

MINUTES
Morris County Board of Transportation Meeting
Tuesday, April 22, 2014
Morris County Department of Planning & Public Works
30 Schuyler Place, 4th Floor Conference Room, Morristown, NJ

In Attendance:

| Board Members | Other Attendees | Staff |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Freeholder John Cesaro | Jim Jones, MCEDC | Deena Leary |
| Milverne E. Cooke, Chairperson | | Gerald Rohsler |
| Ilene Dorf Manahan | | John Hayes |
| Frank Reilly | | Joseph Russo |
| Judy Schleicher | | |
| Manuela Schuster | | |
| Joe Wells | | |

I. Call to Order: Chairperson Melverne E. Cooke called the meeting to order at 2:08 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. Seven voting members were present during roll call.

IV. Welcome and Introductions: Chairperson Cooke welcomed all attendees, Jim Jones of the Morris County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC), and new board member, Manuela Schuster. Ms. Schuster introduced herself and described her current role at the Morris County Employment & Training Services. She described the Morris On the Move (M.O.M.) shuttle, which she manages. Ms. Manahan asked about M.O.M. ridership. Ms. Schuster summarized ridership trends on the shuttle, and identified the recent relocation of the State’s One Stop Center and efforts by her office to serve the Center’s clients. All attendees introduced themselves.

V. Approval of Minutes from April 23, 2013: Approval of the April 23, 2013 meeting minutes was moved by Frank Reilly, seconded by Ms. Manahan. Freeholder Cesaro abstained. All other board members approved the minutes.

VI. Report from Election Committee Chairperson & Election of Officers: Ms. Manahan presented the Election Committee’s recommendations for the election of officers for the Board of Transportation. The Election Committee recommended the following 2014 appointments:

- Chairperson: Melverne E. Cooke
- Vice-chairperson: Frank T. Reilly
- Secretary: Joe Wells

The election of the 2014 appointments was moved by Ms. Manahan, seconded by Ms. Schuster, and unanimously approved.

VII. Selection of 2014/2015 Meeting Dates: Chairperson Cooke presented the Board of Transportation meeting dates for 2014 and 2015. Chairperson Cooke suggested that the proposed October meeting date be moved from the third Tuesday to the fourth Tuesday of the month. The approval of the following 2014/2015 meeting dates was unanimously approved:

- April 22, 2014
- July 15, 2014
- October 28, 2014
- January 20, 2015

These meetings will be held at 2:00 p.m. in the 4th floor conference room of the Morris County Department of Planning & Public Works at 30 Schuyler Place, Morristown, NJ.

VIII. Discussion: Subregional Studies Program - Circulation Element of the County Master Plan: Mr. Rohsler provided a summary of the new Circulation Element of the Morris County Master Plan that will be developed using NJTPA's Subregional Studies Program funding. The Circulation Element will serve as a comprehensive guide for all planning processes that surround and impact transportation in order to provide a safe and efficient transportation network for Morris County and the region. The current element was adopted in 1992; its contents and recommendations are outdated and lack competitive justification for funding and implementation.

Chairperson Cooke asked about the project start date and duration, and if the Board of Chosen Freeholders had discussed the new Element. Mr. Rohsler responded that a consultant will be selected in the fall of 2014 and the contract's duration will be for 21 months. Freeholder Cesaro responded that the project had been brought to the Board's attention for discussion at one of their sessions. Mr. Rohsler added that the Freeholders had adopted a resolution of support for the grant application to NJTPA. Additionally, Mr. Rohsler noted that staff would propose holding joint Planning Board and Board of Transportation meetings during the Element's development for updates and presentations by the consultant team. Ms. Schuster asked which modes of transportation would the Element focus on and suggested Morris County Department of Human Services involvement in the project. Chairperson Cooke responded that the Element covers all modes in transportation that operate in the County.

IX. Staff Reports:

1. **Railroad Activities:** Joseph Russo reported on several railroad rehabilitation and construction projects along the Morris County-owned railroads.

- A train derailed and damaged the Cobb Street crossing on the Dover & Rockaway Railroad on February 9, 2014. The County contracted with a Tracks Unlimited. Emergency repairs started on February 24 and were completed on February 26.
- The Kenvil Team Track Improvement Project on the High Bridge Branch will begin late April or early May 2014, and has an expected duration of 120 days.
- Bid specifications for the High Bridge Branch Resurfacing Project and the Dover and Rockaway Repair Project were completed. The original cost estimates were prepared in 2009 and are now out of date; new cost estimates were generated. A request to increase funding for these projects was sent to NJDOT.
- Bid specifications are being developed for the Morris Avenue crossing on the Dover & Rockaway Railroad and the Righter Road crossing on the High Bridge Branch. Diagnostic Team Meetings were held at both crossings in 2013. It is anticipated RFPs for these construction projects will be advertised in summer 2014.
- The Federal Railroad Administration requires an annual cursory review, and a five-year in-depth inspection of railroad bridges. Morris County reports of the in-depth inspections conducted in 2013 are nearly complete. A County Railroad Bridge Management Program will be created from these inspection reports.

Ms. Manahan inquired if the MCEDC knew of any business interest in the Kenvil Team Track site. Mr. Jones indicated no specific interest, but he stated he would like to visit the construction site. Ms. Schleicher noted the rough condition of the Morris Avenue crossing on the Dover & Rockaway Railroad. Mr. Russo reported that the Morristown & Erie Railway Company temporarily patched the potholes within the crossing, and the NJDOT will award a change order to Morris County so the crossing rehabilitation project can occur this year. Ms. Leary summarized the process for getting State railroad funding to the County.

2. **Human Services Transportation Plan:** John Hayes reported that an update to the Human Services Transportation Plan was completed in December 2013. Federal law requires that the plan is updated every five years. One critical requirement of the update is that each agency in the county, that may seek federal transit funding, is identified in order for each to be eligible for the funding. Anticipated funding requests were also identified, as required. The following information was also updated: demographics, existing transit service, County-operated service ridership, and goals and objectives. A stakeholder meeting was held on December 12, 2013 to discuss the goals, objectives, and agency list updates. The plan was submitted to NJ Transit.

- 3. Morris Canal Greenway:** Mr. Rohsler reported that the Morris Canal Greenway Conference was held at the Morris County Frelinghuysen Arboretum on March 27. Morris County helped coordinate the event. Welcomes and introductions were given by Mary K. Murphy, Executive Director of the NJTPA, and Morris County Freeholder Kathryn A. DeFillippo. Presenters included a wide range of representatives from advocacy groups, consultant firms, state agencies, counties, and municipalities who described recent work in Montville, Wharton, and Passaic County. Mr. Rohsler provided a general account of the history of the Morris Canal that had extended from Jersey City to Phillipsburg. He described the Morris Canal Working group, in which he participates, and how the NYS&W Bicycle & Pedestrian Path, to be designed and constructed under County project management, will tie into the historic Canal. More information on the Morris Canal Working Group can be found at www.MorrisCanalGreenway.org.

Ms. Manahan described that the conference was well attended, and noted that there has been demonstrated enthusiasm and commitment by many communities along the Canal. Chairperson Cooke asked how the efforts would be funded. Mr. Rohsler stated that the next step is a feasibility study to be funded and managed by NJTPA to determine questions like funding and implementation potential. Ms. Schleicher reported that at a Denville flood control study meeting she attended, one recommendation proposed was to reopen the Morris Canal to avert flooding.

X. New Business: Mr. Reilly described how he has observed that road asphalt in general does not appear to be as dense as it used to be and that Long hill Road is falling apart after recent paving. Ms. Leary responded that there was recent repaving in the area tied to utility work, and a different standard material might have been used. Mr. Wells suggest it might have been the time of year that the resurfacing was conducted which determined the material used. Ms. Leary reported that the County is finding that after resurfacing, pavement is not lasting as long as in the past. This is due possibly to increases in truck traffic, increase in volume of all automobiles, and more intense weather. Therefore, the County is investing more in the paving budget. Ms. Schleicher identified the pavement condition of Boulevard in Mountain Lakes and asked when it would be repaved. Ms. Leary responded that the resurfacing of Boulevard is scheduled to start May 1.

XI. Old Business: Mr. Rohsler stated that a copy of the NJ 124 Transit Study's executive summary and report CD was in each attendee's meeting material package. Ms. Cooke invited Mr. Jones to report on MCEDC's recent efforts in relation to the study's recommendations. Mr. Jones reported that about a year ago he brought the NJ 124 Transit Study to the attention of a company that was looking to locate in the Morristown area, after the company determined that Morristown did not meet the company's needs. The company expressed interest in potential development Convent Station, as identified in the study. The MCDEC then issued an RFP and contracted with VHB, an engineering firm, to evaluate and show potential development configurations at Convent Station with a new 150-space parking garage and mixed use development. No decision has been made. Mr. Jones also described the underutilization of office space in the NJ 124 corridor. The MCEDC has assisted municipalities on how to adjust and adapt to office vacancies.

Chairperson Cooke reminded the Board that congress has failed to renew the tax benefit to transit riders, to keep in on par with parking tax benefit. The parking tax benefit is adjusted with inflation while the transit benefit is not tied to inflation.

Mr. Reilly announced that a grant to restore a parlor railcar was acquired and restoration began last week. The railcar was moved from the Boonton State Rail Museum to the Whippany Rail Museum for the work and that the effort should take two to three years to complete.

XII. Next Regular Meeting: July 15, 2014, at 2:00 pm in the 4th floor conference room of the Morris County Department of Planning & Public Works at 30 Schuyler Place, Morristown, NJ.

XIII. Adjournment: Adjournment of the meeting was moved by Ms. Manahan and seconded by Ms. Schleicher, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:14 p.m.

Minutes prepared by John Hayes.