIT is interested in the suggestions that have been made, and will work with the county, Ewing Twp., and airport officials to investigate alternatives.

Lynn Winters Mineo questioned why the south side of Hamilton Road was selected as the parking location for the Hillsborough Station. The site is small and encroaches on nearby neighborhoods. The north side is presently farm land and would allow room for expansion. Dennis Fordham responded that all four quadrants had been examined and there were significant wetlands with potential environmental impacts. Also, the highway access is better on the south side from North Willow Road. Ms. Winters Mineo also commented that the train line was elevated in that area and that additional trains would add to the existing freight noise the neighborhood experiences.

Sondra Moylan commented that the Belle Mead station should be called Montgomery, and then asked where the parking would be located at that station and whether there would be access to the realigned Route 206 bridge. Dennis Fordham responded that there is not sufficient room for parking to the north and west of the station so the project team is currently exploring locations on the east side of the right-of-way and possibly in conjunction with the Pike Run Development. Mr. Fordham said they were aware of the new alignment of Route 206 and the planned realignment of the Route 206 bridge just south of the station site, and that they would be coordinating this with the DOT.

In response to a question from Ken Wedeen about what kind of feeder bus services have been envisioned, Jack Kanarek indicated that the ridership estimates are not constrained by any limitations, so NJ TRANSIT is open to examining new bus services or extending existing bus services.

Bill Wright stated that time should be taken to build the West Trenton Line right. There is a need for all day service, and CSX will be bringing more freight trains so the right-of-way and infrastructure should be designed to accommodate the future freight and passenger demand, bearing in mind that more frequent service means more ridership. It is important to connect with the SEPTA R3 service. Dennis Fordham explained that two tracks are being considered now, but the conceptual designs are being developed to allow space for a third track in the future.

Michael Jenson commented that public transit is limited in Flemington which is a tourist activity hub. The project team should consider acquiring property adjacent to the Lehigh Line to Three Bridges Junction and extend to Flemington – a major market that NJ TRANSIT should consider. Dennis Fordham explained that this proposal is beyond the limits of this study, but NJ TRANSIT could consider this as a separate project in the future.

Frank Scarantino asked about the length of proposed trains and the criteria used for designing parking lots. Dennis Fordham responded that the train would be up to six cars plus an engine, and that 100 to 125 autos per acre were used as a rule of thumb for parking lot design.
A suggestion was made that there is an underused park-and-ride lot at the corner of Amwell Road and Route 206. Perhaps a shuttle service could be developed to take people to the station. Another member added that NJDOT owns 50 acres on Route 514 (Amwell Road) adjacent to the railroad which was originally intended for Route 206. In response, Frank Scarantino said that Hillsborough Township was opposed to an Amwell Road location for a train station and that they would prefer the Hamilton Road location.

A member commented that some of the candidate station locations were geared primarily to good highway access which seemed contradictory to the transit-oriented goals that were discussed earlier. Jack Kanarek responded that plans are still being developed, and NJ TRANSIT is working with the communities.

Kent Scully indicated that the project team should be aware that a lot of fiber optic cable has been installed in the right-of-way, and that this may be a problem. Dennis Fordham thanked the member for the information, and said that this has not been considered at this point in the study, but will be looked at in the future as the design process advances.

Jim McManimon asked NJ TRANSIT to look at the existing bus lines in Mercer County and whether they serve the county sufficiently. NJ TRANSIT will review these routes.

Jon Edwards asked how many cars would the 75 projected riders at Hopewell Station generate. Dennis Fordham stated that there is land owned by the town that may be used for parking and it would accommodate about 60 to 70 parking spaces.

Valerie Chaucer-Levine asked for clarification regarding the ridership projections showing 120 boardings at the I-95 station. Terrence Sobers indicated that most of these riders would be commuting from the north to the Merrill Lynch office park.

A question was raised about where Hopewell residents would park at the I-95 station since Merrill Lynch has said that no one will be able to go through their site to access parking. Dennis Fordham stated that discussions were in progress with Merrill Lynch with regard to locating commuter parking on their property and providing easy access from Scotch Road. Alternatively, parking can be provided on the east side of the right-of-way, with access from Reed Road.

A member again raised the issue of direct access from I-95. Dennis Fordham explained that it would be prohibitively expensive to construct new ramps to provide direct access to and from I-95, especially given that the anticipated ridership driving from I-95 is relatively small.

Next Steps
Roz Diamond explained that NJ TRANSIT and the project team would look into the questions and issues that were raised at this meeting. The next steps of the project would include preparing the EA, preparing and distributing newsletters, holding open houses after the first of the year, meeting with potential station host municipalities, and meeting again with the CLC at the next project milestone.
WEST TRENTON RAIL LINE STUDY
COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

AGENDA

November 30, 1999

1. Introduction
   • Review Agenda

2. Community Participation
   • Role of Community Liaison Committee
   • Technical Advisory Committee
   • Newsletters
   • Municipal Meetings
   • Open Houses

3. Project Overview
   • Background
   • Operations/Schedule/Passenger Demand
   • Infrastructure
   • Stations
   • Coordination with Freight Operators

4. Environmental Process
   • Overview of the Environmental Assessment process
   • General areas of assessment
   • Potential areas of impact
   • Federal Transit Administration land use and transit-oriented development information

5. Related Projects and Studies

6. Questions and Answers

7. Next Steps
WEST TRENTON RAIL LINE STUDY
COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE
Addendum to Meeting Minutes
Of
NOVEMBER 30, 1999

To: Attendees  Date: January 19, 2000
From: Lisa DiTaranti  Meeting Location: Somerset County Freeholders Meeting Room Somerville, NJ

Re: NJ TRANSIT West Trenton Rail Line Passenger Service Restoration Study
Community Liaison Committee Meeting

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The following additional comments are officially added to the minutes of the November 30, 1999 Community Liaison Committee meeting:

1. Jon Edwards noted that Marshall’s Corner is in the process of being de-designated as a town center, and therefore it should no longer be considered as a potential station stop for the proposed West Trenton Line service restoration.
2. Mr. Edwards supports selecting station sites at existing centers, where development is currently occurring.
3. Mr. Edwards supports a station location at the Merrill Lynch site only if non-Merrill-Lynch employees are permitted to park on both sides of the track. If this non-employee parking is prohibited, Mr. Edwards suggests alternative sites for station consideration at Pennington, where there is a potential site behind the Burger King, or at the Trenton Mercer Airport.
Public Outreach Materials
WEST TRENTON LINE PASSENGER
SERVICE RESTORATION STUDY
AND
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Information

Open House Meetings
March 2000
West Trenton Line Passenger Service Restoration Study and Environmental Assessment

FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND

Since 1982, when commuter rail service was discontinued on the Trenton Line, interest in restoring passenger service has emerged as population and development have resulted in increased roadway congestion in the area. Several studies have been conducted to assess the feasibility of service restoration, including studies by NJ TRANSIT and the Somerset County Planning Department.

Somerset County was instrumental in securing a federal earmark to fund continued studies through this current effort. Due to considerable local interest, federal appropriations for transit projects have included earmarks to fund planning, preparation of an Environmental Assessment, and for preliminary engineering work for restoration of passenger service.

The Trenton Line is owned and operated by the CSX Railroad. The Line is a major north-south trunk line for long distance freight. The potential West Trenton Line passenger service would operate between West Trenton and Newark. At the northern end of the Line, the passenger service would connect to and serve Raritan Valley Line stations enroute to Newark. At West Trenton Station, at the southern end, the NJ TRANSIT service would connect with (via passenger transfer) the existing SEPTA service to and from Philadelphia.

STATUS

NJ TRANSIT is now beginning preparation of the Environmental Assessment (EA), in conformance with federal requirements, to ensure that the project will be eligible for federal funds. The EA will define a plan for passenger service restoration. The plan elements will include a train-operating plan; infrastructure needs analysis, including track, signal, station, parking and train storage improvements; and identify capital and operating costs for the service.

A comprehensive public participation process is included in this phase of the project, which includes the participation of the Community Liaison Committee; the Technical Advisory Committee; Open Houses in each of the two counties; and distribution of project newsletters.
FEATURES OF THE PROPOSED WEST TRENTON LINE PASSENGER SERVICE

I. CANDIDATE STATIONS STOPS

Five candidate station sites were selected after review and analysis of the original commuter station stops along the line, sites that had been studied under previous analyses, and sites that have potential for capturing ridership due to recent development. Each station would be equipped with platforms and canopies, parking facilities, pedestrian facilities, accessibility for people with disabilities, and other passenger amenities.

The candidate stations, from north to south, depicted on the following map, are:

**Hillsborough**: Located in Hillsborough Township, Somerset County, adjacent to Sunnymeade Road.
- Access via Sunnymeade Road
- On land owned by the Glen-Gery Corporation
- 350 parking spaces

**Belle Mead**: Located in Montgomery Township, Somerset County, close to intersection of Route 206 and Township Line Road.
- Access via Township Line Road
- Site of former station and parking
- Existing station buildings would remain
- Intersection of Township Line Road and Route 206 will be improved along with replacement of the adjacent Route 206 bridge over the railroad (NJDOT project)
- 300 parking spaces

**Hopewell Borough**: Located in Hopewell Borough, Mercer County, adjacent to Somerset Street, Front Street, and Greenwood Avenue.
- Site of former station
- Borough has restored historic 1876 station building
- Part of station building may used for passenger amenities
- Two parking lots proposed, for a total of 100 spaces: 50 spaces with access from Front Street, and 50 spaces with access from Somerset Street

**I-95**: Located in Hopewell Township, Mercer County. Adjacent to the Merrill Lynch Scotch Road Office Park development, north of I-95
- Access from west and I-95 via Scotch Road and Office Park Loop Road
- Access from east via Reed Road
- Station would serve local community and Office Park employees
- Two parking lots proposed. Approximately 100 spaces on west side, and 50 spaces on east side of tracks, with space for future expansion for 100 cars
**West Trenton**: Located in Ewing Township, Mercer County, near intersection of Grand and Railroad Avenues.
- Proposed southern terminus for West Trenton Line
- Existing station owned by NJ TRANSIT and used by SEPTA as northern terminus for R-3 service to Philadelphia
- Elevators would be constructed to existing underpass to provide accessibility between platforms
- Approximately 50 parking spaces proposed for east side of station for NJ TRANSIT and SEPTA passengers
- Parking may be joint development with Developer of proposed adjacent office building

### II. PROPOSED TRAIN SERVICE

A total of 7 trains are proposed to operate daily on the West Trenton Line, in each direction:

- **5 Inbound A.M. Peak Period** trains to Newark and **5 Outbound P.M. Peak Period** trains from Newark stopping at all West Trenton Line stations. These trains would primarily serve Newark/New York-bound passengers from the service area.

- **1 Outbound Reverse A.M. Peak** train from Newark to West Trenton, and **1 Inbound Reverse P.M. Peak** train to Newark stopping at all West Trenton Line stations. These trains would primarily serve riders from the north destined to work locations within the service area.

- **1 Midday Inbound** and **1 Midday outbound** train to/from all West Trenton Line stations. These trains would serve off-peak and early departures/late arrivals.

All West Trenton Line trains would also serve stations on the Raritan Valley Line. Access to New York Penn Station would require a transfer at Newark Penn Station.

### III. PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

As part of the proposed reactivation of passenger service, 12.1 miles of additional track would be added within the existing Trenton Line right-of-way. The additional track would be equipped with railway signals, grade crossing gates, and other safety enhancements.

It is also proposed to reactivate the Reading Connector, a one-mile long track connecting the West Trenton Line in the north to the Raritan Valley Line (RVL), just west of the RVL Bridgewater Station.
IV. PROPOSED WEST TRENTON LINE TRAIN STORAGE YARD

A train storage yard for West Trenton Line trains is proposed to be located south of the West Trenton Station, in Ewing Township, on land now known as Knight’s Farm. The proposed 10-15-acre storage site would be adjacent to the Trenton Line right-of-way, south of Sullivan Way. To the extent possible, the yard would be screened by trees and consideration will be given to constructing noise barriers to mitigate noise.

V. ESTIMATED DAILY BOARDING RIDERSHIP and TRAVEL TIMES BY STATION

**TABLE 1: West Trenton Line Estimated Station Boardings in 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATION</th>
<th>TOTAL Eastbound Daily Boardings</th>
<th>AM Peak Period Eastbound Boardings</th>
<th>Off-Peak &amp; PM Peak Eastbound Boardings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Trenton</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-95</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopewell</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belle Mead</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillsborough</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL West Trenton Line, Eastbound</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW Raritan Valley Line</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PROJECT</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Totals rounded for West Trenton Line

**TABLE 2: Estimated Daily Boarding Riders by Source in 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ridership Source</th>
<th>West Trenton Line</th>
<th>Raritan Valley Line</th>
<th>TOTAL PROJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NEW Rail Riders</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Auto</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Rail Diversions</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast Corridor</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raritan Valley Line</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>-200</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morristown Lines</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PROJECT</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>1,240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Assumes station stops at West Trenton (Ewing), I-95 (Hopewell Township), Hopewell Borough, Belle Mead (Montgomery Township), and Hillsborough (Sunnymeade Road)
The following is a comparison of travel times to Newark and New York from service area municipalities via the proposed West Trenton Line, the Northeast Corridor Line (NEC) or the Raritan Valley Line (RVL).

**TABLE 3: Travel Time Comparisons by Municipality by Rail Line**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Drive Access</th>
<th>Station to Station</th>
<th>TOTAL Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Approximate Travel Times (minutes)</td>
<td>Newark</td>
<td>New York*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillsborough</td>
<td>Hillsborough</td>
<td>West Trenton</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Somerville</td>
<td>Raritan Valley</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jersey Avenue</td>
<td>NEC</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery</td>
<td>Belle Mead</td>
<td>West Trenton</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Princeton Junction</td>
<td>NEC</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennington</td>
<td>I-95</td>
<td>West Trenton</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>NEC</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ewing Township</td>
<td>West Trenton</td>
<td>West Trenton</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trenton</td>
<td>NEC</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes transfer and wait times at Newark Penn Station for Raritan Valley and West Trenton Line riders transferring for New York Penn Station. Transfer and wait time is estimated as 6 minutes.
NJ TRANSIT
WEST TRENTON LINE PASSENGER SERVICE RESTORATION STUDY
AND
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

TELL US YOUR THOUGHTS!!!!

Please fill out the section below and drop in our comment box or mail to the below address to share your thoughts or suggestions for the project (or just to be included on our mailing list for project updates)!

COMMENTS

NAME: ___________________________

ADDRESS: _______________________

PHONE: _________________________

ORGANIZATION: ___________________

COMMENTS:

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Tom Clark, Regional Manager
NJ TRANSIT
Office of Community Relations
One Penn Plaza East
Newark, NJ 07105
973-491-8080

In addition, project status reports and meeting announcements will be posted on NJ TRANSIT’s website: njtransit.com
Proposed Restoration of Passenger Rail Service on the West Trenton Line

Comment/Question Form

Contact Information
Please Print Clearly:

Name:__________________________________________________________

Company/Affiliation (only if applicable):________________________________

Address:________________________________________________________

City:____________________________________ State:_______ Zip:_________

Telephone:________________________ Email Address:____________________

Comments/Questions
Please Print Clearly:

Feel free to use the back of this page

Please drop this form in the Comments Box

Mail this form to NJ TRANSIT: Thomas Clark
Office of Government and Community Relations
One Plenn Plaza East
Newark, NJ 07105-2245

OR

E-mail your comments/questions to: WestTrentonEA@njtransit.com

OR
What is the project all about?

The purpose of the study is to assess the feasibility and potential impacts and benefits of the proposed restoration of passenger rail service along the West Trenton Line.

Study History

Commuter rail service was discontinued on the West Trenton Line in 1982. Interest in restoring passenger service has emerged as population and development growth have resulted in increased roadway congestion in the area. Several independent studies have been conducted by NJ TRANSIT and Somerset County to assess the feasibility of service restoration. This study, the West Trenton Line Passenger Service Restoration Environmental Assessment Project is a continuation of those efforts.

The West Trenton Line is owned and operated by the CSX Railroad and is a major north-south trunk line for long distance freight. The proposed West Trenton passenger service would operate between West Trenton and Manville on the West Trenton Line, and then join the Raritan Valley Line west of the Bridgewater station for travel to Newark. The southern end of the line would allow transfers to the existing SEPTA R3 service to and from Philadelphia. (See "The Passenger Service Rail Alignment" article on page 3.)

Study Status

Previous study efforts have identified the preliminary operating plan and basic infrastructure improvements for operating passenger service on the West Trenton Line. NJ TRANSIT and their consultants are now beginning the preparation of the Environmental Assessment (EA) in accordance with federal environmental requirements. (See article on page 3 - "What is an EA?")

In addition to the environmental analysis, the study includes the refinement of the operational and infrastructure needs and the development of operating and capital costs. The study also includes a comprehensive public participation process (See article on page 2.)
The Public Participation Process

The West Trenton Line Passenger Service Restoration Environmental Assessment Project includes a comprehensive public participation process. The program includes the following integrated elements:

Technical Advisory Committee
The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed to advise NJ TRANSIT and the consultant team about technical and operational issues during the course of the study. The TAC includes representatives from the Federal Transit Administration, NJ Departments of Transportation and Environmental Protection, Somerset and Mercer Counties, the two Metropolitan Planning Organizations for the study area, and the freight and passenger railroads that currently operate in the study area. The first TAC meeting was held on November 23, 1999 and meetings will continue to be held upon completion of major project milestones.

Community Liaison Committee
A Community Liaison Committee (CLC) has been established to serve as an intermediary between NJ TRANSIT and the various jurisdictions that may be affected by the restoration of passenger service on the West Trenton Line. The committee includes municipal and county representatives from the study area, the NJ Office of State Planning and various public interest groups. The first CLC meeting was held in Somerset County on November 30, 1999. The meeting covered topics including the proposed rail alignment, project overview and schedule.

Municipal Meetings
An ongoing series of meetings is being held with representatives of the study corridor municipalities that would be host to potential West Trenton Line stations. While these governing bodies are already represented on the CLC, these additional meetings allow for more detailed discussions of project-related issues that may be unique to specific localities.

Open Houses
Two open houses will be held in each of the two counties in the West Trenton Line corridor (Mercer and Somerset.) The first set of open houses will be coordinated with the completion of the operations/engineering analysis. The scheduled open houses are listed on the first page of this newsletter.

The second set of open houses are planned for review of Environmental Assessment findings. The purpose of these sessions is to offer the public a hands-on view of the study progress.

Project Newsletters
Project newsletters will be published and distributed throughout the study region to provide information about the progress of the study, an update of the environmental assessment process, and other information related to the West Trenton Line study.

Proposed Project Schedule

This phase of the West Trenton Rail Line Project began in early October 1999 and is scheduled to run through Fall of 2000. As explained in “The Public Involvement Process”, the various public and technical meetings will be coordinated with some of the major project milestones, listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Expected Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engineering/Operating Plan Refinement</td>
<td>December 1999/January 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital and Operating Cost Estimates</td>
<td>January 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridership Estimates</td>
<td>February 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Analyses</td>
<td>June/July 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of the EA</td>
<td>September/October 2000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The West Trenton Rail Line News

The Passenger Service Rail Alignment

Line Description
The West Trenton Line is a 26-mile freight railroad between West Trenton and Port Reading Junction. The line is predominantly a single-track railroad, but originally had three, and in some cases four tracks in some locations.

Given the current and projected level of freight operation on the line, it will be necessary to construct a second track over much of the line to permit unimpeded operation of both freight and passenger trains. The graphic on this page identifies the 12.1 miles of proposed second track and the 4.4 miles of optional second track.

Stations
A total of five stations are proposed for the West Trenton Line, as shown in the map on this page. The southernmost station is the existing station at West Trenton (Ewing Twp.) The four new proposed station locations include (south to north): I-95 (Hopewell Twp.); Hopewell (Hopewell Boro.); Belle Mead (Montgomery Twp.); and Hillsborough (Hillsborough Twp.)

The Bridgewater Station (Bridgewater Twp.) is the first existing Raritan Valley Line (RVL) station that will be served by West Trenton Line trains. Additional RVL stations between Bridgewater and Newark Penn Station will also be served by trains originating in West Trenton.

A new train storage yard for the NJ TRANSIT trains is proposed to be located just south of the West Trenton station.

Service
The proposed operating plan includes five trains during the morning and afternoon peak three-hour periods, offering service every 30-40 minutes in the peak direction. The morning peak trains would originate at West Trenton station and the afternoon peak trains depart from Newark Penn Station. Other limited services are also being planned.

What is an Environmental Assessment?

An Environmental Assessment is a compilation of technical analyses with the purpose of assessing the environmental impact of a proposed project. Preparation of an EA must conform to the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) as well as the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Start requirements. The West Trenton Line Project qualifies as a "New Start" since its focus is the start of new passenger service in an existing rail corridor. Both NEPA and FTA requirements must be met in order for the project to be eligible for federal funding.

The EA will review the potential for impacts in the full range of environmental areas, including: wetlands and ecologically sensitive areas; land use considerations; air quality; traffic and noise impacts; effects on parklands and historic resources; cost and economic considerations; and demographic impacts.

For example, stations will be examined to determine their compatibility with local land use/zoning regulations for the site and surrounding areas. Analyses will also determine whether the station development could impact wetlands vegetation, archeological resources or local traffic conditions.

Continued on Page 4
How can I learn more about the study?

Readers who are interested in obtaining information about the West Trenton Passenger Service Restoration Study can be added to the project mailing list by contacting:

Tom Clark-Regional Manager
NJ TRANSIT
Office of Community Relations
One Penn Plaza East
Newark, NJ 07105

In addition, project status reports and meeting announcements will be posted on NJ TRANSIT's website: njtransit.state.nj.us.

Interested readers are encouraged to attend the planned Open House meetings to obtain hands-on information about the project.9

The purpose of the project is to determine if any significant impacts may result from the proposed West Trenton project. The re-use of an existing rail corridor is advantageous to minimizing project impacts (in contrast to constructing a new transportation corridor) while providing the benefits of new transit options. However, if significant impacts are found, the project may require some modification or the development of mitigation measures that balance any identified impacts. 9

continued from Page 3
Public Participation
The public outreach program for the West Trenton Line restoration project includes the following elements:

- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC): The TAC includes representatives from the Federal Transit Administration, NJ Departments of Transportation and Environmental Protection, Somerset and Mercer Counties, the two Metropolitan Planning Organizations for the study area, and the freight and passenger railroads that operate in the study area.
- Municipal Meetings: Meetings were held with representatives of the study corridor municipalities that would be host to potential West Trenton Line stations. Meetings were also held with the representatives of Mercer and Somerset Counties.
- Open Houses: Open House meetings were held in Mercer and Somerset Counties to provide information about the study and obtain feedback from the public and the proposed project. (See front page for information about upcoming meetings.)

How Can I Learn More About The Study?
Readers who are interested in obtaining information about the West Trenton Passenger Service Restoration Study can be added to the project mailing list by contacting:

Wendy Molner, Regional Manager
NJ TRANSIT
Office of Community Relations
One Penn Plaza East
Newark, NJ 07105-2245
Telephone (973) 491-8073
E-mail: wmolner@njtransit.com

In addition, project status reports and meeting announcements will be posted on NJ TRANSIT’s web site:

http://www.njtransit.com

Interested readers are encouraged to attend the planned open house meetings to obtain information about the project.

About the Study
The proposed West Trenton Line project would reestablish passenger rail service between West Trenton and Newark Penn Station via the existing West Trenton freight line and the Raritan Valley Line (see map at left). Connecting rail services are available in West Trenton (to Philadelphia) and in Newark (to Hoboken, Jersey City, and New York City). The purpose of restoring passenger rail service is to provide an alternative to the traffic congestion on heavily-traveled roads such as Route 206, Route 22, and Route 1. Restoration of service could contribute to regional air quality improvements and could relieve parking shortages at Northeast Corridor and Raritan Valley Line stations. The West Trenton Rail Line Environmental Assessment (EA) is nearing completion. An EA is an analysis of the potential environmental effects (positive and negative) of the construction and operation of the proposed passenger service.

Service Plan
Fourteen trains are proposed to stop at each West Trenton Line station every weekday:
- Five trains to Newark in the AM peak period (6:00 AM to 10:00 AM)
- One train from Newark in the AM peak period
- Two midday trains to/from Newark
- Five trains from Newark in PM peak period (4:00 PM to 7:00 PM)
- One train to Newark in the PM peak period

West Trenton Line trains would serve stations on the Raritan Valley Line (RVL) east of (and including) Bridgewater.

Rail travel time between West Trenton and Newark Penn Station would be 1 hour and 30 minutes. The service would be provided by diesel locomotives and passenger coaches. At Newark, passengers could transfer to NJ TRANSIT, PATH, or Amtrak trains as well as the Newark city subway, buses, and taxis, and walk to destinations in downtown Newark.

Upcoming Meetings

**Wednesday, December 1, 2004**
Mercer County
NJ Department of Transportation
1035 Parkway Avenue
Trenton, NJ 08625
4:00 PM to 8:00 PM

**Tuesday, December 7, 2004**
Somerset County
Hillsborough Township Municipal Complex
379 South Branch Road
Hillsborough, NJ 08844
4:00 PM to 8:00 PM
The following improvements were studied as part of the West Trenton Line project but are considered as ‘optional’ elements and are not part of the proposed project.

**Optional Infrastructure**

- Manville Station: The study of Manville station (located between Hillsborough station and Port Reading Junction) was requested by the Borough of Manville. While Manville station would not result in significant environmental impact, it would add $3 million to the project cost and would attract only 10 riders.
- Additional 44 mile second track segment: At the request of CSX, an additional segment of double track between the Sunnymeade Road grade crossing and Hillsborough station was studied. While this optional element would not result in significant environmental impact, it would add $13 million to the project cost. The additional track is currently not needed because anticipated levels of freight and passenger rail service can be accommodated with a single track in this segment.
- Grade-separated railroad crossing at Port Reading Junction: The West Trenton Line merges with the Lehigh Line at Port Reading Junction, where the proposed alternative includes an at-grade crossing. At the request of Norfolk Southern, a structure (flyover) separating the two lines was studied. It is expected that the flyover would add $55 million to the project cost. Anticipated levels of freight and passenger rail service can be accommodated by the proposed at-grade crossing, but if future freight volumes exceed capacity of the at-grade crossing, the optional flyover would be further studied as a replacement, and separate environmental studies would be required.

**Environmental Assessment Findings**

The West Trenton Line study will produce an Environmental Assessment (EA): an analysis of the potential environmental impacts (positive or negative) of the construction and operation of the proposed passenger service. The EA will comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which establishes specific requirements for projects that might be implemented using federal funding. An important goal of the environmental review process is to provide a forum for the public to learn about, and react to, a proposed project.

Preliminary environmental findings are summarized below and will be confirmed in the EA. The proposed project (without optional elements) is not expected to have a significant impact on any aspect of the environment. In part, that reflects the fact that much of the construction would occur within the existing right-of-way. It is also the case that the proposed alternative was developed in a way that minimizes impacts; for example, to avoid station sites with historic resources or conflicting land uses.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CATEGORY AND REQUIRED ANALYSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Analysis of potential impact with existing use, zoning, and public policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No significant impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Park & Recreation | Effects of project on adjacent public open spaces and recreational resources |
| No significant impact |

| Traffic | Analysis of how the project would affect roadway operations during the construction phase of the project |
| No significant impact |

| Air Quality | Analysis of how the project would introduce or remove air pollutants. Takes into account reduction of auto vehicle trips due to increased mass transit services. |
| No significant impact |

| Noise | Analysis of how sound levels would be affected by eliminating commuter rail service |
| No significant impact |

| Vibration | Analysis of vibration levels due to potential service |
| No significant impact |

| Water Resources | Analysis of how the project would affect flora and fauna in wetlands and riparian areas, and open waters; no threatened or endangered species. |
| No significant impact |

| Floodplain and Drainage | Analysis of how the project would affect flood zones and wetlands. |
| No significant impact |

| Materials | Analysis of whether the project would disturb any historically significant properties or structures. |
| No significant impact |

| Archaeological Resources | Analysis of whether the project would disturb any archaeologically significant locations. |
| No significant impact |

| Hazardous Materials | Identification of any materials that may contain contaminated surface materials that may pose a danger to construction workers or the general public due to explosion or fire. |
| No significant impact |

| Visual Resources | Analysis of whether the project would alter the visual character of the study area. |
| No significant impact |

| Construction | Estimation of potential impacts to existing operations during the construction phase of the project |
| Impacts to freight operations during rehabilitation of tracks will be avoided by staging and freight rail coordination. |

| Environmental Justice | Determination of whether any population group would incur a disproportionate share of negative environmental consequences resulting from the project |
| No significant impact |
The proposal to restore passenger service on the West Trenton Line is generated by the lack of convenient transportation alternatives in the growing Somerset and Mercer counties’ region.

The Proposed Service Would:
- Reestablish passenger rail service between West Trenton and Newark Penn Station via the West Trenton Line and the Raritan Valley Line (see map at left).
- Connect to existing rail service in West Trenton (to Philadelphia via SEPTA) and in Newark (to Hoboken, Jersey City, and New York City).
- Contribute to regional air quality improvements.
- Relieve parking shortfalls along the Northeast Corridor and the Raritan Valley Lines.
- Enable communities to focus transit oriented growth around rail stations, limiting roadway congestion and supporting smart growth.

The West Trenton Line is owned and operated by freight operator, CSX Transportation. Passenger service was discontinued in 1982, and NJ TRANSIT retained operating rights.

NJ TRANSIT has analyzed the feasibility of restoration of passenger service on the West Trenton Line. With continued support from state and local agencies, NJ TRANSIT has completed the Draft Environmental Assessment, a major milestone in the effort of restoring passenger rail service on the West Trenton Line.

The Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) is being issued by NJ TRANSIT for the purpose of receiving public comment.

### Upcoming Meetings

**Somerset County**  
November 29, 2007  
Hillsborough Township Municipal Complex  
379 South Branch Road  
Hillsborough, NJ 08844  
4:00 PM to 8:00 PM

**Mercer County**  
December 6, 2007  
Ewing Community/Senior Center (former JCC Building)  
999 Lower Ferry Road  
Ewing, NJ 08628  
4:00 PM to 8:00 PM
Stations, Track, and Yard

Proposed Restoration of Passenger Service on the West Trenton Line

- Stations, Track, and Yard

Proposed Restoration of Passenger Service on the West Trenton Line

Stations, Track, and Yard

Track Improvements

Additional track would be built within the existing West Trenton Line right-of-way, generally in locations where tracks previously were in place (see map to the left for locations).

- A second track would be installed between the Sunny-mead Road grade crossing and Port Reading Junction (the location in Manville where the West Trenton Line merges with the Lehigh Line), a distance of 2.8 miles.
- A second track would be installed between the Pennington-Hopewell Road Bridge and the Belle Mead Station, a distance of 10 miles.
- Reinstallation of track on the Reading Connector, an abandoned railroad right-of-way between Port Reading Junction and the RVL.

Service Plan

- West Trenton to/ from Newark Penn Station
- 14 Daily Trains
  - Five peak trains in each direction
  - 1 morning outbound train (to West Trenton)
  - 1 evening inbound train (to Newark)
  - 1 midday train in each direction
- West Trenton to Newark travel time: 1 hour, 20 minutes
- Transfer at Newark for New York City
- Transfer at West Trenton for Philadelphia (via SEPTA)

Ridership Forecast

NJ TRANSIT’s North Jersey Transit Demand Forecasting Model was used to estimate the number of future (Year 2025) users of the proposed West Trenton Line service.

- Estimated total daily trips: 2,660
  - 88% of riders with destinations in the Urban Core
- New Rail Trips
  - 1,000 Auto vehicle trips/ day diverted
  - 240 Bus trips/ day diverted
- Diversions of Rail Trips:
  - 980 Northeast Corridor Line trips/ day
  - 440 Raritan Valley Line trips/ day

Financials

The restoration of West Trenton Line service would require a capital investment in order to:

- Purchase land for stations and the train storage yard
- Buy trains (locomotives and coaches)
- Construct track and related systems, station and yard facilities (e.g. platforms, parking), bridge rehabilitation

Annual O&M Cost: $15M
Net Annual Operating Revenue: $2.9M
(Include revenue diversions to West Trenton Line from RVL and NEC)
Annual Operating Subsidy: $12.1M
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENVIRONMENTAL CATEGORY AND REQUIRED ANALYSIS</th>
<th>FINDING</th>
<th>MITIGATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Built Environment</strong> - Analysis of potential impact on existing use, zoning, and public policy</td>
<td>Mitigated Impact</td>
<td>26.73 acres for parking facilities and 13.1 acres for West Trenton yard to be acquired through Federal Guidelines (49 CFR Part 24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Park &amp; Recreational Resources</strong> - Effects of project on adjacent public open spaces and recreational resources</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Traffic and Transportation</strong> - Analysis of how the project would affect roadway conditions</td>
<td>Mitigated Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Air Quality</strong> - Analysis of how the project would increase or decrease air pollutants. Takes into account reduction of auto vehicle trips due to increased mass transit services.</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Noise</strong> - Analysis of how sound levels would be affected by reestablishing commuter rail service</td>
<td>Mitigated Impact</td>
<td>Mitigated with lower decibel warning horn now used on new NJ TRANSIT locomotives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vibration</strong> - Analysis of vibration levels due to potential service</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Water and Natural Resources</strong> - Analysis of how the project would affect flora and fauna in wetlands regions</td>
<td>Mitigated Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Floodplains and Drainage</strong> - Analysis of how the project would affect flood zones and watercourses</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historic Resources</strong> - Analysis of whether the project would disturb any historically significant properties or structures</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Archeological Resources</strong> - Analysis of whether the project would disturb any archeologically significant locations</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hazardous Materials</strong> - Identification of any areas that may contain contaminated surface materials that may present a danger to construction workers or the general public due to exposure</td>
<td>Mitigated Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual Resources</strong> - Analysis of whether the project would alter the visual character of the study area</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construction</strong> - Estimation of potential impacts to existing operations during the construction phase of the project</td>
<td>Mitigated Impact</td>
<td>Temporary impacts to freight operations during repair and rehabilitation of infrastructure will be minimized by staging and freight railroad coordination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental Justice</strong> - Determination of whether any population group would bear a disproportionate share of negative environmental consequences resulting from the project</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cumulative Effects and Indirect Impacts</strong> - Methodology developed according to Council on Environmental Quality publication, Considering Cumulative Effects Under the National Environmental Policy Act and other professional guidance.</td>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where Can I review the Draft EA?

The Draft Environmental Assessment is available for review and comment during normal business hours at the following locations in the study area:

- Ewing Library
  61 Scotch Road
  Ewing, NJ 08628

- Hollowbrook Library
  320 Hollowbrook Drive
  Trenton, NJ 08638

- Hopewell Library
  245 Pennington-Titusville Road
  Pennington, NJ 08534

- Hopewell Public Library
  13 East Broad Street
  Hopewell, NJ 08525

- Bound Brook Memorial Library
  402 East High Street
  Bound Brook, NJ 08805

- Bridgewater Branch Library
  1 Vogt Drive
  Bridgewater, NJ 08807

- Hillsborough Public Library
  379 South Branch Road
  Hillsborough, NJ 08844

- Mary Jacobs Memorial Library
  64 Washington Street
  Rocky Hill, NJ 08553

- Manville Public Library
  100 South 10th Avenue
  Manville, NJ 08835

- Somerville Public Library
  35 West End Avenue
  Somerville, NJ 08876

- Mercer County Planning Division
  McDade Administration Building
  640 South Broad Street
  Trenton, NJ 08650

- Somerset County Planning Division
  20 Grove Street
  Somerville, NJ 08876

Public Participation

The public outreach program for the proposed West Trenton Line restoration project includes the following elements:

- **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):** The TAC includes representatives from the Federal Transit Administration, NJ Departments of Transportation and Environmental Protection, Somerset and Mercer Counties, the two Metropolitan Planning Organizations for the study area, and the freight and passenger railroads that operate in the study area.

- **Municipal Meetings:** Meetings were held with representatives of the study corridor municipalities that would be host to potential West Trenton Line stations. Meetings were also held with the representatives of Mercer and Somerset Counties.

- **Open Houses:** Open House meetings were held in Mercer and Somerset Counties to provide information about the study and obtain feedback from the public on the proposed project. See front page for information about upcoming meetings.

HOW Can I make a comment?

Comments can be made at one of the scheduled meetings (see front page for information about upcoming meetings) or by contacting NJ TRANSIT:

**Thomas Clark**

*Office of Government and Community Relations*

NJ TRANSIT

One Penn Plaza East

Newark, NJ 07105-2245

Telephone: (973) 491-8080

Email: WestTrentonEA@njtransit.com

The Draft EA is also available online:

http://www.njtransit.com

Closing Date for Comments: January 15, 2007
Correspondence and Other Print Materials
June 18, 2004

Jack M. Kanarek
Senior Director, Project Development Planning
New Jersey Transit
One Penn Plaza East
Newark, NJ 07105-2246.

Re: Proposed Hillsborough Rail Station
West Trenton Line

Dear Mr. Kanarek:

Please be advised that on June 17, 2004, the Hillsborough Master Plan Subcommittee reviewed the proposed rail station location on the West Trenton Rail Line. There were four potential locations that were discussed, including the site along Sunnymeade Road that had been recently proposed at the May 26th meeting in the Somerset County Administration Building. The Subcommittee recommended that the site along Amwell Road (as indicated as site 4 on the accompanying map) is the preferred location for the proposed Hillsborough Rail Station for the following reasons:

- This site is relatively close to the proposed Town Center, which will provide better accessibility, as well as serving local commuters working outside of Hillsborough.
- This site has good road access off Amwell Road near the Route 206 bypass interchange.
- This site will be buffered from existing development by the proposed bypass interchange as well as the rail line.

It is recognized that there will be a need to buffer this site from the existing residential development across Amwell Road and to provide a site design and layout that will minimize any potential negative impacts.

Please note that this recommendation will be included in the on-going preparation of the Hillsborough Master Plan with public discussion and adoption expected later this year or early next year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert Ringelheim, PP, AICP
Township Planner

Enclosure

Cc: Robert Bzik, PP, AICP-Somerset County Director of Planning
Dennis Fordham - C.Eng. - Systra Consulting
Mayor Steven Sireci
Hillsborough Master Plan Subcommittee
RESOLUTION REGARDING ZONING AND BUFFERING AROUND THE PROPOSED ROUTE 206 BY-PASS AND AMWELL ROAD INTERCHANGE

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of Hillsborough recognizes that many of the residents surrounding the Amwell Road interchange are concerned with the construction of the proposed Route 206 Bypass; and,

WHEREAS, their concerns have to do with the surrounding zoning and plans for buffering of the proposed Amwell Road interchange;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Hillsborough, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, that the Hillsborough Township Planning Board is directed to do the following;

1. The area to the south of the present Amwell Road, bordered on the north by Amwell Road, on the west and south by Steinmetz and on the east by the Conrail Rail Line and the adjacent Clerico Property, should remain residentially zoned.

2. The area bordered on the south by Amwell Road, on the east by the Conrail Rail Line, on the north by Hamilton Road and on the west by the Rt. 206 by-pass in its proposed alignment should remain HOO, R or CR as currently zoned.

3. No consideration should be given to construction of a Rail Station and/or a Park and Ride facility on or around the Amwell Road interchange now or in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Committee petitions the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Transportation to do the following if it proceeds in the development of the Route 206 bypass;

1. All lands acquired by the State of New Jersey to remain under public ownership and void of any development and any lands acquired by the State of New Jersey shall remain as undeveloped public lands to better buffer existing residences.

2. The State of New Jersey should, if feasible, acquire lands, specifically Block 199, Lots 37a, 18, 18A, 19, 37 and 37B, to keep as publicly owned wooded areas which will buffer existing residences from the Route 206 by-pass.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in addition to the above measures, the Hillsborough Township Committee is committed to partnering with the area residents by keeping them informed of design progress and changes, seeking their input and working aggressively with the State Department of Transportation to incorporate intense use of berms and/or landscaping to screen residents from the proposed Route 206 by-pass.

I, Gregory J. Bonin, Hillsborough Township Clerk, hereby certify that the above resolution is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of Hillsborough at a regular and duly convened meeting held on February 11, 1997.

In witness thereof I have set my hand and affixed the seal of the Township of Hillsborough this 13th day of February 1997.

[Signature]
Communities voice support for West Trenton Line plan

By LARRY HIGGS
Staff Writer

Published in the Courier News on December 8, 2004

HILLSBOROUGH -- About 60 residents and riders Tuesday learned about and commented on NJ Transit's proposal to restore passenger rail service to the new freight-only West Trenton Line.

The line runs parallel to Route 206 through Hillsborough and Montgomery, and the forum provided information about station locations, potential ridership and the cost of the project.

For commuters such as Clare Bretz of Hillsborough, returning passenger service would spare her a 13-mile, 30 to 40 minute ride to New Brunswick and paying $11 daily to park and ride the Northeast Corridor line train to New York.

"I wanted to voice my support; I would definitely use it," Bretz said. "It's two miles from where I live."

An environmental assessment about the effects of resuming passenger service is being finalized and could be sent to the Federal Transit Administration next spring, said Jack Kanarek, NJ Transit senior director of project development and planning.

"Our goal is to complete the plan," he said. "We don't have the funds for construction, so we don't have a schedule."

Officials from Montgomery and Hillsborough attended the forum and asked questions. Both towns are considering zoning changes near the station sites to allow for transit-orientated residential development, which could spur ridership.

"Montgomery is extremely supportive of having service return," Deputy Mayor Karen Wintress said. "Many people in town commute to New York, and this would take pressure off Route 206."

The 21.5-mile West Trenton Line is a single-track freight line owned by CSX Corp. The
line would connect to the Raritan Valley Line between NJ Transit's Finderne and Bridgewater stations.

Of the five stations proposed along the line, Montgomery would have the most projected daily riders at 540 and Hillsborough with 340. A total of 1,240 riders daily is projected.

Passenger rail advocates at the forum were skeptical there would be enough riders to justify the $195 million cost to build stations, passing tracks and a train yard.

"There aren't enough new people from this branch. The selling point is to reduce traffic on Route 206, and this won't do it," said Joe Versaggi, New Jersey Association of Railroad Passengers board member. "I'm not too optimistic about it, as proposed."

To reduce costs, service should be run with a self-propelled rail car to reduce costs, and shuttle buses should meet the trains at Bridgewater to take commuters to nearby office parks to increase ridership, said Ralph Braskett, Committee for Better Transit state coordinator.

"We're open to those proposals," Kanarek said. "As it gets closer to implementation, that's when we'll look at those ideas."

Larry Higgs can be reached at (908) 707-3134 or lhiggs@c-n.com
West Trenton line supporters try to engineer ride

By Joe Tyrrell
STAR-LEDGER STAFF

There is no passenger service yet on the West Trenton rail line, but proponents, including NJ Transit, say they can hear the trains coming.

The question is whether rail service is bringing relief from traffic congestion or another dose of suburban sprawl.

After years of on-again, off-again proposals, transportation groups and officials in Mercer and Somerset counties are cheering the prospect of a public transportation alternative to cars.

“There’s a lot of growth out in that area, and it’s all jamming onto Route 206,” said William Wright of the West Trenton Rail Coalition, which kept talk of the project alive when NJ Transit seemed uninterested.

Other participants in NJ Transit’s current outreach effort agree on the need to fight traffic congestion. But some wonder about the proposed station locations, which are mostly tied to new suburban development.

Transportation officials are “looking at the idea of smart growth, of center-oriented growth, transit-oriented growth” to reduce traffic congestion and suburban sprawl, said Jack Kanarek, an NJ Transit senior director.

Dennis Hojsak of the Office of State Planning lauded the “opportunities” the rail line could provide to funnel growth, but noted that most of the proposed stations are outside commercial centers.

Another transit proponent, Greg Meyer of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, said: “We’d like sta-

“There’s a lot of growth out in that area, and it’s all jamming onto Route 206.”
— WILLIAM WRIGHT,
West Trenton Rail Coalition

tion choices to be based on more than, ‘We’ve got room for parking here.’”

Aside from the terminus at the West Trenton station and a connection to the Raritan Valley line at Bound Brook, stops for the proposed seven passenger trains per day would be:

■ Merrill Lynch’s planned 3.5 million-square-foot office park just north of Route 95 in bucolic Hopewell Township
■ Another area of farms and

Please see RAIL, Page 43
Rail

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41

woods at Marshall's Corner in Hopewell Township

■ The historic Hopewell Borough station, which is being restored

■ The old Belle Mead station properly in Montgomery, where NJ Transit hopes for retail development

■ A wooded site on Hamilton Road in Hillsborough, which township officials hope will spur office development.

NJ Transit and its consultants have focused on these sites instead of the line's old commercial and transit hubs, such as the Mercer County Airport, Pennington and Manville.

Not everyone is unhappy with the new locations. “New transit initiatives are designed to serve new development as well as existing development,” said Robert Bzik, Somerset County planning director.

Although removed from existing commercial development, the Hillsborough station would be within the “town center” designated under the state Development and Redevelopment Plan, Bzik said.

Residents vehemently opposed siting a station on Amwell Road, the main east-west link in Hillsborough’s business district, said township engineer Frank Scarrantino.

Some living near the proposed Hamilton Road station also are unhappy, but Scarrantino pointed out, “The zoning in that area is for corporate development, office parks.”

Building a station would be “a way to encourage non-residential development,” he said.

Meanwhile, the former Manville station, in the nearby Weston neighborhood, lacks parking and is on the fringe of the borough, Bzik said.

Manville officials are not worried about losing a stop in the borough because “commuters park their cars and go” without contributing to the local economy, said Borough Administrator Gary Garwacke.

But some in Mercer County see things differently. An airport station could spark commercial development in the area already served by bus routes and “already paved over, a natural parking lot, rather than paying over Merrill-Lynch” property, said Mercer Freeholder James McManmon.

Hopewell Township Committee man Jon Edwards said Pennington or an adjoining commercial part of the township would be better than either Merrill-Lynch or Marshall’s Corner.

Both sites are bucolic, and commuters would not have direct access from Route 95 to a Merrill-Lynch station, he said.

“I don’t want to stand in the way of passenger service, Edwards said, “but my sense of reading the tea leaves is, this is not going to fly.”

“In reality, it’s basically to serve Merrill-Lynch,” where employment could reach 10,000 if the development, subsidized by the state, is completed, Kanarek said of the proposed location.

In talks so far, “the hope has been that Merrill-Lynch would not only accommodate the station on site, but allow it to be open to the public,” Bzik said. “These discussions have not been that fruitful,” opening the door for consideration of other sites, he said.

NJ Transit’s latest ridership projections are dismal for all the Mercer County stations, showing only 120 daily boardings by 2020 at each of Merrill-Lynch, Marshall’s Corner and West Trenton, and 75 at Hopewell.

The figures improve sharply for Hillsborough, 400, and Belle Mead, 300. But as in previous studies for the state and Somerset County, 89 percent of those riders would be hired not from their cars, but from other public transit routes.

“The better the service offered, the more the value increases” to potential riders, Wright said. With a better schedule than the proposed seven trains a day, the line could attract more riders, he said.

“If we’re going to build it, we should build it right, so we don’t have to come back in a few years and try again,” he said.
March 22, 1997

Ms. Shirley DiLibero
Director, Corporate Affairs
NJ Transit
One Penn Plaza East
Newark, NJ 07105-2246

Dear Director DiLibero,

Enclosed please find some correspondence from one of my constituents which is self-explanatory. I would appreciate any information you can offer to resolve this issue.

Thank you in advance for your anticipated, prompt reply.

Sincerely,

Walter J. Kavanaugh

WJK:tt
Assemblyman W. Kavanaugh
76 N. Bridge Street
Somerville, NJ 08876

Dear Mr. Kavanaugh:

Thank you for your continued advocacy of resumption of passenger train service on the West Trenton Line. Some are too quick to stereotype this line by the service and ridership that was last experienced in 1983 when NJ Transit was still new and under-invested. Central New Jersey demographics, transportation requirements, and population has changed greatly since then as has NJ Transit. Winning APTA awards repeatedly, ridership has increased 54% since then, even though the population in their current service area has not increased to anywhere near that amount. In other words, the investment has paid off in Transit's market share.

There has got to be alternatives to Route 206 from the Princeton/Trenton region to Somerset County. There is no bus service nor would it do much good if there were - they would get stuck in the same traffic as autos do. The region's economic well-being is constrained and inhibited by continuing to put all our transportation eggs in one highway basket with regards to that corridor.

Very truly yours

Joe Versaggi
TO: WEST TRENTON COALITION MEMBERS    DEC. 6, 1999
FROM: BILL WRIGHT, WTC MEMBER
RE: NEEDS STUDY FOR WEST TRENTON RESTORATION

It is imperative CSX and NJ Transit plan for growth for the next 25 years and install now the infrastructure to accommodate that growth. CSX calls this line part of their "main line from Miami to Montreal" which is valid. When tunnel clearances are improved at Baltimore CSX will be able to compete with double stack for domestic trucks on this corridor. Of equal importance is the need for full service on the same order as the SEPTA R3 to provide maximum mobility for this heavily populated, and growing, corridor. Hence, from the start:

Double track the entire route with high speed crossovers every ten miles and one long passing siding which would be a third track. Using the former RDG connection to the CNJ (RVL) at Bound Brook Jct. west of Bridgewater station allows passenger trains to avoid the congestion of freights entering the Lehigh Line of CSAO. This is further aided by another siding at the junction allowing freights to wait for clearance on the Lehigh Line, becoming a pocket track.

Pennington rather than Marshalls Corner to encourage State Plan's town center concept. The West Trenton station should remain in its present place with track realignment to an island platform for fast SEPTA/NJT transfers. The whole passenger layout should be on the east side of the station with two freight tracks to the west as they are then on the same side as the Woodbourne Jct. track to the Trenton Cutoff freight bypass. Traffic into a layup yard would be minimal so use of the "Homosote branch" to a yard on NJDOT property would keep deadhead train movements out of CSX's way.

Passenger diversion from the NEC is not a factor as residential growth along that line will keep parking pressures high. Any divert to the WTL will free up spaces for riders from east of the NEC. If RVL track occupancy constraints on the Lehigh Line keeps a full WTL schedule, then the called for DMU service on the former CNJ to the Arch at Elizabeth would be an ideal terminal for WTL trains. Until funds are found to widen the Lehigh Line to three tracks which will all WTL trains to access Newark.

EIS must include the full VMT's reduced along the whole 206 corridor. Any local traffic access to WTL stations will be miniscule compared to the full mileage of residents driving from Pennington to Newark for example. Auto exhaust and oil and salt runoff into the Millstone fresh water valley far outweigh local station access. The pressure to widen 206 would disappear with WTL trains.

Enviromental Justice must focus on our present elitist attitude "if you don't drive you don't count". One in four Americans cannot or will not drive due to age, economic status, health or simply desire to avoid deadly road rage. Workfare needs to provide reverse commuting is a justice imperative. Restoring WTL trains provides mobility. That is also the importance of all day service as "9-to-5" no longer reflects people's travel needs. Bus feeder lines must address full schedule times. particularly the Trenton lines to downtown. The WTL will be a valid means to achieve the State Land Use Plan.
Mr. Stanley Rosenblum  
Acting Executive Director  
NJ Transit Inc.  
1 Penn Plaza East  
Newark, New Jersey 07105-2250  

Dear Stan:

Knowing of your interest in improving New Jersey’s mass transit network, I am writing to inform you that the House of Representatives recently approved $1 million in funding for the West Trenton passenger rail project.

The funding would be used to continue design and engineering work on restoring passenger service on the line which runs from West Trenton to Bound Brook.

There is an urgent need in Somerset County for a new form of mass transit. Over the past two decades, the area has experienced an extraordinary increase in population that has made the daily commute to work a major headache for thousands of residents. More than 100,000 people now live in the corridor between West Trenton and Bound Brook.

As a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I have been championing this common-sense, cost-effective project for a number of years. Restoring passenger service on the line, which was discontinued in 1982, will help ease traffic congestion on some of the most heavily traveled roads in Central New Jersey including Routes 206 and 1.

Funding for the project was included in the Transportation Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2000, which passed the House on June 23rd. The Senate has not yet voted on its version of the Transportation Appropriations bill for the upcoming fiscal year.

The West Trenton project has already received a total of $1.5 million in federal funds. The total cost of the project is estimated to be $30 million.

Plans call for providing rail service from West Trenton to Bound Brook with several stops in Somerset and Mercer Counties. From Bound Brook, passengers could board Raritan Valley Line trains to travel to Newark. From Trenton, passengers could take SEPTA trains to Philadelphia.
I will be fighting to make sure the $1 million West Trenton appropriation is included in the final bill that is sent to the President.

I appreciate your continuing support of mass transit and look forward to working with you to get passenger service back on the West Trenton tracks.

Sincerely,

Bob Franks
Member of Congress

BF:km
IN SUPPORT OF WEST TRENTON TRAIN SERVICE

The New Jersey Association of Railroad Passengers (NJARP), a statewide, not for profit rail advocacy group has always supported restoring passenger service on the West Trenton Line (WTL). This service is even more vital now to relieve the growing gridlock and sprawl along the route 206 corridor. We recommend;

(1) Trackage be put in place from the outset to provide all day, every day service as well as protect the growth needs of CSX freight. As this is their "Main Line from Miami to Montreal" it will see more traffic when the Baltimore Tunnel clearances have improved to allow doublestack trains. Passengers need all day service as the "9-to-5" workday has long since disappeared. SEPTA R-3 trains operate hourly and so should the WTL, in part to provide thru bistate travel options. Full bus service should link the West Trenton station with downtown Trenton and the state buildings all day. The market is there once service addresses public needs.

(2) NJARP has concerns about station location at Marshalls Corner which we see as encouraging sprawl rather than Pennington which is more in line with the State Land Use Plan. We see no problem with passenger diversion from NEC stations as they all have such long waiting lists, and themselves in a growth area, that such diversion would actually help both lines. As has been historic shown, rail lines encourage orderly growth relieving the pressure on intermediate open space and the WTL will help.

(3) EIS MUST ADDRESS THE LONG RANGE VALUE OF THE WTL. Trains will reduce VMTs by the full route of the traveler. Hence a trip from Hopewell to Newark or Philadelphia will reduce VMTs by at least 120 VMTs daily as car pool use has consistently shown drops as car or van pools offer travelers only a round trip daily and do not address other timings as full train service will. While some congestion at certain times may happen near stations, it will be more than offset by relieving all day congestion on route 206. The longer the auto trip the more pollution and salt and oil runoff.

(4) Environmental Justice must address the travel needs of the many who cannot or will not drive due to age, health, economic status or simply no longer want to put up with growing road rage. If good rail transit saves a suburban family from having to buy a second auto, that puts an additional $7,000 per year into their pocket. That could be likened to a tax cut. Access to work, schools, shopping or social trips are a right and a need which can not be ignored by a philosophy of "if you don't drive, you don't count". Mobility for all is true environmental justice.

The WTL should never been lost. Now is the time to correct that by restoring and improving a rail service that has a real market and will help the environment of the most densely populated state in America.
Lawmaker urges funds for Ewing-Bound Brook rail service

03/28/00

By LISA CORYELL
Staff Writer

EWING -- U.S. Rep. Bob Franks yesterday threw his support behind the growing movement to restore commuter rail service between West Trenton and Bound Brook, saying he will seek $4 million in federal money to help fund the project.

At a press conference at the West Trenton train station yesterday Franks, R-New Providence, said he will do all he can to support the project he called a "common-sense investment" that would ease traffic congestion on some of Central New Jersey's most congested highways.

"I want to see the West Trenton project move on the fast track," Franks said. "There is a desperate need for additional commuter rail service in Central New Jersey."

Franks, one of four Republicans vying for a U.S. Senate seat, has helped secure $2.5 million for the project and said he will lobby Congress for $4 million more in the next fiscal year. That money would be used for project design and engineering work and to purchase property for parking at the various stations.
along the rail line.

The project calls for re-establishing the commuter rail line through Central Jersey that runs from West Trenton station in Ewing to Bound Brook, with stops in Hopewell Township, Hopewell Borough, Belle Mead and Hillsborough. At Bound Brook, northbound commuters could transfer to the Raritan Valley Line for service to Newark. At West Trenton, southbound passengers could board SEPTA trains to Philadelphia.

"Providing a new mass transit option for commuters in Mercer and Somerset counties will help ease traffic congestion on highways including Routes 206, 1 and 31," Franks said.

NJ Transit discontinued passenger trains on the line in 1982 when commuter use dwindled, according to Jeffrey A. Warsh, executive director of NJ Transit.

"People wanted to make the commute in their own cars," Warsh said at the press conference yesterday. "Now people have come full circle. They're sitting in their cars in bumper-to-bumper traffic, and they're clamoring for rail service."

The state is conducting a series of public hearings in the communities along the rail line.

"We're trying to generate a groundswell of public support," Warsh said. "We believe it will be a variation of the Field of Dreams motto 'If you build it, they will come.' In this case its 'If you re-establish it, they'll come back.' "

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Congressman Frank R. Wolf
Chairman
Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Frank:

I am writing to submit my funding requests for the Fiscal Year 1999 Transportation Appropriations Act. I am requesting $4 million to continue the West Trenton commuter rail project and $3 million for the Access to the Region’s Core study for a cross-Hudson passenger train tunnel. In addition, I would like to express my continued support for Operation Respond.

THE WEST TRENTON LINE

I am requesting $4 million for fiscal year 1999 to continue restoring commuter service on the West Trenton rail corridor, connecting the towns of Manville, Belle Mead, Hillsborough, Montgomery, Hopewell, Pennington, and West Trenton, in Somerset and Mercer Counties, in New Jersey.

In the Fiscal Year 1997 Transportation Appropriations Act, $500,000 was provided for a preliminary study of the New Jersey West Trenton commuter rail project (House Report 104-785, Page 60.) That study is currently underway and is expected to be completed this Fall. The $4 million I am requesting will ensure that this project continues without interruption. The total cost of this project is currently estimated at approximately $30 million. It has the full, complete and bipartisan support of the towns affected, Somerset and Mercer Counties, and the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

About twenty years ago, existing commuter service along the West Trenton line was terminated, due to lack of use. However, Somerset and Mercer Counties in New Jersey have experienced tremendous growth in the past few years. The towns affected by this line are currently served by only Route 206, which experiences extreme congestion every weekday morning and afternoon.

The restoration of the West Trenton line will connect the towns along this corridor with the Raritan Valley Line, a major commuter line passing through the major suburban towns in Somerset and Union Counties. The commute on the RVL is so important to alleviating traffic congestion along the corridor that the New Jersey Department of Transportation has dubbed 1998 as the “Year of the Raritan Valley Line.” The West Trenton line is an extension of the RVL line, along an already established rail corridor, through additional towns in Somerset and Mercer Counties. Ridership on New Jersey Transit has far exceeded estimates in the past few years, indicating the importance of...
commuter rail to New Jersey. The West Trenton line is expected to be just as popular.

Authorization for this project has been included in H.R. 2400, the Building Efficient Surface Transportation and Equity Act (BESTEA) (House Report 105-467, Part I, Page 116, Item 95.) Pending the authorization through ISTEA, I urge the Committee to provide $4 million for this project in fiscal year 1999.

ACCESS TO THE REGION'S CORE STUDY

I am also requesting $3 million for the Trans-Hudson/Midtown Corridor Management and Project Development Initiative, otherwise known as Access to the Region's Core. As illustrated above, passenger rail service in New Jersey is increasing in both necessity and popularity. The recent success of the Mid-Town Direct service by NJ Transit is a clear indication of the necessity of passenger rail service from New Jersey to Manhattan. This valuable service takes thousands of motorists off the roads, clearing up the bridges and tunnels that take commuters from New Jersey into Manhattan, and thus helping with New Jersey's compliance with the Clean Air Act. However, the Amtrak tunnel into Manhattan is fast approaching its capacity of 25 trains per hour.

The Access to the Regions Core (ARC) project is a study of the options available for the construction of a second trans-Hudson tunnel. This project has bipartisan support on the federal, state, and local level. I am requesting $3 million from the Committee for fiscal year 1999 for the ARC project for conceptual engineering, operations simulations, modeling on the new program, and a complete analysis of the need for a tunnel in light of the continuum of improvements in transportation across the Hudson River. For your information, I have enclosed a copy of the 14 points for this project.

Authorization for this project has also been included BESTEA (House Report 105-467, Part I, Page 116, Item 36.) Pending the authorization, I urge the Committee to provide $3 million for this project in fiscal year 1999.

OPERATION RESPOND

Finally, I would like to express my full support for Operation Respond's budget request in fiscal year 1999. Operation Respond performs a valuable service to the many hazardous material emergency responders in the United States and to every citizen that is affected by a hazmat release. I can provide legislative language if necessary.

If you need any additional information regarding these or any other project, please do not hesitate to contact me or Doug Tansey at 5-5361.

Sincerely,

Bob Branks
Member of Congress

BF/dt
August 28, 2006

Mr. Richard Roberts, Chief Planner  
NJ Transit Corporation  
One Penn Plaza East  
Newark, New Jersey 07105

Re: Status of West Trenton Line Passenger Reactivation Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. Roberts:

Since the submittal of the West Trenton Environmental Assessment by NJ Transit Corporation in July 2005 to the Federal Transit Administration, Somerset County and its municipalities have been monitoring the project status through updates from NJ Transit Corporation. The project status has consistently been reported that NJ Transit is still waiting for the FTA to review and provide comments on the environmental assessment. It has come to our attention through discussions directly with the FTA that NJ Transit had made other project submissions higher priorities for FTA review. It was noted that FTA has resource and staffing limitations, but individual reviewers can do concurrent reviews of more than one project, where priorities are established by NJ Transit Corporation. It was also noted that NJ Transit had not submitted all of the required materials until earlier this year.

Over thirteen months have passed since the original Environmental Assessment materials were submitted to FTA for review and comment. Somerset County along with Hillsborough and Montgomery Townships continue to be strong supporters for reactivation of passenger service on the West Trenton line. Hillsborough Township in their recently completed master plan designated a transit village district area adjacent and including the proposed Hillsborough Train Station on Amwell Road. Montgomery Township has completed significant design concept development for the proposed Belle Mead train station and an adjacent parcel that will be developed into a mixed-use node for northern Montgomery Township. Both Municipalities have expended their own resources along with county and state planning grants to advance transit friendly land use designs and ordinances that will reinforce the role of each train station within their communities.

Somerset County is requesting that NJ Transit identify the West Trenton EA as a high priority project and request FTA to expedite the projects review so that it could be completed in early 2007. We hope that this can happen shortly since the next progress meeting between FTA and NJ Transit is scheduled for early September.

Should you have any questions or need any additional information regarding this request, please contact Principal Planner Walter Lane at (908) 231-7021 or at lane@co.somerset.nj.us.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Robert Bzik, AICP/PP  
Director of Planning

cc: Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders  
    Somerset County Planning Board  
    Jack Kanarek, Director of Planning, NJ Transit Corporation  
    Roz Diamond, Project Manager, NJ Transit Corporation  
    The Honorable Louise Wilson, Mayor, Montgomery Township  
    The Honorable Carl Suraci, Mayor, Hillsborough Township  

Somerset County Is An Equal Opportunity Employer
September 14, 2006

Mr. Richard Roberts
Chief Planner
NJ Transit Corporation
One Penn Plaza East
Newark, NJ 07105

Dear Mr. Roberts:

This letter will indicate the strong desire of the residents of Hillsborough Township to reactivate passenger service on the West Trenton Line. On behalf of the Hillsborough Township Committee, I am asking you to contact the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) to stress the importance of this project, not only to the citizens of Hillsborough but to the citizens of Montgomery Township and Somerset County as well.

Last year Hillsborough Township revised its Master Plan to include a passenger train station in Hillsborough on Amwell Road near its intersection with the planned Route 206 Bypass to be constructed by N.J. DOT. We are currently in the process of changing our zoning ordinances to reflect the new Master Plan, which will include the appropriate land use activities around the new train station.

I understand that the current impediment to moving ahead on this project is the review of the Environmental Assessment that was submitted by NJ Transit in July 2005 to the FTA. I urge NJ Transit to place a high priority on the West Trenton Line project and to convey this priority to the FTA. The future development of Hillsborough Township is intimately tied to our Town Center development and the new train station.

Please help the Hillsborough community realize its goal of providing passenger rail service to area residents by communicating the importance of this project to the FTA. We are grateful for any assistance you can provide to bring this project to fruition.

Very truly yours,

Carl Suraci, Mayor
Hillsborough Township
March 22, 2005

Mr. Peter J. Garino
Senior Director, Capital Programming
NJ TRANSIT
One Penn Plaza East
Newark, NJ 07105-2246

Re: West Trenton Line Passenger Rail Service Restoration

Dear Mr. Garino:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is in receipt of the February 10, 2005, letter in which NJ TRANSIT is requesting FTA’s concurrence with the identified additional consulting parties for the West Trenton Line Passenger Rail Service Restoration Project. The FTA agrees with NJ TRANSIT and NJ SHPO that the following three consulting parties be added to the referenced project:

1. Borough of Manville
2. Bridgewater Resources, Inc.
3. New Jersey Department of Transportation

It is now appropriate for NJ TRANSIT to extend an invitation to these organizations to become consulting parties. NJ TRANSIT should explain to these organizations their rights and responsibilities as ‘additional consulting parties’ as defined in 36 CFR Part 800.2 as revised in January 11, 2001. Should you have any further questions, please contact Ms. Nancy Danzig, AICP, Community Planner, at (212) 668-2180.

Sincerely,

Irwin B. Kessman
Director, Office of Planning
And Program Development

cc: D. Guzzo, NJ SHPO
Section 106 File
Historic Preservation Commission
Judith B. Peoples, Chair
H. Robert Schroeder, V. Chair
Mark Giallotta, Secretary
Robert Britton, Jr.,
Carol Hill
Elizabeth Lacy, Anne McArthur
John Rhoads, Vacancy

July 26, 2006

David Koenig, Principal Historic Preservation Specialist
NJ TRANSIT
One Penn Plaza East
Newark, NJ 07105-2246

RE: NJ TRANSIT West Trenton Line Passenger Service Restoration Project, Mercer and Somerset Counties

Dear Mr. Koenig:

Thank you for forwarding a second set of materials for our review and for the opportunity to comment on this important undertaking. The commission has reviewed the proposal over the past two monthly meetings and we wish to make the following comments.

- The distance between the Knight-Reading Farm and the proposed construction of a locomotive service facility appears to be a great enough distance to preclude either a visual or noise impact on this historic property. However, we do not see results of an EIS for noise on the site of the locomotive service facility. Has this work been completed?
- We would like to know the exact distance between the Knight-Reading Farm buildings and the service facility and, also, how much farther or closer nearby residences are from the proposed locomotive service facility.
- Although the Slack-Fish house is not currently protected on any historic registers, the families are important to the history of Ewing Township. What provisions will be made to protect the house when the proposed access roadways encircle the building?
- The locomotive service facility would require the use of presently preserved land. How will the land be replaced?

We look forward to your response to our questions and would be happy to have you attend one of our meetings. Should you have questions, I can be reached at 609-530-1255.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]
Judith B. Peoples, Chair

C: Ewing Mayor, Council, Administration, Environmental Commission
September 21, 2006

Ms. Judith B. Peoples
Chair
Ewing Township Historic Preservation Commission
Municipal Complex
2 Jake Garzio Drive
Ewing, NJ 08628

Re: NJ TRANSIT West Trenton Line Passenger Service Restoration Study

Dear Ms. Peoples,

This letter is in response to your letter of July 26, 2006 in which you provided comments relating to the referenced study.

In response to your letter’s first bullet regarding the noise impact analysis of the proposed locomotive servicing facility and the Knight-Reading Farm, please note that a noise analysis was performed and is included in the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared by NJ TRANSIT and currently being reviewed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Once the FTA has completed the review, the EA will become available for public review. The assessment of noise generated by the facility resulted in the conclusion that there would be no impacts to the surrounding environment.

Regarding your inquiry as to the distance between the Knight-Reading Farm buildings and the proposed locomotive servicing facility and adjacent residences, we have calculated that distance. The Knight-Reading farm cluster of buildings, including the Green-Reading House, is approximately 3200 feet away from the proposed locomotive servicing facility. The old piggery buildings to the east of the main farm buildings are approximately 2000 feet from the proposed locomotive servicing facility. The nearest residences to the west are along Wilburtha Road, approximately 3000 feet away, and to the north along Walker Ave. approximately 2800 feet away.

Proposed protective measures for the Slack Fish House from the proposed access road include using the approximate alignment of the existing partially un-surfaced road that passes north-south approximately 100 feet to the west of the Slack-Fish house as the access road to the train storage yard. Consequently, we do not anticipate any direct or indirect impacts on the house or any significant encroachment on the open ground surrounding the house.
In terms of replacement of preserved land, please note: The storage yard will require use of preserved land. In 2000, the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) released 10 acres from the Farmland Preservation Deed of Easement to allow NJ TRANSIT to develop a train yard on the property. If the 10 acres are not used for the train yard, the land reverts to preserved farmland. Should the property be used for the rail facility, the funds used to obtain the land from the State will be utilized to purchase an equal amount of open space in that part of the state.

We hope that these responses prove helpful. Further information about the project will be available to you upon distribution of the Environmental Assessment. Ewing Township is an intended recipient of the published document. In the meantime, if you have additional questions, please contact me at (973)491-7199.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

David Koenig
Principal Historic Preservation Specialist

cc:    D. Guzzo, SHPO
       R. Diamond, NJ TRANSIT
       D. Callender, NJ TRANSIT
       W. Molner, NJ TRANSIT
       L. DiTaranti, SYSTRA Consulting, Inc.
Historic Preservation Commission
Judith B. Peoples, Chair
H. Robert Schreadar, V.Chair
Mark Giallotta, Secretary
Robert Britton, Jr.,
Carol Hill
Elizabeth Lacy, Anne McArthur
John Rhoads, Vacancy

July 26, 2006

David Koenig, Principal Historic Preservation Specialist
NJ TRANSIT
One Penn Plaza East
Newark, NJ 07105-2246

RE: NJ TRANSIT West Trenton Line Passenger Service Restoration Project, Mercer and Somerset Counties

Dear Mr. Koenig:

Thank you for forwarding a second set of materials for our review and for the opportunity to comment on this important undertaking. The commission has reviewed the proposal over the past two monthly meetings and we wish to make the following comments.

- The distance between the Knight-Reading Farm and the proposed construction of a locomotive service facility appears to be a great enough distance to preclude either a visual or noise impact on this historic property. However, we do not see results of an EIS for noise on the site of the locomotive service facility. Has this work been completed?
- We would like to know the exact distance between the Knight-Reading Farm buildings and the service facility and, also, how much farther or closer nearby residences are from the proposed locomotive service facility.
- Although the Slack-Fish house is not currently protected on any historic registers, the families are important to the history of Ewing Township. What provisions will be made to protect the house when the proposed access roadways encircle the building?
- The locomotive service facility would require the use of presently preserved land. How will the land be replaced?

We look forward to your response to our questions and would be happy to have you attend one of our meetings. Should you have questions, I can be reached at 609-530-1255.

Very truly yours,

Judith B. Peoples, Chair

C: Ewing Mayor, Council, Administration, Environmental Commission
January 2, 2001

Rudy Geurds
New Jersey Transit, Corp.
#1 Penn Plaza East
Newark, New Jersey 07105-2246

Re: Knights Farm Property
10 Acres to NJ Transit

Dear Mr. Geurds:

At its December 11, 2000 meeting, the State House Commission approved the transferring of ten (10) acres of vacant land at the Knights Farm to NJ Transit. The approval was based on NJ Transit paying the fair market value for the property. This office has determined the value for the ten (10) acres of property to be $250,000.

Comparable sales of parcels of approximate size, zoned commercial and sold in the past year were used to arrive at the figure cited.

The comparable sales are as follows:

11/19/99 Hamilton Township 7.029 Acres $500,000 $71,135 per acre
1/12/00 Washington Township 9.15 Acres $630,000 $68,852 per acre
10/22/99 Ewing Township 11.09 Acres $760,000 $68,530 per acre

Based on the above, the fair market value with no restrictions would be $70,000 per acre or $700,000 total.
The property at Knights Farm will be conveyed with a deed restriction limiting the use of the property for a railroad storage yard exclusively.

Taking into account the restricted use of the conveyance, it has been determined that the property should be valued at $25,000 per acre or $250,000 total.

The $250,000 proceeds of the sale will be used to protect a high priority agricultural site identified by the Department of Agriculture and the SADC.

If you require any additional information, please feel free to contact me at 609-292-9694.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Gene Hayman, Chief
Bureau of Real Property Disposals & Acquisitions

GH/mtp

C: Anthony R. Mazzella
   Greg Romano
January 16, 2001

Gene Hayman, Chief
Bureau of Real Property Disposals & Acquisitions
Division of Property Management and Construction
NJ Department of Treasury
P.O. Box 039
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0039

Re: Knight Farm Property
Block 411, Lots 10, 11, 12
Block 322, Lot 6
Ewing Township, Mercer County
Release of Development Easement (10 acres)

Dear Mr. Hayman:

At its meeting on November 16, 2000, the State Agriculture Development Committee ("SADC") approved the Department of Treasury’s request to re-convey the development easement on 10 acres of the Knight Farm to the Department of Treasury for the purpose of allowing New Jersey Transit to construct a train storage facility for the proposed West Trenton commuter train line. A copy of the SADC’s resolution that contains several conditions is enclosed.

On December 21, 2000, the SADC reviewed your letter of December 6, 2000, which contained a recommended fair market value of $25,000 per acre as just compensation to reimburse the SADC for the conveyance of a development easement on the 10 acre portion of the Knight Farm. Based on the SADC review appraiser’s review of comparable sales in a nearby township and recommendation, the SADC determined that a value of $25,000 per acre or a total of $250,000 would be considered as just compensation of the full, unrestricted, fee simple value of the 10 acres.

According to your letter of January 2, 2001, the State House Commission at its meeting on December 11, 2000, approved the transfer of 10 acres of the Knight Farm to New Jersey Transit based on New Jersey Transit paying $250,000 as the fair market value of the subject parcel.
Gene Hayman, Chief
January 16, 2001
Page 2

I will request the SADC, at its meeting on January 25, 2001, to formally approve the offer of $250,000 and to authorize the execution of a Deed to re-convey the development easement on the 10 acres to the New Jersey Department of Treasury. The Deed will also contain the restrictions as noted in the enclosed resolution.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Gregory Romano

c: Anthony Mazzella
Rudy Geurds

Enclosure

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STATE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION# FY01R11(15)

RELEASE OF DEVELOPMENT EASEMENT ON 10 ACRES
OF KNIGHT FARM TO NEW JERSEY TRANSIT

EWING TOWNSHIP, MERCER COUNTY

November 16, 2000

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey, Department of Treasury owns the Knight Farm in Ewing Township, Mercer County;

WHEREAS, in 1999, the Department of Treasury donated a development easement to the SADC on the Knight Farm;

WHEREAS, New Jersey Transit is interested in using 10 acres of the deed-restricted Knight Farm for a train storage yard that would provide overnight accommodations for five or six trains in association with the proposed restoration of commuter rail passenger service on the West Trenton Line;

WHEREAS, NJ Transit has requested that the SADC release the development easement on those 10 acres of Knight Farm;

WHEREAS, NJ Transit has found that the Knight Farm is the preferred location for the train storage yard in that it meets all of the basic requirements for a train storage yard on this proposed train line and is particularly suited for NJ Transit's needs because it is undeveloped, wooded, remote from residential development and owned by the State of New Jersey;

WHEREAS, NJ Transit's basic requirements for a train storage yard include: size of 10 acres; close to and parallel to the main line tracks; relatively flat; level with the main line tracks; has road access for employees and company vehicles; is remote from houses and other potentially noise/visually sensitive establishments; and is located south of the southern terminal site to avoid reverse train moves on live through-tracks;

WHEREAS, NJ Transit considered the following alternative sites: an area northeast of the West Trenton Station, adjacent to the former GM site; an area northeast of the West Trenton Station, north of Upper Ferry Road; an area northwest of the West Trenton Station, south of the Scotch Road railroad bridge; and an area northwest of the West Trenton Station, adjacent to the Scotch Road railroad bridge;
WHEREAS, NJ Transit found deficiencies in the above alternative sites and found that the Knight Farm is the only site that meets all of the requirements for the proposed train storage;

WHEREAS, NJ Transit has requested that the SADC convey its development easement on 10 acres of the Knight Farm to NJ Transit, as it needs to designate a train storage yard prior to receiving governmental approvals for the restoration of the West Trenton commuter train line;

WHEREAS, NJ Transit offered to return the development easement to the SADC in the event that the property is not needed; and

WHEREAS, because the development easement on the Knight Farm was donated, and because the Knight Farm is owned by the State of New Jersey, the Committee is amenable to unrestricting the 10 acres of the farm as identified on Schedule "A", provided that NJ Transit reimburses the Committee with the full, unrestricted, fee simple value of 10 acres or with actual farmland in a nearby Township such as Hopewell Township, Mercer County, and provided further that in the event that NJ Transit does not utilize the 10 acres for the specified purpose, the development easement on the 10 acres would revert back to the SADC.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the SADC agrees to grant NJ Transit’s request to unrestrict 10 acres of the Knight Farm for the purpose of allowing NJ Transit to construct a train storage facility for the proposed West Trenton commuter train line;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the SADC’s granting of NJ Transit’s request is conditioned on NJ Transit reimbursing the SADC with the full, unrestricted, fee simple value of 10 acres, or with actual farmland of equivalent value in a nearby Township such as Hopewell Township, Mercer County;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if NJ Transit does use the 10 acres for a train storage facility, a deed restriction shall be placed on the property stating that the 10 acre area of the property can only be used for a train storage yard;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if NJ Transit finds that it does not need the 10 acres for a train storage facility, the development easement shall revert back to the SADC;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the SADC has the discretion to negotiate the final purchase price of the 10 acres with NJ Transit;
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this action is not effective until the Governor's review period expires pursuant to N.J.S.A. 4:1C-4f.

\[11/16/00\]  
Chairperson, State Agriculture Development Committee

VOTE WAS RECORDED AS FOLLOWS:

Carol Shipp, Chairperson YES
Lisa King (rep. Treas. Machold) YES
Dennis Davidson (rep. DEP Comm. Shinn) YES
Richard Binetsky (rep. DCA Comm. Kenny) ABSENT
Donn Derr (rep. Dean Carlton) ABSENT
Andrew Borisuk YES
Julia Allen YES
Lisa Specca YES
Noble McNaughton YES
William Fox YES
Frank Baitinger YES

(Approved SADC Meeting of 11/16/00)
December 27, 2004

Mr. David Koenig
Historic Preservation Specialist
NJ Transit
One Penn Plaza East
Newark, N.J. 07105-2246

Dear Mr. Koenig:

As Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer for New Jersey, in accordance with 36 CFR 800: Protection of Historic Properties, as published in the Federal Register on 6 July 2004 (69 FR 40544-40555), I am providing Consultation Comments for the following proposed project:

Multiple Municipalities, Somerset and Mercer Counties
West Trenton Line Passenger Rail Service Restoration
Federal Transit Administration, NJ Transit

This letter is in response to your submission of documents initiating consultation pursuant to the requirements of 36 CFR Parts 800.3 and 800.4. The supplemental report describes potential changes to documentation (Areas of Potential Effect, Consulting/Interested Parties, Public Involvement Plan) received in this office in August 2000.

800.3 Initiation of the Section 106 Process

I concur that the Borough of Manville, Bridgewater Resources, Inc. (a private company) and the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) are the appropriate consulting parties for this supplemental initiation of consultation. Public involvement activities may identify additional consulting parties.

As is noted in the submitted documentation, the public involvement plan for the proposed project will consist of soliciting comments on the historic resources from all consulting and interested parties, including all responses in the Historic Architectural Resource Background Survey (HARBS) and Effects Assessment reports, consulting with the same parties in the event of an Adverse Effect determination, and requesting comments on a draft Memorandum of Agreement.
(MOA), if required. The plan also indicates the intention to prepare a project presentation for interested and consulting parties, if required, and incorporates the use of an Interested Parties Survey Form. The HPO appreciates your acknowledgement that the cultural resources reports will be sent to all consulting parties, and that input on the various elements of the project will be solicited and incorporated into the final documents. The HPO approves the existing public involvement plan, and only requests that all consulting parties be afforded a concurrent opportunity to review and comment on the cultural resources reports.

800.4 Identification of Historic Properties

I agree with the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the proposed project additions as delineated on the submitted maps. The proposed APE appears to include all properties that would be both physically and visually impacted by the proposed work.

I agree that no additional resource organizations have been identified to supplement those listed in the previous project initiation documentation of August 2000.

Additional Comments

This office looks forward to receiving the Cultural Resources Investigation and Effects Assessment report and to future consultation on the proposed design. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Marianne Walsh at (609) 984-0850.

Sincerely,

Dorothy P. Guzzo
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

C: I. Kessman, FTA
Interested/Consulting Parties List

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