



MINUTES OF FREIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2008

ATTENDEES: Richard Arena, Walter Bonin, Frank DeMasi, Dom D'Eramo, Ed Lowrey, Jon Delli Priscoli, Abby Swaine, Michael Rennie, Marilyn Wellons

Reviewed the following meetings: Senator Anthony Petrucci, March 24th. Frank DeMasi, Dom D'Eramo, Mike Rennie, Marilyn Wellons, and Walter Bonin attended.

Senator Petrucci is on the Joint Committee on Transportation and chairs the Senate Committee on Local Communities and Zoning. There was a lengthy discussion on freight rail issues and the advantages concerning air quality, energy consumption, cost to move goods, etc. He was very receptive to the information we provided. Our objective was educational and was effectively conveyed. Since our objective was limited, we did not ask for specific action on his part. He also conveyed to us that the Senate was working on legislation to address local zoning issues, but felt it would not be completed this session. It may provide us with an opportunity to address local opposition to facilities necessary to an effective functioning rail freight system.

Nancy Seidman, Department of Environmental Protection – Following the meeting with Senator Petrucci, the above individuals and Abby Swaine, who was responsible for setting up the meeting, met with Nancy and several of her associates. We presented the same material and arguments as were presented to Senator Petrucci. As with the Senator, they were interested in what we had to say. We asked them to support rail freight at legislative hearings and to develop a policy in favor of it. Since our objectives are closely aligned, (air quality, fuel efficiency, etc.) it is to our mutual benefit to work together. We encouraged them to continue promoting Smartway as broadly as possible.

They were interested in diesel engine output exhaust. We got the impression they were concerned about its effect on air quality. However, in calculating the amount of freight an engine can pull versus trucking, rail has a significant advantage. We discussed briefly the improvements to rail diesel engines and would send them some related information. We also pointed out the fact that CSX was using the oldest locomotives since it is not heavily investing in this area.

General Discussion

Rick Arena – We are spending billions on roads but very little on rail. This contrasts with many other states which are making significant freight rail expenditures. Virginia, for example, is spending \$20M of the states money on rail freight facilities to upgrade its port.

Rail freight expansion is important in that trucks cause 10,000 times more road and bridge damage than autos.

John Businger – The trucking industry has considerably more influence than rail in that there are many more truck firms and truckers and have a more effective association than rail. There are only a handful of rail companies and they are much less effective than truckers, not to mention the bad press they are receiving.

Double Stack – We need to identify double stack corridors and identify the bridges that have to be repaired and raised to provide adequate clearance. We need to quantify the cost benefits to get the state to make the necessary investments.

Freight Rail Funding

- We should focus on CMAQ funds for rail help.
- There is a need to get EOT's willingness to participate in what we are doing.
- We need to continue discussions with Lt. Governor Murray who thus far is our strongest supporter.
- All projects need to get on the TIP, which is coordinated by Mass Highway.
- Massport seems to have no interest in rail or expanding its business west to Chicago.

Presentations

- We need to develop presentations for seminars, etc. and for bond bill hearings. We should also target environmental conferences. We have a strong message that should resonate with them, especially if we can team with Nancy Seidman and DEP.

Grafton and Upton Railroad – Jon Delli Priscoli who is the operator of this railroad presented an overview of his plans and some obstacles. He discussed his background, which has been primarily focused on real estate development. However, he has a strong interest in railroads and ran Quincy Bay terminal for eleven (11) years. This railroad operated for 125 years and is 16 miles long. He said that there is a lot of interest in the line and he has been getting many phone calls. In a way, it represents corridor development similar to the South Coast Rail, only much smaller and freight focused.

Some of the obstacles he has faced has been encroachment on the rail property and local opposition to rail traffic. He is working with the area towns to build support.

A significant need he has is state funding for rail crossings. He wanted to know who could help him. We suggested Lt. Governor Murray, Tom Cahir, and Greg Bialecki, who Jon knows. We assured him we would do all we could to help him.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 PM.