

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
CONGESTION BUSTER TASK FORCE

IN RE:)
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CONGESTION BUSTER TASK FORCE)
PUBLIC MEETING)
PUBLIC TESTIMONY PORTION)

NJ Department of Transportation
One Executive Campus
Route 70 West
Cherry Hill, New Jersey
Wednesday - April 24, 2002
Commencing 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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Trenton, New Jersey 08618
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1 H E L D B E F O R E :
2 JIM SINCLAIR, Chairman
3 Congestion Buster Task Force

4

5 A T T E N D E E S :

6 KENNETH AFFERTON

7 NOREEN CARDINALI

8 KEN EDMONDS

9 MICHAEL EGENTON

10 DEB FIRMAN

11 RICK GUENTHER

12 JOANNE JAEGER

13 BARRY LEM

14 JUDI PARRISH

15 BILL RAGOZINE

16 ROXANE SHINN

17 MAUREEN SWEET

18 JODILYN TAFT

19 ADNEW TESSEMA

20 THOMAS THATCHER

21 JOHN WARD

22 SUSAN WEBER

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1 (Whereupon, the public meeting is
2 called to order.)

3 (Whereupon, introductory remarks are
4 made by Task Force Chairman James Sinclair.)

5 (Whereupon, remarks are made by
6 various Task Force Subcommittee
7 Chairpersons.)

8 (Whereupon, the public testimony
9 portion of the meeting is opened.)

10 CHAIRMAN SINCLAIR: Well, why don't
11 you come and tell us about your Greenway
12 activities. Would you tell your name and
13 who you represent, and spell it for her.

14 MR. EDMONDS: I am Ken Edmonds, East
15 Coast Greenway Alliance, and I'm based out
16 of Souderton, Pennsylvania. Does everybody
17 have their handout?

18 CHAIRMAN SINCLAIR: I don't.

19 MR. EDMONDS: Before I make some
20 comments about my specific project I'm
21 working on and bike/ped issues, I had to go
22 up to George Washington Bridge the other day
23 dealing with a bike/ped issue up there. I
24 was amazed. I was in eyeshot all the way
25 across Interstate 78 of trash trucks. I

1 don't know if your committee here has
2 addressed the trash issue or not, but I know
3 Pennsylvania is the biggest importer of
4 trash in the country. I was amazed coming
5 across.

6 Today I will tell you a little bit
7 about my specific project at East Coast
8 Greenway, and I will touch a little bit on
9 the ped/bike issues in general and the
10 success of them in other parts of the
11 country. I found out about this task force
12 at a Delaware Valley Regional Planning
13 Commission. There was a handout there, and
14 I looked at the website. I didn't see a
15 whole lot about bike/ped, and I thought I
16 would come in and put a little plug in here.

17 My name is Ken Edmonds. I'm the
18 Mid-Atlantic Coordinator for the East Coast
19 Greenway Alliance. The East Coast Greenway
20 is a 2,600-mile bike/ped trail that's being
21 developed from Maine to Florida. The East
22 Coast Greenway Alliance doesn't build the
23 trails. We identify trail projects within a
24 chosen corridor and encourage local
25 communities in which the trail is being

1 built to connect to the neighboring
2 community's trail project. So we are hoping
3 to develop a network.

4 The East Coast Greenway Alliance is
5 a non-profit organization based out of Rhode
6 Island. There are 15 states and the
7 District of Columbia involved in the
8 development of the East Coast Greenway. If
9 you look at those maps on the inside of the
10 handout, you will see where the corridor has
11 been identified. What we try to do, we look
12 for bike/ped projects all within that route
13 line there and ask that the communities
14 connect to it.

15 Out of the 2,600 miles we have about
16 200 miles in place. There is about another
17 4 or 500 in the pipeline in some sort of
18 planning stage. 64 miles of the East Coast
19 Greenway is planned for New Jersey, and if
20 you're interested in the exact corridor in
21 New Jersey, I have booklets that describe
22 that. There could be more if certain links
23 are developed. By connecting trails we hope
24 to get the best bang for our tax dollar and
25 create a network which becomes a vital

1 commuter corridor, especially in the urban
2 areas.

3 Because it goes through cities, I
4 call the East Coast Greenway the urban
5 version of the Appalachian Trail. People go
6 to the Appalachian Trail to get away from it
7 all. You go to the East Coast Greenway to
8 get to it all. That's kind of a little play
9 we have there.

10 Concerning congestion, there isn't
11 one easy answer to help curtail it. It will
12 be a number of initiatives and
13 transportation options that will help solve
14 the problem. One of those options is
15 multipurpose trails. I would like to
16 encourage the Congestion Buster Task Force
17 to consider development of multipurpose
18 trails and rail trails as a way to help
19 lessen congestion.

20 Nationwide, over 10,000 miles of
21 rail trails have already been developed.
22 The goal is 15,000 miles by 2005. The
23 success and popularity of trails are well
24 documented, especially in urban areas.
25 Trails should not be considered a facility

1 just for recreation, but a vital component
2 to the commuter matrix of transportation
3 options.

4 The top ten rail trails and
5 multipurpose trails now count over 1 million
6 user trips per year. Some now attract 2
7 million user trips a year. In comparison,
8 consider how much money would be spent on a
9 road that has that much usage, and with a
10 road you still don't have the environmental
11 and health benefits that the trail gives to
12 the community.

13 A recent report noted that one-third
14 of all weekday trail users in major
15 metropolitan trail systems in Washington,
16 D.C.; Seattle, Washington; and Tampa,
17 Florida, are commuters. So these trail
18 systems, each of them, has over a million
19 users a year. One-third of them are
20 commuters. I'm told that New York City, but
21 I haven't seen the stats yet, but New York
22 City --

23 CHAIRMAN SINCLAIR: Say that again.
24 Where is it that they have one-third?

25 MR. EDMONDS: One-third, you have

1 got Washington, D.C., the Capitol Crescent
2 Trail; Seattle, Washington, you have the
3 Burke-Gilman Trail; and in Tampa, Florida,
4 you have the Pinellas Trail. All count over
5 a million users per year, a million trips.
6 A third of those have been identified as
7 commuter trips, either kids going on
8 bicycles, people going to work, shopping
9 trips. If you have ever been in any of
10 these cities and been on that trail, you
11 will see that the stats are not off,
12 especially in the summer months. They are
13 really packed.

14 In New York City, even though that's
15 not -- the Hudson River Greenway, even
16 though it's not a rail trail, claims to be
17 the busiest nonmotorized corridor in the
18 country now. Portland, Oregon, reports that
19 in their region over 5,000 people per day
20 now commute by bicycle. They contribute
21 this to well-designed on-street and
22 off-street ped/bike facilities and creating
23 public awareness so that people realize they
24 don't always have to travel in cars.

25 Portland found that the average

1 bicycle commuter lived within 5 miles of
2 work. I was in Portland in the '80s. I was
3 there for a few years, and we were just
4 beginning to develop this bike/ped network,
5 and I went there this past summer. It's
6 amazing how they integrated the on-road and
7 off-road systems.

8 Another aspect of trails, emergency
9 evacuation. It's kind of a new thing that's
10 just been recognized as of 9/11. Some have
11 taken note that pedestrian trails were the
12 only way out for those involved in the 9/11
13 attacks in New York City and the Pentagon.
14 The highways were either clogged with
15 congestion or shut down.

16 As the interstates are considered
17 vital to national defense, there is now some
18 consideration that urban trails are vital in
19 emergency evacuation situations. If
20 disaster was to happen in any major city,
21 most likely the roads and railroads could
22 not handle the rush of people. Most would
23 either leave the area on foot or bicycle,
24 and a multipurpose trail can help provide
25 the way out.

1 As you deliberate ways to solve our
2 congestion woes, please do not minimize how
3 well-designed, multipurpose trails can be a
4 contributing factor in helping to solve our
5 congestion problems. Thank you for your
6 time.

7 CHAIRMAN SINCLAIR: Thank you very
8 much, Ken.

9 MR. EDMONDS: Any questions? And I
10 do have a book which explains what's going
11 on.

12 CHAIRMAN SINCLAIR: Do we have
13 anybody else that wants to testify? Do we
14 have anybody signed up back there? Okay.
15 I'm going to recess the hearing.

16 (Whereupon, a brief recess is
17 taken.)

18 (Whereupon, the meeting is adjourned
19 at 4:00 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

* * *

I, LUCILLE A. KELLY, a Certified
Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public of the State
of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the
foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of
the notes taken by me in the above-captioned
matter.

LUCILLE A. KELLY, CSR, RMR
License No. XI01052

Dated:

My Notary Commission expires March 8, 2005

