

**PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS**  
**RELATED TO DVRPC BOARD ACTION ITEMS**

**February 23, 2017**

**Agenda Item:**

**2. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Actions**

**a. PA17-21: US 322, US 1 to Featherbed Lane (Section 101), (MPMS #69816), Delaware County**

**From:** Leonard Fritz

**County:** Gloucester

**Zip Code:** 08094

**Date Received:** 02/13/2017

**Comment/Question:** I pleased to see that the bids came in lower than expected. My only concern is that the lower bid does not result in lower quality construction and materials used.

**Response:** Thank you for your comment. Your original comment was forwarded to the DVRPC Board, the Capital Programs managers at DVRPC, and PennDOT.

The project bids were as expected in accordance with the engineer's estimate. All contractors bidding on PennDOT contracts are pre-qualified to ensure that they meet our standards. In addition, all construction materials have to meet our specifications as outlined in our design guidelines and project plans.

**8. NEC (North East Corridor) Future Preferred Alternative**

**From:** John Hemphill

**County:** N/A

**Zip Code:** N/A

**Date Received:** 02/15/2017

**Comment/Question:** My comment are on the NEC Future Final Tier 1.

There are 2 areas of concern I have to this plan they may need to be address.

The NEC Line runs from Boston to Washington DC; as it passes through Philadelphia there is a dangerous curve as soon as you cross the Schuylkill River near the

Philadelphia Zoo and this curve loops in the final approach to 30th Street Station. The Railroad curve may not facilitate a train going 160 mph; either the trains will have to slow down drastically or a new rail line may have to be built over a very long stretch of the river which will be difficult and very expensive. If the curve is routed over a new bridge however and rides over East River Drive; east of the Schuylkill expressway and west of the Schuylkill River then the rail line will align right into the final approach of 30th Street Station and the curve will not be as sharp; so that the hazards are reduced to the railroad operations in this area.

My final concern is the NEC with trains at 160 mph along the rail line.

The current NEC line is mostly along residential areas; and if a tragedy were to occur the casualties would be increased due to the current location of the rail lines with respect to speed.

At the present time if a SEPTA Commuter train is on the rail line that is specifically assigned to it and an ACELA rides by the SEPTA Train the force of the displaced wind shifts the train at the current speed; at a higher speed I'm not sure if the effects have been factored in.

To remedy this problem there are 2 options I see.

1st to reduce the speed of the new trains while in a residential area which would be counterproductive to the project.

I am in favour of the 2nd option.

Considering shifting the high speed line to a separated designated track that follows the SEPTA Airport Line which is east of Lindbergh Boulevard in the City of Philadelphia; such a shift east gives access to Philadelphia International Airport and once past Essington, Pennsylvania would ride along the Delaware River in mostly former industrial land; with no residential issues; and with land available for the rail service to expand other future operations. We have seen this fortunate arrangement on residential distance from rail operations at high speed travel with the Amtrak accident in Philadelphia in 2015. While we think of high speed which is very important; if we make it safe it can be more profitable.

If we shift the track we won't just have high speed rail for the NEC but also give it international access for riders from the Philadelphia International Airport which is an international hub; individuals have land in Philadelphia; ride the high speed rail line; and go to cities like Baltimore, Washington, Newark, New York, Boston, and in the future possibly as high speed rail expands they can ride west to Pittsburgh, Indianapolis or Chicago.

**Response:** Thank you for your comments. With respect to your first comment, the NEC FUTURE preferred alternative includes elements to enable a more gentle curve and higher-speed train movements north of 30th Street Station. There are significant

questions about the design details for such an improvement, its constructability, and how it would interface with existing service. These are the sorts of details that FRA anticipates being addressed locally through Tier 2 study and design.

With respect to your other comments, the preferred alternative includes new parallel alignments between 30th Street Station and Chester to serve the Philadelphia International Airport, as well as in the Wilmington area outside the DVRPC region. These parallel segments are intended to expand corridor capacity, create new connections, and enable more service flexibility. On the question of travel speeds specifically, improving service quality and travel times while mitigating any impacts on local neighborhoods has been an important planning objective of the draft and final EIS, and will continue to be an important objective of the Tier 2 studies that will be advanced in the coming years.

Thank you again for your input, and please look forward to opportunities to participate in subsequent study and design work that will follow publication of the Tier 1 Final EIS.