

Lower Manhattan Development Corporation
Meeting of the Commuters and Transportation Advisory Council
Meeting Summary
Wednesday, April 24, 2002, 5:30 – 7:30pm
Held at the Offices of Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton
One Liberty Plaza
LMDC Board Members: Howard Wilson and Bob Harding

Lower Manhattan Development Corporation Board Members Howard Wilson and Bob Harding opened the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves for the record. Mr. Harding then opened up the meeting with LMDC updates including the creation of the LMDC web-site – www.renewnyc.com.

Mr. Harding introduced Alex Garvin, Vice President of Planning for the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation for discussion of the Draft Principles and Preliminary Blueprint. Mr. Garvin indicated that the LMDC Board adopted the Draft Principles and Preliminary Blueprint in early April and released it for public comment. LMDC representatives will be meeting with the eight Advisory Councils to get further input.

Mr. Garvin briefly summarized the Draft Principles and Preliminary Blueprint for the Council with the goal of clarifying any misunderstandings. Mr. Garvin and Mr. Wilson expressed their wish to collect comments and concerns during this meeting regarding the Draft Principles and Preliminary Blueprint. Council Members, Lee Sanders and Bob Yaro, remarked on their appreciation on seeing many of their suggestions included in the Blueprint.

Clarification was provided with regard to the coordination of mass transit services indicating that improvements for train, bus, roads and ferry services are things that are going to be evaluated for further discussion. Mr. Garvin described briefly the desire from the public to link Lower Manhattan to a broader region via a modern station perhaps called “Grand Central South”, thus increasing accessibility to and from all boroughs, Long Island and New Jersey –

similar to Grand Central. Several members of the Advisory Council agreed that it would be a good idea to integrate the Metro Card System into all services e.g. Bus, Train, Path etc.

Mr. Garvin called attention to the fact that many stations such as the one at Fulton Street are very confusing and that the MTA is looking for ways to change it into a modern station, which would support the overall mass transit endeavors listed in the Blueprint.

The Council reminded LMDC that proposals should keep in mind the immediate needs of existing residents and small businesses in Lower Manhattan, it should maintain a “fast track” mentality about the time-table of proposed projects with the intent on getting the downtown economy revitalized sooner than later.

While buses were mentioned in the Blueprint it was reiterated that the LMDC should keep in mind that increased bus services would require a place to house the buses when not in use. There was a consensus not to utilize downtown space for this. As a result, it was suggested to add the construction of underground garages or special buildings to the Blueprint.

A member of the Advisory Council briefly voiced a concern about the lack of a stronger message about the importance of safety and security in the Principles & Blueprint. There was a sense that this message should be included. An additional comment was raised about the relevance of environmental issues related to the redevelopment/improvement of mass transit services in Lower Manhattan.

Of particular importance to members of the Council was the progress and support of the 2nd Avenue subway proposal. Mr. Garvin stressed that the Blueprint includes new proposals, not projects already underway i.e. the 2nd Avenue Subway and furthermore clarified the LMDC’s awareness of this project. Mr. Garvin explained that, while all proposals will be considered,

certain projects must be pursued immediately in order to revitalize the downtown area e.g. the reconstruction of Path train connecting New Jersey with Lower Manhattan, 1 & 9, and N & R services to Cortland Street. Over the last 50+ years most mass transit improvements have been focused in the Mid-town area so it is important we try to keep the focus in the downtown area.

One Council Member suggested the possible use of FEMA funding for transit construction projects. FEMA funds can sometimes be used in order to bring projects into compliance with ADA standards. This could be justification for the use of FEMA funds in transit facility improvements.

Council Members expressed concerns over a proposal for a “Super Shuttle”. Mass transit representatives expressed concern over creating an “override situation” by placing commuter trains and a “Super Shuttle” on or near the same track, particularly in light of recent derailments in Upstate New York. It was stressed that legitimate safety issues be taken into consideration.

In addition,

issues were raised about the proposal to displace A & E lines in order to accommodate a “Super Shuttle” – the alternative was to create a new tunnel which would, as some Council members suggested, divert attention from the 2nd Avenue project.

By mid-summer the LMDC hopes to establish a process by which the memorial project can get started. Currently it is working with family members of the victims to identify this process. It was noted that while long term projects are important, the LMDC and interested parties must remain cognizant of the needs of small local businesses and residents currently residing in Lower Manhattan.

Andrew Salkin from the city DOT, as a final note, provided an update for projects and concerns mentioned at the last meeting. Things have been moving along at a good pace. West Street was reopened, thus returning mobility to the Brooklyn/Battery Tunnel area. Access was returned to Church & Liberty Streets on the pedestrian walkway on the south bridge and it is expected that Rector Street will be open by next week.

It was agreed that due to the lack of time, the Viewing Wall would be discussed at the next meeting. Mr. Harding thanked the Advisory Council member and the meeting adjourned.