

Long Island Regional Planning Council
Summary Minutes

Meeting of March 15, 2016

Hofstra University Club, David S. Mack Hall, 225 Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11549

LIPRC Members Present

John D. Cameron, Jr., Chair

Richard V. Guardino, Jr., Vice Chair

Barbara Donno, Mayor

Elizabeth Custodio

Michael White

Theresa Sanders

Staff and Guests Present

Marlene McDonnell

Tom Dolan

Ray Pagano

Brittany Gelormino

Lisa Black

Julia Schneider

Michael Harrison

Alfonse Castillo

Edward Powers

Tatyana Golilone

John McCarthy

Hector Garcia

Elaine Phillips

Mohinder Taneja

Charles Gardner

Sarah Lansdale

Sherry Southe

Mitchell H. Polly

Stephen Greenwald

Supervisor Anthony Santino

Meeting Commenced:

- John D. Cameron, Jr., opened the meeting at approximately 10:15 a.m.
- Pledge of Allegiance

John Cameron welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Roll Call

- Barbara Donno
- Elizabeth Custodio

- Richard V. Guardino, Jr.
- Michael White
- John D. Cameron
- Theresa Sanders

We do not have a quorum. We will be adding new members to the council, hopefully by the next meeting.

Brief Chairman's Report – John D. Cameron

- John Cameron paid tribute to the men and women in the armed services who continue to put their lives in harm's way each day so that we can enjoy our freedom. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers.
- Globally it is in the news every week that there is strife in the Middle East and terrorism in many places around the world and unfortunately we are vulnerable in this country as we are around the world. China's economy has stalled, as have the economies of the Far East, Europe and South America. As a result there are a lot of foreign investments looking to come into the United States because it is perceived as a much more stable investment than many areas around the world.
- While the dollar is stronger and that can help us, it can also be a negative for our export industry. The low fuel oil prices and the gas industry have had a major hit which affects the financing of energy and conservation measures as well as renewable energy.
- Nationally while unemployment rates are at a low level, we are just not generating the amount of economic growth in this country that we have the potential to do. Median income in this country, adjusted for inflation, has not risen in the last ten years. There is national discourse on the presidential election and Middle America is feeling that they are not sharing in the wealth of the economy of the country. There is a lot of passion on both sides of the aisle. The country is very divided right now.
- The State is still in the final throws of trying to adopt its budget within the month so there is a lot of advocacy for different issues and different bills that are being considered by the legislature and considered by the Governor. The Governor is proposing a \$15 minimum wage being adjusted over a number of years. He is trying to improve transportation infrastructure particularly the Long Island Railroad, as well as Penn Station. He wants to create a new Penn Station at the Farley Post Office site. The Governor has taken a very aggressive stance advocating for the third track. In 2008 this council designated the third track as a project of regional significance. The Governor would like to move this project on a fast track. The LIRPC has been actively involved in trying to move this project forward.
- The economy on the Island is still fairly stalled. There are not a lot of new projects that are moving forward, there are some, but in a community of 3,000,000 people, it is not a significant amount of new projects that are being developed here on Long Island. The two biggest impediments to Long Island's sustainability are the lack of diversity in housing opportunities here on Long Island and the second is an unsustainable tax base. We have to grow our commercial and residential tax base. We have to provide the environmental and transportation infrastructures necessary to enable that growth.

- The council was designated by the New York State Legislature to co-manage a Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan to gauge the impact of nitrogen from point sources such as the sewerage treatment plants on Long Island and non-point sources, such as storm water runoff, fertilizers and other sources of nitrogen on the Island. In Suffolk County the big issue is that greater than 70% of the county is unsewered. You have contamination of ground water that could potentially defile our drinking supply. Steve Bellone received \$400,000,000 to do sewerage in some of the low lying communities. In Nassau County the number one project we are dealing with is the Bay Park Outfall. It is estimated \$450,000,000 more is needed. If any of you have the opportunity to speak to people about it, please continue to champion it.
- In 2014 the Council unanimously designated The Family Life Community Center as a project of regional significance. The multi-generational project of the First Baptist Church of Riverhead is being considered at the Town Board meeting tonight. Chairman Cameron submitted a letter of support that is going into the record. We are hoping the project will move forward.

Presentation by Dave Kapell, Consultant to the Rauch Foundation The Third Track

John Cameron stated that Dave is the former Mayor of Greenport. Greenport was the first community on Long Island where you could say there was a major transformation. Greenport had some major financial and socio-political challenges and Dave, through his leadership, transformed the Village of Greenport into a tourist destination and a place where Long Islanders like to vacation. I would like to salute Dave.

Thank you John. I am working as a consultant for the Rauch Foundation and support the LIRR Third Track.

- Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo in January resurrected a \$1 billion project to build a third track that had been abandoned by the LIRR in 2008 amid local opposition.
- Ten miles of new track on the Long Island Rail Road could generate \$5.6 billion for the region.
- The construction of a third track on the LIRR's Main Line between Floral Park and Hicksville would bring major benefits to the region, by adding \$3 billion in personal income, \$103 billion in property tax revenue and \$5.6 billion to Long Island's gross regional product 10 years after it's built.
- The third track would generate the money by expanding tax bases in Nassau and Suffolk counties, saving commuters' time traveling back and forth from Manhattan, and attracting 35,000 new residents to Long Island – 44% of whom would be between the ages of 25 and 44.
- The project would also create 2,250 new construction jobs and 14,000 total jobs. It is the most important infrastructure investment on Long Island.
- The two tracks that exist now are the same two tracks that were laid in 1844. If we don't invest in modernization over time, we are going to suffer the consequences as a region.
- John Cameron pledged his group's support for the project saying he believes Long Island will not be able to survive without third track.

- Mayor Barbara Donno, President of the Nassau County Village Officials Association voiced concerns of several communities abutting the LIRR Main Line. She said in part: “I think the issue right now is the development of the plan. There is no plan. It’s a concept. The details are what is important and the questions need to be answered. Yes, there are benefits for all of Long Island. But there’s going to be impact to these villages. And what benefits are they getting?”
- The money for the third track has been earmarked in the State budget.
- East side access is fully funded.
- The second track is fully funded.
- Mitchell Pally, Metropolitan Transit Authority, expressed his support of the project.
- Dave Kapell offered to meet with any mayors who have concerns.

Next Meeting: To Be Decided

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:40 a.m.