



## FREIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES, MAY 14, 2008

**ATTENDEES:** Walter Bonin, John Businger, Frank DeMasi, Robert LaTremouille, Ed Lowrey, Anne McGahan, Patrick Mehr, Steve Olanoff, Mike Rennie, Barry Steinberg, Abby Swaine, Marilyn Wellons

### MINUTES

- Correction to minutes of April 23, 2008 meeting. Change reference of CSX locomotives to newest on main line, oldest on branch lines. Pan Am uses oldest on all lines.
- Review Worcester Rail Meeting
  - Lt. Governor comments centered on his displeasure with the pace of progress on negotiations. He was especially critical of CSX's stance on no fault.
  - CSX reiterated its "no fault" position but indicated some interest in sharing cost of insurance.
- Tom Cahir at Rail Meeting.
  - Dispatching not a problem.
  - CSX relations are "good."
  - Longer station stops to firm up schedule and accommodate large increase in commuters.
  - Equipment condition is poor due to third party operation minimizing maintenance and personnel costs.
  - State invested \$100M to improve Framingham to Worcester run (primarily double track removed by Conrail) between Framingham and Worcester. Second track added for capacity needed for new commuter service to Worcester and freight.
- Former Governor Dukakis gave the keynote speech at Worcester Rail Summit Meeting. Some of the key points he made were:
  - Why does it take so long to get public projects done? He passed several projects underway but no one working.
  - He felt the impasse with CSX could be worked out if CSX would agree on sharing the insurance costs. He offered to help with the negotiations.
  - He reiterated his support for the North-South rail link connecting North and South Stations. He said that Europe could build tunnels and pipelines over much greater distances for much less than the quoted costs of the link.

- In his travels to Europe recently, he saw a world-class public transportation system with connections throughout Europe. There were also many high-speed trains. This is something he believes the U.S. needs to do along the entire East Coast.
- Mike Rennie updated us on “bridge” legislation.
  - It appears that there are enough votes to prevent its adoption.
- Barry Steinberg commented that State is paying several hundred million to buy existing track which would not add to capacity. Money would be better spent on capacity improvements proposed by CSX, vetted by EOTPW consultant.
- Marilyn Wellons will contact Senator Petrucci for meeting.
- Rick Arena had conversation with Massport’s Lowell Richards about increasing rail capacity.
- Frank DeMasi – Massport comments.
  - Solution to freight rail, passenger rail, truck freight, and land use conflicts could be solved by MassTrans initiative. Organizational proposal (still in development stage) to consolidate all transportation related agencies. Massport is currently excluded as indicated on current MassTrans Documentation. MassTrans seems to have gone to limbo.
  - Mike Leone is Massport Director of Port Operations, must compete with MassPort Corporate commercial development and airport development for port improvement funds. Port is lowest generator of revenue for MassPort.
  - MassPort and the BRA see low density, bulk rail freight trains as meeting current and future needs of the port and Marine Industrial Park *not intermodal trains*.
  - MBTA bottlenecks to direct freight rail access to the port have been increased rather than eliminated as a result of recent Old Colony Commuter Rail line restoration and the Fairmount Line upgrades and station and track alignments.
  - We believe full intermodal freight rail, Vertical Clearance 22’6” and Weight Capacity 286,000#, are needed to augment truck only handling of containers out of Conley Terminal as volume continues to grow and highway access is continued to be constrained by commercial and residential development in the Sea Port area.
    - Physical constraints at Bay Junction force trains to make reverse moves to access the port and Marine Industrial Park with low capacity for train length. Projected rail freight needs on Fairmount Line are in conflict with MBTA plans for expanded commuter service and high platforms at all stations.
    - No one knows what Mass Trans status is. (Copy of proposal provided to Boston MPO for discussion in November 07. Supported by Romney and Deval Patrick Administration. Supported by Transportation Finance Commission.)
- Order not filed yet per John Businger.

- The Governor's Office is now pushing buying the rail line between Framingham and Worcester as well as the MA congressional delegation. We could inform the MPO/EOT of our concerns and suggestions for using the money to add capacity instead of buying the ROW. This is so down the road as far as a policy decision we may be Quixotic in doing anything!
- Who to approach – Murray, Cohen, Baddour, Kerry? RTAC letter to MPO/EOT?
- Freight Study
  - Abby Swaine “Any environmental person on study committee?” No? Mike Rennie will confirm. Is Dan O'Connor someone we should see, yes.” Can he help us on CSX buy versus add capacity?
  - Abby will help us identify person to contact.
  - Send RTAC letter to Ned Codd and Tom Cahir recommending DEP be a participant on Rail Plan Freight Plan Stakeholder list.
- Frank DeMasi
  - Presented several slides relating to Worcester commuter rail improvement issues in lieu of purchasing line. Framingham to Boston, State owned, in worse operating condition, virtually singletrack, outmoded signal system, Platforms on only inbound tracks at all three Newton and Yawkey Stations. So why complain about Framingham to Worcester? Double track, modern cab signals, Commuter trains get dispatching priority over freight.... CSX requested improvements \$67.8 Million. This is less than \$3-400 million to purchase ROW with no improvements!!!!!!!!!!