

**PATH Riders' Council Meeting Minutes - Wednesday, September 26, 2018 - 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM**

Journal Square Transportation Center (JSTC)

**Meeting Agenda:**

- I. Welcome
- II. PTC Progress & 2018 Weekend Closures Update
- III. Positive PATH Messaging
- IV. New Harrison Station Update
- V. Countdown Clocks and RidePATH App Update
- VI. Priority Rider Campaign
- VII. Next Steps / Adjournment

**Attendees (PRC Members):**

1. Lewis Battista
2. Dorothy Benson
3. Margalit Edelman
4. Dave Ho
5. Terry Karney
6. Haley Klausmeyer
7. Anthony Lupena
8. Stewart Mader
9. Thomas Miller
10. Andrew Nathanson
11. Rahul Pathak
12. Tzara Peterson
13. Maribel Ruiz
14. Sridhar Shankar

**Attendees (Staff):**

1. Christopher Canary (Leadership Fellow, PANYNJ)
2. Rebecca Cassidy (Chief of Staff/Executive Advisor - Director's Office, PATH)
3. Gideon Davidson (Operations Fellow, PATH)
4. Jenny Davis (Chief – Government and Community Relations, PANYNJ)
5. Linda Doss (Principal Marketing Analyst – Customer Relations & Mktg. Programs, PATH)
6. Thierry Dumoulin (Director – Marketing, PANYNJ)
7. Jawauna Greene (Director – Brand & Customer Partnerships, PANYNJ)
8. Scott Ladd (Assistant Director – Media Relations, PANYNJ)
9. Kevin Lejda (Superintendent – Transportation Construction & Operations Planning, PATH)
10. Michele Martin (Senior Administrative Secretary, PATH)

11. Damian McShane (Program Director – Capital Programs, PATH)
12. Jessica Mills (Manager – Customer Relations & Marketing Programs, PATH)
13. Julia Pasquale (Leadership Fellow, PANYNJ)
14. Tom Rowbottom (Assistant Director/General Superintendent, PATH)
15. Vincent Scaramia (Staff Services Engineer – Capital Programs, PATH)
16. Philip Silvestro (Associate Customer Service Representative – CR&MP, PATH)
17. Geoff Walano (IT Project Manager, PANYNJ)
18. Kathryn Winfree (Sr. External Relations Rep - Government and Community Relations, PANYNJ)
19. Greg Wong (Manager - Business and Transportation Analysis, PATH)
20. Michael Vozza (Manager - Financial & Business Planning, PATH)

### **I. Welcome**

- **Thomas Rowbottom** introduced himself and gave a brief overview of the meeting agenda.

### **II. PTC Progress & 2018 Weekend Closures Update**

- **Kevin Lejda** provided a status update on the PTC (Positive Train Control) signals project, stating that PATH is on schedule and nearing the end of the project. Of the seven sections of the railroad, only Sections 6 and 7 remain until PTC is fully implemented system-wide. The Newark to World Trade Center line is fully operational under PTC.
- **Kevin Lejda** detailed the remaining project work. The Sunday closures at the Hoboken and Newport stations were to conduct further testing to ensure absolute readiness for the final cutover to PTC. The final cutover of Sections 6 and 7 will commence the complete implementation of PTC.
- **Kevin Lejda** informed the PRC of potential issues that could affect the project schedule, such as software anomalies; however, we believe that the most complex aspects of the project have already been implemented. An interdisciplinary group meets every morning to discuss any issues that occurred on the railroad from the day before. A group will also meet Thursday, September 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss mitigating any impacts to service caused by the remaining project work.
- **PRC members** asked if, moving forward, analyses will be done to identify opportunities to further improve service. **Kevin Lejda** responded that, yes, his group has prioritized this issue, focusing especially on the Newark to World Trade Center line during peak periods.
- **Gregory Wong** added that Planning and Regional Development believes that there may be a slight shift in ridership from uptown to downtown.
- **Rebecca Cassidy** added that most other railroads will not meet the federal deadline for PTC implementation, and that PATH is the only railroad in this region that will meet the deadline.

- **PRC members** asked when regular weekend service will resume, to which **Kevin Lejda** responded that regular service will resume in November, as the last scheduled outage is the last weekend of October.

### III. Positive PATH Messaging

- **Jenny Davis** introduced herself and the initiative, emphasizing all the good work the Port Authority and PATH are doing, and the need to communicate this to the public.
- **Jawauna Greene** and **Thierry Dumoulin** introduced themselves, and spoke about their past experience with mass transit and using the PATH system. **Jawauna Greene** shared their overall goal, which is to unify the messaging throughout the Port Authority, creating a consistent, modern voice that both unifies the Port Authority brand, and positively changes the public perception of the Port Authority and its work.
- **Thierry Dumoulin** discussed the importance of crafting messaging that resonates with PATH and Port Authority customers. As such, his group will focus on humanizing the Port Authority's voice and building a cohesive vision. They plan to engage the public and craft messaging through the lens of the public. Thierry and Jawauna plan to engage the PRC regularly.
- **PRC members** asked what sources the media is using to provide information about PATH. **Scott Ladd** replied that often radio stations will scan Twitter and synthesize the negative reactions to provide quick information to listeners. Other more mainstream news media will often see these Twitter reactions and reach out to PATH for official comment.
- **Jawauna Greene** discussed how the Port Authority and PATH should proactively utilize assets that it already has to better control its messaging, such as paid social media outreach.
- **Thierry Dumoulin** stated that, moving forward, his group will employ more sophisticated analytic tools to understand negative feedback on social media and elsewhere.
- **PRC members** suggested that (1) PRC meeting content should reach community members outside the council to highlight the good work that path is doing, and that (2) PATH show all of the ways it addresses and mitigates daily operational problems to highlight the resiliency of the system.

### IV. New Harrison Station Update

- **Damian McShane** introduced himself and **Anthony Scaramia**, and provided an overview of the content they would be discussing: (1) Overview of Project, (2) East Side Status, (3) West Side Status, and (4) Q&A.

- **Damian McShane** explained that work will be done on the two eastern head houses, then west side demolition will commence, followed by work on the new west side head houses. Additional project benefits were mentioned, such as plazas and bike racks. The station will be able to accommodate 10-car train service. All head houses will be located above the floodplain and will be ADA compliant. Currently, 8,700 riders enter the PATH system through Harrison every weekday.
- **Damian McShane** confirmed that the northeast head house will open in the very near future. The southeast head house is set to open in June 2019, and it will be a mirror image of the northeast head house.
- **Damian McShane** shared that the west side head houses are still in the conceptual phase and are going through final design. Demolition of the west side will start after both east side entry points are open. The northwest head house is planned to be open sometime in late 2020. The southwest is planned to be open sometime in 2021. The fourth plaza cannot open until 2022 because of work on the new substation; however, all three other plazas and head houses are planned to be open and operating in 2021.
- **PRC members** asked why Harrison station is receiving so much capital investment when other stations have higher ridership. **Damian McShane** responded that there are other projects addressing the other stations in the capital plan. He also explained that it is timely to address growth around Harrison now and update the station before PATH experiences capacity issues.

#### **V. Countdown Clocks and RidePATH App Update**

- **Greg Wong** introduced himself and explained that, over the past year, PATH has been working to install a countdown clock system similar to that of the MTA. He explained that there are three components of implementation: (1) train detection technology, (2) computation, and (3) displays.
- **Greg Wong** discussed the current plan for implementation of the displays. There are already many displays mounted and covered in plastic, and power and communication are currently being routed to the display units. The displays should go live according to the following timeline:
  - Phase 1: Newark and Harrison → November 2018
  - Phase 2: JSQ, Grove, Exchange, WTC → December 2018
  - Phase 3: 33rd, 23rd, 14th → January 2019
  - Phase 4: 9th, Christopher, Hoboken, Newport → January 2019

The phases are listed in the order of implementation, and are being implemented line-by-line. PATH has 73 display units, but estimates that only 50-60 units will be installed at first. **Greg** then showed the PRC images of what the displays will look like when active.

- **PRC members** asked if countdown clocks will be located before customers enter the station (e.g. the fare zone). **Greg** responded that, yes, they have chosen locations with the customer experience in mind, and they will provide signs before the turnstiles at entries where it is possible. **Geoffrey Walano** added that the RidePATH app will be connected to this data as well, so customers can check real-time PATH data before arriving at the station.
- **Geoffrey Walano** then provided updates regarding the utilization of the RidePATH app. He confirmed that 45,000 users have now installed the application on their mobile device, with most users spending around 2 minutes on the app.
- **Geoffrey Walano** discussed improvements being made to the RidePATH app, namely the inclusion of the real-time data being used for the countdown clocks. **Geoffrey** showed two potential display options on the application. Option 1 has real-time data and schedule information on the same page, whereas Option 2 has a separate tab titled, “Real Time.”
- **PRC members** seemed to generally prefer Option 2, but had general suggestions. For Option 1, members suggested carefully thinking about when real-time data supplants the schedule information, because commingling that information could lead to confusion. Another PRC member believed that the colors could potentially cause confusion (e.g. the red color to denote the Newark to World Trade Center line). Another PRC member suggested including the ability to toggle between real-time data and alerts/advisories.
- **Geoffrey Walano** suggested having a WebEx lunch session to discuss additional questions and concerns regarding the RidePATH app.

## **VI. Priority Rider Campaign**

- **Stewart Mader** introduced himself and explained his initiative to better assist “riders who are less able to stand” (an inclusive term he suggested PATH use moving forward). The initiative aims to assist a wider array of those in need of seating, since riders often only associate priority seating with pregnant women and disabled riders. However, “riders who are less able to stand” include other riders, such as those carrying babies and those with ailments that are not visibly obvious.
- **Stewart Mader** provided examples of similar initiatives in Australia, China, Japan, South Korea, and the United Kingdom. These countries employed methods such as colored/patterned seats and floors, noticeable symbols, positive advertisements/messaging, and apps employing Bluetooth technology. Key methods included some form of: (1) seat differentiation, (2) zone differentiation, and/or (3) unified message delivery.

- **PRC** members were in favor of pursuing all three methods, if possible. Some concerns arose, however, regarding the impact such zones would have during peak travel periods. Another concern was whether or not the use of the color “fuschia” (employed in Asia), would be confused with breast cancer awareness in the United States. **Stewart** replied that such confusion has not been problematic in Asia.
- **Stewart Mader** suggested hosting a WebEx session to discuss this initiative in further detail.

#### **VII. Adjournment**

- The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.