

THE NASSAU HUB STUDY ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (AA/EIS)

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting June 22, 2010

MEETING SUMMARY

I. Introduction

The first Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting was held Wednesday, June 22, 2010, at the Long Island Marriott in Uniondale, NY. The purpose of this initial meeting was to welcome the TAC members to the Study, provide them with an overview of the Study's history and the work plan, and discuss the role the Committee will play in the Nassau Hub Study Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Impact Statement (AA/EIS) process.

The meeting commenced at 2:00 pm with Mr. Satish Sood of the Nassau County Planning Department welcoming the committee members and thanking them for their participation. Mr. Sood turned the meeting over to Deputy (Nassau) County Executive Patrick J. Foye to provide some opening remarks.

Mr. Foye welcomed the members on behalf of Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano and thanked all for their participation in this important undertaking.

Mr. Foye also thanked the federal delegation for securing the funding for this Study, specifically noting the support of Senator Schumer, Congresswoman McCarthy, Congressman King and Congressman Bishop. Mr. Foye further stated that the County is committed to using the funds efficiently and responsibly to develop a transportation strategy for the Hub that supports the creation of jobs, enhances sustainable economic development opportunities and advances the greening of Nassau County.

Mr. Foye went on to discuss the importance of this Study to the County. He noted the current congestion on the area's roadways and that it is projected to get worse if no proactive steps are taken to address the problem. He emphasized that the preliminary regional study area encompasses two of the County's greatest economic-development assets, the Coliseum property and the Grumman property in Bethpage.

Mr. Foye concluded his remarks by expressing his and the Study Team's interest that the TAC members take an active participation role throughout the Study.



II. Technical Presentation

Mr. Robert Brickman from the Nassau County Planning Department then provided an overview of the Study Team and funding partners and reviewed the history of the Study. Mr. Brickman stated that the Study is a joint effort being undertaken by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Nassau County. Funding for the Study is from the FTA, New York State and the County with an 80/10/10 percent split, respectively.

Mr. Brickman introduced the Study consultants to the TAC and outlined their roles: Jacobs Civil Consultants, Inc., Garden City, will be leading the technical studies for the AA/EIS. PB Americas, Inc. will provide the County with technical and program management support throughout the Study.

Mr. Brickman discussed the role of the TAC, which includes being a liaison between the Study Team and the TAC members' organizations, reviewing Study materials, and providing ongoing technical guidance to the Study Team. The TAC will meet at several key milestones during the Study with the next meeting anticipated for late summer.

Mr. Brickman briefly summarized the history of the Study, related initiatives in the Hub area, and the primary and preliminary regional study areas. He then provided an overview of the findings and outcomes of the 2006 Major Investment Study (MIS), the precursor and starting point for this effort. Mr. Brickman stated that the MIS was sponsored by the County and sought to identify transit improvements that would benefit the Hub area. The MIS concluded that transit improvements could help address mobility problems and shape economic development opportunities in the Hub.

Mr. Brickman stated that transit-improvement scenarios identified in the MIS will be revisited and expanded upon as this Study progresses. He further stated that this Study will identify a range of transit options to address worsening traffic congestion while supporting economic development opportunities. The AA/EIS will be done in conformance with the FTA's process and requirements in order for Nassau County to remain eligible for future federal funding.

Mr. Jeffrey Stiles, Project Manager of the AA/EIS Consultant Team, then provided an overview of the Study work plan, the preliminary Study goals, which are still under review and development, and the process by which transit alternatives will be developed, screened and evaluated.

Mr. Jeffrey Roux of the AA/EIS Consultant Team provided an overview of how the Study will forecast future transit ridership, including identification of the travel markets to be served. Mr. Roux stated that the Study Team is performing a detailed origin and destination survey and analysis of current Long Island Bus riders in the study area. A stated preference survey will be conducted at a later time to understand potential transit riders' preferences about particular attributes of various transit options.



Mr. Stiles then completed the presentation by presenting the Study's timeline and outlining the near-term activities.

The meeting was then opened to TAC members' questions.

III. Questions and Comments

- Question: Are the alternatives being presented for both the Core and Extended systems?
 - The Study will look at both the primary study area, which roughly coincides with the boundaries of the Core system defined in the 2006 MIS, as well as the preliminary regional study area, within which a transit system extending beyond the primary study area would be located. The focus is to develop a transit strategy that addresses the Hub area proper but also considers the regional study area. Please check the study's website (www.nassauhub.com) for maps of both the primary and preliminary regional study areas.
- Question: Will the LPA focus on the Extended or Core systems?
 - At this time it is hard to answer since a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) will not be selected until completion of the AA studies.
- Question: Will each alternative be subjected to an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?
 - The work plan contemplates that each alternative will undergo an environmental screening for environmental sensitivity prior to an LPA being selected. A full EIS will focus only on the LPA.
- Question: What happens if the LPA has a negative EIS?
 - The purpose of the environmental screening during the AA is to identify significant environmental issues prior to the selection of the LPA. There is, however, a chance that the selected LPA could result in significant environmental impacts, which will be detailed in the EIS and for which mitigation measures would have to be defined and evaluated.
- Question: How will the Study consider the development of the Coliseum?
 - The Study will do this in several ways. First, the Study Team will consult with local communities on possible future land use scenarios. It is anticipated that more than one land use scenario, including the Coliseum property, will be considered in the development of alternatives, which will be discussed with FTA.



- Question: When the Team approaches Washington with an LPA, there is no guarantee of federal money, correct?
 - Correct. There is sufficient federal money to cover the AA/EIS. However, there are many different ways to fund the implementation of an LPA, and we will be developing a strategy that recognizes economic conditions and the availability of federal and local funding. Also, we may have a unique opportunity to be among the first in line for federal funding when the time comes, as we are doing the planning now while the economy is poor and many other areas in need of a similar study do not have the funding currently available.
- Suggestion: Many studies focus on negative impacts only. Try to focus on the positive impacts as well.
- Question: How will the Study incorporate Bethpage?
 - We see Bethpage as an area for potential redevelopment with opportunities to create more efficient transportation connections, and will consider that throughout the Study. Bethpage is located within the preliminary regional study area and will be a component of what gets evaluated as part of the Study.
- Suggestion: Focus on the big picture. Attach to suggested transportation some sort of consideration for bicycle lanes, paths, etc.
 - A multi-modal approach is key in the Alternatives Analysis. We will include both pedestrian and bicycle circulation within the Study.

Mr. Brickman closed the meeting with a reaffirmation of the Study Team's commitment to the project and thanked the members for attending.

Attachments:

- 1. Meeting Agenda
- 1. Sign In List
- 1. Presentation

