
Panel Meeting

of

ASSEMBLY LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT LEGISLATIVE PANEL

*“Status reports on the Northern Branch
and West Shore Line rail line proposals”*

LOCATION: Bergen County
Administration Building
Hackensack, New Jersey

DATE: April 24, 2000
10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE 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

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ASSEMBLYWOMAN ROSE MARIE HECK (Chairwoman):

I wanted to welcome everyone today and thank Chet Mattson for all his good information at the last meeting.

Chet, I was really impressed, as were the representatives from Union County, because they asked me for a copy of your presentation. So I think they're going to rearrange it for Union County, as well.

And Rusty Lachenauer is here with us today, and Jon-Robert Bombardieri, and you, of course, to give us an overview of the West Shore and the Northern Lines. And others will be invited to speak later.

Come forward.

CHESTER P. MATTSO N: Assemblywoman Heck, Jack Kanarek is here from New Jersey Transit.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes, Jack Kanarek is going to speak, as well, and tell us where we're at with the environmental impact studies.

MR. MATTSO N: And for his benefit and from the rather large number of others who weren't here before, I'm going to take a quick spin through the stuff that you've heard. You'll have to--

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE: Is the microphone on? (referring to PA microphone)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That is really the recorder. I don't know why your microphones are not working. They're conserving on electricity.

MR. MATTSO N: I'm going to speak up. How's that? So I'll take a quick trip--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Did you update the legend that I asked you to update?

MR. MATTSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You did? Good.

MR. MATTSON: And we have copies for you today.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You do?

MR. MATTSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Okay.

MR. MATTSON: Chris has them.

Oh, I'm going to speak in this.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you, Chet.

MR. MATTSON: I assure you that this will be quick.

This is kind of tough because we're showing illustrations to two audiences: The Committee (*sic*) and those of you who have come to see. So, if any of you wants to move over to the left, I'd appreciate it.

Art Vatsky has them all memorized so he can-- (laughter)

This slide shows that, by 1994, New Jersey had become No. 1 among all 50 states in gross state product per square mile. This was surprising for us to learn, but we put together a lot of numbers to come to this finding. And also by 1994, our state had become the largest economy among all 50 -- had become the eighth largest among all 50, and were we a nation, would be the eighteenth largest economy in the world.

This is a statement about the importance of New Jersey in the nation's economy and in the world's economy, and it's also, as part of this

presentation, a statement about the need for rail transit in a big way across our entire state.

The other fact that isn't here but rings in my mind is that New Jersey is also the fifth smallest state in the union. And this leads me to think that, for large portions of New Jersey, our state among all 50 is going to be the first of all 50, certainly among the large economies in our nation, to reach zoning build out of available land. So putting together the population and the employment that are coming with the population and employment that are here is what makes rail transit particularly important.

In 1950, we here in Bergen County did not live in the county with the largest economy. Largest economy here is described in terms of population plus employment. This is the new service economy. Where large numbers of people live in close proximity to large concentrations of jobs, the service economy thrives. Businesses seek out the population that is so concentrated and start themselves up, or establish satellite offices in such places, because the same population that they're looking for consists of their customers and of their workforce. And we've entered a period in the state's economic history where that population is the most important economic resource we have, along with how it's distributed on the land.

In 1950, we were not the largest economy among the 21. By 1990, we were. Bergen County itself is the state's economic engine. We contain within our borders 11 percent of the state's population, 12 percent of the state's jobs, 17 percent of the businesses, 14 percent of retail sales, 17 percent of New Jersey real estate market, 16 percent of New York state income tax, and as of last week, as a result of a study done at NJIT, we have 22 percent

of the state's congestion. Here (indicating) is where economy and congestion come together in high densities. Our work in Bergen County, and with New Jersey Transit as partners in the West Shore Region Major Investment Study had, as one of its reasons, to find out how to convert high densities of population, high densities of employment, and high densities of congestion into transit assets.

When we look at the same statistic, population plus employment per square mile, and we put it by census block group in the service economy, we see where the highest concentrations of state economic power lie across our entire state. Here (indicating) we have, in this slide, shown that in the places in red are the ones where high speed transit is possible but not widely available. And in orange -- where these densities together are between 3 and 10,000, where hourly local bus plus commuter rail to Manhattan are possible-- And then in yellow, less than 3200 local transit is still rare, and some rush hour long distance commuting goes on by a park and ride. There's another index of economy and transportation that we have thought hard about in coming to the conclusions we draw.

Notice, if you can remember-- These two slides are quite a neat match. They show where population and employment per square mile by census block are concentrated, in my right hand (indicating), and to the right, where the metropolitan planning area is, which is the state's highest concentration of population and employment, and across which planning is to be done by the State Planning Commission. We see a strong audience for your panel, Rose, and simultaneously with the State Planning Commission (*sic*).

When we look at that same map for Bergen County, we see where population plus employment per square mile by census block are concentrated within our own county, and we see that the core, what we call the economic core of the county, can be seen here in red and yellow combined (indicating). And here is where transit has the best markets, the highest number of users, and for us, the highest number of people who can travel in both directions using transit. Hence, that map becomes an argument for light rail for moving people all day long at high speeds in cars that follow one another 12 minutes apart.

Here's a map (indicating) of the study area for the West Shore Region Major Investment Study, which we completed last May, and whose results we now work on as we enter the Draft Environmental Impact Statement phase. More on that later, but that's the key to our future -- to the future decisions we get to make about finance, and about staging of transit, and how to build a transit network. Again, more about that later. But here we see the Northern Branch as it emerges from the West Shore Region Major Investment Study, with a Northern terminus either in Tenafly or Englewood -- in that area, with the West Shore going up to New York to West Haverstraw, and then the other lines that are already in place, the Bergen Line, the Pascack, the -- I'm sorry, the Pascack Valley Line, the Bergen Line, and the main line, and here, the West Shore. These are the elements -- are what transportation network that the DEIS sets out to examine.

To say very quickly what's in the core of this economy, in the part that's highest red and yellow, here (indicating), right where the transit planning is most intense now, is where most of the state's -- where most of the

county's economy resides. On 39 percent of the square miles of the county we find 75 percent of the population, 62 percent of the resident commuters, 64 percent of the dwelling units, 36 percent of the places of work, and 63 percent of covered employment, in 1990. Now, those numbers are changing, and we track them as they change. But that shows where economy and transit densities best combine to generate customers.

Something happened in this state of ours in the '80s that changed the map of transportation planning and economic distribution of resources. Here (indicating) we see that between 1980 and 1989, as Jim Hughes at Rutgers has shown us in one of his 23 Rutgers regional reports -- each one of them a masterpiece that's as impressive as the previous one -- 82 percent of all of New Jersey's stock of rental offices were built, and our supply in Bergen alone would grow from 8 million to 26 million, by 325 percent. This is the major change in the economy. The office has completely, nearly completely supplanted the factory as the place where people work and the kind of trips they take to get there.

Now, regarding that, how do people get to work, and what kind of trips they are. What we see in Bergen County is that somewhere between 94 and 96 percent of our land is developed. We keep track of these numbers, but we now know that we shouldn't be working with our municipalities to figure out how to use the last 6 percent of their land. We ought to work with all of our municipalities to figure out how to use 100 percent of the land, as the economy continues to change on 100 percent of the land.

So here's the world we're in. Our economy since 1950 has changed from manufacturing to services in this predominant form. It's

changed from free flow to heavy congestion, and it's changed from land development to redevelopment. The redevelopment economy is what we think about now most assiduously when we figure out how to use land, is what our mayors keep telling us as we talk with them. When the land under a building gets to a certain value, the building, whether it's succeeding or not, becomes a subject of a variance to tear it down and put something else up. And this is what zoning boards and planning boards now face not only in Bergen County, but in the five counties that make up the metropolitan planning area, Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Union and Southern Passaic and a touch of Northern Middlesex. That's the red part on the map.

Back in 1943, when there were two million jobs in New Jersey, each new manufacturing job generated a half a trip per job. People average two people per car to go to manufacturing jobs. They came in in the morning and they went home at night. In the service economy now, each new service job generates up to five trips a day, because these offices that carry the burden of our work have people traveling between and among them all day long. And just not to them and from them, in the morning and the evening commuter hours--

So we have almost 10 times as many trips being generated per job in the service economy than we did in the manufacturing economy. This is profound for transit planning. When you see the results of all of this kind of stuff going on-- Here's a congestion map of Bergen County that we've prepared, and this is in trips per square mile across the entire county. Now, the entire county shows as a yellow form sticking out behind these graphs because these are square-mile graphs, and what we have determined, and to

our surprise, that the number of trips per square mile inside this core area is three times larger than the number in the balance of the county. So our congestion becomes a feature of the economy that pretty much matches the concentration of our people in our jobs.

One of the things we've done in thinking ahead about light rail, and we are spurred to do this by the Committee (*sic*) before whom we present this material, is to think about how transit and employment and how population together, at where they occur in the highest concentrations, can be read not as problems, which we have read them as for too long -- "Oh my God we have too much congestion" -- but as assets, transit building assets. So here's a redevelopment idea and concept that we prepared with the City of Hackensack, and using a terrific engineer and planner, Mike McNally, from -- formerly head of engineering and planning at Hartz Mountain for 20 years. His company built 20 million square feet in the Hackensack Meadowlands over 20 years. And when he draws a shape of a building on the map, he can tell you exactly how many people are going to be working there, and whether or not you can get the local permits, and how the buildings fit into the local street pattern. That's a lot of information to come out of one man. But it comes out of him because he has built so many buildings, on so many streets, of so many types.

Here's a redevelopment plan then that looks at the Susquehanna and Western, as it crosses the Hackensack River, near *The Bergen Record* -- here's *The Bergen Record*. (indicating) The idea here that the mayor asked us to look into was thinking about a redevelopment possibility, parallel to the tracks, where we could perhaps move the bus garage up next to the tracks, put

a platform for a light rail station across a road, widen the bridge, and figure out how to run freight and cars -- freight and light rail passengers over the same bridge. That design process is now ongoing, but it's a version of how to think in the terms we're talking about.

We did several of these, but here's one in Maywood, where you heard that John Perkins from two weeks ago. And we are working with the municipality of Maywood to look at a huge Sears warehouse that has a floor plate of some four acres, and we've discovered, again through Mike McNally's work, that we can put three office towers over the same footprint. In the redevelopment economy what we learned with our municipalities, and share with them, is the idea that, wherever you can, you'd like to use the same footprint of a building to do your redevelopment on because it has all the permits. If you have to go through the five- or six- or seven-year permit process for a new building in the last of our remaining spaces -- we all know how long it takes to get through that. So imagining the service economy sitting where the manufacturing economy once rested is a good way to find rail stations. In here we calculate the parking that can be put in structures under the offices that can be shared by the light rail. And here is the light rail coming through west of -- three-quarters of a mile west of Hackensack.

Here's (indicating) another one that we did in Leonia, where we had -- and you've seen-- A lot of you've seen this stuff in the Golden Spikes Report that we put together and in stuff that we've made available to our municipal leaders.

Here (indicating) is Palisades Park, where there is a ShopRite, and right next to it in Overpeck Park -- what about a public-private redevelopment

effort across the tracks, in an area of town where the buildings are old, and where the presence of a light rail station could generate the kind of redevelopment that we are -- that people in New York City are seeing wherever the fiber optic cable and wherever new rail construction is proposed. So here's an opportunity to do that. And we also looked at how a feeder service could move through Leonia, drop people off inside Overpeck Park, and put them on a quick shuttle inside the park down to a redevelopment zone that could occupy both sides of the road. This is a way to work with the municipality. I said to you before, we don't bring these ideas to municipalities. We go into a town, usually when invited, and the mayor says, "This is what I have in mind for my future." And we try to match the results of the West Shore Region Major Investment Study to what the mayor has to do, because we don't zone. Zoning is the province of the local municipality.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Let me interrupt you one second. Didn't the Mayor of Ridgefield Park bring that into play, as well?

MR. MATTSON: Yes, Mayor Fosdick came and showed how his one and a half miles of waterfront on the Hackensack River is a pretty -- see, I can't use -- I must use his word -- a less than inspiring collection of developments on the side of a rail track whose--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: He wants to bring that back.

MR. MATTSON: Now, we have a distinguished representative from CSX here, so I'm going to say this next sentence quickly. I can't get by his freight trains. But the planning there is to figure out how to do a new overpass, over the tracks, so that the existing buildings can become valuable to

the town, with the Mayor telling us that the last thing he wants is Bergen County to be doing -- is generating redevelopment in his neighborhoods.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's right.

MR. MATTSON: So that was a wonderful speech that he gave because he told us that his neighborhoods are the heart of his economic base. Here's where the two and three workers come home every night. These are the people that pay the taxes. They pay the taxes to improve the schools. Don't screw up that formula with the way you think about buildings that just pop up by variance unless you can think this way. So we are working with that mayor to show him how a redevelopment plan can keep redevelopment from occurring in some places while it encourages it in others.

Here's (indicating) one that we did in Fairview, with Mayor Bellucci, and we went down into attractive land, 35 acres in size, next to 1 and 9 and next to a place where the highway is going to be improved. And this is a development that occurs right at the intersection of where the Susquehanna and Western would come out, just north of the Weehawken Tunnel, and where the light rail would come right up north from the Weehawken Tunnel and where the Northern Branch meets it at the intersection of the two lines. Imagine the intersection of two light rail lines, a redevelopment that can take advantage of the highway to pull customers out of their cars and put them on the train. So here we've now come to another principle of our light rail planning: Attach rail stations, where you can, to highways, improve the efficiency of both.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We have a gentleman--

MR. MATTSON: Yes, Jack.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You have to come forward.

MR. MATTSON: Yes, anyway, you could slide over, Jack?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Sir, you have to come forward.

You're not listening. It's not the TV camera you have to worry about. It's this microphone. We have to record what you are saying. (witness refuses to come forward)

MR. MATTSON: Is there a chance you could slide over?

I have a copy of these for you. I know you requested one on the phone, but my problem is I've got two audiences to address in a room that wasn't designed to do that -- the Panel and our municipal leaders.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's all right. He just can't see the board.

MR. MATTSON: So there are others, but these are glimpses of the kinds of planning we do together to advance the possibilities for rail transit in the most congested county with the largest economy in New Jersey.

This was the subject of the -- just completed last May -- West Shore Region Major Investment Study. Most of you have read the report. The study looked at the entire rail network, existing rail lines, future rail lines, to see how best to take advantage of investments in place, matched with investments to come. And we looked at not only the center of Bergen County, but how New Jersey Transit was interested in seeing, and so were we, how all of their commuter rail lines -- many of them flow through Bergen County en route to Manhattan.

So we looked at all of these rail facilities to come to a variety of preliminary conclusions last May, and some of whose unsolved problems now are to be treated in the DEIS before us.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Chet, just for clarification again, when you say you were talking to New Jersey Transit, were you talking to New Rail Construction, or were you talking to New Jersey Transit?

MR. MATTSON: Both.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Simultaneously?

MR. MATTSON: Yes, New Jersey Transit provided us--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Because that makes a very big difference, you know.

MR. MATTSON: Yes, it does, and Jack Kanarek is here to talk about that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We're talking about the builders and the planners. You know they're two separate entities?

MR. MATTSON: Yes, yes. But you know, from our last presentation, that was one of the major conclusions to come out of this -- was that the Hudson-Bergen is coming, and the Secaucus Transfer is coming in 2002 -- steel in the sky now. The Secaucus Transfer-- wherever you can take a commuter rail train to Secaucus, you can now jump onto -- you can now transfer to midtown Manhattan, where the bulk of the economic growth has been in the last 10 years. And the person who measured it all is with us, Martin Robins.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Who?

MR. MATTSON: Martin Robins, for whom I worked at the Port Authority when we were trying to figure out how to do things like this.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, the man who liked buses instead of rails.

MR. MATTSON: Yes, and so we also noticed that the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail was coming, and it would come to Vince Lombardi, and we told ourselves how to get the benefits from both in combination -- was what we should do best next.

Something else that enters our rail planning is the fact that one out of five trips that are taken every day on our rail lines in Bergen County are one of our-- Today, work trips account for one in five trips that people take. And we have been looking at features of the economy, which tell us to look beyond the commuter traffic time as one of the key features of transit planning. And when Chris Helms prepared this pie graph for our county, he discovers that the trips are-- All of the trips that people take over a 24-hour period have one in five as the commute; but 23 percent for personal business; and 19 percent for shopping; and 15 percent for recreation and civic and educational; religious, 11 percent; social, 10 percent; and other, we can't mention them because they're illegal, 2 percent.

No, I'm kidding.

The point of all this is that trip making occurs all day long. And as you have said in so many forms, Rose Heck, what the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail offers us when it connects up to the Secaucus Transfer and to the Hudson River waterfront and to the -- along the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail and Exchange Place and Hoboken, over to Newark in one direction and New York

in the other, it puts all of our citizens in reach of a tremendous variety of activities, to the NJ PATH in Newark, to jobs in Newark, to jobs in lower Manhattan, to jobs all along the waterfront. It connects all--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: The universities and colleges, and ultimately, all the way around the state and then out of state. But again, we're concentrating on the three alternate routes of Bergen today because that was our plan when we first suggested that and recommended -- the Panel recommended -- the Hudson-Bergen Line as the most important to the success of light rail. And as we've seen on the new piece, the leg from Bayonne on 34th Street to Exchange Place--

MR. MATTSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: --it is a renaissance of wonderful community activity and community involvement in the stations, the way they were planned. We were very amazed at how much of the community input was placed within those stations, and we follow that as a guideline.

I think it's important to note that all three -- again, let's reemphasize that all three of the alternate routes are something we would like to see. You and I have said that from the beginning. Bergen is so -- in such need of economic stimulants, environmental protection.

Also, the fact that we need some transportation, convenient transportation for our seniors, for our students, for our families, as well as jobs, because it's a multifaceted project that we're talking about. It's not narrow. It's very broad, and Bergen deserves its opportunity. I know with economics we planned the public-private, but the three plans are equally important to the citizens of Bergen County and even those beyond those three plans.

So you're doing a great job pulling it together, but continue, please.

MR. MATTSON: Along with our redevelopment scenarios that we have been working with, I think, now, eight of our municipalities, we also concentrate on how to get people to the rail stops by using shuttles, vans and bus shuttles. This was a major recommendation from the West Shore Region Major Investment Study. We have to get people to the train in as many ways as we can. One of the reasons we have to do that is because parking remains a problem in a lot of our towns -- parking for the train remains a problem in a lot of our towns on all the lines as a way to get -- step from a car onto the train in the morning. So getting people there as pedestrians, getting them there as bike riders, getting them there on vans and shuttles and buses and every conceivable way becomes an important part of this whole West Shore Region MIS.

Here is a bus route that we worked out with the Mayor of Ridgefield Park, with his thinking being, if you can run shuttles to a 12 minute -- a train that runs every 12 minutes, you can also use those shuttles to get senior citizens to stores, to get kids to school, to start absorbing other trips that are not available to people on the same commuter--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Pattern.

MR. MATTSON: Thanks.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And also again, moving in conjunction and complementing on intermodal plans.

MR. MATTSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Go ahead.

MR. MATTSON: Oh, thanks.

Now, freight is a second major issue that arose during the West Shore MIS. A first was the fact that we weren't able to find large parking lots or parking lots sufficient to serve the number of people that we believe would get on a train. And so we think in as many ways as possible about how to get people to a train.

We also-- We're left-- We also found ourselves, in the middle of the West Shore Region Major Investment Study, with a radical change in the freight environment, where for example, on the West Shore Line, freight trains have -- are growing in their frequency on a regular basis as they come from the West Coast in containers from ships in Asia, across to Albany and Selkirk, New York, and down what the CSX people call the river line and we call the West Shore. I've said to Mike Brimmer, when he starts calling the river line the West Shore and I start calling it the river line, we'll have a way to do something here. But the biggest problem we had to solve was the fact that the original Hudson-Bergen was going to fit between two freight lines, as the light rail Hudson-Bergen exited from the Weehawken Tunnel and moved up the west side of the Palisades. That was the original plan that was part of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail.

As freight has increased in volume in both directions, Norfolk Southern from the south and CSX from the north, with this very narrow skinny rail yard as a switching point back and forth for the freight from both lines, it became impossible to squeeze the Hudson-Bergen line between the freight tracks. Consequently, we have gone to great trouble working with New Jersey Transit to find a way to come out of the Weehawken Tunnel, jump the

tracks, and run the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail up the west side of all of the lines, freeing up the interior of the freight yards.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Now again, tell me with whom you've been working at New Jersey Transit?

MR. MATTSON: Jack, you want to--

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE: Dan Censullo--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's New Rail Construction. Let's clarify that, please.

MR. MATTSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: New Rail is different than New Jersey Transit.

MR. MATTSON: Yes, but the consequences for light rail planning and for commuter rail planning as a result of this freight exchange makes the conversations back and forth healthy, and they are going well, as I am happy to say to you.

So we'll jump the light rail when the freight is removed from the Weehawken Tunnel to the west side of these tracks, and it can then move northward, with one leg peeling off, capable of getting up on the Northern Branch -- that's either a bridge or a tunnel we have to build to do that, but it does not present a major engineering difficulty -- and with another track -- and with two other tracks that can run up to the Vince Lombardi to become one track on an extension of that line in the future.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Chet, your original projections in conjunction with New Rail was when the entire line was built, the HBLRT--

MR. MATTSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: --that we would probably see up to a 100,000 riders a day.

MR. MATTSON: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That has not changed, that projection?

MR. MATTSON: No. We think it has increased because one of the things that -- one of the factors that was not incorporated into the original ridership projection was the fact that people from midtown New York could provide a large number of riders who could come across to Arthur Imperatore's Ferry and move south along the waterfront to jobs in Hudson County or north along the waterfront and into Bergen County to its jobs, so that that's a reverse commute that was thought to be a relatively small number in the original prescriptions about future ridership and which now becomes bigger. So we're going to see even more than originally noticed.

Chris Helms and I did a calculation that if-- Bergen County has about 450,000 people between the ages of 16 and 64. That's generally called a workforce, but it's also a lot of other people. And if each of them took one more trip, one more round trip a day on light rail than they do now, because it's not here to take it on, then our daily ridership on rail, which is only 12,000 of our 450,000 resident workers, or 2.4 percent of our work population that gets on a train today -- that could jump by a factor of 10. We'd have 10 times as many people on rail, then, if each of our people from 16 to 64 found one reason a week to make a round trip by rail. That's an astonishing concept, but it shows how flexible and how innovative the light rail concept makes your economy.

Here's (indicating) where we are now in our work. We've come through a three-year study, where we looked at 18 alternatives and we boiled them down to one, and this was presented in May and finished up in September of 1999. Now as of -- is it this week, Jack? (affirmative response) We're about ready to start -- we've started the DEIS, I believe, on -- there are two Draft Environmental Impact Statements proceeding simultaneously. One is of the West Shore and the Northern Branch combined, because they are thought to be one -- a common transit market -- how best to use the two together. And the other, the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail, and it's being studied with an extension to Route 17, and another look, as well, at Saddlebrook, and a new look, as well, at Paterson. So these are the two DEISs that are proceeding simultaneously.

And it is during these DEISs, proceeding side by side simultaneously, with the plan for the people working on all -- on both of them to be interactive all along the way -- again, a point you made a moment ago -- working all together to get the best world we can get. This is the place where we're looking at parking, or we're looking at ridership based on parking and vans and shuttles, and where we're looking at freight as a player in the choices between rail transit and freight, the terribly difficult choices that have to be made in order for us to do -- at the end of this process -- to select what's called a locally preferred alternative. And that's Federal talk for the alternative that New Jersey Transit and the Federal Transit Administration agreed is the best way to proceed.

So we are in what I would say is the most exciting part of this project because now we're getting down to brass tacks. You will know the real

costs of doing something at the end of this study, and up until now we've been using estimated costs. They got us this far. They made it possible for us to eliminate 17 alternatives and to focus on one, but the focus on one has real costs in it. I wanted to say--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Chet, for the benefit of everyone who's here, can you tell us the towns that would be impacted by West Shore, by Northern, each individually and Cross-County -- would be or could be?

MR. MATTSON: Yes, we added that to this booklet that we handed you last time and--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Could you hand me another one, please, because that one I didn't take with me. I just took the big one.

Thank you.

MR. MATTSON: And we have some of these, and we can keep making these.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I appreciate it.

MR. MATTSON: On the last week -- two weeks ago we named the stops that were to be studied in the Cross-County Line. And the stops to be looked at in detail now on the West Shore Line are stops in Norwood, Closter, Dumont, Bergenfield, West Englewood, Teaneck, and Ridgefield Park. And you remember--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: What page are you on?

MR. MATTSON: I'm on the-- Go to the end.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Okay.

MR. MATTSON: And there are three-- What is it, Chris, one, two, three -- three new pages.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, Page 1.

MR. MATTSON: There are three new pages at the end.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Okay.

MR. MATTSON: One is labeled 1, and one is labeled 2, and the other, because we're all bureaucrats, is No. 27. (laughter)

And you know, we don't want to appear too smart here, because we already have a bad enough reputation.

The West Shore Line would then have the stops that are being looked at in the West Shore DEIS, the second phase of the Major Investment Study: again Norwood, close to Dumont, Bergenfield, West Englewood, and Teaneck, another in Teaneck, and Ridgefield Park, Bogota. And again, as you remember Mayor Fosdick noted, the West Shore Line and the light rail touch one another at the border of Bogota and Ridgefield Park, and that offers a tremendous opportunity to connect up Secaucus Transfer-bound trains with Hudson-Bergen trains so anyone can stop there and select and jump off and make a transfer to the one of the two that offered the best travel service for the rest of the day.

On the Northern Branch, the light rail stations that are under study in the West Shore Region MIS are Tenafly, the Englewood Hospital, Englewood Palisade, Englewood Route 4, Leonia, Palisades Park Central, Palisades Park Route 46, Ridgefield 69th Street, and as -- And then two others that I've presented here that have come out of my department's light rail look at some of the redevelopment possibilities: a location in Leonia, within Overpeck Park, and a large redevelopment proposal that could fit into Fairview. So those are the places where this will happen.

The key thing for me to say is printed on your back page. It's the conclusion of the West Shore Region MIS, and it bears for me -- it bears reading. This study, therefore, recommends that all three lines under study are treated as a transportation network -- Your point earlier, Rose -- And should all be advanced to the EIS phase, or the DEIS phase, of this Major Investment Study -- environmental impact combination. This step will allow all three and various combinations of the three to become eligible for Federal funding.

This is a red-letter day in Bergen County's history. This is the first time we will be in a position to have work done that meets Federal standards that make us eligible for Federal funding. We've never been eligible for Federal funding for any rail new project in many, many years.

So this is a great opportunity for us. We can't miss it.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Well, I do want to, at this particular point in time, say, this didn't happen overnight.

MR. MATTSON: Oh, God Bless.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It took years, years of projections and maybes and studies, and I congratulate the freeholders of the time, who invested in the studies, and Ron Weiss, who helped us dramatically in our work and projections. He will always be highly regarded, and it was just a shame that we lost him at such an early age -- just a marvelous man, and a wonderful proponent of Bergen County's improvement in transportation. So I do want to commend you and your staff, and the members of the Light Rail Advisory Team, for all the work that they've done over the years that brings us to today. And again, I also want to thank Speaker Collins for giving me the

wherewithal, and the Panel members, Alex DeCroce and Joe Doria, the wherewithal to keep moving these projects.

MR. MATTSON: I'm just going to quick mention, Assemblywoman, the rest of the major conclusions that come out of this West Shore Region MIS because it ended up saying there's a whole variety of combined benefits that we can now pursue.

Some examples of these combined benefits are, and I'm reading from the West Shore MIS alternatives report--The existing and projected population, employment, ridership estimates combined, in our county, make for a very strong transit service area. In combination, and treated essentially as a network, the three lines together provide excellent access to urban centers in New Jersey and New York, who'd reverse commuters to homes and jobs. Multiple destinations for highly varied travel patterns are served, as is the traditional trip to the Manhattan CBD.

Clearly, when bus services are added, the geography of the entire transit market area is expanded. This approach can upset shortfalls that may develop as parking opportunities are measured with more precision in this DEIS phase ahead of us and as discussions with the rail freight carriers advance in the DEIS phase. Key transportation features of the State's development and redevelopment plan are advanced through this combined service area.

Last two-- By proceeding by the combined stop and station approach on all three lines, the entire service area and the region surrounding it all gained from the combined capacity to link together the prodigious benefits to be offered by the Secaucus Transfer and the Hudson-Bergen Light

Rail combination. And as the study moves forward into this DEIS phase, an initial operating segment IOS can emerge from the analysis.

So we find ourselves in a position we've never been in before.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

MR. MATTSON: And we're hot to do things.

Jack and I talked about--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Hold your mike up. (referring to PA microphone)

MR. MATTSON: Jack Kanarek and I talked about some of the things I could say that could be reflected in what he wanted to have said, but I want to make sure that I hand the mike to him, as Jeff Warsh's and Commissioner Weinstein's representative, and inside New Jersey Transit for these projects.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You want to give us your title and who your direct contact is?

JACK KANAREK: Good morning, Assemblywoman.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Good morning.

MR. KANAREK: Sure.

Jack Kanarek is my name. I'm Senior Director of Project Development and the Planning Department at New Jersey Transit. And it's an honor to be here to give you our status on the West Shore Region work. Chet has given a tremendous review of where we've come from and where we're going in terms of launching the DEIS work.

I'm just going to fill in a couple of details for you--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Please.

MR. KANAREK: --and be available for any questions that you may have.

We've gone through a collaborative process, working with the county, working with two advisory committees that we've had in the project. We've had a technical advisory committee consisting of representatives of the counties, government agencies that are reviewing the project, the Federal Transit Administration, and we've had a community liaison committee, which consists of representatives of municipalities, again, the same government agencies and public interest groups. We've invited members of the Legislature to participate, and we've opened it up, essentially, to all those that have a stake in the project.

We have held a number of meetings through the effort on the project, and as Chet mentioned, we've defined a recommendation for moving ahead to the DEIS and actually produce two DEIS documents. And we're on the verge of officially launching that process right now. We've requested the Federal Transit Administration to issue a public notice of scoping. We will begin the process with scoping meetings -- this is part of the Federal procedure for DEIS initiatives -- and we're hoping to see that public notice come out in the next few weeks. We'll hold scoping meetings in Bergen County, and as well, we're expecting one in Rockland County, and that will officially launch the DEIS work. There is work under way to put together the technical information that we would be presenting at the scoping meetings and working on through the course of the DEIS work.

So we're on the verge of beginning that work.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: What do you guesstimate the time will be when you'll begin the process in the county? Where the public will be involved?

MR. KANAREK: We're expecting the meetings within about two months. But we are awaiting FTA--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's the gist of it. I know it's hard to hear him, but within two months you're going to be advised that there will be a series of meetings. Once he gets the permission of the FTA--

MR. KANAREK: That's right.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: --to do these meetings, you will all be informed and be on his list. Every one of the towns that could be impacted, and all of the mayors in Bergen will be made aware of all of these meetings, so that they can put in their pieces of information.

MR. KANAREK: That's correct.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think that's very important. Very important.

Chet, do you have mayors here today?

I see Mayor Rooney -- Assemblyman Rooney.

MR. MATTSON: There are representative from--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You know you have to record so we can get-- This is being taped, and these young ladies will prepare a transcript of everything we say. So it'll be available to anyone who is interested.

We've held -- this is our third meeting in Bergen on light rail. We had an overview in February. We had a meeting a couple of weeks ago on the

West Shore -- I meant, sorry, the Cross-County, and now we're doing these two, and there will be a subsequent meeting of the Light Rail Panel as we move forward.

But within two months you anticipate that the FTA will have approved and you will have noticed the people--

ASSEMBLYMAN JOHN E. ROONEY: That's right.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: --involved, and given us a heads up. And you're not going to hold it on legislative days, are you, John?
(laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN ROONEY: No

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you.

MR. MATTSON: There are people, and I think maybe you could call on them, Assemblywoman Heck, but I know Jackie Kates is here from Teaneck. Would you want to start?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Well, I think they should really--
How many mayors are here today, by the way?

I see John. (polling audience for mayors represented)

Englewood Cliffs, right, and the Deputy Mayor of Teaneck. Tenafly is represented as well, and Closter is represented. Planner, from Englewood--

So we have someone from Closter, someone from-- The administrator is, sir, from Englewood? (affirmative response from audience).

Planner, from Englewood.

MR. MATTSON: They'll come up and speak individually.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: But again, each of the towns--

You're representing your town today? (indiscernible response from audience)

Well, I just want to make sure.

Thank you

MR. MATTSON: So how do you wish to proceed, Rose?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think, Jack, that's really important that you just gave us an approximation of the date that we will move with those technical meetings.

And now I think I'd like to invite anyone who'd like to ask questions to please come forward because we have to have you hold the microphone.

MR. MATTSON: Assemblyman and Mayor Rooney, do you want to start?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Why don't you come up here? And anyone who'd like to speak -- put this over here-- No, Chet, you stay there with the mike and you move that over there just a little bit because we're recording.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROONEY: Thank you very much for having the hearing and all of your work that you've done on this so far. I'm concerned because, basically, Northern Valley has been without rail transportation, or passenger transportation, since, probably, 1957. There was a stop in my own town of Northvale. At that time it went away, they gave us buses, they gave us pollution, they gave us long travel times into the City. And we've been, for years, trying to, basically, change that, and it hasn't happened.

I'm looking at the plan that I see, and I see the West Shore Line is the major passenger plan that will come to my town and probably most of the towns in my district, because it's going to stop at Tenafly, which is the first town. That's on the light rail side, which I believe could -- that is a feasible project. Light Rail could happen on that Northern Line. From what I'm hearing, I don't think the West Shore Line is ever going to happen. And it probably won't -- if it does, it won't be in my lifetime. Not that I'm that old, but the thing is that I'm hearing estimates of 10 to 20 years to do light rail -- I mean passenger rail. And it concerns me because one of the problems we have is that CSX is not really anxious to trade any of their freight time for passenger time.

You said earlier in the meeting that, yes, there is a lot more freight. I know. I've stood at the tracks, because we have a project going on right now. In fact, I'm trying to get CSX up there to do that rubberized crossing for us because it's a disaster. And as I was standing there with our engineer, within 45 minutes, 50 minutes, we had three trains pass by. And this is ridiculous. And this was pretty close to rush hour. It was about 9:30 a.m. in the morning. And I, you know, I hate to see us go down a blind alley with the passenger service. I'd rather see us go with a line that's available now. We've got the Northern Line. In fact, New York is pulling up the tracks because there is so little freight going there. I think we have one or two trains a week that come into Northvale on that line, and it would probably be a very simple task to bring everything up.

I had recommended someone to Chet Mattson some time back that's just over the border in Tappan, in New York, who had a huge piece of

property that would be a great turnaround place or, you know, parking place for the light rail cars. Also to have a car lot there, and it's not too far from my own town. I'm looking at Norwood and I'm hearing from Norwood. They're not too interested in the passenger line up there because they don't have any room to put the parking. I'm probably pressed that way myself, as far as parking through West Shore.

So there is a lot of problems that I see, and I think that if we go down this direction of West Shore and stop with Tenafly with light rail, I'll never see again, as I said, in my lifetime, I'll never see a passenger service come back to my area.

So that's my comment, and I--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I'm not going to take up too much time today with what I think because I want to hear what everyone else thinks about the lines. But I just give you an example that when we first started -- and Jim Greller can tell you this -- when we first started to move the idea of light rail, we were told that this would not happen. And then when push came to shove, you know, we had the proponents of buses and people saying it'll never happen, it's never going to happen. And then finally they say, "Oh yes, it will happen." The first shuttle will be in the ground in the year 2010. Now, you know that the light rail is running in Hudson already.

So those projects should not be something to deter you from what you want to do, John, for your community. And I say that to everyone here. It's a matter of determination, desire, and diligence. There are a lot of people from New Jersey Association of Railroad Passengers who can tell you what it means to pull all of this together.

So whatever it is that you are working on, John, I encourage you to talk to us and to talk to Weinstein and Warsh.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROONEY: Well, the comment is that, basically, West Shore right now is a problem that I believe is not, you know, it's not going to happen. I don't think, you know, the passenger service on West Shore, I doubt, is going to come back. I have more faith, and you've proved my point, by the fact that the light rail is already started. And light rail has a better future, as far as I'm concerned, looking at what's happening here in Bergen and Hudson counties. Light rail is the way to go.

Passenger service on West Shore, you know, I think if that's where we're putting our eggs in that basket, for my district, it doesn't help me. I think, the light rail, you know, I think that's going to be 20, 30 years away. A light rail could happen in the immediate future. But you're going to stop at Tenafly. You know that's a long way from the border. It's about 14, 15 miles from the border, from the New York border. And in fact, people in New York are asking to have light rail put in up to them.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I know.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROONEY: So there's a lot of things that we've got to--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I believe that transportation is in a very today mode.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROONEY: Right

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We're not going backwards with transportation projects. We're going forward and we're escalating the time frame, because the people need it, particularly in New Jersey, where we have

a great deal of environmental problems. And we're moving in a multifaceted way on environmental problems, including flood studies and designs that are being done now, even that will affect Hackensack. It's kind of being done on a double track. We're doing flood studies for the east and west riser ditches from Hackensack all the way up to Secaucus to circumvent all the problems that we've been experiencing over the years near our transportation modes, the highways, the rail, etc.

So again, these meetings are of paramount importance because we're making inroads, and we expect to continue to go to the Federal government for assistance in these areas.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROONEY: And I appreciate it, and I know the process. And I will be at the hearings to put in my input.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROONEY: And I thank you for your time.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: No, I appreciate it.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROONEY: I've got to go talk to Pat, so I'll see you later.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you.

Anyone else?

Yes, Deputy Mayor.

Just mention your name, and spell it for them so that they can--

JACQUELINE KATES: Yes, it's Jacqueline Kates, J-A-C-Q-U-E-L-I-N-E K-A-T-E-S (indicating spelling), Deputy Mayor of Teaneck.

I welcome the opportunity to be here today. I thank you very much. And I guess the most exciting thing that I've heard today from you,

Assemblywoman Heck, in saying that all three lines are equally important to Bergen County, and your commitment to all of the people of Bergen County, certainly all the people along the West Shore. Thousands of people need to be transported, and I know that light rail is exciting. It was exciting to see the opening. I experienced light rail when I visited St. Louis and spoke to the Mayor about how successful it had been that they had to add more lines. But I don't know what that's going to mean for us in Teaneck.

We have-- I thought the results of the Major Investment Study showed that light rail is not compatible with the commuter rail lines along the West Shore, and now with the freight-- Teaneck has had freight along Conrail lines for many, many years, but since CSX has taken over, although there has been a great deal of interaction with CSX, the people in Teaneck have been tremendously burdened by the idling of trains, by more pollution, noise pollution, whistling. And, whereas we thought of the West Shore as a potential, a positive for people, now when they hear about CSX, our residents are completely turned off and angered about it and the thought of more freight--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Just a clarification. Angered about the freight or angered about light rail?

MS. KATES: Not angered about light rail, angered about the freight -- the increase in noise and idling in our community.

And I know that we've been working with CSX, but the thought of more freight does not bode well for us, especially if it eliminates the possibility of passenger, commuter rail. And I don't see how light rail is going to help us. I don't know. That's why I'm so pleased that we're looking at this

as a transportation network and that you're not going to leave out the West Shore of-- Several of the towns had met last year in coalition to -- because we are so concerned that the West Shore -- that the eastern end of Bergen County is going to lose out on this, and it's really so essential.

I just received another letter in my township packet on Thursday from a resident of Teaneck who said he's been commuting by bus for 17 years and awaits the day that we will have commuter passenger rail in Teaneck along the West Shore. He doesn't feel optimistic. And I don't feel optimistic if we're talking about 10 or 15 years. I know we have to start someplace, but I hope that the people on the eastern end of the county are not going to be left out. Ten or fifteen years is a very long time.

So I don't know. I know that you don't have any answers at this point but--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Time schedules can't be produced at this particular juncture in time until we get all of our information together.

MS. KATES: I know that, but are we talking about somehow having light rail along the West Shore, which I thought was not compatible as far as the engineering studies are concerned.

Are we talking about--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I don't think it would still be in the study if it were not compatible. There probably will be problems that have to be overcome. We did it on the Southern route, when they said we were going to have trouble with the lines and the rights-of-way, etc. And now Southern New Jersey -- Burlington, Camden, Trenton -- is already bid out and should be

having some kind of an opening ceremony not to ride it, but to begin the work that has to be done.

MS. KATES: Because commuter trains going to the Secaucus Transfer really open up a great deal for us in eastern Bergen-- So although I think light rail is exciting, I don't -- I think we could have combinations--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: There will be combinations in all the modes of transportation throughout the state. But again, it's the economics and the feasibility studies that are progressing, and at that particular point in time you'll have more information coming at you as we go through the process.

MS. KATES: Well, considering that the end of the Major Investment Study talked about two stops in Teaneck, which is great, you know we would want to work with you and New Jersey Transit and the county in any way that we can because we would really would like to see this come to fruition as soon as possible.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We're an Advisory Panel, just so you know. And when we were put together by the Speaker, and then renamed year after year, session after session. People told us we were just nonentities and would produce nothing.

We have produced. And it is done through perseverance, determination, and with the help of the Governor. I can't say enough for Governor Whitman because she is very courageous. And we were able to push this ahead. And our \$1.2 billion project, which they said would never happen -- we received 80 percent of those dollars from the Federal government because the plan we put together through the work of so many people, and many of

them volunteers, was just so marvelous that we were awarded 80 percent of those dollars from the Feds.

I hope to, in the future, see more money coming from the Federal government, as they see how well we handle the dollars in New Jersey.

New Jersey is a very vital state economically. And we are also a wonderful, what can I say, motivator for the other states on the Eastern Coast. I think New York is a little concerned about us because we are moving ahead so rapidly, but we're determined to take our rightful place on the East Coast.

MS. KATES: Well, I don't know if New York is worried, but--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: They're worried.

MS. KATES: --I think it's a great opportunity along the West Shore, at least, for New York and New Jersey to work together--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

MS. KATES: --for Bergen and Rockland to work together.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And Pennsylvania.

MS. KATES: Right now, Teaneck is -- we're trying so hard to revitalize our business areas, and those two stops would really make a difference. So, if we can look at a long-range plan knowing that there will be some kind of commuter passenger rail along the West Shore and Teaneck, that would be very beneficial for our economy.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: As Chet Mattson said, "This is an exciting day for us. It's a red-letter day."

It's our time to promote our ideas and to put our best foot forward.

MS. KATES: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you very much.

Anyone else?

FRANK A. CAMPBELL: My name is Frank Campbell.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: No, you have to come up here, please.

MR. CAMPBELL: Nobody can hear on that thing.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's not a microphone.

MR. CAMPBELL: Well, they have to talk louder.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's right, but that's a recorder.

MR. CAMPBELL: My name is Frank Campbell. I live in Hackensack. I don't represent this city.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's all right.

MR. CAMPBELL: I just want to ask one question. When is the scheduled reconstruction of the trestle across River Street? There is talk of two tracks. Are they going to have three tracks or four tracks? When is that scheduled?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We received dollars for the trestle, Chet, right, months ago in Hackensack?

Do you have any information on that, because that's not part of this meeting.

MR. CAMPBELL: You mentioned something about the rail, the two track rails--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: No, Chet did.

MR. CAMPBELL: He did.

All right.

MR. MATTSON: The question is, when would the trestle in Hackensack -- is there a schedule for its completion, because I don't know if your voice made it into the recording.

Here is what I know.

A year and a half ago, the county put \$1.6 million of its capital planning money into the construction of a trestle that would accomplish two or three things all at once. It would be designed so that two tracks could go across it again as two tracks once had and then were reduced to one -- one part of the design.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And raise the height.

MR. MATTSON: The second would be to raise the height so that trucks would stop hitting it from below, stopping traffic of rail freight on the rail line and traffic through the city simultaneously.

Consequently Bergen County, and the owners of the railroad and the City of Hackensack, are working on a partnership to make that come about. We don't have an exact schedule yet because the design isn't complete. And it's -- the design has a couple of complications left to solve. We're confident they can be solved, but it has to do with how high the span can be in order to come back down to the ground in time, not to foul up the ability of cars to get across the tracks on Moore Street. The higher the span, the longer it takes to drop and the more trouble it causes on Moore Street.

MR. CAMPBELL: Absolutely.

MR. MATTSON: So there is an engineering compromise that has to be made between ideal height of the bridge and the fact that it can't foul up local travel.

The third thing which can always be looked at, but not in anyone's budget today, is lowering the roadway underneath. Now, the only way you can lower the roadway underneath is to add tremendous pumping capacity--

MR. CAMPBELL: I understand it all.

MR. MATTSON: --for the water that forms there now, and more of which would form if you dug the road down below. We're going to be looking jointly with this group at the cost of a big pump station and what that adds to the cost of the -- and how that affects the decision you make about how high the bridge can be, not to foul up Moore Street.

So I don't think we're in a position to say when it will be built, but both the railroad, the freight railroad, and the city want full bore ahead, and both have every reason to want this to be done as quickly as possible. And there's a lot of cooperation going on to do that.

So I think -- I know that the Mayor would like it done in six months. I know that the head of the -- Walter Rich of the rail line would like it done in six months or more, depending on the cost, and we meet regularly to figure out if we need more money for design or if we need more money for construction. But the three design features have to be solved before we know exactly when it's going to happen. That's my update, as of two weeks ago.

MR. CAMPBELL: I'm aware of the problems involved. But it was mentioned before that the question of the light rail track going through there-- will that add another track?

MR. MATTSON: No.

MR. CAMPBELL: One track or two tracks?

MR. MATTSON: No, the design of the bridge will put the number of tracks back that were there for a long time, two tracks: One exclusively for freight, and one for light rail, with passing sidings elsewhere along its trip, so that we get as much light rail capacity as we can on a line that has some freight on it.

MR. CAMPBELL: Then, No. 1, the bridge would be constructed to handle two tracks. The clearance -- isn't there a minimum clearance that has been established by the Federal Government or whatever department was available -- responsible for it, to have a minimum clearance?

MR. MATTSON: Yes, there's a minimum clearance, but it's a minimum clearance if it can be achieved. In other words, if you met the present highway standard for trucks going under the bridge, the rail component would land 100 feet west of Moore Street.

MR. CAMPBELL: There would be quite a problem.

MR. MATTSON: So what it's going to require is a simultaneous conversation between the Federal Rail Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and the Federal Highway Administration.

So that's really a kick when you get in the room with all three at once.

MR. CAMPBELL: It certainly is.

You have a certain maximum height, I believe, for trucks. Is that correct?

MR. MATTSON: Yes, there is a highway standard for trucks, but there is a freight rail capacity that is lost if you meet the truck standard.

MR. CAMPBELL: I understand that.

MR. MATTSON: So we don't know what the final height will be.

MR. CAMPBELL: Right, but my question -- specific question is that if you have a height that doesn't take care of all the trucks, then Hackensack is still going to have the problems of trucks on a different street.

MR. MATTSON: We're confident that right now, at the present stage of design -- we've only begun the engineering drawings. We're confident that all of the trucks will be able to go underneath.

MR. CAMPBELL: Well, you're equating all trucks. Now, that's quite a statement.

MR. MATTSON: Yes.

MR. CAMPBELL: That is a big problem. Divert high trucks to other streets.

Now please understand me. I'm not speaking for Hackensack. I'm just speaking here because I live here, and I know what the problem is.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you.

Please just state your name, and spell it for them so that--

E R I K L E N A N D E R: Yes.

Good morning, Assemblywoman. My name is Erik Lenander, E-R-I-K L-E-N-A-N-D-E-R. (indicating spelling)

I'm the Administrator of the Borough of Closter, which is probably two stops down the line from Mayor Rooney, on either the West Shore or the Northern, and three stops up from Deputy Mayor Kates in Teaneck.

Closter has been a fervent supporter of the West Shore. And my study and our position has always been we didn't care which line we got, as long as can get one the soonest.

We were disappointed last year when the study truncated the Northern Line at Tenafly, which put us down to one line. We had seen the Northern as a 60-foot-wide right-of-way, something you could have two tracks on, which would cover us all the way up to the New York state line. We're also very cognizant of the traffic that comes down from Rockland County.

As an Administrator, I get to talk to people that do salting and run snowplows, and in the morning they say they don't have to salt the southbound roads coming down from the New York state line because of the commuter traffic coming down through town. So any commuter traffic is not only going to help our residents, but it's going to help the traffic on our streets. It's going to be a much larger extent.

In reading the MIS final report, they talk about running the West Shore across the Meadowlands, and our residents and our Mayor and Council are very concerned of the time delay that Mayor Rooney mentioned that may take 10 to 15 years to get the permits to get the construction up and going. And we would just like to add our two cents worth to say that if we could get the Northern up in three or four years, that would be much better to the Northern Valley, because right now we've had nothing for years and years, and we just have local roads.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you very much.

MARTIN E. ROBINS: Hello, my name is Martin Robins, and I am here today representing Commissioner James J. Yarmus, who is the Commissioner, in Rockland County, of Planning and Public Transportation.

It's a pleasure to be here too today, especially before an Assembly Panel that is so supportive of the West Shore Region Study, which I think was an extraordinary effort by New Jersey Transit, and which has set the stage for some very, very important decisions that affect northern New Jersey.

In addition, Rockland County is integrally involved with Bergen County and its economic future. Rockland finds itself on the West Side of the Hudson, often times somewhat separated from transportation policy that is developed in New York state, on the East Side of the Hudson. And there are hundreds and thousands of Rockland residents, present and future, who would very much like to take advantage of investments that may occur in Bergen County that could be extended to Rockland, so that access could be gained to midtown Manhattan, as well as jobs in a variety of places, be they the Hudson River waterfront or the Meadowlands, as well.

It's encouraging to hear today that the attitude that you have expressed, Assemblywoman Heck, that we should not allow obstacles to stand in our way at this time. There are obstacles. No project is easy, and there always are issues that have to be dealt with. But there usually is a way to deal with them. And in this particular case, there are three very promising projects. And the one that seems to have some problems, more than others, is the West Shore. But I would urge that on behalf of Rockland County, that we not give up on the West Shore because the stakes, with regard to the West Shore, are very high.

From a Rockland perspective, it is clear that the West Shore offers a tremendous advantage in the future, because there would be several stations in Rockland County. There is yard space in Rockland County. There is opportunity for substantial park-rides in Rockland County. Rockland could make a major contribution to the ridership of this line. It has been estimated to be somewhere in the order between 20 and 25 percent of a very large number. In fact, if the West Shore were built, it would already step in and be, I think, at the third largest ridership of any rail line -- excuse me, it would be probably the fourth -- the fourth largest ridership of any rail line in the State of New Jersey on a per day basis, which is a very, very impressive number when you consider that there are approximately 10 rail lines that are operating in New Jersey today.

In addition to that, to those excellent numbers, the thing that I think is sort of still beyond us at this moment is the impact of the Secaucus Transfer. Of the projects that are on this list, only the West Shore will take advantage of the Secaucus Transfer. The Secaucus Transfer is far under construction. It's only within two years of being completed. There is an expectation beginning to develop -- which was what the planners thought about a number of years ago, but it now is starting to look like it's going to happen -- that the Secaucus is going to have a monumental effect on Bergen County, as well as on Rockland County.

In fact, I gave a speech in Rockland County to advise them as to how they would benefit from the Secaucus Transfer. I gave that speech about a month ago, and I got an unbelievably positive response from the residents from Rockland County about -- who have stations in Pearl River, Nanuet,

Spring Valley, Suffern, just a small percentage of what Bergen County would benefit from the Secaucus Transfer. And the reaction was electric, absolutely electric, when they realized what would be offered to them as a result of that.

My expectation is that the same thing is going to happen in Bergen County, probably many times more so, and that the interest level of the citizens of this area for every possible way to get to the Secaucus Transfer and its easy access to midtown Manhattan, where there is one million jobs, as well as interconnections with all of the rest of the New Jersey Transit system, as well as access to the Meadowlands area -- that particular project will mean an incredible amount -- and that any of these projects that can gain additional access to the Secaucus Transfer will be highly prized. But right now the project is still in the construction stage, and so people -- the common person doesn't have that sense yet that it's real, that it really means something, that it really is a new service that's available. But my prediction is that once -- and Rockland's predication is that once the Secaucus Transfer opens, it's going to open up a whole new set of demands and interests on the part of people from the county.

In addition, it's going to be such a significant -- have such a significant effect that the pressure that's going to build on the Pascack Valley, which has been identified in the New Jersey Transit study, is going to be very significant. And one of the things that is ironic about the West Shore is that the West Shore has the effect of providing relief for the Pascack Valley, and that both lines are relatively close together in portions of Bergen County, and that people will then be able to make their choices between the two lines, and the Pascack Valley will not have as much pressure on it -- as many people

trying to get on, squeezing into coaches, trying to get into parking spaces, and so on, that we expect to see happen.

Finally, the last thing I would like to say, on behalf of Rockland County, is it that the situation for that particular line in this study is unique in that has been mentioned by Deputy Mayor Kates. It has the promise of bringing money to this project from New York state. Commissioner Yarmus and the County Executive of Rockland County, C. Scott Vanderhoef, are working very diligently to attempt to get funding from the MTA and New York state for this project and to provide something of a jump start for the West Shore, if that is at all possible. The project is that meaningful to Rockland County.

So right now, New Jersey has some funding difficulties as we look at the future. And it will be very helpful if New York state, through the efforts of Rockland County, can bring some money to this project and give it a kind of momentum that -- it would be very desirable.

So for all those reasons, I wanted to make the statements here today that Rockland County has an integral relationship with New Jersey, with Bergen County in particular, and that it will be working very closely with Bergen and the New Jersey Department of Transportation and New Jersey Transit and all the other parties, and hopefully be able to appear before the Assembly Light Rail Committee -- Panel in future times to continue to discuss and advance this very important project.

Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you, Mr. Robins.

I just wanted to comment that there are a number of us here who started this project as the germ of an idea, and we knew that when we chose the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line, that we were going to make it a success, and that when it was a success, and people could see it, we were going to have people lining up from all over to want light rail in the communities.

I think the first New York state group that came to us was word through Molinari that Staten Island was interested in coming over the bridge in Bayonne, because they have a lot of people working in the Bayonne area. And we do know that Union County has done a phenomenal job -- the Jersey Gardens is a result of what they have been doing in drawing in new money to develop. The Governor said to me, after we had seen the first leg of the Hudson-Bergen Line, she said, "It's beyond our wildest dreams." That moved so quickly and so dramatically to revitalize the economy in that area -- and to see all of that work being done, because light rail brings life to a community. It brings business above and beyond the building of buildings. The restaurants become revitalized, the plumbers, the electricians, the contractors -- everyone is working. It's a much happier economy, and the people in the area are much happier. So we do know. We do want to see it go to all areas, and we're certainly not opposed to people pumping money into this particular project. And you can come with bags full of money, Mr. Robins. We'll be very happy to look at the expansion of the project because we really want this to happen.

MR. ROBINS: We hope you will.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

JERRY PLANCHER: Jerry Plancher, from the Borough of Ridgefield.

I've taken a little bit different tap here. For 33 years of my

insurance life, I worked on John Street, Downtown Brooklyn, Cord Street. And I'm telling you it was a disaster taking a bus, going into New York, going into the Port Authority Terminal. Going along Boulevard East is the only choice we have out of Ridgefield, going along Bergen Line Avenue, or if you want to get in your car and go down to Broad Avenue and possibly get a bus that will go through to the Lincoln Tunnel.

I think you are doing a marvelous job, Assemblywoman Heck. We need light rail. We need mass transit here in New Jersey. We need it, especially in Northeast Bergen County, all along the northern part of the county. I tried driving into New York. I've tried driving into Brooklyn -- forget it.

I don't know which is worse, getting stuck at the Lincoln Tunnel or getting stuck at the Lincoln Tunnel on a bus, you know. There is just no two ways about it. If we had light rail, or we had some transit going -- and maybe I wouldn't have retired eight years ago. I'd still be working. But I just couldn't make the trip anymore. And I think you're going to find that with a lot of people today.

I know in my town of Ridgefield you don't have much choice. Either you get on a bus at Bergen Boulevard, you go down to Tonnelle Avenue, or you go to Fairview and catch another bus that goes along Boulevard East. A trip by light rail, probably in a Manhattan or wherever you're going, would probably take 40 minutes or less.

I know I've been on a bus and a subway almost two hours sometimes going to Cord Street in Brooklyn. And I just didn't want to waste the last part of my life traveling on mass transit.

Thank you very much for the opportunity.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you, Mr. Plancher.

CHRIS YEGEN: Good morning.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Good morning.

MR. YEGEN: Thank you for the opportunity to address you. My name is Chris Yegen, Y-E-G-E-N. (indicating spelling) I am here representing the Borough of Tenafly.

We are very much in support of mass transit all along the Northern Line. We'd like to see it go to Rockland County, as well, because we know what's going to happen if it stops in Tenafly. We're not going to have less traffic; we'll have more.

So we think it's a necessary thing to have happen. We'd like to see it go all the way north. Our biggest problem in sitting on the Council and the Planning Board in Tenafly for the last five years -- the thing that most of our citizens come and complain about is traffic. The only way we're going to have less traffic is if we have mass transit. There are more and more developments going on in the northern part of the county where there is still developable land, at least some. And the traffic is building, and it's flowing through all the towns. The further south you get, the more traffic you have flowing through. The only way to address this is to have the mass transit come through that area.

We'd be perfectly happy to see all three lines built. We think it's needed all over Bergen County. The population density here is enormous. And all the people who have to go to New York City, for Rockland County, drive right through Bergen County, because they have no choice. They have

to drive. We'd like to see them have an alternative, and we'd like this to be the one.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Very good.

Thank you.

Anyone else?

Yes?

A R T V A T S K Y: Is this the mike? (referring to recording microphone)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's a recorder.

MR. VATSKY: Recorder, all right.

My name is Art Vatsky, V-A-T-S-K-Y. (indicating spelling)

I'm happy to be here. I was asked to be present to take information and to share some comments from Assemblywoman Weinberg's office, 37th Assembly District.

Good Morning, Assemblywoman Heck.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Good morning.

MR. VATSKY: As I've heard this presentation, and as I've thought about my experience living in the 37th and my knowledge of the whole region, I wanted to take and make some strategic comments about this line as -- about our need for mass transit and the impact lines will have on the citizens of Bergen County.

One of the things that I can say is that I'm not sure that the scope of the Cross-County Line is large enough to have a major impact on most of the people or a significant number of people in Bergen County. And to a larger extent, based on the comments of those from New York, we are part of a

region. I tend to think of New York as a partner. Certainly, the New Jersey contingency and the New York delegation, both delegations at the Federal level, will help us in getting funding for programs that we are enthusiastic about. And I'm not denying the sense and the foundation for the Cross-County Line. But we have in Teaneck -- pardon me -- we have in Bergen County a redeveloped area called a West Shore Line that was built for service with a rail line. Every house, every road, the facilities, the utilities were built around the West Shore Line being operating since the 19th century into 1959.

So we have a developed corridor, and we've had development established that lacks the option that it was designed for, rail. And what has been substituted, fortunately in the past 40 or 50 years, has been the availability of cheap fuel. So that instead of being starved by the lack of that line, Bergen County, eastern Bergen County, as well as western Bergen County, has developed because there's been cheap fuel. Well, that's why I say my comments are strategic; strategic in the sense that cheap fuel in the United States is not guaranteed, okay. If we invest in a transit system, let's invest in a transit system that saves energy for a lot of people because as we saw in these past six or seven months when the cost of energy increased 100 percent, it actually threatens the stability of economic decisions and options to the people in Bergen County .

And I would like to see a line used where we use less energy -- a lot of people using less energy -- I'm speaking so loud so I can be heard--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's okay.

MR. VATSKY: --a lot of people using less energy, because it makes living in Bergen County what it should be: A good combination of

lifestyle and a green environment, and yet close and easy access to urban and business and work centers.

I'll mention another opportunity that hasn't been mentioned before. I talked about the energy option. The other one I'm concerned about is the traffic option. There won't be many, or any, improvements in roads, other than intersection type of improvements for that northeastern part of Bergen County. We have accidents every day. We have thousands of accidents. We're crowding those roads that are already, as Mr. Mattson would tell you, at or above capacity. We need relief along a much longer corridor than the corridor of the -- that goes out to--

What is it, Ridgefield Park?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Ridgefield.

MR. VATSKY: No, Rochelle.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You mean the first piece?

MR. VATSKY: The Susquehanna goes through -- it doesn't go to Saddlebrook -- one town west, all right--

We need a larger impact. I don't want to see Bergen County or New Jersey go to the Federal government and say, "Give us this route for Bergen County--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think I have to interrupt you now because I think you -- this is marvelous for you to have that enlightened perspective. But the reason for us having a Light Rail Panel was to plan for the future of transportation because of the energy prices. Because the Northeast Corridor was in a state of recession, deep recession that needed a kind of a boost, a jump start, and because of the population, the density, etc., and the

age of our infrastructure and the problems we were experiencing, Mr. Greller -- Jim Greller and I went before the Transportation Committee a number of years ago and laid out the plans and had a resolution adopted to look at the entire spine line, the original line for all rail in the State of New Jersey, and to follow the plan of our history, which was perfect.

Isn't that what you said, Jim? (affirmative response)

And why should we reinvent the wheel, because most of it was already there for us, before it was destroyed by an entity, a big corporate entity, years ago.

Light rail is a marvelous public transportation mode that we know is very vital to our environment, our economy, etc. But the beauty of it is, is that we can do it in pieces and have it functioning and just keep adding on as we go along. Dollars are always a problem, but that doesn't stop us from moving in the direction we want to move, and that's putting light rail and intermodal transportation in the entire State of New Jersey.

So these are pieces that you see to the entire plan, and you cannot take a whole dinner and shove it in your mouth. You have to do a piece at a time. And that's what we're doing. It's courses, as far as we're concerned. It means that we are going everywhere, but we're going to do it where it brings us the greatest amount of return environmentally, economically, and for the population that it serves. And that's why we're doing not just the Hudson. That's why Chet and the county decided before we finish the original piece of the HBLRT, let's move ahead with the planning stage for Bergen County. And it started with a small piece, and then expanded to the West Shore, the Northern, and the Cross-County.

So
you, feel that you're discouraged, because we're not looking at it. We

MR. VATSKY: Well, in other words--

AS

MR. VATSKY: We're looking-- Well, that's what I was trying to
would seem that the commitment would
be to go for the recommendation of havi
the
the Because to
start the process after the completion, or af

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: LRT

MR. VATSKY: --LRT is a \$7 billion project that was signed in

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's a \$1.2 billion project.

MR. VATSKY: \$1.2 billion?

MR. VATSKY: The DBOM?

ASSEMB

But

But before it's completed, we want this piece to begin.

VATSKY: Well, then I'll ask, well, while this piece i
beginning, a s
being under construction to begin
you looking for information as to what the next piece will be?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We're right at the beginning of this section right now. We have interested Bill Pascrell in joining us to -- at the Passaic County part of it. We have all pieces moving to interest other counties to give us their support. We don't exist in a vacuum. We're an entire State that has problems. And the Northeast Corridor includes, you know, the Passaic County and Essex County, and we have to have destinations. And we add to those destinations, and then we improve upon them as we go.

MR. VATSKY: So are those plans--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: This study has to be a study as presented. This took years to put it together. So to go beyond this before we have this guaranteed, or the choice is made, is a little premature.

MR. VATSKY: Do any of those plans-- I'm trying to understand. If you talk about those counties, Essex and Passaic County, then once again, I'm concerned--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: They already have their projects, as well.

MR. VATSKY: But the--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: They have units working on it.

MR. VATSKY: That will--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: They have their county units. We -- I will again commend Chet Mattson. Chet Mattson has begun, I guess an example, Chet, that others are following. Union County is ready. They're ready to go, but they can't move until we finish this.

MR. VATSKY: The area--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And Passaic County has a piece going. So you have to remember that we're all on line here.

MR. VATSKY: But all these developments don't seem impact the north--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes, it does.

MR. VATSKY: --the northeastern, or the eastern part of Bergen County, and if it does, how?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think you really need a meeting with your county to go over that. This is looking at three areas right here. We have to concentrate and move this ahead. If we start moving, you know, you build a house and you finish a house one room at a time when you put it together. You don't say, "Oh, before we finish this house, let's build another one next door." We've got to do it one room at a time, and that's what we're doing.

These three have progressed after a myriad of hundreds and hundreds of days and thousands of hours of planning, concentrating effort, as you can see from the projections he gave today. So when we move ahead with the course of events the way -- and progress with it, then we can look at other things.

None of these are in the works he has. You have to wait until we get consensus on these three lines and the money.

MR. VATSKY: The point I was making, and maybe it's too aggressive, is that for Bergen County to go to the Federal level for a program, it should be of broader scope than this -- at this time.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: This is a broad scope. This is a broad scope.

MR. VATSKY: It's the Cross-County Line we're talking about?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We're talking about the three of them.

MR. VATSKY: That's what I'm saying, that we should approach--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We are.

MR. VATSKY: Okay.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Okay?

Thank you.

MR. VATSKY: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Sir, do you want to go there or here?

Sure.

DONALD ZEILLER: Don Zeiller.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Spell your name for these ladies.

MR. ZEILLER: Z-E-I-L-L-E-R (indicating spelling), from Tenafly. Donald.

Members of the Board (*sic*), you have encouraged me so much with the things you say.

About 40 years ago, the Governor of New Jersey came to Tenafly and talked about rail, but nothing was done. Twenty, 25 years ago, I was the Chairman of the Tenafly Environment Commission, and we had a lot of problems, because whether it was Knickerbocker Road or Tenafly Road or Engle Street or 9W, the roads were crowded always. And we had people who

were talking about light rail but never thought it would happen. But I have a feeling it's happening. It's gonna happen. What we need-- Please don't forget the Northern Valley Line, because this is where so many people come not only from New Jersey, but from New York state, too.

And we ask, please, do the best you can.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh we will, Sir.

MR. ZEILLER: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you.

Come forward, Al.

ALBERT CAFIERO: My name is Albert Cafiero. I live in Tenafly, and I'm the Chairman of the Transit Committee of Bergen County.

One of our members was the first one to come up with the idea of light rail along the waterfront, Arthur Adams.

He was going to be here today, but he's working on trying to get the day liners back on the Hudson River.

I want to clear up a couple of points. According to the way I understand, the MIS came out with commuter rail on the West Shore. They didn't rule out light rail because of the heavy freight traffic.

Now Jackie is gone, but something I suggested to the MIS study group, and they ruled it out because they said it wasn't in the project, but it should be included in: Having the light rail go from the Northern, on Fort Lee Road, a street running through Degraw Avenue to Hackensack, and it could go -- meet with the Pascack Line, because the right-of-way goes north to Anderson Street and then goes back across Cedar Lane, back to the Northern

to make a loop. And that would help Teaneck. And that should be considered in the study.

Now another thing, as far as the study is concerned, they came up with the idea of going across the Meadowlands to Secaucus Transfer. There's a couple of problems with that. I was talking to a -- Riley -- from Passiac County.

I forgot his first name.

Frank Riley, yes. And he was talking about the Lackawanna cutoff. And according to him, New Jersey Transit told them that they're not considering any new rail projects going to Secaucus Transfer because of the lack of the capacity into the tunnel into the City. It looks like there might not be enough capacity on the trains, from Secaucus Transfer to the City, when it opens. It's a touch and go.

Furthermore, when they build a new tunnel, Secaucus Transfer does not have enough platform capacity to handle the traffic through two tunnels.

So the West Shore -- instead of going to Secaucus Transfer, it should go across along the old line to the mouth of the new tunnel, when they build that, to access a region core. And access as a region core, which Bonnie Roberts was involved with, has the freight trains going directly into the mouth of the tunnel, and they're going to Secaucus Transfer. Why do people have to travel eight miles longer and transfer when you can get a train directly into the City? And this is the way-- It's eight miles to go from Lombardi to Secaucus Transfer, and eight miles from Lombardi is the UN travel time. And if they

put a thing called a Sec

that then you can get to Queens or 125th Street or to Brooklyn.

I'll give you their two maps.

MR. CAFIERO: Now, another thing,
taking Lombardi as a given. Again, Lombardi has been given for the light rail.

Greller and Arthur Adams and I got together, we were going up to
Northern, and then in 1991 Phyllis Elston got the border freehold
County to say that they wanted the wanted the rail to come here. Now, at that
to go to Bergen County. And

how did h

and he said, "Well, we didn't know anything about Bergen County. We knew
there was parking at Lombardi and we knew that there was train track
here, so we chose Lombardi." There was no study made on any point outside

Now, getting to Lombardi is going to cost quite a bit. I have here
seen this. (opening map)

This the Meadowlands, and it tells you how
far the bedrock -- I just want to show you -- because the part that is

The way the-- On the top is a little map showing-- I got this from
EIS statements of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail. And it goes across a
area where there is a over there, (indicating) which is zoned a free historic
rd of a mile,
to get from the Susquehanna branch to the Lombardi park and ride.

And then on the other side, where the Cross-County would go -- goes through another prehistoric area. And from my calculations it would cost more to go to that little area there, to the Lombardi, than it would go all the way to Leonia because it's wetland. And on the wetlands map here it shows -- there is a line here 94 feet underlying in. That means they went 94 feet down and couldn't find bedrock. Near there is another one, 140 feet down, and they couldn't find bedrock. So they have to go to bedrock to put the bridges and everything else. It's going to be very costly. I don't know if anybody has ever come across a building that ran through Lombardi. I know-- The only thing that might cross light rail would be the filling in the long slip in Hoboken. That might cost more, but this has got to be the most expensive part of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail.

Now, as far as going back to the West Shore, which I gave you, going across the Meadowlands--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Al, this one came from the EIS, you said.

MR. CAFIERO: No, this little piece over here.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: What little piece?

MR. CAFIERO: This little--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, a piece of it.

MR. CAFIERO: Yeah

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Not all of it.

MR. CAFIERO: Not all of it.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You kind of superimposed it?

MR. CAFIERO: Yeah

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: All right.

I have to give it to the ladies so they can put it in the--

MR. CAFIERO: Okay, I got copies.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And where did this come from?

MR. CAFIERO: I drew that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You did this?

MR. CAFIERO: Yes, and let me have that, and I'll show you something.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes, because I want to make sure that I give it to Rusty, and maybe he can make a copy.

MR. CAFIERO: Okay, now this part over here, going across the Meadowlands-- I spoke to, I think it's Colonel Toma of the Corps of Engineers when he was working on (indiscernible), and I asked him what the procedures were for it to go across there -- it's a complete environmental impact statement. And I asked about how long it will take. All he would say, "It would take years." He wouldn't give any more of an estimate than that, just to go across here. (indicating)

And what I'm afraid of, and I think-- I'm-- I hope it isn't something that is underhanded, but what I believe is going to happen is they are going to come out with the statement and say, "We're going to build a West Shore and we're starting with the segment from Secaucus Transfer to the Sports Complex."

And when they get to the Sports Complex they'll find out maybe five years from now, ten years from now, they can't go any further north.

So they give the appearance to the people that they're going to the do the West Shore, but in fact, I'm pretty sure that any -- I'm sure they have doubts that they can get it done. And the West Shore can only be done for regular rail. And the only way to do the regular rail is to go directly into the new tunnel and--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You have to give me those maps so that--

MR. CAFIERO: Oh, I will, I will.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: --so that we can get them duplicated.

MR. CAFIERO: Also, I've been looking at the Cross-County and the Northern, and everything else. It seems that the Cross-County is good for the big developers -- there's a lot of big development places on there -- while the Northern is good for the little people, the people that are already there. According to my calculations, the Northern, if it goes to Tenafly, can get at least 92 percent of the fare box recovery. But this would be conservative. In my opinion, based on historic facts of ridership in the past compared to the ridership now across the river, we're going to have 40,000 to 50,000 riders a day -- rides a day. That means 25,000 people will be using it each day, just on the Northern. That includes across the off-peak hours and everything else.

The New Jersey Transit is infamous for underestimating the number of riders. They miscalculated the--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: The direct?

MR. CAFIERO: --Midtown direct by, I think they were--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: They did.

MR. CAFIERO: I think they were -- and I think they-- I understand where they're coming from because of the-- What is the report that they had years ago that everybody was estimating? So they're being very conservative. But you can't be too conservative, because you'll have capacity. The Secaucus Transfer has only four tracks through it, and if they put a new tunnel in there, the train stopping there will slow it down. But if you have the West Shore and you can get the Bergen Line and the Pascack Line going on the Susquehanna to the mouth of the new tunnel, you alleviate the problem at Secaucus Transfer.

Any questions? (laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: No, I want all your paperwork, though, so I can make copies.

MR. CAFIERO: One other comment.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Okay.

MR. CAFIERO: As far as I know, in this country there has never been a successful light rail line where they started up -- one track that didn't have the double track in a short time. And the problem with the Cross-County I see as light rail -- it's going to be a tremendous cost to double-track it. It's going to cost more to double-track it than the building of the Northern and the West Shore together because of the constraint of the right-of-way. And we don't want to have something that -- people want to come to it and they can't use it, or won't use it because they can't come to it.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you, Albert.

MR. CAFIERO: Thank you.

T H E R E S E L A N G E R: Hi, I'm Therese Langer, L-A-N-G-E-R
(indicating spelling)

I'm from the Environmental Law Clinic at Rutgers, Newark, but I'm here representing the Tristate Transportation Campaign, which is a -- I'm sure you know--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Good, yes.

MS. LANGER: --an advocacy group that represents part of New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut. And naturally, one of our primary interests is public transit service in the entire region. And I want to first say that restoration of passenger rail service in eastern Bergen County is, from our point of view, the No. 1 priority for New Start Rail Service in New Jersey now.

So we're, of course, very pleased to hear that the DEIS is now going forward and will be very interested in the scoping and looking in some detail at these issues about freight interference on the West Shore, the wetlands issue that Al Cafiero's raising, and so forth, and what the proper terminus is for Northern.

Two points I want to emphasize here -- I think one has already been covered by a number of speakers -- and that is, from a regional perspective, the importance of a service to Rockland County, I think, is very great, and all the more significant now when there's the danger of having Rockland County, the MTA, and important possible participants distracted by the idea of a tremendously expensive rail service across the Tappan Zee Corridor. That's a, you know, possibly pie-in-the-sky project where we have one ready to go here that in many senses would be much greater -- has greater potential to serve Rockland County. So you know, I think it's important to

keep them sort of focused on the potential of the Northern Branch and the West Shore right now.

And the second comment I wanted to make is that, clearly, obtaining the Federal dollars for moving these projects forward now is very high priority, but we also think it's very important to have the State showing its commitment to the lines now, and that is New Jersey, and that an opportunity to show that commitment is through the reauthorization of the Transportation Trust Fund. And that it would be very helpful to have some explicit language put into the trust fund saying that some combination of West Shore and Northern is a priority, and that there will be a commitment to move whatever combination of those turns out to be -- to have the greatest potential forward within a certain time frame.

So again, I would just like to emphasize the opportunity to move things forward.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you.

Any other comments?

Well, I think we've had a very good meeting today. And it gives us a lot of information that we can peruse, dissect, add to, and before we have our next meeting--

Do you want to say something, Chet?

MR. MATTSON: No, I wanted to say thank you from all of us for bringing the Panel here.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's our pleasure.

We're a road show. You know that, Chet. We go north, south, east and west.

But this is-- Bergen County is my home county. And I'm very happy that we're reaching this point. We're seeing the opportunity to move this ahead. I'm very pleased. I'm pleased at the information that we got today, and I'm very pleased that people are getting as enthusiastic as the Panel.

And you, Chet.

MR. MATTSON: We're catching up with you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

Thank you very much, all of you. And you'll get noticed on our next meeting.

(MEETING CONCLUDED)