



NY – CT Sustainable Communities Consortium

Public Steering Committee Meeting
New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
199 Water St., 22nd Floor, Lower Manhattan
Friday, September 13th, 2013
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

ATTENDANCE

Steering Committee Designees and Alternates

Gerry Bogacz (NYMTC); Larry McAuliffe (NYMTC); Carl Amento (SCRCOG); Chris Rappa (SCRCOG); Satish Sood (Nassau county); Sean Sallie (Nassau County); Sarah Lansdale (Suffolk County); Sarah Goldwyn (City of New York); Howard Slatkin (City of New York); Linda Puoplo (City of White Plains); David Kooris (City of Bridgeport); Susan Sweitzer (City of Norwalk); Cara Longworth (LIRPC); Brian Bidolli (GBVMPO); Craig Lader (SWRPA); Chris Canna (City of New Haven); Amanda Kennedy (RPA); Chris Jones (RPA); Brian Dennis (RPA); Lynn Brooks Avni (City of New Rochelle)

Additional Consortium Representatives

Mary Kimball (City of New York); Meghan Sloan (GBRC)

Advisory Board Members

Mary Ameen (NJTPA); Jon Carnegie (NJTPA); Zenobia Field (NJTPA); Debra Devine (NYSHCR)

Other

Jennifer Fogliano (MTA), Naomi Klein (Westchester County); Holly Haff (MTA Metro North)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Sarah Lansdale and Brian Bidolli greeted all attendees to the ninth public meeting of the Consortium Steering Committee and proceeded with the agenda.

ROLL CALL

Amanda Kennedy took roll call. A quorum was reached on both the New York and Connecticut sides.

REPORTS ON PLACE-BASED PROJECTS

New York City Climate Resilience Study

There were four brief presentations on climate resilience. Howard Slatkin began with an introductory presentation that provided information on the initiative, and laid the foundation for the other three reports. He was accompanied by Mary Kimball, who discussed Urban Waterfront Strategies; Eugenia DiGirolamo, who presented Designing for Flood Risk; and Leah Cohen from the NYC Mayor's office, who addressed a report from the Mayor's office, "A Stronger, More Resilient New York."

The speakers reported on the climate change panel that was created to address the threat of future adverse weather conditions. The panel developed a set of projections and recommendations that addressed sea level rise and climate change. Damage to the city's coastal housing stock and critical infrastructure by the recent major

storm made the panel's work more urgent. The New York City Department of City Planning's HUD grant work was useful to the work of the Climate Change panel and was incorporated into its work products.

Urban Waterfront Strategies (UWA)

Mary Kimball provided a report on the Urban Waterfront Adaptive Strategies report. This report developed a framework for housing adaptation against sea level rise along New York City's coastal waterfront. The Department of City Planning began by framing all of the various, chronic hazards in the region's coastline. They then looked into different geomorphological typologies and developed a broad range of strategies. Lastly, each typology was paired with an appropriate strategy and evaluated through a cost/benefits analysis. The report is a resource with broad applicability that is being used to influence other regional and federal studies.

Designing for Flood Risk

Eugenia DiGirolamo provided a report on the *Designing for Flood Risk* report. This study recommends design principles for new construction that should be adopted into New York City's local zoning codes. The report first identifies current building construction codes and then suggests ways to provide buildings with greater resistance to flooding. The New York City Department of City Planning created two designs with leading architects to identify innovative design solutions that would be resistant to flooding, yet mindful of the existing urban landscape. The report identified four principles for buildings in flood zones: visual connectivity, façade articulations, inviting access and neighborhood character. This study has informed the current text of a zoning amendment for building and designing new homes in New York City.

A Stronger, More Resilient New York

Leah Cohen reported on Mayor Bloomberg's initiative to evaluate New York City's response to Hurricane Sandy's devastation and devise ways to manage the impact caused by future storms. Substantial assistance for the effort was provided by the work of the New York City Department of Planning on Climate Resilience. The process, which included stakeholder participation, was launched in June 2013 with 260 initiatives and 60 milestones. These proposals were guided by four key principles: 1) be ambitious and achievable; 2) acknowledge there are limited resources; 3) create multiple layers of impacts; and 4) do not abandon the waterfront. The process included an extensive outreach campaign with public elected officials, community groups and over 1000 attendees from the public. Some of the recommendations included ways to improve building codes, incentivize retrofit programs and reduce the cost of FEMA flood insurance premiums. The latter two proposals are in accordance with the requirements of the new national flood insurance maps. Many homeowners with coastal properties are threatened with higher insurance rates because their homes are at or below the new establish flood level.

Comments and questions

Several comments and questions followed New York City's presentation:

- Mobility issues need to be considered when drafting the text amendment for New York City's building codes. New developments need to be accessible for people with mobility issues.
- How does the Federal Highway Administration's grant for climate change vulnerability feed into New York's climate resilience study?
- What would be the additional cost to make New York more resistant to floods?
 - The Mayor's office is looking at expected costs, but there are a wide variety of issues to consider.

Nassau County Infill Redevelopment Feasibility Study

Sean Sallie provided an overview of activities related to the Nassau Infill Redevelopment Study, which began by identifying areas suitable for further assistance with transit-oriented development planning and implementation.

The project occurred in three phases. In phase one, 21 station areas were chosen based on their relationship to the Nassau Hub regional transit study area. In phase two, seven of the 21 stations were selected for further study based on “readiness” and “desire.” In the final phase, three communities were selected, based on the magnitude of influence that TOD success in these communities would have on other communities that are pursuing TOD. The Village of Lynbrook, Hamlet of Baldwin and Village of Valley Stream were the three stations selected to conduct the pilot study. Public workshops in these communities will begin over the next 3 weeks, and comments will be incorporated into the final reports.

Two questions followed the Nassau presentation:

- What is the difference between high and low readiness?
 - o Low readiness means that the kind of zoning for dense development is not in place. Since Nassau has a fragmented local governmental structure, it could stymie TOD projects.
- What’s the interplay between the Nassau Hub Area Development Study and the three areas that were selected?
 - o There is a proposal to redevelop the Nassau Coliseum by Forest City Ratner. The Coliseum development is looking to strengthen the downtown area, regardless of what’s going on at the Nassau hub.

Southern Westchester East-West Corridor Study

Naomi Klein reviewed the work of the Southern Westchester East-West Corridor Study. The charge for the study was to develop an issues scan of existing transit and road infrastructures in the east-west corridor connecting Yonkers, Mount Vernon, White Plains and New Rochelle. The initial scan uncovered that there is an ailing industrial sector, but great transit access and connectivity throughout Westchester. A number of siloed planning initiatives present opportunities for integration and funding. The issues scan identified a few recommendations for improved integration: improve TOD infrastructure and implementation, attract more development and mixed use projects, promote complete streets, utilize form-based zoning codes, and tie the existing industrial and manufacturing sector into new mixed-use development.

Reports from the Advisory Board

North Jersey Sustainable Communities Consortium

The North Jersey Sustainable Communities Consortium, or “Together North Jersey,” developed a work program with three grant projects and 14 initiatives. The consortium recently completed their baseline and fair housing assessment. They exchanged knowledge and strategies for fair housing data analysis with the New York-Connecticut Sustainable Communities Consortium as part of an effort to conform the housing dataset across the Tri-state region.

North Jersey’s outreach will occur in three phases: discovery, vision, and action planning. The consortium completed the discovery phase, for which 15 public workshops were held during the winter and spring, reaching over 2,000 residents. North Jersey also developed a standing committee to engage in a SWOT analysis to inform regional transportation environment and economic development issues. The Consortium is using Mindmixer, a web-based platform, to engage the public, and some 1200 ideas have been collected. For other forms of outreach, the consortium is experimenting with kiosks in public places, and the hiring of consultants.

Demonstration projects are being advanced by New Jersey Transit. Three out of eighteen projects have been completed. Progress is posted on their public website. During this fall, the consortium will focus efforts on vision planning and data analysis.

Comments and questions following the presentation by the North Jersey Consortium

- Gerry Bogacz wanted to learn how New Jersey’s work will be framed in a regional context that includes New York and Connecticut.
 - Jon Carnegie responded that there is an interregional partnership group, which the RPA has convened and managed. Coordination has been between staff, but we hope to receive information about important changes on the federal level that we can use to advocate in a larger region.
 - Gerry followed up by stating that both consortia need to look at the structures we’ve established through the grant funding process and figure out how to bring them together. The regional transportation system is a framework for regional planning. The regional MPOs are not doing enough.
 - Mary Ameen commented that there are plenty of opportunities for both consortia to work together. New Jersey and New York- Connecticut are developing sustainable plans that will be around for a long time.
 - Gerry Bogacz commented that if we are talking about sustainability planning, we need to begin addressing the Trans Hudson divide. We are not establishing a regional planning network across the three states.

Public Participation

George Hycolis from the Rational Transportation Campaign commented that there needs to be transparency in urban and regional transportation studies when they are conducted with public funding. For instance, planning and developing around an out-of-commission track in Queens, NY should be a cooperative effort among different land use planning and transit entities. Also, sustainability needs to be promoted locally as much as possible.

Action Items

Approval of June 26, 2013 Steering Committee meeting minutes was motioned Sarah Goldwyn, representing New York City, and seconded by Linda Puoplo, representing the City of White Plains. The minutes were adopted and passed unanimously by the Steering Committee.

Approval of Steering Committee Resolution SC03-2013 – Procedures for the Transit-Oriented Housing Incentive Fund was motioned by Gerry Bogacz, representing New York Metropolitan Transportation Council, and seconded by Satish Sood, representing Nassau County. This resolution was adopted and passed unanimously by the Steering Committee. Sarah Goldwyn thanked RPA for considering and incorporating comments and suggestions into the entire process.

Approval of Steering Committee Resolution SC08-2013 – Acceptance of Task E, Building Climate Resilience Deliverables, was motioned by Sarah Goldwyn, representing New York City, and seconded by David Kooris of the City of Bridgeport. This resolution was adopted and passed unanimously by the Steering Committee on the above mentioned date.

Approval of Steering Committee Resolution SC09-2013 – Acceptance of Task M, Nassau County Infill Redevelopment Feasibility Study Deliverables M3b and M4b from Nassau County, was motioned by Gerry Bogacz, representing the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council, and seconded by Susan Sweitzer of the City of Norwalk. This resolution was adopted and passed unanimously by the Steering Committee on the above mentioned date.

Approval of Steering Committee Resolution SC10-2013– Acceptance of Task I, Stamford East Side Train Station Feasibility Study Deliverable from South Western Regional Planning Agency County, was motioned by Carl Amento, representing South Central Regional Council of Governments, and seconded by Susan Sweitzer of the City of Norwalk. This resolution was adopted and passed unanimously by the Steering Committee on the above mentioned date.

Approval of Steering Committee Resolution SC11-2013 – Acceptance of Southern Westchester East-West Corridor Issues Scan Deliverable was motioned by Sarah Goldwyn, representing New York City, and seconded by Susan Sweitzer of the City of Norwalk. This resolution was adopted and passed unanimously by the Steering Committee on the above mentioned date.

Approval of Steering Committee Resolution SC12-2013 – Authorization for Regional Plan Association to Request a 120-Day Extension was motioned by Gerry Bogacz, representing New York Metropolitan Transportation Council, and seconded by Linda Puoplo of the City of White Plains. This resolution was adopted and passed unanimously by the Steering Committee on the above mentioned date.

Approval of Steering Committee Resolution SC13-2013 – Amendment to the Consortium Memorandum of Agreement was motioned by Sarah Goldwyn, representing New York City, and seconded by Satish Sood of Nassau County. This resolution was adopted and passed unanimously by the Steering Committee on the above mentioned date. A timeline review and revision is needed for all placed-based projects before a request is made to HUD. A discussion also needs to be held to ensure there are no any foreseeable problems with approval from HUD.

Approval of Steering Committee Resolution SC14-2013 – Selection of Professional Services was motioned by Sarah Goldwyn, representing New York City, and seconded by Satish Sood of Nassau County. This resolution was adopted and passed unanimously by the Steering Committee on the above mentioned date. The Long Island project looks at affordable housing and segregation in the Long Island region. Sharon Mullen will be hired to develop a coordinated study on the affordable housing work already done. There was no competitive process due to the unique qualifications of the consultant and the short timeframe needed for project completions, consistent with local procedures.

Development Items

In light of Hurricane Sandy, the consortium will request an extension to the grantor for more time to develop a high quality Enhancement Plan, Fair Housing Equity Assessment (FHEA) and Execution Plan. The Enhancement plan examines opportunities for integrative planning among different areas. The FHEA documents how to provide access and opportunity to housing, and the Execution plan prescribes how everything will be implemented. March is the targeted deadline for all three plans. We plan to get it done by March.

To date, a meeting was held with fair housing consultants in July. The small group had the opportunity to view an initial segment of the data analysis received from HUD. We will hold public workshops during the months of November and early December across the region to present our initial findings on the HUD data and obtain additional feedback and recommendations. We will then draft the execution plan. Most of the pieces of the execution plan that are focused on transportation will be reviewed by our MPO consortium members. The draft will be open to the public for a 30 day comment period.

Next Meeting and Agenda

The next public Steering Committee Meeting will be November 8th, 2013.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Kennedy
Secretary