



## **FREIGHT INITIATIVES COMMITTEE**

Commissioner Jason Sarnoski, Chair  
Commissioner Sara Sooy, Vice Chair

### **Meeting Minutes October 17, 2022**

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#### **I. Roll Call of Members**

Freight Initiatives Committee (FIC) Chair Commissioner Jason Sarnoski, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Jakub Rowinski, Central Staff, called the roll. There were 13 voting members present.

#### **II. Approval of Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes of the August 15, 2022 meeting was made by Ocean County, seconded by Hudson County and carried with 12 affirmative votes. Warren County abstained.

#### **III. Update on NJTPA Freight Division Activities**

Mr. Rowinski said the NJTPA Freight Rail Grade Crossing Assessment Update, led by Cambridge Systematics, is expected to conclude by June 2023. The study will update an assessment completed by NJTPA in 2008 to address the impacts of freight rail traffic along the region's major freight rail lines. Mr. Rowinski reported also that two studies are being conducted under the Fiscal Year 2021 Freight Concept Development Program: 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. The studies are scheduled for completion in June 2023.

#### **IV. Presentations: Strategies and Effective Practices for Planning for and Working with Developers on Industrial Development in Communities**

Donna Rendeiro, Executive Director of the NJ Office of Planning Advocacy said planning and zoning boards around the state have been inundated with applications to build giant warehouses and distribution and fulfillment centers. She said that led the State to issue recent guidance to help municipalities determine how, or whether, to allow warehouses. The state's guidelines encourage a proactive rather than reactive approach, providing municipalities with factors to consider when updating their master plans and ordinances. The guidelines also support a regional approach to siting warehouses.

Wilda Diaz, former mayor of Perth Amboy in Middlesex County, said the creation of the Perth Amboy Redevelopment Agency in 1997 and the adoption of a redevelopment plan helped the city address a legacy of contamination at several former industrial brownfield sites. Ms. Diaz said one of the projects that came out of that plan is a Home Depot distribution center. The project invested \$500 million for new construction and more than \$10 million to remediate 92 acres of contaminated land, opening a logistics center that created more than 500 jobs. She said, through negotiation, the city was able to acquire open land and had a developer construct an amphitheater as well as major road repairs, infrastructure improvements, and other enhancements. Ms. Diaz said, overall, more than 500 acres of contaminated sites in Perth Amboy have been remediated, and this has attracted and generated nearly \$1 billion in new construction projects, nearly \$15 million in tax ratables, and more than 3,000 jobs for residents.

Commissioner Sarnoski pointed out that counties and municipalities do not have the tools that would require towns to work together and avoid a situation where one town reaps the benefits of industrial development, while adjacent towns must deal with the infrastructure issues of serving that development.

A wide-ranging Q&A session ensued.

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

Stephen Chiamonte from WSP for NJDOT said grant requests for the Rail Freight Assistance Program are under review, and the application period for grants under the Local Freight Impact Fund is open.

Stephan Pezdek, Port Authority of New York & New Jersey (PANYNJ) said, as of August, the Port has been named the nation's number one port, by volume, mostly due to a shift in incoming sailings to the East Coast rather than the West.

Alan Kearns, NJ TRANSIT, said the agency continues to develop the State Rail Plan, and expects to issue a draft early next year.

#### VI Next meeting: December 12, 2022, 1:00 p.m.

#### VII. Adjournment

At 2:30 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by the Governor's Authorities Unit, seconded by the City of Newark and carried unanimously.

**Freight Initiatives Committee  
ATTENDANCE  
October 17, 2022**

VOTING MEMBERS	
Hon. Jason Sarnoski (Chair)	Warren County
Hon. John Kelly	Ocean County
Hon. Bette Jane Kowalski	Union County
Hon. Charles Kenny	Middlesex County
Byron Nicholas	Hudson County
Dolores Wooden	City of Newark
Andras Holzmann	Passaic County
Adam Bradford	Somerset County
Lou Millan	NJ TRANSIT
Janice Marino-Doyle	NJDOT
Jay Shuffield	Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
Dorian Smith	Governor's Authorities Unit
Candace Guthrie	Citizen's Representative
OTHERS	
Christopher Helms	Bergen County
Katie Kirk	Cambridge Systematics
Dr. Jobi Odeneye	Essex County
Rickie Clark	FHWA
Bob Werkmeister	GPI
James Humphries	Highlands Council
Kevin Force	Hudson County
Katherine Fullerton	Hunterdon County
Kris Melchers	Hunterdon County
Mike Dannemiller	Middlesex County
Andrew Lappitt	Middlesex County
John Hayes	Morris County
Dede Murray	Morris County
Ernie Landante	NAIOP NJ
Trevor Howard	City of Newark
Adam DiSarro	NJ TRANSIT
Alan Kearns	NJ TRANSIT
Genevieve Clifton	NJDOT
Various members of Central Staff	NJTPA
Rick Crawford	Norfolk Southern
Mark Jehnke	Ocean County
John Ernst	Ocean County;
Stephan Pezdek	PANYNJ
Todd Goldman	PANYNJ
Blair Wegescheide	PANYNJ
Andras Holzmann	Passaic County

Tom Drabic	Sussex County
Liza Betz	Union County
Ryan Conklin	Warren County
David Dech	Warren County
Stephen Chiaramonte	WSP
Donna Rendeiro	NJOPA
Wilda Diaz	
Jim Katzenberger	
Ronald Klempner	
Zac Werkmeister	
Erika Francis	
Liz L	
Mike McGuinness	NAIOPNJ
Dan Farina	DVRPC
Devyn Cordero	NJDOT