

# MONMOUTH-OCEAN-MIDDLESEX RAIL PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

## *MEETING MINUTES*

**To:** Attendees

**Date:** 5-16-03

**From:** Ruby Siegel

**Meeting Location:** Sheraton Eatontown

**cc:** File: 5312 – T25-3

**Re:** SYSTRA Project # 5312  
**Meeting Title:** Community Liaison Committee Meeting  
**Meeting Date:** 3/27/03

**Attendees:**

**CLC Participants**

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Gregory	Aikins	Monmouth Ocean Development Council
William	Braden	Ocean County Transportation Advisory Board
Jeff	Carty	Academy Bus Lines
Sasha	Corchado	Regional Plan Association
Bryan	Dempsey	Wall Township
Hank	DiPasquale	Ocean County Transportation Advisory Board
Kathleen	Edmond	Ocean County Department of Transportation and Vehicle Services
Joyce	Fertig	Shrewsbury Township
Robert	Forrester	Shrewsbury Borough
Margarita	Frith	Thirtieth District
Barry	Fulmer	Monmouth County Planning Board - Transportation Council
Sean	Gertner	Lakehurst Borough
Bernard	Gindoff	Lakewood Township
Bonnie	Goldschlag	Monmouth County Planning Department
Ann	Hager	Colts Neck Township Board of Education
Thomas	Hennessy, Jr.	Colts Neck Township
Bruce	Hilling	Matawan Borough
Patricia	Horvath	Freehold Regional High School District Board of Education

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Martin	Karasick	Marlboro Township Public Schools
Daniel	Kerwin	New Jersey Association of Railroad Passengers
Arthur	Kondrup	Western Monmouth Chamber of Commerce
Otto	Kostbar	Jamesburg Borough
Mike	Kruimer	Central Jersey Bike Club
Anne	Krumier	Central Jersey Bike Club
Susan	Levine	Marlboro Township
Bernie	Long	Jamesburg Borough
Thomas	Marlin	Manchester Township
Regina	Maurer	Jersey Shore Group Sierra Club
Robert	Melascaglia	Fort Monmouth
Henry	Nicholson	Monmouth County Division of Transportation
William	Nunziato	Howell Township
Carmen	Orta	Federal Transit Administration, Region II
Victor	Sandonato	Central Jersey Rail Coalition
James	Shannon	Dover Township
Emilia	Siciliano	Shrewsbury Borough
Garrett	Stasse	Monmouth County Economic Development and Tourism
Barbara	Steele	Ocean County Public Affairs Department/Tourism
Alma	Strack	Monmouth County Office of Aging
Pat	Torpey	Monmouth/Ocean County
Michael	Trotta	Borough of Eatontown
Frederick	Trutkoff	Manchester Township
George	Ververides	Middlesex County Department of Planning
Herman	Volk	Department of Community Affairs - Office of Smart Growth
Benjamin	Waldron	Monmouth-Ocean Development Council

***NJ TRANSIT and Consulting Team Attendees***

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Jack	Kanarek	NJ TRANSIT
Jim	Schwarzwalder	NJ TRANSIT
Tom	Clark	NJ TRANSIT
Chitra	Radin	NJ TRANSIT
Ken	Miller	NJ TRANSIT
Ruby	Siegel	SYSTRA Consulting
Lisa	DiTaranti	SYSTRA Consulting
Bert	Wescott	SYSTRA Consulting
Geoff	Fetner	SYSTRA Consulting
Marlene	Daniel	Organizational Learning Associates
Jim	Dowling	Edwards and Kelcey

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Ray	Tomczak	Edwards and Kelcey

**Highlights:**

The purpose of the meeting was to involve local and regional decision makers in the MOM DEIS process. The minutes are not a sequential record of events but rather are intended to capture key themes and issues raised by the participants during the meeting.

***Meeting Format and Attendance***

The format of the meeting included a brief introduction by Tom Clark (NJ TRANSIT) followed by a presentation delivered by Ruby Siegel (Project Manager – Consulting Team), Tom Marchwinski (NJ TRANSIT Demand Forecasting); and Lisa DiTaranti (Deputy Project Manager – Consulting Team). The presentation was divided into two sections with a discussion session following each section. Marlene Daniel (Consulting Team) facilitated the discussion groups. Approximately 44 individuals participated in the process.

***Presentation Summary***

The presentation delivered by project team members informed the CLC attendees of the following issues:

- Project status and scoping results
- The CLC role in the project process
- NJ TRANSIT’s approach and guiding principles regarding the local station planning process
- The environmental and technical analysis process

Ruby Siegel (SYSTRA) opened the presentation with a project status overview and explained the role of the CLC members in the context of the project process. Ms. Siegel also shared with the CLC attendees the results of the scoping process. Ms. Siegel informed the attendees that NJ TRANSIT received over 1,500 comments from public and private testimony at scoping meetings, as well as from e-mails, letters, and voice mail. The CLC members were informed that 1,149 of 1,543 comments supported a rail solution and that comments were split both for and against each alignment. Ms. Siegel indicated that the comments were undergoing review and would be incorporated into the Final Scoping Document.

Ms. Siegel’s presentation also included a discussion on how the MOM project team was planning to incorporate smart growth principles into the local station planning process. Ms. Siegel emphasized the importance of maintaining a balance between the project’s goals and the future regional and local development goals and objectives proximate to the three alignments.

Tom Marchwinski (NJ TRANSIT) informed the CLC attendees of the new ridership modeling techniques that will be used in the technical analysis phase of the project. He indicated that ridership forecasts will be based on an updated version of the New Jersey Transit Demand Forecasting Model (NJTDFM) Mr. Marchwinski also highlighted that the model being used for this project differs from the model used during the MIS project phase.

Lisa DiTaranti informed the CLC members of the project team’s approach to conducting the environmental and technical analysis. Ms. DiTaranti presented the various elements that comprise a comprehensive technical analysis. Ms. DiTaranti also emphasized that the technical analysis process is

iterative and that there are several stages of municipality involvement and analysis refinement prior to any decision making on the part of NJ TRANSIT.

### ***Discussions***

Each discussion was designed to help NJ TRANSIT understand what communities know about smart growth principles as well as to understand each community's economic growth expectations. Each participant was provided two worksheets (attached), which asked a series of questions related to Smart Growth both regionally and locally. After completing the worksheets, participants at each table discussed their thoughts and insights. Afterwards, Marlene Daniel invited participants from each table to share a summary of their discussion with the entire group.

#### *Discussion I*

For the first discussion, participants were asked to share what they know about growth in their region. The following are some key issues and themes that were identified:

- Growth in Marlboro is alarmingly high. Automobile traffic uses local roads through Marlboro to circumvent traffic on Route 9.
- Shrewsbury local leadership believes development should occur where development can occur and not in areas overburdened and at capacity.
- Traffic and congestion is high in Eatontown. Fort Monmouth is the largest employer in Monmouth County. Eatontown is concerned how Fort Monmouth is being addressed vis-à-vis growth.
- Need transportation choices and walkable communities.
- Institute more regional control on growth
- Jamesburg is fully developed and therefore does not see the applicability of smart growth in their locale.
- Municipalities need more education on Smart Growth
- Municipalities need to have input into the "Big Map"
- Relate land use more to transportation
- Concern about safety of crossings. In addition, impacts of crossings on open space preservation.
- Consider the needs of buses

#### *Discussion II*

For the second discussion, participants were asked to share how growth in their locale or region has been managed and any obstacles in that management. The following are some key issues and themes from the second discussion:

- Concern about quality of life and impacts on productivity. There were general concerns about a negative impact on the tax base and ratables available for the towns.
- Restore a sense of community loss due to sprawl.
- Greater need for north-south transportation choices. I-195 provides convenient west-east access.
- Future is here already and transportation must meet the needs of today as well as the future.
- Ocean County has the 5<sup>th</sup> highest population in the state. Ocean County was formerly ranked 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Municipalities must work together regionally and statewide
- Non-auto access stations are essential
- Common design guidelines for the entire project corridor
- Small towns cannot control regional growth. Examine park and rides as an alternative to rail.

- Can smart growth really control sprawl?
- Direct service to NYC
- Increasing commercial development over residential development could reduce commuting distances as well as create jobs near the rail line.
- Concern expressed that NJ TRANSIT is duplicating the efforts of the MIS (1996) and that this study will provide no added value.
- Shrewsbury believes they will see no benefit from project.
- Include municipalities east of Route 34 at future CLC meetings
- Identify access roads to stations and not merely the station footprint
- Three-quarters of the Fort Monmouth population travel south and west. A rail connection at Tinton Falls to Lakewood/Lakehurst would greatly improve support for rail, especially if bus service were integrated with the rail connection.
- What is driving the growth? Is the prospect of rail service driving the growth or are there other factors contributing to the economic and demographic dynamic.
- Findings in MIS should be shared again with the public
- Be mindful of connectivity between rail and bus
- Alleviate traffic congestion along Routes 1 & 9
- Concern about the taxes and burdens on municipal services
- Preserve open space
- Preserve the Henry Hudson Trail
- Impact “Home Rule” has on the smart growth initiative
- Housing choices – currently there is one choice – the suburban single family home in an area you need to drive to. Other housing alternatives need to be created near rail lines

*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.*