

MONMOUTH COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

FREEHOLD · NEW JERSEY

JAMES GIANNELL
Chairman



JOSEPH BARRIS, PP, AICP, CFM
Director of Planning

Minutes for the Meeting of the
Monmouth County Transportation Council
Tuesday, March 9, 2021
Monmouth County Planning Board
One East Main Street
Hall of Records Annex Building, 2nd Floor
Freehold, New Jersey 07728

I. CALL TO ORDER - 7:00 PM

II. ATTENDANCE – ROLL CALL

Members Present

Garaguso, Anthony – Chair
Vernick, Jeff – Vice Chair
Barrett, Betsy
Lucarelli, Ben
Nelson, Eric
Van Nortwick, Peter

Staff Present

DeGroot, Kyle
Ettore, Joe
Furmanec, Victor
Nei, Michael
Schmetterer, David

Members Excused

Ponzio, Nicholas

III. REVIEW OF MINUTES

Approval of the Council's February 9, 2021, minutes was sought by Mr. Garaguso. Mr. Vernick motioned to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Barrett, and then accepted unanimously by the Council.

IV. PRESENTATIONS

- Video Analytics for Transportation Projects, Aidan Ehrenberg, Avigilon

Aiden Ehrenberg of Avigilon gave an overview of its out-of-the-box video solution technologies, focusing on analytic, recording, and viewing features. Avigilon cameras come standard with self-learning video artificial intelligence, unusual activity detection, facial recognition, and occupancy counting technology. According to Mr. Ehrenberg, each deployment has capabilities to detect, analyze, communicate, and respond to events of interest. Mr. Ehrenberg further detailed the capabilities of the cameras with examples of use (e.g., automatic recognition and alert of one vehicle travelling more slowly than the rest of the traffic on a road, vehicles travelling over the speed limit, or vehicles travelling in the wrong direction).

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The Council and planning staff asked questions relating to this system, including:

Q: Could this system be applied to detect near hits between pedestrians and vehicles?

A: Yes, and Mr. Ehrenberg elaborated on the behind the scene process.

Q: How does this system comply NJ State Law which restricts the use of real time monitoring technology for enforcement?

A: Its purpose to assist in improving public safety is aided by its artificial intelligence to detect out of the ordinary or suspicious activity, not to quantify if a crime is being committed.

Q: Is this system mobile and able to be deployed on an as needed basis?

A: The system is not mobile.

Q: Could the system monitor resilience concerns such as roadway flooding with the ability to alert emergency management personnel?

A: Yes, and automatic notifications would be sent out to relevant agencies for immediate response, e.g., police, or collect data for processing of longer-term planning analyses.

Q: Could the system be applied on moveable bridges to identify roadway traffic jams or waiting boat traffic?

A: Yes, and automatic notifications would be sent out to relevant agencies for immediate response, e.g., traffic centers, or collect data for processing of longer-term planning analyses.

Q: Are vehicle counts and turning movement counts observed by the cameras calculated by back-end software programs?

A: Yes, and reports can be automatically generated and disseminated as required.

Q: Is all the computing processed at the camera level or from a central server?

A: All computing is done within the camera and that preexisting cameras can gain "add on recorders" which apply the technology to existing non-Avigilon cameras.

Q: What is the effective image/data capture range of each camera?

A: Cameras come in effective ranges from 20 feet to 400 feet, each with different capabilities up to 64-megapixel quality. Mr. Ehrenberg provided an example of the ability to zoom in on a high megapixel image to read text from over 400 feet away.

Q: Are there uses for this technology in vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V) or vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I) applications?

A: The cameras could work with these systems; however, these applications have not been fully developed.

Q: Are the cameras able to detect animals and produce counts of wildlife?

A: Most wildlife is ignored by the system analytics as most customers are not interested this data. The council noted that the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife is seeking to identify migratory pathways where animals cross roadways through their Connecting Habitats Across New Jersey (CHANJ) program, and that the firm may want to explore whether an animal detection could be of use for that type of program.

The Council thanked Mr. Ehrenberg for his informative presentation.

- *Oceanic Bridge (S-31) Route 8A, Joe Ettore, Monmouth County Engineering*

Mr. Ettore provided an overview of the current bridge's history and pre-development actions taken for the Oceanic Bridge project, including comments on design team participants, study area, prior public outreach events, and coordination with U.S. Coast Guard requirements. Mr. Ettore presented the preferred alternative horizontal alignment, which would be constructed to the immediate north of the current bridge and follow a similar path. There are three vertical alignment options, 22 feet, 45 feet, and 65 feet.

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The preferred alignment maintains the same number of travel lanes as the original, in addition to pedestrian facilities on both sides. It was chosen for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to environmental factors, construction, and life cycle cost.

Mr. Ettore reported that comments from public meetings acknowledged 326 out of 379 individuals did not support the Preferred Project Alignment. 115 individuals indicated support for a 45-foot movable or fixed alignment while 101 supported a 22-foot movable or fixed alignment.

In the most recent steps for this project, resolutions of support were gained with a caveat from both Middletown and Rumson. The stipulation was for the county to ask for a waiver of lower vertical clearance for the fixed span bridge (less than 65 feet) from the Coast Guard. This will not occur until the final design phase has been reached.

Therefore, to better understand the heights of vessels that travel the Navesink River, four marine traffic surveys counted the height of 813 total vessels. One survey, which accounted for 531 vessels, determined that 78.2 percent of vessels are under 22 feet in height and that 99.4 percent of vessels are under 55 feet.

Mr. Ettore further explained that from the federal level, the regulations which apply to this project are contradictory as the Coast Guard requires a minimum 65-foot clearance for fixed bridges, with no condition on moveable spans, while the Federal Highway Administration requires the selection of fixed span bridge, at any height, over a moveable span.

Mr. Ettore concluded that he plans to meet with the Coast Guard to discuss the matter by the end of March to discuss height preferences; with the County preferring a height of 50 feet. Mr. Ettore stressed that the limited lifespan and high maintenance costs (\$10 million total in the last 10 years) of the current bridge requires swift action to complete the project before the current bridge loses its safe operating ability. Upon consensus and final design from stakeholders, the federal government is expected to provide an estimated \$145 million for the construction. Adding a movable span to the bridge would increase project cost by \$30 million.

Mr. Ettore expressed his thanks and reiterated a call to action on the matter as federal funding sources are at risk of being reallocated away from the project if action is not taken soon. He indicated that the County has spent over \$10 million over the past 10 years to maintain the bridge, and will be responsible for its maintenance for at least 6-7 more years given the preliminary and final design phases will each take about two years to complete and then allowing three years for construction.

The Council and planning staff asked questions including:

Q: What are some examples of bridges with similar clearances?

A: The Atlantic Highlands – Sea Bright bridge (65-foot clearance, 5% grade), and the Belmar – Neptune bridge (65-foot clearance, 5% grade).

Q: What were the costs of similar surrounding bridges?

A: The cost estimate for the Sea Bright - Rumson bridge project is \$100 million, but the length of the bridge is only 700 feet.

Q: What would be the cost savings of reducing clearance by up to 15 feet?

A: A \$5 million to \$10 million difference, as the support structures, a major project cost element, would not change.

Q: What type of boats above 50-foot in height are currently using the water passage?

A: Mostly sail boats, some with the capability to lower masts.

Q: Are there alternate waterways that could support “safe harbor” requirements reducing the cost of this project?

A: Opportunities east of the bridge are plentiful as the depth of the Shrewsbury River is 9 to 12 feet as compared to 6 feet in the Navesink.

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Q: Would Middletown and Rumson participate in discussions with the Coast Guard?

A: Rumson has already participated, and the municipalities will participate in future meetings.

Q: Was the vessel survey was done using Lidar?

A: Lidar was not used in the survey.

Q: Is scour an issue of concern and how is it addressed in the design of the bridge?

A: Scour is addressed in the design of every bridge and will be dealt with in detail during the preliminary and final design phases of the project. This issue was highlighted by the collapse of the Mianus Bridge in Connecticut in 1983.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- Bylaws Update review

Due to time constraints, the review of proposed amendments to the MCTC bylaws was tabled to the April meeting.

VI. REPORTS OF STAFF

- Monmouth Within Reach

Mr. Schmetterer gave a status report for this study. He indicated the project has made substantial progress, and briefly summarized the project scope and purpose. Since the last MCTC meeting, the list of potential destination sites was narrowed down to Red Bank, Asbury Park, Sandy Hook/Sea Bright, and the Monmouth County Fair. Staff will attempt to meet with several farms and orchards in Monmouth County to discuss how transportation issues impact their agricultural tourism events. Staff will continue meeting with representatives of the five study locations, having already met with Asbury Park. Mr. Schmetterer indicated the draft existing conditions report will be ready for review shortly.

- CMAQ

Mr. Schmetterer gave a status report on two grants approved by the NJTPA Board of Trustees in November 2020, one for public electric vehicle chargers to be installed on Monmouth County property and another for a shuttle bus that would serve specific Brookdale College locations. Next steps are being taken with NJDOT and NJ TRANSIT, the organizations that will be managing the grants.

- NJTPA On Air! Future of Transportation Children's Outreach

Mr. Garaguso and Mr. Vernick mentioned that the deadline for receipt of submittals to this competition was extended by another week.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public were present at this meeting.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Garaguso announced that the next meeting of the Monmouth County Transportation Council will be held on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, at 7:00 PM. The meeting will be held via Webex. Council members and members of the public will be provided with the Webex meeting information through the agenda notification system and email.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Following a motion to adjourn the meeting, made by Mr. Lucarelli and seconded by Mr. Nelson, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.