

MINUTES
Morris County Board of Transportation Meeting
Tuesday, July 24, 2012
Morris County Department of Planning & Development
30 Schuyler Place, 4th Floor Conference Room
Morristown, NJ

In Attendance:

Board Members	Other Attendees	Staff
Melverne E. Cooke, Chairperson	Abbas H. Hirya, NJDOT	Deena Cybulski
Ilene Dorf Manahan	Adam L. Catherine, Stantec	John Hayes
Frank T. Reilly, Vice Chairperson	Helene Rubin, NJDOT	Christine Marion
Judith Schleicher		Joseph Russo
Joe Wells, Alternate #1		Gerald Rohsler
Dudley Woodbridge, Secretary		Elizabeth Shulman
Roman Zabihach		

I. Call to Order: Chairperson Melverne E. Cooke called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm.

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

III. Roll Call: Gerald Rohsler read the roll call. Six voting members were present during roll call.

IV. Welcome and Introductions: Chairperson Cooke welcomed Abbas Hirya, Adam Catherine, Helene Rubin, and all attendees.

V. Approval of Minutes from April 24, 2012: Approval of the minutes was moved by Dudley Woodbridge and seconded by Ilene Dorf Manahan, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

VI. East Hanover Avenue Traffic Corridor Study: Adam L. Catherine, Associate, Traffic Engineering and Transportation at Stantec Consulting presented an overview of the East Hanover Avenue Corridor Traffic Study. The study is funded by the NJDOT and conducted by Stantec. The study will analyze the existing and future traffic along East Hanover Avenue (650) from Speedwell Avenue (202) to Whippany Road (511). This 2.4 mile corridor in Morris County traverses Hanover, Morris Plains, and Morris Townships. The study will design infrastructure improvements to address current and predicted circulation, mobility, and safety issues, while considering the needs of all users. The planning, concept, and design work effort will provide a comprehensive plan for the

corridor across the three municipalities. Mr. Catherine described the existing conditions, the forecasted growth of traffic, and the alternative recommendations that were developed to address current and future issues along the corridor. He compared the cost and intensity of the improvements between the alternative recommendations.

Ms. Manahan asked for additional explanation for the recommended intersection improvements for East Hanover Avenue / American Road and East Hanover Avenue / Martin Luther King Avenue. She noted that the study developed recommendations based on forecasted traffic growth under current zoning; if zoning were to change further improvements might be needed beyond those developed in this study.

Ms. Schleicher noted that the traffic signal at the Morris County Library driveway does not serve the Morris County Frelinghuysen Arboretum driveway and inquired if there was any consideration of realigning the two driveways. She also asked about the extent of the proposed multi-use path and how it would affect residential properties. She asked if site plan approvals are tied to the study recommendations and if an inter-municipal agreement will be developed.

Mr. Wells questioned if there was an existing sidewalk along the corridor where the multi-use path is proposed.

Mr. Woodbridge asked about the location of the proposed ShopRite, if additional Right-Of-Way would be needed for the multi-use path, and what are the next steps of the study.

Ms. Cooke asked what material the path would be constructed with, what alternative improvements would be needed to address traffic volume generated by full build-out of the corridor, and when the report would be finalized.

Mr. Zabihach noted the high volume of drivers that travel from NJ 53 to US 202 to East Hanover Avenue to access NJ 24, contributing to the congestion on Hanover Avenue. He recalled that based on the County's Regional Stormwater Plan, the County has required developers to demonstrate that their site's stormwater impact is mitigated, and perhaps a similar standard could be set in the corridor for traffic generation.

Ms. Marion indicated that even implementation of the plan will have to be worked out between the state, county, municipalities, and developers. ShopRite will give an easement for the multi-use path. Developers are working with the county to incorporate improvements into plans. She noted that further capacity improvements beyond those recommended in the study will be limited in the future; there is a limit to how much of the road can be widened.

Mr. Catherine reported that the proposed development on American Way would have low impact on the intersection with E Hanover Avenue, and described the range of recommendations for the intersection of E Hanover Avenue / Martin Luther King Avenue. He indicated that the Morris County Library's driveway traffic signal was analyzed, but realigning the Arboretum's driveway was not one of the recommendations.

He further discussed the alternative recommendations and details about specific improvements. The multi-use path would be on the westbound side of East Hanover Avenue avoiding residential properties while providing access to amenities in the community. He added that typically asphalt has been used, but some communities use other materials for constructing softer low-impact multi-use paths. Whatever the material, maintenance would be factored into the decision. The next steps of the study will be to finalize the draft alternatives analysis and hold a public meeting to present the recommendations.

Chairperson Cooke thanked Mr. Catherine for presenting to the Morris County Board of Transportation. More information on the study can be found at

www.morrisdot.org/accessories/transportation-ehanoveravecorridorstudy.asp.

VII. Staff Reports:

- 1. NJ 124 Corridor Transit Access Improvement Study:** The study will analyze and recommend station access improvements at the three NJ Transit commuter rail stations in the NJ 124 Corridor: Chatham, Madison, and Convent Station. This study is funded through the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority's (NJTPA) Subregional Studies Program and managed by the Morris County Division of Transportation (MCDOT). The project began in January 2012 and is anticipated to be completed in March 2013. John Hayes reported that since the April Board of Transportation meeting, data collection has been the primary focus of study efforts. A parking utilization study at the three train stations was conducted at the end of April; a technical memorandum reporting on these efforts is being reviewed by the Division of Transportation. Technical memorandums on zoning and public feedback are also currently under review by the Division. Additionally, two online surveys were conducted. The first travel survey, hosted on the project's webpage, was conducted in May. The second survey was part of NJ Transit's Quarterly ScoreCard survey for transit riders held in June. More information on the study can found at www.morrisdot.org/NJ124/.
- 2. Rail Activities:** Mr. Rohsler reported that bids were due on May 15 to operate on the county-owned railroads. The county received two bid proposals and an operator will be selected to sign a lease agreement shortly. Additionally, a Request For Proposals (RFP) for the improvements of the Kenvil Team Track will be issued in the next few weeks. The engineering for improvements to the Kenvil Team Track, located in Roxbury off of US 46 and Berkshire Valley Road, is being conducted by CHA. Mr. Reilly noted that a "Team Track" provides businesses, without direct access to rail, a location where they can pickup shipments by rail. Blue Ridge Lumber Company is one of the customers that use the team track.

Ms. Manahan inquired about the status of freight rail activity and related economic development in the county. Mr. Rohsler noted two studies that are

being conducted by the NJTPA to address these issues: Rail Freight Capacity and Needs Assessment to Year 2040 and the Morris and Warren Rail Corridor Study. Additionally, the large freight rail companies continue to request that NJ Transit permit heavier rail cars on their tracks, as larger and heavier rail cars become the industry standard. NJ Transit has been reviewing the issue. Mr. Reilly explained that NJ Transit restricts each rail car to a maximum weight of 262,000 lbs; while freight companies are requesting the weight restriction be increased to 286,000 lbs. Mr. Reilly suggested that the Board of Transportation pass a resolution in support of increasing the weight restrictions on NJ Transit rail. Ms. Schleicher agreed that it would be good to bring attention to this issue, which is related to economic development and keeping businesses in the state. Ms. Cybulski suggested that the resolution could be tied to the results of the Morris and Warren Rail Study. Ms. Cooke agreed that the resolution should support a statewide increase of weight restrictions, and that the board should pass a resolution now and at the completion of the Morris and Warren Rail Study. Approval of drafting a resolution of support of NJ Transit increasing the weight restriction for rail cars to 286,000 lbs was moved by Mr. Reilly, seconded by Ms. Schleicher, and unanimously passed by the Board of Transportation. The resolution will be presented to the Board for adoption at the October meeting.

3. **Traffic Counts:** Mr. Hayes reported that the spring 2012 traffic count ended on June 22. 58 successful counts were taken this season, primarily at locations last visited in 2007. The traffic count program returns to specific locations about every five years. Additionally, four counts for speed and volume were conducted at the request of Chester Township Police Department, and one count was conducted at a new location for Morris County Engineering.
4. **North Jersey Sustainable Communities Consortium:** Mr. Rohsler reported that Morris County has joined the North Jersey Sustainable Communities Consortium. Morris County will participate on the Economic Development Standing Committee in addition to the Executive Committee of the Consortium. Ultimately, the Consortium, Rutgers, and the NJPA will generate the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. More information can be found at <http://policy.rutgers.edu/njscc/>.

VIII. Old Business:

Mr. Woodbridge asked about the status of the improvements that have been proposed in various studies for the intersection of Columbia Turnpike and Park Avenue. Ms. Cybulski reported that Morris County Engineer Steve Hammond gave a presentation to the NJDOT Commissioner Jim Simpson on the proposal to construct an overpass over Columbia Turnpike, connecting the NJ 24 eastbound off-ramp to Park Avenue, south of Columbia Turnpike. This proposed improvement would eliminate the conflicting movement of traffic exiting from NJ 24 eastbound onto Columbia Turnpike westbound, and then

merging several lanes over in order to turn left onto Park Avenue southbound. The cost of this proposed improvement is being estimated.

IX. New Business: None

X. Public Comments: None

XI. Next Regular Meeting: October 23, 2012, at 2:00 pm in the 4th floor conference room, 30 Schuyler Place, Morristown, NJ.

XII. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Minutes prepared by John Hayes