

**Morris County Freight Rail Advisory Committee
Tuesday January 11, 2011: 2:00 PM
Morris County Administration & Records Building
Fifth Floor, Knox Room
Morristown, NJ**

The Meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Nordstrom at 2:00 PM.

In Attendance:

Board Members	Other Attendees	Staff
Freeholder Margaret Nordstrom, Chairperson	Gary Behrens, Roxbury	Erik DeLine
Freeholder Gene Feyl	Carolyn Blackman, Dover	Frank Pinto
Kathy DeFillippo, Roxbury	Miki Krakauer, NJDOT	Gerald Rohsler
James Dodd, Dover	Jakub Rowinski, NJTPA	
Jack Holland, Holland Manufacturing	Tom Phelan, Eng-Wong, Taub & Associates	
Chris Mazzei, M&E	Phillip Bell, Go21	
Allen Napoliello, Randolph		
Frank Reilly, Board of Transportation		

I. Welcome

Freeholder Nordstrom welcomes everyone to the first FRAC meeting of 2011.

II. Approval of minutes from October 12th, 2010

Freeholder Nordstrom made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Frank Reilly seconded the motion. The minutes from July 13th, 2010 were unanimously approved. Freeholder Feyl abstained.

III. Introduction to Go21, a rail advocacy organization

Mr. Phillip Bell gave a background of Go21, a rail advocacy organization that is funded by Class I Railroads. The mission of Go21 is to help railroads grow. Mr. Bell talked about how railroads were once overregulated by the federal government which led to the shutdown of many railroads since they could not be profitable. Deregulation changed this and allowed them to turn the corner.

Mr. Reilly asked if it was a tax credit. Mr. Bell replied that it was.

Freeholder Feyl asked who owns the infrastructure if it's done? Mr. Bell answered that the ownership would remain with the railroad.

Mr. Pinto noted that this would result in a potential tax credit to the M&E.

Mr. Bell noted that private companies would still get the 25% tax credit.

Mr. Phelan asked if there were any cost sharing limitations. Mr. Bell replied that there would be a tax credit for each dollar that they invest and there are no limitations on a private-public partnership.

Mr. Bell said that the bill previously had 149 sponsors in the House, but that they were not that far along in the Senate. He believes that New Jersey stands to benefit from the legislation and should be the lead sponsor.

Freeholder Nordstrom discussed the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) and mentioned that the state's Economic Development Agency is interested in the status of properties that abut rail lines.

IV. Overview of New Jersey's 286,000 Pound Rail Issues and NJDOT's efforts on this front

Ms. Miki Krakauer from NJDOT's Bureau of Rail Services described what 286K represented, which was the maximum weight of a loaded rail car. The old standard was 263,000 pounds which is the rail capacity in many places in New Jersey and typically along NJ Transit lines and Amtrak's Northeast Corridor.

Newer cars are capable of carrying loads up to 286,000 pounds with a long term horizon for 315,000 pound rail cars though the technology is not yet there.

Mr. Mazzei noted that most plastics cars are capable of 286K, but the M&E is only allowed to load to 263K. There is 286 on most Class I rail as well as most regional and short line railroads.

Ms. Krakauer noted that the problem is typically found on passenger lines and light duty lines but anecdotal reports suggest that businesses are looking for 286 pound rail and that discourages them from locating in New Jersey. There are several issues that face 286K from being implemented including bridge structural issues, cost allocation and operational solutions.

The state has started a number of initiatives to address 286K rail. There is a 286K task force that meets twice a year and is made up of several industry representatives. Also, NJDOT contracted with Rutgers Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Technology to do a five bridge detailed study on their ability to handle 286K. The bridges were located on NJ Transit's Main Line, Bergen Line, the Raritan Bay Bridge, Raritan Industrial Track, and the Del Air Bridge.

Ms. Krakauer noted that this issue is important, but there are not a lot of resources to accomplish it.

Mr. Mazzei said that Morris County would benefit from 286K and that from M&M Mars in Hackettstown east to Dover is 263K.

It was unknown if Norfolk Southern's (NS) Washington Secondary Line was 286K compliant. Mr Phelan noted that if NS can not send 286K rail cars to the M&E, they probably have not worried about it.

V. Current Initiatives

Mr. Erik DeLine gave an update on current freight rail initiatives in Morris County and provided an update on the Chester Branch Rehabilitation Project. Construction was essentially complete, but that the project was on hiatus because of the winter weather. It would resume in the spring and Railroad Construction would install the fence along Horseshoe Lake Park.

Ms. Kathy DeFillippo noted that Roxbury had to sign an agreement with New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to mow the variable sledge, which is considered an endangered species of plant, once a year at Horseshoe Lake because it helps it sustain itself.

VI. Adjournment

Freeholder Nordstrom made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 3:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Erik DeLine
Assistant Planner