

**MINUTES**  
**Morris County Board of Transportation Meeting**  
**Tuesday, July 12, 2016**  
**Morris County Department of Planning & Public Works**  
**30 Schuyler Place, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room**  
**Morristown, New Jersey**

**In Attendance:**

Board Members	Additional Attendees	Staff
Melverne E. Cooke, Chairperson	Kathryn A. DeFillippo, Freeholder Director	Gerald Rohsler
Ilene Dorf Manahan	Robert Wanhouse, MCEDC	John Hayes
Frank T. Reilly		Joseph Russo
Manuela Schuster		
Joe Wells		
John Wetzel		
Leonard Resto, (Alternate #1)		

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

**II. Open Public Meeting Statement:** Gerald Rohsler 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 and new member Leonard Resto. All attendees introduced themselves.

**V. Staff Reports:**

**A. Circulation Element Update:** John Hayes reported that transportation staff are working on closing out the contract with the consultant. Staff are also closing out the Subregional Studies Program contract with the NJTPA which funded this project. The final report was submitted to the NJTPA for review, and NJTPA provided comments that the consultant is addressing. After the contracts are closed out, transportation staff will continue to advance the report, further engage with the Planning Board and Board of Transportation, and seek to get the Circulation Element adopted.

Manuela Schuster thanked the staff for including a recommendation regarding the transition of the County's Morris on the Move shuttle service, which she manages, to NJ Transit. Mr. Rohsler explained NJ Transit reviewed the

recommendations and indicated that they would like the report to note that the agency's budget limitations prevent service expansion without further subsidy at this time.

Ms. Cooke asked when the Circulation Element will be adopted. Mr. Rohsler stated that the goal is to have the Element be adopted by the end of 2016.

**B. Freight Activities:** Joseph Russo reported on several railroad crossing improvement projects along the Morris County-owned railroads. Designs for the rehabilitation of the following eight crossings were completed: East Main Street, Ogden Avenue, Stickle Avenue, and Hibernia Avenue in Rockaway Borough; Lower Richboynton Road, North Salem Street, and Sammis Avenue in Dover; and NJ 10 in Roxbury Township. The East Main Street crossing is under construction. Contracts will be signed shortly for the NJ 10, Ogden Avenue, Stickle Avenue, and Hibernia Avenue crossings, and construction is anticipated to start in late summer. Construction contracts are on hold for the Dover crossings because of the lack of funds in the NJ Transportation Trust Fund.

Mr. Rohsler reported on the storage of propane railcars on the High Bridge Branch in Mount Olive. An agreement was reached between the municipalities, the County, and the operating railroad for the provision of certain safety improvements to the High Bridge Branch on June 30. These improvements include derails and active monitoring, hazardous material response training and emergency kits for local responders, access for emergency responsive vehicles, and emergency evacuation plans. The agreement is intended to ensure the safe and secure storage of the propane railcars while in transit to their final destination.

Mr. Resto asked about the potential for vandalism, which is typically a concern of the public. Frank Reilly said the tanks are about two years old and are designed to resist vandals; shippers are concerned about safety.

Ilene Dorf Manahan asked if the access to the where railcars are located can be restricted. Mr. Rohsler responded that the area is too large to restrict and it needs to be accessible for emergency responders. Additionally, several emergency access points were created. Freeholder DeFillippo summarized the issue explaining that the County's lawsuit against the railroad was about ensuring the safety of residents and arranging coordination between the railroad, County OEM, and municipal first responders.

Joe Wells asked if the propane tanks will be delivered to a local company. And Chairperson Cooke questioned why the gas is being stored on the railroad. Mr. Russo responded it is not clear who will ultimately receive the deliveries. The railroad indicated that the gas is being stored because there is a supply surplus.

Robert Wanthouse shared a map of properties for sale or lease along rail lines in Morris County. He explained that MCEDC used Co-star commercial data to map the properties. Chairperson Cooke asked how MCEDC will use this data. John Wetzel reported that Roxbury is working with MCEDC to market these properties. Mr. Wetzel explained that this information will be on the town's economic

development corporation's website and will share it with local brokers, to ultimately make it easier to market rail accessible properties.

- C. NYS&W Update:** Mr. Rohsler updated the Board on the status of the NYS&W Bicycle and Pedestrian Path project. He explained that the County is working to secure an easement for the path to cross the North Jersey District Water Supply property.

Chairperson Cooke asked if funding for construction was in place. Mr. Rohsler affirmed it was. Mr. Wetzel asked for some background on the project. Mr. Rohsler explained that the Path will be a 4.8 mile shared-use path starting at River Drive in Pequannock and ending at the Mountain View Train Station in Wayne. The path will be constructed on top of the existing abandoned railroad bed of the New York, Susquehanna, and Western (NYS&W) Railway. Currently the project is in the Final Design Phase.

- D. Transportation Trust Fund Update:** Freeholder DeFillippo stated that New Jersey's Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) is out of money, all money must go to debt service. An agreement for how to increase TTF funding was not reached between the State Legislators and the Governor. The Governor issued an order shutting down most State funded projects. It has been reported that some contractors are removing equipment off site; although contractors cannot charge for demobilization, it is believed that it will add to the cost of projects when work resumes. Federally funded projects continue to advance, except for projects funded with TTF swapped dollars.

Mr. Rohsler explained the TTF swap. NJTPA receives Federal Highway Administration funding through the NJDOT, however the NJTPA was finding it difficult to timely allocate/disperse the funds within each fiscal year. NJTPA, with various approvals, found it beneficial to exchange Federal funding for TTF dollars with the State, who could spend it quickly. Chairperson Cooke asked if the TTF issue affected the required State match of Federal dollars. Mr. Rohsler replied that the match is unaffected by the lack of TTF funding because the match is provided by toll money.

Ms. Schuster asked about the potential use of emergency funds to support the TTF. Chairperson Cooke explained that all the money in the TTF is going to paying off debt, no emergency funds available, and the State had used other funds to prop up the TTF for years. She invited people to call their legislators to encourage them to find a solution. Mr. Reilly cautioned that the future credibility of the TTF program was in question.

- E. Capital Projects Update:** Speaker unable to attend.

## **VI. New Business:** None

## **VII. Old Business:**

Freeholder DeFillippo announced that the Morris County Airport Advisory Committee (AAC) was held on June 20. Chairperson Cooke reported that it was the first time it met in about 5 years. A helipad was proposed by GAF as part of

its development application to the County. A member of the County's Development Review Committee suggested that the AAC reconvene to discuss the impacts of helipads. The AAC discussed the general benefits and concerns of helipads and helicopter flights in the County. The AAC recommended that County staff contact NJDOT regarding the helipad application process and report back to the AAC with the details to increase members' knowledge on the topic. Freeholder DeFillippo added that AAC members identified many economic benefits of helipads for the County, and that they may encourage and attract certain businesses.

**VIII. Next Regular Meeting:** October 18, 2016 at 2:00 pm in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor conference room of the Morris County Department of Planning & Public Works at 30 Schuyler Place, Morristown, NJ.

**IX. Adjournment:** Adjournment of the meeting was moved by Ms. Manahan and seconded by Mr. Wells, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

*Minutes prepared by John Hayes, Division of Engineering & Transportation*