

**Morris County Freight Rail Advisory Committee
Tuesday July 12, 2016: 10:30 AM
Morris County Office of Planning and Public Works
Fourth Floor, Conference Room
Morristown, NJ**

The Meeting was called to order by Ms. Kathy DeFillippo at 10:30 AM.

In Attendance:

Board Members	Other Attendees	Staff
Kathy DeFillippo, Morris County Freeholder Director	Jakub Rowinski, NJTPA	Gerald Rohsler
Richard Zoschak, Roxbury Township	Chris Mazzei, M&E	John Hayes
Brian Kincaid, Mount Arlington Borough		Joseph Russo
Wesley Weis, Morristown & Erie Railway		
Frank Reilly, Morris County Board of Transportation		

I. Welcome

Ms. Kathy DeFillippo welcomed everyone to July's meeting.

II. Reports

Mr. Gerald Rohsler began by updating the committee on the recent allocation of Propane/Butane-filled rail cars on Morris County's High Bridge Branch in Mount Olive. Mr. Rohsler noted the County's concern with locating hazardous material on the County's freight railroad network, but assured the committee that the County had worked closely with the Township of Mount Olive, as well as neighboring municipalities and the Morristown & Erie Railway to make safety improvements to accommodate the commodity. Mr. Rohsler stated that such improvements included derails and active monitoring, hazardous material response training and emergency kits for local responders, increased access for emergency responsive vehicles, and emergency evacuation plans.

Mr. Richard Zoschack inquired Mr. Rohsler on the size and amount of cars currently located in Mount Olive Township. Mr. Chris Mazzei of the Morristown & Erie Railway responded that the cars were approximately sixty-foot long and that about thirty-two were located in Mount Olive Township with other cars in route.

Mr. Brian Kincaid asked if the cars were being located on the High Bridge Branch's mainline. Mr. Mazzei explained that they are being located on both the mainline and the run-around track. At this point, Mr. Wesley Weis, President of the Morristown & Erie

Railway informed the committee of the safety of the cars being located in Mount Olive Township. Mr. Weis noted that all the cars are newly built, doubled layered on the haul, and quadruple layered on its ends, and meet all Federal safety regulations. Mr. Kincaid followed up with Mr. Weis by asking if any leaks are possible. Mr. Weis responded that any leaks would have most likely been detected before the cars left their origin location and any leaks while being located in Mount Olive Township are very unlikely.

Discussion arose regarding hazardous material response training provided by Norfolk Southern. Mr. Kincaid inquired the committee if a regional safety drill could be conducted in Morris County to help improve emergency response in Morris County's local communities as well as increase awareness. Mr. Rohsler responded that the Morris County or the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority could reach out to Norfolk Southern to see if they could make the hazardous material response training available in Morris County.

Mr. Frank Reilly added that he had followed the Propane/Butane car issue in the news and commended Morris County in their response, noting that the County had brokered a conversation between the Morristown & Erie Railway and the local municipalities and secured a plan that will ensure that every party's needs were met.

Mr. Kincaid followed Mr. Reilly by inquiring the status of the potential rail-to-trail program Mount Olive Township was seeking for the section of the County's High Bridge Branch in Mount Olive Township, to which Freeholder Director DeFillippo noted that there was no update since the County's last meeting with the Township regarding a potential trail. Mr. Reilly added that such a task would be difficult given Morris County's responsibility by Federal mandate to continue service as part of completed Federally-funded improvement projects on the High Bridge Branch. Freeholder Director DeFillippo further Mr. Reilly's notice by adding that the County, as owner of the railroad, is responsible for providing service to local businesses and supporting the potential of future business that may locate along the High Bridge Branch.

Following the discussion 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 eight crossings being designed for improvements. The crossings in question were East Main Street, Ogden Avenue, Stickle Avenue, and Hibernia Avenue in Rockaway Borough, in addition to Lower Richboynton Road, North Salem Street, and Sammis Avenue in Dover, as well as Route 10's crossing of the County's Chester Branch in Roxbury Township.

Since the Committee's last meeting all designs were completed and each project was successfully bid and awarded, with exception to the railroad crossings in Dover. Mr. Russo noted that the replenishment of the Transportation Trust Fund Account had been delayed and the Governor had issued Executive Order No. 210 directing the immediate and orderly shutdown of all ongoing work that is funded by the Transportation Trust Fund Account, which included the Dover crossings. Mr. Russo added that once the

Transportation Trust Fund Account is replenished, the railroad crossing improvement project in Dover will be rebid and scheduled for construction accordingly. Construction work on the other crossings is expected to begin in late summer.

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 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. Rowinski noted that the South Main Street Bridge Concept Development Study was selected from NJTPA's Morris/Warren County Rail Corridor Study and the Dover & Rockaway Railroad Realignment Concept Development Study was selected from Morris County's Freight Infrastructure and Land Use Analysis Plan. Mr. Mazzei inquired as to when the Pilot Freight Concept Development Program would be completed, to which Mr. Rowinski responded, three years.

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 in July 2017 and that the remainder of 2016 would be dedicated to developing a new agreement and bid package to be advertised in the first quarter of 2017. Ms. DeFillippo inquired to the length of the operating agreement to which Mr. Rohsler responded, five years.

Mr. Rohsler also informed the committee of welcome signs that the Township of Roxbury would like to have installed on Morris County's Chester Branch's bridge that crosses Berkshire Valley Road. Mr. Rohsler noted that the County is working closely with the Township to determine the most appropriate sign to be affixed to the bridge. Mr.

Zoschak added the Township of Roxbury is working with New Jersey Transit in affixing welcome signs on their bridges as well.

III. Old Business

There was no old business to mention at this time.

IV. New Business

Mr. Kincaid asked if the Morristown & Erie Railway could bring an NSD45 Locomotive to the Whippany Rail Museum, to which Mr. Weis noted that the rail could not accommodate it. Mr. Reilly noted that they had one at the United Railroad Historical Society in Boonton. Ms. DeFillippo asked if they could hold a future Freight Railroad Advisory meeting at the United Railroad Historical Society, to which Mr. Weis and Mr. Reilly agreed to. Mr. Rohsler suggested that the October meeting would be ideal.

Ms. DeFillippo thanked everyone for attending July's Freight Railroad Advisory Meeting and noted that the next meeting would be held on October 18, 2016 at 10:30 AM.

V. Adjournment

Ms. Kathy DeFillippo made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Frank Reilly seconded the motion. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph A. Russo
Senior Planner