

Morris County Board of Transportation Meeting
Tuesday, April 13, 2010
Morris County Department of Planning & Development
30 Schuyler Place, 4th Floor Conference Room
Morristown, NJ

In Attendance:

Board Members	Other Attendees	Staff
Freeholder Director Feyl	Jeff Bashe, Interfaith Council	Frank Pinto
Ilene Dorf Manahan, Chairperson	Amy Magnuson, NJTPA	Gerald Rohsler
Art Valand, Vice Chairperson	Chris Mazzei, M&E Railway	Deena Cybulski
Dudley Woodbridge, Secretary		Erik DeLine
Melverne Cooke		Denise Chaplick
Frank Reilly		
Judith Schleicher		
Hester Wharton		
Roman Zabihach, Alternate #1		
Joe Wells, Alternate #2		

I. Call to Order: Chairperson Ilene Dorf Manahan called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

II. Open Public Meeting Statement: Chairperson Manahan read the Open Public Meetings Act compliance statement.

III. Roll Call: Denise Chaplick read the roll call. Six voting members were present during roll call.

IV. Approval of Minutes

1. January 12, 2010: Approval of the minutes was moved by Ms. Cooke and seconded by Mr. Woodbridge and the minutes were unanimously approved.

2. March 22, 2010 (Special Meeting): Approval of the minutes was moved by Mr. Valand and seconded by Ms. Schleicher and the minutes were unanimously approved.

V. Presentations:

1. North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) Regional Transportation Plan 2035-Amy Magnuson, NJTPA: A video and slide show highlighting the regions transportation priorities for the next twenty-five years was

presented. It was noted that climate change and livable communities were added as new focus areas in the 2035 plan.

- Chairperson Manahan stated that she felt the Transportation Board should start taking a leadership position to get cars off the street through proactive planning to assist in achieving the goals of the NJTPA Plan 2035.
- Ms. Schleicher questioned how projects outlined in Plan 2035 would be funded.
- Freeholder Director Feyl pointed out that it is going to be the decision of the Governor and legislators to determine how and where transportation dollars come from.
- Ms. Magnuson pointed out that the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) will outline how priority projects of the Plan 2035 move forward.
- Chairperson Manahan pointed out that during Mr. Woodbridge's tenure, project plans would be brought to the Board of Transportation for comment.
- Mr. Rohsler pointed out that staff currently does this by working with Site Plan Review and NJTPA.
- Mr. Pinto acknowledged that the scale and pace of development has slowed since this type of review was completed by the Planning Board. Currently, development projects mainly consist of in-fill and redevelopment. However, he did note that we can keep the Board more abreast of current projects.
- Chairperson Manahan stated that she would like to talk strategically about supporting communities between train stations.
- Ms. Schleicher suggested that the Board regroup with the Chamber of Commerce to discuss getting people to work.

2. Freight in Morris County-Erik DeLine, Morris County Division of Transportation:

- Mr. Erik DeLine gave a presentation on the history of the three railroads that Morris County owns: the Dover & Rockaway, High Bridge Branch, and the Chester Branch. The Chester Branch was acquired from Holland Manufacturing in October, 2009.
- In the presentation, Mr. DeLine also explained the relationship between the county as the owner of the railroad and the Morristown & Erie Railway as the operator, how railroad improvements and maintenance are funded, and gave other similar arrangements of publicly owned railroads operated by a rail carrier.

VI. Old Business:

1. Spring/Summer Board Trip: Chairperson Manahan commented that the Board looks forward to a Spring/Summer trip and asked if there were any suggestions. Mr. Rohsler commented that several ideas are under consideration. He also noted that a trip along a newly renovated Chester Branch may be an option if completed in time.

VI. New Business:

- Freeholder Director Feyl briefed the Board on the NJDOT Draft FY 2011 Capital Construction Program (CCP):

- \$1.4 billion available, as opposed to \$1.6 billion in FY 2010
 - No capacity improvements will be made throughout the state
 - Sussex Turnpike project will move forward as planned
 - Commerce Boulevard is still in the program
- Ms. Magnuson also provided an update on NJDOT's proposed budget cuts:
 - Overall 10% cuts
 - NJTPA was given a week to prioritize projects
 - Rt. 52 causeway bridge will receive a bulk of the funding
 - Local Aid and County Aid programs have been cut by 30%
 - Additional cuts will occur on resurfacing, bridge, and freight projects
 - Route 1, Route 9, and Route 17 projects are off the CCP
- Mr. Rohsler commented that MCDOT is prepared to assist NJTPA with the prioritization of projects.
- Freeholder Director Feyl thanked all of those involved with executing the emergency Board of Transportation meeting on March 22 in response to NJ Transit's proposed service cuts and fare increases. He noted that these efforts enabled us to prepare an extremely effective strategy, gain critical public feedback, and allow us to connect with citizens who we rarely get an opportunity to meet.
- Freeholder Director Feyl and MCDOT staff met with NJ Transit's Executive Director to discuss the proposed strategies. He noted that we were able to achieve 100% of what was requested. NJ Transit commented that they were surprised at the level of public interest received during their public hearings and meetings and also acknowledged how well thought out Morris County's strategy was.
- Mr. Rohsler briefed the Board on a follow up meeting that took place with NJ Transit's Bus Planning staff. Preliminary discussions were held to reassess specific bus routes to apply the recommendations outlined in the Northwest NJ Bus Study and specific needs identified during the March 22nd special meeting. He also noted that NJ Transit will rename MCM bus routes to be listed under the 800 series. The attached Meeting Notes detail specifics of this meeting.
- Ms. Schleicher asked if PABCO could sustain itself with the modifications discussed. Mr. Rohsler replied that he thought they could.
- Mr. Reilly commented that there would be very few bidders for such a contract, given membership in the United Transit Union (UTU) is a requirement of these contracts. He also noted that other contractors who are members of the UTU come from greater distances causing their prices to be much higher.
- Ms. Schleicher asked how MAPS now fits in. Mr. Rohsler responded that MAPS is funded through Section 5311 funds. He also noted that if the funds are granted that MAPS will provide trips to residents residing in rural areas of the county starting July 1, 2010.

- Ms. Wharton noted her concern that MAPS has limited service and scheduling typically has to be done far in advance. Mr. Rohsler commented that this would have to be assessed and more vehicles may be able to be added through Section 5311 funds if needed.
- Mr. Woodbridge asked if NJ Transit responded to service cuts to Montclair State University. No one was certain if this was addressed.
- Mr. Valand commented that the State of New Jersey is broke and the Board may have to be prepared to really cut back in the future if economies continue to decline.
- Chairperson Manahan commented – What can we do about getting together with the Chamber of Commerce and the business community?
- Mr. Rohsler recommended that we first firm up the proposed bus route changes to get a better handle on the details prior to such a meeting.
- Mr. Reilly commented that the letters to NJ Transit from the Board of Transportation and the Board of Freeholders were superb and it was nice to see a firm position on the issue.

XI. Public Comments:

- Mr. Bashe wanted to thank everyone involved with conducting the Board of Transportation special meeting. He also commented that it was great to see such a coordinated effort and that the public was provided a forum for comment.

XII. Next Regular Meeting: July 13, 2010

XIII. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Notes prepared by Denise Chaplick

MEETING NOTES

Meeting Topic: Consideration of Modifications to the Morris County Metro (MCM) and WHEELS 966 Routes

Meeting Date: April 7, 2010

Meeting Location: NJ Transit Headquarters
Newark, NJ

Present:

<u>NJ Transit Representatives:</u>	<u>County Representative:</u>
Joyce Gallagher, Chief, Contract Services	Mary Jo Buchanan, Director of the Department of Human Services
James Gilligan, Director of Bus Service Planning	Gerald Rohsler, Director, Division of Transportation
	Deena Cybulski, Assistant Director, Division of Transportation

Notes/Summary:

This meeting was held at the request of NJ Transit after Morris County was assured by NJ Transit Executive Director James Weinstein that the urban bus routes and WHEELS 966 would not be eliminated. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss cost-neutral changes that could be applied to the bus system in Morris County prior to the re-bid of the Morris County Metro system private carrier contract. The NJ Transit representatives stated that our discussion would not affect Mr. Weinstein’s recommendation to the Board of Director’s to retain the MCM 1, 2, and 3 and the WHEELS 966 routes. The representatives did not expect that a press release on the recommendations would be made prior to the NJT Board of Director’s meeting on April 14, 2010.

NJ Transit wishes to preserve as much of the Access Link service area as possible. The Access Link program shadows NJ Transit’s bus routes and the MCM Urban bus routes, within ¾ miles of the routes. There is additional Access Link coverage in urban cores. The rural MCM routes were never shadowed by Access Link service, so their proposed elimination will not affect the Access Link program.

Below is a summary of proposed revisions to the bus system in Morris County, much of which was recommended in the Northwest New Jersey Bus Study. The goal of these proposals is to retain as much of the existing, well-used network as possible, while expanding the network where feasible, improving running times, and retaining the Access Link service area.

MCM 1

Existing: MCM 1 runs north from Morristown to the Morris County Mall (Walmart), Parsippany, Lake Hiawatha, and Boonton, and then most trips continue on US 202 through Towaco and Lincoln Park to the Willowbrook Mall in Wayne. The service is operated with two buses with an hourly frequency in the AM peak and 90 minutes midday.

Proposed: Split into two routes: NJT 871 and NJT 875. The NJT 871 would run along the full route minus Jefferson Road and serve the Wayne/Route 23 Transit Center at a frequency between 90 and 120 minutes. The NJT 875 will operate along Jefferson Road, east along US 46, to the Willowbrook Mall at a frequency of approximately 75 minutes.

MCM 2

Existing: MCM 2 connects Morristown with the County College of Morris in Randolph via NJ 10 and Dover. It serves retail locations along NJ 10, including Kmart on most trips. The service is operated with two buses and the frequency is hourly.

Proposed: Add Greystone Park Hospital, Morris County “Hill” Area, and Central Avenue Complex stops to the NJT 872 route. This will add approximately 10 minutes to the route’s running time. Mary Jo Buchanan suggested retaining the deviation to the Mack-Cali campus because the county is working with Mack Cali, who is willing to reduce the rents to nonprofits for their vacant office space. The portion of the route from HQ Plaza along Martin Luther King would be eliminated; the bus would run along Speedwell Avenue serving the Morris Plains Railroad Station. The MCM 2 and 10 would run together starting at Hanover Avenue, servicing the Hill, Greystone Park Hospital, and the Central Avenue Complex. The NJT 872 would then follow its current route to County College of Morris.

MCM 3

Existing: MCM 3 operates hourly inbound to Morristown from the Livingston Mall, heading non-stop to the Short Hills Mall and then following NJ 124 to Headquarters Plaza, Morristown. It continues beyond Headquarters Plaza on US 202 to Morris Plains and then heads west to the Greystone Park Hospital and the Morris County offices. The service is operated with two buses and the frequency is hourly.

Proposed: Make Morristown HQ Plaza the northern terminal of the NJT 873. The remainder of the route would not change, except for a slight modification for the route to serve Morristown Station via Morris Street and Elm Street. The Morristown to Greystone portion of the route would be covered by the MCM 2 and 10. This will reduce running times by 15 minutes.

MCM 10

Existing: MCM 10 operates between Morristown HQ Plaza and the Rockaway Mall, along the way serving Morris Plains, Mt. Tabor, Denville, Rockaway Borough, Dover, Wharton, and Rockaway Marketplace (Wal-Mart). The service is operated with three buses and the frequency is hourly (45 minutes in the peak).

Proposed: The Ridgedale Avenue through Hanover Avenue loop would be removed from the NJT 880. The bus will operate along Speedwell Avenue to the Morris Plains Railroad Station and then to the County “Hill” Complex and Greystone Park. The combination of the NJT 873 and NJT 880 will provide the “Hill”, Greystone Park, and the Central Avenue Complex with service from Morristown every 30 minutes. The bus would be rerouted through the Rockaway Mall to serve multiple stops, including the movie theater and Target. NJT will also be exploring limited service to Picatinny Arsenal, if time allows within the NJT 880 schedule. The MCM 10

should be able to be operated with two buses, instead of three, with hour and half frequency. If it is feasible to run the route with two buses, the extra bus can be employed in some other part of the network.

WHEELS 966

Existing: The current operator is First Student. It operates as two peak hour shuttles from Convent Station with frequencies of approximately 30 minutes. It consists of two separate routes: Route 1 serves Crum & Forster, Honeywell, and Campus Drive in Florham Park, while Routes 2 serves FDU, Verizon, and AT&T.

Proposed: Include new routes in bid package for MCM routes: NJT 878 and NJT 879. Stops will be added for the new Park Avenue offices (includes Exxon Redevelopment properties). The proposed routing and frequency of these buses is still in development.

Morris on the Move (M.O.M.)

Existing: M.O.M. is a van service that operates with one vehicle, predominantly in the peak hours, from Dover west to Mount Olive. As a Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) service it is designed to assist low-income workers, but is open to all. No fare is charged. The service frequency is every one hour and 40 minutes.

Proposed: Convert to MCM Urban route: NJT 881 Increase span and frequency. Extend to Rockaway Mall via Mt Hope Road, follow the proposed MCM 10 route within the mall. Serve West Clinton Street between the Rockaway Mall and Dover on some trips. From Dover, continue west on US 46 and follow existing route of the MCM 5 to the Roxbury and Ledgewood Malls, then into Netcong. Continue west on US 46 and follow into the International Trade Center retail area and follow existing M.O.M. route to terminus at Eagle Rock Village in Mt. Olive. This is proposed to be hourly service and NJT would charge regular NJT fares.

Other Items

NJT will be installing small add-on signs to bus stops signs that will provide a number for the rider to call to determine when the next bus will be arriving. That is one reason why it is necessary for the MCM routes to be identified as the 870 routes.

NJT hopes to bring Colonial Coach into the 870 family as well. Colonial Coach consists of two routes throughout Morristown and Morris Township and is funded by these municipalities.

The Greater Newark Bus Study has proposed extending Newark NJT 73 to Morris Plains and Morristown via NJ 10, which would provide continuous service on NJ 10 from Morris Plains to Livingston. The NJT representatives agreed that this was a worthwhile concept, but stated that the funds are not available at this time to add this type of improvement.

Morris County brought up the request made by a transit user to install a bus shelter at the Rockaway Mall. There are at least two different bus stops for different transit providers at the mall. During this reassessment of the MCM routes, the bus stop locations should be evaluated. Once the stop(s) are known, Morris County and NJT can reach out to a Rockaway Mall representative.

NJ Transit is in discussions with Coach USA. They would like the company to consider making local stops along the Coach 77 route with a fare structure similar to NJT. This route runs along Columbia Turnpike and NJ 10 providing rides to New York City.

Action Items Resulting from Meeting:

Explore application of Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) funds, which are currently being used to fund a private carrier to operate the free Morris on the Move (M.O.M.) Shuttle and on-demand shuttle. The cost of the entire shuttle operation is \$230,000. A 50 percent match is required for JARC funds. Currently, Morris County is providing this match with New Jersey Department of Human Services transportation block grant funds, which are obtained through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Federal funds. These match funds will be reduced or eliminated in the near future. The current JARC contract will expire on June 30, 2010. Can the JARC funds be transferred to supplement funding of the Morris County Metro routes, using the current county subsidy to provide the necessary 50 percent match? Is it necessary to retain a portion of the JARC funds to operate the on-demand shuttle? If so, how much funding would be needed and what would be the source of the 50 percent match? NJT states that JARC funds could be applied to new service; what is considered new service? How could the JARC funds be applied to the system? These questions should be explored with Jim Flynn of NJT, Hamou Megdhir of NJTPA, and the Morris County Human Services representatives.

NJT must provide a minimum of 30 days notice to PABCO Transit, Inc. in order to eliminate the MCM 4, 5, and 7 routes. NJT suggested that they would likely be able to terminate service by June 1, 2010. Morris County requested that service continue until June 30, 2010. Starting July 1, 2010, or shortly thereafter, Morris County is anticipating using Section 5311 Rural Bus funds to provide trips using the Morris Area Paratransit Service for residents in rural areas of Morris County. Many of the passengers that will no longer be served by the MCM 4, 5, and 7 will be eligible for this new MAPS service. NJT suggested that Morris County contact Robert Koska of NJT, with a copy to Joyce Gallagher, to request that MCM 4, 5, and 7 service be continued until June 30, 2010.

Morris County has budgeted \$150,000 to subsidize the MCM 1, 2, 3, and 10 and \$26,500 to subsidize the MCM 4, 5, and 7 for calendar year 2010. As of yet, no payments have been made to NJT for 2010 service. Morris County would like to add the \$26,500 to the \$150,000 Urban Bus Subsidy, but would then be unable to pay a subsidy to Rural Bus. Joyce Gallagher said that she would speak to Robert Koska about this issue.

There are some additional options for extending service slightly later into the evening. If the current operator, PABCO Transit, Inc., wins the contract, the route schedules can be modified to allow PABCO to operate service on the trips back to their Dover garage. Currently service dead heads in Morristown and Willowbrook and the buses run "Out of Service" back to Dover.

Currently, as stated above the MCM 10 is operated with three buses. NJT has proposed that the service be run with two buses. Jim Gilligan will provide running time data on this proposal, so

that Morris County can decide if they would like to use the third bus on another route or to expand service hours on another route.

Jim Gilligan offered to come to a Morris County Board of Transportation meeting to present the new bus routes, once the bid package has been finalized. NJT stressed the importance of informing riders and potential riders about the new network once the plan is known. Morris County and NJT will work jointly on advertising the new network. If budget allows, an updated Morris County Transit Guide would be key to the effort.