

**Morris County Freight Rail Advisory Committee  
 Tuesday October 18, 2016: 2:00 PM  
 Morris County Administration & Records Building  
 Fifth Floor, Knox Room  
 Morristown, NJ**

The Meeting was called to order by Freeholder Director, Ms. Kathy DeFillippo at 2:00 PM.

**In Attendance:**

<b>Board Members</b>	<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Staff</b>
Kathy DeFillippo, Morris County Freeholder Director	Jakub Rowinski, NJTPA	Deena Leary
Jack Holland, Holland Manufacturing	Chris Mazzei, M&E	Christopher J. Vitz
Roman Hirniak, Randolph Township	Charles C. Jensen, M&E	Gerald Rohsler
Brian Kincaid, Mount Arlington Borough	Joe Wells, Morris County Board of Transportation	Joseph Russo
Wesley Weis, Morristown & Erie Railway	John R. Wezzel, Morris County Board of Transportation Robert Wanhouse, MCEDC Richard Zoschak, Roxbury Township	

**I. Welcome**

Ms. Kathy DeFillippo welcomed everyone to Octobers’s meeting.

**II. Approval of minutes from July 12, 2016**

Ms. DeFillippo made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Wes Weis seconded the motion. Mr. Roman Hirniak abstained. The minutes from July 12, 2016 were approved.

**II. Reports**

Mr. Gerald Rohsler began the committee meeting by updating the members on the recent allocation of Propane/Butane-filled rail cars on Morris County’s High Bridge Branch in Mount Olive. Mr. Rohsler noted that the M&E has worked well with Morris County and the local municipalities in meeting all safety requirements and that there are currently three propane/butane cars located in Mount Olive Township. Mr. Chuck C. Jensen, Chief Operating Officer, Morristown & Erie Railway, added that the three remaining propane/butane cars will be moved by October 21, 2016.

Following Mr. Rohsler's update of the propane rail cars located on the High Bridge Branch, Mr. Joseph Russo updated the committee on the County's rail crossing improvement projects for 2016. Mr. Russo reminded the committee that the last time the committee had met, there were seven crossings slated for improvements in the fall of 2016, but only five crossings would be reconstructed this year due to Executive Order No. 210 issued by the Governor regarding transportation projects funded by New Jersey's Transportation Trust Fund. Mr. Russo notified the committee that Executive Order No. 210 has since been lifted and the remaining three railroad crossing reconstruction projects would proceed following a public bid this fall.

Mr. Russo informed the committee that the other four crossings had begun construction on October 17, 2016 beginning with Stickle Avenue in Rockaway Borough. Mr. Russo added that the Route 10 crossing reconstruction will begin Friday, October 21, 2016, followed by Hibernia Avenue crossing on October 24, 2016, and lastly Ogden Avenue crossing on October 31, 2016. He added that each crossing reconstruction project will last about a week, with exception to Route 10 which will be conducted over the weekend of October 21 and be reopened by Monday, October 24, 2016 at 6:00 AM. Freeholder Director, Kathy DeFillippo added that an extensive outreach effort had been implemented to inform local residents of the closure and subsequent detour. Morris County put out a press release in local newspapers, the State provided Video Messaging Signage that informed passing motorists, and Roxbury Township had initiated a Reverse 911 notification of the closure as well as included a press release on their Township's website.

Mr. Jakub Rowinski, Special Projects Manager of the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority's (NJTPA) Freight Division, updated the Committee on NJTPA's Pilot Freight Concept Development Study. Mr. Rowinski noted that the NJTPA is in the final stages of their consultant selection process and hope to have a consultant selected by December 2016. Mr. Rowinski informed the committee that this study would be a three part effort, consisting of two concept development studies and developing the Freight Concept Development Program that will serve as an avenue to advance future local and regional freight projects towards the engineering and construction phases. Mr. Rowinski reminded the committee that there are several freight improvements in the region identified in planning studies that have had a difficult time being implemented and NJTPA's Pilot Freight Concept Development Program will help to fill that "gap" and assist these improvements towards meeting their goals.

Mr. Rowinski explained that the two concept development projects would be the overhead rail clearance constraint at the South Main Street Bridge in Phillipsburg and the realignment of the Dover & Rockaway Railroad in Dover. Mr. Rowinski stated that the South Main Street Bridge in Phillipsburg currently presents a height restriction for Plate F rail cars, preventing them from continuing along Norfolk Southern's Washington Secondary, effectively limiting the ability to run the rail freight's industry standard Plate F rail cars into Morris County. The study will look at ways to address this limitation and research preferred alternatives. The Dover & Rockaway Railroad Realignment will explore ways to eliminate thirteen passive at-grade rail crossings in the Town of Dover

by shifting the Dover & Rockaway Railroad's connection further east on New Jersey Transit's Morris & Essex Line.

Mr. Chris Mazzei asked if the industry standard, 286,000 pound weight limitation, would be addressed in this effort to which Mr. Rowinski responded that it would not. Mr. Wes Weis inquired about a study being conducted by Rutgers University regarding the 286,000 pound weight limitation in the State of New Jersey. Mr. Rowinski mentioned that the study in question is a joint effort between Rutgers University and New Jersey Department of Transportation and separate from NJTPA's Pilot Freight Concept Development Program. Mr. Charles Jensen inquired the funding source for the program to which Mr. Rowinski responded that the study was being funded using Federal Highway dollars.

Mr. Rohsler moved the discussion along to the current operating agreement with the Morristown & Erie Railway to operate Morris County's freight railroad network. Mr. Rohsler explained that the current operating agreement will end on June 30, 2017 and that the County has been developing a new agreement which will be advertised as a public bid in the first quarter of 2017.

Ms. DeFillippo inquired to the length of the operating agreement to which Mr. Rohsler responded, five years. Mr. Richard Zoschak mentioned that communication must be integral in the new contract, adding that Roxbury Township would like notification of rail cars located at Lake Junction. Mr. Rohsler added that communication is already an integral part of the contract, but mentioned that the County is looking for more ways to increase communication between the County, its municipalities, and the railroad operator. Ms. Kathy DeFillippo mentioned that early communication is key regarding business on the County-owned rail lines. Ms. DeFillippo thanked the Morristown & Erie Railway for addressing the local municipality's safety concerns and communicating the safety regarding the propane/butane cars they located in Mount Olive Township earlier this year.

### **III. Old Business**

There was no old business to mention at this time.

### **IV. New Business**

Mr. Rob Wanthouse of the Morris County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) updated the committee regarding MCEDC's effort to include an interactive map for businesses that would locate in Morris County and require freight railroad service. Mr. Rohsler added that Morris County is working with MCEDC to create a subcommittee of the Freight Railroad Advisory Committee to promote economic development on Morris County's freight railroad network.

Mr. Richard Zoshak informed the committee that hydro-rigging and dredging efforts will be conducted at Lake Hopatcong in the near future and would like to get New Jersey Transit involved with providing more services in the Lake Hopatcong area.

Ms. Kathy DeFillippo mentioned that she took a tour of the Greenville Yard in Jersey City with NJTPA to observe the various rail freight movements conducted within the yard. Ms. DeFillippo added that barges could move fourteen rail cars from Greenville Yard over New York Harbor to Brooklyn within 35 min and noted that there are not many options to move rail freight from New Jersey to New York. She mentioned that beyond Greenville Yard the next closest crossing for rail freight was in Albany, New York. Mr. Rohsler furthered Ms. DeFillippo's comments by noting that this effort to prepare for and distribute increased freight from larger ships now beginning to enter the New York Harbor is part of the NY/NJ Port Authority's Cross Harbor Freight Program.

Ms. DeFillippo thanked everyone for attending October's Freight Railroad Advisory Meeting and noted that the next meeting would be held on January 10, 2017 at 2:00 PM.

## **V. Adjournment**

Ms. Kathy DeFillippo made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Wes Weis seconded the motion. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph A. Russo  
Senior Planner