



Memorandum

TO: Meeting Attendees
DATE: October 5, 2004
FROM: Stephanie Brooks
SUBJECT: Northerly Crossings Corridor Congestion Mitigation Study Interagency Advisory Committee (IAC) Meeting #2

Below is a summary of key issues discussed during the second Interagency Advisory Committee Meeting for the Northerly Crossings Corridor Congestion Mitigation Study.

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, September 14th, 2004
 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

LOCATION: Clarion Hotel
 1220 W. Main Street
 Stroudsburg, PA

PURPOSE: Northerly Crossings Corridor Congestion Mitigation Study Interagency Advisory Committee Meeting #2

IN ATTENDANCE (21 TOTAL):

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
<i>Michael Cane</i>	<i>DRJTBC – Project Manager</i>
<i>Bryan L. Hill</i>	<i>DRJTBC</i>
<i>Frank McCartney</i>	<i>DRJTBC</i>
<i>Jeanne Pomager</i>	<i>DRJTBC</i>
<i>Roger Sager</i>	<i>DRJTBC</i>
<i>Linda Spalinski</i>	<i>DRJTBC</i>
<i>James Yeager</i>	<i>Michael Baker Jr., Inc. – Project Manager</i>
<i>Mark Alisesky</i>	<i>Michael Baker Jr., Inc.</i>
<i>Bob Bevilacqua</i>	<i>Michael Baker Jr., Inc</i>
<i>Stephanie Brooks</i>	<i>Michael Baker Jr., Inc</i>
<i>Robert D’Abadie</i>	<i>Michael Baker Jr., Inc</i>
<i>Amy Sokalski</i>	<i>Michael Baker Jr., Inc</i>
<i>John Woodling</i>	<i>Monroe County Planning Commission</i>
<i>Bob Hay</i>	<i>Monroe County Railroad Authority</i>
<i>Joe Lombardi</i>	<i>NJTransit</i>
<i>Doyle Nelson</i>	<i>National Park Service</i>
<i>Laine Rankin</i>	<i>New Jersey Department of Transportation</i>
<i>Kurt Bauman</i>	<i>Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance</i>
<i>Don Lerch</i>	<i>Pennsylvania Department of Transportation</i>
<i>Michael Mrozinski</i>	<i>Pike County Office of Community Planning</i>
<i>David Dech</i>	<i>Warren County</i>

MEETING SUMMARY/COMMENTS REVIEW

- Welcome/Introductory Remarks: *DRJTBC*
- DRJTBC Mission/Project Team: *DRJTBC*
- Meeting Agenda/Group Introductions: *James Yeager*
 - Mr. Yeager noted that the IAC did not meet in June as originally planned so the project team could obtain Summer 2004 traffic data.
 - Requested that IAC members reply with comments/suggestions regarding Technical Memorandum #2 by **Tuesday, September 28th**.
- Inventory of Existing Transportation System: *James Yeager/Amy Sokalski*
 - Other proposed major developments in the study area include:
 - Glen at Tenement near Mt. Laurel Center; 100+ residential lots are already approved.
 - Assisted Living units near the Marshall's Creek interchange; in preliminary proposal phase.
 - Project team requested that agencies provide proposed development information by **Tuesday, September 28**.
 - Delaware Water Gap daily vehicle volumes: slight decline in 2003 is an anomaly; first half of 2004 data suggests that volumes will continue to grow in the future.
 - Doyle Nelson added that this decline echoes that of daily National Park visitations.
 - Michael Cane and Frank McCartney noted that DRJTBC found similar declines in toll direction for 2003 on all bridges.
 - Members of the group suggested national economy as possible reason for decline.
 - Don Lerch also suggested that perhaps the high growth rate in 2002 was the anomaly – an impact of September 11, 2001.
- Base Year 2004 Analysis: *Mark Alisesky*
 - Milford-Montague bridge traffic:
 - Mike Mrozinski noted that the greatest congestion occurs not on the bridge itself but at the traffic light in Milford. Questioned as to why the study did not go further into Pennsylvania to find the root of the bottleneck problem.
 - The project team responded that the area north of the intersection is out of range of the study area but added that it will be noted for the study.
 - Pike County Planning is looking at various short-term improvements for this area north of the intersection, and will have traffic data by the end of October. **Will share findings with the project team.**
 - Portland-Columbia bridge traffic:
 - David Dech noted that truck traffic in the I-80/Route 46 interchange may have difficulty maneuvering at the ramp near the truck stop.
 - Mr. Nelson asked if the toll plaza adds to overall congestion. Project team replied that there is not much influence on the Milford-Montague/Portland-Columbia Bridges. The toll plaza at the I-80/Delaware Water Gap Bridge was found to be one of several constraints to operations.
 - Mr. Nelson also suggested that the team take a look at the Route 611/Portland-Columbia area when it is used as a diversion from the Delaware Water Gap.
 - I-80 Delaware Water Gap traffic:
 - Mark Alisesky presented a series of physical constraints which limit the capacity of I-80 through the study area including lane reductions at the Lackawanna Cut-Off bridge, less than desirable cross section width, sign structures and the toll plaza. He then asked the group if there were other factors that the project team might have missed that add to congestion along the I-80 corridor.
 1. Mr. McCartney: Signage may contribute to congestion; drivers have maneuver to get into the proper lanes. DRJTBC is working on providing better signage.
 2. Mr. Yeager noted that KLD is currently developing a model for DRJTBC to analyze its toll plaza configurations. Baker may use KLD results to augment this study, as well as to help analyze future traffic operations through the various toll plazas.
 - SKYCOMP Slideshow
 - Laine Rankin asked why the project team did not do an AM eastbound peak speed study in addition to the SKYCOMP analysis. Project team replied that SKYCOMP traffic data did not show congestion in the eastbound direction.
- Environmental Screening: *Bob Bevilacqua*

- Project team presented environmental constraints which currently exist within the I-80 project area.
 - Constraints include, parkland, wetlands, contaminated sites, river, as well as archaeological sites, especially around the river's edge.
- Mr. Nelson noted that the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act must be considered with any new construction along the Delaware Water Gap.
- There is no Bald Eagle nesting in the area, but Mr. Doyle noted that there are Peregrine Falcons attempting to nest in the area, and sightings of the bird have been reported to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Travel Demand Model Methodology: *Robert D'Abadie*
 - Other potential travel demand models available:
 - Mr. Mrozinski noted that Pike County Community Planning did an Origin-Destination study in 1991 and will provide a copy to the project team.
 - Ms. Rankin expressed concern related to the accuracy of the transit model. Mr. D'Abadie replied that the NJTransit model is multi-modal and contains the most recent available material. He stated that the project team is confident about using the NJ Transit model.
 - Ms. Rankin asked why the team is not waiting for the NJTPA integration model. Mr. D'Abadie replied that team cannot wait 1 year due to the project schedule.
 - Mr. D'Abadie also noted that the 2001 REEBIE data are not being used (which Ms. Rankin noted is questionable), but instead the REEBIE data from 1998 are being used.
 - Ms. Rankin asked if there would be any consideration of a possible truck traffic reduction as a result of completion of the I-95/Pennsylvania Turnpike interchange. The project team replied that they are looking at the Pennsylvania Turnpike study and will see if it contains data that is relevant to this study.
 - Mr. Dech added that the Baker team might want to take a look at the Warren County modeling data, as they did a forecast based on future build-out. ***Warren County will send this data to the Baker team.***
 - Joe Lombardi noted that the Lackawanna Cut-Off Project EIS is being completed; the project may have significant impact on travel in the Northerly Crossings Corridor. Mr. Yeager noted that the Baker team would create two sets of travel forecasts: one without the Lackawanna Cut-Off as an influence, and one with the Lackawanna Cut-Off. ***Mr. Lombardi will inform the IAC about Lackawanna Cut-Off EIS developments.***
- Study Work Plan
 - Mr. Lombardi asked the project team about traffic congestion findings west of the toll plaza in Pennsylvania. The project team replied that the congestion on I-80 west of the river is less severe than in New Jersey and appears to be focused at the interchange locations.

ACTION ITEMS

- *Tuesday, September 28th*: Deadline for Technical Memorandum #2 comments from the IAC.
- *Wednesday, September 28th*: Agencies will inform Baker of any other proposed developments in the Corridor.
- *End of October*: Pike County Planning will share findings and traffic data with Baker team regarding short-term improvements for the area north of the Milford-Montague bridge area.
- Pike County Community Planning will send its 1991 Origin-Destination study to Baker.
- Warren County will send Baker team its modeling data based on build-out.
- NJ Transit will continue to keep the IAC updated as to the status of the Lackawanna Cutoff EIS.

NEXT STEPS

- Northerly Crossings Forum Meeting #2 will take place on October 5th, 7:00 PM, same location
- Public Information Center will be held in late October/November.