

*Present:* Emmanuel Carter, James D'Agostino, Nell Donaldson, Karen Kitney, Rebecca Livengood, Kevin McAuliffe, Sarah McIlvain, Donna O'Mahoney Rohde, Steve Schroeder, Doug Sutherland, Paul Mercurio, Ben Sio, Meghan Costa, Sandra Barrett

Meeting begins with review of topics covered at previous meeting. Donna reported on Bill Egloff's presentation at FOCUS the previous week. The reactions and questions from the audience were similar to the study committee's. The facts that the viaduct cannot be rebuilt as is and that it is the only 45-mph stretch seem to resonate with people.

Discussion of Public Sessions: How should we involve the public?

- Only a small percentage of people have the necessary expertise to analyze what should occur, yet everyone is of equal standing in expressing points of view.
- Should we be looking for public input or providing public information? How can we provide information? How can we take preparatory steps?
- Are there changes in the transportation system, for instance the trucking industry, that will impact the kind of traffic seen in the future? For instance, some local communities are trying to restrict truck traffic from local routes.
- What parties are thinking about what the next generation of transportation is? Where can we look for that information?
- To alleviate the anxiety level that goes with a fear of "taking away the highway," we need to inform the public about things like how emergency transportation will function.
- The federal money that comes to this region comes through NYSDOT and its allocation is decided upon at the SMTC.
- Federal earmarks could influence the process, but it is not likely.
- One hundred percent of federally funded projects are reviewed by SMTC. If NYSDOT tries to put across a project that doesn't have local support, SMTC's board will not approve it.
- Issues raised through the public input process will be well documented and responded to in some fashion.
- Issues raised within OCL process will be reintroduced into SMTC's public input process.
- Part of our education process is letting people know that the decision-making process will be open to public input, that their voices will be heard. Part of the process is cataloging what people's interests are and part is illustrating that other communities have handled this with interesting solutions.
- The public should be informed that if the decision is made to keep I-81 in its current configuration, we will be maintaining a structure that is substandard in design.
- Projects organized by Emmanuel Carter: What will be shown? Several possibilities including the current configuration, a projected rebuild of I-81, a boulevard level roadway. Alternatives that the committee would not necessarily endorse should be included to provide the full range of alternatives, help the public "see" what can happen in different scenarios.
- Proposed that a video be produced similar to the San Francisco video, in conjunction with the Newhouse School or WCNY. This will be offered to students as an optional project at Newhouse for a fall or spring semester (2009) project.
- Proposed: Exhibition in History/Art format for public display showing the still sheets prepared by Emmanuel Carter's class.

- Inform people "freeway culture" is an inefficient use of tax dollars, due to lower population density and thus the need for greater infrastructure.
- OCWA: They are building 200,000 feet of OCWA water line and taking pride in it. This fits into the themes of sprawl without growth and regional importance of a strong urban center, which have been central to past OCL studies (eg. Strategic Consolidation, Downtown) and which OCL should continue to point out through coming studies.
- The OCL study should inform the SMTC study in a thoughtful and informative manner. The OCL has the opportunity to influence public perception before the SMTC process is fully underway.
- Consideration of other groups that might join in advocacy with OCL is important.
- Agenda for next meeting: If the best use of OCL study is advocacy for downtown and University Hill, then the focus of education process is narrowed. One item for next meeting: consider all existing organizations that might provide input into needs and issues of downtown and University Hill as they relate to I-81's future. Look at sectors of business downtown, then look at entities and ask for their input. (Hospitals, etc.)
- Student project will include illustration of how traffic might be absorbed by grid (if I-81 exits were removed and replaced by boulevard.)
- Create a "Top reasons not to take I-81 down" and then address each of those fears.