

MONMOUTH COUNTY PLANNING BOARD TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

PAUL KIERNAN, JR.
Planning Board Chairman



ERIC NELSON
Council Chairman

Minutes for the Meeting of the
Monmouth County Transportation Council
Tuesday, April 12, 2016
Monmouth County Planning Board
One East Main Street
Hall of Records Annex Building, 2nd Floor
Freehold, NJ 07728

I. CALL TO ORDER – 7:00 PM

II. ATTENDANCE – ROLL CALL

Members Present

Thomson, Edmund
Frost, Barry
Nelson, Eric
Vernick, Jeff
Hennessy, Thom
VanNortwick, Peter
Burke, Tom
Garaguso, Anthony
Grbelja, Nancy
Doyle, Peter

Staff Present

Gamallo, Anthony
James Bonanno – Staff Advisor

Members Excused

Barrett, Betsy
Long, Dina

III. REVIEW OF MINUTES

Approval of the March 8, 2016 minutes was sought by Chairman Nelson. Vice Chairman Vernick identified a few errors pertaining to the names of NJ TRANSIT's buses and spelling errors which needed to be corrected. Mr. Garaguso motioned to accept the minutes as edited. The motion was seconded by Mr. Burke and with the exception of Mr. Doyle who abstained; the minutes were accepted by the council.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Letter to Legislatures Regarding NJ TRANSIT's Removal of Rear Bus Signage:

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Ms. Grbelja outlined the Planning Boards discussion of the removal of rear-facing bus signage for the Transportation Council and alerted them to the Boards decision to allow the Council to address their concerns to the County legislatures by means of a letter. Mr. Vernick suggested the content of the letter be focused on the removal of signage's negative effect on riders and the monetary cost the removals incur. Ms. Grbelja added that there should be an emphasis on the usefulness of the signs to bus passengers. The Council tasked Mr. Bonanno with writing and sending these letters to all legislatures and assemblyman representing Monmouth County.

Discuss How The MCTC Can Assist The Street Smart Campaign:

Mr. Burke suggested disseminating information on the Campaign or Campaign pamphlets to each of the council members' liaison contacts in an effort to exemplify the benefits of having a Street Smart Campaign in their municipalities. In addition, Ms. Grbelja proposed enlisting service organizations such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and teens performing community service to assist with handing out safety literature at public events. To move forward with assisting the Street Smart Campaign Mr. Nelson felt it would be beneficial to request a post-Red Bank outreach report from NJTPA. With more information on the outcome of the Red Bank Street Smart Campaign which took place in March, the Transportation Council intends to establish a sub-committee tasked with encouraging the spread of the Street Smart Campaign.

Discuss Master Plan Suggestions, Recommendations, and Comments:

Influenced by the increase in public interest in street cars and light rail, Mr. Frost voiced his interest in seeing more existing unused rail lines being revived into light rail lines. Mr. Bonanno recorded Barry's input and will be considering it for inclusion into the Monmouth County Master Plan. While on the subject of unused rail lines, Mr. Vernick reminded the Council of The Rails to Trails organizations and how their efforts to transform unused rail lines to trails can be used to preserve railway right of ways. Mr. Vernick requested Mr. Bonanno reach out to Rails to Trails in an effort for more information and possibly a presentation on Rails To Trails work being done.

V. REPORT OF STAFF

NJ.com article "OMG, Lawmaker Wants to Ticket Pedestrians Who Walk and Text"

Mr. Bonanno introduced and summarized the article to the Transportation Council. A new law being proposed intends to ticket all pedestrians who are using a hand held device while crossing the roadway. Mr. Vernick posed an anecdote about his use of a cell phone while crossing the road to record drivers' behavior in order to ensure the safety of himself and other pedestrians crossing said road. Mr. Vernick conveyed to the Council through his narrative that not all hand held device use while crossing roadways is necessarily a safety hazard, leading the council to believe this new law would be unenforceable. The Council's final opinion of this proposed law was that it would most likely not become a law and no action was needed by the Transportation council to ensure this.

NJ.com article "NJ TRANSIT Trains and Buses are Breaking Down More Often, Stats Show"

Mr. Vernick introduced this article and explained that NJ TRANSIT's buses and trains are breaking down more often than neighboring transit agencies' vehicles. Mr. Frost suggested that NJ TRANSIT may not be at fault, and that there are most likely extenuating circumstances leading to these low mean distances between failures. Mr. Nelson also posed the question of what are the averages for these numbers, and while NJ TRANSIT's numbers have dropped, are they still within the acceptable limits of a transit agency. The Council expressed concern for the convenience of transit riders and for NJ TRANSIT's ability to maintain funds with such low efficiency. With little information being provided by the article as to NJ TRANSIT's measures being taken to fix this issue, Mr. Bonanno was talked with inquiring on the Council's behalf on this matter.

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Light Rail Surveillance is Starting to Record Audio as well as Video

Mr. Vernick introduced the fact that NJ TRANSIT light rail will begin recording audio surveillance in addition to video surveillance. Ms. Grbelja voiced her opinion that if it is in the best interest of the safety of the passengers then audio surveillance is not an invasion of privacy. The notion was shared by the Council which then decided to wait for the story to develop further before any decision to take action is made.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were received from the public.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next public Monmouth County Transportation Council meeting – 7:00PM Tuesday, July 12, 2016 at the Monmouth County Division of Planning Conference Room at 1 East Main Street, 2nd Floor, Freehold, NJ 07728

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Following a motion to adjourn the meeting by Ms. Grbelja and seconded by Mr. Doyle, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.