



Joel P. Ettinger  
Executive Director

**MEETING SYNOPSIS OF THE SEPTEMBER 4, 2013  
NEW YORK METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL**

**A. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The meeting was called to order by Ron Epstein, of the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and Secretary of the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council. The roll call of the members was done and it was declared there was a quorum. The meeting was chaired by Ron Epstein on behalf of Joan McDonald NYSDOT Commissioner and Co-Chair to the Council, who was not available to attend the meeting.

**B. OPENING SESSION**

**NYMTC's Co-Chair, County Executive Robert Astorino, Westchester County**

County Executive Robert Astorino was not available to attend the meeting; therefore Deputy County Executive Kevin Plunkett spoke on his behalf. Deputy County Plunkett thanked County Executive C. Scott Vanderhoef for his dedication and for his contribution towards the rebuilding of the Tappan Zee Bridge. He said that he wanted to underscore the importance of what was being done to fulfill the obligations under the federal metropolitan transportation planning regulation and the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. He said NYMTC members and their staffs had devoted their time to the development of the four federally-required planning products and actions taken during the meeting would demonstrate the commitment to fulfilling the obligation to use all resources from the federal, state and local, to address the important transportation challenges the region faces.

On behalf of Commissioner McDonald, Ron Epstein also thanked everyone for their support in developing the NYMTC products.

**C. GUEST SPEAKER – Seth Diamond, State Director for Storm Recovery**

Mr. Ron Epstein provided a brief biography on the Mr. Seth Diamond, State Director for Storm Recovery. He noted that Mr. Diamond was appointed by Governor Cuomo to oversee the planning, coordination and implementation efforts associated with funding the state had received for recovery, rebuilding and resiliency work associated with Hurricanes Sandy and Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. He noted that Mr. Diamond provided direct assistance to affected home owners and small businesses to improve the resiliency of local communities and statewide planning to improve resiliency.

State Director for Storm Recovery, Seth Diamond, gave a presentation entitled, "Making New York's Transportation System More Resilient." The presentation focused on the four major principles put forth by Governor Cuomo to respond to Hurricane Sandy to make the state stronger and more resilient to future events. He noted their charge was to focus on homeowners and provided security and resiliency to their homes; and to focus on small businesses for recovery by providing the necessary tools and funds to employ people in the community and rebuild. He said building cohesive communities was an important part of the recovery and the Governor's community-based-effort program named the *Community Rising Program* would designate communities to receive funds for them to design resilient projects that would help that community become stronger. The fourth principle focused on making the state's infrastructure and assets stronger and more resilient. (More information can be found at [www.stormrecovery.ny.gov](http://www.stormrecovery.ny.gov))

## **D. COUNCIL MEMBERS' DISCUSSION**

### **Overview of NYMTC's New Planning Products – Joel Ettinger**

Mr. Joel P. Ettinger, NYMTC's Executive Director, gave a presentation on NYMTC's regional planning products. He said that the Regional Transportation Plan (Plan 2040) was the foundation product of the planning process. He noted that it was a federally-required, long range plan that provided a framework for the use of federal funding in the NYMTC planning area. The key components to Plan 2040 were the Principal's shared goals, vision and strategic framework. He said that Plan 2040 provided financial assessment of the federally supported transportation system in the NYMTC planning area. He noted that the Congestion Management Process Status Report was an integral part of Plan 2040 that identified and forecasted areas of high, long duration traffic congestion. He talked about NYMTC's multi-year, multi-modal program of transportation improvement programs, or (TIP), where transit, roadway & bridge, bicycle/pedestrian and demand management projects are drawn from the Regional Transportation Plan. He noted that it represented the members' consensus and commitment for specific improvements that would be pursued using federal, state and local funding. He said that the Transportation Conformity Determination fulfilled NYMTC's obligation under the Clean Air Act of 1990. He noted that NYMTC must demonstrate that its Regional Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program conformed to the mobile source emissions budgets for pollutants in the New York State Implementation Plan for air quality for the development of conformity determination. He noted that a vast amount of public involvement was done to develop the four NYMTC products. He thanked all those involved with the completion of this process. (Detailed information on all the products could be found on the website at [www.NYMTC.org](http://www.NYMTC.org))

Mr. Ron Epstein noted that more than two-thirds of all the funding in Plan 2040 came from non-federal sources. He then commended the members on their huge undertaking and efforts. He noted that the total program for the region and the magnitude and extent of the systems that were operated in the region was unparalleled to the rest of the country. He talked about the challenges and questioned the members about the future beyond the current planning process.

Westchester Deputy County Executive Kevin Plunkett questioned the current financial aid and funding status and the expectations for the future.

Mr. Joel Ettinger noted that the current federal authorizing legislation, MAP-21, would expire on September 30, 2014. He said one of the challenges in Plan 2040 was estimating what the future federal funding would be for the next 27 years. The answer of what the future funding would be was unknown.

Westchester Deputy County Executive Plunkett asked about past trends and the federal government changes that were made that were incorporated into the NYMTC planning process.

Mr. Ettinger said in the past, when there was a new reauthorization bill, federal funding was increased by 20%. He noted that the money was essentially flat, so it was unclear what would happen starting in October 2014.

Mr. Jonathan McDade, Division Administrator for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) agreed that the future was unpredictable and the resources were flat. Mr. McDade said that other contributing factors were the spent down balances in the highway trust fund. He noted that for many years a healthy balance was maintained and that continued to support the regular increases with each succeeding bill. He said the gas tax had not been changed for many years which affected the buying power and the total amount had gone down. He noted that sequestration and other budget issues across the country were current issues that made it a challenge to predict future funding. He said the sustainability of the highway and transit side of the trust fund was difficult to predict. He noted that infrastructure needs sustainability and vulnerability issues and resiliency had been major in the New York City metropolitan area. He noted that one of the important steps the Council was undertaking as a group was identifying steps to come up with and strategies to meet them. At the federal level, he noted that the issue of sustainable transportation funding was key among many members of Congress and with FHWA. He noted that MAP-21 provided innovative

and creative flexibility for financing, such as the use of TIFIA loans and public-private partnerships, which many agencies have taken advantage of. He said from a federal perspective, using a MAP-21, flat-line approach was a good approach and supported the efforts the Council were undertaking to identify other types of regional strategies, agency strategies, partnerships and other ways to bring financing in. He said he did not predict what the future would be but hoped it would not be any less than the continued trend.

Regional Administrator Marilyn Shazor for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) said that funding was not just an issue at the state, city and local levels but was also an issue at the federal level in terms of what was going to happen with federal government funds and financing in the next few years. Ms. Shazor noted that from a transit perspective, the focus would be on infrastructure and maintenance of infrastructure. She said that there would be funds for new projects but not as much as there had been in the past. She said that priorities should be aligned with the FTA's and the federal government's priorities which were safety or state of good repairs (SOGR)—maintaining existing systems. She noted that FTA's commitment was to make sure that funding would be available for projects that were currently in the pipeline but was not sure about new projects coming along.

Mr. Jonathan McDade said one aspect to dealing with funding challenges was to work smarter and the use of innovation. He noted that the use of design-build was important because it unleashed the private sector's creativity to build projects smarter, faster and more efficient. He noted that the build-design price for the Tappan Zee Bridge project was much lower than the initial estimate because of some of the creative activity. He said how to deliver a project in a cost efficient and timely scheduled way was a key factor along with the use of federal dollars.

County Executive Steven Bellone of Suffolk County commended Joel and his staff for going beyond what was legally required, in terms of laying out a vision for where the region needed to go. County Executive Bellone said that Suffolk County's focus was on public transportation. He said that in order to grow the economy in a sustainable way, in suburbia, a robust investment in public transportation was needed. He said that the federal government needed to play a larger role in making appropriate investment and additional investments in public transportation. He said the systems needed to be maintained and investments were needed for enhancements. He asked Joel Ettinger, of Executive Director of NYMTC, what role should be played, in the current state of affairs, to help advocate or help push for additional funding and what role could be done in helping the municipalities and the Council to develop innovative and creative alternative solutions that would be necessary to supplement investment in transportation.

Executive Director Joel Ettinger of NYMTC said that there would be funding for the region for the next five years but afterwards something would need to be done to bridge the gap. Mr. Ettinger noted that the heart of the Regional Transportation Plan was the linkage of land-use planning and transportation planning which was being done with Connect Long Island and transit oriented development, a cornerstone of a linkage of land use and transportation policy. He noted that more money was needed. He said that NYMTC as an organization could not lobby but members of the Council who were not bounded by lobbying restrictions could let their respective elected officials know that there was a dire funding situation in the New York region.

Ms. Nuria Fernandez, representing Mr. Thomas Prendergast, the Chairman and Chief Operating Officer for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), said that she appreciated the great work the NYMTC staff had done in pulling together reports because it helped her understand the background of the challenges and future challenges. Ms. Fernandez said that she was cautiously optimistic regarding Plan 2040 being fiscally constrained for the first 5 years but noted that it was fiscally constrained based on what was currently known and hoped that it would continue through the reauthorized transportation program. She noted that there was opportunity to put together information that would provide some background on past, present and future expectations. She said that funding would have to be sought internally and locally, as well as looking at ways to grow the existing federal funding that was available through the highway trust fund, which would require exploring the increasing the gas tax since it was one of the main source of the highway trust fund. She noted that meaningful dialogue about how the dollars should be distributed across the country and the amount of dollars would come into the NYMTC region.

Mr. Ettinger said over the next few years, other sources would be sought, such as at the project level--public-private partnerships, bonding, and development districts; at the area-wide level various kinds of pricing mechanisms. He said it would require a lot of work from the members of the Council to figure out what made the most sense for the New York metropolitan area.

Mr. Epstein added that the NYMTC staff had the ability to lay out options without geographic boundaries where the Council members could assess and evaluate whether they are feasible or not. He noted that the biggest asset the NYMTC staff could provide was information of how the program was funded and why it was important to the NYMTC region. He said the return on investment in transportation was astronomical compared to the divestment scenario.

Mr. Satish Sood, Deputy Commissioner of Nassau County Department of Public Works, spoke on behalf of Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano, who sent his regrets for not being available to attend the meeting in person. He noted that County Executive Mangano supported Plan 2040 and was supportive of the alternative funding sources. He said that after the devastating impacts of Hurricane Sandy, everyone needed to move forward to prepare for future incidents. He said that County Executive Mangano had committed to his county's residents not to raise property taxes so other alternatives for funding should be looked into.

Mr. Lou Venech, Senior Manager of Transportation Policy Development for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, said that freight planning was a component of NYMTC's planning process and was an essential component of the system. He noted that in Plan 2040, it was pointed out that there was a need for agencies to work more closely together to deliver essential goods more safely with less dependency on trucks and with less community impact. He said it was an important point not to recognize. He said that the Port Authority currently worked closely with the New York & New Jersey State Departments of Transportation and the metropolitan planning organizations and would continue to so.

Mr. John Filippelli, representing Judith Enck, Regional Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, complimented NYMTC on its leadership despite all of the difficult financial times. He noted that NYMTC continued to prepare for climate change and prepare to make the systems more resilient. He said that the USEPA looked forward to working with NYMTC on these issues and integrating the work into President Obama's Climate Action Plan. He noted that the recent federal register had published the particulate matter budgets (PM 2.5) and commended NYMTC on their great work on transportation air quality conformity.

## **E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Murray Bodin, Concerned Grandparents, said that it was impossible to change tradition and it was quite difficult to change how the agencies thought. He said that stop signs should be clear so that people would be more aware; the color red should not be used because it was not a safe color, white or green were safer colors; and the lines on the road were not clear. He noted that the subway system was shut down for 5 days for cleaning but was up and running very quickly after the damages Hurricane Sandy made to the subway system. He said that the high occupancy lanes should be on the outside lanes and run by cameras so that buses would be able to get on and off the highways. He said that toll collectors would no longer be needed if lanes on highways were controlled and collected by cameras.

Mr. Alexander Saunders requested for the Tappan Zee Bridge project to be defunded by holding up the TIFIA loan. He said the Tappan Zee Bridge project lacked a financial plan, lacked final engineering, did not connect to anything, and therefore was a financial and an environmental disaster. He said that the project precluded the shared goals to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve water quality and preservation of open space and unless it was reconverted into a tunnel, none of the goals would be met. He noted that other countries put 18-wheeler heavy trucks onto drive-on, drive-off trains and this method should be followed. He noted that many trucks that drove through the South Bronx caused a disservice to the air pollution and many people are dying because the right thing was not being done with transportation. He reiterated to defund the Tappan Zee Bridge project, develop the Tappan Zee Tunnel, and invest in truck-on-train and rail services to Long Island.

Ms. Edith Prentiss, Transit Rider Council, said although Seth Diamond's presentation was interesting, it left out a very large population—the disability community. She said that she lived in Washington Heights in New York City and if anything was to happen she had no way to get out. She said she was out of her apartment for 3 months because the elevators in her building needed to be replaced. She urged that these issues to be looked into. She explained her hardships using ferries in Manhattan and noted that not all of the ferries accommodated people with disabilities or those who needed accessible exits. She also noted that signage for those who needed accessible exits were poor. She said that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority needed to talk to the community. She questioned if Plan 2040 included increase accessibility. She said hoped to one day see a fully accessible subway system.

Mr. Steven Faust, Faust & Associates, explained why he was upset that the long range plan did not have an evacuation plan for Staten Island residents. He was upset that Staten Island had no connections to any other borough in New York City for non-motorized traffic and during emergencies and questioned why Staten Island residents were not allowed to walk over the bridge. He said that the Verrazano Narrow Bridge was not able to be utilized by non-motorized traffic for any past emergency situations whereas the east river bridges were able to evacuate pedestrians by foot and by bicycle. He said that there was access on the lower level of the Verrazano Bridge used by the Five Boro Bike Tour that could accommodate emergency access and urged the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to include this path in their emergency plan.

Mr. Cornelius Skeahan, a member of Local #3, asked the Council to keep the workers of the building trade in mind whenever projects were awarded and understand that workers are a large part of the ridership. He said that they are first responders in emergency situations, so it was tough for them whenever one project is completed, they were asked to make concessions of wages and benefits for the next project.

Mr. Neil Weissman, CompleteGeorge.com, said that per the 2035 Master Plan, there would be \$2 billion worth of bicycle infrastructure over the next 20 years and the George Washington Bridge would be that infrastructure's connection. He said that completegeorge.com, an advocacy group, goal would be to get an ASHTOO compliant, ADA compliant, 24/7 non-motorized transportation facility to connect the two infrastructures. He noted that the Port Authority's bicycle master plans called for them to consider putting facilities on any major reconstruction but there was no clarity if it would be done.

## **F. ACTION ITEMS**

### **1. ACCEPT: FEBRUARY 26, 2013 MEETING SYNOPSIS**

Ron Epstein referenced the February 26, 2013 meeting synopsis, which was available at the sign in tables and asked if there were any comments on the synopsis. There were none.

Ron Epstein, representing Commissioner Joan McDonald, NYS Department of Transportation made a motion to accept the February 26, 2013 Council Meeting Synopsis, and was seconded by Mr. Satish Sood, representing County Executive Ed Mangano, Nassau County. The meeting synopsis was accepted.

### **2. ADOPT: RESOLUTION #2013-5- COUNCIL ADOPTION OF THE FEDERAL FISCAL YEARS 2014-2040 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (PLAN 2040) AND RELATED 2013 CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS STATUS REPORT**

Mr. Jan Khan of NYMTC staff noted that NYMTC was required to update the Regional Transportation Plan every four years therefore Plan 2040 and associated Congestion Management Process Status Report had been completed in accordance with federal regulation 23 CFR 450.322. Plan 2040 and the 2013 Congestion Management Process Status Report could be found on the NYMTC website at [www.NYMTC.org](http://www.NYMTC.org).

A motion to adopt Resolution #2013-5, Council Adoption of the Federal Fiscal Years 2014-2040 Regional Transportation Plan (Plan 2040) and Related 2013 Congestion Management Process Status

Report was made by Ms. Nuria Fernandez, representing Chairman & C.E.O. Thomas Prendergast, Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and was second by Jack Schmidt, representing Director Amanda Burden, NYC Department of City Planning. The resolution unanimously passed. There was no discussion.

**3. ADOPT: RESOLUTION #2013-6 – COUNCIL ADOPTION OF THE FEDERAL FISCAL YEARS 2014-2018 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

Ms. Angelina Foster of NYMTC staff noted that the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) was a federal required document that must be updated every four years. She said that the TIP was consistent with Plan 2040, was fiscally constrained, and was public reviewed as per regulations.

A motion to adopt Resolution #2013-6, Council Adoption of the Federal Fiscal Years 2014-2018 Transportation Improvement Program, was motioned by Deputy County Executive Kevin Plunkett, representing County Executive Robert Astorino, Westchester County, and seconded by County Executive Steven Bellone, Suffolk County. The resolution unanimously passed. There was no discussion.

**4. ADOPT: RESOLUTION #2013-7 – COUNCIL ADOPTION OF THE TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY DETERMINATION FOR THE FFYs 2014-2040 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND FFYs 2014-2018 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

Ms. Angelina Foster of NYMTC staff noted that the Transportation Conformity Determination for Plan 2040 and the Transportation Improvement Program was in compliance with the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990; had coordinated a regional mobile source emission analysis with the Orange County Transportation Council as required for the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Fine Particulate Matter Non-Attainment Area; was publically reviewed, and was in compliance with federal transportation conformity requirements.

A motion to adopt Resolution #2013-7, Council Adoption of the Transportation Conformity Determination for the FFYs 2014-2040 Regional Transportation Plan and FFYs 2014-2018 Transportation Improvement Program was motioned by County Executive MaryEllen Odell, Putnam County, and seconded by Ms. Nuria Fernandez, representing Chairman & C.E.O. Thomas Prendergast, Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The resolution unanimously passed.

**G. ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned.

## ATTENDANCE

### Voting Council Principals/Representatives

Steven Bellone, Suffolk County Executive  
Linda Bailey for Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan, NYC Department of Transportation  
Ron Epstein for Commissioner Joan McDonald, NYS Department of Transportation  
Nuria Fernandez for Thomas Prendergast, Chair & CEO, Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
MaryEllen Odell, Putnam County Executive  
Kevin Plunkett for County Executive Robert Astorino, Westchester County  
Jack Schmidt for Director Amanda Burden, NYC Department of City Planning  
Satish Sood for County Executive Edward Mangano, Nassau County  
Thomas Vanderbeek for County Executive C. Scott Vanderhoef, Rockland County

### Advisory (Non-Voting) Principals/Representatives

Jeremy Colangelo for Executive Director James Weinstein, New Jersey Transit  
John Filippelli for Judith Enck, Regional Administrator, US Environmental Protection Agency  
Jonathan McDade, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration  
David Behrend for Executive Director Mary K. Murphy, North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority  
Marilyn Shazor, Regional Administrator, Federal Transit Administration  
Jared Snyder for Commissioner Joseph Martens, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
Lou Venech, for Executive Director Patrick Foye, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

### NYMTC

Ali Afshar	Michael Chiume	Anthony Gawrych	Darrin Moret
Imeran Ahmed	Lisa Daglian	Leokadia Glogowski	Larisa Morozovskaya
Ismet Apdiroglu	Nina DelSenno	Stephen Hausch	Olga Olovyannikov
Jorge Argote	David Drits	Jerry Jonassen	Munnesh Patel
Sangeeta Bhowmick	Joel Ettinger	John Lopez	Shalendra Ramadhin
Gerry Bogacz	Merrill Frank	Howard Mann	Chris Rodrigues-Moore
David Burgy	Sandra Forte	Larry McAuliffe	Abdus Salem
Rosemary Checca	Emma Gaitan	Andrea Miles-Cole	
Ken Chin	Fidel Garcia	Kathy Monroe	

### OTHERS

Daniel Ackerman, Downtown Alliance	Anjali Jain, Australian Trade Comm	Lauren Racusin, Hudson Sq Connection
Allison Agliardo, PANYNJ	Mike Koehler, Vision Long Island	Denise Ramirez, NYCDOT
Onyinye Akujuo, NYCDOT	Joanne Minieri, Suffolk County	Valeriya Remezova, FHWA
Darin Allan, FTA	Naomi Klein, Westchester CDPW&T	Karen Rosenberger, FHWA
Murray Bodin, Concerned Grandparents	Sufian Khondker, ARCADIS	Mohsen Shaaker, Con Ed
Robert Brickman, Nassau Co. DPW	Garry Lenberger, Suffolk CDPW&T	Alexander Saunders
Joseph Brown, NYCDOT	Adam Levine, NYSDOT	Amanda Septino, Congress Serrano's Off
Luis Calderon, NYSDOT	Remi Li, NTDTV	Renee Schoonbeek, HSC
Jacqueline Carbone, Con Ed	Uchenna Madu, NYSDOT	Bela Shah, NYSDOT
Nancy Danzig, FTA	John Mafford, NYCDPR	Sneha Shukla, NYSDOT
Jack Dean, MTA	Michael Moltzen, USEPA	Cornelius Skeaham, Local #3
Sandra Dixon, PANYNJ	Mike O'Neal, LU #3	Karin Sommer, NYCDOT
Steve Faust, Faust & Associates	Harrison Peck, MWA	Gail Spears
Patrick Gerdin, Rockland Co. Plan	John Pilner, Putnam County	Neil Weismann, Completegeorge.org
Orrin Getz	Jay T. Pisco, Westchester CDPW&T	William Wheeler, MTA
David Henley, NYCT	Edith Prentiss, Transit Rider Council	Melanie Zeman, USEPA

*This September 4, 2013 Council Meeting Synopsis was unanimously accepted by all members of the Council at its February 27, 2014 Annual Meeting.*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Andrea' Miles-Cole  
Secretary II - NYMTC*