
Panel Meeting

of

ASSEMBLY LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT LEGISLATIVE PANEL

*“Presentation on the first of three routes
being considered for light rail in Bergen County”*

LOCATION: Bergen County
Administration Building
Hackensack, New Jersey

DATE: April 10, 2000
10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS OF PANEL PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Rose Marie Heck, Chairwoman



ALSO PRESENT:

H.W. “Rusty” Lachenauer
*Office of Legislative Services
Panel Aide*

Jon-Robert Bombardieri
*Assembly Majority
Panel Aide*

Patrick O’Connor
*Assembly Democratic
Panel Aide*

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ASSEMBLYWOMAN ROSE MARIE HECK (Chairwoman):

I want to wish you all a good morning and welcome you on behalf of the Assembly Light Rail Panel. We will be holding informational hearings on these -- on the three alternate routes here in Bergen.

Chet Mattson has agreed to give us a complete overview of the Cross-County. And on the 24th, we will be back in this room to look at the Northern and West Shore. So we want to make sure that you mark your calendars early enough to give your attention to the fact that we're taking as much information as possible.

And just as a reminder, the Light Rail Panel has, in its past, given resolutions to adopt and promote a variety of projects. The Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Transit Project was our initial recommendation, over and above other projects, one being the NERL, because we thought it would be the most successful and generate the most money. We have been proven right. We have dedicated a lot of time to that. We are very proud of the piece in Union County that's being done. We're very proud of the additions going on at the NERL. And certainly, we're working on the Southern New Jersey Line.

But to me, most importantly, now that we've reached this point with the Hudson-Bergen, we must prepare to have Bergen meet the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail System. And we want to move ahead. We don't want to take forever. We're very pleased that New Rail Construction has decided to do environmental studies on the three plans that are already projected because we'd like all three of them to go, but there will be a priority list because of dollars. And that's what we're trying to determine now, which would be the best alternate plan for us to support.

So I'm going to ask Chet--

I'll introduce you to -- Pat O'Connor is representing Joe Doria today. Alex couldn't make it. Jon-Robert is my aide on the panel. And of course, Rusty Lachenauer is from the Office of Legislative Services. He has been with us since the first idea came to pass and our first meeting in Trenton with Chuck Haytaian. So we're very pleased that he has remained in that position because he gives us great stability. And, of course, the young ladies here are taping, and we will have a report on this -- a transcript later on.

Chet Mattson, as you all know, represents Bergen County -- is the Director of Planning and Economic Development, and does a fine job there. He's going to present a little history and the project, as well.

CHESTER P. MATTSO N: Thank you, Assemblywoman Heck.

I'm going to ask you to follow along, as it interests you to do, in the handout because there are figures and illustrations in the handout -- it looks like this (indicating) -- this one's black and white -- that are not in the presentation. I didn't want to take-- I didn't want this to sound like my summer vacation--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, okay.

MR. MATTSO N: --with the slides that you've all endured when your family went on vacation. No, when your friends of your family go on vacation.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE: Excuse me, the microphones are not working at all.

MR. MATTSO N: They're not working. That's right. So I'll make an effort to be heard in the room. And when you can't be heard-- This is

recording and not broadcasting. (indicating) So I'll broadcast to the room and record for the machine simultaneously. We planners have to be very clever. It's hard to do these things.

This is a piece that starts, distinguished members of the Panel, with a sense of what -- who New Jersey is. And we'll talk about where Bergen County's rail futures -- how they connect to this history.

In 1994, we had become the eighth largest economy in all 50 states, our State of New Jersey. If we were a nation, our state's economy would be the 18th largest in the world. This economy, then, is only exceeded in gross domestic product across the United States by three big states to the south, Florida, Texas, and California; beside us by Pennsylvania and New York; and by two others in the Midwest, Ohio and Michigan. So, among all 50 states, we are the eighth largest in gross domestic product.

The other thing about our state is that, among all 50, we're the fifth smallest. So when you put two numbers like that together, as we do in this chart, you will see that, by 1994, we had become No. 1 in all 50 states in gross state product per square mile. There is no state in the union that has more jobs and population per square mile than New Jersey.

This becomes very important because we, as a state, through the work of your Panel and through our own work here and in as many forms as we can find, we have to make it known who we are. And we have to be, when we're in Washington, urging funding for the projects that you tell the world about, and that we do, too. We would like our own delegation and the rest of the country to know that we're only -- we come only after those other places, in terms of economic power.

The conclusion that I draw from these numbers is that, because we are the biggest economy per square mile in the fifth smallest state, we are the state that's most likely to reach zoning build-out of available land first. And today we ask questions like all of us should be asking if you think your state is going to be the first one to see developed every acre of the state as zoned among all 50; "What should we have been doing on the way to that condition?" We should be talking about rail transit in big, big terms.

Inside that state-- It's local pride time -- Bergen County. Inside New Jersey-- In 1950, this county was not the largest economy among the 21 -- Essex and Hudson and Bergen and down to Sussex and across the northern part of the state. We were No. 3. By 1990, this state -- this county in the state is the largest economy in the state among the 21 counties. And we measure this by combining population and employment because population and employment combined are what the service economy is about, and that's what we've become.

Inside the State of New Jersey, Bergen County has the most of every economic indicator that you can name. We have 11 percent of the state's population. The rest look like this (indicating) in comparison. It's in your chart, so you don't have to try to read this one. But that one in your packet is designed to be readable during commercials on television hours.

Twelve percent of New Jersey's jobs are in Bergen County. All the rest fan out like that. Seventeen percent of all the businesses in the state are in Bergen County. We have 34,000 businesses here. And your planning and economic development department here in Bergen County has mapped everyone, and we know what street address and we know how many people

work and we know what goes in that business, and that is all on digitized computer maps. So we know where the economy is. We've mapped every inch of it.

We have 14 percent of all retail sales in the state. That's a seventh. That means retail sales taxes, too -- collected. We have 17 percent of all the real estate market and equalized value in the State of New Jersey. And we have 16 percent -- a sixth of all the State income taxes that are collected in the state. So we are the most powerful economy, and we are--

Now, when you map the state's economy by jobs and population per square mile, per census block group-- Where's the economy most concentrated? Here in the northeast, of course, in and around Trenton and Camden and along the shore in Monmouth. There are the places where the state's economy concentrates in its highest densities. We're transportation planners here.

The red-- The dark red are the densities of population employment that -- greater than 10,500 per square mile by census block. These are the places where you can build high-frequency, high-speed transit, but it's not widely available anywhere in our state. The second category, orange, the suburban areas just -- suburban-urban areas lying right outside the red concentrations. And the third is the kind of transit that is hard to get. And our state only offers some rush hour, long-distance commute by park-ride. So this says where the state's service economy is most highly concentrated.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I just want to add credence to what Chet is saying. When the Panel and the advisory team got together, originally, nine years ago, when we were talking about the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail, as

opposed to the Newark-Elizabeth piece, we used Chet's material to disprove the numbers that New Jersey Transit was projecting. They were completely off the wall. They did not really depict what Bergen County was about and what Hudson County was about. So we used Chet's wonderful background to promote the Hudson-Bergen line and give us the numbers we needed.

And Pat can attest to the fact, being in the Bayonne-Jersey City area, how right we were, weren't we, Pat? (affirmative response) We were on target; they were not.

So I'll use this moment to, again, reinforce our plan to put New Rail Construction into place to help us expedite light rail transit because the gurus at the time did not perceive this line to be a moneymaker or one that would service a very large population.

I thank all those people like Chet, and with Chet's leadership, who gave us the material we needed to give the facts to the people.

Go ahead, Chet.

MR. MATTSON: We'll be showing some more of those kinds of maps--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Good.

MR. MATTSON: --of the larger area because we were very happy to be working with you right from the beginning. We're the ones that pointed out that Hudson and Bergen together contain a fifth of all of the state's jobs. But we are not the place that contains the kind of rapid transit, until now, it's coming, that moves people across this crowded landscape.

Here is our map, in Bergen County, of this map in the state. The one you have in your folder shows this green line around the heart of Bergen

County's economy. (indicating) And the heart of Bergen's economy lies in the catchment area of the three lines that make up our rail transportation network of our future: the southern part of the Northern Branch, which is the part where the highest population of employment concentrations can be found; the West Shore Line, particularly its southern component; and the Cross-County Line and the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line combined to cross this red heart of the economy.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And you can see Union County in part of that piece as well, down at the bottom, in your bigger map that you have there.

MR. MATTSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: So all of the decisions this Panel has made has really looked at density and need.

MR. MATTSON: Yes, look at this one.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Go ahead, Chet. I just want to make sure that we mention the other counties that are part of our total plan.

MR. MATTSON: Bergen, Hudson, Essex, and Union, plus part of southern Passaic, are the state's biggest economic concentration. And these rail lines that we're talking about here, tie them together and connect them both to PATH.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And you can see, by the map for the Southern Line, the Burlington-Camden piece, that the Southern Line encompasses, as well. So light rail has been on target all the while. And that reinforces all of those decisions made by the Panel.

MR. MATTSON: The other point that you can see on the smaller handouts, but it's not easy to see in a room this large, is that, also in this circle, two things are going on that are also mapped separately in stuff you can look at.

One, it's inside this circle where 65 percent of Bergen County's economy lies on 35 percent of our land. And also in this circle are all the rail lines and major highways that converge inside Bergen County from the region but don't connect with one another. This becomes a job, as everyone in the room knows. Rail planning becomes a job to hook all kinds of transportation together. That's what Bob Roe said back in 1991, "Make this system intermodal. Connect things up." And here's the place. And it's a larger place here -- to connect things up. So we're on the right track in what we're doing and thinking about.

This map is also in your kit, and it shows that the State plan -- the metropolitan planning area for the State plan corresponds nearly exactly to the population plus employment per square mile by census block group map here and here. (indicating) This is the metropolitan planning area. It contains the highest concentration, as a planning area, of all the population employment in the entire state. And this is the part of the state which needs urban-oriented transportation. What you hear today, and will hear as we move through the sequence of hearings, is that we are looking here at an urban transportation response to an urban economic landscape.

Now, you have other maps of the economy in your handout than I am showing here, so my point here is not to drag on too much, but to create the pictures of the larger picture that we are talking about. When we look at

the core of the economy that I just mentioned here, with the red concentration being the highest and the orange the second highest, that core of the county's economy, we find, in that 35 percent of the land -- the 60-something percent of a lot of other things going on. It's about a 35-- It's about a third -- two-thirds-square-mile combination. Inside this core is 75 percent of the county's population, with 25 percent in the rest. Inside this core is 62 percent of the people who get up in the morning and go to work -- the resident commuters -- our resident workforce. The rest of the county, 38 percent. Sixty-four percent of all our dwelling units in the county are in this core. Those are transit riders. And 36 percent are dispersed much more broadly in the balance of the land area -- in the balance -- in the two-thirds balance of the land area.

Similarly, here's where the businesses, the places of work-- Sixty-four percent of the places of work in Bergen County are in the core, 36 percent beyond. And covered employment, that's private sector employment that gets workman's compensation -- that's a widely used statistic -- 63 percent. So there are other statistics in your handout, but they make that point. And here's (indicating) where the economic activity is the most intense, and here's (indicating) the place where rail transit is least available.

There's a slide in front of you that I'd like to call attention to, that I don't have here. It's on Page 4 of your handout. And on the bottom right-- At the bottom of the page there are three maps of Bergen County. The far-right map is the one that's very telling about transit. Transit riders in Bergen County are not distributed where the economy is most intense. There's a statistic about that that astonished us when we did a computer model of all of our transit riders. Two percent of the people that get up in the morning and

go to work in Bergen County -- 2 percent of the 447,500 of us who get up and go to work in the morning take the train -- 12,000.

We are the biggest economy in the state. We're the lowest rail ridership. Here's (indicating) where it's needed. Here's (indicating) where the Hudson-Bergen can do the most good not only for Bergen County, but for the rest of the regions around us that your planning has you visit and see and knit together with rapid light rail transit.

A few slides next show what makes our economy tick and explains the congestion that we experience. The major transportation point that we make in this notebook, and in this handout, is that congestion has grown rapidly over the last 25 years -- very rapidly over the last 25 years, extremely rapidly since the '80s boom. And it has to do first with where the offices are. The office building has taken over the economy of 1950. But even as early ago as 1982, we had eight million square feet of office in Bergen County, and after the huge '80s boom, we had 26 million square feet of office. We grew, in office space, by 325 percent. This is faster than the rest of the state, in terms of rate of growth and absolute numbers of office workers. But it also reflects the fact that between 1982 and 1989, as Dean Hughes keeps telling us, from Rutgers, 82 percent of the state's office stock was built -- rental office stock. And that's the great preponderance of all of it.

This is an astonishing number because offices on the land used to generate the most traffic per square foot of space and the-- It's the land used to generate the greatest tax ratables per square foot of space and per square foot of land occupied, and is therefore the most attractive to our municipality to stick on the zoning map to pay for the schools. But it is also the land used

that generates, by far, the most traffic. That is a major topic in this booklet that you have in this presentation.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Just as a point of information, you mentioned Hughes -- Professor Hughes. He came before us to give us information way back when and told us that the Northeast Corridor, during the time of the recession, would have the slowest rate of comeback than any other part of the state and that we had overbuild and that building boom that we went through was really going to be hard on the Northeast Corridor. And it was then that Chuck Haytaian came to Joe Doria and myself and Alex to promote the light rail to try to stimulate the economy in the Northeast Corridor. And I'm saying that for a purpose because Hughes told us that we, in the Northeast, would not recover until 2001, 2005. With the beginning of light rail, we jump-started the economy in the Northeast region.

So that's a major point that we're making here. Again, attest to the fact of the renewal -- the renaissance in Hudson, which we're looking forward to in Bergen and Union and Essex and Passaic.

Go ahead, Chet.

Just a little history.

MR. MATTSON: Donna, it's here that you were going to find me the consequences of -- consequences slide.

Thanks.

The next slide shows what we-- It's in your book, on Page 5, at the top of the page. And it's here for the rest of us. What we call, in transportation terms-- We record here (indicating) the by-products of being the biggest economy on the smallest piece of land because all of this economic

activity inside Bergen County -- the 16 percent of the population and jobs and so forth, is occurring on one-thirty-third of the state's land mass. We are a tiny county in land mass, and we're gigantic in economic output.

But the consequences are, among other things, that we have the most lanes of roads. Now, one of the reasons you have the most lanes of roads is that we have the most subdivisions. They're named, as we all know -- subdivisions are Hickory Acres-- They're named for the ecosystems they displaced. Where's the hickories? Well, they're the houses.

We have the most lanes of road, partly because we also have the highest concentration of interstates of any county, and they come through us en route to other places. We also have the most auto registrations of any county, on a thirty-third of the land mass. And we have the most vehicle miles traveled -- over five billion a year of any county in the state. So the honor and the glory of being the biggest economy is fairly obvious. The danger of having become the biggest economy without rail transit in our hand of cards is also very evident.

Here's the next point we make about our economy. It has a lot to do with why we need rail. Somewhere between 94 and 96 percent of the land in Bergen County available as zoned is already developed. We work very closely with our municipalities because the municipal instinct is to figure out how to use the last piece of land best.

I bet some of you saw the piece in *The Times* on Cherry Hill, recently. Well, that's-- The last piece is a racetrack that is going to be developed in Cherry Hill. And the mayor and the council and the zoning board and the planning board all sat down to figure out what to do. And they

drew a picture of the open space. “We better get some of everything.” And they did. They got a little park over here where the stream is. They got houses over here. They got a hotel over here matching the offices over there. By the time they were done, the open space in the town had disappeared. They hadn’t looked at the whole map around them to figure out -- of their town -- to figure out what to do with the best, last piece of open space.

The fact that we only have about 5 percent of our land available to put anything on, open space or buildings, means that our economy has to be focusing on the fact that redevelopment is our future. When we sit with municipalities, like with Ridgefield Park, whose mayor, Mayor Fosdick, is here-- We sat with him, and we said, “If we could put light rail along your waterfront,” because that’s where light rail can go-- It has to go where there’s already tracks. Everybody knows that. No, not everyone does. You all know that. The rest have to be shown that. And we saw that we could put transit-oriented redevelopment along the rail line, and that it would cause his waterfront to blossom.

Now you can’t-- You’ll see it in your book. But that rendering, which you can take a squint at later, is the one we did with Mayor Fosdick. We took our engineer and our planner and our environmental people over, and we said, “Well, Mayor Fosdick, we don’t zone, you do. But we see the train coming. How can we work with you to prepare for the train?” And he’ll tell you what he said to us. But in a nutshell, he said, “I want my river shore back, and I want open space that we lost the first time around, and I want a marina, and I want green space. I want to use my existing buildings along the

waterfront to make them more valuable.” And he’s working with his businesspeople to see how to do that.

And we put together, with him, the transportation that could work -- vans and shuttles. He said, “I don’t want a lot of cars. I don’t want to waste my waterfront with a big parking lot. I want to use vans and shuttles to get there and a parking garage, if we can fit one somewhere.” And then he said to me, the thing most important of all, “Where’s the light rail stop going to be?” And I said, “Oh, that’s not for us to say. You come up with a redevelopment plan that has incentives built in it for a light rail stop, and we’ll make sure that it gets there so we don’t do it backwards, as so commonly happens in New Jersey, to pick the stop and hope something happens around it.” In Bergen County, where all we have is redevelopment go on, we put together incentive-based redevelopment ordinances that bring the light rail stop to the people who will most -- who will do the best for the economy through redevelopment.

And one of the reasons that we do this is that something has happened here over the last 30 years. Our economy has gone from manufacturing to services. Services generate-- Every new service job generates five new trips a day. A short 50 years ago, when we had a manufacturing economy, every new job generated a half a trip per day. Two people sat in the car, and they went to their manufacturing job, and they stayed there all day. The Ford plant in Mahwah is the example.

Now, in the service economy, when most of the people who are in the office get to work, a large number of them just turn around and start traveling again. So it’s travel among businesses that causes congestion to rise. And so two conclusions are possible that are very important for rail transit

planning. One is that each job generates a lot more trips. And two, that the need to move around in all kinds of directions, as people travel among offices, not only in Bergen County, but in the region, means that a light rail system is the ideal form of transit. And the fact that it must connect up to every other form of transit becomes very important.

We've also moved from free flow to congestion, and we've also moved from land development to redevelopment. These are momentous events in the history of a town. When you're developed, you have to think entirely different about your future.

I have to tell you, my mother just heard me say that, in heaven, and she would have said, "Differently, my son, differently, differently."

Here's the map of congestion. This isn't the most number of cars. This, as the figures says, "This graphic shows Bergen County." It's hard for you to see it, but it's easy for us. It's peeking out around the outside. This is Bergen County. But on a graph-- What we're plotting here is the number of trips per square mile -- taken per square mile in Bergen County, with the red the highest per square mile. And each one of these little blocks are a square mile. And the lowest -- as you move down through the colors -- red to magenta to gray-- So surprise, surprise. Where the economy is most highly concentrated, congestion is most pestiferous. This does not mean that the rest of the county isn't congested, but when you lay out your transportation options, you're looking, as we are, to turn congestion into a transit asset.

Now, when we said that to the freeholders, we got chased out of the room, but sometimes we get chased out anyway, so it was okay. We said to our freeholders, "You've got to look at economy in place and congestion as

the prime transit building assets.” That’s in Bergen County. It’s not the case in other places where rail is used to stimulate development that’s not yet in place. But in places like here, which is where you are today, we use the buildings that are here. Look at them out the window. They’re all over the county, and they look like this. (indicating) Those are the buildings that are -- whose congestion becomes our transit building asset.

Now, one of the things that we’ve just come through-- Well, on Page 6, you’ll see other indicators of congestion. The most important are the fact that between-- On Page 6, at the top--

Here’s our history. Since-- In 1950, Bergen County had 150,000 homes and 121,000 jobs and 150,000 registered vehicles -- the good old days -- the suburbs we once were. By 1990 -- look -- our housing stock had doubled to 320,000, our jobs had almost -- had grown to 440,000 -- 447,000 from 121,000, almost times four, and our registered vehicles-- Wow. Our registered vehicles, as that chart says-- In 1950, there were 150,000 cars in our driveways. By 1990, there were 640,000. That’s the pace of congestion growth in a service economy that you’re seeing mentioned there.

Here’s a picture that also dominates our transit planning in Bergen County. Twenty percent of all the trips that are taken in any given day occur in the morning peak hour, plus the evening peak hour. And back in 1950, the standard thinking about transportation was that if you design for 20 percent of the trips that are the commuter trips, you design for the whole day’s travel because that’s when most of the cars are out there. But Chris Helms, of our staff-- He’s over there. (indicating)

Put your hand up, Chris. Thanks.

--put together the graph that shows all of the trips taken across the day: civic, education, religious, social, other -- now, don't ask me what that is -- people always -- I don't know -- personal business, shopping, and recreation. This is the trip patterns of our people. Penetrate all the other things that people do with transit, and you'll get much bigger ridership. You will not get a lot just trying to increase the number -- the 12,000 people that ride commuter rail to New York, which is all we have. But you will get a lot of riders if you take a few people from all trips. You'll get many more riders, then, if you take a few people from all trips rather than try to get a lot more out of the lowest common denominator. So the trip to work is not the index of how to do transportation in developed spaces. That becomes a guide to us.

I remember my first conversation with you, Rose. You said, "Don't forget to say that school kids will go to Liberty State Park on this thing. Don't forget to say that people in Bergen County will travel down the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line, if we can only get the damn thing here, pardon me, down to Exchange Place and hook a right -- take PATH to Newark. You can be at the Performing Arts Center. You can be at the explosion in jobs taking place around Penn Station down there.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: The museum, the colleges.

MR. MATTSON: Yes. So that's a big transit market. Don't just count the people who get on the train in the morning as not only the present commuters, but potential commuters. That's an important pie graph for us.

This map shows you what happened over the last three years in this county. We had a remarkable piece of study that went on. It was called the West Shore Region Major Investment Study. Now, the West Shore

Region turns out to be all of Bergen County because it starts -- because the region that was studied starts at the Passaic River, which is our border with Passaic County, and goes to the Hudson River. So the West Shore Region Major Investment Study was about Bergen County. And we looked-- And we were to look at, and did, how the present rail network is used. It's comprised of the Bergen Line, the main line, and the Pascack Valley Line.

But on our horizon were three others; the Northern Branch, going through easternmost Bergen County; the West Shore Line, also known as the River Line, is the major rail freight route not only through Bergen County, but through all of New Jersey from the north. All of those double-stacked cars that start on the West Coast of the United States, from Asia, come across the whole country. They run into Selkirk, New York, up by Albany; they swing south; and they roar -- got me -- roar down the West Shore Line. In the last six months, the number of freight cars -- freight trains has doubled on that line.

What we have going on here, on the West Shore Line, and it happened halfway through the Major Investment Study, is that we have a whole new freight environment to deal with. The people who own the freight lines, or who control the freight lines, are in competition here with the people who want to use transit. So we're always working hard to find a balance between getting the freight in that keeps us -- the doorstep of the larger region through the ships that come in in the port and the trains that come in from the north, but not to the extent that we lose the way to get to work for the 447,000 of us who take off to work every morning. There's a very hard job ahead of us. We learned, in this MIS, to straighten out where the freight isn't going to go so that rail transit can go.

What we have to do is decide that in the next stage of that Major Investment Study. Steve Jurow from New Jersey Transit is here to hear questions from you about that. But in that next stage of the study, the draft environmental study, (*sic*) we're going to be looking at things like that to see how much rail transit space there is on the tracks and seats there are on the cars that can operate on these lines.

We also--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Add to that, Chet. When we're talking about the business end of it -- the freight lines, etc. -- because we have been talking to them over the years. And you're right; they have doubled. But when we talked about transportation, we always looked towards the movement of people and goods, but not the movement of goods to the exclusion of people, because quality of life in our area is of great importance. The environment is of great importance. So we have to learn to live together. And that's one of our big problems that we have to solve.

Go ahead.

MR. MATTSON: Yes. And it is a problem that has not-- Steve will tell you that in the draft environmental impact study (*sic*) that problem wasn't-- In the Draft Environmental Impact Statement-- In the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, it wasn't handled in the Major Investment Study because that topic, the Conrail merger, came up in the middle of our '69 -- '96 to '99 study. That issue has been lodged in the DEIS, and it is a major planning issue. But as we all know, DEIS aren't just about wetlands, although God knows they're important, it's about financial impact, it's about economic impact, it's about transportation impact, it's about congestion. So DEISs,

now, are the whole world of economy and environment. And that question is left to be done.

We also asked in this MIS -- West Shore -- to think about how the three existing lines, Pascack, Bergen, and main, would fit -- could be made to fit into a transit network.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I don't see that map in our paperwork here.

MR. MATTSON: What's the closest one we have?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Okay, Page 12. Okay.

MR. MATTSON: Oh, thanks. I did-- I'm jumping around a bit, but thanks for adapting.

So this is-- The West Shore MIS asked us to think not only about existing commuter rail, but the West Shore Commuter Rail, the Northern Branch Light Rail, and the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail.

Oh, look here, it finally comes to Vince Lombardi. Now, don't you believe what you see in *The Ledger* today. It says to get it beyond the Vince Lombardi will cost billions more. I mean, we always have our thing about *The Ledger*, but--

The fact is, here's the Hudson-Bergen moving through the environment that you know about. When it gets to Vince Lombardi-- We will be looking at how to extend it -- extend the Hudson-Bergen seamlessly, same cars, same trains, same operators, over to Route 17 to get into this core and to connect up to all of the rest of the lines. This map then became the basis for studying what you will hear the results of over the next three trips -- but some of the major ones here today.

How do we make a network out of this? We end this document that you have with a quote directly from that May 1999 study that I'll come to at the end. It's a major statement about what we're about and why we do these things.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: What I'd like you to do, Chet, is give us a page version of that with the legend at a later date so we can have it in our records, please.

MR. MATTSON: Yes, we will.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Okay, thank you.

MR. MATTSON: Now, the book that you have in the large file -- in the large folder -- is this story large, and in great detail-- And it covers a very important aspect of our work here. We have, as a county planning and economic development department, sat down and worked out some eight redevelopment plans that relate to light rail. Two of them are on the-- Three of them are on the Northern Branch -- a light rail plan for Fairview, a light rail redevelopment scenario for Leonia, and a light rail redevelopment scenario for Palisades Park. And another batch of them are along the Cross-County Line. And one is on the West Shore Line because the West Shore Line meets the Cross-County and the Hudson-Bergen Line.

So what we've done is we've done a bunch of these. It's for you to look at them and read about them. But this is the redevelopment plan we developed with the mayor of Fairview. And what you're looking at here is eastern Bergen County. Here's the older Ridgefield, Fairview, North Bergen economy, with not a square inch left between anything else for much else. But we picked out a tract, 45 acres in size. We used one of the best engineers in

the country, Mike McNally, to lay out a redevelopment plan of hotel, office, and retail built -- devised around a light rail stop. This is a major kind of activity that we've engaged in because we know when it comes time to do light rail, we better have thought about the economy before it arrives. We're not going to be-- We need to get the best of what's here as we go about our work.

I'm not going to dwell on these too much today, but this is the plan for the city we're in. And it's just over there by *The Bergen Record* -- out the window and thataway. This is *The Bergen Record*. Here is a redevelopment plan devised for the Cross-County Line, where it crosses the Hackensack River, for office towers. And what we will do is we will take the Hackensack Bus Station, which is a great bus transit facility, and pick it up and move it over to here and put it inside an office building so that we have parking inside structures for light rail.

That's pretty much the rule in Bergen County. There isn't a big-- There isn't a lot of space in the center of town like there was when we built our commuter rail networks back in the '50s when they were built by the private sector. The station went in the middle of town, and the buildings shaped around it. Not anymore. Parking is the toughest thing to deal with in rail planning in Bergen County. It too has been shipped into the DEIS phase. It's in the DEIS phase that we will try to find actual parking spaces that you can actually put a car in and run a bus or van to and connect to a light rail stop. This kind of planning, then, done with a town, shows how you can strengthen the City of Hackensack, CBD, and Ridgefield Park, and Bogota, and the others in the book as you go about your transit planning.

Here's another kind of thing we do with -- in municipalities with whom we work. If we were a bigger department, we would work with more. You can put in a plug for our budget later with the freeholders. I'd appreciate it.

But here's a bus-van loop around the City of Hackensack, and it is built around the light rail line.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: A what loop?

MR. MATTSON: It's a van -- mini bus and van shuttle that will run around the city and pick people up and take them from the hospital to places where development is occurring -- to schools and to office buildings -- connect residential neighborhoods with work and connect rail passengers and bus passengers to a delivery network that doesn't require -- requires fewer people to be in cars. The whole idea is that if rail doesn't get some people out of cars, you don't get a net gain. So we do a lot of this kind of planning in our cities and towns where we-- And we do it simultaneously with redevelopment and rail planning.

This is the-- You'll see this (indicating) in one of your illustrations. Here's the Ridgefield Park-Bogota suggested shuttle bus and van loop inside Ridgefield Park. Another request that Mayor Fosdick made of us in Ridgefield Park-- He said, "I don't want my waterfront filled up with parking, so I'll help you put together an interior network built around the light rail that runs, in Ridgefield Park, between Route 80 and Route 46."

Here's a redevelopment scenario that we developed with the mayor of Palisades Park. We looked at the possibility for a light rail station in Overpeck Park, in Leonia, at the end of a van-bus loop. And then we looked

at the possibility for a redevelopment track down inside Palisades Park where we have a developer that would like to add some development next to an existing food store that has gone in. And some of the development could be on a portion of Overpeck Park as a way to stimulate a possibility for people to get to the Park by rail. So this is another example of the kind of thinking we do with our municipalities.

You know, it's not easy to do because you say, "Light rail is coming." They say, "When?" "Well, come to Hackensack next week." No. Light rail is coming. We've got to be ready. And so towns have to think ahead about their economy while they're thinking about light rail.

First, the freight story. You can see it in your book. But at the west end of the Weehawken Tunnel, through which the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail -- or where it will land in 2002 -- says in my calendar-- The Hudson-Bergen Light Rail will come up from the south and land at the west side of the Weehawken Tunnel, right here (indicating) in 2002. This happens to be the place where all the freight lines come together. We're working with 21st Century Rail. We're working with the Rail Construction Group and with our own engineers -- putting them all in a room to figure out how to get the Hudson-Bergen up this set of tracks along the west side of the Palisades because the route has to be changed a bit since the original route was done in that freight now -- intervenes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I see you have Palisades Park. Nowhere do I see anything for Cliffside Park. There's nothing close or helping Cliffside Park at all?

MR. MATTSON: Yes, there is. We have an opportunity to put a rail stop at a supermarket. We have conversations going with the owner of a supermarket, but they haven't become formal plans yet. But we're out there looking for such things.

This is the key to the Hudson-Bergen getting to Bergen County to deal with the fact that freight now goes through the Weehawken Tunnel. We've got to shift its pattern to travel south, down to Marion Junction, so that the light rail and commuter rail -- the West Shore Line -- can come down-- The West Shore Line can continue. No, no, I'm sorry. The West Shore Line has -- we've had to move it over to Vince Lombardi to go to the sports complex. There aren't enough tracks here to do everything.

So the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail runs here. It can connect directly up the Northern Branch. It can swing north and west and go up to Vince Lombardi. That's all part of the DEIS that we're working on. But this becomes another major issue that's been pushed into the DEIS for the West Shore Region Major Investment Study. Where does the freight go? I've talked about that before, but these are specific jobs that we work on using county money to be most ready when the Hudson-Bergen opportunities present themselves to us.

The last series of pictures I will now move to and then finish up -- occur on Pages -- 18. I want to read this because it's the major finding of the West Shore Major Investment Study. The slide says combination alternative 2, which is to look at all three or a combination -- alternative 2 offers, by far, the best and most powerful combination that benefits to the entire study area and its regions. And these combined benefits reinforce one another in many

impressive ways. Thus, our recommendation -- the major recommendation of the West Shore Region Major Investment Study-- “Our recommendation is that all three lines under study be treated as a transportation network and should be advanced to the Environmental Impact Statement phase. This will allow all three, and various combinations of them, to become eligible for Federal funding.”

This is a great day for Bergen County to be moving into the DEIS phase because -- the first time in our history we will have a project being studied that has Federal funding at the end of it. We’ve never, ever had a rail study, since the last of the lines disappeared, that led to funding. These are guaranteed to lead us to funding. Steve Jurow can talk about it. But the DEIS phase is very important for us for those reasons.

We are also engaged in a very important look at what kind of funding can come first and how we can get something out there as quick as possible. We believe -- so you can hear me say it -- that we can start our best chance for light rail, whichever it is, in time to meet you guys at Tonnele Avenue. That’s a leap, but we were inspired by the photo that Donna came across of the two transcontinental rail lines meeting in Utah -- Promontory Point. We said, “Darn it. Why do we have to wait to build the Hudson-Bergen all the way to Vince Lombardi by getting somewhere else first?”

So our passion is to meet the Hudson-Bergen coming from the south by arriving from the north. And my observation to you is that everyone knows that the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line, when it has all its stations in place, including its station with the most riders, Bergen-- We only have one stop on the whole line, but it adds the most -- the single largest number of

passengers. When the whole line is in place, we will have the most magnificent transit system of any state in the union, and for the part of the state where most of the economy is.

Those are my words to you. The Cross-County Line will be having people here to talk about it. The Cross-County Line is a six-mile extension of the Hudson-Bergen. You can see one of the graphics in your piece shows that the Hudson-Bergen arrives at Vince Lombardi. The Cross-County Line's first leg, and the most important one to us, is between Vince Lombardi and Route 17. It will feature a stop in Ridgefield Park; a stop in Bogota; one in Ridgefield itself, where the Vince Lombardi is; and two in Hackensack; and then yet another at Route 17, where the Maywood-Rochelle Park border lies, on the highway, less than a mile from the center of Hackensack.

The features of the Cross-County Line are worthy of your attention. They are written about in the report. But what we're doing in perusing this alternative in the DEIS is to look at the best ways, as you could read in the major conclusion, to connect the commuter rail lines that come through Bergen, from outside, to light rail. Why do this? The commuter-- If you're on a commuter light rail when the Secaucus Transfer opens, wow, you're going to get to the Secaucus Transfer, and you're going to have all-day commuter rail service. We haven't had all-day rail service since the trollies disappeared. The last one was 1967.

The Hudson-Bergen and the Cross-County, as one line, will offer service all day long -- frequent service. Our operating plan says every 12 minutes. But our operating plan meshes exactly with the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line from the south so that all the stops at Arthur's Ferry will fit into the

larger schedule for the Hudson-Bergen. And we'll be down, come Saturday, to look at -- to travel the line together to Liberty State Park -- great day in our future.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Well, I think you've been part of that since the beginning, so all of these -- the three alternate plans are so important to all of us. And there have been minor changes here and there over the last six years, there's no doubt, in the original planning. And there could be more changes. I'm not certain. But, Chet, it really is, and has been, our dream to have Bergen connect with Hudson-Bergen, as they will both mesh. How they mesh was also still in the dream kind of stages.

MR. MATTSON: But we know it can be done now.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: But they're becoming more reality, now, as we see the route progressing.

And are you looking at the projected ridership -- the ridership projections on each of the three alternate plans where we would get the most ridership?

MR. MATTSON: Yes, we are.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Okay.

MR. MATTSON: There were estimates made in the MIS itself. They weren't based on parking capacity. They weren't based on secure knowledge about which of the lines had freight on them or not. So when we solve those two, we'll have a better sense of the ridership. But the big thing we've learned, that wasn't known when the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail was put out for public consumption and construction, was the extent to which

Midtown Manhattan, at the other end of Arthur's Ferry, is part of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail's ridership.

We have done a major study that shows how that concentration of people in Midtown is actually analogous to downtown Manhattan for the Hudson -- southern Hudson waterfront. There's a direct analogy between that part of lower Manhattan and the path across to the Hudson River waterfront there and the Arthur's Ferry across from Midtown to Arthur's Ferry and to the development on the northern waterfront attached to development in Bergen County.

The second thing we also looked at was Paterson. We haven't looked at it in detail, but the DEIS that is now underway will look to see what the cost and benefits are of extending it to Paterson. That's more money. It's another stage. But when you--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We also have the other stage over the Bayonne Bridge for the--

MR. MATTSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: --for Staten Island to feed into Bayonne. There's a whole group of people that we could serve, and they wanted us to do that years ago, right Pat? (affirmative response) And we're still interested in that phase of it. I think New York-- Maybe the Port will give us some money.

MR. MATTSON: The last page has our-- I don't have a last page. But the last page says that--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I mean that Port Authority, not Port Elizabeth.

MR. MATTSON: We're going to look at all these things in the DEIS. But make no mistake about it, Bergen County's No. 1 light rail priority, without which any of these lines can't work, is to get the Hudson-Bergen here.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, absolutely.

MR. MATTSON: That's our major effort.

Well, in *The Star-Ledger* today, it says it will cost billions more to get it here. I'm going to find the two reporters who wrote that and see if I can get them with the same shot. It won't cost billions more to do that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think that our aim--

MR. MATTSON: It's not good for people in Bergen County to think that we're billions away from having a stop here.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: But, Chet, this kind of thought pattern, throwing these big figures and saying -- reminds us of what we had when we began -- this will never happen, it's way, way too big a project. It is not too big a project. It's a project that must be done -- must be done now because it will cost trillions in years to come. But we should look to the Federal government for our dollars, just as we did. And we were very fortunate to have Bob Roe as an advocate early on, and certainly to have Frank Lautenberg carry the banner for us after that -- getting us dollars, and to have Bobby Franks, and etc. People are awaking to the fact that good transportation is absolutely a necessity not only for the economy, but for the well-being of all of our families, our children, our seniors. We have to have it in New Jersey.

Don't be frightened about what the papers say about billions. Just keep saying we'll go to the feds for the money.

MR. MATTSON: No. The one thing Bergen County's done is we've spent \$2 million of our own money to do engineering analyses that give us real cost numbers because we know we have to enter this debate with real numbers in that others are tossed about, and we have to overcome the inaccuracies that come with them. That's our major point -- is that getting it to Vince Lombardi opens up other opportunities.

Now, the last feature of the light rail planning that we're doing is that we go a step beyond what most transit planning does. We say, connect the major highways to the rail lines. In our state's history, that's been something we don't do. We have the rail over here. And it has a group of people that -- we say connect it 17--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We're getting calls from citizens of the vacation area saying, "Can't you connect us to that Hudson-Bergen Light Rail? Can't you connect us?" I said, it is our intention to do light rail and intermodal transportation in the entire state. And other states are coming to us now and looking at what we've done. And we will be going into the Pennsylvanias and the Delawares and the Connecticuts. Of course, we're already attached to New York. But we can't cover all of the expenses. You know, New York state has to pick up some of the expenses, as do the other states. And some of them are ready, willing, and able. I'm hoping that Staten Island becomes a reality when -- What's that guy's name who want us to help him? -- Molinari? (affirmative response) If Molinari gets on our bandwagon, hey, we're in good shape. I think it's important for us to, again, go with the original theories, follow the spine line, add little pieces here and there.

Joe Doria's bill, years ago, to prevent the sale of rights-of-way-- That was a major help to us, wasn't it, Pat? (affirmative response) It really did a good job for us because we could see that we all had to work together, in a bipartisan way, to make the State of New Jersey accessible and create new jobs. Particularly, we started in the Northeast Corridor because we were the most needy. Our infrastructure is very old. We have to be revitalized, and this is a way of doing it.

When we were in Jersey City and Bayonne just a few weeks ago, everyone said it's so exciting. It was beyond our wildest dreams, the amount of redevelopment of old cities -- of old areas. So again, that's what we have to look at here in Bergen. We have to build a new mode of transportation to benefit the people.

MR. MATTSON: There are representatives from two--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Invite them to speak, Chet. You know who they are.

MR. MATTSON: There are other representatives from two of the towns along the Cross-County Line. You indicated to me that others would have a chance at another time.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes, at a later date.

MR. MATTSON: Mayor Fosdick is here, from Ridgefield Park. John Perkins is here, from Maywood.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Why don't you invite them to give us their view of light rail?

MR. MATTSON: Mayor Fosdick, if you would like to say some words.

MAYOR GEORGE D. FOSDICK: Thank you very much.

Chuck (*sic*) has presented most of the detail about what is proposed, but in order to explain the view of the Village of Ridgefield Park, I have to talk just very briefly about a little history.

I say the same thing at every forum. The Village of Ridgefield Park was originally settled in 1685, and direct ascendants still live there, so we've been around for a while.

In terms of our history, we are served -- were served by two railroads. We had three commuter rail stations within the Village of Ridgefield Park. Indeed, in 1928, Ridgefield Park was the second busiest commuter rail station on the entire New York Central Railroad between New York City and Cleveland, exceeded only by White Plains. So we have a great interest in rail transportation.

We'd like to think that, through no fault of our own but because of things that have occurred, we've lost all of that. The rail lines are still there. We're part of that heavy rail freight line now, the West Shore as we call it. These folks call it the River Line, but it was known as the West Shore when I was a kid. But it's now a heavy freight rail line. But we have developed a pretty good relationship with CSX, and they tell us that they think that light rail is going to come, eventually. And of course, for reasons that deal with their corporate structure, they, presently at least, favor the Cross-County Line.

But our interest in this concept has to do with something else. A lot of people don't realize it, but right within the middle of Bergen County, the Village of Ridgefield Park is a peninsula. We're surrounded on three sides by water, the Overpeck Creek and the Hackensack River. In fact, our northern

boundary is Route 80. So you cannot get in or out of Ridgefield Park, in all instances, without going over a bridge or, in one instance, under Route 80.

Now, over the years, Ridgefield Park was originally settled -- going back to 1685 because as you come up the Hackensack River, we were the first high grounds through all those meadowlands. And believe it or not, Ridgefield Park was settled because of the water. In the 20th century, the century just passed, we lost all conception of that water. We lost all use of it. Our people don't even think about it. But now, as we-- We're going through a process all through this area. People are becoming more sensitive to space, more sensitive to what's around them. And one of the things that we would like to do is regain the use of our waterfront.

One of the problems we have now, and I'd have to describe it this way, and only people from Ridgefield Park would probably understand it, when you come down Mount Vernon Street and across the tracks, you have the railroad, a strip of land, and the Hackensack River. The road that goes along there is called Industrial Avenue -- Industrial, Industrial, Industrial -- except that the industry is all gone. We have some warehouses. We have our public works facility and some other small warehouse-type facilities. And when the county approached us about the light rail line, we, of course, were interested because we know our history.

We were also interested in the fact that we could couple this light rail line with an economic redevelopment that would benefit not only the businesses in the area, but also the people, and in the process, help reclaim the waterfront for public use. And so we're doing all sorts of things in addition to

the light rail line, but with our sewers and everything else, to try to make those waterways accessible to the people, as they should be.

Another thing that we found very interesting about the light rail is that we recognize that commuting patterns have changed, and not everybody in Ridgefield Park goes to New York City anymore. Many do, but also, as typical as the charts show, we have people, now, that travel to all different parts of the county. And the light rail concept, as has been presented to us, will provide our people with the opportunity to access different areas; to go out to the malls; to go down to Hudson County; to visit Liberty Science Center, as someone has said.

In conjunction with that, we have indicated to the County Planning Authority, under Chet, that we are in full support of working with them to develop a feeder concept, or whatever jitney concept, or whatever you want to call it, that not only would access the light rail, but would connect other areas of the town, the schools in other towns -- in Bogota and Teaneck.

Now, there's something else that I just thought about as I'm sitting here. Some of you may have read, although many of you probably would not have because you're not in the area, but we just settled, in the Village of Ridgefield Park, a very major Federal bankruptcy case involving an old paper mill. And with the cooperation, and I have to be careful how I say this because everything is still in its nascent stages -- but with the cooperation of the State Office (*sic*) of Economic Development, which has recognized the potential here, and a major developer who was looking to put in, surprise, surprise, a significant office complex, which Chet will add in percentagewise -- a significant percentage to the total county office space available. But he's

looking to put this in this area -- this former paper mill site. But in all of our meetings with them, these folks -- and I'm not a planner, a lawyer, and I'm not an engineer, so I refer to these people as heavy hitters. These are big finance people, and they're serious. But they have talked about the importance to them of having the light rail come to Vince Lombardi, in terms of what they are planning to do and their plans. And they're developing conceptual plans, now, of how they might connect the facility that they're proposing to the light rail.

So this light rail concept has implications for everybody. All the standard things need to be said again. But I want you to hear it from a local official. It helps us improve the environment. We're one of the towns, now, that has too many cars. Many of our homes were built before people had driveways and garages, believe it or not. We have a whole series of apartment houses that were built in the 1920s with no provision for off-street parking because, in the 1920s, the idea was if you live in an apartment you should never have a car.

So all of these things, to us, are part of a bigger picture that we recognize and understand that light rail will help us deal with. It helps us economically, it helps us environmentally, it helps us historically, it does many, many good things. So I just want you to know that we're fully on board with the concept. We would stand to benefit, actually, from two of the proposals. Because as Chet has pointed out, to use the terms that some people are familiar with-- We're on the Susquehanna Railroad Line; we're on the West Shore Line. They come together and parallel each other in Ridgefield Park, along the

Hackensack River. But we support the whole concept because, looking at the big picture, we recognize that we all stand to benefit.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you very much, Mayor.

And the mayor of--

MR. MATTSON: John Perkins, the Administrator of Maywood.

JOHN PERKINS: Good morning.

I'm the Administrator for Maywood. I've been the Administrator for two years, but I've been a Borough resident for 30, so my outlook on the light rail for what it would do for the Borough of Maywood and our region, is true.

A couple of things that we've looked at -- and one of the few times we've got the entire mayor and council for something. And we have had this for a number of years, now, when it comes to the light rail possibly coming through Maywood.

There's been an awful lot of discussion about the Susquehanna Railroad reducing the amount of freight on the line coming through our area now. And we had some discussions with some other people as early as two weeks ago. And that seems to be a fact.

The other thing is that we've got -- where there's been some discussion about putting in the rail station -- is on the MISS, which is a thorium site that Maywood has had for a number of years. And it's connected with a number of what we call Phase II properties that are in need of cleanup. And we're attempting to work with the Army Corps of Engineers in getting that done.

One of the things that light rail may help us with is getting that done. Chet, and I've got to thank him for all the work he's done on this, met with the Army Corps and myself to discuss the Phase II cleanup, which would encompass this area. And we were told that they would prioritize the cleanup at this site if, in fact, the record of decision was published. So, as a result of that, I've requested a meeting with staff from Torricelli's Office, Rothman, and also, Bill Pascrell's office, in my town, to try and get them to force the issue with the Army Corps to get the rod done. And that meeting has been scheduled for April 20, and everybody's coming -- staff members.

I think that's important for two reasons. No. 1, we've been talking for the last 10 years about this cleanup, but when you look at the sites compared to where light rail would be and the major thoroughfares -- Route 17, Route 80, Route 4, which basically surround Maywood -- this is a home run. And it actually-- When you look at \$39 million this year from the Federal government to help this cleanup in what they call the Maywood Site, which is Maywood, Rochelle Park, and Lodi-- Nothing can get done with the \$39 million unless this rod is completed. So we lose \$39 million if they don't do it this year. And from what I understand, the money next year goes down to \$24 million. As an administrator, that just bothers the hell out of me.

So if we can get, through this project, hopefully, some pull with the feds to get this rod completed, it's only going to help us all. So I'm definitely for, and the Borough's definitely for this line. I remember a couple of years ago there was some discussion about this going out into Paterson. And there was a little bit of uproar -- I'm talking about two and one-half years ago -- whether that would ever happen with the Cross-County--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: What going into Paterson?

MR. PERKINS: The Cross-County.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, the line.

MR. PERKINS: Yes, the line going into Paterson. I think that would be -- that would add tremendous ridership. I don't know what the studies would show, but I think that would be a great idea.

But for the project that we're talking about in Maywood, where the present Sears warehouse site is, there is some discussion that possibly that could be redeveloped. And some of the discussion is to put in three 10-story buildings, which would help a lot when you're talking about 17's entrance into that site and the rail station being right there. There would be an awful lot of people employed in that particular area. We've already talked to one developer. And the people that own the property now are going to be-- We have a meeting with them right after the 20th. And we have an idea as to where this might go. So I think it would be a benefit not only to the Borough of Maywood, but for that entire transportation region: 17, 80, and 4.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Are you working with the State DEP on that particular contaminated site problem?

MR. PERKINS: Oh, yes, ma'am. Yes. They've been with us all along. In fact, we just -- they just dealt with us a little bit with another project, the Army Corps did, but DEP--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Can you tell me the name of the person with whom you're dealing?

MR. PERKINS: Personally, I don't know the name of the person. I know Angela Carpenter is dealing from the State. I've got a file of names. We're dealing with all kinds of people there.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Let us know who it is.

MR. PERKINS: Sure, sure. But, yes, we're dealing with them.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Please, because we've been working with Rochelle Park and Lodi on the cleanup of the area and the Saddle River.

MR. PERKINS: Yes, the Phase I has been completed.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And the Passaic River, as well.

MR. PERKINS: Phase I is completed. They're just getting into the Phase II, now.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You're welcome. Thank you very much for speaking.

Chet, do you have anyone else that you want to speak at this particular point in time?

MR. MATTSON: Well--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You're okay?

MR. MATTSON: There are others here that may want to speak. These aren't municipal representatives.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I have Al Cafiero who wants to add some words. Al has been involved for a long time.

MR. MATTSON: Ilan Plawker would like to address you, as well.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Who?

MR. MATTSON: Ilan Plawker.

ALBERT CAFIERO: Thank you, Rose, for this opportunity.

One thing I'm afraid of is piecemeal planning. The biggest project that should be in this area that we haven't mentioned at all -- that is the new Trans-Hudson Tunnel. And I believe everything should be keyed to the future to push that. We need another new tunnel. But the way the planning is going, nobody is thinking about it.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You're talking about to New York?

MR. CAFIERO: To New York.

If we don't get that, we're stuck. It isn't a matter of whether we can afford that or not, it's a matter of whether we can afford not to do that.

The Transit Committee of Bergen County was involved with light rail back in 1980. Arthur Adams was one of the founding members of the Transit Committee. He went to Governor Kean and got him to interest -- light rail and the waterfront. So he's really the godfather of the waterfront project.

We believe light rail is very urgent, but we have to make sure we don't foreclose something better just to put a light rail line in. What I would like to see is all the lines--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: None of this would foreclose another route to New York.

MR. CAFIERO: Well, one of the things I see is the Bergen County Line coming out to the Susquehanna and going in -- directly into the new tunnel, as well as the Pascack Line going into that new tunnel and the West Shore into that new tunnel. And we'll have the light rail feeding those lines. And I think we ought to have real overlook. For one thing, right now, I think the light rail -- there was one mistake, using the Weehawken Tunnel. It should

go straight up to Edgewater and had the Weehawken Tunnel used for the West Shore and the Susquehanna back to Imperatore's Ferry. All that same development -- everybody wants -- could go that way, too.

And also, by going the -- having the West Shore Tunnel for commuter trains, you could have the freight going through that tunnel to the port.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Just for the record, years ago, we tried to include Edgewater, and they refused any concept of light rail.

MR. CAFIERO: I know.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: So remember that we did try to do that, but they stopped us cold.

MR. CAFIERO: But if you look at it now-- I just drove down there yesterday.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I know.

MR. CAFIERO: There's no way that road is going to carry all the people when they build all the apartments. They need rail now. So we ought to try to push the rail line up through Edgewater now, before they go into the tunnel.

I would like to urge you to get the--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I don't think the plans for light rail are going to change at this point. It's done.

MR. CAFIERO: I know it's done, but--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's done. And we're not throwing that money away, Al.

MR. CAFIERO: You're not throwing the money away, you're putting in different way.

But anyway, I think you ought to look at -- Secaucus Transfer-- Most people don't realize there's going to be a problem. If they build a new tunnel, there's not enough capacity in that platform space in Secaucus Tunnel.

I think somebody ought to take a look at the whole thing.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Even if they start the tunnel tomorrow, how many years do you think it would take?

MR. CAFIERO: Oh, about six years.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Maybe. We're talking about from the beginning to the end. You're talking about, like, 15 years, I think.

Don't you, Pat? What do you think, 10 to 15, in that area?
(affirmative response)

MR. CAFIERO: I think we should put more effort on that tunnel than anything else because we need that desperately.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you, Al.

I L A N P L A W K E R: I'm Ilan Plawker, Councilman in Englewood Cliffs and former candidate for everything.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: For everything?

MR. PLAWKER: For everything.

I just want to point out one of the other things that I think really gets shortchanged, in terms of the development and the importance of transportation to this area, which is education and getting kids -- high school

children -- giving them the ability to go from school to school with a magnet school idea the way we have--

I grew up in Manhattan, or New York, and I went to Stuyvesant High School -- took subways from Brooklyn into Manhattan. Eventually, we're going to have that in this state, and certainly in Bergen County. We need it desperately.

If children are going to be able to get on trolley cars, which is what I like to call them-- By the way, there was a newscast this morning that in Brooklyn, they're talking about bringing back trolleys. I think from a PR point of view, if we call them trolleys instead of light rail, you may get more people understanding what it is that we're trying to do here.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We've been doing that for years, but that's okay.

MR. PLAWKER: Well, my activity now is going to be focused on getting public support for all of this and getting people aware of it. Certainly, in Englewood Cliffs, other than that Route -- the Palisade Avenue congestion we have, people are really not aware of what is going on. I think it's crucial--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think you should take them on a field trip to Bayonne and Jersey City.

MR. PLAWKER: Absolutely. I think that we're going in the right direction. I think the impetus is there, and I think this has to be a bipartisan-- This should not be a political thing.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It has been a bipartisan thing.

MR. PLAWKER: I understand that, and I'd like it not to be.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And it will continue to be.

MR. PLAWKER: No. I'm saying it should not be involved with politics whatsoever.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I agree.

MR. PLAWKER: This is essential to the growth and well-being of our community.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Ask the guys from Union County.

MR. PLAWKER: Thank you.

One last point.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes, certainly.

MR. PLAWKER: I have children who live in Westfield, as well as Montclair. And the property values of their homes have skyrocketed with the announcement of the fact that they're going to be able to get to and from those communities by train.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you.

MR. PLAWKER: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Come forward.

DANIEL CHAZIN: My name is Daniel Chazin.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Take that because it's recording. (referring to PA microphone) They're doing a piece for us.

MR. CHAZIN: My name is Daniel Chazin. I live in Teaneck. I've lived there all my life. I know when I was a little boy there we did have passenger service on the West Shore Railroad, although I don't remember it. And I'm just wondering whether I'm ever going to live to see it again.

I certainly support the extension of light rail and the other plans that have been proposed. I was at the meeting you had in Tenafly last June,

I think it was, where they presented the three schemes, the Northern, the Cross-County, and the West Shore. I think that two of them make some sense, the Cross-County and the Northern. Those are, I think, achievable, and they will be achieved in the next five years or so.

The scheme that's been proposed of the West Shore, to me, makes absolutely no sense -- involves construction of completely new rail lines through the meadowlands -- through wetlands, which -- whether it can even be done is a big question. If it can be done, it's going to take years and years to do. And by proposing or planning to put the light rail through the Weehawken Tunnel, you foreclose the use of that for the West Shore, which is the most logical way to have commuter service on the West Shore. To extend it through the West Shore Tunnel, you can then stop at the ferry in Weehawken, and then it could go down and terminate in Hoboken.

Now, I know it has the disadvantage of not going to Secaucus Transfer, but at least you'd have some kind of service there that would, I think, be very well patronized.

Al mentioned the possibility of using the light rail through the Edgewater Tunnel. You then responded, well, you tried that, and Edgewater didn't want it, and you planned for the Weehawken Tunnel.

I don't know how Edgewater feels about it now. I think that they--
ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's inconsequential. All of--
Everything has been approved by the Federal government. You just don't tear out the page and throw it away.

MR. CHAZIN: Again, I don't know all the facts here. Chet mentioned some concerns. One concern that he did mention was that the

freight component of this has changed significantly since the studies were made. There's far more freight now on the West Shore.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We're not changing the plans for the HBLRT to this point. We're looking ahead to three alternate routes. So keep that in mind.

MR. CHAZIN: Well, I'm just making my comments.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: No, I understand.

MR. CHAZIN: It may be wrong, but I--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: But don't think we can change it at this point. You can't.

MR. CHAZIN: I'm not sure that's the case.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: What is, is.

MR. CHAZIN: I don't know enough about that to say whether you can or you can't.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's okay.

MR. CHAZIN: I think, since nothing's been done-- Since the railroad-- Again, I don't know this for a fact, but I suspect the that the railroad -- the CSX would like to keep that Weehawken Tunnel -- that they use it significantly -- while it is possible to reroute the freight through Marion that would somewhat hamper their operation, that's a negotiating point you could have, if that were possible, and the Edgewater Tunnel is still there.

Again, I don't know the reality of this thing, but I do somehow think that if we do this, there's no way you're going to have any effective commuter service on the West Shore railroad for many years to come.

So that's just my point of view--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I appreciate that. I appreciate your input.

MR. CHAZIN: --I wanted to get expressed to you. But I certainly do support these plans.

And I would also like to point out that I think the greatest possibility for short-term improvement in rail service in my area is the all-day service and expansion service on the Pascack Valley Line, which is something that can easily be done without going through very much, other than putting in some sidings. I think that's coming along. I think that should be given great priority.

I also mentioned I attended a meeting of New Jersey Transit, last Friday, was it?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It was on a Wednesday.

MR. CHAZIN: Wednesday, it was. Right. And I pointed out the fact that you do have a deadhead train, now, that operates from Spring Valley back to Hoboken in the middle of the afternoon. If that could be converted to a revenue run -- very, very simple -- that would do something. So I would like to, again, mention that.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you very much.

Chet.

MR. MATTSON: Assemblywoman Heck, Steve Jurow is here.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: They want you to come forward.

MR. MATTSON: Steve Jurow is here from New Jersey Transit. He will head up the environmental work for the DEIS that's about to be begun. And he'd be happy to say a couple of words.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Maybe he can give us a kind of overview of their agenda and timing on the DEIS.

MR. MATTSON: Yes.

STEVEN M. JUROW: Good morning.

Steve Jurow. I'm the Senior Director for Environmental Compliance for New Jersey Transit, and I've been charged with serving, for now, as Project Manager for the Environmental Impact Statement work on both this and the Union County public-private partnership light rail initiatives.

We selected a contractor two weeks ago. It was approved by the board last week, subject to the Governor's review. I think we'll start the project early in May. We intend to write a standard Draft Environmental Impact Statement for this line, the Cross-County Line, with some of the degrees of freedom that have been discussed -- represented in the EIS itself: the terminus at Maywood; the terminus in Paterson, or perhaps several termini in Paterson; and how to hook up with the HBLRT, whether a through service or across the platform transfer. These things are not yet settled.

As Chet had indicated, a major impact issue that will have to be grappled with will be the relationship with the freight railroad services through the Susquehanna Corridor.

The schedule for the project is, approximately -- I'm going to say eight to ten months to produce a working Draft Environmental Impact

Statement that could then be subject to public hearings in order to preserve eligibility for Federal funding, via the New Starts Program, thereafter.

We'll coordinate the work closely with the Environmental Impact Statement analysis that's being conducted, also, at New Jersey Transit for the West Shore and the Northern Branch initiatives so that the three, essentially, march together arm in arm as a package of railroad improvements for Bergen County, as Chet had described.

And if you have any questions, I'm happy to take them, but that's about it for now.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I don't have any questions for you. I just wanted to get a timetable -- a projected timetable.

MR. JUROW: All right. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Anyone else who'd like to speak on any of these matters? (no response)

Hearing none, this meeting is adjourned until the 24th, here in this same room, beginning at 10:00. We will discuss the Northern and the West Shore Lines. And after that, we'll probably schedule another meeting for a few months from now, when we'll discuss all three and how we feel about all of it. We'll take information that's coming forward and move ahead in several areas.

Thank you very much for coming.

(MEETING CONCLUDED)