



Kathryn A. DeFillippo, Chair
Mary D. Ameen, Executive Director

FREIGHT INITIATIVES COMMITTEE

Commissioner Charles Kenny, Chair

Meeting Minutes

October 18, 2021

I. Roll Call of Members

Freight Initiatives Committee (FIC) Chair Commissioner Charles Kenny, Middlesex County, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. There were 12 voting members of the FIC present. The Commissioner noted that the NJTPA had applied for 1.5 AICP credits and 1.5 Professional Engineering credits for the meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2021 meeting was made by Union County, seconded by Somerset County, and carried unanimously.

III. Update on NJTPA Freight Division Activities

Anne Strauss-Wieder, Central Staff, said the amount of industrial real estate in the NJTPA region continues to grow rapidly, with several million square feet completed during the most recent quarter. She said the industrial real estate market throughout New Jersey and Pennsylvania is “red hot” for a variety of reasons, and the MAP Forum Multi-State Working Group held a workshop in September on real estate trends and considerations. The discussion focused on the accelerated demand for space and recognized that industrial property is not one-size-fits-all. Details on the workshop, including the recording and presentations can be downloaded from <https://map-forum-njtpa.hub.arcgis.com/pages/freight>

Ms. Strauss-Wieder said that, despite national supply chain problems, the Port of New York and New Jersey is functioning with minimal delays. Since October 14, three container vessels were at anchor at the Port of New York and New Jersey, in contrast with the Port of Savannah, where 24 vessels were waiting, and the West Coast with many more. She said container activity at the Port increased by the end of 2020 as facilities came back online. She noted that online shopping peaked at about 21 percent of market share during the fourth quarter of 2020 and has dropped down to about 19 percent but continues to be very robust and is “clearly here to stay.” The definition of ecommerce has also expanded to include many consumer goods and “buy online, pick up in stores (BOPIS)”.

Ms. Strauss-Wieder thanked the partner agencies and subregions involved in implementing two studies under the NJTPA Freight Concept Development Program. She said two virtual public meetings had been held for the Berkshire Valley Road Truck Circulation Project in Roxbury, Morris County, and the Port Reading Secondary South Main Street Grade Crossing Elimination Project in Bound Brook, Somerset County. For more information and links to the study websites, visit <https://www.njtpa.org/2021FCDP.aspx>.

IV. Presentations:

Current State of the Air Cargo Industry

Brandon Fried, Executive Director of the Airforwarders Association, said the air cargo industry has played a significant role in addressing the current overflow of goods in the supply chain. He said, traditionally, most air cargo handled by forwarders has been flown in the belly holds of passenger jets. Now, increasing air cargo demands have prompted all major carriers to repurpose some passenger planes to full cargo carriers by loading packages onto passenger seats. He noted that labor shortages and airport congestion are limiting air cargo expansion. He also discussed growing concerns about cybersecurity threats and the need to ensure that goods containing hazardous materials are not shipped as air cargo.

UPS's Initiatives in the NJTPA Region

Chris Lutick, Director of State Government Affairs, UPS, said the company is exploring new services for moving truck trailers by barge or ferry between New Jersey and New York to avoid highway congestion and to reduce environmental impacts. He said the marine highway concept was tested this summer and is undergoing further development in collaboration with marine operators, the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey (PANYNJ), and other partners.

V. Two-Minute Reports on Freight Activities from Committee Members

Jay Shuffield, PANYNJ reported on truck activity on trans-Hudson crossings. He said light truck volume is slightly down from 2019, and large trucks are running a little higher.

Alan Kearns, NJ TRANSIT, said the agency is working with New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) on the New Jersey State Rail Plan. Meetings with Norfolk Southern, CSX and Conrail have been scheduled and will be followed by meetings with some short line railroads. Public outreach will be conducted through virtual meetings.

Genevieve Clifton, NJDOT, announced there will be a Freight Advisory Committee meeting on November 18, and the agency will collaborate with the Federal Highway Administration to host a workshop on freight and complete streets in January.

Jeffrey Niemen, Governor's Authorities Unit, talked about his personal observations of the thriving activity at Newark Airport and the transformation of the Jersey City waterfront compared to 30 years ago. He said North Jersey businesses, freight activities, and transit appear to be healthy and thriving.

Commissioner Kathy DeFillippo, Morris County, thanked Ms. Strauss-Wieder and Mr. Jakub Rowinski, the NJTPA and the consultant team that conducted a virtual public meeting about the Berkshire Valley Road Traffic Circulation Project in September. She said the meeting went well and generated useful feedback that will help the study to advance. The Commissioner also said that Morris County is moving forward with the design for a runaround track, along the Dover and Rockaway Railroad line to improve rail freight operations in Rockaway Township. She said design and construction are being funded through the NJDOT Rail Freight Assistance Program, and construction is expected to begin next year.

Byron Nicholas, Hudson County, said the Hudson County Truck Routes Assessment, an NJTPA sponsored study under Subregional Studies Program, will assess truck traffic patterns, safety, and truck route equity for environmental justice communities. Mr. Nicholas said the study will also analyze air quality issues and determine how to address them through new technologies. He said a request for proposals would be issued shortly.

Ken Wedeen, Somerset County, said the first public meeting for the Port Reading Secondary South Main Street Grade Crossing Elimination Project in Bound Brook, Somerset County was held in September and was well attended. He said a recording and summary of the meeting are available on the study website at <https://www.southmainstreetgradecrossing.com/>.

Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski, Union County, said the Union County Truck Mobility Study has been completed. The final report and executive summary are available on the NJTPA website at <https://www.njtpa.org/Planning/Subregional-Programs/Studies/Completed-Studies/2020-2021/Union-County-Truck-Mobility-Study.aspx>. Study findings were also entered into the NJTPA PRIME database at <https://prime.njtpa.org/>.

IV. Next meeting:

Commissioner Kenny announced that the next virtual meeting of the FIC is scheduled December 13, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. and will feature the Annual Industrial Real Estate Update.

V. Adjournment

At 2:18 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by Union County, seconded by Morris County, and carried unanimously.

**Freight Initiatives Committee
ATTENDANCE
October 18, 2021**

VOTING MEMBERS	
Hon. Charles Kenny (Chair)	Middlesex County
Hon. Kathy DeFillippo	Morris County
Hon. John Kelly	Ocean County
Hon. Chris Carney	Sussex County
Hon. Bette Jane Kowalski	Union County
Byron Nicholas	Hudson County
Trevor Howard	City of Newark
Ken Wedeen	Somerset County
Jeffry Nielsen	Governor's Authorities Unit
Genevieve Clifton	NJDOT
Alan Kearns	NJ TRANSIT
Jay Shuffield	PANYNJ
Other Attendees	
Jim Katzenberger	Accelerx Group
Jim Hess	AECOM
Rutuja Patil	ARUP
Sherry Bauer-Stephan	Bahlsen
Joseph Baladi	Bergen County
Alice Cheng	Cheng Solutions
David Kriger	David Kriger Consultants Inc.
Rickie Clark	FHWA
Dan Healey	GHC
Matt Van Hattem	HDR
James Humphries	Highlands
Thomas Malavasi	Hudson County
Kevin Force	Hudson County
Carrie Fellows	Hunterdon County
Katherine Fullerton	Hunterdon County
Scott Parker	Jacobs
Capt. Jeffrey Flumignan	MARAD
Tom Morkan	MARAD
Doug Greenfeld	Middlesex County
Denise Nickel	Middlesex County
Mike Dannemiller	Middlesex County
Ali Rezvani	Moffatt Nichol
John Hayes	Morris County
Dede Murray	Morris County
Lou Millan	NJ TRANSIT
Mary Ameen	NJTPA
Blythe Eaman	NJTPA

Keith Hamas	NJTPA
Mark Solof	NJTPA
Jeffrey Perlman	NJTPA
Ann Ludwig	NJTPA
Eve Chamberlain	NJTPA
Jakub Rowinski	NJTPA
Anne Strauss-Wieder	NJTPA
Melissa Hayes	NJTPA
Ted Ritter	NJTPA
Beverly Morris	NJTPA
John Ernst	Ocean County
Mark Jehnke	Ocean County
Peter Palmer	Palmer Enterprises
Sal Presti	Passaic County
Andras Holzmann	Passaic County
Michael Lysicatos	Passaic County
Stephanie Finch	PANYNJ
Blair Wegescheide	PANYNJ
Hillary	PANYNJ
Tom Drabic	Sussex County
Liza Betz	Union County
Chris Lutick	UPS
Brian Appezzato	Warren County
Stephen Chiaramonte	WSP
Brandon L. Fried	
Paul Onish	
George Bulow	