

Agenda
Transportation Committee
Monday, April 24, 2017 10:00 AM
Legislature Chambers

- 1. Call to Order (10:00)**
- 2. Changes to Agenda (10:00)**
- 3. Comments from the Public (10:00)**
- 4. Minutes Approval (10:05)**
 - a. February 27, 2017
- 5. Chair's Report (10:10)**
- 6. Comments from Committee Members (10:15)**
- 7. Discussion Regarding the NYSDOT Visit of April 19, 2017 (10:20)**
- 8. General Discussion (as available) (10:45)**
 - a. Airport
 - b. Highways
 - c. Mass Transit
 - d. Rail Roads
- 9. Adjournment (11:00)**

Transportation Committee
 Regular Meeting Minutes (same as Notes) – 3-20-17
 Monday, February 27, 2017 10:00 AM
 Legislature Chambers

Attendance

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Michael Lane	Chair	Present	
David McKenna	Vice Chair	Late	10:09 AM
Glenn Morey	Member	Present	
James Dennis	Member	Present	
Peter Stein	Member	Present	
Daniel Klein	Legislator	Present	
Katrina McCloy	Deputy Clerk, Legislature	Present	
Joe Mareane	County Administrator	Present	
Fernando de Aragon	ITCTC Director	Present	
Ed Marx	Planning Commissioner	Present	
Dwight Mengel	Chief Transportation Planner	Present	
Dooley Kiefer	Legislator	Present	

Call to Order

Mr. Lane, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Changes to Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

Comments from the Public

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Minutes Approval

December 14, 2016

RESULT:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Peter Stein, Member
SECONDER:	Glenn Morey, Member
AYES:	Lane, Morey, Dennis, Stein
EXCUSED:	McKenna

Comments from Committee Members

Mr. Lane asked Mr. Klein to provide an update on the South Hill Recreation Way Trail.

Mr. Klein explained there is an ongoing project by the County to assist in the extension of the trails in the County including the South Hill Recreation Way that runs through the Towns of Caroline,

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Danby, Dryden, and Ithaca. There has been some resistance from landowners along the trail and who have been in attendance at some of the town board meetings, the Town of Caroline in particular. Some of their questions relate to the need for the trail, the County's role, and the legality of New York State Electric and Gas's (NYSEG) right-of-way and they have submitted Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) requests to the County. Mr. Klein stated he wanted to inform the Committee of the active, engaged, and aggressive resistance to this project.

Mr. Marx said there are landowners that believe they own some of the property involved in the rights-of-way. NYSEG attorneys have assured the County that NYSEG owns the property involved and some of the Town attorneys have confirmed that after researching real estate records.

Another reason landowners oppose the project is that they do not want the trail near their property, which is a common concern regarding trails. He spoke of the experience with trails in the Town of Ithaca when landowners opposed the project that was later followed-up by a survey that found landowners had changed their minds and did not object to the trail. The Towns are trying to work with landowners to try to alleviate the issues.

The project is primarily a project of multiple towns but the County has provided assistance and been actively engaged in the project. The County's role will be further discussed at the Planning, Development, and Environmental Quality Committee later in the week.

Mr. McKenna arrived at this time.

The genesis of the project was at the level of the various towns as it involves four towns. The Town of Caroline encountered resistance efforts in trail development a number of years ago. The Town investigated some of the concerns, filed a report, and took no further action. The towns later approached the County and expressed their desire to extend the trails. NYSEG has expressed its preference to have one agreement and the County would hold the license and have an intermunicipal agreement with the towns and they would provide all trail development, maintenance, funding, and operations.

Mr. Lane clarified the County's position is to facilitate the agreement with NYSEG and is not forcing this project on the individual towns.

Mr. Marx stated this trail extensions along with the Black Diamond Trail and the Dryden Trail were listed as priority projects several years ago as developments of the future as a part of the Trails Strategy.

Mr. Klein stated if the towns decided not to participate the County will not force them to.

In response to Mr. Stein's question, Mr. Marx stated NYSEG owns the property involved in this project and has agreed to make the land available under a license agreement for trail development. The property involved is part of the former railroad rights-of-way.

Mr. Dennis is in agreement with Mr. Klein's statement regarding the County not forcing this on the towns. He said the name NYSEG brings a negative connotation in this area and they need to be transparent in this process.

Mr. Marx spoke of the County being proactive on all the priority trail segments but each role has been different. This one is a bit more involved due to it involving four towns.

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Route 13 Corridor Update

Route 13 Corridor - Public Transit

Mr. de Aragon spoke of conversations he has had with Dan Dineen, Director of Planning, Cortland County, regarding inter-county transit service, specifically opportunities and their perspectives. He was made aware that First Transit of Cortland County is interested in route development between Cortland and Groton.

Mr. de Aragon stated Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT) has expressed interest in extended and additional routes but is facing constraints with its current service being at maximum capacity.

Mr. de Aragon found that TCAT and First Transit already communicate between each other regarding their routes to Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) when a route is running late.

Mr. Marx added that First Transit provides a well-subscribed commuter service between Cortland and Cornell but the service is very limited with one trip in the morning and one in the afternoon. There is a need for additional service with additional routes.

Mr. Mengel spoke of an inter-municipal agreement between Cortland and Tompkins Counties regarding public transit from 2012. The Cortland County Mobility Manager, Seven Valley Health Network, has contacted him regarding setting up connections with Gadabout to enable people to gain access to Cayuga Medical Center for medical treatments.

Route 13 Corridor - Highways

Mr. Marx stated the has been in contact with Mark Frechette, NYSDOT (New York State Department of Transportation), and discussions have been opened regarding the Route 13 Corridor, particularly in the overlap of Route 366 and downtown Ithaca. Mr. Frechette expressed interest and has asked to be informed of any new development in the area that will assist them in coordinating plans in advance. The major roadblock is funding. There may be an opportunity to put together a request for funding to begin to get them in the queue and begin to advocate for them.

Discuss Possible Visit To DOT Facility-Syracuse

Mr. Lane has been in contact with Dave Smith, NYSDOT, to coordinate a trip to the Syracuse DOT Facility to discuss issues related to highways in an attempt to raise the level of intent of the County. He asked if Committee members were interested in participating. All Committee members expressed their interest. Mr. Dennis suggested preparing an agenda and sharing it with DOT in advance.

Mobility as a Service

Bringing Mobility as a Service to the United States: Accessibility Opportunities and Challenges (ID #6860)

Mr. Mengel provided a PowerPoint presentation entitled Mobility as a Service (MaaS), A Concept for Small Urban and Rural America.

Mr. Mengel explained this new concept came about as a part of the Age Friendly Community

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Plan in which transportation was identified as an issue for seniors. This would bring together some solutions to the transportation barriers, not only for seniors but for others in the community as well. He stated this is not and there are no plans to make this a County program or service but the County may be interested in the context of our federal system to assist in sponsorship or support applications for funding. He spoke of this being more of an entrepreneurial service and this has been discussed a great deal for large metro areas. This is the first time it has been conceived of in a small urban and rural setting where an App would be useful but not necessary.

Mr. Stein stated he thought this concept is much too complicated for this area but suggested 2-1-1 or something along those terms where transportation can be addressed. Mr. Mengel stated MaaS is that concept; one place to sell mobility and assist with resolving mobility challenges.

Mr. de Aragon agreed with the program's complexity and said 2-1-1 does currently provide transportation assistance. The challenge for the MaaS concept is to simplify the complexity for the consumer.

Mr. Stein compared some of the components of the program to Uber where people with personal vehicles make some extra money while providing a ride for someone.

Mr. Lane explained that AAA began at a county by county level before expanding to regions. He suggested shopping this idea at the Rev to involve some enterprising minds in the concept.

Following a question by Mr. Morey, Mr. Mengel stated a program like this has never been established in a smaller area like Tompkins County, it has only been established in larger metropolitan areas. If this concept were to move forward, Mr. Mengel believes a market price would be established for the effective use by the community.

Mr. Morey inquired about possible grant funding from New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) for a program like this. Mr. Mengel stated it could be included in a draft strategy.

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General Discussion

Airport

Mr. Lane reported there have not been any notifications from the State regarding the Upstate Airport Competition funding but he has received notification of a Statewide Opportunities for Airport Revitalization (SOARs) grant to assist with the marketing program.

Mr. McKenna spoke of Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT) and the Airport discussing additional bus service to the Airport to accommodate early morning flights.

Highways

Mr. Lane said the Town of Dryden received a grant for two bridge projects. Mr. Mareane explained the County will assist the Town with the processes that need to be followed.

Mr. de Aragon explained these projects are a part of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the City of Ithaca also has a project that falls under that program.

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Mr. Mareane stated there was a substantial amount of local dollars to be used for the two bridge projects and this funding will allow for those funds to be used elsewhere.

Mr. de Aragon spoke of the redistribution of unused earmarked funds for projects being added to the TIP. There are four railroad crossings that will be improved and pedestrian improvements will be done in the City of Ithaca with those funds.

On February 24th Mr. de Aragon was notified of Pedestrian Safety Action Plan funding to assist with painting of crosswalks and signalization of intersections in need of additional pedestrian safety improvements. Mr. de Aragon stated there would be no additional bicycle traffic instructions included.

Mr. Dennis inquired as to what could be done to look at the signal timing on Route 96 and 79 coming into Ithaca from Trumansburg and spoke of the traffic back-ups that take place. Mr. de Aragon stated the area has been identified as a problem area and part of it is the lights being so close to each other. Mr. Marx suggested adding that to the agenda to be discussed when the visit is made to Syracuse DOT.

Mr. Lane inquired about the State Street Hill Study and if there were any funds for work to be done in that area. Mr. de Aragon spoke of improvements made to signage in the area and pedestrian safety work but was not aware of any additional funding for that area. He will contact the City of Ithaca for more information. Mr. Dennis spoke of the potential for development in that area.

Mr. Mareane spoke of five electric vehicles that were recently purchased and said they are currently plugged in and charging at the Mental Health Offices. There are additional purchases planned for the near future. He is interested in doing a photo op in hopes to gain some additional attention on what the County is doing.

Ms. Kiefer spoke of an exchange between she and the Department of Transportation (DOT) regarding her frequent travels to Rochester and the Hudson Valley area. She stated she missed an exit due to a tourism sign blocking the view of the exit sign. There is work underway by the State to have the signs removed.

Mass Transit

Mr. Dennis inquired if anyone knew of the status of hiring a new Tompkins Consolidate Area Transit (TCAT) Director. Mr. Stein explained there has been no movement towards filling that position.

Railroads

Mr. Lane stated the Cayuga Power Plant is in a difficult position and has concerns about losing the railroad. The use of the railroad has decreased and there is no increased use of it for transporting salt.

Mr. Dennis said the Cayuga Power Plant and the Industrial Development Agency are in the process of negotiating a new payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) program.

Chair's Report

Mr. Lane stated he will work on setting up a visit to Syracuse DOT.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

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