

The Legislature of Rockland County



HARRIET D. CORNELL
Legislator – District 10
Chair, Special Committee On Transit

MINUTES
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON TRANSIT
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2014
6:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

LEG. H. CORNELL, CHAIR
LEG. A. WOLFE
LEG. M. GRANT
LEG. N. LOW-HOGAN
LEG. C. CAREY

OTHERS PRESENT:

LEG. B. KANTROWITZ
E. YEGER, ESQ.
D. FRIEDMAN
A. SAMUELS
S. FILGUERAS

LEG. A. WIEDER
LEG. D. JOBSON
N. DOLINER
S. POWERS

CHAIR CORNELL CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6:47 PM

1. CHAIR CORNELL WILL PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON THE MASS TRANSIT TASK FORCE (MTTF) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DISCUSSED

Chair Cornell stated that at the first meeting of the Governor’s Mass Transit Task Force (MTTF), there was a lot of discussion of being more global in approach in how residents travel and how they need to travel. She said that she has been involved with the Tappan Zee Bridge studies since 1998 and it is an important thoroughfare for both individuals and municipalities. Numerous summit meetings were held so that people could be informed. The MTTF’s mission statement stipulated that it was to identify long and short-term transit options for two counties. Chair Cornell said she spent a lot of time talking about the western side of the Hudson, because Rockland County is often the “orphan county.” The MTTF’s Executive Summary was not given out with the idea of amending it, but is basically a final document. Chair Cornell stated that she was not happy with the vague descriptions of Western Hudson improvements. She reached out and the MTTF has agreed to clarify that. Express trains stop at a park and ride in the morning, but not in the evening, which is an easy fix. The agency should work with Amtrak regarding the Bergen Loop. The Arc Tunnel had the rug pulled out by Governor Christie. The final report in some draft form will be given this Friday and they have agreed to some of Chair Cornell’s changes. She spoke about the outline that was given by the ARAP people in October, which distressed her because things Rockland County asked for, like the TZ Express, they had not recommended. They later said that they made a mistake on that. Leg. Low-Hogan asked about ferries. Chair Cornell said that the ferry option had been dropped a long time ago, but she can look into it. She said there needs to be an agency designated to see that short-term recommendations are carried out leading up to the medium and long-term recommendations. There needs to be oversight. Chair Cornell stated that they were working with a consultant, who will continue to work with us on transit issues.

2. REF. #8069 - REQUESTING THAT THE NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY PASS BILL A.1198 AND THE NEW YORK STATE SENATE PASS BILL S.1996 - AN ACT TO AMEND THE PUBLIC AUTHORITIES LAW TO ALLOW THE NEW YORK STATE THRUWAY AUTHORITY TO OFFER DISCOUNTED TOKENS TO RESIDENTS OF ROCKLAND AND WESTCHESTER FOR TAPPAN ZEE BRIDGE CROSSINGS
(HON. CHRISTOPHER CAREY, LEGISLATURE)

ADDED CO-SPONSORS: CORNELL, WOLFE, GRANT, LOW-HOGAN, JOBSON

**MOTION TO APPROVE:
GRANT/CAREY**

**TRANSFERRED TO PPW
UNAN**

Leg. Carey stated that the request was more about fairness than anything else. The 60% discount given to Staten Island should be applied equally to Rockland County and Westchester County. There isn't a price set, so the discount can be worked into the cost. Leg. Wieder stated that Staten Island already has a bridge; and for years, Rockland County complained that the Tappan Zee Bridge needs to be replaced. The bridge is being built and someone has to pay for it. If Rockland County and Westchester County residents don't want to pay, who will? Leg. Wieder spoke about commerce not wanting to come to Rockland County. He said the Governor has been progressive in building the bridge and asked how will it be paid? Chair Cornell stated that the federal government promised a \$1.6 billion loan, but we don't know how the new bridge will be funded. We've said for years that we don't want it funded on the backs of residents. She said studies are being done. Leg. Carey said that it was a regional bridge and system from all the way upstate and into the city. It shouldn't be shouldered just by Rockland County and Westchester County. Leg. Wieder said that the bridge is ultimately funded by tolls and asked Leg. Carey if he reached out to Governor Cuomo? Leg. Carey stated that he reached out to our state representatives, Senator Carlucci and Assemblyman Zebrowski. Leg. Wieder said that this resolution says that we don't want a bridge built or to pay for it. Chair Cornell stated that the Governor was going to appoint a task force on finances, but it was not done yet. She spoke about the Tappan Zee Bridge being a very important passageway for the region. Leg. Carey said that he supported the bridge before it was approved, we need a bridge, and that he was looking out for the residents. Leg. Low-Hogan said that the people who live here have a lack of options; and for fairness, she strongly supports it. Leg. Grant said that he was in support and that twenty years of hard work went into getting to this point. He said that the Governor should be supported and that some consideration should be given to those that live here, including the pollution, congestion, and law enforcement issues incurred. In excess of twenty-five years, Rockland County has suffered from MTA inbounds, paying more in taxes than benefiting from them. More public discussion is needed on funding. Leg. Jobson said that he was in support.

CHAIR CORNELL ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 7:18 PM

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TRANSIT 2.26.14.MIN/PS