

Morris County Freight Rail Advisory Committee
Tuesday April 9, 2013: 2:00 PM
Morris County Administration & Records Building
Fifth Floor, Knox Room
Morristown, NJ

The Meeting was called to order by Mr. Gerald Rohsler at 2:05 PM.

In Attendance:

Board Members	Other Attendees	Staff
David Scapicchio, Morris County Freeholder	Jakub Rowinski, NJTPA	Deena Leary
Kathy DeFillippo, Roxbury Township	Chris Mazzei, M&E	Gerald Rohsler
Gary Behrens, Roxbury Township		John Hayes
Jack Holland, Holland Manufacturing		Joseph Russo
Frank Reilly, Morris County Board of Transportation		

I. Welcome

Mr. Gerald Rohsler welcomed everyone to April's meeting.

II. Approval of minutes from October 9, 2012

Mr. Gary Behrens made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Frank Reilly seconded the motion. The minutes from October 9, 2012 were unanimously approved.

III. Presentation - Morris/Warren Rail Freight Corridor Study

Mr. Jakub Rowinski, Principal Planner, Freight Planning, with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) gave a brief overview of the Morris/Warren Rail Freight Corridor Study being conducted by Jacobs Engineering. Mr. Rowinski noted that the study examines the primary rail freight corridor serving Morris and Warren Counties. He explained that the corridor consists of Norfolk Southern's Washington Secondary Line between Phillipsburg and Hackettstown in Warren County and NJ Transit's Morristown Line from Hackettstown to Morristown in Morris County. Further, the study is investigating the feasibility and potential benefits of upgrading the rail corridor to accommodate heavier rail cars and eliminate overhead height restrictions to better serve existing and future businesses located along the corridor.

Mr. Rowinski added that the study builds upon the findings of the previously completed "Morris County Freight Infrastructure and Land Use Analysis" study, which identified a

number of constraints on the corridor in Morris and Warren Counties that limit the ability of the freight railroad industry to serve the region.

Moving the presentation along, Mr. Rowinski provided several answers to a few key questions raised from the study. Most importantly, the study asks, *does the value of economic development support making the needed investments?* Mr. Rowinski described how Jacobs Engineering approached this question using a defined screening process. The screening process included an investigation of properties that would be potential recipients of freight rail service. The study identified 4 clusters in Morris and Warren Counties to which Jacobs Engineering focused their research.

Based on information obtained from NJ Transit and Norfolk Southern and several field investigations, Mr. Rowinski noted, that Jacobs Engineering preliminary analysis determined two overhead and five undergrade bridge constraints between Morris and Warren Counties that would incur an estimated cost of \$15 to \$24.5 million in infrastructure investment to establish a rail line that could accommodate 286,000 lb./Plate "F" rail cars from Phillipsburg to Morristown, NJ. Mr. Rowinski pointed out to the committee, that although this initial investment is relatively high, the potential economic impact associated with implementing this investment would return \$133.6 million in annual tax revenue, statewide, in addition to creating roughly 3,000 new jobs. Mr. Rowinski was careful to inform the committee that this scenario provided, was the maximized economic impact from investment, suggesting a best-case scenario, and that the economic benefits actually realized could potentially be less.

In summation, Mr. Rowinski stated that Jacobs Engineering's initial findings determined that the return on investments for improvements to Norfolk Southern's Washington Secondary Line and NJ Transit's Morristown Line appears to be feasible and the public benefit would greatly exceed the cost of the infrastructure improvements.

Several questions from the committee followed Mr. Rowinski's presentation. Mr. Gary Behrens inquired as to the timeframe involved with implementing the improvements presented by Jacobs Engineering. Mr. Rowinski mentioned that a timeframe, at this moment, would be difficult to predict without finalized problem statements and detailed engineering that would still need to be conducted for each constraint.

Mr. Chris Mazzei added that any investments implemented west of Lake Junction would provide the largest return on investment, adding that those investments should be sought out first above all, to which the committee agreed.

Ms. Kathy DeFillippo asked if the rail-bypass around the Town of Dover was included in this study, to which Mr. Gerald Rohsler responded that it had not been included.

Mr. Rohsler thanked Mr. Rowinski for taking the time to present before the Freight Railroad Advisory Committee and moved the meeting towards Current Initiatives.

IV. Current Initiatives

Mr. Rohsler mentioned that the County had been working closely with Roxbury Township to finalize the site plans for the Kenvil Team Track and that a courtesy review before the Township's governing council would be held in either the following month of May or later in June. The courtesy review would be to inform Roxbury Township Council of aesthetic improvements the County is proposing to include with the rehabilitation of the team track.

Mr. Rohsler added that earth berms and curbing would be installed at the entrance of the Kenvil Team Track off Berkshire Valley Road. Additionally, a berm on the southwest end of the team track will be planted with Norway Spruces and that the County's property line would be delineated using a CORTEN steel guide rail.

V. Open Discussion

The committee had no more discussion involving freight and items related.

VI. Other Business

Mr. Chris Mazzei mentioned that the rubber seal in the crossing at Berkshire Valley Road along the County's High Bridge Branch had been dislodged and required immediate repair. Mr. Mazzei informed the committee that the Morristown & Erie Railway could cold patch the crossing, removing the seal, but mentioned that the County's Department of Public Works had the ability to cut the rubber seal out and hot patch the crossing, providing a more durable repair. Mr. Rohsler agreed with Mr. Mazzei and mentioned that he would speak to Morris County's Division of Engineering to seek a remedy to the issue regarding the High Bridge Branch crossing at Berkshire Valley Road as soon as possible.

VI. Adjournment

Mr. Gary Behrens made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Jack Holland seconded the motion. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph A. Russo
Assistant Planner