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2 THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

3 -----x

4 Public Meeting:

5 Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

6 For the Proposed Goethals Bridge Replacement

7 -----x

8 City of Elizabeth

9 City Hall

10 Council Chambers

11 50 Winfield Scott Plaza

12 Elizabeth, New Jersey

13 July 8, 2009

14 4:30 p.m.

15

16 B e f o r e:

17

18 GARY KASSOF
19 Bridge Program Manager
The United States Coast Guard

20 MAURA FITZPATRICK
21 Moderator
Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates

22 KEN HESS
23 Project Manager
23 Louis Berger Group

24

25

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2 A P P E A R A N C E S:

3 For The United States Coast Guard:

4 Gary Kassof

5 Chris Bisignano

6 Zack Strauss

7 For Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates:

8 Maura Fitzpatrick

9 Christie A. Marcella

10 Ryan Walsh

11 For Louis Berger Group, Inc.:

12 Ken Hess

13 Jean Philippe Magron

14 Craig Hanlon

15 For Parsons Brinckerhoff:

16 Judy Versenyi

17 Peter Sucher

18 For URS:

19 Stefan Armington

20 ALSO PRESENT:

21 The Public

22 The Press

23 The Media

24 Marc Russo,

25 Reporter

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20	Staten Island & Research Fellow, The University	
21	Transportation Research Center - City College	

22 of New York & on behalf of Alan Benimoff -

23 College of Staten Island

24

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22 ** There were no Speakers for the

23 Evening Session **

24

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PROCEEDINGS

3

4

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon,

5

everyone.

6

My name is Maura Fitzpatrick and

7

I'm going to be facilitating this meeting today.

8

And I would like to welcome you on behalf of the

9

U.S. Coast Guard.

10

And for those of you who are

11

interested in speaking to us today, it's important

12

that you fill out a speaker's request card at the

13

table right outside the main door here and Christie

14

will help you with that.

15

We are going to begin this evening

16

with a short - this afternoon I should say - a

17

short presentation and then we're going to take --

18

A VOICE: Can we get a little

19

more volume?

20

THE MODERATOR: How about if I

21

get closer?

22 Thank you.

23 And so I'm going to remind you

24 about this again. But if you want to speak, you

25 have to sign up. And after the presentation I'll

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2 be giving you the ground rules on how we will run
3 that part of the meeting.

4 But without further delay, I would
5 like to introduce Gary Kassof who is the Bridge
6 Program Manager of the First Coast Guard District.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. GARY KASSOF: Good
9 afternoon.

10 VOICES: Good afternoon.

11 MR. GARY KASSOF: Before we begin,
12 I would like to thank John Papetti of the City of
13 Elizabeth for arranging, helping us arrange for
14 these accommodations.

15 We thank the City of Elizabeth as
16 well.

17 Also we would like to recognize
18 some elected officials who are here: Michelle
19 Yamakaitis, Councilwoman of the City of Linden,
20 Jonathan Peters, Council President, Fair Haven
21 Borough, Elaine Lubas, Commissioner of the Linden

22 Environmental Commission, and Gordon Hass, Chairman
23 of the Elizabeth Planning Board.

24 So welcome, welcome all.

25 As Maura had said, I also welcome

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2 you to the United States Coast Guard public meeting
3 regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement
4 for the proposed Goethals Bridge Project.

5 As Maura mentioned, I am Gary
6 Kassof, the Bridge Program Manager for the First
7 Coast Guard District.

8 The U.S. Coast Guard, an agency
9 within the Department of Homeland Security, by
10 virtue of its authority to consider the issuance of
11 a bridge permit for the proposed action, is the
12 lead federal agency in accordance with the National
13 Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and its enabling
14 regulations which found at Title 40 Code of Federal
15 Regulations Part 1500.

16 Therefore, the Coast Guard is
17 responsible for ensuring that the Federal
18 environmental process is properly conducted.

19 In addition, this process is being
20 conducted in compliance with Section 106 of the
21 National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

22 With me this evening are members
23 of my staff as well as members of the joint venture
24 consultant team of The Louis Berger Group, and PB
25 World, who assisted the Coast Guard in the

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2 preparation of the DEIS about which we are here
3 this afternoon and evening to receive and listen to
4 your comments.

5 Therefore, this meeting is a
6 critical part of the EIS process.

7 There are numerous federal, state
8 and local agencies with expertise or jurisdiction
9 in the environmental review process that have
10 provided consultation to the Coast Guard through
11 the Technical Advisory Committee and the
12 Environmental Task Force in order to ensure
13 conformance with existing laws and regulations.

14 Further, public input has been a
15 key component of the process to date via the EIS
16 scoping meeting held in October of 2004, two rounds
17 of public open houses at key milestones in the
18 process, and established Stakeholder Committee
19 meetings of organizational representatives in the
20 project area which were held throughout the
21 development of the Draft EIS.

22 This is one of two formal public
23 meetings that are being held in communities nearest
24 to the project. And we are here to hear comments
25 on the Draft EIS.

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2 The other meeting will be held
3 tomorrow, July 9th at the Staten Island Hotel,
4 Staten Island, New York, between the hours of 4
5 p.m. and 8 p.m.

6 This public meeting is conducted
7 under the authority granted to the Coast Guard by
8 Section 115.60 of Title 33 of the Code of Federal
9 Regulations.

10 The decision to hold this meeting
11 was announced in The Federal Register on May 28,
12 2009.

13 The purpose of this meeting is to
14 obtain views of interested and affected parties and
15 to gather information concerning the impacts of the
16 proposed project on navigation and its effect on
17 the quality of the human environment.

18 A brief presentation describing
19 the proposed action, its purpose and need, project
20 alternatives, and potential mitigation will follow
21 my remarks.

22 Informational boards are located
23 outside this meeting room to the rear and are
24 provided for your review along with handouts that
25 can be taken home for further study.

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2 In addition, members of the
3 consultant staff are available to provide answers
4 or clarification, wherever possible.

5 Discussions held in those areas
6 will not be made part of the official record. So I
7 encourage you to make oral statements or comments
8 here in this room or submit comments by the various
9 methods available so that they can be included in
10 the official record.

11 We will address comments received
12 and statements made in the ensuing Final
13 Environmental Impact Statement.

14 We are here to listen to you.

15 This meeting is not an adversarial
16 proceeding, rather, it is one in which all
17 interested parties have the opportunity to present
18 a full and frank statement of their views regarding
19 the impacts of the proposed project.

20 Statements will not be given under
21 oath and cross-examination of speakers will not be

22 permitted. However, the presiding official may ask
23 for clarifications or amplifications of statements
24 that are made.

25 Shortly, Maura will provide the

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2 ground rules for conducting this meeting.

3 The record of this meeting will

4 remain open for the receipt of comments until July

5 28, 2009.

6 The Port Authority of New York and

7 New Jersey, the project sponsor, submitted a

8 preliminary bridge permit application to the Coast

9 Guard in June 2004. The U.S. Coast Guard, pursuant

10 to the General Bridge Act of 1946, found at 33 U.S.

11 Code 525, will ultimately make a decision on the

12 bridge permit application based on the merits of

13 the case.

14 At this point it is important to

15 state that the U.S. Coast Guard has not made a

16 final determination or final decision on the merits

17 of the case or the application before us. Our

18 decision will be based upon an evaluation of the

19 probable impacts of the proposed activity on

20 navigation and on the quality of the human

21 environment.

- 22 Pertinent factors such as
- 23 information concerning public parks, wetlands,
- 24 water quality, fish and wildlife, coastal zone,
- 25 historic and archeological sites and navigational

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2 safety, among others, will be made part of the case
3 record and will be fully considered prior to taking
4 final agency action on the bridge permit
5 application.

6 I would now like to introduce Mr.
7 Ken Hess from the project team who will provide a
8 brief description of the project.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. KEN HESS: Thank you, Gary.

11 I would also like to thank all of
12 you who are today.

13 I know many of you have probably
14 been involved right from the initial scoping and we
15 value your input and we continue to value your
16 input today.

17 We really want to hear from you
18 all so I'm going to have a very abbreviated
19 presentation today because we really want to hear
20 what your comments are.

21 I have an abbreviated agenda,

22 similar to some of the presentations we've given in
23 the past, focusing on purpose and need for the
24 project and how that purpose and need has led to
25 the conceptual bridge design that's been proposed.

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2 We will also talk about some of
3 the key project impacts and mitigation measures
4 that have been identified in the Draft EIS. And
5 we'll talk about this public comment period and the
6 next steps.

7 There are a number of elements of
8 purpose and need driving this project. One of them
9 is to address design deficiencies that make the
10 Bridge functionally obsolete. Given that the
11 Bridge was constructed in 1928, the substandard
12 ten-foot lane widths that are on the Bridge really
13 are not able to accommodate the types of traffic
14 and the volumes of vehicles that are used in the
15 Bridge today.

16 There's also a lack of emergency
17 shoulders and there's a difficult span alignment on
18 the New Jersey approach to the Bridge.

19 There's also a need to provide
20 safer operating conditions and to reduce the number
21 of accidents on the Bridge as well as to improve

22 traffic service on the Bridge and its approaches.

23 And I'll be addressing that particular point in a

24 few minutes in more detail.

25 There's also a need to enhance

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2 structural integrity and to reduce the lifecycle
3 cost with the aging Bridge.

4 In order to keep the existing
5 Bridge functioning for the next hundred years,
6 hundreds of millions of dollars would need to be
7 invested just to keep it going without the
8 additional benefit of the other -- being able to
9 resolve some of the other needs that we're talking
10 about.

11 There's a need to provide reliable
12 transportation system redundancy to ensure that
13 there's an adequate number of lanes between Staten
14 Island and New York -- and New Jersey at all times.

15 There's also a need to provide for
16 the safe and reliable truck access for regional
17 goods movement. And this is especially important
18 now in light of the ongoing and anticipated future
19 growth at the New York Container Terminal on
20 Howland Hook.

21 And there's also a need to provide

22 additional width on the Bridge so as not to
23 preclude potential future transit in the corridor.
24 So it's being designed so that we can accommodate,
25 whether it be a bus rapid transit system or a light

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2 rail system, if and when it's determined that it's
3 feasible or warranted.

4 So the various elements of purpose
5 and need that I've just addressed led to a
6 cable-stayed design. It was determined that a
7 cable-stayed design would fully meet all of the
8 elements of purpose and need and that I've just
9 addressed. The concept that you can see here shows
10 what that cable-stayed design could look like.

11 It's essentially, or very close to
12 where the existing Goethals Bridge is, although
13 depending on which alternative alignment is
14 selected, would either be a little bit to the south
15 or a little bit to the north of where the existing
16 bridge is.

17 With regard to the alignments, I'm
18 not getting into that in the presentation here but
19 out in the hallway we do have display boards that
20 do give details about the four alternative
21 alignments that have been considered. And we've

22 got people here that will help you to understand

23 more about those.

24 The basic design concept includes

25 a single bridge with cable-stayed supported roadway

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2 decks. There are two decks and roadways, one in
3 each direction.

4 Now here you see a -- oh, I'm
5 sorry.

6 Each roadway contains three
7 12-foot wide lanes, a 12-foot wide right shoulder,
8 and a 5-foot wide left or inner shoulder.

9 Now the design concept that we're
10 seeing here is, this is the entire cross section of
11 the proposed Bridge. The roadways that I've just
12 mentioned, we've got a westbound and an eastbound,
13 with three lanes in each direction with shoulders.

14 In the center area there's the
15 potential future transit corridor that I mentioned
16 earlier. Between that area and the two roadways,
17 here is where the towers are proposed to go as well
18 as the inner support cables.

19 The outside edges, that's where
20 the outer support cables will go. And then on the
21 north side of the bridge, that's where there's the

22 proposed bicycle/pedestrian facility is.

23 Now we've taken that basic concept

24 with the various alternatives that have been

25 analyzed and we've looked at the impacts associated

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2 with those alternatives and concepts. And that's
3 what's been addressed in the Draft EIS.

4 As I mentioned earlier to you, we
5 want to really give you the opportunity to talk
6 tonight so I really can't talk about all of the
7 different disciplines that we have listed here,
8 which we did look at in the Draft EIS.

9 I'm going to focus today on those
10 that are underlined and shown in red, although you
11 can't really tell that they're red. I think those
12 are kind of the key types of environmental impacts
13 that you're probably most interested in knowing
14 about.

15 I should point out that the
16 handout that we've given you, there's a matrix, a
17 four-page matrix. That does, in fact, address, in
18 a summary fashion, all of the impacts and some
19 mitigation measures as they relate to the various
20 alternative alignments that have been studied in
21 the EIS.

22 So let's first talk about

23 socioeconomics.

24 And one of the key elements there

25 is the potential for displacements, specifically

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2 businesses and residences.

3 And the number of displacements

4 really correlate with the particular alignment

5 that's chosen. But among the four alignments,

6 anywhere from nine to twelve businesses would be

7 impacted. And what that includes are those

8 businesses that would be displaced outright, or in

9 some cases it would be an operational impact where

10 it's some facility on the property that would be

11 encroached upon such as a parking lot or some other

12 support structure to the business.

13 There's a total of zero to 51

14 residences that would be displaced, once again,

15 depending on which alternative is selected. And

16 they're all located in Elizabeth in the Krakow

17 Street neighborhood.

18 Regardless of which alternative

19 and which -- the total number of displacements that

20 ultimately does come out of this, compensation will

21 be provided in accordance with the law.

22 Now, during the construction
23 period, which would last anywhere from 56 to 70
24 months, once again, depending on which alternative,
25 jobs would be generated so that's a positive

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2 impact.

3

Actual construction jobs, there

4 would be about 400 to 500 generate per year during

5 the construction period. And there would be a

6 total of about 5500 to 5900 jobs that would be

7 indirectly generated through sales and expenditures

8 and services.

9

We also looked at historic and

10 archeological resources. The State Historic

11 Preservation Offices for both New York and New

12 Jersey have concurred with the Coast Guard's

13 determinations that there's no known adverse effect

14 on any archeological resources in either state.

15

They've also concurred that there

16 is, in fact, an adverse effect on three historic

17 architectural resources which are all considered to

18 be eligible for listing on the National Register.

19

The first of those is the Goethals

20 Bridge itself which would be adversely effected

21 because it would be demolished. The other two, the

- 22 Staten Island Railroad Historic District in New
- 23 Jersey, and the Staten Island Railway Lift Truss
- 24 Bridge over the Arthur Kill, they would be visually
- 25 adversely affected because there's a visual

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2 relationship between those resources and the
3 Goethals Bridge.

4 So the next step would be, as we
5 develop the Final EIS, to also develop a Memorandum
6 of Agreement with the State Historic Preservation
7 Offices to establish what would be appropriate
8 mitigation for the impacts associated with those
9 three resources. And the intent is that we would
10 present that information in the Final EIS.

11 Okay. We looked at wetland
12 impacts. Permanent impacts of wetlands is when
13 there would be an impact that would occur for more
14 than six months right up to truly a permanent
15 impact.

16 And the range for the four
17 alternative alignments would be anywhere from 5.2
18 to about 5.5 acres. So between the various
19 alignments there's not a significant difference in
20 number of acres. It's really the location of the
21 acres would that be impacted.

22 Temporary wetland impacts are
23 those that would be in effect for less than six
24 months. They're usually associated with cofferdam
25 construction that would be ultimately removed.

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2 Most of the impacts are in New
3 York because that's where the large tidal wetlands
4 system is located.

5 And there's a variety of
6 mitigation measures that are being proposed. They
7 vary depending on state and type of impact that's
8 being proposed. And there's also an effort to
9 continue to try to reduce the number of impacts as
10 design proceeds further.

11 Okay. The next element is traffic.

12 Now, generally, when we're looking
13 at traffic, you talk in terms of levels of service.
14 And that's really, we're talking about operational
15 conditions. And levels of service are similar to a
16 report card that go from best being level of
17 service A to the worst being level of service F
18 with various grades in-between.

19 Level of service A is defined as a
20 free-flowing condition with high travel speeds,
21 whereas F is considered breakdown condition with

22 excessive congestion and delay.

23 So what we looked at was the year

24 2034, which is the Design Year, twenty years beyond

25 the point where it's anticipated that the Bridge

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2 would be completed.

3

So let's look at first at the AM

4 peak period during that year. What we see there in

5 red arrows, those are the level of service F.

6 Those are the worst case conditions. So what you

7 see here on the Goethals Bridge, you've got level

8 of service F. This would be the No Build Scenario

9 if you did not construct the Goethals Bridge

10 replacement.

11 In the AM you would have level of

12 service F in the westbound direction, level of

13 service E, which is next level up, still not

14 considered to be acceptable, in the eastbound

15 direction.

16 Down here at the Outerbridge

17 Crossing you've got level of service F in both

18 directions.

19 Now, with the Build, where we

20 would provide a replacement bridge for Goethals,

21 what happens there is that where you have level of

22 service F or E, you're now going to have level of

23 service D in both directions and that's considered

24 to be operationally acceptable.

25 And you get some improvement here

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2 going from a level of service F to E in the
3 westbound direction on either Bridge.

4 And that would occur because some
5 of the traffic that would otherwise be used in the
6 Outerbridge Crossing will now be traveling onto the
7 Goethals Bridge because of the increased capacity.

8 And we did a similar analysis for
9 the PM peak period. In the No Build case, once
10 again, you get level of service E, level of service
11 F and level of service of -- level of service F in
12 both directions along the Outerbridge.

13 Now with the Build Scenario, in
14 the PM, once again, you have level of service D in
15 both directions and you have some improvements of
16 level of service E here.

17 So there will be improvement at
18 the various bridge crossings and essentially in the
19 region as a whole as a result of the project.
20 There would be some locations, however, where you
21 get some increased congestion and reduced speeds.

22 And we're talking about some local intersections,
23 they could be on and off-ramps to expressways and
24 so on.

25 And you can see that there are a

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2 number of locations both in New York and New Jersey
3 during the AM and PM peak period.

4 So what is being done to try to
5 alleviate those impacts is that there's some
6 mitigation proposed as part of the basic project.
7 On the Bridge itself we're talking about a managed
8 use lane on the new bridge. So for the three, the
9 three-lane roadways in both directions, we're
10 talking about that two of those lanes would serve
11 as general use, whereas, one would be a managed use
12 lane in each directions. And that would mean that
13 they would be set aside for buses and
14 high-occupancy vehicles, autos. And this is during
15 the two peak commuting periods, the peak committing
16 only.

17 Another type of mitigation that's
18 being proposed are local improvements at certain
19 select intersections where there would be some
20 impacts. And there's a variety of types of
21 improvements that are being proposed kind of on a

22 case-by-case basis, including signal timing

23 changes, new signals, and so on.

24 Now dealing with mitigation that

25 will be proposed, there are still a few locations

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2 -- I should say that most of those locations then
3 with the mitigation will be improved. They will be
4 brought back at least to the No Build level of
5 operation.

6 But there are some locations where
7 you can't fully get mitigation. In New York,
8 you've got a number on and off-ramps along the
9 Staten Island Expressway that you see there in red.
10 They would continue to remain unmitigated.

11 And then on the New Jersey said
12 there's a couple of ramps in the vicinity of the
13 New Jersey Turnpike Interchange that would also not
14 be fully mitigated.

15 With regard to air and noise, once
16 the Bridge is constructed, there will be no adverse
17 impacts. In the case of air, we would actually get
18 some improvements because there would be decreases
19 in regional greenhouse gases and other mobile
20 source emissions.

21 The noise level increases at a

22 couple of locations would really be imperceptible

23 to the human ear so no mitigation really is

24 required.

25 Once the Preferred Alternative has

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2 been identified during the course of developing the
3 Final EIS, we will also be doing an air quality and
4 noise analysis for the construction period. And we
5 will be reporting on those results in the Final
6 EIS.

7 So that completes the information

8 I'll be presenting with regard to the impacts.

9 As was mentioned previously, we're
10 in the midst of a public comment period that ends
11 on July 28th.

12 I believe the newsletter that was
13 given to you, it does give details on where to mail
14 or fax or online your comments.

15 As far as the next steps, we will
16 be taking and incorporating your comments and we'll
17 be addressing them into the EIS in some fashion, as
18 appropriate. And we will be coming up with a Final
19 EIS.

20 At this point we're envisioning
21 some time in the early part of next year. And then

22 there would be with a Record of Decision which
23 would be the Coast Guard's decision document. And
24 that's anticipated for some time in the middle of
25 next year.

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27

2 And with that, I'll give it back
3 to Maura.

4 THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank
5 you, everybody.

6 I'm now going to tell you about
7 how the rest of this day is going to work. We're
8 going to set up our equipment a little bit
9 differently.

10 I'm going to call -- and I just
11 want to mention that we are going to be here to
12 8:00 p.m., but Ken is going to repeat his
13 presentation at 6:30 for any latecomers. So we will
14 be doing the presentation again.

15 I'll be calling the names of the
16 people who are registered to speak. When it's your
17 turn to speak, please come up to the podium set up
18 right there. I'm going to ask you to come to this
19 podium and ask you that you introduce yourself by
20 giving us your name and your organization, if you
21 have one.

22 And if you have any difficulties
23 with coming up to the podium, please let anybody on
24 the project staff know. We're the ones with the
25 name tags around our necks and we will do

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2 everything we can to accommodate you.

3

4 This meeting is going to be
5 recorded by Marc, the stenographer. And remember
6 what I told you before, if you wish to speak, you
7 need to fill out a speaker request card in order to
8 speak, which is in the back in the open house area.

8

9 Again, we are here to hear from
10 you so we will not be responding to your comments
11 that you make this afternoon and this evening. But
12 we will address them in the Final Environmental
13 Impact Statement when that comes out, again, as
14 decided by the schedule.

14

15 To assure everyone has an
16 opportunity to be heard, I would request that you
17 limit your testimony to three minutes and I will
18 give you little bit of a warning when you get to
19 the end of it.

19

20 If you have a written statement,
21 by all means provide it to us as well. That's
22 always helpful for Marc. And submission for written

22 statements is the same for all statements, they

23 will both be part of this afternoon's and evening's

24 record.

25 I do want to remind you that, and

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2 Ken and Gary went through this, but we have our
3 open house area as in an informal area to be able
4 to converse with you and answer any questions. But
5 those comments in the open house area are not part
6 of the official record. So just what's said here or
7 what you give us in writing up to July 28th is what
8 becomes official. And as Ken pointed out, on our
9 comment sheet and our newsletter, there's all the
10 information you need --

11 A VOICE: Can't hear her.

12 THE MODERATOR: -- to submit your
13 written comments after the fact through July 28th.

14 You're welcome to step out of the
15 room. We will call your names out in the open house
16 as well and we'll call you up.

17 And with that, I think I've
18 covered all the ground rules. So I'd like to first
19 call Councilwoman Yamakaitis to come up to the
20 microphone, please.

21 COUNCILWOMAN YAMAKAITIS: Hi.

22 Good afternoon.

23 (Adjusting microphone.)

24 THE MODERATOR: Bear with us.

25 Okay. Sorry about that.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN YAMAKAITIS: Good
3 afternoon.

4 My name is Michele Yamakaitis. I'm
5 the Eighth Ward Councilwoman for the City of
6 Linden.

7 (Adjusting microphone.)

8 THE MODERATOR: We have some
9 technical difficulties.

10 COUNCILWOMAN YAMAKAITIS: Good
11 afternoon.

12 My name is Michele Yamakaitis. I'm
13 the Eighth Ward Councilwoman for the City of
14 Linden.

15 One thing I didn't see expressed
16 in the presentation was anything on the Missing
17 Link. I know it's two separate projects, but I
18 would like the Port Authority to take that into
19 consideration.

20 Approximately two years ago Bayway
21 Avenue turned into a one-lane highway. The impact

22 of Linden's Eighth Ward was incredible. We've had

23 increased truck traffic, cars.

24 From 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. you get a

25 traffic nightmare on the Ward. Bachelor Avenue has

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2 been affected, Route 1 and 9.

3 So I would like, request that we
4 work on the Missing Link to coincide with any
5 expansion of the Goethals Bridge.

6 I would also like to request that
7 the public meetings regarding this be held in this
8 type of forum also. There are many rumors that are
9 going around the Ward saying that houses were going
10 to be taken. It causes panic.

11 I'm also here representing St.
12 Patrick's Church of Elizabeth. There had been
13 rumors that, you know, that they were going to come
14 right through the Church to the Goethals Bridge. I
15 think this is important that the public be kept
16 aware of this situation. But I just want to make
17 sure that, you know, we don't get left out in the
18 loop.

19 The Eight Ward of Linden cannot
20 withstand any impact of the traffic, further impact
21 without something being done with the Goethals

22 Bridge expansion. We need to have that in the City

23 of Linden worked on and considered.

24 Thank you.

25 THE MODERATOR: Thank you,

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2 Councilwoman.

3 Next is Steve Radel.

4 MR. STEVE RADEL: Hello. My name
5 is Steven Radel.

6 I'm a consultant for J. Cashman,
7 Inc.

8 Jay Cashman is a company that is
9 working to develop property on South Front Street
10 in Elizabeth. And we've been working with the
11 parties that are responsible for environmental
12 cleanup.

13 And soon that work is scheduled to
14 begin this fall and soon after that Cashman will
15 implement its infrastructure improvements. And
16 obviously Cashman has concerns with a northerly
17 alignment and the impacts it would have on the
18 property that they are in the process of
19 revitalizing.

20 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr.
21 Radel.

22 Next I'd like to have John Papetti

23 come to the front, please.

24 John Papetti, thanks.

25 MR. JOHN PAPETTI: Hello.

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Good afternoon.

My name is John Papetti, Jr. I'm

the Director of Public Works for Elizabeth and I

have a statement here that's here on behalf of

Mayor J. Christian Bollwage.

This statement is submitted on

behalf of J. Christian Bollwage, Mayor of the City

of Elizabeth regarding the conditions that should

be addressed before full support of the Goethals

Bridge Replacement Project can be expressed.

During previous meetings between

representatives of the City of Elizabeth and the

Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the City

has stated its concerns about traffic in the area

of the approach to the Bridge, the roadwork that

would be required, as well as the impact on the

local residents and merchants.

Certainly the addition of a second

bridge will increase the traffic, in particular,

truck traffic with a tremendous impact on our local

22 roads.

23 One area of concern is the

24 interconnection between Exit 13 of the Turnpike,

25 Bayway Avenue, City streets and the Goethals

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2 Bridge, which is in need of significant improvement
3 and will not be resolved simply by the current toll
4 plaza widening.

5 Of equal importance to the City is
6 the fact that access from the Bridge to relocated
7 Bayway Avenue - an important industrial corridor
8 for the city of Elizabeth - be significantly
9 improved to ensure the smooth operation of
10 business-related traffic.

11 As we work to promote alternative
12 transportation methods, the bicycle and pedestrian
13 way inclusion in the widening or in any new
14 construction is important. Consideration should be
15 given to how the bike and pedestrian way will
16 emerge from the Bridge to the City of Elizabeth
17 streets.

18 Considering the overall critical
19 impact the expansion will have on Elizabeth's
20 residents and commuters, we want to make sure that
21 the appropriate (sic) acquisition of current City

22 property owners' rights, that those owners be
23 adequately adjusted for their rights that have to
24 be acquired for construction at fair market value.

25 We want to stress the importance

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2 of minimizing noise and air pollution during all
3 construction phases. Besides the adverse effect to
4 local residents in the vicinity of the
5 construction, a local school will also be directly
6 impacted.

7 An additional health concern is
8 the design flaws due to settling of earth at the
9 stanchions of the current bridge supporting
10 pillars. Currently, the flaw has allowed for a
11 concave configuration which retains rainwater and
12 results in potential breeding grounds for
13 mosquitoes and West Nile Virus.

14 The City of Elizabeth's last
15 concern is vital to the success of the project as
16 well our overall transportation issues.

17 The I-278, U.S. Routes 1 and 9
18 Interchange Ramp Improvement project, also known as
19 the Missing Link portion of the Bridge project,
20 will enable a critical connection to be made to
21 Routes 1 and 9 north and southbound.

22 In order to ultimately alleviate
23 vehicular traffic volumes on City streets, traffic
24 must be redirected via the Missing Link connection.

25 In addition, the Missing Link

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2 connection will have its own environmental process
3 with the Federal Highway Administration Serving as
4 the lead agency. This initiative must be finished
5 in conjunction or before the completion of the
6 Goethals Bridge Replacement project.

7 If the conclusion of the -- if the
8 inclusion of the bicycle and pedestrian way as well
9 as the Missing Link components are not addressed in
10 the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, it
11 provides the U.S. Coast Guard with the opportunity
12 to ignore the concerns of the city and its
13 residents.

14 The City of Elizabeth will remain
15 persistent in its efforts and will not be
16 disregarded or shortchanged with respect to the
17 Goethals Bridge Replacement Project.

18 The residents of the City of
19 Elizabeth deserve more and we will continue to
20 stand up for what is right, fair, and best for this
21 community.

22 Thank you.

23 THE MODERATOR: Next I'd like to

24 call up Elizabeth Lutak, please.

25 MS. ELIZABETH LUTAK: Yes. Good

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2 afternoon. Good afternoon, everybody, please.

3 I'm Elizabeth Lutak. I'm a

4 resident of the City of Elizabeth so I'm just a

5 regular resident. But my concern is similar to Mr.

6 Papetti. Being a lifelong resident of the City of

7 Elizabeth, we seem to be having an increase of

8 hearing problems in the City, asthma, due to the

9 fact we have an overload of cars, naturally buses,

10 trucks.

11 The truck population here has

12 grown like tremendous and no one takes into

13 consideration -- even though you have the new air

14 controls, there's still a lot of pollution in the

15 town. I wish someone would just take consideration

16 of the schoolchildren, regular residents, and

17 seniors.

18 We're getting hoarse. We get

19 bronchitis. We get asthma when it's not the season

20 to get asthma. Strange things are happening.

21 Our homes that do exist, by

22 putting in more of these trucks and cars, the paint
23 peels. We must get them fixed periodically. It's
24 supposed to last 30 years on a roof. Our roofs are
25 being replaced due to the car traffic and truck

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2 traffic between eight years and ten years. Can you
3 imagine what us human beings are going through if
4 the roof can't withstand?

5 And the other part would be is, I
6 like the Goethals Bridge, the construction of it.
7 If there's any way of saving the architectural
8 design and in addition to what you're building a
9 new bridge. That is something that was built
10 previously and it's something to keep historically
11 what it was.

12 Also, has anyone considered solar
13 power so that when it snows -- because, you know,
14 we do live in Jersey and in New York -- so we can
15 drive without having the salt trucks ahead of us
16 and splashing rock salt all over us, to modernize
17 it with solar power so this way it will
18 automatically defrost.

19 And could you please make
20 announcements for when we do we get to the Final
21 Statement, whichever statement. Consider the fact

22 that most of us people have lived, like I have, 50
23 years in our home. So we got like fifty to a
24 hundred years of stuff, considering the families
25 we've raised and just being there.

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Where else could you move where

3

you have a church up the street, you have a grocery

4

stores, you got a bank all within walking distance?

5

You said you're going to relocate me. To where?

6

Why? You know, it's kind of strange. Why would I

7

want to get relocated? I've lived here for a

8

hundred years. I've paid my taxes. We've paid our

9

dues. We just like living where we live.

10

I'm not being displaced so I'm

11

lucky but these people aren't. So would you please

12

help.

13

Thanks for hearing me out and

14

thank you for giving a great presentation.

15

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Ms.

16

Lutak.

17

Okay. Next I would like Jonathan

18

Peters.

19

MR. JONATHAN PETERS: Hi. Good

20

afternoon.

21

I'm Jonathan Peters from the

22 College of Staten Island. I'm Associate Professor
23 of Finance. And I'm also speaking on behalf of Alan
24 Benimoff who will be at tomorrow's meeting on
25 Staten Island.

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2 Our particular concern about the
3 EIS Statement for the Goethals Bridge is that it
4 relates to what's called environmental justice
5 which is provision of transit services or mobility
6 services towards what's considered protected
7 classes.

8 In particular, the Executive Order
9 of the President, 12898 in 1994, mandated that we
10 do an environmental justice analysis to make sure
11 that you serve the low-income and a number of
12 different protected classes in terms of transit
13 needs.

14 The EIS as proposed doesn't look
15 at the negative impacts of the building of the
16 facility. However, it doesn't look at the benefit
17 of mobility for the low and moderate income
18 households. It's primarily focused on private
19 vehicle facility, which again, we just heard about
20 the traffic issues in this region.

21 And we're extremely concerned

22 about the fact that there's no transit proposed as
23 a part of this process. Mass transit will be a key
24 critical component for the particular areas that
25 we've identified as areas of environmental justice,

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2 particularly low-income populations, minority
3 populations, elderly populations and the disabled.
4 These are all identified by the North Jersey
5 Transportation Planning Authority, as the EJ
6 community in Elizabeth has a large, large
7 population in many of these areas.

8 Initially there was some
9 discussion about using transit as an alternative to
10 replacing the Bridge. I don't think that given the
11 age of the facility and the structural deficiencies
12 that have already been pointed out, that that's a
13 viable option.

14 However, the transit component
15 should be part of the solution. And the reality is
16 that we've done an analysis at the College of
17 Staten Island. We took a look at the proposed bus
18 routes which were in the initial EIS. And there
19 were 34 different stations on three different
20 routes in each state.

21 We found there was 8,885 persons

22 on average around each station which is very good

23 in terms of transit demand on the 34 stations.

24 So basically we installed a modern

25 transit system and we would put about 237,000

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2 people within walking distance of transit.

3

But particularly, the current

4 analysis uses the existing auto users on the Bridge

5 as way to predict what the transit use would be and

6 I think that's a major issue, because the fact of

7 the matter is our work in New York City has

8 identified that the people who use toll facilities

9 tend to have about \$35,000 higher income than

10 people who are non-toll bridge users.

11

So the fact of the matter is I

12 think we need to really seriously consider the

13 impact of this facility on the low-income and

14 minority populations in this area and make sure

15 that we replace this facility, which is an obsolete

16 facility, with a facility that serves the needs of

17 all the residents of both of these communities.

18

Thank you.

19

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr.

20 Peters.

21

Next up is Ron Stefanowicz. Did I

22 say that sort of right?

23 MR. RON STEFANOWICZ: That's very

24 good.

25 Rather than being redundant and go

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2 over the same issues, I just want to make a couple
3 of comments.

4 THE MODERATOR: I'm sorry.

5 Could you tell us your organization first.

6 MR. RON STEFANOWICZ: Oh, yeah,

7 I'm sorry.

8 Ron Stefanowicz, Linden Economic

9 Development Corporation.

10 I just wanted to make a few

11 comments and I don't want to be redundant because

12 Councilwoman Yamakaitis articulated the issues and

13 concerns about the traffic.

14 In addition to her particular

15 Ward, we know -- we anticipate that there will be a

16 lot more traffic coming into Linden primarily

17 because we're in an economic renaissance and we're

18 developing over 600 acres of industrial land which

19 will be bringing a lot of commodities and traffic.

20 In addition to that, we're

21 building shopping centers that will be bringing in

22 more shoppers. Currently, we did a few studies and
23 we know that the Staten Island people, even people
24 from Brooklyn, are using the Goethals Bridge to
25 come to shop into Linden so we need to mitigate

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2 that.

3 Also, in participating with the
4 New York Port Authority, we'd like to just thank
5 you for the opportunities in keeping us abreast for
6 the type of activities and the project. Because it
7 does a lot in eliminating the anxiety of the people
8 not knowing exactly what's going on.

9 And the comments from the
10 Councilwoman, as well as John Papetti, I think it's
11 a great idea to have more meetings to share the
12 progress because it eliminates a lot of anxiety.

13 So we are looking for our
14 continued relationship with the Port Authority and
15 the project, even though Missing Link and Goethals
16 Bridge is a part of our major problem, but it's a
17 step in the right direction.

18 So I'd like to just thank you.
19 And Gary, you're very good in keeping us informed
20 and I do hope that we will have a lot more public
21 meetings in the future.

22 Thank you.

23 THE MODERATOR: Thank you,

24 Mr. Stefanowicz.

25 Next is Raymond Lee.

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How are you?

MR. RAYMOND LEE: Good afternoon.

My name is Raymond Lee. I'm Vice

Chair of the Republican Committee in Elizabeth.

What I have to say is, I would

like to see what is the projected total cost of

this Bridge;

How much the Federal Government is

going to share in the dollar amount

percentage-wise;

How much it's going to cost New

York; and

How much it's going to cost New

Jersey.

That's the end of my comment.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you,

Mr. Lee.

Armando Alvarez.

How are you?

22 MR. ARMANDO ALVAREZ: My name is

23 Armando Alvarez. I'm a resident of that area.

24 My comment is that area have the

25 stuff to be a residential area long time ago. With

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2 a new bridge I think it's not going to be any
3 improvements for the quality of life for the
4 residents. In a way I think that area should be
5 complete industrial. No more residential.

6 Thank you.

7 THE MODERATOR: Thank you,
8 Mr. Alvarez.

9 And Mr. McClain.

10 How are you?

11 MR. LEROY MCCLAIN: Yes. Leroy
12 McClain, Committee Member Second Ward and
13 representing an organization called Elizabeth
14 Community Activist.

15 I don't have anything written. I
16 just have a few questions.

17 Just like you said, we do need
18 more meetings to let the community know 'cause it's
19 a lot of people that should have been here that
20 don't know about it. And I got it through word of
21 mouth. I didn't see it advertised. And you need to

22 work in the communities more, Elizabeth and other

23 areas to let their citizen know about this meeting.

24 Okay?

25 The one question I wanted to ask

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2 is, because I hear rumors coming down that they're
3 going to relocate people. People saying this
4 neighborhood going to be done over, this is going
5 to be done over. But you need to have more of these
6 meetings and get that in time so the community
7 really know about it.

8 THE MODERATOR: Actually, if you
9 would, I'd be very interested in knowing some of
10 your networking mechanisms for your organization.
11 So if you could leave your contact information with
12 the front desk, we'll be in touch to make sure that
13 we expand our work list to include some of the
14 people that you talked about meeting. We'd be
15 delighted to have them.

16 MR. LEROY MCCLAIN: Oh, all right.
17 Then all right.

18 Thank you.

19 THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

20 John Surmay.

21 MR. JOHN SURMAY: Okay. I'm John

22 Surmay, the Health Officer for the City of

23 Elizabeth.

24 I'm sorry they turned the podium

25 around because my remarks are more for the

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2 audience.

3 As you officials know that we've
4 been participating and I'm here to support what
5 Mayor Bollwage said in his remarks, as read by Mr.
6 Papetti.

7 We're here to see -- I'm on the
8 Environmental Committee as the generic reference to
9 the various subcommittees that this whole community
10 as a whole has. Mr. Papetti and members of the
11 Engineering Department, the County of Union
12 Engineering Department, the City of Linden
13 Engineering Department, we're all part of that. So
14 we're there to make sure that the comments that
15 were made by the elected officials are fulfilled.

16 And one of the things that Mayor
17 Bollwage said right from the beginning, he urged
18 that their meeting be done between the City of
19 Elizabeth officials, Linden officials and the
20 County Union officials. And I understand that has
21 been accomplished.

22 He also stressed that the houses
23 in the Krakow Street area be given full value, not
24 just what is required by law, full value for what
25 they're giving up in that place. And also for the

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2 economic development of the area for the benefit of
3 Elizabeth and the roadways. It's a nightmare to
4 come off of the Goethals Bridge on the Elizabeth
5 side and we just can't absorb any more of that
6 traffic.

7 Also, the noise - that's my area
8 of expertise - noise and air pollution. And I think
9 it's one of the concessions that I got last time is
10 that the air hammers that would be used in
11 pile-driving of the pillars that would be used in
12 the construction of the Bridge would be all reduced
13 noise compression, right?

14 MR. KEN HESS: Things are being
15 worked out.

16 MR. JOHN SURMAY: Pardon me?

17 MR. KEN HESS: The details are
18 going to be worked out and presented in the Final
19 --

20 THE MODERATOR: I just want to
21 remind you that this is not a --

22 MR. JOHN SURMAY: Yeah, I
23 understand. I just wanted to make sure that many of
24 the facts were -- I just want to reassure the
25 audience that the Mayor has a --

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2 MR. GARY KASSOF: Sir, sir.

3 That is a question that we can answer. And I

4 appreciate it if you would come to the back with

5 some of the --

6 MR. JOHN SURMAY: Well, we can --

7 I'll submit some comments which you'll have in --

8 MR. GARY KASSOF: You can make

9 your comments but address them to us.

10 MR. JOHN SURMAY: But what I

11 wanted to reassure everyone was that what the Mayor

12 said in text, he assigned members of his staff to

13 make sure that it's being done. And that's Mr.

14 Papetti, that's myself and members of the

15 Engineering Department and all the other people

16 that I mentioned before.

17 And I just would like to assure

18 the members of the audience that if you can't get

19 in touch with the members of this Goethals Bridge

20 Committee, you can always come to Mr. Papetti's

21 office or myself or the Mayor's office and we'll

- 22 make sure that your concerns are addressed at these
- 23 meetings that have we generally at the Coast Guard
- 24 building in New York City next to the Staten Island
- 25 Ferry Terminal.

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2 Okay. Thank you very much.

3 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr.

4 Surmay.

5 MR. JOHN SURMAY: That's all I

6 wanted to say.

7 THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

8 Next up is William Sharkey.

9 MR. WILLIAM SHARKEY: So far so

10 good.

11 My name is William Sharkey. I'm

12 from 1000 Allen Street in Linden.

13 And what I'd like to know is, what

14 does this mean (indicating?) I keep going to these

15 meetings two years now. I got work to be done in

16 the house. I've been putting everything off. I

17 don't know what's going on. I can't see where it

18 takes two or three years just to set a job up.

19 I mean it's going to take me

20 longer to set it up than actually build it. It's

21 unbelievable.

22 But anyway, where are we at?

23 Where are we at with this? 1000 Allen Street is a

24 very -- I think everybody got a notice on the

25 Linden side all the way to Route 1 and 9 about

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2 going to these meetings. That started like three
3 years ago. I'm -- the Bridge -- as far as I'm
4 concerned you need a bridge. It's just how you
5 going to get there back and forth. That's the only
6 problem.

7 But the Bridge was built in the
8 1900's. The thing's falling apart. They finally
9 did some work on it a couple of years ago and that
10 was it, just to reinforce why they build a new one.
11 And that was \$83 million.

12 But I don't know how this thing is
13 progressing. It seems very slow. I don't know.
14 I'm not knowledgeable in that area. But to me I
15 mean I keep getting these notices.

16 I come here because I thought the
17 bridge was done. I thought you's had all the land,
18 you were buying property and what not; is that
19 true?

20 THE MODERATOR: In this part of
21 our meeting we're not responding to questions. So

- 22 what I would encourage you to do though is take
- 23 advantage of our of project staff out in the open
- 24 house area and they can explain to you the process
- 25 that we're going through so you can understand

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2 where are we going and answer any questions about
3 what's been done to date.

4 MR. WILLIAM SHARKEY: The only
5 thing, I had missed the presentation. I had come
6 in late. I don't know what was said.

7 THE MODERATOR: We're going to
8 be repeating the presentation at 6:30 p.m.

9 MR. WILLIAM SHARKEY: 6:30?

10 THE MODERATOR: You can stay and
11 you'll see the presentation.

12 MR. WILLIAM SHARKEY: Okay. Very
13 good.

14 Thank you.

15 THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

16 Okay. That is everyone who has
17 signed up to speak up till now.

18 MS. ELAINE LUBAS: Excuse me,
19 ma'am. I didn't have a chance to sign up. Can I
20 just make a comment?

21 THE MODERATOR: If you go to the

22 desk and fill out a speaker request card, we will

23 be delighted to hear your testimony. And, again,

24 we're going to be here to 8 p.m. so take your time.

25 I would encourage the rest of you

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2 to take advantage of our open house area and have a
3 snack. The people with the tags are there to answer
4 questions. But again, just to remind that only the
5 comments made here in front of our stenographer
6 will be for the record.

7 And, again, we'll be repeating our
8 presentation at 6:30 p.m.

9 And thank you so much for your
10 attention.

11 Okay. We have another speaker who
12 has requested to make a comment and that's Elaine
13 Lubas.

14 Thank you and sorry.

15 MS. ELAINE LUBAS: That's quite
16 all right. I just wanted to get in.

17 Commissioner Elaine Lubas,
18 Environmental Commissioner, City of Linden.

19 I'd like to say that as part of
20 the environmental concerns, I would like to
21 emphasize and stress minimization of air, noise and

22 work time constraints during the -- in the
23 construction of the Bridge in order to ensure the
24 health, safety and quality of life of the residents
25 of the City of Linden as well as the City of

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2 Elizabeth. Okay?

3 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Ms.

4 Lubas.

5 MS. ELAINE LUBAS: I think it's a

6 very vital issue. And during any kind of

7 construction there's bound to be a lot of, either

8 it's traffic or noise or air pollution and I think

9 the citizens should be taken in consideration.

10 Thank you very much.

11 (At 5:24 p.m., the hearing was

12 temporarily recessed.)

13 (At 6:10 p.m., the hearing was

14 resumed.)

15 THE MODERATOR: We have an

16 additional speaker.

17 Please introduce yourself and your

18 organization, if you have one.

19 MR. JOE DOHERTY: Okay. Joe

20 Doherty, 190 Bayway Avenue, Elizabeth, a resident.

21 I do not represent any organization, just myself

22 and my brother-in-law and my family.

23 I would like to know if Port

24 Authority will take all the residential and

25 commercial property south of the present structure

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2 between Krakow Street/Amboy Avenue to the north
3 side of Bayway Avenue.

4 If so, when will this occur and
5 how will monetary compensation for property and
6 relocation expenses be determined?

7 Also, will the often-dreaded
8 eminent domain come into play?

9 Thank you.

10 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, sir.

11 Right now we don't have anyone
12 else signed up to speak. So we will be here to
13 repeat the presentation at 6:30 and so we'll see
14 you then.

15 (At 6:12 p.m., the afternoon
16 session was concluded.)

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July 8, 2009

(6:30 p.m.)

EVENING SESSION

THE MODERATOR: So for those of you who have been waiting, thank you for your patience and we're going to be getting started in just a moment with the presentation again.

We had given some introductory remarks at 4:30. Gary Kassof from the Coast Guard had explained the rules and regulations that we were following in this hearing. And we are not going to repeat those.

But I just wanted to introduce myself. I'm Maura Fitzpatrick. I'm going to be facilitating the second half of this hearing.

And after the presentation, I'm going to explain to you the ground rules if you want to make any oral comments to our stenographer. But if you do, you need to sign up to do so at one

22 of our desks and fill out a speaker request card.

23 So I will be back in a few moments

24 but I'm going to introduce Ken Hess from the

25 consultant team to give a brief presentation on the

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2 background of the project.

3 MR. KEN HESS: Okay. Thank you,

4 Maura.

5 Thank you all for being here.

6 I know many of you have been

7 involved probably going back to the scoping process

8 and it's been great that you've been so involved

9 and we continue to look for your involvement.

10 That's really what this is about

11 tonight. We want to hear your comments, what you

12 have to say. And as a result, I'm going to have a

13 very abbreviated presentation on some materials

14 that have been presented in the past. But we really

15 want to hear from you tonight.

16 So what I'll be talking about is

17 the purpose and need for the proposed project and

18 how that purpose and need has led to the conceptual

19 bridge design that's has been proposed.

20 We will also talk about some of

21 the key project impacts and mitigation measures

22 that have been presented in the Draft EIS.

23 And we'll talk about the public

24 comment period that we're currently in and some of

25 the next steps.

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2 There are a number of elements of
3 purpose and need that are driving this project.
4 One is the need to address design deficiencies that
5 make the Bridge functionally obsolete. Given the
6 fact that the Bridge was constructed in 1928, there
7 are substandard ten-foot lane widths and that's
8 really not adequate for handling the volume and the
9 size of the vehicles that are used in the Bridge
10 today.

11 There's a lack of emergency
12 shoulders on the Bridge and there's a very
13 difficult span alignment on the New Jersey approach
14 to the Bridge.

15 There's a need to provide safer
16 operating conditions and to reduce the number of
17 accidents on the Bridge, and also a need to improve
18 traffic service on the Bridge and its approaches.
19 And I'll be discussing that particular aspect in a
20 few minutes in more detail.

21 There's also a need to enhance the

22 structural integrity and to reduce the lifecycle

23 costs associated with the aging Bridge.

24 Just to keep the Bridge going for

25 an additional hundred years, to keep it functional,

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2 hundreds of millions of dollars would have to be
3 invested just to keep it going and it would not
4 have the benefit of the additional needs being
5 addressed.

6 There's also a need to provide
7 reliable transportation system redundancy to ensure
8 that there's an adequate number of lanes connecting
9 Staten Island to New Jersey at all times.

10 There's a need to provide for the
11 safe and reliable truck access for regional goods
12 movement. And this is particularly important
13 because of the ongoing and anticipated future
14 growth at the New York Container Terminal on
15 Howland Hook.

16 And finally there's a need to
17 provide additional width on the Bridge so as not to
18 preclude potential future transit in the corridor.
19 It could accommodate such types of transit as a bus
20 rapid transit or a light rail system, if and when
21 determined to be warranted or feasible at some

22 point in the future.

23 So looking at the various elements

24 of need for the project, it's been determined that

25 the cable-stayed design would fully address the

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2 various elements of need. And that's what we're
3 presenting here, a conceptual image of what the
4 cable-stayed design might look like.

5 Essentially what you're seeing
6 here is generally along the existing alignment of
7 the Bridge, although it would vary depending on
8 which alternative alignment would be selected, it
9 could either be south, a little bit south of the
10 Bridge or a little bit north.

11 What you're seeing here
12 particularly would be a little bit south of the
13 existing Bridge, but still very close to where the
14 Bridge is.

15 Concerning the alignments, I want
16 to point out that I'm not really going to be
17 discussing in the presentation the actual
18 alternative alignments, but we do have set up out
19 in the corridor, detailed graphics that you can
20 learn more about the alternative alignments that
21 have been developed. And we've got people that

22 will help to explain the differences between those

23 alignments.

24 The basic design concept is that

25 we're talking about a single bridge with

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2 cable-stayed supported roadway decks. And as you
3 can see, there would be two roadways, one in each
4 direction.

5 Each roadway would contain three
6 12-foot wide lanes, a 12-foot wide outer shoulder,
7 and a 5-foot wide inner shoulder.

8 Now what you see here is the cross
9 section -- what you see here is the cross section
10 of the entire bridge. And the two roadways that I
11 just talked about, we've got the westbound roadway
12 and the eastbound roadway, each with three lanes
13 and shoulders in each direction.

14 In the middle would be the
15 potential future transit corridor that I mentioned
16 in the beginning. In between that area and the two
17 roadways is where the towers would be constructed
18 as well as the inner support cables. That's where
19 they would connect to the roadways.

20 We've also got outer support
21 cables that will come in out from the outer edges.

22 And on the north side there's a bicycle/pedestrian

23 facility that's proposed.

24 So that's the basic concept and

25 it's been applied to the four alternative

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2 alignments. And that's what we evaluated when we
3 looked at the various types of environmental
4 impacts and proposed mitigation measures.

5 As you can see, the list here is
6 rather long. This is the full range of types of
7 environmental impacts that we've studied in the
8 Draft EIS.

9 Once again, because we want to
10 hear from you, I'm abbreviating this. I'm just
11 going to be talking about those that are shown in
12 red or underlined. So I think those are some of
13 the key elements that you're going to be most
14 interested in hearing about.

15 So let's start with
16 socioeconomics.

17 One of the major elements of
18 socioeconomics is the displacements that would
19 occur in terms of businesses and residences.

20 These would vary depending on
21 which alternative alignment is ultimately selected.

22 But the range would be anywhere from nine to twelve

23 businesses that would be impacted. Now that

24 includes outright displacements of the businesses,

25 or in some cases it would be an operational impact

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2 such as an encroachment on a parking lot or on a
3 support structure on the property.

4 The range of residences that would
5 be displaced go from zero to 51. And they're all
6 located in Elizabeth in the area of Krakow Street.

7 And regardless of what the final
8 alternative is that's selected and what the final
9 number of displacements would be, compensation will
10 be provided in accordance with the law.

11 Now, during the construction
12 period, which would range anywhere from 56 months
13 to 70 months, once again, based on which
14 alternative is selected, there would be jobs
15 generated in the construction phase.

16 For each year during the
17 construction period there would be anywhere from
18 400 to 500 construction jobs that would be
19 generated. There also would be 5500 to 5900 jobs
20 that would be indirectly generated through
21 expenditures and services.

22 We also looked at historic and
23 archeological resources. The State Historic
24 Preservation Offices for both New York and New
25 Jersey have concurred with the Coast Guard on their

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2 determinations regarding that there is no known
3 adverse effect on archeological resources in either
4 state.

5 And also that there is an adverse
6 effect on three historic architectural resources,
7 and they're all considered to be eligible for
8 listing on the National Register of Historic
9 Places.

10 So three resources that we're
11 talking about, one is the Goethals Bridge itself
12 and that would be an adverse effect because of the
13 fact it would be demolished. We've got two other
14 resources, the Staten Island Railroad Historic
15 District in New Jersey, as well as the Staten
16 Island Railway Lift Truss Bridge over the Arthur
17 Kill. They would be visually adversely affected
18 because there's a visual relationship between those
19 resources and the Goethals Bridge.

20 So the next step on this is to
21 work with the State Historic Preservation Office

22 for both states to come up with a Memorandum of
23 Agreement to establish appropriate mitigation for
24 dealing with the impacts to those resources. And
25 that would be done during the Final EIS

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2 preparation.

3 Regarding wetlands, permanent
4 impacts are those impacts that would be in place
5 for at least six months.

6 And as you can see here, the
7 variation between the four alternative alignments
8 is not that great. We're talking anywhere from 5.2
9 approximately to about 5.5 acres of impact among
10 the four alternatives. And primarily the
11 differences would really be in the location of
12 where those impacts would occur.

13 Temporary impacts are primarily
14 associated with cofferdam construction and would
15 only be in place for less than six months and it's
16 very minor in comparison to the permanent impact.

17 Most of the wetland impacts are on
18 the New York side because that's where the large
19 tidal wetlands system is located.

20 There's various mitigation
21 measures that are also being proposed, a possible

22 wetland mitigation bank in New Jersey and rather

23 various on and off-site wetland mitigation

24 opportunities in New York.

25 And moving onto traffic.

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2 Traffic is generally assessed on
3 the basis of level of service which is an
4 operational condition. And it's like a report card.
5 It ranges from level of service A to level of
6 service F with level of service A being the best,
7 level of service F being the worst.

8 A is generally is defined as a
9 free-flowing condition with high travel speeds.
10 Level of service F is considered to be a breakdown
11 condition with excessive congestion and delay.

12 And we're showing a level of
13 service F in red. And what we looked at was the
14 year 2034, which is the Design Year, which
15 essentially is twenty years after the Bridge
16 construction would be completed. So that's what
17 the analysis was based on.

18 So in the year 2034 for the AM
19 peak period in the No Build Scenario -- and No
20 Build mean no new bridge. It would be the existing
21 bridge that's there -- what you see here is that on

22 the Goethals Bridge you have level of service F

23 conditions in the westbound direction, level of

24 service E, which is the next one up, still

25 operationally not acceptable in the eastbound

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2 direction.

3 On Outerbridge Crossing you have

4 both directions level of service F.

5 Now, if you were constructing the

6 improvements at Goethals Bridge so you have the

7 Build Scenario, what happens is that you get

8 improvement from both directions on Goethals Bridge

9 where you go from level of service D which is

10 considered to be operationally acceptable.

11 On the Outerbridge Crossing you

12 would also get, in the westbound direction during

13 the PM, you would get some improvement going from F

14 to E.

15 The reason you're going to get

16 some improvements at the Outerbridge Crossing is

17 because some of the traffic that would otherwise

18 use the Outerbridge will now travel to the Goethals

19 Bridge because of the increased capacity.

20 Now we did a similar analysis for

21 the PM peak period. And as you can see here very

22 similarly, we got level of service F and level of
23 service E along the Outerbridge. Once again, level
24 of service F along the Outerbridge Crossing.

25 And similarly changed -- and

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2 that's the No Build.

3

And a similar change with the

4 Build where you go from a level of service D in

5 both directions on the Goethals and some

6 improvement to the level of service E at the

7 westbound direction on Outerbridge Crossing.

8

So based on that information,

9 obviously there's going to be improvement to the

10 bridges going across to Staten Island and generally

11 improvements to the region as a whole because of

12 this. However, there are some locations that would

13 actually experienced some increased congestion and

14 reduced speeds as a result of the project being

15 constructed.

16

And as you can see here, some of

17 those locations are in both New York and in New

18 Jersey. We're generally talking about some access

19 ramps to the expressways. We're talking about some

20 local intersections. So we want to do something to

21 try to mitigate those impacts, to the extent that

22 we can.

23 So what's been incorporated into

24 the project are two types of mitigation measures.

25 One is a managed use lane on the new bridge. And

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2 that would be for each of the two roadways, the
3 three-lane roadways, one roadway in each direction,
4 you would have two general use lanes and one
5 managed use lane that would accommodate buses and
6 high-occupancy vehicles during the peak commuting
7 hours.

8 And then there's also, at some of
9 the intersections that would experience some
10 impacts, there are local improvements that have
11 been proposed such as new signal changes, new
12 signals, street re-striping and off-street parking
13 and that would really be done on a case-by-case
14 basis.

15 So with those two types of
16 mitigation improvements that are proposed as part
17 of this, the majority of the impacted locations
18 will, in fact, be improved back at least to the No
19 Build level of service so there will not be
20 worsening.

21 There are a few locations,

22 however, in New York, that would remain unmitigated

23 and those are primarily related to access ramps

24 along the Staten Island Expressway.

25 Similarly, there's a couple of

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2 ramps in the vicinity of Interchange 13 in New
3 Jersey that would also not be fully mitigated.

4 Moving onto air quality and noise.

5 Once the bridge has been
6 constructed, there will actually some improvement
7 in terms of air quality because there would be a
8 decrease in some of the regional greenhouse gases
9 and other mobile source emissions.

10 In terms of noise, at a couple of
11 locations there would be imperceptible noise level
12 increases, less than two decibel an increase and
13 therefore no mitigation is being provided or really
14 required in the case of air and noise.

15 During the preparation of the
16 Final EIS, once a Preferred Alternative has been
17 identified, there will be a construction phase air
18 quality and noise analysis that will be undertaken
19 and the results of that analysis will be reported
20 in the Final EIS.

21 As I mentioned earlier, we're in

22 the midst of a public process which closes on July

23 28th.

24 You've been given information. In

25 the handouts there's a newsletter that identified

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2 how to submit your comments after this public
3 meeting, either by mail, fax or online.

4 We will be taking all of your
5 comments. We'll be addressing them and considering
6 them as we prepare the Final EIS. And we will then
7 release the Final EIS which at this at this point
8 we're anticipating will be time in the early part
9 of next year.

10 And then a Record of Decision,
11 which is really the Coast Guard's decision
12 document, that will occur some time later in the
13 year, in the mid-portion of next year.

14 So with that, I'm going to give
15 you back Maura.

16 And as I said, we're looking
17 forward to hearing your comments today.

18 Thank you.

19 THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Ken.

20 So I was going to give the ground
21 rules, but I want to remind everybody that if you

22 want to speak, you need to fill out a speaker

23 request card at the desk. And we will let elected

24 officials speak first.

25 If there are others who choose to

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2 speak, I'm going to ask that you come to this
3 microphone and I'm going to ask you to identify
4 yourself by name and by your organization.

5 And if you have a written copy of
6 your statement, by all means that makes it easier
7 for us and for Marc to take it all down. We
8 appreciate that.

9 We are going to limit you to three
10 minutes and I'll give you warning when you get
11 close to that.

12 And with that, right now we don't
13 actually have anyone registered to speak. So we'll
14 be here till 8. If people prefer to join us back at
15 our open house area, there are people with the
16 badges that can answer your questions.

17 I want to remind everyone that
18 comments and discussions in the open house area are
19 not part of the formal record. You can give your
20 comments this evening either orally or in writing
21 or we have comment sheets that you can take with

22 you. All the information is there about how to

23 submit your comments to us July 28th.

24 And as Ken said, we won't be

25 responding. This is to hear your comments and

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2 questions. And those will be responded to in the
3 final EIS. But we will be there for conversation
4 and there are cookies.

5 So we'll be here to 8 but help
6 yourselves to the open house.

7 And thank you.

8 (At 6:46 p.m., the hearing was
9 temporarily recessed.)

10 (At 8:00 p.m., the hearing was
11 resumed.)

12 MR. GARY KASSOF: On behalf of
13 the Coast Guard, I thank everyone for your
14 participation and I compliment you on your
15 adherence to the rules set forth for this public
16 meeting.

17 Many thanks to John Papetti of the
18 City of Elizabeth for the use of their facilities.

19 In closing, everyone is reminded
20 that the Coast Guard will be accepting written
21 comments on the proposed project through 28 July,

22 2009.

23 Once again, this meeting was

24 intended to solicit comments and should in no way

25 be construed as a decision being made or opinion

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formed by the Coast Guard on the merits of the
proposed project before us.

The time is now 8 p.m.

This meeting is adjourned.

Thank you.

(At 8:00 p.m., the proceedings
were concluded.)

* * *

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CERTIFICATION.

STATE OF NEW YORK)

SS.

COUNTY OF NEW YORK)

I, MARC RUSSO, a Shorthand
(Stenotype) Reporter and Notary
Public within and for the State of
New York, do hereby certify that the
foregoing pages 1 through 76 taken
at the time and place aforesaid, is
a true and correct transcription of
my shorthand notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have
hereunto set my name this 23rd day
of July, 2009.

MARC RUSSO

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1167 _____ ROY ALLEN & ASSOCIATES, INC., 212-840-
_____ 100 Church Street, Suite 817, New York, New York 10007
626 RXR Plaza, Uniondale, New York 11556