

## MEETING MINUTES

**To:** PAC members

**Date:** 6/8/99

**From:** John D. Dean, MTA

**Meeting Location:** Dept of City Planning  
 Spector Hall  
 22 Reade St.

**Re:** MTA Contract No. 1-01-97054-0-0  
 SYSTRA Project # 4351  
**Meeting Title: PAC Meeting #4 - 6/8/99**

**Attendees:**

Name	Organization
Colleen Alderson	NYCDPR
Barry Adler	ESPA
Rosalie M. Banks	Community Center
Henry Colon	Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination
Todd DiScala	Metro North Railroad
Michael Doyle	PCAC
Michael Follo	Interested Citizen
Merrill R. Frank	Councilmember Kathryn Freed's Office
Elizabeth Gibbs	REBNY
William K. Guild	CBT/TRC/PCAC
R. Hansen	NYSDOT-Region 11
David Haskell	Municipal Arts Society
John Johnston	Councilmember Martin Golden
Robert Kulikowski	Manhattan Borough President's Office
Rich Levin	
George Haikalis	IRUM
Yvonne Morrow	Assemblyman Silver's Office
Peg Myerson	Women's City Club
Michael O'Conner	Alliance for Downtown NY

Name	Organization
Bob Olmsted	NUTS
James O'Shea	
Albert Papp, Jr.	NJ Association of RR Passengers
Meg Reed	NYS Sen. Connor
Gorman Reilly	CIVITAS
Debbie Roth	Assemblymember Glick's Office
John Rozankowski	Fordham-Bedford
Eunice Samuels	Meltzer Towers
Lou Sepersky	Metro East
Arkadiy Sherman	NYSDOT-Region 11
Tim Steinhilber	Bechtel
Lawrence Stelter	Brooklyn Community Board 10
Stephen F. Wilder	Manhattan Community Board PCAC
Larry Fleischer	MTA
Ruby Siegel	SYSTRA Consulting
Alexandra Zetlin	Zetlin Strategic Comm, Inc.
Andrea Weiss	Zetlin Strategic Comm, Inc.

## **Handouts:**

- Meeting Agenda
- March 9, 1999 PAC Meeting #3 Minutes
- Level 2 Build Alternatives
- Level 1 TSM Alternatives

## **I. Introduction:**

Larry Fleischer, MTA, welcomed participants to the fourth PAC meeting of the *Lower Manhattan Access Study*, and introductions of meeting participants were made. Mr. Fleischer asked for further comments, questions or additions to the minutes from the third PAC Meeting. Mr. Sepersky corrected the spelling of MetroEast. There were no other additions/changes to the minutes offered and the minutes were accepted as amended.

## **II. Project Status/Progress Update**

### **✓ Level 2 Long List Review**

Ms. Ruby Siegel of Systra Consulting informed attendees that the consultants are busy working on the conceptual design of Level 2 Build Alternatives. She briefly described the current list of alternatives which consists of 5 Build Alternatives and 10 Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternatives. She explained that TSM measures are designed to enhance rather than expand the existing transportation system. These options are less capital intensive than Build Alternatives, and do not involve the same level of new construction that the long-term alternatives would. She noted that the commuter rail options would provide a one-seat ride to Lower Manhattan for both Long Island Railroad and Metro North commuters.

Mr. John Johnston of Councilmember Golden's Office asked, whether all Brooklyn alternatives refer only to downtown Brooklyn. Ms. Siegel answered that the commuter rail options include an extension to Flatbush Terminal, and subway options contemplate connections to existing Brooklyn service. Mr. Papp informed attendees of a recent New Jersey Transaction Conference and stated that the *Access to the Region's Core* study conducted a panel discussion on their proposal for a tunnel connection from Grand Central Terminal to Penn Station. Mr. Papp asked, if the ARC connection does not move ahead, might the Lower Manhattan study be expanded to consider a New Jersey/Lower Manhattan tunnel as an adjunct to a build alternative. Ms. Siegel responded that we are leaving questions concerning ARC open until that study reaches its conclusions. In addition, *The Lower Manhattan Access Study* will consider benefits and travel demand from New Jersey, but will not recommend infrastructure improvements beyond the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's jurisdiction. Mr. Fleischer stated that both LMAS and ARC are being closely coordinated. Stephen Wilder of PCAC and Community Board 5 asked if there could be an LL2B option that would provide a larger MESA tunnel in order to fit commuter rail cars. Mr. Fleischer stated that this study is not an alternative to MESA, and MESA decisions cannot be changed at this point.

Ms. Siegel then explained the 10 TSM alternatives, and noted that they are designed to get people to their destination quicker and more reliably and largely represent improvements to subway service. Mr. Merrill Frank of Councilmember Freed's Office asked how much capacity the new technology train control would add, and by how much time it was being advanced. Mr. Fleischer responded that this information is being developed.

Ms. Siegel explained that the study team is now analyzing the Build and TSM alternatives, creating conceptual designs determining how they would operate, how ridership would respond, and determining the benefits. Mr. Rich Hanson of NYSDOT questioned the wording referring to the "former LIRR Bay Ridge line." Mr. Hanson thought that the branch is in use by the NY & Atlantic Railroad. The status of the line will be reviewed and the TSM description will be corrected as appropriate. Ms. Eunice Samuels of Meltzer Towers asked whether the study includes access for handicapped and elderly people. Ms. Siegel responded that anything that is built will need to follow ADA guidelines and therefore will be fully accessible. Mr. Johnston commented on access problems from southwest Brooklyn (Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights) to lower Manhattan, and asked if access improvements to that area are included in the study. Mr. Fleischer responded that while there are benefits to a broad population in this study, the LMAS focuses on the suburban commute to Lower Manhattan. Ms. Rosalie M. Banks emphasized that transportation access is very important to the elderly and handicapped. Mr. Lou Sepersky, MetroEast encouraged Ms. Banks to become and remain actively involved in the study in order to make sure that this issue is addressed. Ms. Siegel agreed and also assured Ms. Banks that all new construction is handicap accessible.

#### ✓ Lower Manhattan Commuter Rail Station Update

Ms. Siegel reminded members that an initial question that the study needed to address was whether a station or terminal could be built in Lower Manhattan. She then clarified the difference between a terminal and a station. A terminal is where service stops or turns around because it is the end of the line. A station is where service runs through and on to another destination on that particular line. Ms. Siegel stated that the team has been working on where to site stations. She explained that the first step was to create the basic footprint, box or outline of the station by determining the size requirements. The second step involved walking through Lower Manhattan to find sites that would fit the station criteria. She explained that the station will have to be underground in order to construct it with minimal impact on adjacent properties. She stated that the team looked at street width, availability of property and locations where people work in selecting sites.

Ms. Siegel informed attendees that only 8 potential sites were found based on this "first glance" review. These eight were then subjected to a more detailed evaluation, and screened to a list of four. Ms. Siegel then presented the Station Site Matrix that explains why 4 stations out of 8 were eliminated. She explained that the team looked at existing transit lines, how deep they would have to build, historical buildings, narrowness of streets, where people want to go, environmental impacts, and how difficult it would be to construct. She described station size and depth requirements. Several construction methods were examined, including cut and cover, tunnel boring, and marine. She stated that the two most important criteria are: Constructability (how difficult is it to build) and Does it serve the Goals and Objectives of the study. Mr. Sepersky asked about high-speed elevators and escalators in order to address the issue of depth. Mr. Fleischer explained that if a station is built too deep underground it could fail to meet fire regulations. Mr. Hanson asked whether a station could be built horizontally rather than vertically. Ms. Siegel responded that space in lower Manhattan is extremely constrained, and building horizontally would also result in a major disruption of street level activities. Mr. Johnston asked whether an intermodal facility, such as ferry at the Coast Guard station was considered. Ms. Siegel pointed out that this failed to meet the goal of service being near jobs.

Ms. Reed and Ms. Morrow expressed concern about possible impacts to Route 9A, which has just been built for a 50 year life if a station were to be built in that area, and on the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel approach. Ms. Siegel stated that the potential station would be built underground which would minimally disrupt Route 9A. Mr. Fleischer pointed out the difficulty in locating potential sites given the amount of infrastructure already in place. He stated that no site would be problem-free, but some sites have fewer or more easily surmountable problems than the others. It is also much more difficult to locate a station than a tunnel. Mr. Henry Colon of the Mayor's Office of Transportation mentioned concerns with

flooding and global warming in the next 100 years. Ms. Siegel stated that as we get more detailed information these questions will be addressed. Mr. Hansen asked if there is consideration to build an above ground station. Ms. Siegel stated that at this point they are only looking at underground sites to bring trains into Lower Manhattan. The construction of a headhouse for a station will be discussed in the context of specific commuter rail alternatives.

Ms. Siegel informed attendees that the four potential sites were then screened to two remaining sites. The two remaining stations are the WTC-1 site and the Water Street site. Mr. Papp asked if both sites can access service from both Penn Station and Grand Central Terminal. Ms. Siegel responded that the western station would serve the westside and the eastern station would serve the eastside. Mr. Papp asked whether any of the eliminated sites had access to both east and westside service. The NY Stock Exchange site might have access to both alignments with difficulty, but there were other significant problems with that site. Mr. Olmstead asked whether the study was looking at how to circulate people east-west once they get to lower Manhattan. Ms. Siegel stated that the study would look at people mover systems for circulation in lower Manhattan. Mr. Johnston asked whether there would be a cost differential, with suburban riders paying more than urban riders for the same trip. Mr. Fleischer said that hadn't been contemplated, and pointed out that whatever the study decides, significant benefits will accrue to non-commuter rail riders. Mr. DiScala, Metro-North Railroad asked whether the commuter rail station sites serve all alternatives equally. Mr. O'Shea asked if the study examined the potential of converting underutilized subway lines to commuter rail. Ms. Siegel stated that early in the study, it was decided that no alternative would remove or diminish capacity from existing service.

Members requested a copy of material detailing station feasibility issues. It was agreed they would be distributed with the minutes.

### **III. NEXT STEPS**

Ms. Siegel informed attendees that currently the team is working on the station siting design for both railroads with maximum flexibility. In addition, the team is working on the detailed analysis of the subway options.

PAC meeting #5 is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, September 9, 1999 at the New York City Department of City Planning's Spector Hall from 12 Noon to 2 PM.