



# Long Island Rail Road Expansion Project Floral Park to Hicksville

## Final Environmental Impact Statement Appendix 22-C Oral Comments

April 2017

**Attachment C:**  
**Public and Private Oral**  
**Comments on Draft**  
**Environmental Impact**  
**Statement**

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 Yes We Can Community Center

9 141 Garden Street

10 Westbury, New York

11  
12 January 17, 2017

13 11:38 a.m. - 11:41 a.m.  
14  
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16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 ROBERT SALVATICO

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
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25

1                   MR. SALVATICO: Okay, so let  
2                   me start by saying I'm a lifetime resident  
3                   here; New Hyde Park and Garden City, I  
4                   lived my whole life in Nassau County  
5                   around the affected area. And while I  
6                   view the current system as having done its  
7                   job for so many years that it's been in  
8                   existence, I don't see that happening  
9                   going forward.

10                  With increasing population,  
11                  you know, we see from time to time,  
12                  already on a westbound way, inconsistent  
13                  and unavailable service, and I don't think  
14                  that's going to get better as the  
15                  population grows and the system  
16                  deteriorates.

17                  You know, again, having  
18                  lived, worked, and played here my whole  
19                  life, I view quality of life issues, in  
20                  particular, that could be solved here by  
21                  the removal of grade crossings, when you  
22                  look at the sound from horn blasts, the  
23                  created traffic and what it does to the  
24                  surrounding community when cars are backed  
25                  up at a grade crossing. That's my first

1 obvious benefit for wanting this.

2 Certainly the quality of  
3 environment vis-à-vis living environment,  
4 but also environmental where there's less  
5 emissions with idling cars and the like.

6 Another greater concern, I  
7 believe, this would solve is avoidance of  
8 track closures, which we hear about more  
9 and more. With each track closed, it  
10 stifles our working community. New Hyde  
11 Park and Garden City have a very strong  
12 commuting population that work in  
13 Manhattan, it creates significant  
14 pressures at work, financially, and at  
15 home.

16 And so this would really help  
17 that as well, as it would dovetail with  
18 the introduction of East Side Access,  
19 which so many of us greatly desire. As in  
20 addition to working in Manhattan, we also  
21 entertain ourselves and visit Manhattan,  
22 and it's very difficult to get there,  
23 particularly at those peak evening hours.

24 And my final thoughts revolve  
25 around the future of transit and

1 development vis-à-vis retaining the youth  
2 in our population, but also servicing an  
3 aging population who won't be able to  
4 drive as much and would probably do better  
5 to have a more robust and frequently  
6 running transit system.

7 Those are my comments. Thank  
8 you.

## C E R T I F I C A T E

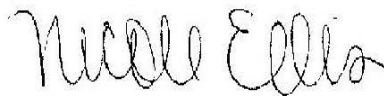
STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  : ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

I, NICOLE ELLIS, a Notary Public for and  
within the State of New York, do hereby certify:

I reported the proceedings in the  
within-entitled matter, and that the within  
transcript is a true record of such proceedings.

I further certify that I am not related to  
any of the parties to this action by blood or by  
marriage and that I am in no way interested in the  
outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
hand this 17th day of January 2017.



---

NICOLE ELLIS

1-17-17 LIRR AM

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NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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MTA/LONG ISLAND RAILROAD

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LONG ISLAND RAILROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

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RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

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-----X

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Yes We Can Community Center

9

141 Garden Street

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Westbury, New York

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12

January 17, 2017

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11:21 A.M.

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B E F O R E :

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SUSAN MC GOWAN,

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THE HEARING OFFICER

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Long Island Railroad General Manager

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Donna Betty

Chief Planning Officer -

Long Island Railroad

Joseph Zacharia

Project Manager New York State Department  
of Transportation

ALSO PRESENT:

Other Project Participants

The Public

The Press

The Media

Marc Russo,

Stenographer

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. PICCA: Good morning.

Thank you for attending today's public meeting for the Long Island Railroad Expansion Project.

My name is Elisa Picca. I'm the Executive Vice President of the Long Island Railroad.

In just a moment I will be overlooking the program for today.

But first, I'd like you to stand and say the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

MS. PICCA: Thank you very much and thank you for taking the time from your busy schedules to be here today. Your input and feedback for this project are crucial and they are greatly appreciated.

This public meeting is part of a robust community outreach process for the Long Island Railroad Expansion Project that began last year and it will continue throughout the project duration.

In a moment, we're going to

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2 show you a video about the proposed project.

3 After that, we will take comments from those who  
4 have registered to speak. For those who would  
5 like to speak and have not yet registered, there  
6 is plenty of time to do so. You can sign up in  
7 the front tables in the lobby.

8 The purpose of this meeting is  
9 to discuss the Long Island Railroad Expansion  
10 Project and, in particular, the Draft  
11 Environmental Impact Statement that was released  
12 on November 28th, 2016.

13 The environmental process began  
14 last spring with the release of the Draft Scoping  
15 Document and continued through the summer with  
16 the release of the Final Scoping Document.

17 Since that time, we have  
18 performed extensive environmental analyses, which  
19 are presented in the Draft EIS. The report is  
20 available on our project website,  
21 [www.amodernli.com](http://www.amodernli.com).

22 It's also available at local  
23 village halls and libraries along the project  
24 corridor.

25 It's also available at our

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2 Project Information Center at the Mineola train  
3 station.

4

5 In response to public requests  
6 for more time to comment on the Draft EIS,  
7 Governor Cuomo has extended the comment period  
8 until February 15th, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

8

9 The Draft EIS comment period  
10 for this project was already longer than those  
11 for much larger projects, such as the Second  
12 Avenue Subway and the new Tappan Zee Bridge. Now  
13 because of your input, there's even more time to  
14 comment.

14

15 When Governor Cuomo first  
16 announced this project, he made clear that it  
17 would be completely different from prior  
18 proposals. Unlike prior proposals, the third  
19 track would be built entirely within the Long  
20 Island Railroad's right-of-way.

20

21 Since the Governor's  
22 announcement over a year ago, we have implemented  
23 unprecedented public outreach and thanks to your  
24 input, we have made commitments to:

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Take no residential properties;

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To modify all seven grade

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crossings in the project area;

    To add sound attenuation walls;

    To improve passenger rail stations with enhancements like full-length platforms;

    To add 2,000 additional parking spaces; and,

    To use innovative methods to speed construction and to minimize its impacts.

    All of these project elements are examples of our commitment to community outreach. Your input is important to us and it's important to the process.

    Your comments will be entered into the public record and reviewed accordingly. While we are here at a formal public hearing today, there are many other outreach efforts and opportunities to comment.

    Our project team has had hundreds of meetings with local officials, business leaders and residents and many members of our team are here today to listen to your comments.

    We've maintained our Project

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2 Information office at the Mineola station on the  
3 south side platform. The hours are posted on the  
4 project website and we encourage everybody to  
5 visit, discuss the project and to make comments.

6 You can also provide comments  
7 on the project website or by e-mail to:

8 info@amodernli.com.

9 Finally, we have visited all  
10 residential properties that share a property line  
11 with the Long Island Railroad multiple times, and  
12 as recently as last week, to remind residents of  
13 these public hearings.

14 Now I'd like to turn your  
15 attention to a short video that will discuss the  
16 project need and highlight its benefits, which  
17 include improved service reliability, safety and  
18 quality of life. The project would add much  
19 needed capacity to the main line and eliminate  
20 all street level grade crossings within the  
21 project area.

22 Incorporating extensive input  
23 from local communities, the project team is  
24 exploring neighbor-friendly and innovative  
25 construction methods and practices to keep the

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2 impact of construction as minimal as possible.

3 (Video presentation.)

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. PICCA: Thank you.

6 Now I'd like to introduce our  
7 representatives from the Long Island Railroad and  
8 State DOT, as well as our Hearing Officer.

9 To my far right, we have Ms.  
10 Donna Betty. She is the Chief Planning Officer  
11 of the Long Island Railroad.

12 Seated next to Donna is, Mr.  
13 Joseph Zacharia, Project Manager from New York  
14 State Department of Transportation; and,

15 To my immediate right is Ms.  
16 Susan McGowan, Long Island Railroad General  
17 Manager of Public Affairs.

18 Susan will serve as our Hearing  
19 Officer today and I will turn the meeting over to  
20 her at this time.

21 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
22 you, Elisa.

23 Welcome, everybody.

24 And thank you for joining us  
25 today.

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Before we begin, we have a few  
procedural items so I ask for your patience.

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This public meeting is an  
opportunity to hear from you regarding the  
project's environmental review process, in  
particular, the Draft Environmental Impact  
Statement, or Draft EIS.

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The Draft EIS includes a wide  
range of technical analyses on topics such as:

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Air quality;

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Noise;

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Land Use;

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Socioeconomics;

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Traffic;

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Parking; and much more.

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It also reviews any potential  
property impacts from the proposed project,  
including easements and commercial property  
acquisitions.

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Today's proceedings also serve  
as the public hearing in accordance with the New  
York State Eminent Domain Procedures Law, or  
EDPL.

25

As Vice President Picca noted

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2 earlier, no permanent takings of residential  
3 property will be needed for this project.

4

Building station platform  
5 areas, retaining walls, and Long Island Railroad  
6 infrastructure along the entire 9.8 mile project  
7 corridor, would require no full property takings  
8 of any type. It would require four partial  
9 acquisitions of non-residential properties, which  
10 would not affect any structure.

11

It would also require three  
12 permanent or temporary easements of  
13 non-residential properties and one temporary  
14 easement at a multi-family cooperative  
15 residential property.

16

Multiple options at the seven  
17 grade crossing locations along the 9.8 mile  
18 project corridor were also evaluated. For these  
19 grade crossing options, we've identified full  
20 acquisitions of up to four commercial properties  
21 for which the State will work with the owners to  
22 provide relocation assistance within their  
23 communities.

24

In addition, partial  
25 acquisitions affecting eight non-residential

1

2 properties could be needed but in all situations  
3 which will not affect the continued operation of  
4 the businesses.

5

6 Finally, the grade crossing  
7 work may need some permanent rights to access  
8 some parcels of commercial property during and  
9 after construction and some temporary rights to  
10 access other parcels of property during and after  
11 construction in connection with the construction,  
12 or in connection with certain maintenance needs  
13 after construction. None of these rights of  
14 access will permanently impact the operation of  
15 the businesses affected.

16

17 For complete details about the  
18 multiple grade crossing options, please refer to  
19 the DEIS or visit the DOT table in the open house  
20 area.

21

22 Again, no permanent taking of  
23 residential property will be needed for this  
24 project.

25

Those who may be impacted by  
property acquisitions have already been contacted  
by the State.

26

Pursuant to the EDPL, the

1

2 project team has studied the proposed project and  
3 is able to determine the relocation requirements  
4 for each grade crossing option and determined  
5 which plan would be preferable.

6

This information will be  
7 considered along with other relevant factors when  
8 selecting the project's final design.

9

New York State DOT and Empire  
10 State Development will provide extensive support  
11 for the four commercial properties that may be  
12 fully acquired with day-to-day relocation  
13 assistance as required, including:

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Help in finding suitable  
replacement sites;

Reestablishment expenses; and,

A variety of moving expenses  
options.

The State has studied the local  
real estate market and concluded that there will  
be a sufficient number of replacement properties  
to satisfy the needs of any displaced commercial  
occupant, irrespective of the design option that  
is selected. Property acquisition would not  
commence until the final design option has been

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2 approved.

3

4 Each affected property owner  
5 will be contacted by a real estate specialist who  
6 will explain the proposed construction and the  
7 acquisition process. Any potentially affected  
8 property owners present here today may visit the  
9 DOT table in the open house area until the end of  
10 this hearing for further details about the  
11 process or to ask any questions they may have.

12

13 Now in order to give public  
14 comment, we ask if you haven't already done so,  
15 that you sign up at the registration desk.

16

17 We're also asking that everyone  
18 limit their comments to three minutes, and that's  
19 intended to give everyone an opportunity to  
20 speak.

21

22 Again, this meeting is not the  
23 only opportunity that you'll have to comment on  
24 this project. You can continue to provide  
25 comments through February 15th at the project  
26 office at the Mineola station, by mail or online  
27 at: [www.amodernli.com](http://www.amodernli.com).

28

29 We have representatives and  
30 experts here from the Long Island Railroad and

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2 the New York State Department of Transportation.

3 We're available to consult with you on the

4 project and they're in the next room.

5

6 If you prefer to give comments  
7 privately, because we realize not everybody wants  
8 to speak in front of an audience, you can sign up  
9 at the front desk and give your comments to a  
10 private stenographer, who will make sure your  
11 comments are entered into the public record.

12

13 Now because this is a formal  
14 hearing and because we're entering your comments  
15 into the public record, we will not be responding  
16 to your comments or answering questions from the  
17 stage. However, we do have staff here in the  
18 building who will do their best to answer your  
19 questions and concerns.

20

21 If you have any special needs,  
22 please find a staff member and we'll do our best  
23 to address those needs.

24

25 And one final thing, if you  
26 haven't already done so, please turn your cell  
27 phones to silent.

28

29 I'm going to call the names of  
30 the first five speakers and ask that they make

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2 their way up to the reserved seats in the front,  
3 the front row, so they can prepare themselves.

4 There are two microphones, one  
5 on the left and on your left and my right -- your  
6 right. After I call the first five speakers,  
7 I'll call the name of the next speaker. When you  
8 come up to speak, please give your name and your  
9 affiliation. If you're part of an organization,  
10 please say the name of that organization and then  
11 you'll have three minutes to speak.

12 There is a timer, a countdown  
13 clock. The countdown clock will show as green  
14 until you have 30 seconds. Then it will turn  
15 yellow. And finally when the three minutes are  
16 up, it will turn red. And if you're not sure,  
17 I'll give you a very gentle reminder.

18 So the first five speakers are:

19 Dave Kapell.

20 Kevin Law.

21 Kyle Strober.

22 Grant Havasy; and,

23 Ann Corbett.

24 Mr. Kapell.

25 MR. KAPPELL: Good morning.

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Thank you for hearing me.

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My name is Dave Kapell and I am  
Executive Director of the the Right Track for  
Long Island Coalition.

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Our Coalition has grown to  
5,000 members and we speak for over one million  
Long Islanders who have come together to support  
the Long Island Railroad Enhancement Project  
because we believe it is the key to unlocking the  
full potential of our region in the 21st century.

The two existing tracks through  
the main line corridor were built in the 19th  
century when people rode to the station in horse  
and buggy. Today it's the busiest railroad  
corridor in the country and runs at full capacity  
during peak hours.

Without a third track, service  
cannot be expanded to meet the growing needs of a  
region of three million, especially young people  
who hold transit access as a priority in deciding  
where to live, work and raise a family. Unless  
we can attract these young people, Long Island  
will continue falling behind regions that  
aggressively compete with us for talent.

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We respect the fact that a project of this magnitude cannot be built without local impacts. But the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is to be commended for including important mitigation measures to minimize short-term inconvenience.

And the elimination of seven dangerous, loud and unattractive grade crossings, construction of six garages with 2,300 new parking spaces, five new state-of-the-art train stations and sound walls to reduce noise and vibration in residential districts ensures that the project will be transformative for the local communities.

Three million Long Islanders should be able to enjoy the same convenient access to transit as the corridor communities do now. After all, it is the Long Island Railroad.

As importantly, the lack of a third track denies the flexibility the system needs to respond effectively to frequent, often tragic incidents, that are a major cause of delays that plague the system and frustrate 300 (sic) daily commuters who depend on it to support

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2       their families. These commuters have previously  
3       been without a voice on a project that  
4       dramatically improves their lives and those of  
5       their families.

6                       I am now pleased to present to  
7       you a petition we have circulated that bears the  
8       signatures of 4,542 Long Island Railroad  
9       commuters who enthusiastically endorse the  
10      project.

11                     A beautified main line corridor  
12      will be the 21st century pride of the Long Island  
13      Railroad system and the envy of Long Island.  
14      This will raise property values and help keep  
15      property taxes down in the future.

16                     We urge you to move ahead and  
17      build the third track now.

18                     Thank you.

19                     (Applause.)

20                     THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
21      speaker is Kevin Law.

22                     MR. LAW: Good morning.

23                     Thank you.

24                     My name is Kevin Law. I'm the  
25      President and CEO of the Long Island Association.

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I also am one of the co-chairs  
of our Right Track Coalition.

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No surprise, I support, or our  
organization supports this project. I've stated  
it many times publicly before and we believe it's  
the most important infrastructure project to  
happen on Long Island in decades, many decades.

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Imagine a Long Island without  
the service roads on the LIE. Well, about 30  
years ago they did not exist. People cannot  
fathom traveling on the LIE without them now.

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Imagine if the Sunrise Highway  
project was never completed and taken all the way  
out to past Patchogue and connecting beyond to  
the East End. Again, people take that project  
for granted now and it would be devastating to  
our region if it didn't exist.

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This is a project that should  
have happened decades ago and decades from now we  
will look back on this project and people will  
say, wow, I can't believe Long Island went this  
long without this important project.

24

25

But I'm here -- I'm going to  
speak actually from a different perspective

1  
2 today. I've -- I'm an attorney. I've spent half  
3 my career in an international law firm in the  
4 environmental practice group. I've worked on  
5 major projects on Long Island, participating in  
6 the preparation of Environmental Impact  
7 Statements, reviewing Environmental Impact  
8 Statements, advising clients and/or  
9 municipalities on Environmental Impact  
10 Statements. And I have never seen such a fine job  
11 of an Environmental Impact Statement that the MTA  
12 and the Long Island Railroad has done on a very  
13 important project.

14 Projects like this will have  
15 impacts and you guys have gone a long way  
16 identifying those impacts and then establishing  
17 and identifying ways to mitigate those impacts.  
18 It -- since this is part of a process and part of  
19 the environmental review process, it's important  
20 to note that this process has been carried out,  
21 not just well, but beyond what is required. And  
22 I commend the MTA and the Railroad for doing a  
23 fine job.

24 Because as part of our  
25 coalition, we understood that the communities

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2 that live closest to the proposed third track  
3 would have some impacts and we agreed with them  
4 to ask the MTA and the Railroad to address those  
5 concerns and to mitigate those impacts. And we  
6 believe they've done above and beyond and  
7 especially with all of the different community  
8 impacts, the community benefits along the  
9 corridor that the MTA has now supported.

10 So job well done.

11 Thank you very much.

12 Bottom line, let's get this  
13 project done. Long Island's future depends upon  
14 it.

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
18 speaker is Kyle Strober;

19 Followed by Grant Havasy; and,  
20 Ann Corbett.

21 Mr. Strober.

22 MR. STROBER: Good morning.

23 My name is Kyle Strober and I'm  
24 here as the Executive Director of the Association  
25 for a Better Long Island.

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For more than 30 years, ABLI has been advocating on behalf of Long Islanders. Our mission is to improve our region's quality of life and our economic viability, both for today and future generations.

Despite its considerable strengths, Long Island remains a region with considerable challenges. We pay incredibly high property taxes. We have high energy costs. Don't even get me started with the traffic here.

But in addition, we have an aging railroad system whose infrastructure was once constructed when Long Island's chief export was oysters. And as the spouse of a daily Long Island Railroad commuter, I know firsthand the expense of monthly commuting tickets and those costs keep going up. And I also know how service delays can negatively impact the Long Islander's quality of life, as well as the spouse's quality of life. And maybe most importantly, an aging transit system can only harm Long Island's economy and our economic bonds to neighboring New York City. That is why I'm here today.

Our organization believes if we

1

2 don't proactively acknowledge, confront and  
3 resolve the problems we face on Long Island, they  
4 will not only remain, they will, in fact, get  
5 worse and dangerously so.

6

The third track has the means  
7 to exponentially increase the power of mass  
8 transit to benefit all of Long Island.

9

It has the means to make far  
10 more effective use of the multi-billion dollar  
11 East Side Access Project.

12

It has the power to make  
13 reverse commuting to Long Island more than a  
14 favored concept but a powerful asset to our  
15 bi-county economy.

16

It has the ability to invest  
17 the tens -- the ability to invest tens of  
18 millions of dollars into our local communities,  
19 eliminate the grade crossings, install sound  
20 barriers, build much needed parking structures  
21 for downtowns along the corridor.

22

That is why the Association for  
23 a Better Long Island fully supports the third  
24 track project.

25

Will this project cause some

1

2       inconveniences during construction? Of course it  
3       will. How can we -- but how we can make anything  
4       better without improvements that require some  
5       sort of construction. And the changes for the  
6       corridor communities, including elimination of  
7       residential property takings, parking structures,  
8       state-of-the art sound walls, is nothing short of  
9       historic for this Railroad public works project.

10                       These proposed upgrades will  
11       improve traffic, real estate values and local  
12       economies within the corridor. The project is  
13       desperately needed, not just for Long Island  
14       commuters but the project is desperately needed  
15       for Long Island.

16                       Long Islanders pay some of the  
17       highest property taxes in the State. Getting our  
18       fair share returned through this \$2 billion  
19       investment will reap rewards for the region  
20       through new jobs and an added \$3 billion in  
21       personal income within ten years.

22                       As a region, convenient mass  
23       transit access to jobs in New York City has  
24       always been at the core of property values  
25       throughout Long Island. If we ignore this

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powerful fact, it's at our own peril.

And I want to close on this and I know I'm over time, but this is an issue that directly affects me as a millennial. Long Islanders' future is being severely compromised by the mass exodus of Long Island's next generation of professionals. We are losing young people to places like Hoboken, Westchester and Connecticut.

My peers all know Long Island is a great place to live but not if you want mass transit access to a city that continues to the epicenter of commerce, culture and careers.

The third track will not only make commuting and from New York City jobs easier, it will attract new companies and ensure young professionals remain connected to Long Island, rejuvenating our regional economy and bringing 21st opportunities with them.

The Third Track project --  
THE HEARING OFFICER: Please conclude.

MR. STROBER: The Third Track project puts Long Island on the right track for

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2 the future for commuters, for the local  
3 economies, for the Long Island -- and for Long  
4 Island's economic vitality and for today and  
5 future generations.

6 That is why the Association for  
7 a Better Long Island fully supports the third  
8 track project.

9 Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 THE HEARING OFFICER: Grant  
12 Havasy is our next speaker.

13 MR. HAVASY: Good morning.

14 Grant Havasy from Bloom Gold  
15 Homes, a local home builder and the president of  
16 the Long Island Builders Institute.

17 First and foremost, I and the  
18 Long Island Builders Institute support the third  
19 track. In an effort not to be redundant, there's  
20 very many valid points that were just previously  
21 spoken, I'm going to speak to basically the  
22 socioeconomic impacts.

23 Last year at the first set of  
24 hearings, I stated, and will state again, the  
25 third track is a necessary catalyst that will

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2 change the course of our Island forever.

3

4 A few points that I want to  
5 reiterate and emphasize why the third track is  
6 necessary. This project will create a tremendous  
7 amount of new jobs and will promote a 21st  
8 century technology-based economy, paired with  
9 increased mobility to and from New York City and  
10 within Long Island, we will finally have the  
11 means to attract young talent again. By  
12 efficiently connecting Long Island and New York  
13 City, talent and manufacture will finally move  
14 east instead of only west.

15 The growing desire to transform  
16 the areas around train stations and grow them  
17 into vibrant hubs, such as Huntington Station,  
18 Ronkonkoma, Wyandanch and Hempstead Village will  
19 also create the desire to move east, as within  
20 these new hubs, talent will have relief from the  
21 much higher costs of living of New York City,  
22 while enjoying the vibrancy and convenience of a  
23 walkable downtown, coupled with easy and  
24 efficient access to New York City.

25 Simply put, the third track is  
a necessary means to protect and improve our

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2 future. It's not 9.8 miles that's affected.

3 It's geographically 118 miles and the millions of  
4 people that reside on this Island.

5 Our future job growth, our  
6 future health care services, our future  
7 technologies and our future families are all at  
8 stake. The third track is the first step for our  
9 future.

10 I just wanted to applaud the  
11 progress that the Governor's office and his team  
12 has made in these efforts in the environmental  
13 statements and I look forward to the day this  
14 project is a reality.

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
18 speaker is Ann Corbett.

19 But I'm going to also read the  
20 names of the next five speakers so they can get  
21 ready to come to the podium.

22 Following Ms. Corbett, we'll  
23 have:

24 William Corbett;.

25 Jenn Casey;

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2

Mark Hamer;

3

Joan Dickinson; and,

4

Patricia Schaefer;

5

Ms. Corbett.

6

MS. ANN CORBETT: My name is

7

Ann Corbett. I'm the former Mayor of Floral Park

8

and I'm also a spokesperson for Citizens Against

9

Rail Expansion, CARE.

10

First I'm going to talk about

11

freight. Many of our people are concerned about

12

the increase in freight trains. Residents that

13

are living in apartments and doing business along

14

the proposed project, report that they have

15

observed more than three freight trains during

16

off-peak day and off-peak hours, day and night,

17

and that many other freight trains have more than

18

the average number of 21 rail cars and more than

19

one diesel. In addition, freight trains often

20

have heavy loads of materials, including garbage

21

that are not covered.

22

In the new agreement with the

23

New York and Atlantic Railway, what are the exact

24

terms related to the number of trains and rail

25

cars and diesels and materials that can be

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2       hauled?

3

4                   Are hazardous materials or  
5       radioactive waste hauled now or will they be --  
6       will there be circumstances when such materials  
7       will be hauled west through our communities in  
8       the future?

8

9                   Under the new agreement as  
10       stated, that conservative estimates are that  
11       there will be one additional round-trip freight  
12       train, an additional engine per freight train and  
13       up to 30 cars in the future. Does this up to 30  
14       rail cars mean an average or a limit?

14

15                   There is no real need to  
16       provide reverse commute with the third track but  
17       will the third track accommodate dead-head trains  
18       or trains that need cleanup and maintenance at  
19       facilities under your reliability-centered  
20       maintenance program or in yards in Suffolk  
21       County?

21

22                   Is this the result of a lack of  
23       space for these trains to be cleaned and  
24       maintained in Richmond Hill or Hollis?

24

25                   How many dead-head trains will  
be traveling the third track in a week along the

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2 main line in the future?

3

4 The MTA Long Island Railroad  
5 today announced -- excuse me, I'm going to skip  
6 to something else that I feel is more important.

6

7 I believe that the MTA/Long  
8 Island Railroad is neglecting its responsibility  
9 to treat fairly, the residents and businesses  
10 along the Long Island Railroad four-track stretch  
11 between Floral Park, South Tyson Avenue Extension  
12 and Queens Village. No sound attenuation walls  
13 for them are planned. These would reduce noise  
14 and vibration generated by more rail traffic.

14

15 Sound attenuation walls are  
16 planned along the main line, or project corridor,  
17 which has two tracks to accommodate rail traffic.  
18 The people west of Floral Park and the South  
19 Tyson Extension will bear the burden of more  
20 noise and vibrations produced by more trains on  
21 the four tracks to and from -- on the Hempstead  
22 line and on the main line to and from Hicksville.

22

Thank you.

23

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

24

you.

25

(Applause.)

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2

THE HEARING OFFICER: Now Mr.

3

William Corbett;

4

Followed by Jenn Casey.

5

MR. WILLIAM CORBETT: Thank

6

you.

7

My name is Bill Corbett. I

8

represent Citizens Against Rail Expansion.

9

That's a coalition of 130 local businesses,

10

associations, political leaders and community

11

leaders who are opposing this project and have

12

opposed it for awhile.

13

I might say we heard testimony

14

and that there was 4,500 signatures given in on a

15

petition in support. Last time this came up, we

16

had 10,000 signatures given in opposition. All

17

of ours were done by volunteers. I read in the

18

paper that these other petitions were circulated

19

by paid employees.

20

CARE has -- no one is paid.

21

We're all volunteers. We're just doing this as

22

citizens of our community.

23

Since I'm limited to the three

24

minutes, I will be handing in about 20 pages of

25

comments and suggestions as to how the project

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2 can be made better if it goes forward.

3

4 We are for the grade crossing  
5 eliminations. We feel that should have been done  
6 years ago and that's certainly a very positive  
7 thing for the communities, as long it's done with  
8 taking these -- the feelings of the local  
9 communities involved into consideration.

9

10 My major concern is the toxic  
11 soil that is on the railroad bed throughout the  
12 corridor. For 100 years the Railroad's been  
13 spraying toxic chemicals, many of them are now  
14 banned from use. Those chemicals if stirred up  
15 and put into the air, can be very dangerous for  
16 our local residents.

16

17 So we'd like to see more --  
18 more of a program as to what the remediation is  
19 going to be if they're going to have to remove  
20 the gravel and tons and tons of soil that I  
21 believe are probably, no doubt, are contaminated.

21

22 Also, the inconvenience to the  
23 local residents in the ten communities along the  
24 way. In some of the places you talk about  
25 parking garages. Floral Park is going to lose  
parking spaces. In the Floral Park station,

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2       you've talked about modernizing stations.

3       Nothing's been done in Floral Park. We don't

4       even have -- we don't even have access for

5       disabled persons. That's something that should

6       be on the list.

7                       Regarding freight, we do

8       believe that one of the reasons for this is to

9       enable Suffolk to take more of their garbage

10      throughout -- through the main line. We know

11      that many of the land fills have been closed in

12      Suffolk by the State and we've got to have a

13      place to put that trash.

14                      And the other thing is that

15      with the third track, from my understanding, it's

16      going to be no -- none of those tracks are going

17      to stop anywhere between Hicksville and Jamaica.

18      So all of these communities along the way that

19      are going to be going along with this, they're

20      not going to have any benefit as far as increased

21      service.

22                      Also, the time limit. This is

23      going to take probably, by the time you're done,

24      five years or more. We know for East Side

25      Access, we know how long that took. We know the

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2 Second Avenue Subway how long that look.

3 You talk \$2 billion. You're  
4 probably be talking five or six by the time you  
5 get finished. That's going to cost the  
6 taxpayers. It's going to cost the commuters.

7 New Hyde Park alone is going to  
8 lose \$390,000 in tax revenue from the property  
9 they're going to be taking to put up part of this  
10 facility.

11 So in all, we favor the grade  
12 crossings but we would like them to do much more  
13 work on all the points that I raised here. I'll  
14 be giving more comments on that in written form.

15 Thank you.

16 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
17 you.

18 (Applause.)

19 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
20 speaker is Jenn Casey;

21 Followed by Mark Hamer.

22 MS. CASEY: Good morning.

23 My name is Jennifer Casey. I'm  
24 Chair of the Suffolk County Planning  
25 Commissioner. As Chair of the Commission, one of

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2 our biggest challenges has been transportation  
3 and traffic.

4 The third track is vital to the  
5 economy of Long Island. The future of development  
6 on Long Island lies in transit-oriented  
7 development. In order for transit-oriented  
8 development to succeed, the Railroad must be  
9 expanded, service more frequent and reliable.

10 Projects on the horizon  
11 include:

12 Heartland, which will rely on  
13 the Railroad to transport an influx of workers  
14 and residents in both directions.

15 For many years the residents of  
16 the Upper East Side of Manhattan dealt with  
17 inconveniences for the larger whole with the East  
18 Side Access Project. The construction of the  
19 third rail may be an inconvenience for some but  
20 will serve the greater good of Long Island as a  
21 whole.

22 The future of Long Island is  
23 dependent on a better transportation system,  
24 including a better Long Island Railroad.

25 Thank you.

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2

(Applause.)

3

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next

4

speaker is Mark Hamer and please correct me if

5

I've mispronounced your name.

6

MR. HAMER: No, you did not and

7

I'm impressed.

8

My name is Mark Hamer. I'm an

9

Executive Board Member of the Association for a

10

Better Long Island. I'm a business owner, owning

11

two real estate companies; one commercial, one

12

residential. And I'm a resident of the Town of

13

Huntington.

14

Thank you for allowing me to

15

speak today.

16

I'm here to voice my support

17

for Long Island Railroad Third Track. In

18

analyzing the cost-benefit analysis of the third

19

track, it is clear that New York and Long Island

20

must approve and complete the capital project.

21

The Long Island Railroad is the

22

busiest commuter railroad in North America,

23

serving over 300,000 commuters daily, yet the

24

infrastructure is woefully inadequate to handle

25

the passenger loads in today's world. As a

1

2 result, on-time performance has declined.

3 Reliability has suffered. General maintenance

4 has deteriorated and most importantly, Long

5 Island commuters have lost faith in the Railroad

6 as a viable mode of transportation.

7 Construction on the third track

8 will resolve many of the issues that plague the

9 Long Island Railroad. The additional track will

10 increase capacity throughout the system.

11 This increased capacity will

12 improve on-time performance, allow for reverse

13 commutes during peak hours, allow for routine

14 maintenance of the system without compromising

15 regular service; and, provide reliability when

16 unforeseen disruptions occur.

17 The Long Island Railroad is the

18 life blood of Long Island. Without a reliable

19 commuter rail, Long Island traffic will not be

20 manageable. Environmental concerns will increase

21 and Long Islanders' quality of life will suffer.

22 However, with the third track, not only will

23 commuters' lives improve but also, Long Island

24 will enjoy many more benefits, including:

25 Increased safety due to the

1

2       elimination of seven dangerous grade crossings;

3                       Improved intra-county traffic

4       conditions due to the elimination of grade

5       crossings that temporarily stop traffic while

6       trains cross, especially during peak hours;

7                       Improve commuter experiences

8       resulting from five, new state-of-the-art train

9       stations and six new parking structures, totaling

10      2,300 additional parking spaces;

11                      Improved environmental

12      conditions for the homeowners along the track

13      corridor due the installation of sound

14      attenuation walls, along the length of the

15      project that will decrease noise, reduce

16      vibration and lower pollution.

17                      The residents of Nassau and

18      Suffolk Counties have wholeheartedly endorsed

19      this capital project. They recognize its

20      importance and the opportunities it offers.

21                      The business and institutional

22      support is universal. Both understand that

23      workers demand reliable and abundant service.

24                      Long Island must invest in its

25      infrastructure to retain businesses and younger

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workers.

Please support the most  
important infrastructure project on Long Island  
in the past 50 years.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
speaker is Joan Dickinson;

Followed by Patricia Schaefer.

MS. DICKINSON: Good morning.

I'm Joan Dickinson. I'm  
Community Relations Director of Stony Brook  
University and I'm here to speak on behalf of the  
University in favor of the third track.

We believe that Long Island  
needs this project and knows that it will help  
our students and employees.

The trains that currently stop  
on campus are often overcrowded because they run  
too infrequently. The station is used by  
westbound commuters to New York City and  
eastbound students, faculty and staff coming to  
campus.

The third track will help us

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2 with our student recruiting efforts.

3

4 Long Island has a world-class  
5 research university right in its backyard and the  
6 third track would mean increased opportunities  
7 for students looking for a top tier school at an  
8 affordable price.

9

10 It will also help us to recruit  
11 staff and faculty. As the largest single-site  
12 employer in Suffolk County, residents of Nassau  
13 and the five boroughs might consider a career at  
14 Stony Brook University, University Hospital, the  
15 Long Island State Veterans Home or one of our  
16 Centers of Excellence if the commute were easier.

17

18 Potential employees would have  
19 access to good jobs. SBU would have access to  
20 great talent and pollution and traffic would be  
21 reduced by the reverse commute via train.

22

23 This proposal would also help  
24 us to alleviate some of the housing and parking  
25 issues raised by our neighbors and our students  
and our early career employees.

26

27 Our student housing survey data  
28 shows that commuter students, including our  
29 graduate and professional students, are willing

1

2 to travel up to 40 minutes away from campus when  
3 traveling by train.

4

5 The improvements supported by  
6 the third track could potentially open up other  
7 communities for students and young professionals  
8 to live if the ride is easy and within the  
9 appropriate distance and time. This would be a  
10 boost to some of the communities on the line.

11

12 It will be an improvement for  
13 the Long Island economy. The project will  
14 certainly create jobs and will help Long Island  
15 to capture the new businesses that are often  
16 drawn to the intellectual capital at Stony Brook  
17 University, Cold Spring Harbor and Brookhaven  
18 National Lab.

19

20 Long Island needs to leverage  
21 its mass transit infrastructure to attract new  
22 investment, create additional jobs, strengthen  
23 real estate values and grow its economy.

24

25 The improved service would also  
mean more opportunities for our students to spend  
time in New York City for cultural events and  
internships. It will allow Long Island to  
attract young talent as they will have more

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2 options for housing and entertainment.

3

4 It would also allow us to take  
5 advantage of the East Side Access Project and to  
6 stay competitive with other regions. This  
7 project has the power to be transformative.

7

8

Stony Brook University supports  
the third track.

9

Thank you for your time.

10

(Applause.)

11

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay.

12

Following our next speaker, Patricia Schaefer, we  
13 will call up:

14

Mark Epstein;

15

Neal Lewis;

16

Laura Schultz;

17

Michael White; and,

18

John Murphy.

19

So if you could make your way

20

to the front row.

21

Ms. Schaefer.

22

Thank you.

23

MS. SCHAEFER: Thank you.

24

Good morning.

25

My name is Patty Schaefer and

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2 I'm Managing Director of the Rauch Foundation,  
3 which is a family philanthropy based in Garden  
4 City.

5 I'm pleased to testify this  
6 morning on the Draft Environmental Impact  
7 Statement for the Long Island Railroad Expansion  
8 Project, also known as the third track.

9 The Rauch Foundation is  
10 publisher of the Long Island Index, which has  
11 conducted and publicly released extensive  
12 research over many years documenting the  
13 extraordinary importance of this project to the  
14 economic future of Long Island.

15 As several people have  
16 expressed before me, the third track will address  
17 the chronic bottleneck that regularly constrains  
18 rail service on Long Island. It will improve  
19 reverse commuting, which is essential to business  
20 growth in the region and it will have profoundly  
21 important impacts on our economy.

22 In 2014, research from the Long  
23 Island Index showed that ten years after the  
24 third track's completion, the impacts would be:

25 14,000 new jobs;

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\$5.6 billion in additional  
gross regional product;

\$3 billion in additional  
personal income; and,

More than 35,000 new residents  
on Long Island, of whom more than 40 percent  
would be in the 25-44 year-old age range.

The long-term benefits would be  
even greater.

The DEIS should be applauded  
and endorsed for the extraordinary lengths to  
which it goes to mitigate project impacts. It  
details:

The retaining and sound  
attenuation walls to be built;

The passenger rail station  
improvements to be made;

Street level grade crossings,  
which will be eliminated; and,

The parking facilities to be  
constructed, among many other mitigating actions  
and local benefits.

The MTA, the Long Island  
Railroad, and the State of New York should be

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2 commended on their remarkable commitment to  
3 moving this project forward.

4

As plans for the project  
5 continue to evolve, our one specific  
6 recommendation is that consideration be given to  
7 designing the new facilities to the highest  
8 possible design standards.

9

The Long Island Index, through  
10 its parking plus design challenge, has elevated  
11 public discussion of the potential parking  
12 facilities, in particular to provide multiple  
13 amenities and truly enhance downtown communities.  
14 Bringing the best in design to the development of  
15 those facilities would provide an additional  
16 lasting economic benefit as well.

17

And I'd like to present you all  
18 with several samples of innovative designs for  
19 parking structures, which were presented during  
20 the last design challenge of the Index  
21 (indicating.)

22

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
23 you.

24

(Applause.)

25

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next

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2 speaker is Mark Epstein.

3 MR. EPSTEIN: Good morning.

4 Mark Epstein, Chair of the Long  
5 Island Railroad Commuter Council, the official  
6 voice of all our Long Island Railroad riders.

7 I'm here today to offer our  
8 support for the improvement of the main line and  
9 the DEIS statement on the project.

10 The Long Island Railroad  
11 Commuter Council recognizes that a decision to  
12 proceed with this project involves a major  
13 commitment. Large-scale construction is  
14 disruptive and we understand that communities and  
15 riders are likely to be inconvenienced during the  
16 improvement of the main line.

17 We're also mindful of the cost  
18 of the project. After all, we are fare payers and  
19 taxpayers. We are residents and riders.

20 And in the end, we believe that  
21 benefits of this project outweigh its costs. But  
22 it must be managed carefully to ensure that it is  
23 completed on time and on budget.

24 As every day users of the Long  
25 Island Railroad, we support the expansion of the

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2 main line because continued improvement for Long  
3 Island Railroad infrastructure is critical to  
4 meet the demands of Long Islanders for safe,  
5 efficient and affordable transportation while the  
6 Railroad's capacity is constrained and there's no  
7 room to add peak hour service, riders should  
8 continue to increase.

9

In 2015, a total of 87.6  
10 million passengers rode the Long Island Railroad,  
11 accounting for the highest usage since 1949.  
12 This growth continued in 2016 by between 2 and  
13 2-and-a-half percent increases. This popularity  
14 has a cost.

15

The system that Long Islanders  
16 are increasingly choosing to ride is heavily  
17 burdened, without sufficient operational  
18 flexibility to deal with problems. About 40  
19 percent of the Railroad's total riders travel  
20 over the particularly outdated and overburdened  
21 section of track that we know as the main line.  
22 The volume of traffic on this section prevents  
23 any serious consideration of two-way service and  
24 often reduces rush-hour travel to a crawl and  
25 those of us who are stuck on those trains know

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2       what a crawl is all about.

3

4                       These issues exist even if  
5       nothing goes wrong. But problems like a stalled  
6       train, malfunctioning crossing gate or track  
7       defect can mean serious problems for the Long  
8       Island Railroad and its riders.

8

9                       Even Long Island Railroad  
10       riders that do not travel over the main line are  
11       regularly affected, as problems on the main line  
12       can and do back up traffic and delay trains  
13       beyond them.

13

14                      As you know, the East Side  
15       Access Project is under construction and will add  
16       new capacity to get Long Island Railroad trains  
17       under the East River. The reality of the  
18       situation is, however, that once the East Side  
19       Access is completed, trains will still have to  
20       deal with the same old choke points on the main  
21       line. Without improvements to the main line, the  
22       over \$10 billion East Side Access Project will  
23       never realize its full potential.

23

24                      The need for this improvement  
25       is clear from both the limitations the Long  
26       Island Railroad faces in normal operations and

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2 the huge delays that result with any problem that  
3 disrupts service between Floral Park and  
4 Hicksville.

5 The current service is not  
6 working for riders, their families and their  
7 employers. There has to be a better way.

8 The project is critical to Long  
9 Island's economic health, quality of life and  
10 desirability as a community. We have a unique  
11 opportunity to move forward and leverage the  
12 increased capacity that will be generated by East  
13 Side Access and the second track projects to  
14 create real benefits for Long Island and those  
15 who call it home.

16 We must take advantage of this  
17 opportunity. The communities of the Long Island  
18 Railroad strongly support this long awaited  
19 project.

20 Thank you.

21 (Applause.)

22 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
23 speaker is Neal Lewis;

24 Followed by Laura Schultz;

25 Michael White; and,

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2

John Murphy.

3

Mr. Lewis.

4

MR. LEWIS: Thank you.

5

Good afternoon.

6

My name is Neal Lewis. I'm the

7

Executive Director of the Sustainability

8

Institute of Molloy College.

9

I would like to say that the --

10

you've already heard, and particularly from our

11

last speaker, the points made about the benefits

12

for this project for those who are current

13

commuters and you've also heard the points made

14

about those who could be future commuters, people

15

who will travel in what sometimes called reverse

16

commuting. I would just call it intra-Long

17

Island commuting.

18

So there's many benefits for

19

people using the train now and using the train in

20

the future. But what we also want to acknowledge

21

the benefits for all Long Islanders, including

22

many who never use the trains.

23

I want to start by

24

acknowledging that the hearing today is on the

25

Draft Environmental Impact Statement that was

1

2 released in November, which I have reviewed and I  
3 echo the comments of Kevin Law, where I reviewed  
4 many impact statements over the years and this  
5 one was done in a highly professional way with  
6 great detail and it demonstrates many benefits of  
7 this project.

8

As you've all heard, the  
9 benefits include the point made at the beginning  
10 that no homes would be eliminated under this  
11 proposal as compared to the previous one. That  
12 sound attenuation walls will be included in the  
13 project.

14

We should also acknowledge that  
15 for every person that gets on the train and the  
16 increase in the numbers of people who get on the  
17 train as a result of this project, there will be  
18 direct environmental benefits because they won't  
19 be using their cars. And as less people are  
20 using their cars and there's less traffic  
21 congestion, all that improves our air quality,  
22 the air that all of us breathe and, also, from  
23 the perspective of reducing greenhouse gas  
24 emissions that contribute to global warming.

25

The point that has been made

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2 about rail crossings is very, very important.  
3 The rail crossings are dangerous. They cause all  
4 sorts of traffic congestion and delays which,  
5 again, contributes to air pollution and they  
6 represent noise issues. So in addition to the  
7 sound attenuation walls, we also have the  
8 opportunity to eliminate the horns that are  
9 blared a quarter-a-mile before every train  
10 crossing. So it's seven train crossings being  
11 eliminated, is a direct benefit to many people  
12 that ever use the train.

13 By having a better train  
14 service, more frequent train service, we will see  
15 a revitalization to downtowns, which is great for  
16 the efforts to promote transit oriented  
17 development, which is good from the sort of broad  
18 goals of promoting sustainability on Long Island.

19 What was not in the previous  
20 proposals are several significant parking  
21 structures that will also be constructed in the  
22 downtowns, which I think is great. I want to  
23 echo the point made by Patty Schaefer from the  
24 Rauch Foundation. I want to see the designs of  
25 these stations and parking structures as the best

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1

2 possible.

3

4

5

And my last point, one thing I would criticize is you should seek solar on those parking structures and new train stations.

6

Thank you.

7

(Applause.)

8

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

9

you.

10

Our next speaker is Laura

11

Schultz;

12

Followed by Michael White.

13

MS. SCHULTZ: Hello. I'm

14

Laura Schultz. I am President of Residents for a More Beautiful Syosset.

15

16

The adoption of ride sharing

17

services, such as Uber and Lyft for Nassau and

18

Suffolk Counties could be a game changer. This

19

could ease the parking problems at the Hicksville

20

and Syosset train stations and other local

21

stations.

22

Large parking garages might not

23

have to be constructed at railroad stations. But

24

larger areas for drop-off and pick-up by Uber and

25

Lyft cars might be necessary.

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Residents for a More Beautiful  
Syosset request that you include in the DEIS the  
impact of the adoption of ride sharing services  
for Nassau and Suffolk Counties on this project.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
speaker is Michael White;

Who will be followed by John  
Murphy.

MR. WHITE: Good afternoon.

My name is Michael E. White and  
I'm here on behalf of property owners and  
occupants at 172 and 173 School Street in  
Westbury. These properties are subject to the  
project plans to eliminate the grade crossing at  
School Street.

The property owners and  
occupants generally support the important third  
track infrastructure improvement and recognize  
its potential environmental and economic  
benefits. They also recognize the need for  
elimination of the grade crossing at School  
Street but remain extremely concerned about the

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adverse impacts of the proposed reconfiguration and reconstruction, as presented, to the access, use and overall value of their properties and buildings.

These impacts are not adequately evaluated or even identified in the DEIS. As examples, the property at 172 School Street must reject Alternative 1A, which contemplates eliminating its access to School Street in its entirety and shifting it to Union Avenue. Among other things, this would mean an unacceptable loss of existing level yard surface.

Alternative B, which moves their access from School Street -- from one section of School Street to another, may provide less impact in this regard. But in both alternatives, the use of the present dispatch office building will be eliminated and must be replaced.

As per the 173 School Street, the analysis in the DEIS fails to mitigate or even identify the impact to access to the building once the street and lot change grades are changed.

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For both the 172 and 173 School Street, the DEIS also fails to identify, evaluate and present, any mitigation measures for their significant loss of parking, which will result from this project.

We also note, incomplete traffic studies for certain grade crossing elements. While it may be true that traffic, and certainly safety improvements are realized by the elimination of these grade crossings, the DEIS does not provide a complete evaluation of the changes in grade and property ingress and egress locations to traffic flow, traffic patterns or existing or future traffic control measures.

We had the opportunity to meet with project representatives before the release of the DEIS and have reached out for a follow-up meeting to occur before the end of the comment period, with the goal of addressing and resolving these and other issues.

We will, of course, follow up with submittal of final written comments.

Thank you for listening.

(Applause.)

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2

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next speaker is John Murphy.

4

And Mr. Murphy, if I can take a minute.

6

MR. MURPHY: Certainly.

7

THE HEARING OFFICER: You will be followed by Leslie Levy;

9

Ravi Ramkeesoon;

10

Rosemary Mascali;

11

Rob Salvatico; and,

12

Ernie Fazio.

13

Thank you, Mr. Murphy.

14

MR. MURPHY: Hello. My name is John Murphy. Floral Park resident 35 years and proud union member for 32 years.

17

My concern with this project is if it were to go through, that it's done properly.

20

In November when the DEIS came out, it stated many things that would be addressed, including sound barrier walls. When most people think of sound barrier walls, they think of the ones used along the highways, usually 12 feet tall. These walls have been used

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with great success.

If you read the fine print of the MTA DEIS, Table 12-7, sound attenuation walls on retaining walls in fill sections will most likely be four feet above the top of the rail. This big -- not a very big sound barrier wall.

Standalone attenuating walls will likely be between six and eight feet high. A four-foot sound barrier wall will do very little for the loudest of trains; for example, diesel locomotives with freight cars.

Let's not miss this opportunity to do this properly. If this project is done, we need full-size sound barrier walls.

Thank you and God bless America.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

The next speaker, Leslie Levy.

MS. LEVY: My name is Leslie Levy. I am a Vice President of Residents for a More Beautiful Syosset.

I have a question regarding

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2 Hicksville garage.

3

4 Question one is, I understand  
5 that two garages are to be built. I'm wondering  
6 whether these are the same garages referred to on  
7 page 1323 where it says, potentially construct a  
8 new parking garage near Hicksville Station.

8

9 I'm wondering whether that is  
10 part of the provisions to be made during  
11 construction. My question is, the garages to be  
12 built are built on top of existing parking lots.  
13 Obviously, it takes time to build a garage so how  
14 will those lots -- the people who use those lots,  
15 how will they be accommodated during the  
16 construction?

16

17 Also, will those two garages be  
18 built simultaneously or consecutively. And that  
19 was my question.

19

20 THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay.  
21 We announced at the beginning that under this  
22 forum we're mostly listening. I'm going to close  
23 your time here. We're listening but there are  
24 experts from DOT and Long Island Railroad in the  
25 room upstairs. There is an elevator if you don't  
want to do the stairs. They're there to answer

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2 your questions.

3

MS. LEVY: They told me it was  
4 a good question. So I'm just suggesting you add  
5 it before the final EIS.

6

THE HEARING OFFICER: All  
7 questions are good. Do you have more testimony?

8

MS. LEVY: I would just like to  
9 add one thing just for general comment, that I  
10 don't think that the frequency of service is the  
11 biggest obstacle to having young people, I think  
12 the cost of real estate and the high Long Island  
13 Railroad fares also have to be considered.

14

Thank you.

15

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
16 you.

17

Ravi Ramkeesoon is our next  
18 speaker. And, please if I've mispronounced your  
19 name, please don't be afraid to correct me.

20

MR. RAMKEESOOON: You did a  
21 perfect job.

22

Thank you.

23

Good afternoon.

24

My name is Ravi Ramkeesoon and  
25 I am the Technology Coordinator at the Rauch

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2 Foundation and a long-time researcher for the  
3 Long Island Index.

4 I'd also like to echo the  
5 sentiments shared by Patricia Schaefer of the  
6 Rauch Foundation earlier.

7 But I won't be addressing you  
8 in either one of these capacities today.  
9 Instead, I'd like to address you as an  
10 entrepreneur and the CEO of a tech start up.

11 And looking at it through those  
12 lenses, this project becomes less about trains  
13 and train tracks or environmental studies and  
14 noise reductions, while those are vital concerns,  
15 fundamentally for me, it comes down to the role  
16 that infrastructure plays in linking people with  
17 opportunities and it's about the people.

18 When speaking with other tech  
19 entrepreneurs, we all instinctly understand the  
20 status quo. And that is, if you decide to  
21 headquarter your company on Long Island, you  
22 pretty much have to hire Long Islanders and those  
23 that live here. The problem then becomes, is it  
24 the brightest minds from across the country and  
25 the world, the Harvards, the MITs, the Stanford

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2 grads and other highly motivated, highly educated  
3 young professions who are settling in Manhattan,  
4 Brooklyn and Queens?

5

6 So to attract this talented  
7 workforce, a more updated transit system needs to  
8 be implemented to link these outstanding people  
9 with these potential opportunities.

10

11 So in effect, on some level if  
12 you choose to support the status quo, you're also  
13 saying that there's no room to give opportunities  
14 for the best and brightest young professionals to  
15 work here. And there's also no room for young  
16 entrepreneurs that live here and want to stay  
17 here and compete on a national and global level  
18 but need to attract the necessary talent.

19

20 In the current system, young  
21 professionals and young entrepreneurs on Long  
22 Island have to leave and go to other tech hubs  
23 because of the talent there in order to compete.

24

25 I don't think anybody truly  
wants that future but that's part of what's  
causing the brain drain. With this one project,  
we have the opportunity to reverse that status  
quo and create a different future and help turn

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2       that brain drain into more of a brain gain.

3                       I support this project.

4                       Thank you.

5                       (Applause.)

6                       THE HEARING OFFICER:     Our next  
7       speaker is Rosemary Mascali;

8                       Followed by Rob Salvatico; and,

9                       Then Bernie Fazio.

10                      MS. MASCALI:   Hi.   My name is  
11       Rosemary Mascali.   I'm Manager of Transit  
12       Solutions, a federally funded program of the MTA,  
13       whose mission is to improve Long Island's air  
14       quality by increasing transit ridership.

15                      I also chair the Sustainable  
16       Transportation Committee for the U.S. Green  
17       Building Council's Long Island Chapter and  
18       co-chair the annual Car Free Day Long Island  
19       event.

20                      As Manager of Transit  
21       Solutions, I help build awareness of the  
22       available transit options by conducting  
23       transportation days that many of Nassau County's  
24       major employers and colleges, as well at  
25       companies at the major employment centers in

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2 Suffolk County, including along the Route 110  
3 corridor and the Hauppauge Industrial Park.

4

5 At these transportation days, I  
6 help employees and students find transit  
7 alternatives to get to work and school. In the  
8 study area, I visit North Shore University  
9 Hospital, LIJ Medical Center, the multi-tenant  
10 facility at 1111 Marcus Avenue every month and  
11 Winthrop University Hospital on a quarterly  
12 basis.

12

13 I can tell you from this  
14 experience that the limited service on the main  
15 line is a major inhibitor to both intra-island  
16 and reverse peak Long Island Railroad travel.  
17 The infrequent train service, often exacerbated  
18 by infrequent and uncoordinated bus service,  
19 makes total travel time intolerable for most  
20 commuters.

20

21 This is evidenced by census  
22 data that shows that 70 percent of Nassau County  
23 residents drive alone to work. The impact on the  
24 major employment centers in Suffolk County is  
25 even more severe as there are hour-and-a-half  
blackout periods where there's no train service

1

2 at all during peak travel times, making  
3 intra-island travel from Nassau County, or  
4 reverse commuting from New York City, impossible  
5 for anyone with a regular nine to five job.

6

The economic impact to Long  
7 Island of poor reverse peak transit options is  
8 evident when you look at the economic growth of  
9 White Plains and Stanford, as compared to Long  
10 Island. Both these regions have good track  
11 capacity, providing for a rich source of manpower  
12 from New York City, particularly of millennials  
13 who've we've been speaking a lot today, who  
14 prefer living in New York City but don't favor  
15 owning a car.

16

Beyond the economic benefit,  
17 this project has major environmental benefits as  
18 well. The tri-state area does not meet EPA air  
19 quality standards. Suffolk County is the worst,  
20 by the way, of the tri-state area. And cars are  
21 a major contributor to our poor air quality.

22

This project can significantly  
23 reduce vehicle miles traveled by providing much  
24 needed track capacity, as well as reduce local  
25 pollution from idling cars at those Long Island

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2 Railroad grade crossings. Elimination of the  
3 grade crossing will also have a positive impact  
4 on NYCE bus schedules as traffic is reduced,  
5 particularly the heavily used M25 that goes from  
6 Lynbrook up to Great Neck, by eliminating the New  
7 Hyde Park grade crossing.

8

Long Island needs this project  
9 and I'm encouraged that the current proposal has  
10 positive benefits for all.

11

Our regional economy will  
12 certainly benefit. The elimination of the seven  
13 grade crossings will make our neighborhood safer  
14 and less noisy and the reduced traffic will  
15 improve our air quality and reduce greenhouse gas  
16 emissions.

17

And as I see it, it's a win-win  
18 for all.

19

Thank you.

20

(Applause.)

21

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
22 speaker is Rob Salvatico;

23

Followed by Ernie Fazio.

24

(No response.)

25

THE HEARING OFFICER: Mr.

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1

2 Salvaticao?

3

(No response.)

4

THE HEARING OFFICER: All

5

right.

6

We'll skip then to Mr. Fazio

7

and we'll come back to Mr. Salvatico in a few

8

minutes.

9

MR. FAZIO: Good afternoon.

10

My name is Ernie Fazio and I am

11

the Chairman of the Long Island Metro Business

12

Action.

13

And we -- as part of our

14

mission statement, we are advocates of better

15

infrastructure. I have looked at infrastructure

16

items that have transpired over the last century.

17

The Erie Canal, the Transcontinental Railroad,

18

the Panama Canal, these all changed dramatically

19

the economics of those times, when those things

20

were built. We could not even imagine not having

21

those kind of links in our history and getting to

22

where we are today.

23

Long Island has the opportunity

24

to take what is a real gem in terms of our

25

research centers and our places of employment and

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2 being more efficient. Efficiency means that  
3 somehow all it filters down to our own  
4 pocketbooks, that we'll get more money in our own  
5 pockets.

6 So this seems to be very, very  
7 important on that level alone. But I want to  
8 talk about the environmental part too. I read a  
9 lot about where we get the most amount of air  
10 pollution from automobiles and it is in the  
11 thickest traffic of all. If we can eliminate a  
12 lot of the traffic that we have at the railroad  
13 crossings, that's good for the community. The  
14 people who are going to benefit most by that are  
15 the communities themselves.

16 On the other hand, if we can  
17 induce people to use railroad to go out -- come  
18 from Long Island to go to New York City rather  
19 than drive a car because I can see the traffic on  
20 the Long Island Railroad -- on the Long Island  
21 Expressway every day and it's absurd. I mean,  
22 I'm so glad I'm out of that -- that mix.

23 So all of these benefits are  
24 pretty obvious to most of us and, of course,  
25 whenever you do things you are going to disrupt

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2 and there is going to be inconvenience. That's  
3 what we have to live with for a short period of  
4 time. And from that point on, we're in the plus.  
5 And not only does it put a lot of our good  
6 crafted people to work, it gives the rest of us  
7 who are not crafted people an opportunity to work  
8 even more and improve our own economic situation.

9

So the Long Island Metro  
10 Business Action supports this entirely.

11

(Applause.)

12

THE HEARING OFFICER: All

13

right.

14

Our next four speakers are:

15

Phil Heckler;

16

Jason R;

17

Joseph Flynn; and,

18

Surin Manaktala.

19

And, again, if I've

20

mispronounced any names, please correct me.

21

Mr. Heckler.

22

MR. HECKLER: Hi. Good

23

afternoon.

24

My name is Phil Heckler. I'm on

25

the Hicksville Downtown Revitalization Committee.

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2 I'm a member of the Hicksville Garden Civic  
3 Association and I'm President of the Hicksville  
4 School Board. But I'm here speaking for myself,  
5 not for the School Board.

6 As I said at the public comment  
7 period in Hicksville on May 25th, I support this  
8 long overdue project but only if it addressed  
9 commuter parking and pedestrian safety.

10 I'm very pleased to see that  
11 the Draft EIS includes two new parking  
12 structures.

13 Currently, the main growth  
14 industry in downtown Hicksville is at-grade  
15 parking lots. A businesses close, they're often  
16 replaced by at-grade lots and this significantly  
17 impacts downtown Hicksville -- aesthetics, a  
18 significant portion are just these at-grade  
19 parking lots. And the tax base -- it hurts our  
20 tax base as these parking lots pay less taxes  
21 than a structure, a building would -- a business  
22 would. The tax impact is shifted to our  
23 residential taxpayers.

24 So it appears to me that these  
25 proposed parking structures will go a long way to

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2 solve these problems. However, I would ask that  
3 the designated parking for Town residents in  
4 these parking structures be maximized for Town  
5 residents. This could help mitigate future  
6 traffic congestion by limiting non-Town residents  
7 who might decide to shift which train station  
8 they use from another Town into Hicksville.

9 So we'd ask, again, that --  
10 that the use by residents of these parking  
11 structures be maximized.

12 Thank you.

13 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
14 you.

15 (Applause.)

16 THE HEARING OFFICER: All  
17 right.

18 Our next speaker is Jason R;  
19 Followed by Joseph Flynn.  
20 Surin Manaktala; and,  
21 If Rob Salvatico is returned,  
22 we will hear from him as well.

23 MR. R: Good afternoon.

24 Peak rush-hour service in the  
25 mornings and evenings are at capacity and have

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2       been since the late 1980s. These trains are  
3       standing room only. There's no margin for error  
4       whatsoever or room for improvement on the Long  
5       Island Railroad due to the lack of track  
6       capacity. One small disruption causes dozens of  
7       cancelled and combined trains, and this is a  
8       regular occurrence.

9

                    This is not the case with Metro  
10       North, which in most places has three or even  
11       four tracks and does not suffer from daily  
12       delays, disruptions and cancellations.

13

                    Commuters from the north do not  
14       experience this whatsoever, it's only on Long  
15       Island. This is a terrible quality of life.  
16       Countless hours each week wasted on delayed or  
17       cancelled trains and this is a huge reason young  
18       families are leaving Long Island.

19

                    The Long Island Railroad is  
20       reliably unreliable. This undisputed fact is one  
21       of the single biggest reasons friends of mine  
22       have settled in Westchester and northern suburbs  
23       instead of Long Island.

24

                    Without this project, more  
25       young families, mine included, will be leaving

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2 Long Island for northern suburbs and reliable  
3 train service.

4

Thank you.

5

6 THE HEARING OFFICER: I'm so  
sorry. One minute. I'm assuming you're Mr. R?

7

MR. R: Yes.

8

9 THE HEARING OFFICER: But you  
did not say your name and it's my fault for not  
10 reminding you.

11

MR. R: Jason R.

12

THE HEARING OFFICER: Jason R.

13

MR. R: Yes.

14

15 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
you very much.

16

MR. R: Thank you.

17

(Applause.)

18

19 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
speaker, Joseph Flynn;

20

Followed by Surin Manaktala;

21

and,

22

Rob Salvatico.

23

MR. FLYNN: Good afternoon.

24

My name is Joseph Flynn.

25

I am currently a practicing

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2 real estate agent at Douglas Elliman Manhasset.

3 I've also been working at real estate companies

4 in Manhattan for the past two years now.

5 Currently, I do use the Long

6 Island Railroad on a daily basis. I currently am

7 enrolled at Baruch College, which is why --

8 pardon my appearance because today is my first

9 day back at school and I do have a train to catch  
10 so I have to leave as soon as possible.

11 Back to my points exactly,

12 dealing with the north shore and many

13 neighborhoods on north shore and Nassau County,

14 many people are moving into central Nassau for

15 many different reasons. Many of those reasons

16 include the school districts, different tax

17 brackets and the Long Island Railroad being an

18 easy commute into Manhattan.

19 Now, due to the fact that New

20 Hyde Park, in particular, was the number one most

21 popular, most sought after, most wanted

22 neighborhood in Nassau County for 2016, with

23 Hicksville also being No. 5 in Nassau County,

24 making people want to move into these

25 neighborhoods knowing that they have an easy ride

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2 into Manhattan.

3

4 Now as a current rider of the  
5 Long Island Railroad, from New Hyde Park to Penn  
6 Station, it is completely unreliable and due to  
7 the fact that if the train is now delayed 30  
8 minutes, I then miss a class, which has a lot to  
do with my grades and my future.

9

10 The fact that I have to drive  
11 into Jamaica to take the E train, the J train or  
12 the F train just to make sure that I get to class  
13 on time, totally takes away from me being a  
14 current resident in Nassau County and wanting to  
15 have a career in Manhattan or even a future  
having a job in the City.

16

17 A few things that really I'm  
18 unsure about in terms of the Long Island Railroad  
19 making this project actually possible would be,  
20 the parking situation because as of right now,  
21 New Hyde Park is one of the hardest train  
22 stations to find parking for. So hopefully with  
23 that you are able to increase parking in that  
area.

24

25 Not only that, there is a fare,  
the fare from New Hyde Park to Penn Station on

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2 peak hours is \$23.50. Now for people that are on  
3 a budget or students that have to pay out of  
4 pocket for their education, they can either have  
5 a meal for two at Applebee's or go to Manhattan  
6 for one ride into the City at peak hours.

7

8 Personally there is a discount  
9 for senior citizens and I personally think that  
10 there should be a discount for students who are  
11 commuting from Long Island into Manhattan. This  
12 is why many tuitions and people who have room  
13 board schools in Manhattan and the five boroughs  
14 decide to actually live in the City full time  
15 because they don't want to commute or they can't  
16 afford to pay out of pocket for the commute every  
17 month, which from New Hyde Park is \$242, which  
18 schools do not cover, which is paid out of  
19 pocket.

19

20 Personally, I think it would be  
21 great for real estate values. I've seen that  
22 houses are selling above market value and are  
23 having bidding wars throughout many properties.  
24 I also see that this would be a great move and a  
25 great future for Long Island and I am for the  
project.

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2

Thank you very much.

3

(Applause.)

4

MR. MANAKTALA: My name is

5

Surin Manaktala. I live in Farmingdale.

6

I would like to take railroad

7

more often if they have more service.

8

I would like MTA to encourage

9

people to take public transportation rather than

10

cars and taxis and cabs like Uber and Lyft, et

11

cetera, who I believe have more lobbying power in

12

the States and that's why the number are

13

increasing and ridership of MTA is going down.

14

Also, I want to -- does the

15

railroad understand that if fares -- profits are

16

taken by those modes of transportations. Those

17

modes of transportations are not good for

18

environment and must be regulated. I'm surprised

19

how come there are no rules yet to regulate their

20

numbers as there are thousands and thousands of

21

cabs already running and killing and hurting our

22

environment.

23

Otherwise the train will remain

24

empty and highways and streets will be like

25

parking lots. Those modes of transportations are

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2 in competition with the railroad and should be  
3 considered regulated.

4

Thank you very much.

5

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

6

you.

7

(Applause.)

8

THE HEARING OFFICER: All

9

right.

10

As of this time, we have more

11

speaker on the list, Mr. Rob Salvatico.

12

(No response)

13

THE HEARING OFFICER: All

14

right. If anyone wishes to speak, the

15

registration table is open.

16

MR. CULBERTSON: I just

17

registered.

18

Okay.

19

MR. CULBERTSON: I have my

20

card.

21

THE HEARING OFFICER: Why don't

22

you come on up and state your name and your

23

affiliation.

24

MR. CULBERTSON: Good

25

afternoon. I'm with the Right Track, Long Island

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2 Coalition.

3

THE HEARING OFFICER: Your

4

name?

5

My name is John Culbertson.

6

That's spelled, C-u-l-b-e-r-t-s-o-n.

7

And I'm a -- the president of a

8

company called I Plan Access. We do

9

infrastructure planning and I'm also on the board

10

of directors of Long Island Software and

11

Technology Network.

12

I have a whole bunch of notes

13

here that since I'm last, I don't think there's a

14

subject that hasn't been covered right now. So

15

I'm just going to kind of speak as a business

16

person, a commuter and a parent here on Long

17

Island.

18

Currently, I use the Long

19

Island Railroad. I live in St. James. My

20

business is in Smithtown and I use it a few times

21

a month. It's important when I go there. I

22

don't use the Port Jeff line because it's too

23

antiquated. It takes forever to get in. So I go

24

to Ronkonkoma. And Ronkonkoma hits bottlenecks,

25

as we know.

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1  
2 I always have to leave earlier  
3 than I have to get there because of all the  
4 delays because the business meetings I have in  
5 Manhattan cost me a ton of money if they aren't  
6 made and people don't want to hear if you've been  
7 late if you've been going to an appointment and  
8 there's 15, 20 people waiting for you. So you  
9 have to go earlier. So there's a big problem  
10 with the bottleneck here that we're talking  
11 about.

12 As a parent, a -- my children,  
13 my daughter and her husband lived for a few years  
14 in Hoboken. For the obvious reason, they work in  
15 Manhattan and they wanted to come back here and  
16 they have, they're here now. And they're  
17 commuters, full-time commuters. And my son lives  
18 in Ronkonkoma now. He just moved in, he's  
19 getting married and he's going to be using the  
20 railroad as well.

21 I hope -- what happens is,  
22 their quality of life is totally changed when  
23 they have children they can't get back home after  
24 work. Obviously, it's a real hard thing to get  
25 to work and these massive outings that happen all

1-17-17 LIRR AM

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2 too frequently caused by the lack of another  
3 track is unconscionable that it's not being  
4 fixed.

5 That -- and I'd like to talk  
6 from my business, I do infrastructure planning  
7 and broadband communications. And I kind of  
8 worked with Cablevision, Lightpath, building  
9 these fiber optic networks and the like. I want  
10 you to envision if we had a backbone, which the  
11 railroad is, especially this trunk line right  
12 here and it was very small and didn't have enough  
13 bandwidth, as it's called. And the homeowners  
14 weren't able to get to their banking interests,  
15 their schools or anything because there's a  
16 constant backup and delays and congestion.

17 Obviously, that's uncomfortable  
18 for folks that want to live here. The truth be  
19 told is many of the folks would leave if there  
20 weren't more information systems available.

21 I look at people as bits and  
22 bytes. The trains as packets and the railroad  
23 trunk lines as the backbone of the internet.

24 I think right now if we don't  
25 fix this, we're going to have folks leaving, my

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2 children included, to go to places where -- are  
3 growing, the City's growing. That is where all  
4 the professional jobs are. The children still  
5 want to live on Long Island. They do want  
6 transit-oriented development. They want to stay  
7 around the train stations and they want to live  
8 the life that they had, like you know, in  
9 Hoboken.

10 I am a proponent for this. I'm  
11 a proponent for transit-oriented development. I  
12 support this and just everybody I know supports  
13 that and I just wanted to give my opinion.

14 (Applause.)

15 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
16 you.

17 All right.

18 I'm being signaled that we have  
19 another speaker. So while we're waiting for that  
20 name, I will just remind everyone that if you  
21 haven't signed up to speak, there's plenty of  
22 time to do so. We're going to be here for a  
23 couple of hours. We'll be here again this  
24 evening. So stop by the registration table, give  
25 your name, come up. We want to hear your point

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2 of view.

3

Thank you.

4

And our next speaker is Peter

5

Gaffney.

6

When you come to the

7

microphone, please restate your name and your

8

affiliation, if you're associated with an

9

organization.

10

MR. GAFFNEY: Thank you.

11

My name is Pete Gaffney. I

12

reside in Westbury, Carle Place School District.

13

I am a member of the Carle

14

Place Civic Association but I'm just speaking on

15

my own.

16

I do commend Governor Cuomo and

17

the MTA, Long Island Railroad for having this

18

initial sessions. And I've been involved and

19

asked many, many questions from the initial

20

scoping document on through through the

21

environmental statement.

22

It just seems that the overall

23

scoping process in terms of the hamlet of Carle

24

Place, it's -- it's actually a very big

25

disappointment to me. It just seems that it's

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2       been neglected. I mean, everybody's talking  
3       about the parking and how the increase in terms  
4       of parking. Well, the reality is, is that  
5       currently we have 14 parking spaces that are  
6       direct. It's going to be reduced to five. Plus,  
7       it's also going to impede with the right-of-way  
8       in terms of a parking lot that only has one  
9       access point.

10

                  If there's a fire or a safety  
11       or some concern that way, there's going to be  
12       blockage and people won't be able to get through.  
13       So I think that's a real valid safety concern.

14

                  The other safety concern that I  
15       have is closure on some of our bridge overpasses.  
16       Very little discussion was done on that. Cherry  
17       Lane, if it is closed, how is the fire department  
18       going to respond to any sort of fire or whatever  
19       south of the closure of the bridge? They're  
20       going to have to go up to Ellison Avenue and now  
21       we're talking about adding 15 to 18 minutes of  
22       crisis time that could prevent, you know, a fire  
23       or an emergency situation, an illness and even  
24       possibly a death.

25

                  That's a big concern. That

1-17-17 LIRR AM

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needs to stay open.

The other thing is Glen Cove Road. That area over there is probably the second highest traffic road that's going on besides Old Country Road. Everybody knows that. It's become a parking lot, especially on weekends. You can't close that even on a weekend. It has to be done probably at night time, at nine o'clock and be done by business hours.

There's four-and-a-half million square foot of retail space that's over in that particular area. I'm sure closing Glen Cove Road is going to upset an awful lot of commuters and shoppers and things like that.

The other things is, just on a larger scale, is that if they're looking to reduce some of the traffic, maybe the Long Island Railroad can work Nassau County and the Town of Hempstead to close some of the retail spots that actually go up to -- that cross Cherry Lane. That'll reduce congestion while this construction is going on.

I'm not for it. I'm not

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2       against it. I just want Carle Place to have the  
3       right thing. I mean, closure of the entire  
4       station for upwards of a year is ridiculous.  
5       Okay. And what's going to affect the local  
6       retailers that are in the Carle Place community?  
7       Some of them just live month to month. With that  
8       loss of that economy, I expect a few of the  
9       businesses to go out.

10                       The other thing that I just --  
11       I'll end up creating some summaries and I'll  
12       speak additionally later on.

13                       Thank you.

14                       THE HEARING OFFICER:    Thank  
15       you.

16                       Do we have any other speakers  
17       at this time?

18                       (No response.)

19                       THE HEARING OFFICER:    I'll call  
20       again, the name Rob Salvatico?

21                       (No response.)

22                       THE HEARING OFFICER:    Mr.  
23       Salvatico, if you're here, this is your  
24       opportunity.

25                       (No response.)

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2

THE HEARING OFFICER: All

3

right.

4

Then ladies and gentlemen,

5

thank you.

6

We're going to take a brief

7

break but our registration table remains open and

8

if you have decided that you wish to speak,

9

please sign up and we'll be happy to hear your

10

comments.

11

Thank you.

12

(At 12:48 p.m., the hearing was

13

temporarily recessed.)

14

(At 1:33 p.m., the hearing

15

resumed.)

16

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay.

17

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a couple of other

18

speakers who've signed up.

19

Once again, I'm going to remind

20

the speakers, when I call you to the microphone,

21

please state your name and your affiliation if

22

you are affiliated with an organization and then

23

you will have three minutes to speak.

24

Our next speaker is:

25

Andrew Sparberg.

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2

Mr. Sparberg.

3

MR. SPARBERG: Good afternoon,

4

ladies and gentlemen.

5

My name is Andrew Sparberg.

6

I'm a retired Long Island Railroad manager and a

7

long-time Nassau County resident, total of 58

8

years, by the way.

9

And I want to give you my

10

honest, professional opinion why the main line,

11

third track is essential to our future here in

12

Nassau County.

13

When I was at the Long Island

14

Railroad for the last dozen years of my

15

employment, I was a manager in charge of

16

documenting and summarizing all train delays and

17

train performance. The biggest daily challenge

18

of the Long Island Railroad is that its intense

19

rush hour schedule is coupled with a very

20

constrained operating environment and there are

21

many locations where even a minor train delay can

22

cause ripple effects up and down the line.

23

Penn Station and Jamaica may

24

come to mind right away but the main line between

25

Floral Park and Hicksville is equally congested

1-17-17 LIRR AM

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2 and it's certainly a bad chokepoint.

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

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13

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19

20

21

22

23

24

25

Chapter 10 of the EIS did an excellent job documenting the daily challenges of operating the intense train traffic through this area. It noted that both tracks are required for the predominant rush hour mode for about 90 minutes during each rush hour in the morning and in the evening.

When one of the tracks can't be used because of a train or infrastructure problem, the delays magnify quickly because two tracks worth of train service must be restricted to the remaining single track.

The third track will provide a needed relief valve to mitigate all the impacts. The third track will also unclog this essential train traffic corridor and allow the Railroad to finally have true reverse peak service on the main line between Mineola and -- sorry, between Floral Park and between Hicksville.

And along that corridor are important employment centers, such as Mineola and Hicksville where workers coming from the west via public transportation today are generally

1-17-17 LIRR AM

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restricted just to the very slow bus service coming out of Queens.

Even more important than the train service improvement with a third track is the elimination of the seven grade crossings in the project area.

I thought it was quite noteworthy that the three crossings in the immediate vicinity of New Hyde Park Station; Covert Avenue, South 12th Street and New Hyde Park Road accounted for 54 of the 66 train vehicle collisions and three of the five fatal collisions during the three-year period documented on that page.

For these reason alone, the project should be proceed full speed ahead. These grade crossings -- the elimination of these grade crossings is a community benefit that a lot of people really don't realize. Removing the conflicts between trains and motor vehicles, reduce these accidents to zero and greatly enhance travel safety for motorists, pedestrians and railroad customers.

An argument that the opponents

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2 are giving is that the project will interfere  
3 with the free movement of emergency vehicles  
4 between either side of the tracks. That is a  
5 phony argument. Right now the frequent grade  
6 crossing blockages impede the movement of  
7 emergency vehicles in those situations.

8 Eliminating the seven grade crossings mean that  
9 -- will mean that emergency vehicles will never  
10 have to wait for a train to pass, enhancing  
11 public safety in the impacted communities.

12 In March 1982, a month prior to  
13 the commencement of my own Long Island Railroad  
14 career, a terrible accident occurred at the  
15 Herricks Road grade crossing between the Maryland  
16 Avenue and Mineola Stations that killed nine  
17 young adults. During my time at the Long Island  
18 Railroad, this crossing was finally grade  
19 separated and provisions were included in that  
20 project for adding a third track in that vicinity  
21 without any additional future property takings.  
22 And that was in the late 1990s.

23 So hasn't enough time passed?  
24 It's time to finish this job.

25 One final point is that the

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2 Long Island's Peer commuter railroads in this  
3 region, Metro North and New Jersey Transit have  
4 many three and four track main line rights-of-way  
5 on their busiest routes that are also completely  
6 grade separated.

7

Along these routes are  
8 communities such as Stanford, White Plains and  
9 New Brunswick that have the advantages of high  
10 quality peak direction and reverse peak rail  
11 service and that's why they are both bedroom  
12 communities and suburban employment centers,  
13 generating significant tax revenues for those  
14 communities.

15

Building the Long Island  
16 Railroad third track on the main line and  
17 eliminating the grade crossings will give Nassau  
18 County its own high tech corridor.

19

So thank you and let's hope  
20 this project gets finished.

21

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
22 you.

23

We have another speaker.

24

John Viscusi.

25

Is Mr. Viscusi in the room?

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2

(No response.)

3

THE HEARING OFFICER: All

4

right.

5

We'll take a brief break. I

6

understand that he may have gone up to view some

7

of the displays in the upstairs room.

8

We'll take another brief break

9

until then.

10

(Brief recess.)

11

THE HEARING OFFICER: Hello.

12

Do I have the honor of Mr. John Viscusi's

13

presence?

14

MR. VISCUSI: That's me.

15

THE HEARING OFFICER: All

16

right.

17

Well, thank you.

18

You are our next speaker. I'll

19

remind you, just say your name and affiliation,

20

if any, at the start of your testimony.

21

MR. VISCUSI: Okay. John

22

Viscusi, Carle Place Civic Association, 89 Broad

23

Mill Lane, Westbury, New York.

24

My public comment mostly

25

concerns with the retaining wall along the north

1-17-17 LIRR AM

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2

side of the railroad tracks between the

3

Meadowbrook Parkway and Cherry Lane and the Carle

4

Place Railroad Station and on the south side, a

5

portion of it, which is also known as Atlantic

6

Avenue.

7

The question/issue is retaining

8

wall with the sound barrier. I'm looking to get,

9

if it's at all possible, vegetation planted that

10

can replace the existing trees that are there now

11

on both sides.

12

Also, moving eastward towards

13

the train station, I understand -- I just found

14

out that they're replacing the entire Cherry Lane

15

Bridge, which we're obviously going to need to

16

figure that out as far as logistics with

17

commuters, school children and stuff like that,

18

school buses, how that's going to work in.

19

Also, looking to add possibly a

20

decorative wall on the south side of the train

21

station between Cherry Lane and the Carle Place,

22

Charles Fuschillo Park. There are about a dozen

23

residents that are on the south side of the

24

platform that the train station existing as it is

25

now looks into their backyards. And we're looking

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2 for some sort of vegetation or a decorative wall  
3 to possibly shield the station lights, stuff like  
4 that that has been there, is ongoing there for  
5 the last several years.

6

We're looking to get the  
7 railroad, the Long Island Railroad to replace the  
8 existing kiosk, the ticket kiosk so that it can  
9 be more beneficial to add 24 hour -- I apologize,  
10 monthly tickets and all sorts of other kinds of  
11 tickets, maybe a Metro card purchases also that  
12 can be easily purchased by the commuters of Carle  
13 Place instead of them going to Mineola or to  
14 Hicksville to buy their monthly ticket, they can  
15 actually buy it at the Carle Place Train Station.

16

I understand now there's  
17 going to be access on the north side of the train  
18 station from Carle Road, which is definitely a  
19 plus to match the access on the south side for  
20 some of the residents who are on the western part  
21 of the incorporated village of Westbury from  
22 Ellison Avenue back towards Carle Road.

23

And that's basically it. We're  
24 just looking to have the areas in question with  
25 vegetation to kind of maybe address the issue of

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2 having a wall in front of the people on the north  
3 side of Atlantic Avenue.

4

I think that's it.

5

6 I'm fully aware of all the  
7 modernization of the station, the amenities that  
8 are going to be there, that some of -- I'll have  
9 to say most of the ridership will be very pleased  
to hear about if the project does go through.

10

And, also, some of the  
11 residents -- commuters are also looking for  
12 enhancement in the train scheduling. So I  
13 understand that that'll be probably further --  
14 once the train, the track is added and the -- the  
15 service has been restored, that the scheduling  
16 will be enhanced so it can offer more trains to  
17 Carle Place residents during the day time hours  
18 and evening hours.

19

That is my public comment.

20

Thank you for your time.

21

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
22 you.

23

Is there anyone in this room --  
24 we don't have many people with us right now, if  
25 you were thinking about testifying, please feel

1-17-17 LIRR AM

1

2 free. The registration table is open. Sign up.

3

4 There are also other ways to  
5 comment. You can comment until February 15th on  
6 our website, [www.amodernli.com](http://www.amodernli.com). Or you can stop  
by our project office at the Mineola Station.

7

8 Once again, we're going to  
9 break for a brief recess until we have more  
speakers.

10

Thank you.

11

12 (At 1:40 p.m., the hearing was  
temporarily recessed.)

13

14 (At 1:59 p.m., the hearing was  
resumed.)

15

16 THE HEARING OFFICER: Ladies  
17 and gentlemen, we have no further speakers at  
this time. We will be closing this hearing.

18

19 We will be back again this  
evening at six o'clock for a second hearing at  
20 this same location.

21

Thank you for joining us.

22

23 (At 2:00 p.m., the proceedings  
were concluded.)

24

25

1-17-17 LIRR AM

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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 102, 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 30th day of January,  
2017.



-----  
MARC RUSSO

# MGR Reporting

## < Dates >

February 15th

16:21,

101:4

February

15th, 2017

8:7

January 17,

2017 1:12

January, 2017

102:14

March 1982

95:12

May 25th 74:7

November

28th, 2016

7:12

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1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 Yes We Can Community Center

9 141 Garden Street

10 Westbury, New York

11  
12 January 17, 2017

13 6:35 p.m. - 6:36 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 RON ENICLERICO

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
23  
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25

1                   MR. ENICLERICO: I just want  
2                   to say as a commuter of more than ten  
3                   years, I strongly support the project.

4                   I strongly support the  
5                   project, the Long Island Railroad -- I'm  
6                   sorry, Long Island infrastructure --  
7                   infrastructure in Long Island, and the  
8                   Long Island Railroad in particular, are in  
9                   need of an overhaul and this plan is  
10                  exactly the kind of first step that's  
11                  necessary to address the over congestion  
12                  of the island.

13                 Thank you.

## C E R T I F I C A T E

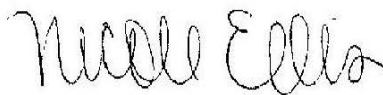
STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  : ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

I, NICOLE ELLIS, a Notary Public for and  
within the State of New York, do hereby certify:

I reported the proceedings in the  
within-entitled matter, and that the within  
transcript is a true record of such proceedings.

I further certify that I am not related to  
any of the parties to this action by blood or by  
marriage and that I am in no way interested in the  
outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
hand this 17th day of January 2017.



---

NICOLE ELLIS

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 Yes We Can Community Center

9 141 Garden Street

10 Westbury, New York

11  
12 January 17, 2017

13 6:14 p.m. - 6:16 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 RONALD NOTTARANTONIO

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1                   MR. NOTTARANTONIO: My name  
2                   is Ronald Nottarantonio.

3                   I'd like to make a statement  
4                   about the eminent domain situation on  
5                   Urban Avenue, stating that I'd like to  
6                   have some input in regards to a piece of  
7                   property that I own that is spoken as  
8                   possibly being Eminent Domained -- how  
9                   would you put that? -- I'd like to help  
10                  fashion the deal between DOT and the Rail  
11                  Road so that it works well for all of us.

12                  I'm for the proposal, but I  
13                  would like to make it as minimally  
14                  intrusive so that it doesn't have a big  
15                  impact on my business. I have a cement  
16                  company that needs property, but I'm  
17                  willing to work with the Rail Road and the  
18                  DOT so as to -- my company is Commercial  
19                  Concrete in Westbury on Rushmore Street,  
20                  which is the property that -- my property  
21                  is between Rushmore and Urban.

22                  I have a right-of-way from  
23                  both streets that I would consider using  
24                  to fashion a deal as an option for making  
25                  it easier for other properties on Urban

1 Avenue, if it helps.

2 That's it. Thank you very  
3 much.

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## C E R T I F I C A T E

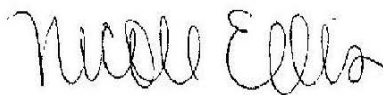
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marriage and that I am in no way interested in the  
outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
hand this 17th day of January 2017.



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NICOLE ELLIS

1-17-17 LIRR PM

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NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MTA/LONG ISLAND RAILROAD

-----x

LONG ISLAND RAILROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

-----x

Yes We Can Community Center

141 Garden Street

Westbury, New York

January 17, 2017

6:28 P.M.

B E F O R E :

SUSAN MC GOWAN,

THE HEARING OFFICER

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

Elisa Picca  
Executive Vice President of the  
Long Island Railroad ..... 5

Susan McGowan  
Long Island Railroad General Manager  
Public Affairs ..... 10

Ed Dumas  
Vice President Market Development, LIRR

Joseph Zacharia  
Project Manager New York State Department  
of Transportation

ALSO PRESENT:

Other Project Participants  
The Public  
The Press  
The Media

Marc Russo,  
Stenographer

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**P R O C E E D I N G S**

3

MS. PICCA: Good evening.

4

If you'd take your seats, we're

5

ready to begin our program this evening.

6

Good evening and thank you for

7

attending today's public meeting for the Long

8

Island Railroad Expansion Project.

9

My name is Elisa Picca. I'm the

10

Executive Vice President of the Long Island

11

Railroad.

12

In just a moment we'll be going

13

through our program for today.

14

But first, I'd like you to

15

invite you to stand and say the Pledge of

16

Allegiance.

17

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

18

MS. PICCA: Thank you very much.

19

And thank you for taking the time from your busy

20

schedules to be here this evening. Your input and

21

feedback to this project are crucial and they are

22

greatly appreciated.

23

This public meeting is part of a

24

robust community outreach process for the Long

25

Island Railroad Expansion Project that began last

1-17-17 LIRR PM

1

2 year and it will continue throughout the project  
3 duration.

4 In a moment, we're going to show  
5 you a video about the proposed project. After  
6 that, we will take comments from those who have  
7 registered to speak. For those of you who would  
8 like to speak and have not yet registered, we  
9 encourage you to do so. There's still plenty of  
10 time and you can sign up at the table in the  
11 lobby.

12 The purpose of this meeting is  
13 to discuss the Long Island Railroad Expansion  
14 Project and, in particular, the Draft  
15 Environmental Impact Statement, or Draft EIS, that  
16 was released on November 28th, 2016.

17 The environmental process began  
18 last spring with the release of a Draft Scoping  
19 Document and continued through the summer with the  
20 release of the Final Scoping Document.

21 Since that time, we have  
22 performed extensive environmental analyses, which  
23 are presented in the Draft EIS. The report is  
24 available on our project website,  
25 [www.amodernli.com](http://www.amodernli.com).

1-17-17 LIRR PM

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It's also available at local village halls and libraries along the project corridor and at our Project Information Center at the Mineola train station.

In response to public requests for more time to comment on the Draft EIS, Governor Cuomo has extended the comment period until February 15th, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

The Draft EIS comment period for this project was already longer than those for much larger projects, such as the Second Avenue Subway and the new Tappan Zee Bridge. Now because of your input, there's even more time to comment.

When Governor Cuomo first announced this project, he made it clear that it would be completely different from prior proposals. Unlike prior proposals, the third track would be built entirely within the Long Island Railroad right-of-way.

Since the Governor's announcement over one year ago, we have implemented an unprecedented public outreach program. Thanks to your input, we have made commitments:

1-17-17 LIRR PM

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2

To take no residential

3

properties;

4

To modify all seven grade

5

crossings in the project area;

6

To add sound attenuation walls;

7

To improve passenger rail

8

stations with enhancements such as full-length

9

platforms;

10

To add more than 2,000

11

additional parking spaces; and,

12

To use innovative methods to

13

speed construction and minimize its impacts.

14

All of these project elements

15

are examples of our commitment to community

16

outreach. Your input is important to us and it is

17

important to the process.

18

Your comments will be entered

19

into the public record and reviewed accordingly.

20

While we are here at a formal public hearing,

21

there are many other outreach efforts and

22

opportunities to comment.

23

Our project team has held

24

hundreds of meetings with local officials,

25

business leaders and residents and many of the

1-17-17 LIRR PM

1

2 members of our team are here today to listen to  
3 your comments.

4

5 We've maintained our Project  
6 Information office at the Mineola station on the  
7 south side platform. The hours are posted on our  
8 website. We encourage everybody to visit, discuss  
9 the project and submit comments.

10 You also can provide comments on  
11 the project website or by e-mail to:

12 info@amodernli.com.

13 Finally, we have visited all  
14 residential properties that share a property line  
15 with the Long Island Railroad multiple times, and  
16 as recently as last week, to remind residents  
17 about these public hearings.

18 Now I'd like to turn your  
19 attention to a short video that will discuss the  
20 project need and highlight its benefits, which  
21 include improved service reliability, safety and  
22 quality of life. The project would add much  
23 needed capacity to the main line and eliminate all  
24 street level grade crossings within the project  
25 area.

26 Incorporating extensive input

1-17-17 LIRR PM

1

2 from local communities, the project team is  
3 exploring neighbor-friendly and innovative  
4 construction methods and practices to keep the  
5 impact of construction as minimal as possible.

6 (Video presentation.)

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. PICCA: Thank you.

9 Now I'd like to introduce our  
10 representatives from the Long Island Railroad and  
11 New York State Department of Transportation, as  
12 well as our Hearing Officer.

13 To my far right, we have Mr. Ed  
14 Dumas, who is the Vice President of Market  
15 Development and Public Affairs at the Long Island  
16 Railroad.

17 Seated next to Donna is Mr.  
18 Joseph Zacharia, Project Manager at the New York  
19 State Department of Transportation; and,

20 To my immediate right is Ms.  
21 Susan McGowan, Long Island Railroad General  
22 Manager of Public Affairs.

23 Susan will serve as our Hearing  
24 Officer today and I will turn the meeting over to  
25 her at this time.

1-17-17 LIRR PM

1

2

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

3

you, Elisa.

4

Welcome, everybody.

5

And thank you for joining us

6

tonight.

7

Before we begin, we have a few

8

procedural items so I hope you'll bear with me.

9

This public meeting is an

10

opportunity to hear from you regarding the

11

project's environmental review process, in

12

particular, the Draft Environmental Impact

13

Statement, or Draft EIS.

14

The Draft EIS includes a wide

15

range of technical analyses on topics such as:

16

Air quality;

17

Noise;

18

Land Use;

19

Socioeconomics;

20

Traffic;

21

Parking; and much more.

22

It also reviews any potential

23

property impacts from the proposed project,

24

including easements and commercial property

25

acquisitions.

1-17-17 LIRR PM

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Today's proceedings serve as the public hearing in accordance with the New York State Eminent Domain Procedures Law, or EDPL.

As Vice President Picca noted earlier, no permanent takings of residential property will be needed for this project.

Building station platform areas, retaining walls and LIRR infrastructure along the entire 9.8 mile project corridor would require no full property takings of any type. It would require four partial acquisitions of non-residential properties, which would not affect any structure.

It would also require three permanent or temporary easements of non-residential properties and one temporary easement at a multi-family cooperative residential property.

Multiple options at the seven grade crossing locations were also evaluated. For these grade crossing options, we have identified full acquisitions of up to four commercial properties for which the State will work with the owners to provide relocation assistance within

1

2 their communities.

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In addition, partial acquisitions affecting eight non-residential properties could be needed but in all situations this will not affect the continued operation of the businesses.

Finally, the grade crossing work may need some permanent rights to access some parcels of commercial property during and after construction and some temporary rights to access other parcels of property during and after construction in connection with the construction or maintenance needs after construction. None of these rights of access will permanently impact the operation of the businesses affected.

For complete details about the grade crossing options, please refer to the DEIS or visit the DOT table in the open house area upstairs this evening.

Again, no permanent takings of residential property will be needed for this project.

Those who may be impacted by property acquisitions have already been contacted

1

2 by the State. Pursuant to the EDPL, the project  
3 team has studied the proposed project and is able  
4 to determine the relocation requirements for each  
5 grade crossing option and determined which plan  
6 would be preferable.

7

This information will be  
8 considered along with other relevant factors when  
9 selecting the project's final design.

10

New York State DOT and Empire  
11 State Development will provide extensive support  
12 for the four commercial properties that may be  
13 fully acquired with day-to-day relocation  
14 assistance as necessary, including:

15

Help in finding suitable  
16 replacement sites;

17

Reestablishment expenses; and,

18

A variety of moving expenses

19

options.

20

The State has studied the local  
21 real estate market and has concluded that there  
22 will be a sufficient number of replacement  
23 properties to satisfy the needs of any displaced  
24 commercial occupant, irrespective of the design  
25 option selected. Property acquisition would not

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commence until the final design option has been approved.

Each affected property owner will be contacted by a real estate specialist who will explain the proposed construction and the acquisition process. Any potentially impacted property owners present may visit the DOT table in the open house here this evening up until the end of this hearing for further details about the project or to ask any questions they may have.

Now in order to give public comment, we asked that, if you haven't done so already, that you sign up outside at the registration table.

We're also asking that everyone limit their comments to three minutes, and that's intended to give everyone a chance to speak.

Again, this meeting is not the only opportunity that you'll have to comment on this project. You can continue to provide comments through February 15th at the project office at the Mineola station, by mail or online at: [www.amodernli.com](http://www.amodernli.com).

We have representatives and

1-17-17 LIRR PM

1

2 experts here from the Long Island Railroad and the  
3 New York State Department of Transportation, who  
4 available to consult with you on the project and  
5 they are in the open house room upstairs.

6

If you prefer to give comments  
7 privately, because we know that not everybody  
8 likes speaking in front of a crowd, you can sign  
9 up at the front desk and give your comments to a  
10 private stenographer, who will make sure that your  
11 comments become part of the permanent record.

12

Now, because this is a formal  
13 hearing and because we are entering your comments  
14 into the public record, we will not be responding  
15 to your comments or answering questions from the  
16 stage. However, we do have staff here in the  
17 building who will do their best to answer your  
18 questions and concerns and they're, again, in the  
19 open house room.

20

Now if you have any special  
21 needs, please find a staff member and we'll do our  
22 best to address those needs.

23

And one final thing, if you  
24 haven't already done so, we ask that you please  
25 turn your cell phones to silent.

1-17-17 LIRR PM

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And I'm going to be calling the names of the first five speakers. When I call those names, we ask that those speakers come and sit in the front row. So when I call your name to speak, you'll hear the microphone.

There are two microphones, one on the left and on the right. And after I call the first five speakers, I'll call the name of the next speaker. When you come up to speak, please give your name and your affiliation and if you're associated with any organization. And then you'll have three minutes to speak.

There is a timer, it's a countdown clock. It will show as green until you have 30 seconds. Then it will turn yellow. And finally when the three minutes are up, it will turn red. So if you're not sure, I'll give you a very gentle reminder.

So the first five speakers are:

Peter Cavallaro;

Beaumont Jefferson;

George Ginsberg;

Dennis Feeney; and,

Bill Longnecker.

1-17-17 LIRR PM

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And if I've mispronounced any names, please let me know.

Our first speaker is the Honorable Peter Cavallaro, Mayor of Westbury.

MR. CAVALLARO: Good evening.

I am Peter Cavallaro, the Mayor of the Village of Westbury. I'm also here with Trustee Beaumont Jefferson and Deputy Mayor Joan Boes from the Village.

I want to thank the Long Island Railroad and the MTA for holding this hearing.

I know it's required by law but I want to thank you for making it convenient for those residents from my part of the community to be here.

I also want to thank members of the staff of the Long Island Railroad, the MTA, the Department of Transportation and all the other people who have worked on this project thus far. We found everybody to be very cooperative and open and we appreciate that so we can relay all the information back to our residents and express their concerns, you know, in a very convenient manner.

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1

2

And I also want to thank

3

Governor Cuomo for the extension of time. A lot

4

of the other municipal officials made that request

5

because they felt that they needed more time to

6

review the DEIS. It's a very complex document and

7

so I want to thank the Governor for that

8

additional time.

9

The Village of Westbury, we're

10

in the process of finishing our review of the

11

DEIS. We have staff and other professionals who

12

are reviewing it. And we are, in general, pleased

13

that many of the comments that we had made during

14

the scoping document -- we had submitted an

15

extensive letter in response to the scoping

16

document and many of those issues have been

17

addressed in the DEIS.

18

And so we've been very, or

19

generally supportive of the project from when it

20

was announced. We have concerns that we continue

21

to have that we've expressed and we've had many

22

opportunities to do that. But we are pleased that

23

the DEIS has taken great lengths to really address

24

many of those concerns.

25

We're particularly happy that

1

2 some of the mitigation efforts were measures that  
3 we had suggested are incorporated, as you noted,  
4 including the elimination of the grade crossing at  
5 School Street but also, the providing of  
6 additional parking resources at the Westbury train  
7 station, which are sorely needed, especially if  
8 service -- train service is going to increase in  
9 the future as projected.

10

We will be submitting a formal  
11 comment letter to -- to the DEIS and it will  
12 outline some of the continuing concerns we have,  
13 continuing areas of review that we think an  
14 analysis needs to be done.

15

I'm just going to tick off a  
16 couple of things that will be included in that  
17 comment letter in more detail. But we do believe  
18 that there needs to be more traffic analysis as it  
19 relates to Post Avenue as the construction is  
20 taking place because the DEIS was a little bit  
21 thin on some of that evaluation.

22

Also, very important to the  
23 residents who own properties adjacent, we think  
24 the DEIS needs to include a property valuation  
25 assessment as to how the project will affect their

1

2 property values and what mitigation may be  
3 appropriate.

4

5 And we also believe, even though  
6 it's not in the Village, that more analysis needs  
7 to be done with respect to the Carle Place train  
8 station and how that's going to be handled going  
9 forward, if at all, through this process.

10

11 So I want to thank the Governor  
12 again and the staff and the MTA and the Long  
13 Island Railroad.

14

15 We think the process has been  
16 very open and we appreciate that.

17

18 I also want to particularly  
19 recognize Lisa Black and John McCarthy, as well as  
20 Marion Ella from the Governor's staff, who have  
21 really been very interactive with us and we  
22 appreciate that, having them really at our  
23 disposal any time we have questions, they've been  
24 very responsive.

25

26 So we continue to remain  
27 supportive of the project as long as those  
28 concerns that have been raised by us and the other  
29 concerned parties and stakeholders are addressed.  
30 But we think the DEIS has thus far done a very

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2 good job and a good faith job in doing that and we  
3 look forward to working with the Railroad and the  
4 other staff members as we go forward.

5 Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. Our  
8 next speaker is the Honorable Beaumont Jefferson,  
9 Westbury Village Trustee.

10 MR. JEFFERSON: Hi, good  
11 evening.

12 And thank you for giving me the  
13 opportunity to speak tonight.

14 Thank you for the hearings that  
15 are scheduled. I think it's a great opportunity  
16 to get the feedback on the DEIS.

17 As the Mayor said, the Village  
18 of Westbury is generally in support. I'm in  
19 support of this project also.

20 There's some things that also  
21 gives us some concern and we look forward to  
22 continuing that conversation and also having you  
23 take a look at some of our neighbors and their  
24 concerns, which are much different than some of  
25 the concerns in Westbury.

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I think it's a project that will cause some inconvenience, some interruptions in services, obviously folks who live close to the Railroad, you know, they would have greater concerns and it's going to be a big change for some people but I think that that all is on the scale of things, small, considering what we will gain.

And some of the pros I feel it will have is better service, investment in the infrastructure for the future, which I think would be fantastic if we have new stations, better service.

Also, as we continue to grow Long Island we need more capacity. I think that's fantastic.

The safety, the elimination of the grade crossings. I think that from a safety perspective and a noise perspective would be fantastic.

And jobs. If we're talking -- I'm in support of it because I think that one, all the pros that I mentioned are great but also, it gives us an opportunity to create jobs, to also --

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2 we don't know when we'll have an opportunity to  
3 actually have this type of investment in our  
4 community again.

5 The upgraded tracks and it also  
6 allows Long Island, as I mentioned before, to  
7 continue to grow. But one of the things that I  
8 also saw that I think is great, if you have more  
9 capacity -- obviously we live on an island. We've  
10 had in the last couple of -- probably -- in 2012  
11 we had Hurricane Sandy. We don't know what the  
12 future brings. With the increased capacity, if  
13 we're able to get more people off the Island as  
14 quickly as possible, that would be fantastic.

15 And the -- the impact is my only  
16 concern. Again, this is fantastic that we have  
17 the opportunity to speak. I wanted to just come  
18 and tell you my support but to also tell you that  
19 we'll continue to monitor the project and work  
20 with you and, also, we're concerned about, you  
21 know, the negative impact but I think the negative  
22 impact is -- is really insignificant when you  
23 consider the positives and what this will do for  
24 us in the future.

25 So thank you for this

1-17-17 LIRR PM

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2 opportunity.

3

Thanks.

4

(Applause.)

5

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next

6

speaker, George Ginsburg.

7

MR. GINSBURG: George Ginsburg,

8

no affiliation.

9

With five whole branches of the

10

Long Island Railroad funneling into one main line

11

corridor between Floral Park and Hicksville, I

12

know it makes sense to open up that one main line

13

corridor from two tracks to three tracks.

14

Even with staggered schedules

15

amongst the branches, the high frequency of trains

16

running during rush hour, the third track could

17

allow more trains to run in parallel to get

18

through the main line corridor.

19

Naturally this would save time

20

compared to the current situation where often your

21

train is crawling while waiting for another train

22

to go ahead of your train.

23

The third track project will

24

eliminate seven grade crossings. This is huge

25

because it will eliminate all the respective train

1

2 horn blasts and excessive amount of traffic that  
3 is backed up at those many grade crossings.

4

5 The grade crossings at those  
6 stops are down collectively for one-third of an  
7 hour to accommodate all the trains jockeying for  
8 the limited track availability -- that's during  
9 rush hour.

9

10 Plus, the third track will add  
11 to safety by lifting or lowering the tracks away  
12 from pedestrians and motorists. But besides  
13 making the trains run more smoothly and timely, a  
14 third rail also introduces the option of reverse  
15 commuting. For example, currently during rush  
16 hour in the morning, both tracks are mostly used  
17 for westbound train traffic to get commuters to  
18 work in the City. In the evening, the opposite.  
19 Both tracks are used for train traffic going east.  
20 But with a third track we can also transport  
21 workers eastbound during the morning rush hour to  
22 get them to work on Long Island.

22

23 This will allow Long Island  
24 business and public institutions to tap into a  
25 much larger talent pool that also includes people  
that reside in Brooklyn and Queens. And

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2 conceivably that talent could also come from the  
3 further boroughs as well if they wish to first  
4 take a subway to Brooklyn or Queens.

5

6 I am wondering, however, how the  
7 reverse commuters will go that last mile to get  
8 from their train station on Long Island to their  
9 place of business on Long Island? For areas east  
10 of -- I'm sorry, areas further east on Long  
11 Island, business is spread out farther from the  
12 train stations. It might be costly taking taxi or  
13 Uber rides every day to and fro between the  
14 station and work.

15

16 I believe there are plans for  
17 increased north-south bus routes from some  
18 stations, for example, near Melville, Farmingdale  
19 area. But I personally also envision a more  
20 futuristic solution. After all, it will take a  
21 few years to build a third track so by then how  
22 far away are we really from autonomous electric  
23 vehicles.

24

25 I can imagine some millennials  
26 sitting on a train going from Brooklyn to  
27 Farmingdale using his SmartPhone to schedule an EV  
28 to pick him up at the train station to travel that

1

2 last mile to the office. Shortly after the EV  
3 drops him off at work, the EV receives a request  
4 for another ride from another person. The EV then  
5 heads on his merry way to pick up that person and  
6 take her to the market or wherever.

7 Of course there would be super  
8 charger stations around Long Island for the  
9 autonomous EV to charge up during the day by  
10 docking itself into the charging platform.

11 In any case, in a few years when  
12 the third track project is complete, Long Island  
13 businesses getting into the transportation as a  
14 service industry may help out with that last mile  
15 challenge. If not, buses, taxis and the Ubers and  
16 Lyfts of the world will step up to meet the  
17 demand.

18 Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 THE HEARING OFFICER: All  
21 right.

22 Our next speaker is Dennis  
23 Feeney;

24 Followed by Bill Longnecker.

25 MR. FEENEY: Dennis Feeney,

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2 Laborers Local 1298.

3 Good evening.

4 My name is Dennis Feeney. I'm a  
5 life-long resident of Nassau County and a proud  
6 member of Laborers Union Local 1298 for nearly 30  
7 years.

8 Before beginning my comments,  
9 I'd like to thank Governor Andrew Cuomo, the MTA  
10 and the Long Island Railroad for proposing the  
11 third track project. It will bring Long Island a  
12 long awaited and much needed update and expansion  
13 of our roads and rail system.

14 Large scale infrastructure  
15 projects such as this one, have long been proven  
16 to be some of our region's best economic engines.  
17 A project of this magnitude would bring immediate  
18 benefits to those of us in the construction  
19 industry, providing hundreds of well paying jobs  
20 for several years.

21 In addition to construction  
22 jobs, businesses that supply materials, such as  
23 equipment, tools, hardware, fuel, gas and repair  
24 services will also benefit, thus providing an  
25 opportunity of employment for even more people.

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However, this project is not just about providing construction jobs or a way to bolster the bottom line of the aforementioned types of small businesses. It is mainly about improving safety at our grade crossings, replacing antiquated bridges and station platforms, as well as easing congestion on our roads and trains.

Downtown areas along the third track corridor will be revitalized as a result of this project by improving access to them. Business can and should take advantage of this new found abundance of available and accessible real estate.

With well thought out planning, these areas will thrive and become major centers of employment for many years to come.

The Draft Environmental Impact Study that was recently released is thoroughly detailed and exemplifies both the MTA and Long Island Railroad's commitment to being transparent throughout this entire approval process.

I encourage everyone, if they haven't already done so, to read it and see for themselves on how this project will improve the

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2 quality of life here in Nassau County.

3

4 In closing, I'd like to say that  
5 the investment we make now and bearing with the  
6 minor inconveniences of construction, such as a  
7 re-routing of your usual traffic pattern or  
8 additional noise and dust, will all pale in  
9 comparison to the dividends we'll receive when  
10 this project is completed.

11

12 The time has come for this  
13 political football to stop being kicked up. The  
14 time has come to expand and update our rail  
15 system, improve safety and ease congestion on our  
16 roads. The time has come to revitalize our  
17 downtown areas, increasing opportunities for  
18 employment and promoting the growth of businesses.

19

20 We deserve it. We need it. The  
21 time is now.

22

23 Thank you.

24

25 (Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER:

22 All  
23 right.

24

25 Our next speaker will be Bill  
Longnecker;

1-17-17 LIRR PM

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2

Followed by Nicole Marks; and,  
Steven Quigley.

3

4

If I've called your name, come

5

sit in the front row.

6

Mr. Longnecker.

7

MR. LONGNECKER: Good evening.

8

My name is Bill Longnecker.

9

Today I'm here to advocate in

10

support of the Long Island Railroad Expansion

11

Project on behalf of my company, Clever Devices,

12

which is a local technology and software company

13

here in Long Island.

14

Did I mention I work for a

15

software technology company here in Long Island?

16

It's the type of job which you could be proud of.

17

a lot of engineering, a lot of software and a lot

18

of high tech.

19

We're a growing technology

20

company. We're a growing technology company that's

21

is in the Deloitte Fast 500 Track for the last

22

several years running. My first -- and my last

23

five years in the company, we've grown from 150

24

employees to over 375 employees at a very, very

25

fast rate.

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1  
2 I asked to speak tonight because  
3 I'm one of the many employees within the company  
4 who has reverse commuted in many ways from New  
5 York to our office -- to our office. For over a  
6 year I lived near Penn Station and daily took the  
7 morning train to Hicksville. For those of you  
8 that don't know, there's an hour-and-a-half gap  
9 between 6:07, the 6:07 train and the 7:39 train in  
10 the morning.

11 So my choices were either to  
12 arrive an hour-and-a-half before our 8:30 start  
13 time or 15 minutes late for work. I'm someone who  
14 is willing to bear major inconveniences in order  
15 to utilize public transportation. I fall into the  
16 line of one of those millennials that cares about  
17 supporting our public transit.

18 However, after one year I joined  
19 one of the many thousands of commuters who had  
20 preferred to drive along the increasing traffic in  
21 the reverse direction. Imagine forgetting  
22 something in your apartment and you're at Penn  
23 Station at 5:45 a.m., forcing you to go back to  
24 your apartment, costing a few extra minutes. As a  
25 consequence, you have to job through Penn Station

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2 and on that day you may miss your train by just a  
3 few minutes. Instead of arriving at work an  
4 hour-and-a-half early, you just got up at 5:00  
5 a.m. to kill an hour-and-a-half in Penn Station,  
6 which everybody knows and loves.

7

As with most fast-paced jobs,  
8 getting out of my work by 5:00 p.m. in order to  
9 get to the 5:24 train is a major task. It often  
10 didn't happen. This meant that I was stuck in  
11 Long Island until the next 6:35 p.m. train from  
12 Hicksville placed me at my home past 7:30, making  
13 for a very, very long day.

14

I've currently been forced to  
15 live toward Long Island City rather than Manhattan  
16 in order to support my commute and drive out to  
17 Long Island City adding another car to the Long  
18 Island Railroad -- Long Island Expressway.

19

On behalf of my company, this  
20 one-and-a-half hour gap in reverse commuting  
21 during peak hours makes business significantly  
22 more difficult. We cannot reliably start a 9:00  
23 meeting in time with an employee, vendor or  
24 interview candidate that commutes from New York  
25 City.

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Speaking of interviews, hiring good people fast enough has been a significant hurdle in our company. We offer a median salary around 125 per year. It's the type of jobs we want to attract and keep and bring into Long Island.

Providing better transportation opens our company up to a very much larger New York talent base within the City. Many professionals love the idea of moving out towards Long Island for more space and a -- and a less crowded environment. This takes one or two years of commitment towards a company and most people won't move out to Long Island from New York City without experience from the company.

This requires them to buy a car. This requires them to take -- or to take this very, very strenuous commute that I took for several years in the morning.

For this reason, I'd like to advocate and in conclusion, for the thousands of commuters and countless Long Island businesses that stand to gain from this expansion project. It is unquestionably necessary and an inevitable

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2 infrastructure investment that cannot happen soon  
3 enough.

4

Thank you.

5

(Applause.)

6

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

7

you.

8

Our next speaker, Nicole Marks.

9

MS. MARKS: Good evening.

10

Thank you for this opportunity

11

to speak today.

12

My name's Nicole Marks and I'm a

13

resident of Franklin Square.

14

I fully support this project as

15

it would directly benefit me in many ways even

16

though I am not an LIRR commuter. For me, and

17

many like me, traveling to the north shore, which

18

is mere minutes away, can be very -- can be quite

19

cumbersome.

20

Due to delays with the traffic

21

system, messy vehicular and pedestrian traffic and

22

the many delays that I experience, I would rather

23

drive ten minutes out of my way to avoid having to

24

cross the tracks at the New Hyde Park Station.

25

This project would help alleviate many of the

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2 issues that I experience on a daily basis, whether  
3 I'm commuting to work, going shopping or about my  
4 personal business.

5 Being born and raised in Queens,  
6 I find that I'm typically trying to avoid many of  
7 the local businesses that I've been a patron for  
8 many years. Traveling through both the LIRR  
9 stations adds unnecessary time and headaches to my  
10 commute. This project will help alleviate these  
11 issues and make traveling around Long Island much  
12 easier and less stressful for me and many like me.

13 It'll bring a lot more Long  
14 Islanders about the Island and bring anybody else  
15 who wants to visit.

16 Thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
19 speaker is Steven Quigley;

20 Followed by John Viscuzi.

21 And if anyone hasn't signed up  
22 to speak but is interested in speaking, the  
23 registration table is still open. We encourage  
24 you to join the discussion.

25 Thank you.

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2

Mr. Quigley.

3

MR. QUIGLEY: My name is Steven

4

Quigley and I'm a commuter on the Long Island

5

Railroad every day from Babylon to Mineola.

6

And a lot of people don't even

7

realize you can go from Babylon to Mineola on the

8

train because there's not enough train service.

9

The reason there's not enough train service is

10

because of the fact there's not enough capacity on

11

the main line.

12

But I'm going to tell you a

13

slightly different story. I'm going to relate --

14

oh, wait, let me take my glasses off.

15

I'm going to relate a brief

16

story and make some comments about the need for

17

the third track on the main line in between

18

Hicksville and Floral Park.

19

I'm approaching it from a

20

slightly different tact. My father worked in

21

downtown Brooklyn for almost 30 years and commuted

22

on the train from Mineola to Flatbush Avenue, now

23

called something else, every day.

24

When I was young, I used to ride

25

with my mom to pick up my father at the train

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2 station. We lived just off of Hillside Avenue,  
3 right by Herricks Road. And the best and most  
4 direct route was to take from the Mineola train  
5 station when we picked him up, up Herricks Road  
6 down to Hillside Avenue. And many times, at least  
7 once or twice, we'd be stopped at the Herricks  
8 Road Railroad crossing.

9

And I don't know if a lot of  
10 people realize it, but at one time the Herricks  
11 Road Railroad crossing was the busiest railroad  
12 crossing in the United States with relation to the  
13 amount of cars that went across it every day  
14 versus the amount of trains. It was also  
15 considered at one time, one of the most dangerous  
16 by the FRA.

17

My father was not the most  
18 patient person in the world so you can imagine  
19 when we were sitting at the train crossing waiting  
20 for two, sometimes three trains to go by, one or  
21 two comments might be made. But in the meantime,  
22 my job, after I obtained my driver's license --  
23 never mind what year that was, was to pick up my  
24 father in Mineola. And I also experienced the  
25 frustration of sitting at the Herricks Road

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2 Railroad crossing, at times waiting for a few  
3 trains.

4

5 Regretfully, one fateful day in  
6 1982, specifically on March 14th, 1982, a lot of  
7 people don't remember. There were nine teenagers  
8 in a van that left a party in Mineola at 2:00 a.m.  
9 The proceeded south on Herricks Road at 2:18 when  
10 the railroad crossing gates came down. It signaled  
11 the approach of a Port Jeff train that was  
12 traveling at about 65 miles an hour. The driver  
13 of the van who shall always -- no one will ever  
14 know why, he drove around the gates. Of the nine  
15 teenagers, eight were killed. The only one who  
16 was surviving was Kathleen Caemmerer, who was then  
17 a 17-year old daughter of the recently deceased  
18 John Caemmerer from East Williston, who was a  
19 State Senator.

20

21 Earlier, many years prior to  
22 that, seven men were killed when a train hit their  
23 truck at the Herricks Road Railroad crossing. It  
24 took 16 years but on April 23rd, 1998, the  
25 Herricks Road Railroad cross was eliminated at the  
cost of \$85 million. There has been zero lives  
lost at the spot where Herricks Road and the

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2 Railroad cross since April -- April 23rd, 1998.

3 No car backups, no whistles, no  
4 horns sounding at locomotives and most of all, no  
5 lives lost. All right.

6 To sum it up, the reason why we  
7 need the third track between Hicksville and Floral  
8 Park is we need more frequent train service,  
9 especially in regard to express train service,  
10 which I think is going to occur.

11 The reverse commute is becoming  
12 more and more needed. It will be available to a  
13 greater degree. I don't know if anybody notices,  
14 Winthrop Hospital, the amount of people who take  
15 the train on the reverse commute in the morning,  
16 there are several hundred.

17 There will be no more accidents  
18 at railroad crossings between Floral Park and  
19 Hicksville, zero. None. How many lives will be  
20 saved? We don't know but there will be lives  
21 saved.

22 There will be no more train  
23 horns sounding at the railroad crossings. Can you  
24 imagine how quieter it's going to be in the middle  
25 of the night?

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There will be good paying  
construction jobs, which I'm sure one or two  
people --

(Audience participation)

MR. QUIGLEY: -- might  
appreciate.

Okay. There will be no more  
deaths. There will be no more traffic tie-ups.

The time has come. The money is  
available, according to the Governor. The people  
who ride the Long Island Railroad want it and I'm  
sure the people in the area would appreciate it  
once all the construction is done.

Thank you very much for your  
time.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: John  
Viscuzi is our next speaker.

MR. VISCUZI: Good evening.

John Viscuzi, President of the  
Carle Place Civic Association, Westbury resident.

I'm just here to speak on behalf  
of some of the concerned residents of Carle Place.  
We do have quite a few properties that face the

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2 north side of the Long Island Railroad -- Railroad  
3 itself and they'll be directly impacted by this  
4 project.

5 We have approximately 12 homes  
6 along the south side of the Carle Place Railroad  
7 Station that will definitely be impacted by this  
8 project. Some of these residents voiced their  
9 concerns about the construction process. They  
10 want to know what is going to happen as far as  
11 heavy duty construction equipment, where it's  
12 going to be and once the construction commences,  
13 what's going to happen to what's underneath the  
14 gravel that's underneath the tracks or along the  
15 embankments of the tracks.

16 There's apparently a rodent  
17 problem at the Carle Place train station that  
18 needs to be rectified and hopefully that will be  
19 taken care of if this construction happens, if  
20 this project goes through.

21 There's also concerns in regards  
22 to some of the utility poles, the high tension  
23 poles on the north side of the tracks. Are they  
24 going to be replaced? Who's replacing them? What  
25 kind of construction is that going to involve?

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2 That's going to impact the residents on Atlantic  
3 Avenue on the north side.

4

And the -- I understand there's  
5 going to be some renovations and upgrades to the  
6 station, which are welcomed being that the station  
7 is falling into a little bit of a disrepair  
8 status. And many of the residents are also  
9 concerned about the Long Island Railroad upkeeping  
10 their property because from the train station, the  
11 Carle Place train station heading east towards the  
12 Ellison Avenue Bridge, it is quite filled with  
13 debris, garbage, leftover railroad ties. And the  
14 concerns of the residents, is that going to be  
15 cleaned and once this project happens and if it's  
16 built, if it's going to be maintained at a proper  
17 regular basis?

18

And that's just most of the  
19 concerns that my residents of Carle Place have  
20 raised.

21

Thank you for allowing me to  
22 speak on their behalf.

23

Thank you.

24

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

25

you.

1-17-17 LIRR PM

1

2

(Applause.)

3

THE HEARING OFFICER: At this

4

time, I don't believe we have any other speakers.

5

We will take a brief recess while others arrive

6

and sign into speak.

7

If you've been thinking about

8

sharing your views on the DEIS, now is the time.

9

We welcome your comments. We'd like to hear from

10

you.

11

So we'll take a few moments and

12

we'll wait for some additional speakers to arrive.

13

Thank you.

14

(At 7:12 p.m., the hearing was

15

temporarily recessed.)

16

(At 8:45 p.m., the hearing was

17

resumed.)

18

THE HEARING OFFICER: Ladies and

19

gentlemen, as of 8:45 we have no additional

20

registered speakers.

21

The hearing will close.

22

However, our open house room

23

with its panel of experts from DOT and Long Island

24

Railroad will remain open until 9:00 p.m.

25

Thank you for joining us this

1-17-17 LIRR PM

1

2 evening.

3

This hearing is closed.

4

(At 8:46 p.m., the proceedings

5

were concluded.)

6

7

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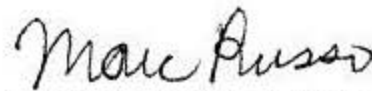
1-17-17 LIRR PM

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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 46, 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 30th day of January,  
2017.



-----  
MARC RUSSO

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1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 Hofstra University  
9 David S. Mack Student Center  
10 200 Hofstra Boulevard  
11 Garden City, New York  
12

13 January 18, 2017

14 12:10 p.m. - 12:11 p.m.  
15  
16  
17

18 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF  
19 STEVEN BUCKVAR

20 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1                   MR. BUCKVAR:    So I'm a  
2       reverse commuter.   I've been using the  
3       Long Island Rail Road for a few months so  
4       far, and there's almost zero -- there's  
5       almost zero reverse peak during rush hour  
6       and it's pretty annoying.

7                   So I'm in full support of  
8       this project.   My only real concern is I'm  
9       not sure with the Mineola station, the  
10      Mineola project is supposed to be a  
11      reverse commute.   I'm kind of confused as  
12      to why they didn't pick up, like, do the  
13      same configuration as Hicksville, instead  
14      they have a bypass track.   But other than  
15      that, I'm in a hundred percent full  
16      support of this and I want it to be passed  
17      as quick as possible.

18                  That's all.   Thank you.  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

## C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  : ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

I, NICOLE ELLIS, a Notary Public for and  
within the State of New York, do hereby certify:

I reported the proceedings in the  
within-entitled matter, and that the within  
transcript is a true record of such proceedings.

I further certify that I am not related to  
any of the parties to this action by blood or by  
marriage and that I am in no way interested in the  
outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
hand this 18th day of January 2017.



---

NICOLE ELLIS

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 Hofstra University  
9 David S. Mack Student Center  
10 200 Hofstra Boulevard  
11 Garden City, New York

12  
13 January 18, 2017

14 12:17 p.m. - 12:25 p.m.  
15  
16  
17

18 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF  
19 ANNMARIE KEANE

20 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 MS. KEANE: Well, I guess I  
2 have a few arguments against it. I guess  
3 a big reason I don't see that it's  
4 necessary, I've lived near a train -- I've  
5 lived within -- between Floral Park and  
6 Westbury for 57 years so -- or 58 years,  
7 so I have a lot of experience with the  
8 trains and with the trips going back and  
9 forth into the City. And I don't feel that  
10 putting in a third rail is going to get  
11 people into Penn Station quicker because  
12 Penn Station only has so many -- in the  
13 mornings, right, Penn Station only has so  
14 many lines going into Penn Station. Only  
15 so many stations right now can get in, and  
16 they're backed up so to add another third  
17 rail or third line there, I don't know, I  
18 guess they're not adding another one into  
19 Penn Station, it's really only going from  
20 Floral Park to Westbury, which then I say,  
21 well -- but it will increase the number of  
22 trains going into Penn Station,  
23 supposedly, but it's already bottled up at  
24 rush hour into the City. And people are  
25 already -- their train times are longer in

1 the mornings than probably the afternoons  
2 because of the wait to get into Penn  
3 Station. So that's just adding more  
4 trains in, if that's what one of the  
5 arguments is they're going to provide more  
6 train service.

7 Coming out, I guess, it's  
8 similar. It's the same thing. There's  
9 only so many lines that -- well, they all  
10 head into Jamaica, a lot head into Jamaica  
11 except the North Shore, and only -- you  
12 know, often people have to wait before  
13 they get into Jamaica in order for the  
14 trains to get cleared out. So it just  
15 doesn't make sense that it would expedite  
16 trips back and forth.

17 In living in the area for so  
18 many years we've been very privileged and  
19 happy to have the updated trains  
20 themselves, which is wonderful with the  
21 new trains and the air conditioning and  
22 the heat and everything, and they're all  
23 really special, but there's -- I've rarely  
24 been on a train that's been so overcrowded  
25 that you rarely call for more trains. You

1 know, until you get to the last stop,  
2 which is like before getting into the  
3 City, like, say New Hyde Park or Floral  
4 Park, that's where you might have to --  
5 you might not get a seat as easily. I  
6 don't know if that's one of the reasons  
7 they are doing that, to help people have  
8 more seats.

9 So all these reasons why  
10 they're giving for doing this comes at  
11 great cost and expense for what they have  
12 planned. Between -- you know, the  
13 downside, of course, has a lot to do with  
14 the houses and the businesses that are  
15 along those train lines. It's a  
16 tremendous amount of residential and  
17 businesses from Floral Park to Hicksville,  
18 and to destroy all those things, there's  
19 families, residents, there's -- or to  
20 interfere with all that, it just doesn't  
21 seem like it's worth it.

22 And then to build new parking  
23 areas. Where are they going to put these  
24 parking areas? Because you're not talking  
25 about putting these trains out to Montauk

1       where there's so much land they can put  
2       parking areas. So what are they going to  
3       be taking away when they're putting in all  
4       these parking areas? I don't really see  
5       that as a major problem. Well, maybe  
6       Hicksville needs a bigger parking area,  
7       Mineola has the tremendous high-rise  
8       parking facilities, they don't need more  
9       parking, and a lot of people go to Mineola  
10      because there's express trains from  
11      Mineola into the City, and people who ride  
12      the express trains seem to have no problem  
13      with it. Plus not to mention the rural  
14      aspect or any -- the trees that are around  
15      these areas are very valued because  
16      there's so much commercial things going on  
17      between Hicksville and Mineola.

18               Now maybe they want to take  
19      Hicksville and put a new parking area this  
20      there, knock down all of the businesses  
21      and stores that are around the Hicksville  
22      train station, they don't have to do ten  
23      miles of reconstruction, you know, to do  
24      that. 'Cause I know a lot of people come  
25      from out East to go to Hicksville, so just

1 to make a quicker train ride maybe.

2 There was one other thing.

3 In the next four years or five, six, seven  
4 years, however many years it would take  
5 for the public to have to go through --  
6 there's already so much traffic in that  
7 area, which I drive around. I live in the  
8 area now, tons and tons of traffic, the  
9 traffic has gotten worse. To have to  
10 impose those constructions on these areas  
11 where it's already so bottled up and  
12 negative, when trains come through --  
13 there's already so many trains coming  
14 through, I don't understand why we have to  
15 make more trains come through, 'cause  
16 that's what will be happening. Apparently  
17 that's the reason they're arguing they  
18 want to do this, to create more trains.  
19 And there's already enough tracks, gates  
20 going down at rush hour, and that would be  
21 creating more gates going down when the  
22 final project is over. Not to mention all  
23 the problems and headaches as it's being  
24 done.

25 So I mentioned a few things.

1 I guess, as I said, one of the biggest  
2 things I think is the imposition on the  
3 commerce and businesses and residents that  
4 are already there and that have their  
5 homes and families. And not to mention  
6 the high cost of it all, of course. I  
7 guess that's it.

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## C E R T I F I C A T E

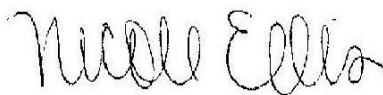
STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  : ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

I, NICOLE ELLIS, a Notary Public for and  
within the State of New York, do hereby certify:

I reported the proceedings in the  
within-entitled matter, and that the within  
transcript is a true record of such proceedings.

I further certify that I am not related to  
any of the parties to this action by blood or by  
marriage and that I am in no way interested in the  
outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
hand this 18th day of January 2017.



---

NICOLE ELLIS

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

3

MTA/LONG ISLAND RAILROAD

4

-----x

5

LONG ISLAND RAILROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6

RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7

-----x

8

Hofstra University

9

David S. Mack Student Center

10

200 Hofstra University

11

Westbury, New York

12

13

January 18, 2017

14

11:38 A.M.

15

16

17

B E F O R E :

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SUSAN MC GOWAN,

20

THE HEARING OFFICER

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Ed Dumas  
Vice President Market Development, LIRR

Joseph Zacharia  
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of Transportation

ALSO PRESENT:  
Other Project Participants  
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The Press  
The Media

Marc Russo,  
Stenographer

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2

**P R O C E E D I N G S**

3

MS. PICCA: Good morning. Good

4

morning.

5

Good morning. If you'd please

6

take your seats, I will begin our program today.

7

Thank you for attending today's

8

public meeting for the Long Island Railroad

9

Expansion Project.

10

My name is Elisa Picca. I'm the

11

Executive Vice President of the Long Island

12

Railroad.

13

In just a moment I'll be going

14

through the program for this morning.

15

But first, I invite you to stand

16

and join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

17

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

18

MS. PICCA: Thank you very much

19

and thank you for taking the time from your busy

20

schedules to be here today. Your input and

21

feedback on this project are crucial and they are

22

greatly appreciated.

23

This public meeting is part of a

24

robust community outreach process for the Long

25

Island Railroad Expansion Project that began last

1-18-17 LIRR AM

1

2 year and it will continue throughout the project  
3 duration.

4 In a moment, we're going to show  
5 you a video about the proposed project. After  
6 that, we will take comments from those who have  
7 registered to speak. For those who would like to  
8 speak and have not yet registered, there is plenty  
9 of time to do so. You can sign up at the tables  
10 at the front entrance.

11 The purpose of this meeting  
12 today is to discuss the Long Island Railroad  
13 Expansion Project and, in particular, the Draft  
14 Environmental Impact Statement, or Draft EIS, that  
15 was released on November 28th, 2016.

16 The environmental process began  
17 last spring with the release of a Draft Scoping  
18 Document and continued through the summer with the  
19 release of the Final Scoping Document.

20 Since that time, we have  
21 performed extensive environmental analyses, which  
22 are presented in the Draft EIS. The report is  
23 available on our project website,  
24 [www.amodernli.com](http://www.amodernli.com).

25 It's available at local village

1-18-17 LIRR AM

1

2 halls and libraries along the project corridor.

3

4 And it's also available at our  
5 Project Information Center at the Mineola train  
6 station.

6

7 In response to public requests  
8 for more time to comment on the Draft EIS,  
9 Governor Cuomo has extended the comment period  
10 until February 15th, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

10

11 The Draft EIS comment period for  
12 this project was already longer than those for  
13 much larger projects, such as the Second Avenue  
14 Subway and the new Tappan Zee Bridge. Now because  
15 of your input, there's even more time to comment.

15

16 When Governor Cuomo first  
17 announced this project, he made it clear that it  
18 would be completely different from prior  
19 proposals. Unlike prior proposals, the third  
20 track would be built entirely within the Long  
21 Island Railroad's right-of-way.

21

22 Since the Governor's  
23 announcement over a year ago, we have implemented  
24 an unprecedented public outreach program and  
25 thanks to your input, we have made commitments:

25

To take no residential

1-18-17 LIRR AM

1

2 properties;

3

4 To modify all seven grade  
crossings along the project area;

5

6 To add sound attenuation walls;  
7 To improve rail stations with  
enhancements such as full-length platforms;

8

9 To add more than 2,000  
additional parking spaces; and,

10

11 To use innovative methods of  
construction to minimize impacts.

12

13 All of these project elements  
are examples of our commitment to community  
14 outreach. Your input is important to us and  
15 important to the process.

16

17 Your comments will be entered  
into the public record and reviewed accordingly.  
18 While we are here today at a formal public  
19 hearing, there are many other outreach efforts and  
20 opportunities to comment.

21

22 Our project team has had  
hundreds of meetings with local officials,  
23 business leaders and residents and many of our  
24 team members are here today to listen to your  
25 comments.

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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We've maintained our Project

Information office at the Mineola Train station on the south side platform. The hours are posted on the project website and we encourage everybody to visit, discuss the project and to submit comments.

You can also provide comments on the project website or by e-mail to:

info@amodernli.com.

Finally, we have visited all residential properties that share a property line with the Long Island Railroad multiple times, and as recently as last week, to remind residents of these public hearings.

Now I'd like to turn your attention to a short video that will discuss the project need and highlight its benefits, which include improved service reliability, safety and quality of life. The project would add much needed capacity to the main line and eliminate all street level grade crossings within the project area.

Incorporating extensive input from local communities, the project team is now exploring neighbor friendly and innovative

1-18-17 LIRR AM

1

2 construction methods and practices to keep the  
3 impact of construction as minimal as possible.

4 (Video presentation.)

5 (Applause.)

6 MS. PICCA: Thank you.

7 Now I'd like to introduce you to  
8 our representatives from the Long Island Railroad  
9 and the New York State Department of  
10 Transportation, as well as our Hearing Officer.

11 To my far right, we have Mr. Ed  
12 Dumas. He is the Vice President of Market  
13 Development and Public Affairs at the Long Island  
14 Railroad.

15 Seated next to him is Mr. Joseph  
16 Zacharia, Project Manager from the New York State  
17 Department of Transportation; and,

18 To my immediate right is Ms.  
19 Susan McGowan, Long Island Railroad General  
20 Manager of Public Affairs.

21 Susan will serve as our Hearing  
22 Officer today and I will turn this meeting over to  
23 her at this time.

24 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
25 you, Elisa.

1-18-17 LIRR AM

1

2

Welcome, everybody.

3

And thank you for joining us

4

today.

5

Before we begin, I'm going to

6

ask you to bear with me because we have a few

7

procedural items.

8

This public meeting is an

9

opportunity to hear from you regarding the

10

project's environmental review process, in

11

particular, the Draft Environmental Impact

12

Statement, or Draft EIS.

13

The Draft EIS includes a wide

14

range of technical analyses on topics such as:

15

Air quality;

16

Noise;

17

Land Use;

18

Socioeconomics;

19

Traffic;

20

Parking; and much more.

21

It also reviews any potential

22

property impacts from the proposed project,

23

including easements and commercial property

24

acquisitions.

25

Today's proceedings also serve

1

2 as the public hearing in accordance with the New  
3 York State Eminent Domain Procedures Law, or EDPL.

4

As Vice President Picca noted  
5 earlier, no permanent takings of residential  
6 property will be needed for this project.

7

Building station platform areas,  
8 retaining walls and LIRR infrastructure along the  
9 entire 9.8 mile project corridor would require no  
10 full property takings of any type. It would  
11 require four partial acquisitions of  
12 non-residential properties, which would not affect  
13 any structure.

14

It would also require three  
15 permanent or temporary easements of  
16 non-residential properties and one temporary  
17 easement at a multi-family cooperative residential  
18 property.

19

Multiple options at the seven  
20 grade crossing locations were also evaluated. For  
21 these grade crossing options, we have identified  
22 full acquisitions of up to four commercial  
23 properties for which the State will work with the  
24 owners to provide relocation assistance within  
25 their communities.

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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In addition, partial acquisitions affecting eight non-residential properties could be needed but in all situations it will not affect the continued operation of the businesses.

Finally, the grade crossing work may need some permanent rights to access some parcels of commercial property during and after construction and some temporary rights to access other parcels of property during and after construction in connection with construction, or in connection with certain maintenance needs after construction. None of these rights of access will permanently impact the operation of the businesses affected.

For complete details about the grade crossing options, please refer to the DEIS or visit the DOT table in the open house area.

Again, no permanent takings of residential property will be needed for this project.

Those who may be impacted by property acquisitions have already been contacted by the State. Pursuant to the EDPL, the project

1

2 team has studied the proposed project and is able  
3 to determine the relocation requirements for each  
4 grade crossing option and determined which plan  
5 would be preferable.

6

This information will be  
7 considered along with other relevant factors when  
8 selecting the project's final design.

9

New York State DOT and Empire  
10 State Development will provide extensive support  
11 for the four commercial properties that may be  
12 fully acquired with day-to-day relocation  
13 assistance as necessary, including:

14

Help in finding suitable  
15 replacement sites;

16

17

18

Reestablishment expenses; and,  
A variety of moving expenses  
options.

19

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The State has studied the local  
real estate market and has concluded that there  
will be a sufficient number of replacement  
properties to satisfy the needs of any displaced  
commercial occupant, irrespective of the design  
option selected. Property acquisition would not  
commence until the final design option has been

1

2 approved.

3

4 Each affected property owner  
5 will be contacted by a real estate specialist who  
6 will explain the proposed construction and the  
7 acquisition process. Any potentially affected  
8 property owners present here today may visit the  
9 DOT table in the open house area until the end of  
10 this hearing for further details about the process  
or to ask any questions they may have.

11

Now in order to give public  
comment, we ask if you haven't already done so,  
that you sign up at the front desk.

12

We're also asking that everyone  
limit their comments to three minutes, and that is  
intended to give everyone a chance to speak.

13

Again, this meeting is not the  
only chance that you'll have to comment on the  
project. You can continue to provide comments  
through February 15th at the project office at the  
Mineola station, by mail or online at:  
[www.amodernli.com](http://www.amodernli.com).

14

We have representatives from the  
Long Island Railroad and the New York State DOT  
here, who are available to consult with you on the

15

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2 project and they're located in the open house room  
3 just around the corner.

4

5 If you prefer to give comments  
6 privately, because we realize that not everyone is  
7 comfortable speaking in front of a group, you can  
8 sign up at the front desk and a stenographer will  
9 take your comments and ensure that they are made  
10 part of the public record.

11

12 Now because this is a formal  
13 hearing and because we're entering your comments  
14 into the public record, we here on the dais will  
15 not be responding to your comments or answering  
16 questions from the stage. However, as I  
17 mentioned, we do have staff in the open house room  
18 who will do their best to answer your questions  
19 and concerns.

20

21 Now if you have any special  
22 needs, please find a staff member and we'll do our  
23 best to address those needs.

24

25 And one final thing, if you  
26 haven't already done so, we ask that you please  
27 silence your cell phones.

28

29 I'm going to call the names of  
30 the first five speakers and ask, if they're not

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2 already in the front rows, that they make their  
3 way up to the reserved seats in the front so they  
4 can prepare themselves and get to the microphone  
5 more quickly.

6

There are two microphones, one  
7 on the left and one on the right. And after I  
8 call the first five speakers, I'll call the name  
9 of the very next speaker. When you come up to  
10 speak, please give your name and your affiliation,  
11 if you're part of an organization, and then you'll  
12 have three minutes to speak.

13

There is a timer, a countdown  
14 clock. The countdown clock will show as green  
15 until you have 30 seconds. Then it will turn  
16 yellow and when you run out of time, it turns red.  
17 And if you're not sure, I'll give you a very  
18 gentle reminder.

19

So the first five speakers are:  
20 Steve Bellone;  
21 Sean Walter;  
22 Jack Schirman;  
23 Richard Amper; and,  
24 Charles Strain.

25

First we have the Honorable

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2 Steve Bellone, Suffolk County Executive.

3 MR. BELLONE: Good morning.

4 Thank you.

5 Normally, I'm not comfortable  
6 speaking in front of groups but I'll give it a  
7 shot.

8 (Laughter.)

9 MR. BELLONE: You can take that  
10 out of the record.

11 It's an honor to be here.

12 First, I want to thank Governor  
13 Cuomo for prioritizing this project and the Long  
14 Island Railroad for the really extensive outreach  
15 efforts that have gone on here and continue to  
16 proceed.

17 I have prepared remarks that I'd  
18 like to read into the record.

19 On behalf of the 1.5 million  
20 residents in Suffolk County, I'm honored to show  
21 my support for the third track project.

22 I understand that all of the  
23 proposed 9.8 miles are in Nassau County, not  
24 Suffolk County. And I'm here today because these  
25 9.8 miles of track are pivotal to our region.

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2 Whether or not we can construct these 9.8 miles of  
3 track will define if we are a region that gets  
4 things done or if we a region of no.

5

6 These 9.8 miles of track will  
7 define whether we are willing to make the  
8 investments in a better Long Island where we can  
9 retain and recruit the best young minds in the  
10 nation or if we are a region in decline.

11

12 And while it is true that this  
13 project has been debated for decades, I believe  
14 that if we cannot build these 9.8 miles of track  
15 now when a plan is on the table within the Long  
16 Island Railroad right-of-way, that this may well  
17 be our last opportunity for a third track.

18

19 Our region needs enhanced  
20 transportation infrastructure. A lack of  
21 transportation options has led to some of the  
22 nation's most congested roadways and auto-centric  
23 development patterns that are no longer attractive  
24 to our younger population.

25

26 The third track will not only  
27 provide vastly improved service for current  
28 customers, it is the critical element needed to  
29 support our transit-oriented downtowns.

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2 In Suffolk County we have a  
3 regional transportation and development plan  
4 called, Connect Long Island. Connect Long Island  
5 calls for the build out of a network of vibrant  
6 downtowns centered around Long Island Railroad  
7 train stations, filled with innovation jobs,  
8 connected by great public transportation,  
9 including north-south connections to the three  
10 branches of the Long Island Railroad in Suffolk.

11 Effectively, we need to connect  
12 people by frequent, reliable transportation to all  
13 the places that they need to be and want to be  
14 without having to get into a car every single  
15 time. The third track investment is a critical  
16 element towards our region reaching that goal.

17 The third track investment  
18 leverages other major investments being made  
19 across our region and, of course, including the  
20 East Side Access project, which is critical to our  
21 region and Long Island and the double track  
22 project. Other benefits, as we know, include  
23 reduced congestion, over 2,000 construction jobs,  
24 fewer delays for everyone, faster, more reliable,  
25 less crowded commutes.

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And it's important to note that the Long Island Railroad already has the property necessary, as you said, to construct the third track.

Now is the time that we must act on these transportation needs that were identified decades ago. With the construction of the third track, and I'll close by saying this, this region can once again become a place where the best and brightest are flocking, where we are creating high paying jobs and building a 21st century innovation economy.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Next we have the Honorable Sean Walter, Supervisor of the Town of Riverhead.

MR. WALTER: Good afternoon.

I want to thank you for having us out today to listen to our comments.

My first comment is more of a personal comment. My three sons, along with many, many eastern Long Island children attend schools at Chaminade. In fact, my son is sitting at

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2 Kellenberg High School right down the road. And  
3 so that third track is critical to move the train  
4 kids, as we call them, east and west.

5

Many, many times my sons have  
6 sat on the platform at Hicksville waiting for a  
7 train. So on behalf of the train kids, we really  
8 want the third track.

9

But the reality is, Steve  
10 Bellone, the County Executive, had it exactly  
11 right. Are we in a period of decline or are we in  
12 a period of growth? If you all will lead us, we  
13 will follow.

14

And this is how we are following  
15 in the Town of Riverhead. You may not know it, but  
16 the Town of Riverhead has just finished up an  
17 Environmental Impact Statement on the largest  
18 commercial industrial subdivision on Long Island,  
19 in New York State and probably in the northeast,  
20 2,300 acres. On that 2,300 acres, we are able to  
21 build up to 10 million square feet of new  
22 commercial/industrial property, between five and  
23 10,000 employees.

24

You can fit three-quarters -- we  
25 didn't go the whole distance, but three-quarters

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2 of the Hauppauge Industrial Park in the former  
3 Grumman facility known as EPCAL. If you don't  
4 build the third track and we don't build the  
5 second track to Ronkonkoma, all that is for  
6 nothing. Because you see, we only have 35,000  
7 residents and I don't think we're going to find  
8 10,000 more that are going to come work there.

9

We don't have the jobs. We are  
10 a service -- even though Riverhead is the highest  
11 -- has the highest number of jobs, I think when  
12 you compare all the jobs in the four East End  
13 Towns, we still have the highest number of jobs,  
14 they're service jobs.

15

So if you want your kids to stay  
16 here, like I want my kids to stay here, like the  
17 men and women behind us want their kids to stay  
18 here, we need to get serious. And sometimes there  
19 are sacrifices that have to be made. I understand  
20 the other elected officials that may not want this  
21 project but sometimes there are sacrifices that  
22 have to be made for the greater good.

23

If you will lead, we will  
24 follow. We will bring you those jobs but you need  
25 to bring the people. You need to get them past

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2 Floral Park. You need to get them past Hicksville  
3 and you need to get them to places like EPCAL. It  
4 is the last frontier for economic development on  
5 Long Island. There is no other place that is ever  
6 going to be like EPCAL on Long Island. Oh, and by  
7 the way, we have a rail spur that connects to the  
8 main line that's less than five years old.

9 So as I said, if you lead, we  
10 will follow.

11 Thank you and God bless you  
12 guys.

13 (Applause.)

14 THE HEARING OFFICER: The  
15 Honorable Jack Schirman, Long Beach City Manager.

16 MR. SCHIRMAN: Thank you.

17 There's five things I wanted to  
18 briefly mention.

19 First, as Long Beach City  
20 Manager, but also as the husband of a commuter who  
21 relies on public transportation and the Long  
22 Island Railroad to get to work every day and get  
23 home in time to -- to -- to get our daughter, I  
24 wanted to say that we're paying attention.

25 Second, we're listening in Long

1

2 Beach because we care about quality of life and  
3 fewer delays for not only my wife but all of the  
4 other commuters in Long Beach. We care about  
5 faster commutes and these are things that  
6 certainly pique our interest.

7 We care in Long Beach from an  
8 economic perspective about keeping our young  
9 people and relying on public transportation to do  
10 so. And that's something that we work very hard  
11 on.

12 And as the father of a daughter,  
13 who I hope that from a public transportation  
14 perspective, we're going to have enough service  
15 that my daughter one day can take the train from  
16 Long Beach up to the Nassau Hub, get a job, go to  
17 school, go to a show, and be part of economic and  
18 cultural life on Long Island.

19 Third, we encourage, as we do in  
20 Long Beach, we encourage you to continue to work  
21 with communities every step of the way as it seems  
22 that you are. And we're encouraged by things like  
23 grade crossings and noise abatement that you're  
24 doing to mitigate any potential impacts. We urge  
25 you to keep that up.

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Fourth, we would just say that in Long Beach we do big things and so we are encouraged by this effort. We built a brand new state-of-the-art boardwalk, which was huge. We did it with local labor. We did it with a project labor agreement and I appreciate that labor's here in support of the project.

(Audience participation.)

MR. SCHIRMAN: And fifth, and finally, that leads me to make the broader point that others are making as well, which is this captures the can do spirit of New York State, of Long Island and we know how easy it is to say no to things. But we also know how important it is to stand up for progress, to stand up for getting things done, and to figure out a path forward so that my children and our City and the entirety of Long Island can have a future economically and quality of life that we can all be proud of.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next speaker is Richard Amper;

Followed by Charles Strain.

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MR. AMPER: My name is Richard  
Amper. I'm Executive Director of the Long Island  
Pine Barrens Society. It's an environmental  
education and advocacy organization.

We're based in Riverhead but we  
cover all of Long Island. And I find myself using  
the Long Island Railroad in virtually all of the  
lines of service that you supply. And it's quite  
clear to me what the third track is going to do  
for everybody on Long Island.

I appreciate this as an  
individual and as a life-long Long Islander but  
I'm here specifically to talk today to the matter  
of the environment and the air quality, which is  
clearly a beneficiary of the project. It's not  
merely the fact that we're taking people out of  
their cars and putting them in public  
transportation through the Long Island Railroad,  
it's also what you're doing on the grade  
crossings. It's not just a convenience for those  
local communities, the worst possible problem with  
air quality is the number of vehicles that sit  
idling for enormous periods of time. They're not  
even helping us get where we're going.

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So you're going to improve the quality of transportation on Long Island but you're also going to improve the quality of air and that's what matters to environmentalists and virtually every other Long Islander.

So we're fully supportive of what it is that you're doing because we think it works for the environment and the economy and that's what Long Island needs.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next speaker is Charles Strain.

And Mr. Strain, if you'll permit me, the following five speakers will be:

Lionel Chitty;

John Gutleber;

Roxanne Mahler;

Chris Jones; and,

Marianne Garvin.

Thank you for your patience.

MR. STRAIN: Thank you.

My name is Charles Strain. I'm a partner in the Uniondale Law Firm of Farrell Fritz. I'm also the Chairman of the Board of

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2 Winthrop University Hospital in Mineola.

3

4 I am strongly supportive of this  
5 major, most important infrastructure project here  
6 on Long Island. We need a 21st century railroad on  
7 Long Island. It's as simple as that. We need to  
8 become a better bi-directional railroad, which is  
9 what this project does.

9

10 We've got a growing innovation  
11 economy out here on Long Island, combined with a  
12 growing innovation economy in New York City. We  
13 are inextricably linked in that regard.

13

14 We need to be able to access the  
15 talent that is in the -- in the boroughs, out here  
16 on Long Island. We've got lots and lots of  
17 millennials living in Queens, Brooklyn and  
18 Manhattan. We need to be able to easily get them  
19 out here to Long Island.

19

20 Very, very difficult to reverse  
21 commute. I can tell you from the perspective of  
22 Winthrop University Hospital, we've got almost  
23 8,000 employees. A good chunk of them live in  
24 Brooklyn, Queens and Manhattan, many of whom  
25 reverse commute on the Long Island Railroad, which  
is extremely difficult to do and challenging on a

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2 daily basis.

3

4 This project on Long Island is  
5 critical, I think, to the life blood of the  
6 economy here on a going forward basis.

7

8 I commend what the Railroad has  
9 done in terms of responding to the -- to the  
10 concerns raised by the community. This is  
11 different than what occurred back in 2005 and  
12 2006. Some of the innovative suggestions in terms  
13 of both parking, grade crossings -- I'm old enough  
14 to remember the tragic incident at the Herricks  
15 Road crossing. Those seven changes at the grade  
16 crossings will be critical and helpful to the  
17 communities. And I think you've been enormously  
18 responsive in that regard. There's continued work  
19 to be done but I commend the engineering team for  
20 the work they've done to date.

21

22 But on behalf of myself, I'm  
23 certainly enormously supportive of this project.

24

25 Thank you.

26

(Applause.)

27

28 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
29 speaker is Lionel Chitty.

30

31 MR. CHITTY: Good afternoon.

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My name is Lionel Chitty. I'm wearing two hats today; first as the President of the Hicksville Chamber of Commerce and, also, as the Chair of the Hicksville Downtown Revitalization Committee.

Hicksville was basically developed around the train station. At one point in time, it was the last stop on the Long Island Railroad, the last point. Everything going east was all farmland.

Today we are maxed out as far as parking. We brought it to the attention of the MTA and we are happy to see that there are two parking structures in the proposed plan to try to alleviate that situation.

Looking at revitalization, the train station is -- we want to turn the area into a destination not just a train station. I spoke earlier at the Plainview Bethpage Chamber of Commerce today and when I mentioned why doesn't anybody go to Hicksville, they said because of the train.

We want to be able to utilize the train station as an asset to be able to draw

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2 people in to, not only just take the train but to  
3 also live, work and play in the immediate area and  
4 make Hicksville a true destination.

5 We appreciate the outreach that  
6 the MTA is doing and we hope that we can fully  
7 support this project and move forward.

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 THE HEARING OFFICER: John  
11 Gutleber is our next speaker.

12 MR. GUTLEBER: I'm John  
13 Gutleber, President and CEO of Castagna Realty.  
14 I'm a member of the Long Island Association and  
15 the Association for a Better Long Island.

16 Castagna Realty is a 95-year old  
17 Long Island company. We've developed major  
18 projects of quality on Long Island, including the  
19 Americana Manhasset, Wheatley Plaza, the six  
20 office buildings with another Long Island Company,  
21 the Albaneses in Garden City. We're doing the  
22 headquarters for the dealer track with the  
23 Tri-Tech Company on New Hyde Park Road.

24 So we've invested on Long Island  
25 and we think it's important, this project, because

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2 to us, the key elements is that it will make Long  
3 Island better and the Long Island Railroad better.

4 It eliminates seven dangerous,  
5 loud, traffic inducing grade crossings, which will  
6 make local roads less congested and much safer for  
7 cars and children.

8 The third track will also create  
9 2,000 jobs and taxes over the future.

10 The third track will allow the  
11 entire Long Island region to take advantage of the  
12 East Side Crossing, making traffic into New York  
13 City much easier.

14 This project will help generate  
15 significant improvements on Long Island, on-time  
16 performance, service reliability and a 50 percent  
17 increase of capacity of ridership.

18 It's so important that we  
19 strengthen our connection to New York City. We'll  
20 attract new residents, new talent and new  
21 businesses.

22 Growing our local downtowns in  
23 Long Island economy, we have to compete with New  
24 York City for young talent. They can live and work  
25 on Long Island with better transportation.

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The New York State idea of  
creating better railroad stations is excellent.  
Modernizing and lengthening and with heated  
platforms is excellent.

We are in support, our company  
invests in our properties, modernizing all the  
time. Let's modernize and invest in the Long  
Island Railroad.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Roxanne  
Mahler is our next speaker;

Followed by Chris Jones;

Then Marianne Garvin.

MS. MAHLER: Good morning,  
ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests and  
neighbors.

My name is Roxanne Moller. I'm  
a 9/11 first responder who served the City of New  
York for 17 years. I'm a Floral Park resident of  
18 years and my property backs the north retaining  
wall along the main line.

I'm for better jobs, stronger  
economy, safety at crossings, clean air and a

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2 better commute for all Long Islanders. My  
3 question is, at what cost to the main line  
4 communities and businesses? Where is the funding  
5 and who's paying for this?

6

I've attended every scoping  
7 meeting since 2005. Concerns about our stations  
8 were raised, as well as handicap access. To date,  
9 we have new stairs with an incline of a small  
10 mountain, netting to deter birds from roosting.  
11 The handicap access has yet to be addressed.

12

This project tries to sell  
13 itself as reverse commute, fewer delays for  
14 commuters, less crowded trains, fewer cars on the  
15 road. Born and raised on Long Island, unless you  
16 work in the City, Long Islanders drive everywhere.

17

The Long Island Expressway was  
18 built for freight traffic from Queens Midtown  
19 Tunnel to Riverhead. Original plans were to  
20 extend to Connecticut, Rhode Island but were  
21 fought with opposition. It was also to connect to  
22 the Lincoln Tunnel and New Jersey but those plans  
23 were cancelled as well.

24

From 1994 to 2005, HOV lanes  
25 were added to lessen the congestion of commuter

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2 traffic on Long Island, with some success.

3 *Newsday*, May 12, 2012, headline.

4 On the Right Track. Rail terminal called a good  
5 start as Long Island slowly starts to move away  
6 from reliance on road freight.

7 Public officials have been  
8 calling for track rail facilities for 25 years.  
9 New York State DOT estimates 20,000 trucks a day  
10 use the LIE and only one percent use freight by  
11 rail.

12 The rail yards have been built.  
13 The main line is what stands in the way.

14 *Newsday*, July 2005, broke the  
15 story. Brookhaven National Lab transports  
16 radioactive soil illegally for six months.

17 *Newsday*, November 28, '07,  
18 Brookhaven National Lab transports 4,000 cubic  
19 feet of radioactive soil to out of state facility.

20 Floral Park Gateway, January  
21 '08, MTA/LIRR, failure to notify main line  
22 communities about radioactive waste being  
23 transported.

24 This is going through our  
25 backyards and our schools.

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*Newsday*, January 9th, '09.

3

Freight derail slows Long Island Railroad in Deer

4

Park on Ronkonkoma branch. Cause:

5

Miscommunication of crew members.

6

*Newsday*, September 16, 2015, New

7

Cassel freight derails. Afternoon rush is

8

affected.

9

*Newsday*, October 10, 2016, LIRR

10

derails in New Hyde Park, collides with work

11

train, affects morning commute.

12

The past ten years there seems

13

to be an increase in train derailments and

14

accidents. The MTA/LIRR need to:

15

Be held accountable for the rail

16

companies it does business with and the safety

17

records that they hold;

18

Manage its own crews for sleep

19

deprivation and intoxication;

20

Maintain its own infrastructure;

21

and,

22

Run trains on time to avoid

23

overcrowding on the commuting schedules.

24

My concerns are:

25

There are station conditions

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2 that need to be met;

3

4 What materials are being  
transported on the main line?

5

6 Vibration and the effect it will  
have on the homes due to increased freight?

7

8 Disturbing contaminated soil  
that is in the right-of-way that has toxic  
9 herbicides in it.

10

Dust and air quality.

11

12 Noise levels, not everyone is at  
work during the day and the effects it will have  
13 on our animals.

14

15 Education of our children. Our  
schools do not have A/C.

16

17 Sleep deprivation to the hours  
of work times.

18

19 The effects on our business  
district.

20

21 Traffic on our roads and the  
response times for our police and fire.

22

23 Governor Cuomo promised an  
unprecedented community outreach as part of this  
24 project.

25

On January 11, 2017, between the

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2 time of 2:54 and 3:11 p.m., the "sorry I missed  
3 you," was stuck in my door. I was home all day  
4 and left to pick up my son from school. This is  
5 the only outreach I have received to this date.

6

The project documents are vague.  
7 This is not, let's start to build it and figure it  
8 out as we go along, for we all know that doesn't  
9 work. We want to be heard by elected officials  
10 that represent we the people. This is not about  
11 what party you belong to or what legacy is left  
12 behind.

13

We understand the need for  
14 progress to move the truck traffic and goods to  
15 and from Long Island and also to support our  
16 commuters every day, to support jobs and to keep  
17 our economy going and clean air.

18

Thank you for your time.

19

(Applause.)

20

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
21 speaker is Chris Jones.

22

MR. JONES: Good afternoon.

23

I'm the Senior Vice President  
24 and Chief Planner for Regional Plan Association.  
25 We're a research and advocacy organization serving

1

2 Long Island and the greater New York Metropolitan  
3 region.

4

5 RPA has long supported the Long  
6 Island Railroad third track as a key missing  
7 element in the region's transit network and we  
8 strongly support the current project as proposed  
9 by the Long Island Railroad.

10

11 The economic and environmental  
12 benefits of this project are clear. It will boost  
13 job opportunities for residents of Nassau and  
14 Suffolk Counties, encourage more young people to  
15 stay on Long Island, and support more walkable  
16 neighborhoods near train stations.

17

18 The project will provide  
19 increased service and greater reliability for over  
20 100,000 daily riders and is expected to add nearly  
21 \$6 billion and 14,000 jobs to Long Island's  
22 economy.

23

24 It will also help update a  
25 transit system that has largely remained the same  
since it was constructed decades ago, allowing  
Long Island Railroad to catch up with Metro North  
and New Jersey Transit.

26

Over the last 20 years, Metro

1

2 North and New Jersey Transit have made major  
3 investments in new capacity. These projects,  
4 including a third track on the Metro North Harlem  
5 Line, have allowed these systems to be more  
6 flexible, redundant and better serve the reverse  
7 commuters and off peak travel.

8

As a result, Metro North and New  
9 Jersey Transit ridership has grown much faster  
10 than Long Island Railroads. Between 1990 and  
11 2014, Metro North ridership grew by 44 percent and  
12 New Jersey Transit by a whopping 74 percent, while  
13 Long Island ridership grew only 19 percent.

14

Land use policies that direct  
15 development near transit have complemented these  
16 investments. In fact, the third track on the Metro  
17 North Harlem line resulted in a 30 percent growth  
18 in transit ridership and helped catalyze the  
19 revitalization of White Plains.

20

Additionally, the third track  
21 will allow Long Island to reap the full benefits  
22 of other projects, including East Side Access, the  
23 MTA's direct connection into Grand Central and a  
24 second track from Farmingdale to Ronkonkoma.

25

These projects will expand the

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2 Railroad's capabilities, provide one-seat rides to  
3 the east side of Manhattan and increase in train  
4 frequency on Long Island Railroad's most crowded  
5 line.

6

But without additional capacity,  
7 the Long Island Railroad's main line will become a  
8 choke point as more trains squeeze onto two  
9 tracks. And better transit service leads to higher  
10 property values. For example, a study that we did  
11 found the East Side Access will improve property  
12 values by an average of \$7,300 for 400,000 Nassau  
13 and Suffolk households and even more for those who  
14 live closer to the station.

15

The funding added by Governor  
16 Cuomo for community enhancement is a welcome  
17 addition but will still require that the Long  
18 Island Railroad work closely with the communities  
19 along the corridor in applying these funds.  
20 Communities will see substantial long-term  
21 benefits from the project, including property  
22 value increases, shorter commuting times and the  
23 removal of seven grade crossings that will greatly  
24 reduce local traffic and pollution.

25

But the MTA and the New York

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2

State Department of Transportation will need to work closely with local officials and communities in evaluating the options for grade crossings that are outlined in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, as well as to minimize the local impacts of construction.

8

9

10

11

We look forward to working with the Long Island Railroad's local officials and community residents to make this project a success.

12

Thank you.

13

(Applause.)

14

15

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next speaker will be Marianne Garvin;

16

Followed by Bob Keeler;

17

Tom Herron;

18

Theresa Statz-Smith; and,

19

Mark Herbst.

20

Ms. Garvin.

21

22

23

24

MS. GARVIN: I am Marianne Garvin, President and CEO of the Regional Nonprofit Community Development Corporation of Long Island.

25

Our mission is to meet the

1-18-17 LIRR AM

1

2 housing needs of low and moderate income people,  
3 to create housing opportunities for young  
4 professionals and empty nesters. We are strong  
5 advocates for transit oriented housing  
6 developments.

7

In order for these housing needs  
8 to be met, we need a transportation system that is  
9 of the 21st century. We, as a society, must make  
10 investments in our railways to keep up with the  
11 increasing demands of our residents. Building the  
12 third track will help do this.

13

As a resident of Long Island and  
14 a user of the Long Island Railroad, I support this  
15 project. As the CEO of an organization serving  
16 tens of thousands of residents, I support this  
17 project.

18

I urge you to do all that is  
19 necessary to build the third track.

20

Thank you.

21

(Applause.)

22

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
23 speaker is Bob Keeler;

24

Who will be followed by Tom  
25 Heron.

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2

MR. KEELER: Hi, Bob Keeler from  
the Third Track Coalition.

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25

Let me start by saying that the  
MTA and the Railroad cast their share of negative  
comments over the years but in this case, I  
congratulate them both on doing a good job of  
updating the proposal so that it eliminates a lot  
of the disruption to the communities and, also,  
doing a good job of reaching out to the  
communities and explaining how it has changed.

The Draft Environmental Impact  
Statement goes through a whole bunch of the  
benefits. I won't run through those again.

One thing it doesn't say, one of  
the benefits it provides, is regional thinking.  
Long Island starting right after World War II when  
it started to grow exponentially, was a series of  
small villages separated by large trees. We've  
always had a lot of problem thinking as a region.

As this project moves forward  
and succeeds and produces the benefits that we  
know it will produce, I think it's going to add to  
our ability to think as a region.

And finally, as someone who has

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2       asthma and who luckily has gotten through this so  
3       far without coughing, I think that what Dick Amper  
4       said earlier about the environmental benefits of  
5       reducing, even however small amount, the  
6       automobile emissions, that's a very large,  
7       important part of the whole process.

8

Thank you very much.

9

(Applause.)

10

THE HEARING OFFICER:   Next we

11

have Tom Herron;

12

Followed by Theresa Statz-Smith.

13

MR. HERRON:   Good afternoon.

14

My name is Thomas Herron and I'm

15

a Council representative for the Northeast

16

Regional Council of Carpenters. I represent over

17

2,000 men and women that are carpenters here on

18

Long Island.

19

We're very much in favor of the

20

expansion project. The infrastructure on Long

21

Island, as we all know, has been deteriorating.

22

This project, without the construction jobs it

23

creates, will also improve transportation for

24

every Long Islander to and from his job across

25

Long Island and the City.

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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Also, I have two daughters that work in the City, as many other people also do. Any improved transportation for them back and forth seems to just make sense. We've heard all the other positives about it but this project to us just makes total sense.

Thank you very much for your time.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Theresa Statz-Smith.

MS. STATZ-SMITH: Good morning. Thank you -- or good afternoon, for this opportunity.

I am -- I sit on the Advisory Board of the Long Island Index. I'm a member of the Energeia Project at Molloy.

I am also the Executive Director of the Long Island Arts Alliance.

And today I wanted to talk about how this makes sense for our arts and culture industry on Long Island. If we can invite tourists to come out from Manhattan to Long Island for a day trip or even better, to stay overnight

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2 and spend money at our hotels and our restaurants  
3 and our shopping venues and to experience our  
4 amazing arts, culture and history here on Long  
5 Island, that's a win-win.

6

They come. They spend their  
7 money and they go home without adding to traffic,  
8 housing or school crowding and they support the  
9 hospitality industry, an industry that cannot  
10 export jobs and is growing and is a new  
11 sustainable source of income for our region.

12

For the last few years, New York  
13 City has been experiencing something called over  
14 tourism. They have balanced this influx of  
15 tourists by pushing a five-borough strategy that  
16 gets visitors out of Manhattan and into Queens and  
17 Brooklyn neighborhoods they wouldn't have set foot  
18 in ten years ago. And these are our neighboring  
19 neighborhoods and it's a release valve that  
20 spreads the tourist wealth.

21

Long Island is next. Long  
22 Island Arts Alliance, in partnership with Discover  
23 Long Island, formerly the LICDB, is working  
24 together toward inviting tourist wealth to our  
25 region and a very good public transportation

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 infrastructure is critical to that.

3 So we're very much in support of  
4 this and very thankful for today's opportunity.

5 (Applause.)

6 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
7 speaker is Mark Herbst;

8 He will be followed by Tammy  
9 Stark;

10 Sylvia Silberger;

11 Rosemary Mascali;

12 Richard Guardino; and,

13 Kyle Strober.

14 Mr. Herbst.

15 MR. HERBST: My name is Mark  
16 Herbst and as the Executive Director of the Long  
17 Island Contractors Association, I represent the  
18 heavy construction industry in this region, which  
19 wholeheartedly supports this project.

20 So my comments about the third  
21 track proposal might be viewed as self serving  
22 given that a number of our members would  
23 competitively bid on this construction project.

24 So given that most of the  
25 opposition to the third track is from those who

1-18-17 LIRR AM

1

2 live beside the current right-of-way, let me talk  
3 about the Second Avenue Subway.

4

5 For what seemed like a  
6 generation, the residents along the subterranean  
7 stretch of construction in Manhattan had to live  
8 with constant presence of a massive underground  
9 public works project. Deep beneath their feet,  
10 dynamite set off to propel excavation, there were  
11 street closings, barricades, construction  
12 equipment and a convoy of trucks required to build  
13 the subway beneath them. It was not pretty.

13

14 And what were they left with on  
15 New Years Eve? One of the most sought after  
16 residential and retail addresses in Manhattan.  
17 Real estate values are already rising.  
18 Millennials who worked downtown want to move to  
19 the upper east side. The street surface,  
20 underground utilities and related infrastructure  
21 are all now in the 21st century standards. It's  
22 quickly become a powerful, positive,  
23 transformative force.

23

24 The third track project won't  
25 require anywhere near the level of disruption.  
Others have already listed the construction

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 benefits for those communities that sit astride  
3 the main line but it bears repeating.

4 It will be over -- there will be  
5 more than six new parking structures with over  
6 2,000 new parking spaces benefiting not just the  
7 commuter but the community as local shops and  
8 villages downtown can welcome shoppers.

9 Sound deadening walls planned  
10 along the tracks will decrease noise and  
11 vibration.

12 The elimination of seven deadly  
13 grade crossings that currently shut down and  
14 isolate commuters during rush hour.

15 Five new train stations that  
16 even make a veteran commuter smile.

17 And not one single home or  
18 residential property will be acquired.

19 If this project falls victim to  
20 politics, we all lose.

21 The communities along the  
22 right-of-way will continue to live next to the  
23 main line. Train volumes will increase. The new  
24 double track out east and the East Side Access in  
25 Manhattan guarantee that. But there will be no

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1

2 means to resolve any of the current issues. Long  
3 Island will lose. We will not be able to make  
4 effective use of new mass transportation assets  
5 that I've just mentioned.

6

And our future will lose its  
7 ability to strengthen the region. It needs to  
8 reinvent itself to recognize the realities of the  
9 21st century. And those who abandon Long Island,  
10 the next generation, you'll find them living  
11 somewhere along the Second Avenue Subway where the  
12 neighborhood has been transformed because of the  
13 power of infrastructure and the political courage  
14 of those who advocated for its construction.

15

Support this project. Support  
16 the future of Long Island.

17

Thank you.

18

(Applause.)

19

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
20 speaker -- our next speaker is Tami Stark.

21

MS. STARK: Thank you for the  
22 opportunity to speak today.

23

I am a lawyer, a mother of three  
24 children and I commute on the Long Island Railroad  
25 to New York City.

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25

The time is now to build a third track. If you have ever seen the standing room only crowds on peak trains, you would know that we are badly in need of improvements to the tracks.

Organizations that care deeply about Long Island have analyzed this issue and shown the enormous benefits to the entire region. And the great thing is that now commuters, the Long Island economy and local residents can benefit from a third track.

Commuters will see reduced delays and they'll also have better intra-island and reverse commuting service.

The Long Island Index projects the economy will see more jobs for Long Island.

And, of course, increased mobility to and from New York City.

Local residents will see improved street level grade crossings and reduced pollution and sound.

I recognize that local residents will bear the burden of the construction. My hope is that local residents will see beyond a few months of local detours and recognize how this

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2 project benefits the entire region.

3

4 Construction might be  
5 frustrating for a period of time but I urge my  
6 neighbors and local leaders to start thinking  
7 about the future. Long Island simply cannot stay  
8 competitive without an improved rail system.

8

9 The Long Island Railroad will  
10 drag us down if we don't start modernizing it.

10

Thank you.

11

(Applause.)

12

13 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
14 speaker -- our next speaker is Sylvia Silberger.

14

MS. SILBERGER: Hi.

15

16 Thank you for giving me the  
17 opportunity to speak.

17

18 I'm Sylvia Silberger. I'm  
19 speaking both for myself and in my capacity as  
20 Chairperson of Carless Long Island, an  
21 organization that works to enable more convenient  
22 and safer forms of non-automobile transportation  
23 on Long Island.

23

24 We are -- my organization and  
25 myself, are strongly in favor of the third rail  
project. We'd like to encourage you to consider

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2 cycling and public transit users when working on  
3 this project. We need safe parking places for  
4 cyclists and to help alleviate more congestion.  
5 I believe that the long term goal should be to  
6 allow public transportation within Long Island, as  
7 well as to and from the City.

8

I realize this is not your  
9 jurisdiction but since there are representatives  
10 of many local municipalities here, I'd like to  
11 encourage everybody to look at keeping the bus  
12 system affordable and convenient and making much  
13 safer routes for cyclists on Long Island as well.

14

Thank you.

15

(Applause.)

16

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
17 speaker is Rosemary Mascali;

18

Who will be followed by Rich  
19 Guardino and Kyle Strober.

20

MS. MASCALI: Hi. My name is  
21 Rosemary Mascali. I'm with Transit Solutions and  
22 I'm a member of the Right Track for Long Island  
23 Coalition.

24

Today I'm speaking for Lisa  
25 Inzerillo, a Councilmember of the Smithtown Town

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 Council.

3

She writes: to whom it may

4

concern: I have been anticipating the Long Island

5

Railroad expansion project for quite some time.

6

It is with great pride that I thank the Right

7

Track For Long Island Coalition, a grassroots,

8

non-profit partnership of 5,000 major

9

organizations, businesses, individuals

10

representing over one million Long Islanders to

11

help Long Island Railroad make this project a

12

reality.

13

This project is so important for

14

Long Islanders benefiting our economic growth, our

15

younger generation and our families for many years

16

to come.

17

As a member of the Smithtown

18

Town Council, it is of special interest to me to

19

know that rail service here can be expanded in the

20

future to serve the planned transit oriented

21

development in Kings Park. With a third track,

22

significant service expansion such as

23

electrification cannot occur on the Port Jefferson

24

branch.

25

I urge the Long Island Railroad

1-18-17 LIRR AM

1

2 to build the project. Sincerely, Lisa Inzerillo,  
3 Smithtown Town Council.

4

(Applause.)

5

MR. GUARDINO: Good afternoon.

6

7 I'm Rich Guardino and I am the  
8 Executive Director of the Long Island Regional  
9 Planning Council and I have a statement on behalf  
10 of the Council.

11

12 The Council is a bi-county  
13 organization dedicated to promoting the physical,  
14 economic and social health and well being of Long  
15 Island Region, educating Long Islanders on key  
16 issues affecting the quality of life and serving  
17 as a catalyst for action.

18

19 The Regional Planning Council  
20 has been on the record supporting the third track  
21 since 2008. It was the first project to be  
22 designated as a project of regional significance  
23 by the Council.

24

25 Our Chair John Cameron spoke and  
issued a statement this past May at a Draft  
Scoping Document public meeting, strongly  
supporting the construction of the third track and  
endorsing the project as critical to Long Island's

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future.

This transformative project will provide much needed expansion and rail line capacity on a system that was originally constructed over 170 years ago when the population of Long Island was about the population of the Village of Hempstead today instead of the three million people we currently have here on Long Island.

This expansion will not only have the net beneficial effect of reducing traffic and its associated air pollution on the east-west highway arteries, but will also permit reverse commuting during peak hours.

The ability to reverse commute will enable persons living in the City to work on the Island, growing our workforce and the Island's economy. It will enable intra-island transit commuting for Long Island workers and then importantly, will add additional capacity for the multi-billion dollar East Side Access project to realize its full transportation and economic development potential.

According to the MTA, the East

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1

2 Side Access will be a principal driver behind a 28  
3 percent increase in ridership in the next 30  
4 years.

5

6 The Railroad is preparing the  
7 system for new demands and opportunities, such as:

8

9 Governor Cuomo's recent proposal  
10 to connect MacArthur Airport to Long Island  
11 Railroad;

12

13 Eliminating this bottleneck in  
14 western Nassau unlocks the economic potential of  
15 other transit improvements. It will enable  
16 frequent and better service for commuters and  
17 increase the reliability of the Railroad.

18

19 The Council recognizes that a  
20 project of this size will undoubtedly impact  
21 surrounding areas during construction but the  
22 benefits provided by the project warrant the  
23 unavoidable short-term disruption to the local  
24 communities.

25

26 We commend the Railroad for the  
27 massive effort to mitigate the impact to the  
28 surrounding communities. I won't go through all  
29 the details. They've been mentioned. Certainly  
30 the fact that no residential property taken for

1

2 the project is very important. We know that  
3 you're working on scheduling the construction,  
4 satellite parking for workers and a door-to-door  
5 outreach.

6

However, the most important  
7 improvement for the local communities will be  
8 elimination of seven dangerous, loud traffic  
9 inducing and unattractive grade crossings.

10

And on a personal note, one of  
11 my neighbors lost their daughter at Herricks  
12 Avenue and we realize how dangerous these  
13 crossings are. So this is a huge benefit.

14

The Draft Environmental Impact  
15 Statement details major new benefits, and I won't  
16 go through all them. They've been mentioned  
17 before, the sound walls, the upgrade of the  
18 stations, the new critically needed parking  
19 structures.

20

But once the -- the Long Island  
21 Regional Council once again states its full  
22 support of the construction of the third track  
23 project.

24

It is estimated that close to a  
25 billion dollars, or nearly half the currently

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 proposed project costs will go to features  
3 designed to benefit corridor residents. In this  
4 era of tight budgets, a commitment of \$2 billion  
5 for infrastructure improvements is a historic  
6 opportunity, one we cannot waste.

7

We commend you on your action  
8 thus far. We encourage you to continue to work  
9 with the communities and we look forward to the  
10 building of the third track.

11

Thank you very much.

12

(Applause.)

13

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. Our  
14 next speaker is Kyle Strober;

15

He will be followed by Jen

16

Solomon;

17

David Kapell;

18

Marjorie Telasco;

19

Sandra Lui; and,

20

Kelly Coughlin-Heck.

21

MR. STROBER: Good afternoon.

22

I'm here speaking on behalf of  
23 Supervisor Angie Carpenter from the Great Town of  
24 Islip. And I'm going to read her letter into the  
25 record.

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2

THE HEARING OFFICER: And you

3

are?

4

MR. STROBER: Kyle Strober.

5

I write in support of the third

6

track from Floral Park to Hicksville. It is my

7

understanding that this project will further a

8

number of regional goals and address issues that

9

impact all Long Islanders.

10

We are all committed to reducing

11

traffic on our congested east-west roadways,

12

improving safety, providing faster commute times

13

for workers and promoting railroad use for

14

visitors to our region. The proposed third rail

15

should help us achieve those goals.

16

Safety at crossings is crucial.

17

It is my further understanding

18

that the proposed project would eliminate seven

19

existing street level grade crossings within the

20

project limits to provide grade separated

21

crossings.

22

Comfort and convenience of our

23

region's travelers would be improved. A third

24

track will add flexibility for better scheduling

25

to and from Manhattan, thereby easing crowding.

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25

Along with the double track project, adding a second track to -- that adds a second track between Ronkonkoma and Farmingdale, more frequent service at more evenly spaced intervals will give riders more choices and a better chance at finding a seat during heavy travel times.

Also, the third track will allow the entire Long Island region to take advantage of the East Side Access project.

The overcrowding at New York's two major airports will make Islip's own Long Island MacArthur Airport the better choice for travelers coming to the region from cities served by LIMA.

Given the proximity to the Ronkonkoma station, the proposed triple track project will have a positive impact in terms of convenience and economic impact miles to the east of its actual location.

This proposed project looks to the future of our region and promotes all the right goals. It should be thoroughly studied and perhaps improved as it goes through the process

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2 but the project is important to our region's  
3 growth and prosperity and for all those reasons,  
4 on behalf of the Town of Islip, it has my full  
5 support.

6

Thank you.

7

(Applause.)

8

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next

9

speaker is Jen Solomon;

10

Followed by David Kapell.

11

MS. SOLOMON: Hi. My name is

12

Jen Solomon. And as a resident of the Town of

13

Babylon and the spouse of a person that commutes

14

daily from the Wyandanch station, I'm here to read

15

a letter into the record from Supervisor of the

16

Town of Babylon, Richard Schaffer.

17

I write to support the Long

18

Island Railroad expansion project. By adding a

19

third track to the main line corridor between

20

Hicksville and Floral Park, the project will

21

address the single largest infrastructure

22

constraint to economic vitality for Long Island in

23

the 21st century.

24

Until the bottleneck in the

25

corridor is relieved, meaningful expansion of

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 service on the Ronkonkoma branch cannot occur and  
3 the full benefits of the LIRR investment in double  
4 track and East Side Access cannot be exploited.

5 The Town of Babylon is engaged  
6 in a major transit-oriented revitalization of  
7 Wyandanch where LIRR is a partner. The Town is  
8 also planning a new transit-oriented development  
9 of the area surrounding the shuttered LIRR station  
10 at Republic Airport. As these projects unfold,  
11 new demands will require increased rail service to  
12 flourish.

13 The LIRR is to be commended for  
14 its commitment to the communities that will bear  
15 the brunt of construction impacts by including in  
16 the project six new garages for 2,300 cars, five  
17 new state-of-the art rail stations, elimination of  
18 seven dangerous grade crossings and sound walls to  
19 reduce noise and vibration and no residential  
20 property taking is required.

21 I urge the LIRR to build the  
22 expansion project now. Sincerely, Richard  
23 Schaffer, Supervisor Town of Babylon.

24 Thank you.

25 (Applause.)

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next

3

speaker is David Kappel;

4

And then we'll have Marjorie

5

Telasco; and,

6

Sandra Lui.

7

MR. KAPPEL: Good afternoon.

8

Thank you for hearing me.

9

My name is Dave Kapell and I'm

10

the Executive Director of the Right Track for Long

11

Island Coalition.

12

I'm pleased that we have support

13

from seven of the ten Suffolk County Towns. And

14

I'd like to read a letter now from Supervisor Ed

15

Romaine of the Town of Brookhaven.

16

I support Governor Cuomo and the

17

Right Track for Long Island Coalition in their

18

efforts to implement the third track between

19

Floral Park and Hicksville stations.

20

The Long Island Railroad is the

21

busiest commuter railroad in North America and

22

serves one of the highest population densities in

23

the country. Therefore, it is important to avoid

24

delays and cancellations.

25

Employee punctuality is crucial

1

2 to workforce productivity and is heavily dependent  
3 on the timeliness of our transportation systems.  
4 For this reason, commuters should be able to rely  
5 on the Long Island Railroad to provide an  
6 efficient system that will guarantee on-time  
7 departures and arrivals.

8

The third track project is a  
9 worthwhile investment that will benefit the  
10 population of Long Island's workforce that  
11 partakes in the daily railroad commute. The  
12 addition of a third track will alleviate severe  
13 congestion during peak hours, decrease frequency  
14 of delays and cancellations, and provide a more  
15 attractive and punctual service to its customers.

16

Furthermore, the third track  
17 addition is projected to stimulate ridership  
18 growth upon the development of nearly 2,300 new  
19 parking spaces at New Hyde Park, Mineola, Westbury  
20 and Hicksville stations. By providing additional  
21 parking spaces in these areas, travelers will be  
22 inclined to get off the road and onto the train,  
23 resulting in a reduction in automobile traffic  
24 congestion and adverse environmental effects.

25

The proposed project also

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1

2 addresses the concerns of many residents in the  
3 surrounding areas of the railroad by installing  
4 sound attenuation walls along significant portions  
5 of the right-of-way.

6

Finally, the project will  
7 greatly improve service by removing areas where  
8 vehicles and pedestrians can collide with trains  
9 by eliminating all seven grade crossings.

10

It is time for the Long Island  
11 Railroad to make the necessary and long overdue  
12 infrastructure improvements to deal with the  
13 rising population of Long Island commuters.

14

I fully support the efforts to  
15 construct the third track project which will  
16 provide a safe and punctual railroad service for  
17 many years to come. Sincerely, Edward P. Romaine,  
18 Brookhaven Town Supervisor.

19

Thank you.

20

(Applause.)

21

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
22 speaker is Marjorie Telasco;

23

She'll be followed by Sandra  
24 Lui;

25

And then Kelly Coughlin-Heck.

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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MS. TELASCO: Hi.

I'm very happy to be here.

I'm nothing fancy. I'm a  
resident of Hicksville. I live, and have lived  
there all my life, three blocks east of the  
Railroad in Hicksville.

And I'm telling you, I have not  
wanted to go on the Railroad for the past 30  
years. I used to go as a young child with my  
mother into New York City for ballet lessons. She  
was a teacher We have a business teaching dance,  
a small business, right on Woodbury Road. A seven  
minute walk to the train station and I still don't  
want to go.

Between crossing the streets,  
the traffic, the sounds, the beeping of horns, the  
-- the way it looks to me is just deplorable and,  
also, it's been so many years and I've heard about  
how China has this, Japan has this, and we have  
these ancient system here and it just is terrible.  
I don't want to go out. And the parking, they  
park up all along our side streets. My tenants  
have no place to park their cars. People fight  
for spots. They leave their cars all day long.

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2                   It's just very disappointing to  
3 me as a human being. And I love going into the  
4 City. My daughter is coming home from Vegas but I  
5 haven't gone there in 30 years and I was commuting  
6 there during -- I'm very tender towards the  
7 commute because I used to commute while I worked  
8 at Radio City as a dancer. I'd go early in the  
9 morning and I'd get back home at 11:55 train or  
10 11:20 train and get back home at 1:00 in the  
11 morning, walk home, no problem. It was wonderful.  
12 And I did that for about a year before I moved  
13 into the City.

14                   But I always expected home to be  
15 comfortable and it's totally uncomfortable the way  
16 it is right now. The congestion is beyond belief  
17 and nobody wants -- they're so tired from fighting  
18 nobody wants to do anything anymore. It's just --  
19 to me it's horrible and I think any progress is  
20 good progress. Anything forward is good for  
21 everyone. There can't be anything bad with that.

22                   Thank you.

23                   (Applause.)

24                   THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
25 speaker is Sandra Lui.

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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MS. LUI: Good afternoon.

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I am here because I would like to say something about the congestion, as well as Ms. Telasco did. I live on a side street on Harding Avenue and from East Barkley all the way down to Bethpage Road, they block it up. You can't park anyway. You work at night, you come home, you have to go six blocks to find a place to park your own car.

And I think this project will be a good thing for the community and a good thing for all concerned.

But, also, they need to also address some of the other issues that are -- the trains that are always delayed. My son takes the train every day. He gets stuck out in Suffolk County and has to stay overnight in the railroad station because the train sometimes don't come and then you have to take a train from Hicksville all the way to Jamaica just to take a train back into Babylon. They need more frequent stops along the way for people to get off and get on where they need to be.

But this expansion project is a

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 wonderful idea and if it goes through, God bless  
3 you all.

4

Thank you.

5

(Applause.)

6

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

7

Vincent Albanese is our next

8

speaker;

9

Followed by Robert Campbell;

10

and,

11

Richard O'Kane.

12

Oh, did I miss one. Oh, I'm

13

sorry. I missed one.

14

Kelly Coughlin-Heck.

15

A VOICE: Not here.

16

THE HEARING OFFICER: Not here?

17

VOICES: Kelly.

18

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay.

19

Ms. Heck.

20

Okay. I'm sorry. I messed up

21

the order.

22

Ms. Heck is next;

23

Followed by Mr. Albanese.

24

(Audience participation.)

25

THE HEARING OFFICER: My

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 apologies.

3

MS. COUGHLIN-HECK: Good

4

afternoon.

5

My name is Kelly Coughlin-Heck.

6

I'm speaking today in favor of

7

the third track project through the lens of a

8

life-long Long Islander, member of the Long Island

9

Association's Young Professional Committee, Long

10

Island Builders Institute, and on behalf of

11

Tri-Tech Real Estate Company based in Setauket,

12

New York, a firm that's been focused on smart

13

growth principles and specifically for the last

14

decade, thoughtful, sustainable, transit-oriented

15

development, the aim of which provides housing and

16

mixed use development in downtown communities with

17

effective public transit offerings, seeking to

18

spur economic development in these communities

19

while preserving open space in the surrounding

20

suburban character that helps define our beautiful

21

Island.

22

The vast majority of our housing

23

stock was built decades ago and the LIRR over a

24

century ago. But over the past decades, Long

25

Island has seen dramatic demographic changes,

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 which in turn has led to intrinsic changes in the  
3 way we live, our needs and demands when it comes  
4 to housing, employment recreation and transit.

5

6 Vehicle ownership rates and  
7 driver license applications in one small -- one  
8 small example are declining. In fact, in 1983,  
9 87, percent of our 19 year olds had a driver's  
license and today that number is 69 percent.

10

11 We have a changing population.  
12 Yet Long Island's housing and transit stock has  
13 not changed nearly enough to sufficiently address  
14 those demographic -- those dramatic demographic  
15 shifts and as such, we are seeing droves of our  
16 young people, as well as our seniors leaving Long  
17 Island due to the high cost of living and the lack  
of affordable housing, transit and job options.

18

19 We are the developers for the  
20 Ronkonkoma Hub and we've been turned down some  
21 larger corporations that were looking to move to  
22 the hub because of the lack of a reverse transit  
option.

23

24 And so in order to improve upon  
25 Long Island's environmental sustainability and  
resiliency, to sustain and expand Long Island's

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 economic, social and fiscal vibrancy, to attract  
3 new corporations, we need to be able to attract  
4 and retain a young, well educated workforce.

5

6 Our human intellectual capital  
7 is our most valuable asset. We've applied enough  
8 bandaids and now we need to focus on the root  
9 source of these issues and the third track is  
doing just that.

10

Thank you.

11

(Applause.)

12

THE HEARING OFFICER: Mr.

13

Albanese, you're next.

14

My apologies once again.

15

MR. ALBANESE: Vincent

16

Albanese, Laborers International Union North  
17 America.

18

19

20

21

I'll be submitting my own  
comments on behalf of our organization but right  
now I'm submitting comments from the Huntington  
Supervisor, Frank Petrone.

22

23

24

25

He writes: I'm writing to  
express my support for the Long Island Railroad  
Expansion Project. Adding a third track to the  
main line between Floral Park and Hicksville

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 should provide benefits for all Long Islanders,  
3 including those who regularly ride the Port  
4 Jefferson line between Huntington and Penn  
5 Station.

6

A completed third track should  
7 provide faster, more reliable service for all Long  
8 Island Railroad branches and reduce system-wide  
9 delays that frequently occur based on a single  
10 incident along the main line.

11

A third track will allow trains  
12 to avoid track and signal problems and to bypass  
13 disabled equipment.

14

Reliable service is also  
15 important to the revitalization of Huntington  
16 Station. As the Town and our Huntington Station  
17 Master Developer are working on potential  
18 projects, both residential and commercial, that  
19 attempt to capitalize on their proximity to the  
20 LIRR's Huntington Station.

21

Enhanced reverse commute  
22 opportunities, which a third track could provide,  
23 are also desirable to attract the highly skilled,  
24 well-educated workforce that will be central to  
25 the continuing growth of the Melville Employment

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 Center and the Town's ability going forward to  
3 attract major employers such as Canon USA and  
4 Leviton to the Route 110 corridor.

5 Longer term, the direct and  
6 residual benefits of this project will help make  
7 Long Island more attractive to our youth and help  
8 stem the brain drain to other areas of the country  
9 by providing the employment and lifestyle  
10 opportunities they prefer.

11 For those reasons, I offer my  
12 support for the project and hope that it receives  
13 the necessary approvals and funding to allow for  
14 continued progress and swift completion.

15 Very truly yours, Frank Petrone,  
16 Supervisor, Huntington.

17 (Applause.)

18 THE HEARING OFFICER: Mr. Robert  
19 Campbell is our next speaker;

20 He will be followed by Richard  
21 O'Kane.

22 MR. CAMPBELL: My name is Robert  
23 L. Campbell. I am the Manager of Planning and  
24 Scheduling at NYCE Bus at Nassau Intercounty  
25 Express.

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I was in a similar position with MTA Long Island Bus for 15 years so I'm a long-term person in -- in the transportation area on Long Island.

I support and commend the Long Island Railroad effort for its plan to have a third track on its main line. It can only help bus service in all of Nassau County in connecting areas. There will be greater connectivity of communities along the way without long gaps in reverse peak schedules.

Lesser traffic will allow faster bus travel speeds on parallel routes. Fewer grade crossings will allow better speeds on north-south bus routes.

At NYCE we will be happy to provide any assistance to bring about this improvement in service for the County.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next speaker, Richard O'Kane.

MR. O'KANE: Good afternoon.

Thank you for the opportunity to

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 speak here.

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I represent 59,000 people in the Nassau/Suffolk Building and Construction Trades. These people are your mothers, your fathers, your cousins, your neighbors, your friends and on and on and on.

We're highly skilled trades that would be doing this job. My members need these jobs. They're going to be for a fair amount of time and many, many, many of them rely on the train system because cars break down and unfortunately there is a statistic out there right now that says that 62 percent in America, of people if their car broke down, they cannot afford a \$500 car payment, all the more reason why they utilize the train and need the train. So that statistic is kind of awful.

But, you know, we need to get to work. Our members need to get to work and they have to be on time as well. If they don't get to work on time, they're docked and that's not a good thing.

But 30 percent of the people, our young population between the ages of 19 and

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 30, are leaving because they can't get jobs.

3 These jobs will provide good, high paying jobs.

4 And once again, we're skilled.

5 We all have apprenticeship programs. Everybody

6 that would be working on that job comes from a

7 registered apprenticeship program and that --

8 that, you know, makes for taking care of our own.

9 We don't want people from out of town coming here.

10 We need to take care of the people that live here.

11 And we have thousands of people that live in this

12 area where this train is gonna take place.

13 And I think one of the better

14 things, eliminating 3,000 horn blasts would suit

15 me fine too because I -- I live by a train and it

16 doesn't bother me but, you know, that's one

17 aspect, positive aspect of having the -- this new

18 project come and eliminating that.

19 And one of the gentleman

20 speakers before said about the crossings, the

21 seven ones that are going to be eliminated. A lot

22 of people don't realize the traffic that builds up

23 when there's an accident and you wouldn't want to

24 be in that traffic and an ambulance looking to get

25 to a hospital. That's a big, big, big plus and --

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2 and more emphasis has to be put on that to bring  
3 you aware of it and maybe the people who are  
4 against it might think about that and consider  
5 that as a positive aspect.

6 I've seen traffic backed up and  
7 backed up and emergency vehicles trying to get  
8 through. It's awful. And I know I wouldn't want  
9 to be in back of that with that situation.

10 So the seven overpasses would be  
11 terrific and, you know, give somebody that's, you  
12 know, dying a chance to live.

13 Thank you very much for allowing  
14 me speak.

15 Thank you.

16 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
17 you.

18 All right.

19 Ladies and gentlemen, at this  
20 time we have no other registered speakers.

21 I want to thank everyone for --  
22 you're registered?

23 MR. MICHNO: Yeah. I just got  
24 here.

25 THE HEARING OFFICER: Well, why

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 don't you come up and speak. But they didn't give  
3 me your card yet but come on up.

4

MR. MICHNO: Okay.

5

THE HEARING OFFICER: Please  
6 state your name and your affiliation.

7

MR. MICHNO: Okay. My name is  
8 John Michno. I'm not affiliated with any -- I'm  
9 just somebody who lives in Westbury, somebody who  
10 depends on public transportation to get around.

11

I came here -- can you hear me  
12 okay? Because the microphones a little --

13

THE HEARING OFFICER: Yes.

14

MR. MICHNO: Okay. I came here  
15 to express my support for this project.

16

The Long Island Railroad's main  
17 line as it is, is woefully antiquated and  
18 inadequate to handle the amount of people using  
19 it.

20

I do, however, think this  
21 project needs to be done right and I have a few  
22 concerns.

23

Mineola should have two island  
24 platforms and Oyster Bay trains shouldn't be  
25 restricted to just the north platform, which would

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 limit service on this line which has seen growing  
3 ridership.

4

5 My other concern, which was  
6 stated in the DEIS, is that only one additional  
7 rush hour direction train would be added. With  
8 the third track, that means two tracks would be  
9 devoted full-time to peak direction service, which  
10 should have a much greater improvement in  
11 rush-hour service. Compared to the Babylon  
12 branch, the rush-hour service on the main line,  
13 particularly west of Hicksville, is completely  
14 insufficient.

15

16 We should have more three-stop  
17 express flyer trains like those stations on the  
18 Babylon branch. If you want to garner more support  
19 from those who have their doubts about this  
20 project, especially in New Hyde Park and Floral  
21 Park, then you need to show them how it will  
22 improve their service.

23

24 It is clear that commuters, for  
25 the most part, are choosing the Babylon branch for  
its modern design and better service. It is now  
time for the main line to follow suit which will  
strengthen the area's economy and make for more

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 reliable train service.

3

4 Let me just add that a more  
5 robust local bus network is just as important and  
6 instead of cutting service it should get increased  
7 funding so service can be improved.

7

Thank you for your time.

8

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

9

you, Mr. Michno.

10

(Applause.)

11

THE HEARING OFFICER: I have no

12

other registered speakers but if -- if -- you

13

should register to speak but come on up, we have

14

no others at this time.

15

All right.

16

Thank you.

17

Please state your name.

18

MS. SARRO: My name is Samantha

19

Sarro.

20

Good afternoon.

21

How are you?

22

I'm speaking on behalf of -- I'm

23

a resident of Long Island. I've lived out here 35

24

years of my life and I am actually a new

25

homeowner.

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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I am -- I say this to say that as a resident of the Island, however, I love New York City, that drive is horrendous. I utilize the Long Island. My children look forward to getting on the train to go to the City. We just went to see the Rockettes.

It is of absolute importance that we do expand our infrastructure on the Island. As a resident I get caught in the traffic time and time again and it -- it's just horrendous. And anything that we can do to utilize our tax dollars properly to help the -- the community to benefit our Island, I am all for it.

Many people that I've spoken with, we all agree this is going to be a benefit, not just to the workers that get to benefit for the short time of building the project, but in the long run it does increase the value of our homes, our Island. It does increase our ability to move around, our mobility.

And I just hope that you guys take into consideration the fact that this is important to us as residents of the Island to have

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2 a more -- so sorry, to have a better flowing way  
3 of moving in and out of the City, moving around  
4 the Island.

5 Thank you.

6 I appreciate it.

7 THE HEARING OFFICER: One  
8 minute.

9 Can I ask that you see the  
10 stenographer so that we make sure that we have the  
11 correct spelling of your name.

12 MS. SARRO: Sure.

13 THE HEARING OFFICER: Just see  
14 the stenographer right here.

15 MS. SARRO: Thank you.

16 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
17 you.

18 All right.

19 Ladies and gentlemen, unless we  
20 have any further speakers, we will take a break.  
21 We will be here until 2:00 and we'll be here again  
22 this evening from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. to  
23 take additional comments should you decide that  
24 you wish to comment on the DEIS.

25 Thank you very much for taking

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 the time to come out and join us today.

3 (At 1:01 p.m., the hearing was  
4 temporarily recessed.)

5 (At 1:13 p.m., the hearing was  
6 resumed.)

7 THE HEARING OFFICER: Ladies  
8 and gentlemen, I'm going to ask you take your  
9 seats once again. We have a speaker.

10 So once again, our speaker is  
11 Ellen Redmond.

12 Ms. Redmond, if you can approach  
13 the microphone. Just say your name and  
14 affiliation, if any. And you will have three  
15 minutes.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. REDMOND: All right.

18 Thank you.

19 My name is Ellen Redmond. I am  
20 an international representative with the  
21 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
22 and I work for the Third District which covers New  
23 York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware.

24 I'm also a proud graduate of the  
25 Energeia Partnership, class of 2006, which I am

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2 proud to say was the first class.

3

4 And I can tell you that back in  
5 2006 we -- we addressed -- and I'm not sure if  
6 you're familiar with the Energeia Partnership, but  
7 we addressed some of the issues facing Long  
8 Islanders and adequate transportation was  
9 certainly on the top of the list.

9

10 So I'm glad that we're here  
11 today to -- to talk about improving that for Long  
12 Islanders.

12

13 And I'd also like to thank you  
14 for the opportunity to speak here today about this  
15 very important issue.

15

16 A little about the IBW, we  
17 represent 60 -- about 60,000 members throughout  
18 New York State and we are employed in the  
19 railroad, construction, utility,  
20 telecommunications, manufacturing and broadcast.

20

21 On Long Island alone the IBW  
22 represents about 6,000 members, of which 900 are  
23 employed by local -- by the MTA and are  
24 represented by Local 589. The remaining work at  
25 1049 and Local 25 in utility construction. We  
also have members that work in Brookhaven Lab.

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2 I can tell you also that -- that  
3 the IBW's members are highly skilled and trained  
4 in this field. They work as maintenance  
5 electricians that fix and repair the various  
6 different pieces of electrical system on trains.  
7 We have third rail electricians who build and  
8 maintain the electrified third rail and -- and we  
9 have members that are also qualified electricians  
10 and linemen. So we are certainly skilled and  
11 trained to do the work for this project and we'd  
12 be proud to do it as well.

13 We are here also to support the  
14 third track and for a number of reasons. The LIR  
15 is the busiest commuter railroad in North America  
16 and it serves 300,000 commuters daily, of which on  
17 many days I am one of them. And I think it's  
18 really unacceptable that we are operating on a  
19 two-track system that was constructed in the 1800s  
20 when we are now in 2017. So -- and it was also  
21 built for an entire population of 50,000.

22 So a third track along the main  
23 corridor between Hicksville and Floral Park would  
24 allow commuters riding the Hempstead, Ronkonkoma,  
25 Port Jefferson, Oyster Bay and Montauk branches of

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 the LIR to see significant improvement in one  
3 time -- in on-time performance, service  
4 reliability, as well as a 50 percent increase in  
5 capacity.

6

And, again, as a rider on the  
7 Long Island Railroad, I would certainly welcome  
8 any improvements to -- to our time on the  
9 Railroad.

10

And I would like to say that --  
11 that the Long Island Railroad, in spite of the  
12 fact that -- receives criticisms, I have to tell  
13 you that the people that work on the Long Island  
14 Railroad are some of the finest people. Oh, I'm  
15 losing my time here, but I would like to just  
16 commend them for the work that they do.

17

So in my role as an  
18 international representative, I travel throughout  
19 New York State. I speak on a lot of subjects.  
20 This is a win-win for everybody. I am proud to be  
21 here and support this project and I know that the  
22 Long Island Railroad is -- can boast that it is  
23 the largest railroad -- commuter railroad in the  
24 United States. And it would be really nice for us  
25 at the end of the day to say that we are the

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 largest and the best and the most efficient.

3

4 So, again, thank you for the  
5 opportunity to bring forth our support and I  
6 certainly welcome the opportunity to work on the  
7 project as well.

7

Thank you.

8

9 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
10 you.

10

(Applause.)

11

12 (At 1:18 p.m., the hearing was  
13 temporarily recessed.)

13

14 (At 1:34 p.m., the hearing was  
15 resumed.)

15

16 THE HEARING OFFICER: Ladies  
17 and gentlemen, I'm going to ask that you take your  
18 seats. We're going to reconvene this hearing for  
19 a few minutes. We have additional speakers -- or  
20 one additional speaker at this time.

20

21 So if everyone is ready, Mr.  
22 Mark Lesko, you are the next speaker.

22

23 Typically we ask speakers to say  
24 their name and their affiliation and then three  
25 minutes to speak.

25

MR. LESKO: Thank you very

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 much.

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My name is Mark Lesko. I'm Vice President for Economic Development here at Hofstra University and I'm here on behalf of President Stuart Rabinowitz of Hofstra University.

And the entire Hofstra University community would like to welcome the Long Island Railroad here and we appreciate the opportunity of hosting this hearing on a very, very important issue to the University.

President Rabinowitz wanted me to share with you his very strong support for the third track for a number of reasons.

Primarily, the third track will directly benefit Hofstra University. Many of our students, faculty, administrators and employees reside west of the University and many of them reside actually in New York City. And enhancing connectivity with the City will only benefit Hofstra in a number of ways, primarily by allowing us to access the labor pool in New York City. And I personally know of many faculty members who live in New York City and reverse commute to Hofstra.

It also will benefit the region.

1

2 And as you know, President Rabinowitz is the  
3 Co-Vice Chair of the Regional Economic Development  
4 Council for the Long Island Region and is  
5 dedicated to building an innovation based economy  
6 throughout Long Island and, in particular, in the  
7 region near the University at the hub, the Nassau  
8 Hub region.

9

And we think that the third  
10 track will benefit all of the efforts on Long  
11 Island to build an innovation economy that will  
12 sustain the region in the long-term future of Long  
13 Island.

14

And that effort has focused on a  
15 variety of sectors including, biotech, information  
16 technology, energy, food tech -- the list goes on  
17 and on and on. But having increased connectivity  
18 to New York City dramatically bolsters the effort  
19 to create a 21st century innovation based economy  
20 on -- on Long Island.

21

President Rabinowitz is a  
22 regional leader, if not a State leader in that  
23 regard. And he strongly, strongly supports the  
24 third track effort.

25

So with that, again, welcome to

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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2 Hofstra University and President Rabinowitz sends  
3 his regrets. He's out of town otherwise he would  
4 have been here today.

5 Thank you very much.

6 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
7 you.

8 Thank you for hosting this  
9 event.

10 All right.

11 Ladies and gentlemen, unless  
12 there are any further speakers, we're going to  
13 take a break and adjourn temporarily until such  
14 time as we have additional speakers.

15 It's 1:37. We are here until  
16 2:00 to hear you if you wish to speak.

17 Thank you.

18 (Brief recess.)

19 THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay.  
20 Ladies and gentlemen, we're going to reconvene.  
21 Two additional speakers have arrived.

22 The first speaker will be:

23 Chris Boylan.

24 Mr. Boylan.

25 MR. BOYLAN: Thank you.

1-18-17 LIRR AM

1

2

My name is Christopher Boylan.

3

I'm here today on behalf of the General

4

Contractors Association of New York. I also

5

happen to be a Long Island resident myself and

6

live about a block from the Babylon line. So I am

7

a little bit familiar with the impact of living

8

near the Railroad.

9

And on behalf of the

10

contractors, we represent them in New York City

11

but we're here to support the expansion project

12

for the greater good of the regional economy.

13

I, myself, for those of you who

14

may know, was at the MTA for 21 years when the

15

original project was proposed ten years ago. And

16

I have to commend the MTA, the Long Island

17

Railroad, the Governor and his staff for

18

redefining the project and frankly addressing many

19

of the issues that were raised at the time when

20

the project was originally proposed.

21

So it is now a project that not

22

only benefits commuters on Long Island all the way

23

out to the end of the Island, but it also provides

24

a new level of safety for individuals who drive

25

north and south. And for those of us who live on

1-18-17 LIRR AM

1

2 the South Shore and intend to go to the North  
3 Shore, this will not only improve safety but  
4 increase the -- decrease the amount of time it  
5 takes to go from north to south, especially around  
6 rush hours.

7

Certainly these are good things  
8 for Long Islanders in general. Certainly it's  
9 good for the economy overall and good for our  
10 members.

11

So I'm here, again, to express  
12 support on behalf of the General Contractors and,  
13 also, on behalf of myself as a Long Island  
14 resident.

15

I see this as one of the things  
16 that will help keep us competitive in the national  
17 marketplace as the economy continues to improve  
18 and is commuting into and back out of the City  
19 becomes even more important to the region.

20

So thank you for putting this  
21 altogether and please let us know how we can be of  
22 additional help.

23

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
24 you.

25

MR. BOYLAN: Thank you.

1-18-17 LIRR AM

1

2

(Applause.)

3

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next

4

speaker is Ryan Stanton.

5

Mr. Stanton, please state your

6

name and your affiliation, if any, at the

7

beginning of your remarks.

8

Thank you.

9

MR. STANTON: Hi. My name's

10

Ryan Stanton. I'm associated with the Long Island

11

Federation of Labor.

12

First, I want to thank the

13

Governor, the MTA, the Railroad and the New York

14

State Department of Transportation for addressing

15

the Long Island Railroad enhancement project. The

16

Long Island labor movement sees this as a top

17

priority.

18

I'm here to testify on behalf of

19

the Long Island Federation of Labor, representing

20

over 250,000 union members and their families in

21

Nassau and Suffolk Counties, all of whom live in a

22

region that stands to benefit economically in a

23

significant way should this project move forward.

24

I'd also add that I'm here as a

25

young professional that's decided to work, live

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and play here on Long Island.

The importance of this project has been well documented for many years. The issues it would alleviate are just as well documented; service delays, air, noise pollution, traffic and congestion have all become part of our daily lives and are only growing more severe as the infrastructure of the Railroad has continued to age.

The proposed project provides substantial benefits:

Improved service on the main line, which moves 40 percent of the Railroad's daily ridership;

Eliminates seven grade crossings, which directly eliminates a significant number of the 3,000 horn blasts that occur daily at the grade level crossings along this corridor.

Install sound attenuation walls along the Railroad's right-of-ways;

Upgrades and modernizes track infrastructure such as switches, signals and power equipment.

Our position remains grounded in

1-18-17 LIRR AM

1

2 the concept that those most closely impacted need  
3 to be engaged throughout the process.

4

5 Many of the improvements and  
6 changes about the proposed project, such as  
7 building out within the existing right-of-way, the  
8 grade crossing eliminations and the improvements  
9 on noise pollution are a direct result of quality  
10 and constructive discussion between the community  
11 and the project team.

11

12 This project is significant for  
13 our labor movement and the entire Long Island  
14 economy. Our workforce stands to gain 14,000 jobs  
15 over a ten-year period. These jobs represent a \$3  
16 billion increase in personal income within our  
17 region and these numbers do not include the  
18 one-time benefits accrued over a five-year period  
19 of \$910 million in increased personal income and  
20 the 2,250 construction jobs that would fund those  
21 incomes.

21

22 So thanks again for your time.

22

23 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

23

24 you.

24

25 (Applause.)

25

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay.

1-18-17 LIRR AM

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Ladies and gentlemen, unless we have any additional speakers, we're going to take another break.

We will not officially conclude this hearing until 2:00. It's now 1:49.

We will reconvene if we have any additional speakers.

(At 2:00 p.m., the proceedings were concluded.)

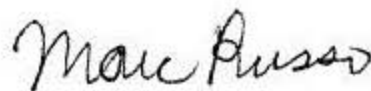
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STATE OF NEW YORK )  
SS.  
COUNTY OF NEW YORK )

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 103, 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 31st day of January,  
2017.



-----  
MARC RUSSO

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NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

-----x

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

-----x

David S. Mack Student Center  
200 Hofstra University  
Garden City, New York

January 18, 2017

6:51 P.M. - 6:53 P.M.

STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF  
WILLIAM CORNELL

REPORTED BY: Marc Russo, Stenographer

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MR. CORNELL: The Long Island

Expansion Project, Railroad, the third rail -- the  
third rail on line. Let's get it going.

Listen, Nassau County needs the  
money. It's \$2 billion. It's a great job and it's  
going to help out with all the commuters. It's  
going to help all of Long Island. It's going to  
make it safe.

I'm a fireman in Long Island. I'm  
a firefighter at Westbury. Seven grade changes  
will help. It will cause no distraction to any  
driver in ten years when this thing is projected to  
be done. We can respond faster with fire trucks.

And I guarantee you, there is no  
worse spot for any Long Island commuter than to be  
stuck at Willis Avenue when you're in the middle of  
Mineola and you're stuck there for 32 minutes  
because it's 5:30 in the afternoon and there's  
three trains that come through at the same time but  
we go right under them and that's fantastic.

Now listen though, the money  
point, the money point's fantastic. It's \$2  
billion. When's the last time we wanted to spend  
\$2 billion in our backyard? We blew that chance

1

2 with the Islanders. That guy didn't want to spend  
3 any money to make nice jobs here.

4

5 This job will commute tons of  
6 millions of dollars to Long Island, to Nassau  
7 County. When's the last time Nassau County had a  
8 billion dollars to spend in their county? None.  
9 It hasn't happened in awhile.

10

11 This is a billion dollars. People  
12 get off the perch. Get off yourself.

13

14 My grandfather came here from  
15 Germany as a barber. He built a place on Jericho  
16 Turnpike in Floral Park, which a lot of people come  
17 from that oppose this and guess what he did? He  
18 built a nice business. And what happened to him?  
19 They expanded -- they expanded Jericho Turnpike by  
20 three lanes, both ways. And what happened now?  
21 Jericho Turnpike, a fantastic corridor. There's a  
22 lot of bars. There's a lot of restaurants.  
23 There's a lot of everything going on on Jericho  
24 Turnpike.

25

26 We're muckling up in Westbury and  
27 now they want to do it in South -- and guess what?  
28 We're all good with that too. It made it better  
29 for everybody.

1

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Get off your high horse and spend  
the money, a billion dollars.

4

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Nassau County, let's make it  
happen.

6

Thank you.

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2 STATE OF NEW YORK )

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4 COUNTY OF NEW YORK )

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10 I, MARC RUSSO, a Shorthand  
11 (Stenotype) Reporter and Notary Public within and  
12 for the State of New York, do hereby certify that  
13 the foregoing pages 1 through 5, taken at the time  
14 and place aforesaid, is a true and correct  
15 transcription of my shorthand notes.

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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 5, 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 19th day of January,

2017.

-----  
MARC RUSSO

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 Hofstra University  
9 Davis S. Mack Student Center  
10 200 Hofstra Boulevard  
11 Garden City, New York  
12

13 January 18, 2017

14 6:31 p.m.  
15

16 B E F O R E:

17 SUSAN MCGOWAN, LIRR

18 THE HEARING OFFICER  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1

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

3 For the Long Island Rail Road:

4 Elisa Picca

5 Susan McGowan

6 Ed Dumas

7

8 For NYS DOT:

9 Joseph Zacharia

10

11 Other Project Participants:

12 The Public

13 The Press

14 The Media

15

16

17

18

19

20 Nicole Ellis, Stenographer

21

22

23

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25

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1 1-18-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 P R O C E E D I N G S

3 MS. PICCA: Good evening.

4 Thank you for attending this evening's  
5 public hearing for the Long Island Rail  
6 Road Expansion Project.

7 My name is Elisa Picca, I'm  
8 Executive Vice President of the Long  
9 Island Rail Road.

10 In just a moment I'll be  
11 going over the program for today, but  
12 first I would like to invite you in  
13 joining me and standing for the Pledge of  
14 Allegiance.

15 (Whereupon, the Pledge of  
16 Allegiance was recited at this time.)

17 MS. PICCA: Thank you very  
18 much.

19 And thank you for taking the  
20 time from your busy schedules to be here  
21 today, your input and feedback to this  
22 project are crucial and they're greatly  
23 appreciated.

24 This public meeting is part  
25 of a robust community outreach process for

1           1-18-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           the Long Island Rail Road Expansion  
3           Project that began last year and will  
4           continue throughout the entire project  
5           duration.

6                     In a moment we're going to  
7           show you a video about the proposed  
8           project. After that, we will take  
9           comments from those of you who have  
10          registered to speak. For those of you who  
11          would like to speak, but have not  
12          registered, there's still plenty of time  
13          to do so at our tables by the front doors.

14                    The purpose of this meeting  
15          is to discuss the Long Island Rail Road  
16          Expansion Project, and in particular the  
17          Draft Environmental Impact Statement, or  
18          Draft EIS, that was released on  
19          November 28, 2016.

20                    The environmental process  
21          began last spring with a release of a  
22          draft scoping document and continued in  
23          the summer with the release of the final  
24          scoping document. Since that time, we've  
25          performed extensive environmental

1           1-18-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           analyses, which are included and presented  
3           in the Draft EIS. The report is available  
4           on our project website, [www.aModernLI.com](http://www.aModernLI.com).  
5           It's also available at local village halls  
6           and at libraries along the project  
7           corridor, as well as at our project  
8           information center at the Mineola train  
9           station.

10                   In response to public request  
11           for more time to comment on the Draft EIS,  
12           Governor Cuomo has extended the comment  
13           period to February 15, 2017, at 5:00 p.m.  
14           The Draft EIS comment period for this  
15           project was already longer than those for  
16           much larger projects, such as the Second  
17           Avenue Subway and the new Tappan Zee  
18           Bridge. Now, because of your input,  
19           there's even more time to comment.

20                   When Governor Cuomo first  
21           announced this project, he made it clear  
22           that it would be completely different from  
23           prior proposals. Unlike prior proposals,  
24           the third track will be built entirely  
25           within the Long Island Rail Road's

1           1-18-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           right-of-way. Since the Governor's  
3           announcement over a year ago, we've  
4           implemented an unprecedented public  
5           outreach campaign, and thanks to your  
6           input we've made commitments to take no  
7           residential properties, to modify all  
8           seven grade crossings in the project area,  
9           to add sound attenuation walls, and to  
10          improve stations with enhancements and  
11          amendments like full-length platforms, to  
12          add more than 2,000 additional parking  
13          spaces, and to use innovative methods to  
14          speed construction and to minimize its  
15          impacts.

16                 All of these project elements  
17          are examples of our commitment to  
18          community outreach. Your input is  
19          important to us and the process. Your  
20          comments will be entered into the public  
21          record and reviewed accordingly. While  
22          we're here today at a formal public  
23          hearing, there are many other outreach  
24          efforts and many other opportunities to  
25          comment. Our project team has held

1 1-18-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 hundreds of meetings with local officials,  
3 businesses, leaders and residents. And  
4 many of the members of our team are here  
5 today to listen to your comments.

6 We've maintained our project  
7 information office at the Mineola train  
8 station on the south side. The hours are  
9 posted on our project website. We  
10 encourage everyone to visit, discuss this  
11 project, and to submit your comments. You  
12 can also provide comments on the project  
13 website or by e-mail to [info@aModernLI.com](mailto:info@aModernLI.com).

14 Finally, we have visited all  
15 residential properties that share a  
16 property line with the Long Island Rail  
17 Road multiple times, and as recently as  
18 last week, to remind residents about these  
19 public hearings.

20 Now I'd like to turn your  
21 attention to a short video that will  
22 discuss the project and highlight its  
23 benefits, which include service  
24 reliability, safety, and quality of life.  
25 The project will add much needed capacity

1           1-18-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           to the main line and eliminate all  
3           street-level grade crossings in the  
4           project area. Incorporating extensive  
5           input from our local communities, the  
6           project team is now exploring  
7           neighbor-friendly and innovative  
8           construction methods and practices to keep  
9           the impact of construction as minimal as  
10          possible.

11                       (Whereupon, a video was  
12          played at this time.)

13                   MS. PICCA: Now I'd like to  
14          introduce you to our representatives from  
15          the Long Island Rail Road and New York  
16          State Department of Transportation, as  
17          well as our hearing officer.

18                   To my far right we have  
19          Mr. Ed Dumas, who's the vice president of  
20          Market Development and Public Affairs at  
21          the Long Island Rail Road; seated next to  
22          him is Mr. Joseph Zacharia, project  
23          manager at New York State Department of  
24          Transportation; and to my immediate right  
25          is Ms. Susan McGowan, Long Island Rail

1           1-18-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           Road general manager of Public Affairs.  
3           Susan will serve as our hearing officer,  
4           and I'll turn the meeting to her at this  
5           time.

6                       THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
7           you, Elisa.

8                       Welcome, everybody, and we  
9           thank you for taking the time to join us  
10          here tonight. Before we begin, I ask that  
11          you bear with me because we have a few  
12          procedural items to cover, I'll try to be  
13          quick.

14                      This meeting is an  
15          opportunity to hear from you regarding the  
16          project's environmental review process, in  
17          particular, the Draft Environmental Impact  
18          Statement or Draft EIS.

19                      The Draft EIS includes a wide  
20          range of technical analyses on topics such  
21          as air quality, noise, land use,  
22          socioeconomics, traffic, parking, and much  
23          more. It also reviews any potential  
24          property impacts from the proposed  
25          project, including easements and

1 1-18-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2 commercial property acquisitions.

3 Today's proceedings also  
4 serve as the public hearing in accordance  
5 with the New York State Eminent Domain  
6 Procedures Law, EDPL. As Vice President  
7 Picca noted earlier, no permanent takings  
8 of residential property will be needed for  
9 this project.

10 Building station platform  
11 areas, retaining walls, and Long Island  
12 Rail Road infrastructure along the entire  
13 9.8-mile project corridor will require no  
14 full property takings of any type. It  
15 would require four partial acquisitions of  
16 nonresidential properties, which would not  
17 affect any structure. It would also  
18 require three permanent or temporary  
19 easements of nonresidential properties,  
20 and one temporary easement at a  
21 multifamily co-operative residential  
22 property.

23 Multiple options at the seven  
24 grade crossings locations were also  
25 evaluated. For these grade crossing

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options, we have identified full acquisitions of up to four commercial properties for which the State will work with the owners to provide relocation assistance within their communities. In addition, partial relocation of citizens' acquisitions affecting the eight nonresidential properties could be needed, but in all situations this will not affect the continued operation of the business.

Finally, the grade crossing work may need some permanent rights to access some parcels of commercial property during and after construction, and some temporary rights to access other parcels of property during and after construction, in connection with the construction or maintenance needs after construction. None of these rights of access will permanently impact the operation of the businesses affected.

For complete details about the grade crossing options, please refer to the DEIS or visit the DOT table in the

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2 open house area here tonight.

3 Again, no permanent takings  
4 of residential property will be needed for  
5 this project. Those who may be affected  
6 by property acquisitions have already been  
7 contacted by the State pursuant to the  
8 EDPL. The project team has studied the  
9 proposed project and is able to determine  
10 the relocation requirements for each grade  
11 crossing option and determine which plan  
12 would be preferable. This information  
13 will be considered along with other  
14 relative factors when selecting the  
15 project's final design.

16 New York State DOT and Empire  
17 State Development will provide extensive  
18 support for the four commercial properties  
19 that may be fully acquired with day-to-day  
20 relocation assistance as needed, including  
21 helping find suitable replacement sites,  
22 reestablishing expenses, and a variety of  
23 moving expense options.

24 The State has studied the  
25 local real estate market and has concluded

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2 that there will be a sufficient number of  
3 replacement properties to satisfy the  
4 needs of any displaced commercial  
5 occupant, irrespective of the design  
6 option chosen. Property acquisition will  
7 not commence until the final design option  
8 has been approved.

9 Each affected property owner  
10 will be contacted by a real estate  
11 specialist who will explain the proposed  
12 construction and the acquisition process.  
13 Any potentially affected property owners  
14 present here today may visit the DOT table  
15 in the open house area until the end of  
16 this hearing for further details about the  
17 process or to ask any questions you may  
18 have.

19 Now in order to give public  
20 comment, we ask that if you haven't  
21 already done so, that you sign in at the  
22 registration table outside. We're also  
23 asking that everyone limit their comments  
24 to three minutes, and that's intended to  
25 give everyone a chance to speak.

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Again, this meeting is not the only opportunity that you will have to comment on the project. You can continue to provide comments through February 15th at the project office in Mineola, that's Mineola station, by mail, or online at aModernLI.com.

We have representatives here tonight, experts from the Long Island Rail Road and from the New York State Department of Transportation, who are available to consult with you on the project, and they're in the open house suite that's just around the corner.

If you prefer to give comments privately, because we realize everyone is not comfortable speaking in front of a large audience, we have a stenographer who will take your comments and make sure that they're part of the public record.

Now because this is a formal hearing, and because we are entering your comments into the formal public record, we

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2           will not be responding to your comments or  
3           answering questions here at the dais.  
4           However, we do have staff, as mentioned,  
5           here in the building, in the open house  
6           room, who can answer your questions and  
7           concerns.

8                       If you have any special  
9           needs, be sure to get a hold of a staff  
10          member and we'll try to address those  
11          needs as best we can.

12                     And one final thing, please,  
13          if you haven't already done so, turn off  
14          your cell phones, set them to vibrate or  
15          silent, and I will begin calling names.

16                     I'm going to call the names  
17          of the first five speakers, and ask that  
18          they make their way up to the front row of  
19          seats so they can prepare themselves to  
20          speak. There are two microphones, one on  
21          the right and one on the left. And after  
22          I call the first five speakers, I'll call  
23          the name of the next speaker.

24                     When you come up to speak,  
25          please give your name and affiliation,

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2           that is, if you're part of an  
3           organization. Then you will have three  
4           minutes. There's a timer, countdown  
5           clock. The clock will show as green until  
6           you have 30 seconds, then it will turn  
7           yellow, and finally when you're out of  
8           time, it will turn red. And if you're not  
9           sure, I'll give you a gentle reminder.

10                   So the first five speakers  
11           are, and thank you for your patience  
12           during that introduction, Paul Pontieri,  
13           Ellis Simon, Karen Reiter, Kent Reiter,  
14           Dennis Feeney. And please correct me if  
15           I've mispronounced any names.

16                   The first speaker, the  
17           Honorable Paul Pontieri, Mayor of the  
18           Village of Patchogue.

19                   MR. PONTIERI: Good evening.  
20           You know, we all talk about economic  
21           development on Long Island, we all talk  
22           about the things that are great on Long  
23           Island. But one of the things that has  
24           always troubled me, and we see it every  
25           time we go in and out of Manhattan, as we

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2 begin to shrink down in terms of your car  
3 trying to get in, you're on a train trying  
4 to find a seat.

5 Our strengths are the assets  
6 that we have. The Long Island Rail Road,  
7 for communities, is a primary asset that  
8 we have. We have to make it as available  
9 as we can make it to the general public,  
10 whether people living here on the island  
11 and commuting into the city or whether  
12 they're in the city commuting out to the  
13 island.

14 We have many, many strengths,  
15 and we devalue the rail road all the time  
16 by not improving it. Not making it what  
17 it can be. This third rail gives us that.  
18 As Mayor of Patchogue, we're on the south  
19 shore line, I'd love to see what a second  
20 light coming in and out -- it would allow  
21 us to do many other things.

22 But the third rail coming  
23 out, and with the Ronkonkoma hub project  
24 being where that's at, I think really  
25 creates an opportunity for us. You have

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2 McArthur Airport, you have the ability to  
3 build up that end of the island and really  
4 to make that access so much greater.

5 So on the economic  
6 development side, on our ability to make  
7 it a better place to live, I think this is  
8 a critical piece to it. And I'll give the  
9 next person another minute and 30 seconds.  
10 Thank you very much.

11 (Applause.)

12 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
13 next speaker is Ellis Simon.

14 MR. SIMON: Good evening. My  
15 name is Ellis Simon, I'm from Oceanside.

16 And I'm here as a member of  
17 the Right Track Coalition to speak in  
18 support of the expansion project.

19 The third track between  
20 Floral Park and Hicksville, and the  
21 related improvements going with it, are  
22 really essential to meeting the need for  
23 better and more reliable service on the  
24 rail road, and also to make Long Island's  
25 economy more competitive throughout parts

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2           of the Metropolitan region.

3                       There are two projects  
4           currently underway on the rail road; East  
5           Side Access in the City, to bring trains  
6           to a new station being built under Grand  
7           Central Terminal; and the double transfer  
8           of the Ronkonkoma line between Farmingdale  
9           and Ronkonkoma out to our east. And these  
10          projects have been increasing capacity and  
11          add redundancy to the system. But to make  
12          them pay off, the rail road needs an  
13          additional project in between them, and  
14          that's the third track on the main line  
15          between Floral Park and Hicksville.

16                      There are more than 250  
17          trains that use this segment every  
18          weekday, and that makes it the busiest  
19          two-track rail road in the country. And  
20          when things go awry, hell breaks loose as  
21          delays cascade down the line, sometimes  
22          including the line that serves Oceanside.

23                      So when East Side Access  
24          opens, the rail road wants to add more  
25          trains, but it won't be able to if the

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2       tracks are incapacitated, which is the  
3       case now. The third track will make  
4       additional service possible, and in  
5       addition it will make all the trains run  
6       around blockages and stalled trains on one  
7       of the tracks.

8                   And the communities on the  
9       route will stand to benefit from the  
10      project because seven grade crossings in  
11      the villages are going to be eliminated,  
12      and that's going to reduce traffic  
13      congestion, improve safety, and reduce the  
14      noise pollution from horns and such.

15                   And also rail road plans are  
16      going to add nearly 2,500 spots of  
17      off-street parking, and I think every  
18      community will stand to benefit from more  
19      commuter parking. I don't think any town  
20      has enough, I know Oceanside certainly  
21      doesn't. And I'm sure Mineola and  
22      Hicksville the same.

23                   The third track will also  
24      facilitate reverse commuting, and that  
25      will enable people who live in New York to

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2 travel to jobs out here on Long Island and  
3 the suburbs, and that's going to help  
4 address the train drain on Long Island  
5 that keeps local businesses from growing.

6 And the Metro North rail  
7 road, you have all three major lines out  
8 of Grand Central Terminal have at least  
9 three tracks. Because of that, they have  
10 a large reverse commute business and Long  
11 Island should be able to have that, too.

12 I just want to say to the  
13 people who have concerns about the project  
14 and may oppose it, please work with the  
15 rail road to see that your concerns are  
16 addressed. The rail road has worked  
17 extensively to redefine the project so its  
18 less intrusive.

19 Long Island needs a third  
20 track project now. We have so much to  
21 gain from it and too much to lose if we  
22 let it die.

23 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
24 you.

25 (Applause.)

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2 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
3 next speaker is Karen Reiter.

4 MS. REITER: When I was  
5 growing up, my grandmother always told me  
6 that if I was going to do anything I had  
7 to do the best possible job I could. I  
8 have tried to apply this principal of  
9 excellence to everything I did, whether it  
10 was raising my own child or in the way I  
11 conducted myself at my own place of work.  
12 And I think my job now, in the winter of  
13 my life, is to set a good example and help  
14 prevent the destruction of suburbia as we  
15 know it.

16 When you want to do a great  
17 job, you need to model your behavior and  
18 ideas after someone or something that has  
19 already done an extraordinary job. We are  
20 here tonight to discuss a possible LIRR  
21 train expansion. And in order to have  
22 that discussion, we must look at the  
23 finest rail road system in the world, and  
24 that is the Swiss railway system.

25 Beginning in the early years

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2 of the last century, the Swiss invested in  
3 technology and infrastructure. Having had  
4 a large railway system for approximately  
5 the same time as the LIRR, the Swiss  
6 approached railways a bit differently.  
7 The Swiss made sure plenty of space was  
8 built into all cities and landscapes,  
9 unlike the very motorized culture of the  
10 US, where building a rail line is a huge  
11 problem in terms of finding enough pieces  
12 of land to possibly expand an existing  
13 railway.

14 The proposed  
15 less-than-ten-mile area designated for  
16 expansion is now too densely populated to  
17 even consider expanding a railway. We  
18 have residential homes next to the tracks,  
19 schools next to the tracks, churches next  
20 to the tracks, businesses next to the  
21 tracks, large and dangerous petroleum  
22 plants next to the tracks, historic post  
23 offices next to the tracks, children's  
24 baseball fields next to the tracks, bird  
25 sanctuaries next to the tracks, parking

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2 lots next to the tracks, and pools and  
3 recreation centers right next to the  
4 tracks.

5 So the time has passed for  
6 railway expansion in this very densely  
7 populated area. Just like the Swiss, but  
8 unfortunately 100 years later, we need to  
9 remove the Bunsen burners used to defrost  
10 the Jamaica switches and replace them with  
11 some modern technology. We need green  
12 locomotives. The LIRR has to stop  
13 spraying dangerous toxic chemicals in  
14 their right-of-way without ever telling  
15 anyone.

16 How could thousands of tons  
17 of contaminated soil ever be removed  
18 safely without poisonous dust becoming  
19 airborne? Haven't enough people in Garden  
20 City died from cancer already? We need to  
21 make the LIRR the best passenger line  
22 possible by adding more switches so we  
23 don't have another train derailment like  
24 we did in Garden City. And we need to  
25 invest in trains with positive train

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2           control, like the Swiss trains, so we  
3           don't have another horrible Hoboken  
4           derailment or the January derailment in  
5           Brooklyn. All these derailments could  
6           have been prevented if the trains had  
7           positive train control. Every day we  
8           continue to operate trains without a  
9           positive train control, we risk having  
10          another deadly crash.

11                 We also need to train our  
12          LIRR engineers like the Swiss do, and also  
13          constantly give refresher courses to the  
14          LIRR engineers like the Swiss railway  
15          system requires. Also in Switzerland, if  
16          the train shows signs of overcrowding, the  
17          Swiss add more trains. In other words,  
18          the Swiss run more trains at busy times.

19                 We must also accept the fact  
20          that in order to have the best passenger  
21          line, we have to designate it as a  
22          passenger line and get the overnight  
23          freight trains off this small, densely  
24          populated corridor. The heaviest trains  
25          in the world are freight trains and they

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2 break rails. Just like the Swiss, we must  
3 move any freight to an alternate mode of  
4 transportation, and that, of course, is to  
5 be decided by the experts whether it would  
6 be better suited for Suffolk to move their  
7 garbage out on a barge system from their  
8 ports or on the side of the expressway.

9 It is unfortunate it took the  
10 LIRR 100 years longer than the Swiss, but  
11 it's never too late to improve technology  
12 and explore new ways of improving  
13 everyone's life. We need to have the gold  
14 standard not the substandard.

15 THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay.  
16 Our next speaker is Kent Reiter, and we  
17 ask that the audience allow the speakers  
18 to speak uninterrupted. Everyone has a  
19 point of view, we're here to hear  
20 everyone's comments.

21 MR. REITER: I think the  
22 whole project seems to be a lie. I mean,  
23 what's so important about this ten-mile  
24 stretch of rail that the State has to  
25 offer \$2 billion worth of incentives to

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2 get this thing approved? They have to  
3 offer all these villages seven bridges at  
4 \$100 million a pop, parking garages for  
5 thousands of cars for these villages for  
6 millions of dollars, and all other  
7 assorted buildings for these villages to  
8 go along with the third rail.

9 The whole premise is that if  
10 there's a grade, and I can't get around it  
11 everything backs up. And we've mentioned  
12 that put more switches in between the two  
13 rails so that you don't have to -- so you  
14 go around the broken trains, so instead  
15 we're going to spend \$2 billion for a  
16 third rail, which is not going to have any  
17 platforms, there's going to be no  
18 stations. The middle rail is -- it's  
19 serving mostly all of Suffolk County, it  
20 doesn't serve any of the people here.

21 There's not going to be any  
22 stations, you can't get on that middle  
23 rail from anyplace in this ten-mile  
24 stretch. So what is the real purpose of  
25 this ten-mile single track if it's going

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2 to have no stations on it?

3 I mean, we have -- we've been  
4 told that it's not for freight, but it  
5 appears it has to be freight because  
6 there's no stations on it, it's for  
7 freight. But for some reason it's a big  
8 secret, it can't be mentioned about  
9 freight. And I'd like to know what it is,  
10 because every time you ask anybody it's --  
11 there's no extra freight on it, but we  
12 have Brook haven Rail Terminal in Yaphank,  
13 820 acres of freight; the Brook haven lab  
14 has a freight spur, they're always putting  
15 radioactive stuff on it, and that goes  
16 behind our house. And you got EPCAL in  
17 Calverton, that's the old place that has  
18 80 or 100 watts in it, that's going to be  
19 developed all for industrial buildings,  
20 that's a spur.

21 These are all places that are  
22 ready to go and it's going to be freight.  
23 And the Pilgrim State Spur, there's a  
24 whole project in there, a hub. So Gershow  
25 Recycling has its own spur, Catalyst

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2 Gravel, these are all commercial places  
3 with freight.

4 And if it's freight, you  
5 can't burden the people that live along  
6 this track with all the debris and all the  
7 headaches and broken foundations and  
8 getting no respect.

9 I mean, and we're also being  
10 confronted with -- we're being singled out  
11 and manipulated because the press, or  
12 whatever it is, is putting commuters  
13 against us. There should be -- it's like  
14 the rail road has to have an underdog and  
15 pit one group against another.

16 It just seems like if you  
17 want to buy our properties, buy us all  
18 out, there's no resistance. I don't see  
19 anything in this whole project is for --  
20 that's for the people that adjoin the  
21 tracks. That's it.

22 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
23 next speaker is Dennis Feeney. He will be  
24 followed by Mark Mack, Dave Kapell and  
25 John Murphy.

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2 MR. FEENEY: Good evening.

3 My name is Dennis Feeney, I'm a life-long  
4 resident in Nassau County and a proud  
5 member of the Laborers Union Local 1298  
6 for nearly 30 years.

7 Before I begin my comments,  
8 I'd like to thank Governor Cuomo, MTA and  
9 Long Island Rail Road for proposing the  
10 third track project that will bring Long  
11 Island a long awaited and much needed  
12 update and expansion of the rail system.

13 A project of this magnitude  
14 will benefit thousands of Long Islanders,  
15 it is much needed and we should all be in  
16 favor for various reasons.

17 Initially during the  
18 construction phase of this project, over  
19 1,000 men and women in the construction  
20 industry will have gainful employment  
21 right here on Long Island for several  
22 years. Also benefitting during  
23 construction will be the businesses that  
24 supply materials, fuel, equipment, and  
25 tools that will be necessary to complete

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this project, thus providing opportunities for more employment as these businesses require additional help.

These are just some of the immediate benefits; however, not the only ones. After construction is complete, the Long Island Rail Road customer will enjoy the use of a new parking garage to safely park their cars and avoid parking in residential areas and enduring the long walk to the station. The customer will also have the use of new well-lit stations, updated stairs, escalators and elevators, and be able to board trains from newly benefited platforms, some that have not seen an upgrade for nearly 50 to 60 years.

Finally, the Long Island Rail Road customer will be able to find seating. With overcrowding on trains, many of us know that the 30-to-45-minute ride to and from Penn Station can be quite uncomfortable and unsafe when standing in a doorway or aisle of a speeding train.

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Additionally, dangerous grade crossings are a major source of traffic congestion, and by their elimination we will improve traffic flow, safety, and eliminate the potential for more deadly accidents. This idea simply does not work in our densely populated area of Nassau County.

The bridges in this area are also antiquated and long overdue for replacement. Many are undersized and narrow creating bottlenecks on our roadways. Several of these bridges are approaching 100 years of age. They have the potential to be struck by a driver and cause damage that will cripple the roadway. Must we wait for another accident to finally take action? Don't we all deserve better?

In closing, I recommend that everyone read the Draft Environmental Impact Study and see for themselves the details that the MTA and Long Island Rail Road have put into a template to minimize

1           1-18-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           the impact on the residents and  
3           businesses. A project of this size will  
4           definitely have its opposition, but it's  
5           long overdue and necessary to provide us,  
6           the residents of Long Island, with a safe  
7           and up-to-date road and rail system.

8                     Thank you for your time and  
9           putting forth this proposal.

10                    (Applause.)

11                   MR. KAPPELL: Good evening.  
12           My name is Dave Kapell, I'm the Executive  
13           Director of the Right Track For Long  
14           Island Coalition, and I've been asked by  
15           Jay Schneiderman, Town Supervisor of the  
16           Town of Southampton, to read this letter  
17           into the record.

18                    "Dear Mr. Dumas: The Town of  
19           Southampton has reviewed the scoping and  
20           DEIS documents available online as part of  
21           the third track expansion public hearing  
22           process.

23                    "As town supervisor, I  
24           support the Long Island Rail Road's  
25           efforts to add another track along the

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2           Floral Park to Hicksville corridor. I  
3           believe that these improvements will  
4           provide much needed track congestion  
5           relief and operational flexibility in  
6           riding of trains at all times, and most  
7           especially during emergency situations,  
8           such as equipment breakdowns and other  
9           anticipated events.

10                       "I also strongly support the  
11           proposed safety improvements provided by  
12           the elimination of seven at-grade  
13           crossings and improved pedestrian access  
14           plans. Sincerely Jay Shneiderman,  
15           Supervisor."

16                       I'd also like to -- before I  
17           leave, I have letters. They were letters  
18           read into the record earlier today by  
19           supervisors for the Town of Brook haven,  
20           Islip, Babylon, Smithtown, and Huntington.  
21           I'll submit these for the record.

22                       But I'd like to announce that  
23           at this point, with the inclusion of this  
24           support and the ballooning of our  
25           coalition to 5,000 members, our members

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2           now speak for over 2 million people on  
3           Long Island and we urge you to advance  
4           this project.

5                     Thank you very much.

6                     (Applause.)

7                     THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
8           next speaker is John Murphy followed by  
9           Mark Mack.

10                    MR. MURPHY: Hello, John  
11           Murphy. I'm a Floral Park resident for  
12           35 years. I live in proximity to the  
13           track, my backyard abuts the track. I'm a  
14           32-year union member, the brothers back  
15           there.

16                    My concern with this project  
17           is if it were to go through, it's a  
18           hundred percent union property. It goes  
19           to all you guys in the back, none of  
20           these -- you hear these horror stories  
21           with these nonunion outfits, not good.

22                    In November the DEIS came  
23           out, it stated many things that would be  
24           addressed, including the sound barrier  
25           walls. When most people think of the

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2 sound barrier walls, they think of the  
3 ones used along the highway, usually 12  
4 feet tall, if not even bigger than that.  
5 These walls have been used with great  
6 success. If you read the fine print the  
7 MTA DEIS, table 12-7 it states, "Sound  
8 attenuation walls and retaining walls in  
9 fill sections are most likely to be four  
10 feet above the top of the rail --" the  
11 train wheel is four feet high --  
12 "standalone sound attenuation walls will  
13 likely be six to eight feet high --" I'm  
14 six-foot tall.

15 A four-foot sound attenuation  
16 wall will do very little for the loudest  
17 of trains, for example, locomotive freight  
18 cars. My concern is to make sure that  
19 this is on property and we have proper  
20 sound barriers, not a four-foot wall, that  
21 isn't going to do anything.

22 And that's all I have to say.  
23 Thank you very much.

24 (Applause.)

25 THE HEARING OFFICER:

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2 Mr. Mack.

3 MR. MACK: Thank you. I  
4 appreciate your patience with me. Thank  
5 you.

6 First of all, good evening.  
7 Mark Mack, and I'm just a taxpayer funding  
8 this project. I'm trying to oppose.

9 I oppose this project because  
10 I believe strongly that the taxpayers have  
11 had enough. For instance, we talk about  
12 the Second Avenue subway system that  
13 started at \$4 billion, ballooned into  
14 \$6.6 billion. Is this the same repeat of  
15 history that will occur with this track,  
16 this ten-mile stretch, something that  
17 starts at \$2 billion over four years,  
18 which equates to \$500 million per year,  
19 and then balloons into \$4 billion more, so  
20 \$8 billion over four years, which would  
21 equate to \$2 billion per year?

22 I think the MTA can allocate  
23 their funds by not necessarily making the  
24 system bigger, but making it more  
25 efficient for everyone else, first of all.

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2 For instance, everyone has the same fear  
3 that every time a snow storm or rainstorm  
4 comes, the electrical power will fail, the  
5 grid also fails. Next thing you know, how  
6 will we get home? The east tunnel has  
7 flooded, how will we get out of 34th  
8 Street, Penn Station? How will we get  
9 back to Ronkonkoma? These are the  
10 everyday things that people worry about  
11 during this kind of weather.

12 I strongly oppose this  
13 building of this project for the simple  
14 fact that the allocation of funds that the  
15 MTA has been spewed out in the area --  
16 excuse me, needs to be spewed out in more  
17 areas. For instance, in North Babylon,  
18 where I live currently, we need a parking  
19 lot there. We have migrants, transplants  
20 from every other area that has a parking  
21 lot they have to pay, they come to this  
22 parking lot and they flood the parking  
23 lot. The residents of North Babylon  
24 cannot park their cars to go to work, to  
25 go to the doctors' appointments, to do

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2 whatever business they need to do by using  
3 the Long Island Rail Road. We need to  
4 make the system more efficient for the  
5 taxpayer, not necessarily more bigger.

6 I had a couple of talking  
7 points, I'm sorry.

8 One main concern is why can't  
9 we use that money to fund new tracks or a  
10 new electrical system. Power failures  
11 occur often. Just the other day, or last  
12 year, a train slipped off in Brooklyn off  
13 the tracks, right, so safety concerns.

14 I agree with one of the other  
15 individuals here tonight who said we need  
16 positive train control. Governor Cuomo,  
17 after the Port Authority -- the train  
18 crashed in New Jersey, he also said the  
19 same thing. After the sister crash in  
20 Metro North, he also stated the same  
21 thing. MTA, Long Island Rail Road needs  
22 to invest more in safety. Making the  
23 system bigger, does not make it better.

24 Thank you, speaker.

25 (Applause.)

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2 THE HEARING OFFICER: All  
3 right. We have -- at this time, we have  
4 one more registered speaker and that is  
5 Vincent Albanese.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. ALBANESE: My name is  
8 Vincent Albanese, and I'm submitting  
9 public comments on behalf of the Laborers  
10 International Union of North America and  
11 our affiliated heavy construction local  
12 here on Long Island, Laborers Local 1298.

13 We're here today to urge the  
14 MTA and LIRR to move forward with this  
15 critical infrastructure project as soon as  
16 possible.

17 Our members, and the  
18 contractors we work for, rely on public  
19 investment, much like this one, to keep  
20 people working, particularly when economic  
21 conditions are difficult like they are  
22 right now. The jobs constructing this  
23 project will be good middle-class jobs  
24 that are the backbone of a strong local  
25 economy.

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2 Estimates place those jobs at  
3 well over 2,000 during construction, which  
4 means over 2,000 families will be paying  
5 local taxes and contributing back to local  
6 businesses. However, for us, this project  
7 isn't just about creating local jobs in  
8 the short-term, it's about finally  
9 creating a rail system that works for all  
10 Long Islanders and facilitates an  
11 environment which leads to continued local  
12 jobs. This, in the long-term, is what is  
13 needed to sustain a prosperous middle  
14 class and create future opportunities for  
15 our members.

16 We also have many brothers  
17 and sisters from many different locals and  
18 trades that use the LIRR to commute to and  
19 from work, whether it be here on Long  
20 Island or in New York City. As trades  
21 people, we wake up early in the morning,  
22 often work long hours, and then, of  
23 course, go to bed early all to be ready to  
24 repeat the cycle again. Our time with our  
25 families is often short and incredibly

1           1-18-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2       valuable. This is why increasingly  
3       reliable, long-time train service is  
4       imperative to our life as fathers,  
5       mothers, sons and daughters, and, of  
6       course, brothers and sisters. We believe  
7       these upgrades to the LIRR will allow us  
8       the family life we deserve and value so  
9       much.

10                   And I would also add one  
11       final point. Our members train  
12       extensively to do this work safely and  
13       efficiently. While disruptions during  
14       construction may be inevitable, I couldn't  
15       imagine a more qualified workforce to  
16       complete this project on time and ensure  
17       that the safety of the surrounding  
18       communities is top priority.

19                   Our members live here, they  
20       coach little league here, they are members  
21       of the local fire departments, and they  
22       care deeply about the well-being of all  
23       their neighbors. It is apparent to us  
24       that every effort to accommodate our  
25       communities has been laid out and planned

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2           for in the DEIS.

3                       We greatly appreciate these  
4           efforts and look forward to putting our  
5           talents to work moving Long Island forward  
6           for all working people. Thank you.

7                       (Applause.)

8                       THE HEARING OFFICER: Ladies  
9           and gentlemen, as far as I know, we have  
10          no additional registered speakers. Chris,  
11          are you aware of any additional registered  
12          speakers at this time?

13                      All right, then we will be  
14          taking a brief recess. We do have  
15          commuters, as we did last night, who are  
16          on their way home. We will be here until  
17          9:00 to take testimony from those people  
18          who show up later in the evening.

19                      So we'll be taking a brief  
20          recess, but we're not going anywhere, and  
21          the open house room is open if you have  
22          any questions or concerns for our experts.

23                      Thank you.

24                      (At 7:17 p.m., the public  
25          hearing was temporarily recessed.)

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2 (At 7:25 p.m., the public  
3 hearing reconvened.)

4 THE HEARING OFFICER: Ladies  
5 and gentlemen, if you could take your  
6 seats and give your attention to the next  
7 speaker, Mr. John Kingston.

8 If you could, please state  
9 your name and your affiliation, if any,  
10 and then you have three minutes.

11 MR. KINGSTON: John Kingston;  
12 Carle Place, New York. Just here to voice  
13 my support as a 36-year commuter on the  
14 Long Island Rail Road.

15 I'm sure you're into your  
16 fourth session and by now you've heard  
17 almost everything. So I was trying to  
18 think of a couple perspectives I could  
19 bring.

20 I do travel quite a bit for  
21 work and wherever I go, I do try to take  
22 mass transit just because I prefer it and  
23 I like to see how the systems work.

24 Two things that I'm thinking  
25 of recently. There's a commuter rail

1           1-18-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           service in Virginia called Virginia  
3           Railway Express, VRE, it runs between  
4           Fredericksburg and Washington, also  
5           branches from Manassas to Washington. It  
6           is a mere fraction of what travels on the  
7           Long Island Rail Road, and if you want to  
8           go out at 4:00 in the afternoon from  
9           Fredricksberg to go to Washington you  
10          can't. There's just no services. It's  
11          essentially northbound in the morning and  
12          southbound in the evening.

13                 Couple years ago they were  
14           getting bottlenecks with CSX trains  
15           because they use CSX trackage for most of  
16           their pathway and they added a third rail,  
17           third set of tracks. And what really  
18           struck me is this sort of dinky rail road  
19           compared to Long Island Rail Road could  
20           see the need for three tracks, but yet  
21           there's still our opponents, some of them  
22           elected officials, who resist it here. I  
23           think the example that they set, kind of,  
24           shows that if you're in a major city, two  
25           tracks just simply isn't enough.

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The other point I want to make is, I don't know, I travel a lot. I travel to Europe, Asia, and one thing when you're in a business like mine, you get a sense of how much Long Island is in competition. We're in competition with other areas in New York, the New York Metropolitan area for the best people, the best jobs, the best companies. We are in competition with other areas in the country. We are in competition with Boston, Washington, Philadelphia, and so on.

And the place that we're really in competition with is in London. And the reason we are in competition with London is we're essentially both trying to be the worldwide financial capital of the world. And obviously we know the benefits here on Long Island being, but I think we would still be the worldwide financial capital.

Next year, I believe it's next year, they're going to open up

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2 Crossrail in London. It's a massive  
3 expansion of their rail system, it will go  
4 from Heathrow to Canary and other parts of  
5 London. There's already a goal  
6 surrounding many of the construction  
7 projects on the plans. Now there's a  
8 Crossrail 2, which is another big project  
9 that's also going to tie into an already  
10 extensive system.

11 These kind of things matter  
12 here. I work for a company that I saw my  
13 division's headquarters move from New York  
14 to London, so I've seen this kind of  
15 movement. It is important that we stay  
16 competitive, not just with other areas in  
17 this region, not just with other areas in  
18 this country, but with other areas in the  
19 world. And that's why you have my full  
20 backing and hope that you'll approve this  
21 project and can't wait for it to get  
22 started.

23 Though I did want to say my  
24 station in Carle Place is going to be  
25 closed for a year. So I'm not too happy

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2           about that, but if you could change that,  
3           that would be great. Thank you.

4                   THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
5           you.

6                   Do we have any other speakers  
7           at this time?

8                   (No response.)

9                   THE HEARING OFFICER: All  
10          right. We're going to take another  
11          recess, but as mentioned earlier, we're  
12          having this session in the evening because  
13          we know there are people who are working  
14          during the day and need time to get home  
15          at night before they can attend. So like  
16          last night, we expect to -- we will be  
17          here until 9:00 for anyone who signs up to  
18          speak between now until then.

19                  Thank you very much, all of  
20          you, for coming and participating in this  
21          event.

22                  (At 7:28 p.m., the public  
23          hearing was temporarily recessed.)

24                  (At 8:45 p.m., the public  
25          hearing reconvened.)

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2 THE HEARING OFFICER: It's  
3 8:45 p.m., there's no more registered  
4 speakers, we're concluding this evening's  
5 hearing.

6 Thank you for joining us.

7 (Time noted: 8:45 p.m.)  
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## C E R T I F I C A T E

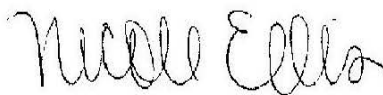
STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  : ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

I, NICOLE ELLIS, a Notary Public for and  
within the State of New York, do hereby certify:

I reported the proceedings in the  
within-entitled matter, and that the within  
transcript is a true record of such proceedings.

I further certify that I am not related to  
any of the parties to this action by blood or by  
marriage and that I am in no way interested in the  
outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
hand this 20th day of January 2017.



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NICOLE ELLIS

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	<b>wait (2)</b> 33:18;48:21 <b>wake (1)</b> 42:21 <b>walk (1)</b> 32:12 <b>wall (2)</b> 37:16,20 <b>walls (8)</b> 7:9;11:11;36:25;	<b>12 (1)</b> 37:3 <b>12-7 (1)</b> 37:7	<b>6</b>	<b>6:31 (1)</b> 1:14 <b>60 (1)</b> 32:18

<b>7</b>				
<b>7:17 (1)</b> 44:24 <b>7:25 (1)</b> 45:2 <b>7:28 (1)</b> 49:22				
<b>8</b>				
<b>8:45 (3)</b> 49:24;50:3,7 <b>80 (1)</b> 29:18 <b>820 (1)</b> 29:13				
<b>9</b>				
<b>9.8-mile (1)</b> 11:13 <b>9:00 (2)</b> 44:17;49:17				

1

2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----x

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----x

8 Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11

12 January 19, 2017

13 1:01 P.M. - 1:03 P.M.

14

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17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 CURTIS AXELSEN

19 REPORTED BY: Marc Russo, Stenographer

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MR. AXELSEN: Curtis Axelsen,  
A-x-e-l-s-e-n, 1421 Lowell, L-o-w-e-l-l Avenue, New  
Hyde Park, New York, resident.

I'd just like to comment that the  
plan put forth by the MTA doesn't address the  
economic impact of their taking of the storage  
building off of New Hyde Park Road.

As a former School Board member of  
both the New Hyde Park/Garden City Park School  
District and the Sewanhaka School District, the  
loss of revenue if it's \$300,000, as that's what's  
projected in the plan, we're talking about the  
potential loss of three teacher salaries, minimal.

The MTA needs to commit to a plan,  
not only for construction but a plan to reimburse  
the village and the School District affected by  
their construction with the loss of revenue.

I personally would like to see  
them take the school districts and the village out  
of the MTA salary tax, which I think still exists.  
And if not, then certainly we -- the school  
districts should get additional funding from the  
Governor's office to make up for the loss of the  
revenue.

1  
2                   Some MTA representatives have said  
3   to me that they anticipate that the tax base will  
4   go back up because of the increased value of  
5   property or that we can use the -- the taken  
6   property for additional parking, which can generate  
7   additional revenue, but there's no commitment to  
8   date as to the MTA's plan to make up for this loss  
9   of significant yearly revenue, certainly while the  
10  construction's going on and thereafter.

11                   That's all.

12                   Thank you so much.

13                   Okay. We're good.

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STATE OF NEW YORK )  
SS.  
COUNTY OF NEW YORK )

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and place aforesaid, is a true and correct  
transcription of my shorthand notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have  
hereunto set my name this 19th day of January 2017.

  
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MARC RUSSO

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NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

-----x

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

-----x

Inn at New Hyde Park  
214 Jericho Turnpike  
New Hyde Park, New York

January 19, 2017  
10:51 A.M. - 10:58 A.M.

STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF  
BESS GIORDANO

REPORTED BY: Marc Russo, Stenographer

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2

MS. GIORDANO: Okay.

3

4

5

My name is Bess Giordano. I live at 500 Sixth Avenue, New Hyde Park. I'm right across from the railroad tracks.

6

7

8

9

10

My house is only 40 feet from where the third rail is supposed to go and I have a couple of, you know, kind of problems with the third -- not problems, you know, things that might erupt, especially with construction.

11

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16

Because I'm so close, I have -- and the street's very narrow because my house is right there. I have -- going to my house we have a water line. I have a sewer line. And I'm talking about the vibrations, things that might cause to this kind of stuff.

17

18

19

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21

22

And also underneath my steps, the right side of my steps, I have -- I'm on a slab so I have an oil tank there. So the vibrations are going to be a real problem if they're severe. It may cause a lot of damage with the windows and everything else.

23

24

25

So -- let me see concerns -- oh, these glasses aren't working. The vibrations -- extreme water, earth, sewer lines, oil tank -- I

1

2 did that. Damage to the home.

3

Constant noise due to the  
4 construction they have on the tracks. I should  
5 have wore my other glasses.

6

There must be a way -- but there's  
7 going to be a lot of pounding. I was warned about  
8 that when construction does start. And if there's  
9 any way that the pounding could be subsided a bit,  
10 especially when it's so close to -- I'm not the  
11 only one that's that close. There are people that  
12 are close also.

13

And I want them to, you know, if  
14 they can 'cause I have had some -- some  
15 construction going on near me that they were  
16 pounding and the house was shaking. And I did call  
17 them and they -- they did something so it wasn't  
18 bad. The house wasn't shaking any more and it  
19 wasn't that bad with the vibrations.

20

So if anything can be done on that  
21 end, especially when they're bordering homes and  
22 even businesses you can't, you know, there could be  
23 damage done there.

24

And the contaminated materials  
25 like, as I said, I'm right across from where the

1

2 third rail is going to go. I'm on the south side.  
3 My house faces the tracks and there's like, you  
4 know, the dirt they're going to be bringing up and  
5 stuff that's going to go in the air that can be  
6 hazardous to the health. I mean, you know, that's  
7 going to be a big problem.

8 I mean, I don't know if anything  
9 was ever put down there in the past but it should  
10 be addressed.

11 Let's see what else. Concerns,  
12 damage.

13 Okay. Now the quality of life for  
14 the duration of the project and after is going to  
15 be horrendous, especially if it's three or four  
16 years. I mean -- I mean, we're not going to be  
17 able to travel south -- I mean, I'm on the south  
18 side of the tracks and traveling around the  
19 neighborhood is going to be a horror. It is going  
20 to be a horror.

21 And it's like, I don't mind that  
22 much for the trains, as far as the noise and stuff  
23 because the trains are not a problem with the  
24 vibrations, it's just the freight that causes a big  
25 problem with vibrations, noise.

1  
2                   The electrified trains aren't that  
3 bad as far as sound and vibrations, it's the  
4 freight. Now if there's any way if this third  
5 thing goes through that if freight goes through --  
6 freight is going to go through, it's placed on the  
7 center, on the center rail, not on the side where  
8 the houses or businesses are and, also, to kind of  
9 confine their speed because once the -- once the --  
10 the crossings go, what's to stop them from going  
11 faster? They usually slow down because they're  
12 reaching a crossing. Because the freight trains  
13 don't stop at stations, they go straight through.  
14 They go straight through to Hicksville or wherever  
15 they go.

16                   So as far as that, I'm concerned  
17 about speed on the freight because that can cause a  
18 big problem with the noise and the vibrations would  
19 be more because they really -- they really make a  
20 lot of noise and -- and rumble the house. Whenever  
21 a freight train goes by, even now is a little  
22 shaking, you know, like if I'm on the couch, you  
23 can feel a little vibration.

24                   And now with the third rail, it  
25 might be on the south side if they come -- plus --

1

2 plus they might be going faster. I think that  
3 would be a problem.

4

And also the freight train - I got  
5 that.

6

Now I've been living in New Hyde  
7 Park for like over 35 years. I lived by the tracks  
8 for 35 years. I really haven't had a problem with  
9 the tracks for 35 years. Some people say, oh, you  
10 moved by the tracks, what do you expect?  
11 Thirty-five years, no problem.

12

I foresee a problem with this,  
13 with the construction, the length of time for the  
14 construction, the disarray, the -- the disruptment  
15 of everything in the neighborhood, the disruptment  
16 of everything.

17

I mean the people from the  
18 Railroad have been very nice. They've come by,  
19 they've looked, they've addressed some things,  
20 which is, I mean, I really appreciate it.

21

John McCarthy, he was a, you know,  
22 I said something, what, about a wall or something  
23 like that and sound proofing. And they're going  
24 along with that, which I appreciate that very much.  
25 But there's still other things that have to be

1

2 looked at because it's going to cause a lot of  
3 problems for a lot of people that live in this  
4 neighborhood that aren't going to be benefiting by  
5 any of this.

6 The crossings should have been  
7 done a long time ago because of safety. You know,  
8 it should have been done because of safety at the  
9 crossing. But this here is going to be -- it's  
10 going to be horrible for the area. And not only  
11 us, Floral Park, New Hyde Park. I don't know if  
12 the other -- the other areas are going to be  
13 affected by it but I know we're very close with New  
14 Hyde -- with Floral Park, you know.

15 As a matter of fact, I'm a  
16 neighbor to the Floral Park pool.

17 So as I said, like this is what  
18 I'm concerned about and basically, you know, I -- I  
19 know this is for the commuters but you got to look  
20 at the other side of, you know, who are you going  
21 to harm and it's going to be -- it's going to be  
22 harmful to a lot of people and even businesses.  
23 Because people on the south side are not going to  
24 travel across that mess when the crossings get  
25 done, the track gets done, they're not going to be

1

2     able to go across there because when New Hyde Park  
3     gets done, Covert's going to be closed.

4

                    Everyone's going to go south.  
5     They're not going to go north just to shop and  
6     everything else, if they can get out of the  
7     neighborhood because Floral Park is too bad when it  
8     gets closed down because that's going to be worked  
9     on. I mean, it's going to be hard to get out of  
10    the neighborhood going -- going north because  
11    everything is going to be shut down and blocked.

12

                    That's mine. That's it.

13

                    Thanks a lot.

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2 STATE OF NEW YORK )

3 SS.

4 COUNTY OF NEW YORK )

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NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

-----x

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

-----x

Inn at New Hyde Park  
214 Jericho Turnpike  
New Hyde Park, New York

January 19, 2017

12:55 P.M. - 12:58 P.M.

STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF  
STEPHEN MC ALLISTER

REPORTED BY: Marc Russo, Stenographer

1

2

3

MR. MC ALLISTER: Hi. My name is  
Stephen McAllister.

4

5

I am the Police Commissioner of  
the Village of Floral Park, the Police Department.

6

7

8

9

I have a couple of concerns that I  
wish to share with the Long Island Railroad and the  
MTA due to their oncoming or projected third rail  
project.

10

11

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13

14

First, I would like to know if  
they have any plans for -- that they could share  
with me for the actual construction phase as to  
where they're going to stage their employees and,  
also, equipment and/or their private vehicles.

15

16

17

18

19

We are a densely populated  
village, as they may be aware, and we don't have  
much parking to accommodate their needs. So I  
would be interested in seeing those questions  
answered.

20

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23

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25

Secondly, with the construction of  
the Covert Avenue underpass, or overpass whichever  
you may choose, during that construction phase most  
traffic will be diverted into or through Floral  
Park. And I am concerned because Tulip Avenue,  
which runs east-west presently today, has

1

2 approximately 10,000 cars per day and Plainfield  
3 Avenue, which intersects going north-south has  
4 approximately 8,000.

5

6 So at the intersection of Tulip  
7 and Plainfield, 18,000 vehicles. Any -- it's  
8 already congested especially during peak travel  
9 times, AM rush, PM rush. So I'm concerned with the  
10 additional volume as to how we are going to cope as  
11 a village and what plans are going to be made to  
12 help us alleviate.

12

13 The problems we're going to deal  
14 with are due to added volume. We will have added  
15 accidents and, therefore, some aided cases and  
16 injuries due to accidents.

16

17 My police officers will be called  
18 upon to respond to those additional aided and  
19 accidents, thereby taking them out of service to  
20 the rest of the village. So how do we alleviate  
21 that projected problem? And are there any plans  
22 for traffic diversion?

22

23 And that's all I have to say.

23

24 Thank you for your time and I look  
25 forward to your response.

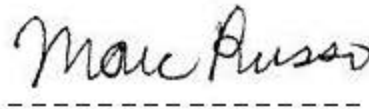
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STATE OF NEW YORK )  
SS.  
COUNTY OF NEW YORK )

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NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

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LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

-----x

Inn at New Hyde Park  
214 Jericho Turnpike  
New Hyde Park, New York

January 19, 2017  
11:22 A.M. - 11:25 A.M.

STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF  
ANN THOMPSON

REPORTED BY: Marc Russo, Stenographer

1

2

MS. THOMPSON: Okay. My name is

3

Ann Thompson.

4

I live at 40 Hathaway Drive in

5

Garden City. It has been my residence for 40

6

years.

7

It's a unique neighborhood with

8

narrow streets and sidewalks only on one side. It

9

also has many young families.

10

My concern is the circle, which

11

currently borders Greenridge -- which currently is

12

at Greenridge Avenue and Clinch Avenue. I'd like

13

to know if this will be open for people to drop

14

train passengers off or if this will be blocked

15

off, so that my neighbors and I don't have to worry

16

about traffic in this very child-friendly

17

neighborhood, if this will affect the safety of the

18

children.

19

I have spoken to representatives

20

and they have told me that they're not quite sure

21

what will happen to this circle and if there will

22

be access for cars from Greenridge and Hathaway.

23

My e-mail is a -- t-h-o-m-p

24

8866@aol.com.

25

I would appreciate some sort of

1

2 response since the representatives I had met this  
3 morning did not have any info.

4

Thank you.

5

THE STENOGRAPHER: Okay. Just in  
6 reference to your e-mail, 88 number?

7

MS. THOMPSON: 8866.

8

THE STENOGRAPHER: Okay.

9

MS. THOMPSON: And it's  
10 athomp8866.

11

THE STENOGRAPHER: So it wasn't  
12 the letter A?

13

MS. THOMPSON: Yeah, yeah.

14

Okay. Who knows. Whatever.

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SS.  
COUNTY OF NEW YORK )

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-----  
MARC RUSSO

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 The Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 11:30 a.m.

14  
15 B E F O R E:

16 SUSAN McGOWAN, LIRR

17 THE HEARING OFFICER  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
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25

1

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

3 For the Long Island Rail Road:

4 Elisa Picca

5 Susan McGowan

6 Ed Dumas

7

8 For NYS DOT:

9 Joseph Zacharia

10

11 Other Project Participants:

12 The Public

13 The Press

14 The Media

15

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20 Nicole Ellis, Stenographer

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1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 P R O C E E D I N G S

3 MS. PICCA: Good morning.

4 And if you could please take your seats,  
5 we're ready to begin our program this  
6 morning.

7 Good morning. Thank you for  
8 attending today's public meeting for the  
9 Long Island Rail Road Expansion Project.  
10 My name is Elisa Picca, I'm executive vice  
11 president for the Long Island Rail Road.

12 In just a moment I'll be  
13 going through our program for today, but  
14 first I would like to invite you to stand  
15 and join me for the Pledge of Allegiance.

16 (Whereupon, the Pledge of  
17 Allegiance was recited at this time.)

18 MS. PICCA: Thank you.

19 And thank you for taking the  
20 time from your busy schedules to be here  
21 today, your input to this project is  
22 crucial and is greatly appreciated.

23 This public meeting is part  
24 of a robust community outreach process for  
25 the Long Island Rail Road Expansion

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           Project that began last year, and that  
3           will continue throughout the project  
4           duration.

5                       In a moment we're going to  
6           show you a video about the proposed  
7           project. After that, we will take  
8           comments from those who have registered to  
9           speak. For those of you who would like to  
10          speak and have not yet registered, there's  
11          plenty of time to do so and you can sign  
12          up at the tables in the back.

13                     The purpose of our meeting  
14          today is to discuss the Long Island Rail  
15          Road Expansion Project, and in particular,  
16          the Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
17          that was released on November 28, 2016.

18                     The environmental process  
19          began last spring with a release of a  
20          draft scoping document and continued  
21          through the summer with the release of a  
22          final scoping document. Since that time,  
23          we've performed extensive environmental  
24          analyses, which are represented in the  
25          Draft EIS. The report is available on our

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           project website, [www.aModernLI.com](http://www.aModernLI.com). It's  
3           also available at local village halls and  
4           libraries along the project corridor and  
5           our project information center at the  
6           Mineola train station.

7                       In response to public  
8           requests for more time to comment on the  
9           Draft EIS, Governor Cuomo has extended the  
10          comment period to February 15, 2017 at  
11          5:00 p.m. The Draft EIS comment period  
12          for this project was already longer than  
13          that of larger projects, such as the  
14          Second Avenue Subway and the new Tappan  
15          Zee Bridge. Now, because of your input,  
16          there's even more time to comment.

17                      When Governor Cuomo first  
18          announced this project, he said it would  
19          be completely different from prior  
20          proposals. Unlike prior proposals, the  
21          third track will be built entirely within  
22          the Long Island Rail Road right-of-way.

23                      Since the Governor's  
24          announcement over a year ago, we've  
25          implemented an unprecedented public

1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

outreach program. And thanks to your input, we've made a commitment to take no residential properties, to modify all seven grade crossings in the project area, to add sound attenuation walls, to improve rail stations with enhancements and amenities such as full-length platforms, to add more than 2,000 parking spaces, and to use innovative methods to speed construction and minimize impacts. All of these project elements are examples of our commitment to community outreach. Your input is important to us and important to the process.

Your comments will be entered into the public record and reviewed accordingly. While we're here today at a public hearing -- a formal public hearing, there are many other outreach efforts and opportunities to comment. Our project team has had hundreds of meetings with local officials, business leaders, and residents, and many of the members of our team are here today to listen to your

1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

comments.

We've maintained our project information office at the Mineola train station on the south side platform, the hours are posted on our project website. We encourage everybody to visit, discuss the project, and submit comments. You can also provide comments on our project website or by e-mail at [info@aModernLI.com](mailto:info@aModernLI.com).

Finally, we have visited all residential properties that share a property line with the Long Island Rail Road multiple times, and as early -- as recently as last week, to remind residents of these public hearings.

Now I'd like to turn your attention to a short video that will discuss the project need and highlight its benefits, which include improved service reliability, safety, and quality of life. The project would add much needed capacity to the Main Line and eliminate all street-level grade crossings within the

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2       project area. Incorporating extensive  
3       input from the local communities, the  
4       project team is now exploring  
5       neighbor-friendly and innovative  
6       construction methods and practices to keep  
7       the impact of construction as minimal as  
8       possible.

9                       (Whereupon, a short video was  
10      played at this time.)

11                   MS. PICCA: Now I'd like to  
12      introduce our representatives from the  
13      Long Island Rail Road and the New York  
14      State Department of Transportation, as  
15      well as our hearing officer. To my far  
16      right we have Mr. Ed Dumas, vice president  
17      of Market Development and Public Affairs  
18      at the Long Island Rail Road; seated next  
19      to him is Mr. Joseph Zacharia, project  
20      manager at the New York State Department  
21      of Transportation; and to my immediate  
22      right is Ms. Susan McGowan, Long Island  
23      Rail Road general manager, Public Affairs.  
24      Susan will be the hearing officer for  
25      today's public hearing, and I turn this

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2 meeting over to her at this time.

3 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
4 you, Elisa.

5 Welcome, everybody. We  
6 appreciate your taking the time to come  
7 out and join us today and share your  
8 comments with us.

9 Before we begin, I have a few  
10 procedural items, so I'm going to ask for  
11 your patience as I read through these  
12 items.

13 This public hearing is an  
14 opportunity to hear from you regarding the  
15 project's environmental review process or  
16 Draft EIS. The Draft EIS includes a wide  
17 range of technical analyses on topics such  
18 as air quality, noise, land use,  
19 socioeconomics, traffic, parking and much  
20 more. It also reviews any potential  
21 property impacts from the proposed  
22 project, including easements and  
23 commercial property acquisitions.

24 Today's proceedings also  
25 serve as the public hearing in accordance

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           with the New York State Eminent Domain  
3           Procedures Law, EDPL. As Vice President  
4           Picca noted before, no permanent takings  
5           of residential property will be needed for  
6           this project.

7                       Building station platform  
8           areas, retaining walls, and Long Island  
9           Rail Road infrastructure along the entire  
10          9.8-mile project corridor would require no  
11          full property takings of any type. It  
12          would require four partial acquisitions of  
13          nonresidential properties, which would not  
14          affect any structures. It would also  
15          require three permanent or temporary  
16          easements of nonresidential properties,  
17          and one temporary easement at a  
18          multifamily co-operative residential  
19          property.

20                      Multiple options at the seven  
21          grade crossing locations are also  
22          evaluated. For these grade crossing  
23          options, we've identified full  
24          acquisitions of up to four commercial  
25          properties for which the State will work

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           with the owners to provide relocation  
3           assistance within their communities. In  
4           addition, partial acquisitions affecting  
5           eight nonresidential properties could be  
6           needed. But in all situations this will  
7           not affect the continued operation of the  
8           businesses.

9                       Finally, the grade crossing  
10          work may need some permanent rights to  
11          access some parcels of commercial property  
12          during and after construction, and some  
13          temporary rights to access other parcels  
14          of property during and after construction,  
15          in connection with construction or for  
16          maintenance needs after construction.  
17          None of these rights of access will  
18          permanently impact the operation of the  
19          businesses affected.

20                      For complete details about  
21          the grade crossing options, please refer  
22          to the DEIS or visit the DOT table in the  
23          open house area. Again, no permanent  
24          takings of residential properties will be  
25          needed for this project. Those who may be

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           impacted by property acquisitions have  
3           already been contacted by the State.

4                   Pursuant to the EDPL, the  
5           project team has studied the proposed  
6           project and is able to determine the  
7           relocation requirements for each grade  
8           crossing option, and determine which plan  
9           would be preferable. This information  
10          will be considered along with other  
11          relevant factors when selecting the  
12          project's final design.

13                   New York State DOT and Empire  
14          State Development will provide extensive  
15          support for the four commercial properties  
16          that may be fully acquired with day-to-day  
17          relocation assistance, including help in  
18          finding suitable replacement sites,  
19          reestablishment expenses, and a variety of  
20          moving expense options.

21                   The State has studied a local  
22          real estate market and has concluded that  
23          there will be a sufficient number of  
24          replacement properties to satisfy the  
25          needs of any displaced commercial

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occupant, irrespective of the design option chosen. Property acquisition would not commence until the final design option has been approved. Each affected property owner will be contacted by a real estate specialist who will explain the proposed construction and the acquisition process. Any potentially affected property owners present here today may visit the DOT table in the open house area until the end of this hearing, or this evening, for further detail about the process or to ask any questions they may have.

Now in order to give public comment, we ask that if you haven't already done so, that you sign up at the registration table just outside. We're also asking that everyone limit their comments to three minutes, and that's intended to give everyone a chance to speak.

Again, this meeting is not the only opportunity that you'll have to comment on the project. You can also

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           continue to provide comments through  
3           February 15th at the project office at  
4           Mineola station, by mail, or online at  
5           www.aModernLI.com.

6                       We have representatives and  
7           experts here from the Long Island Rail  
8           Road and the New York State Department of  
9           Transportation who are available to  
10          consult with you on the project, and  
11          they're in the open house area. If you  
12          prefer to give comments privately, because  
13          we realize that not everyone is  
14          comfortable speaking in front of a large  
15          group, we have a stenographer and you can  
16          sign up at the front desk to meet with the  
17          stenographer privately, and the  
18          stenographer will make sure your comments  
19          are entered into the public record.

20                      Now because this is a formal  
21          hearing and because we're entering your  
22          comments into the public record, we here  
23          on the dais will not be responding to your  
24          questions or comments. However, we do  
25          have staff here in the building who can

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2 help to answer your questions and  
3 comments, and they are in the open house  
4 room again.

5 So if you have any special  
6 needs, please contact a staff member and  
7 we'll do our best to accommodate you. And  
8 one final thing, please -- if you haven't  
9 already done so, please turn your cell  
10 phones to silent or vibrate.

11 And next I'm going to call  
12 the names of the first five speakers. We  
13 ask that they make their way up to the  
14 reserved seats in the front row so they  
15 can prepare themselves. There are two  
16 microphones, one on the right and one on  
17 the left. After I call the first five  
18 speakers, I'll call the name of the very  
19 next speaker. When you come up to speak,  
20 please give your name and affiliation if  
21 you are associated with any organization.

22 Then you'll have three  
23 minutes to speak. There is a timer, a  
24 countdown clock. It will be green until  
25 you have 30 seconds then it will turn

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2 yellow. And after the time is up it will  
3 turn red. And if you're not sure, I'll  
4 give a very gentle reminder.

5 One other thing, if you have  
6 written testimony, it might help for our  
7 stenographer to have a copy of that. If  
8 you have an extra copy, when you're done  
9 speaking you may give a copy to our  
10 stenographer here on the side of the room,  
11 and then she will make sure that your  
12 comments are in the public record.

13 Okay, so here are the first  
14 five speakers: Edward Ra, Dr. Lynn  
15 Pombonyo, Kevin Fitzgerald, Archie Cheng,  
16 and Larry Penner.

17 First up is the Honorable  
18 Edward Ra, New York State Assemblyman.

19 MR. RA: Good morning. My  
20 name is Edward Ra. I'm New York State  
21 Assemblyman for the 19th Assembly  
22 District. I represent the corridor of  
23 this Main Line from Floral Park out to  
24 Westbury.

25 And basically I wanted to

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 come here this morning, having met many  
3 times with representatives regarding this  
4 project, and certainly heard a lot from  
5 the communities I represent on this  
6 project, to express that there continues  
7 to be major objection and concerns with  
8 this project within our communities.

9 Especially this immediate  
10 area, obviously, has had a concern with  
11 these grade crossings for many, many  
12 years. And if it's a safety concern, and  
13 I think we all agree it's a safety  
14 concern, then I think we believe it should  
15 stand on its own. This, like ten years  
16 ago, has become a carrot and stick  
17 approach with regard to the grade  
18 crossings. And I know there's a  
19 tremendous amount of support for  
20 eliminating those grade crossings in a  
21 manner that's acceptable and consistent  
22 with the character of these local  
23 communities.

24 I think that looking through  
25 the DEIS, and there are many village

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 officials here, there are constituents  
3 here that will hit on many of their  
4 concerns, whether they're environmental or  
5 otherwise, dealing with construction and  
6 after the fact. But one of the sections I  
7 want to bring up in particular was the  
8 Alternatives section.

9 My understanding is that  
10 there will be an application made to amend  
11 the MTA Capital Plan to include funding  
12 for this. My question is, and really what  
13 I would like to see addressed, is if that  
14 is going to be done, I think the  
15 alternatives need to A, address the  
16 alternative where the grade crossing is  
17 done, and then other alternatives that can  
18 be done in conjunction with that. And how  
19 does the moving of that money, or putting  
20 this project into the MTA Capital Plan,  
21 where it wasn't previously, affect other  
22 plans of the MTA that may have achieved  
23 some of the objectives of this project?

24 So what of those plans is not  
25 going to get done as a result of shifting

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           funding towards that, and what were the  
3           objectives of those particular plans, in  
4           terms of modernizing the infrastructure of  
5           the Long Island Rail Road, increasing  
6           efficiency, and whether some of that, in  
7           conjunction with some of the grade  
8           crossing work there seems to be a lot of  
9           support for, where do we come out on the  
10          end? How does that alternative function  
11          as opposed to this full plan?

12                        So I think that as we move  
13          forward, you know, I'm appreciative of the  
14          short couple-week extension. I think it  
15          allows the villages to come together, seek  
16          expert opinion, which is great. But I  
17          think we need to continue to explore those  
18          alternatives to ensure that we move  
19          forward in a way that's consistent with  
20          the characters of the local communities  
21          that I represent.

22                        Thank you.

23                        THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
24          you.

25                        Our next speaker is the

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 Honorable Dr. Lynn Pombonyo, Trustee,  
3 Village of Floral Park.

4 DR. POMBONYO: Good morning.  
5 My name is Lynn Pombonyo, and I'm here as  
6 a resident and Trustee of the Village of  
7 Floral Park.

8 My comments will address  
9 Chapter 3, socioeconomic conditions; and  
10 Chapter 13, construction, in the Draft  
11 Environmental Impact Statement and the  
12 profound impact the proposed construction  
13 plan will have on the Village of Floral  
14 Park.

15 The Incorporated Village of  
16 Floral Park is a densely populated  
17 community; in fact, one of the highest in  
18 Nassau County. Our business district  
19 features small, often family-owned stores  
20 and restaurants, many of which are near  
21 the Long Island Rail Road Main Line and  
22 Hempstead branch tracks on South Tyson,  
23 Plainfield, and Tulip avenues. The two  
24 LIRR bridges, which span South Tyson and  
25 Plainfield avenues are scheduled for

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2       modifications and/or reconstruction during  
3       the third track construction period.

4           Although South Tyson,  
5       Plainfield, and nearby Tulip Avenue are  
6       all main thoroughfares in Floral Park,  
7       they all have only one lane of traffic  
8       moving in each direction with parallel  
9       parking at the curbs. These three roads  
10      transport thousands of vehicles on a daily  
11      basis and traffic is already congested.  
12      Parking lots are few in Floral Park and as  
13      a result vehicles must parallel park along  
14      South Tyson, Plainfield, and Tulip to  
15      access the businesses, second-floor  
16      offices, and apartments, as well as a  
17      700-people elementary school located on  
18      South Tyson Avenue, one block north of the  
19      aforementioned South Tyson Bridge.

20           DEIS Chapter 3, page 3-17  
21      states, "the proposed project would not  
22      result in any impact to the Tulip Avenue  
23      business district in Floral Park." And  
24      further on page 3-22, "the proposed  
25      project would not result in any

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           significant adverse socioeconomic impacts,  
3           and therefore mitigation is not  
4           necessary."

5                       When you consider the DEIS  
6           statements in Chapter 3 and 13 together,  
7           you see the inconsistencies and research  
8           findings that do not reflect the  
9           socioeconomic impacts resulting from the  
10          construction period, which may be  
11          temporary in duration, but will likely be  
12          long-term with respect to impacts.

13                      Many problem aspects of the  
14          construction remain to be addressed in the  
15          Final EIS. For example, the definition of  
16          the word "temporary." Repeatedly stated  
17          throughout the DEIS are words "temporary  
18          lane and/or road closures," which will  
19          occur sporadically throughout the  
20          construction process. In subsequent  
21          communications from the LIRR, "temporary"  
22          is a term that refers to both weekends and  
23          periods lasting one year or more. The  
24          severity of adverse economic impacts could  
25          vary greatly and thus "temporary" must be

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2       defined more precisely for every stage of  
3       the construction process in the Final  
4       DEIS.

5                       Lane and/or road closures on  
6       South Tyson, Plainfield, and Tulip  
7       avenues, no matter how temporary, will  
8       limit access to our businesses, offices,  
9       and residents there. Not only will it be  
10      difficult to reach the destinations, but  
11      once you get there, parking will be  
12      reduced in half with a lane closure or  
13      eliminated completely with a road closure.

14                    In closing, DEIS page 3-21  
15      describes the economic and fiscal benefits  
16      of the third track project based on  
17      IMPLAN, input-output modeling system. The  
18      DEIS contains numerous references to the  
19      positive socioeconomic impacts that the  
20      third track will have. The DEIS is  
21      incomplete in the use of such analysis of  
22      the local economies of villages and  
23      communities, such as Floral Park, where  
24      the socioeconomic impact of the  
25      construction will be the most significant

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2 and potentially damaging.

3 The serious shortcoming of  
4 the DEIS must be addressed in the Final  
5 Environmental Impact Statement. Thank  
6 you.

7 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
8 you.

9 Our next speaker is the  
10 Honorable Kevin Fitzgerald, Mayor, Village  
11 of Floral Park.

12 MR. FITZGERALD: Good  
13 morning. I'm Kevin Fitzgerald, Mayor of  
14 the Village of Floral Park. Thank you for  
15 allowing me and my residents to comment on  
16 this significant intrusion.

17 Approximately a decade ago,  
18 the same project was presented to us, and  
19 as is the style of the people of Floral  
20 Park, all documents were reviewed to weigh  
21 the impacts and benefits.

22 Throughout the scoping  
23 process, our residents, along with our  
24 businesses, have voiced and written their  
25 opposition to the project. This

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 opposition has been one that's been vocal  
3 for the past decade.

4 As there will be many  
5 comments from the residents on the various  
6 impacts, I would like to focus this  
7 morning on the socioeconomic impacts that  
8 this project will have on our village.

9 Back in the 1960s when the  
10 trains were elevated in Floral Park, a  
11 number of businesses closed and property  
12 was taken. That loss still has effects on  
13 the residents today, as there are now  
14 fewer properties that pay taxes. If this  
15 project goes forward, I would expect that  
16 the residential properties that are  
17 adjacent to the tracks, and those directly  
18 impacted by the construction, will and  
19 should grieve their taxes, thereby  
20 increasing the tax burden of those not  
21 surrounding the construction zone.

22 Additionally, if businesses  
23 in the commercial district fail, our  
24 commercial property owners will also  
25 grieve their tax. This would be a tax

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increase to certain residents of Floral Park and other surrounding communities. This tax increase, along with the increase of taxes and fares to foot the \$2 billion project cost, will leave less money in the pockets of our local residents to support our local businesses, charitable organizations, and reduce discretionary spending, all while the residents have no benefit of an additional track.

In addition, I would add that our recreation and pool is not only a place where physical activity occurs, but a great place for the community to enjoy each other's company. If the rec center is closed for any period of time, or if a sporting season is cancelled, I'm greatly concerned that our little league baseball, roller hockey, football, soccer organizations, along with our evening recreational programs for our adults, can continue to exist or at least struggle. If those organizations fail, a large piece of what makes Floral Park the vibrant

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           community it is may cease to exist.

3                       Finally, I fear that due to  
4           the closure of South Tyson Avenue and  
5           Plainfield for an extended period of time  
6           will physically divide our community,  
7           since people on the north side of the  
8           tracks will be reluctant, due to the  
9           inconvenience of traveling, to visit  
10          businesses and friends on the south side  
11          and vice versa. Over time, fewer  
12          friendships in the village will form, and  
13          as an 18-year resident, I can confidently  
14          say that the social fabric woven by these  
15          friendships is what makes Floral Park a  
16          special place.

17                      The DEIS addresses the  
18          positive impacts of the project in Nassau  
19          County, Suffolk County and New York State,  
20          but none for Floral Park.

21                      Finally, I look forward to  
22          submitting additional written comments  
23          before the deadline that will be put forth  
24          once our outside counsel has studied the  
25          DEIS, along with providing written

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           comments on behalf of my family. Thank  
3           you very much.

4                   THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
5           you.

6                   Our next speaker is the  
7           Honorable Archie Cheng, Village of Floral  
8           Park.

9                   MR. CHENG: Good morning,  
10          thank you.

11                   First of all, I want to thank  
12          Ms. Black, Ms. Picca, Mrs. McCarthy,  
13          Mrs. Garcia, Mrs. Eng, and the others that  
14          met in Floral Park regarding the extension  
15          project.

16                   In all of our meetings, we  
17          never said that we were against the  
18          project, that we need information to  
19          present to our residents to explain the  
20          impacts of the project on Floral Park so  
21          we can make plans to mitigate those  
22          impacts.

23                   We're told that the scoping  
24          document and the DEIS would answer our  
25          questions. We were told that the

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2       railroad, MTA, and governor were listening  
3       to our concerns, and they would work with  
4       us and our concerns would be addressed. I  
5       went back to my comments during the  
6       comment period and asked the same  
7       questions I asked today. Simple comments  
8       with simple questions: How? When? And  
9       where?

10               We asked that construction  
11       move east to west so that any glitches in  
12       the project would be worked out before the  
13       project got to the congested areas. We  
14       asked that work on South Tyson and  
15       Plainfield not be done at the same time  
16       due to traffic concerns, and that South  
17       Tyson not be done during the school year.  
18       We asked the construction not occur near  
19       our rec center in the summer.

20               DEIS did not address our  
21       concerns. It informed us that work on  
22       South Tyson and Plainfield would begin at  
23       the beginning of the project, and would  
24       run concurrently for 180 days. Work that  
25       would cripple two -- traffic on two of our

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2 main roads. That South Tyson would take  
3 approximately 320 days, impacting at least  
4 one and a half school years. How will  
5 school buses bring the children to school?  
6 How will fire, police and emergency  
7 vehicles respond?

8 The DEIS also informs that  
9 track retaining wall work near the rec  
10 center would run two to three summers. We  
11 asked that our railroad station be made  
12 ADA compliant. The DEIS says the work is  
13 planned with the station, except shaving a  
14 few inches off the platform.

15 We asked that construction  
16 noise be limited, and while the DEIS  
17 states that work would be done within  
18 hours specified in local ordinance, it  
19 adds the catchall, quote, except where not  
20 feasible, end quote. It states that noisy  
21 activities in residential areas would be  
22 avoided in overnight hours, but adds,  
23 quote, to the maximum extent practical.

24 If feasibility or  
25 practicality is something only decided by

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           the contractor, who will earn incentives  
3           for doing the job fast, that is not  
4           working with us or addressing our  
5           concerns. I asked at our first meeting,  
6           and all subsequent meetings, that a survey  
7           showing the right-of-way and any temporary  
8           easements be shown to us. While no  
9           residential takings have been promised,  
10          the DEIS states that a number of temporary  
11          easements would be required during the  
12          construction period, as determined by the  
13          design build contractor. Again, the same  
14          contractor with monetary incentives will  
15          make that determination.

16                 The three pages I'm going  
17          hold up are ledger size, and in the DEIS  
18          it shows Floral Park, I guess, the survey.  
19          To the left, a scroll is being held up of  
20          the railroad in Floral Park from the  
21          elevation when the tracks were planned 50  
22          years ago. Back then, the railroad showed  
23          working easements, what the project and  
24          its impacts were. It's unable to give us  
25          any detail now.

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The DEIS is required to inform us as to the impacts the project is going to have with a great deal of specificity. As an elected official, I'm unable to explain whose property might be needed. I cannot tell if there will be noise at night or when school is in session. With no traffic plans, I'm unable to explain to businesses, residents, or first responders how they will travel through the village when work is being done. And I'm completely amazed that I cannot explain why our station should be ADA compliant.

If nothing else, it is my hope that the DEIS explains the impacts and what the railroad, MTA, and governor can do to mitigate the impacts in Floral Park so we can plan how to prepare for this disruptive project. Thank you.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our

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2 next speaker is Larry Penner. He will be  
3 followed by Richard O'Kane, Chuck Leeb,  
4 Kevin Law, Kurt Langjahr, and Lisa Tyson.

5 MR. PENNER: Larry Penner,  
6 transportation advocate, historian.  
7 Worked 31 years in the transportation  
8 field, including both MTA and Long Island  
9 railroad.

10 Why no reference to the  
11 National Environmental Protection Act,  
12 NEPA? Without following NEPA, we forfeit  
13 the opportunity to access United States  
14 Department of Transportation Federal  
15 Transit Discretion and federal funding.  
16 US DOT FTA provides over 1.2 billion  
17 yearly formula draft systems, of which  
18 Long Island railroad shares 150 million,  
19 not counting East Side Access. This is  
20 supplemented by competitive discretionary  
21 powers, which over any five-year capital  
22 program, averages one to two billion.

23 Why would you not want to  
24 preserve the option to apply for federal  
25 funding? Twelve years ago, you followed a

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2       NEPA process. Some did not want federal  
3       oversight over this project by not  
4       following NEPA.

5                   The anticipated potential  
6       final cost will never be known until  
7       completion. Costs will be defined by an  
8       order of construction contracts followed  
9       by any unforeseen site conditions and  
10      change orders that basic contracts were  
11      enforced in construction.

12                   There's only \$7 million in  
13      the current five-year 2015-2019 capital  
14      program. Governor Cuomo's proposal to  
15      amend \$2 billion of additional new funding  
16      for this project in the five-year capital  
17      plan has a lot of problems. The proposed  
18      new State budget of \$152 billion does  
19      provide 1.5 million more in additional  
20      funding to the MTA, but that's not  
21      reducing 7.3 billion that Governor Cuomo  
22      promised to the MTA five-year program,  
23      reducing the deficit to 5.8 billion.  
24      Governor Cuomo has promised 6 billion for  
25      the Gateway Tunnel Project and many other

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2 projects around the state.

3                   Construction is going to be  
4 very complicated on an active right-of-way  
5 when you have to maintain existing  
6 service. When Ronkonkoma Main Line goes  
7 into service in 2018, off-peak service  
8 will be even greater. There are currently  
9 194 weekday and 152 weekend trains, not  
10 counting freight trains and capacity train  
11 movements. All this work has to be done  
12 in parallel with maintaining existing  
13 service. It's the equivalent of  
14 performing heart surgery for the patient  
15 who is running a 26-mile marathon.

16                   Clearly there will be the  
17 need for significant track outages, but  
18 with all this activity, how many times per  
19 hour would construction crews have to stop  
20 then resume work? How much work is going  
21 to be performed evenings, over night and  
22 weekends? 'Cause you can't do a lot of  
23 work during midday service with all the  
24 activity on the branch.

25                   You've yet to release a

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           detailed project budget to share with  
3           anyone. A real project budget would  
4           include the estimated cost for each  
5           project component. This information is  
6           needed if you wish to build credibility  
7           with commuters, residents, tax payers,  
8           advocates, elected officials, and media.

9                       The proposed project  
10          implementation schedule is overly  
11          optimistic based upon delays that take  
12          funding, unforeseen site conditions,  
13          inclement weather, insufficient track,  
14          unavailable force encounters with  
15          construction contractors.

16                      Without sharing the details  
17          which make up the project budget, which is  
18          going from a billion to 1.5 million,  
19          2 billion -- I previously had written that  
20          I believe it's going to be 2.2 billion and  
21          more -- you're not going to have  
22          credibility with the public. What you've  
23          given the public, and there's nothing in  
24          your environmental document, really  
25          appears to be a number written on an

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           envelope. That's not a way to generate  
3           creditability with the public.

4                       Finally, is there a conflict  
5           of interest between endorsements and  
6           campaign contributions from labor unions  
7           and the business community who would  
8           benefit by this project being funded? It  
9           would be interesting for a reporter to  
10          check out Governor Cuomo's campaign  
11          financial filings and see where he's  
12          getting his money from. Thank you.

13                      (Applause.)

14                      THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
15          next speaker is Richard O'Kane, followed  
16          by Chuck Leeb and Kevin Law.

17                      MR. O'KANE: Good afternoon.  
18          Thank you for the opportunity to speak  
19          before you today on my thoughts.

20                      My name is Richard O'Kane,  
21          and I represent 59,000 people with the  
22          Nassau/Suffolk Building and Construction  
23          Trades Council.

24                      Thousands and thousands of my  
25          members rely on the railroad to get to

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2 work on a daily basis. If they don't get  
3 to work on time because of backups and  
4 breakdowns and everything else, by the  
5 time they get to the job they're already  
6 docked a substantial amount of their pay.  
7 These people are your neighbors, your  
8 friends, your sisters, brothers, cousins  
9 aunts and uncles, and they are all going  
10 to be provided by this project thousands  
11 of jobs, high paying jobs. And they're  
12 needed to live in Suffolk County, Nassau  
13 County, and all over Long Island.

14 And they come from all over  
15 Long Island. And many, many of them come  
16 from right here in this area, the area  
17 where this project is going to take place.  
18 So those are going to be thousands.

19 One of the things that you  
20 need to know, to live in Long Island --  
21 I'm sure you know, I don't think I have to  
22 tell you -- but living on Long Island,  
23 recently a survey came out, and it stated  
24 that it costs 50 percent more to live on  
25 Long Island than any other place in our

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2 country, yet our wages are only 10 percent  
3 more. So that's complicated, and to let  
4 these jobs go by the wayside wouldn't be  
5 very good for the industry that I  
6 represent.

7 So we want to also mention  
8 that another reason why the railroad is  
9 very important to our members, 62 percent  
10 of Americans -- all Americans across the  
11 United States, 62 percent of them, if  
12 their car broke down and they needed a  
13 \$500 repair, they couldn't afford to do  
14 it, and those people would rely on the  
15 railroad. And they do often, depending on  
16 where the job is, even if they do have a  
17 car. But to breakdown and not be able to  
18 fix your car, they do rely on the train  
19 tremendously.

20 The problem two is that we  
21 have -- people are looking to join our  
22 workforce between the ages of 19 and 30  
23 that are leaving Long Island and New York  
24 to go to places like North Carolina at the  
25 rate of 30 percent. Beyond -- you know,

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2 not everybody is going to be a doctor or  
3 an IT person. We need these jobs for  
4 people who want to work with their hands  
5 and provide a good service. So we  
6 don't -- and the families don't want to  
7 leave, but they have to because they don't  
8 have an option for a job. And it's  
9 getting worse and worse. So we're trying  
10 to break that situation.

11 Everyone is talking about the  
12 growing trend in lack of people. I'd like  
13 to ask you who's going to put the fires  
14 out, drive the ambulance, and train the  
15 kids in sports to be men and women, doing  
16 things that they like to do? That's  
17 another consideration. We need these  
18 people to stay here.

19 One of the positive aspects,  
20 I think, is not having to hear that train  
21 roar 3,000 times a day, which is noted in  
22 the brochures that it's going to be  
23 eliminated. And the thing that is  
24 paramount, I believe, is the seven  
25 railroad crossings that are going to be

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2 eliminated. You wouldn't want to be in an  
3 ambulance -- I've been stuck in those jams  
4 many, many times, and you wouldn't want to  
5 be in an ambulance headed to the hospital  
6 while you're waiting to get the gate up,  
7 all the lanes are jammed, everybody's  
8 cutting ahead of one another, and nothing  
9 happens. Now it's very important that you  
10 get to the hospital when you're in a bad  
11 car accident, and there's no shortage of  
12 bad car accidents on Long Island. So  
13 that, I think, everybody should really  
14 digest as well, and think what if it was  
15 me in the back of that ambulance sitting  
16 like that.

17 So I strongly encourage the  
18 board to pass this proposition and  
19 project. It means a lot to tens of  
20 thousands of people just sitting in this  
21 room, that it will have a very positive  
22 affect on their lives. Thank you for your  
23 time.

24 (Applause.)

25 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our

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2 next is speaker Chuck Leeb.

3 MR. LEEB: I'm a resident of  
4 the Village of New Hyde Park, and well, let  
5 me get to it here.

6 The third track project, I  
7 see, it's -- the politically correct is  
8 now expansion project, will affect our  
9 environment in New Hyde Park, as well as  
10 Floral Park. The tidal under the tracks  
11 will prevent commercial traffic from  
12 accessing Second and Third avenues, which  
13 is our commercial district to a great  
14 extent, and force the use of Fourth and  
15 Fifth avenues and side streets, which are  
16 residential areas. This will lower their  
17 assessed evaluation permanently, affecting  
18 the tax base, putting higher taxes on  
19 others. If businesses are impacted, which  
20 they will be, they will move or close,  
21 further impacting the surrounding tax  
22 base.

23 To expedite rail traffic,  
24 number one should be four or five new  
25 intersections, interchanges, which I

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2 presume is when you go from one track to  
3 the other -- if I'm wrong, that's what I  
4 meant -- so that trains can easily and  
5 quickly bypass trains in a station or  
6 stall by a broken rail or other  
7 breakdowns.

8 Concentrate on maintenance of  
9 rail signal and equipment. The Long  
10 Island railroad is buying 100 new  
11 single-deck rail cars instead of  
12 double-decker cars. You plan to extend  
13 all train stations to accommodate 12-car  
14 trains, double the cars will only need  
15 seven, eight, or nine cars and fit  
16 comfortably in existing stations.

17 Let me give you a comparison.  
18 In the 1800s, the Mississippi River  
19 carried hundreds of steamboats. These  
20 boats carried passengers and freight, but  
21 were expensive. These boats had the  
22 right-of-way on the river. The poor  
23 people who couldn't afford them, traveled  
24 by raft. The raft was controlled by a  
25 steering oar called the rift oar, that's

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2 how we got the term rift raft. Everything  
3 had to get out of the way of the  
4 steamboats.

5 Now the new term for us is  
6 the deplorables. And that -- and what the  
7 governor and the MTA want is, like the  
8 steamboats, get out of the way or we'll  
9 run you over. We, the residents along the  
10 track, are the deplorables. We are in the  
11 way.

12 The Second Avenue Subway has  
13 three stops after four and a half years.  
14 There's no more money in the capital  
15 budget to continue on to the next section.  
16 One billion is left, that's what I read in  
17 Newsday, through 2019. The parking is a  
18 disaster, Tappan Zee Bridge has to be  
19 finished. East Side Access, trains to  
20 LaGuardia, JFK Airport are on the table.

21 All big projects make  
22 headlines for someone with big political  
23 green. Making things due by implementing  
24 alternative methods that don't create  
25 headlines at a much lower cost, don't

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           enter into the equation. Safety at the  
3           crossings can be aided by installing  
4           double gates so no vehicle can go around.  
5           Again, that does not create headlines.

6                       New York State is close to  
7           the limit of its borrowing power and  
8           unfinished projects are not the solution.  
9           New York and New Jersey are both losing  
10          population, I wonder why.

11                      Now I have here, I brought  
12          the ad in the local paper. And it says  
13          here, "Enhancing Quality of Life and  
14          Increasing Property Value in Central  
15          Nassau." The heading should have been  
16          "Fake News." Thank you.

17                      (Applause.)

18                      THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
19          next speaker is Kevin Law.

20                      MR. LAW: How do I follow  
21          that?

22                      (Laughter.)

23                      MR. LAW: Good afternoon. My  
24          name is Kevin Law, I'm the president of  
25          the Long Island Association, and I'm glad

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2 the gentleman before just talked about  
3 some of the history on Mississippi,  
4 because I want to talk about some history  
5 on Long Island.

6 You know, it was less than  
7 100 years ago that we did some big  
8 projects connecting our island to New York  
9 City; the Midtown Tunnel was built, and  
10 the Queensboro Bridge was built connecting  
11 our island to Manhattan. And you can't  
12 imagine what our region would be like if  
13 those projects didn't happen.

14 And then the Long Island  
15 Expressway was extended all the way to  
16 Route 110, and that's where it ended. Now  
17 it goes out to Riverhead. Imagine what  
18 our island would be like if that project  
19 wasn't completed.

20 In the 1960s, Robert Moses,  
21 they built the Northern and Southern State  
22 parkways so people would have an  
23 opportunity to get to the beautiful State  
24 parks that were built. Imagine if those  
25 parkways were not built.

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2 More recently -- I wasn't  
3 around when those projects were done, but  
4 more recently, projects I remember, the  
5 State built and completed service roads  
6 along the Long Island Expressway. Before  
7 that, once there was an issue on the LIE,  
8 there were no alternatives. At least now  
9 there's opportunities to get off the LIE  
10 and get back on for issues when they  
11 arise. Imagine what our region would be  
12 like if those service roads were never  
13 built.

14 And then I had a meeting  
15 before here today in Uniondale, and I  
16 remember -- I had worked in Garden City  
17 for a dozen years or so -- I remember when  
18 the Northern State and the Meadowbrook,  
19 before the merger, it was a tight, like,  
20 90-degree exit and a stop sign, and then  
21 you got onto the Meadowbrook. And now  
22 there's an overpass and an underpass and  
23 the traffic facilitates through both now.  
24 I can't imagine what our region would be  
25 like without that project.

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2 This is an important project  
3 to our region. It doesn't mean that the  
4 concerns raised by the residents nearby  
5 aren't legitimate. The MTA and the  
6 railroad should address those concerns and  
7 should mitigate those concerns, but this  
8 project is critical to our region. And  
9 decades from now people will say, Wow,  
10 what would our region be like if this  
11 third track didn't happen.

12 So I encourage you to  
13 complete the environmental review process  
14 and commence construction with this  
15 important project as soon as possible.  
16 Thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
19 next speaker is Kurt Langjahr. Please  
20 correct me if I'm pronouncing the names  
21 incorrectly.

22 MR. LANGJHAR: You did fine.  
23 I'm a resident of New Hyde Park and I tell  
24 you, you need to take another look.

25 You need to put the Long

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2 Island Railroad underground, at least for  
3 the part of the little villages,  
4 especially for New Hyde Park. It creates  
5 parking spaces above when you put it  
6 underground. You would have a beautiful  
7 railroad station underneath.

8 Environment. You need all  
9 the street -- in this environment, where  
10 it's densely populated, you need all the  
11 streets above ground. You can't just  
12 eliminate Twelfth Street and build the New  
13 Hyde Park Road elimination in Covert.

14 This is a little village.  
15 Unlike Roslyn and Mineola or other  
16 villages east of here, you have more space  
17 there. You cannot take a single business  
18 away from this little community, it  
19 impacts our taxes. The impact would make  
20 it, in the long run, devastating.  
21 Building the two railroad crossing  
22 elimination will cost you more than say a  
23 one-mile tunnel through New Hyde Park, and  
24 the tunnel construction wouldn't -- you  
25 wouldn't even know it's being built,

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2 because the way it's built it's one  
3 section at a time, and you wouldn't know  
4 it, that it's being done. The access,  
5 let's say, would be in Westbury to the  
6 tunnel, and you build a little bit at a  
7 time and eventually you have a beautiful  
8 station with parking spaces above and so  
9 forth.

10 Now I know about this, I  
11 helped build the 63rd Street Tunnel, the  
12 Roosevelt Island station, Jamaica Center.  
13 That was done in an open trench, we cannot  
14 do that here. You'd have to build  
15 underneath the railroad under your  
16 right-of-way to do this kind of work with  
17 the least impact to all these little  
18 villages.

19 Now if we were located in  
20 Brooklyn, Manhattan or even Queens, we  
21 would be more important and the money  
22 would be spent for us to make this a  
23 better place. And the example is there  
24 for the 63rd Street Tunnel and Jamaica  
25 Center. Parking above the underground

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           would give you a return for your money and  
3           give us a space to park. I take the  
4           10:37, there's never a parking space. I  
5           leave my car home, I walk the 15 minutes.

6                       Never mind your old-fashioned  
7           thinking, these are locomotives. It's  
8           time to electrify all. One hundred years  
9           is enough already. And building the  
10          tunnel will have less of an impact on our  
11          community than any other way that you can  
12          do this job.

13                       (Applause.)

14                      THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
15          you.

16                      Our next speaker is Lisa  
17          Tyson. She will be followed by Robert  
18          Lofaro, Gerry Bambrick, Frank Brechtlein,  
19          Thomas Gannon, and Diane Bentivegna.

20                      MS. TYSON: Thank you very  
21          much for having me here. My name is Lisa  
22          Tyson, director of the Long Island  
23          Progressive Coalition. We're a  
24          multi-issue, grassroots, citizen-run  
25          organization. We're very excited to be

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2 here.

3 We think this project is an  
4 excellent project to move Long Island  
5 forward. We see the railroad as a major  
6 component to making Long Island move, to  
7 getting cars off the road, to getting  
8 people to Manhattan mostly on peak hours.  
9 And what this does is this actually  
10 relieves that, and makes it so you can  
11 have off-peak commute as well.

12 We know that so many  
13 commuters are supportive of this. We're  
14 part of the Right Track Coalition. And  
15 we're part of many coalitions throughout  
16 the years, but this coalition is one of  
17 the broadest coalitions of organizations,  
18 individuals, people who really support  
19 this project. All across Long Island,  
20 there's huge support for this project.

21 So today we're submitting  
22 nearly 5,000 petitions from the commuters  
23 who take the railroad, and about half of  
24 them are from the Main Line corridor. And  
25 they truly support this project. The

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2 petition states:

3 "We, the undersigned, are  
4 Long Island railroad commuters and  
5 passengers who suffer regular delays and  
6 crowded trains because of the antiquated  
7 two-track bottleneck on the Main Line  
8 corridor between Hicksville and Floral  
9 Park. Construction of the third track  
10 will help solve this problem. We  
11 respectfully demand that it be built as  
12 soon as possible. It's time for all Long  
13 Islanders to enjoy the full benefit and  
14 convenience of a modern railroad system."

15 Talking to commuters, it's  
16 clear, their one biggest problem is  
17 delays, they get to work late. This  
18 project will relieve that. It will help  
19 the environment, it will take cars off the  
20 road. This project needs to be moved  
21 forward now. This is a much better  
22 project than was submitted in the past,  
23 and we understand that the local community  
24 has real concerns, as Kevin Law stated,  
25 that need to be addressed. But they need

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           to be addressed and the project needs to  
3           move forward. Thank you.

4                   (Applause.)

5                   THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
6           next speaker is the Honorable Robert  
7           Lofaro, Mayor, Village of New Hyde Park.

8                   MR. LOFARO: Thank you for  
9           your time today. My name is Bob Lofaro,  
10          I'm Mayor of the Village of New Hyde Park.

11                   First I want to go off script  
12          a little bit and I'd like to thank the  
13          governor and MTA for extending a mere two  
14          weeks for us to look at this enormous  
15          document and determine its negative  
16          affects to the community, but we'll take  
17          two weeks over zero weeks. I'd also like  
18          to commend the MTA, Long Island railroad,  
19          and all the political operatives, and all  
20          the folks that have assembled together to  
21          market this project to be the panacea, and  
22          it's going to resolve and solve all the  
23          problems.

24                   I am a commuter, and I was  
25          approached to sign that petition. And it

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2       states that it will solve all the delays,  
3       and that's disingenuous. It's  
4       unfortunate, I would sign it 'cause I  
5       think delays are a problem, but it's not  
6       the third track or lack of, it's broken  
7       rails, it's defective signal systems and  
8       so on and so forth.

9                       (Applause.)

10           MR. LOFARO: The village will  
11       submit formal -- it's a massive  
12       document -- we will submit formal comments  
13       to each and every chapter, and that's  
14       forthcoming.

15                       I'd like to thank Larry  
16       Penner for his comments, because my  
17       comments sort of echo the same sentiment.

18                       The Draft Environmental  
19       Impact Statement, page S13, dated  
20       November 16th under project cost, "the  
21       construction cost estimate to be  
22       \$2 billion, with funding to come from the  
23       MTA and other sources." And with a price  
24       tag that high, why have the project  
25       sponsors not chosen to follow the federal

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2       guidelines under the National  
3       Environmental Policy Act, NEPA, in order  
4       to access federal funds?

5           The Federal Transit  
6       Administration provides financial  
7       technical assistance to local transit  
8       authorities and commuter rails. Over five  
9       decades, the FTA has overseen the  
10      transformation of public transportation in  
11      America; in New York, Boston,  
12      Philadelphia, Chicago. The FTA, its  
13      mission is an economic interest of force  
14      and development of the revitalization of  
15      public transportation systems, maximize  
16      the safe and secure and efficient mobile  
17      life of individuals, and minimize  
18      environmental impacts.

19           Why would the Long Island  
20      railroad give up federal funds, especially  
21      when the new presidential administration's  
22      key objectives are: Transform America's  
23      crumbling infrastructure for accelerated  
24      economic growth, pursue American  
25      infrastructure first, provide maximum

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 flexibility to states, and implement bold  
3 and visionary plans.

4 The Village of New Hyde Park  
5 is not opposed to the elimination of grade  
6 crossings, we'd be foolish to say that we  
7 are. We do not support the current plan  
8 that's been proposed, we'd like to see  
9 additional options. We also do not  
10 believe the third track is necessary and  
11 will solve all the problems. Governor  
12 Cuomo said yesterday that he told  
13 President Elect Trump that New York is  
14 ready to build, and needs the federal  
15 government to back the massive  
16 infrastructure project. And Governor  
17 Cuomo told the reporter if Trump wants to  
18 build some federal monies -- if Trump  
19 wants to put some federal monies to good  
20 use, put the federal monies to use here  
21 quickly, and this is the state to do it.

22 So why would the Long Island  
23 Railroad want to burden New York  
24 homeowners, residents, taxpayers, union  
25 representatives, the Long Island

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 Coalition, all these folks, why would they  
3 want to burden them with the price tag of  
4 \$2 billion when federal funds could be  
5 available?

6 So I ask, in conclusion, that  
7 as a New York State taxpayer -- rather,  
8 no, we demand, as a New York State  
9 taxpayer and federal government taxpayer,  
10 that the Long Island railroad immediately  
11 begin to follow the NEPA process, instead  
12 of the State SEQRA process, to allow the  
13 project to access federal funds before  
14 they spend one dollar of taxpayer money on  
15 this project. Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 THE HEARING OFFICER: Next  
18 speaker is the Honorable Gerry Bambrick,  
19 Village of Floral Park.

20 MR. BAMBRICK: Good  
21 afternoon, and thank you for giving me an  
22 opportunity to speak.

23 Others have commented on the  
24 topic I'm going to discuss, but I want to  
25 bring up a certain aspect of it, talking

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           about the diminution of the property  
3           values. This isn't the first time we've  
4           brought this up. We brought it up in the  
5           scoping process, and we're coming to the  
6           conclusion that a lot of our concerns just  
7           aren't being addressed.

8                       We've met often with the  
9           governor's office. We like to think we've  
10          been having a dialogue, but coming to the  
11          inescapable conclusion that certain  
12          aspects are just being ignored.

13                      As I said, one year into this  
14          process and the SEQRA review process is  
15          proceeding along rapidly. The DEIS must  
16          be 2,500 pages, if you include the  
17          appendixes, yet there's still no true  
18          assessment of the impact of the  
19          communities and residents along the Main  
20          Line in this proposed project, as is  
21          clearly required by SEQRA.

22                      The MTA is going to require  
23          separate holdings, scoping hearing  
24          sessions, and having hearings on these  
25          documents, but certain issues are simply

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           not being addressed. During the scoping  
3           process, the Village of Floral Park  
4           requested that the Long Island railroad  
5           conduct a study to assess the third track  
6           project impacts on the property values of  
7           residences that border or are in close  
8           proximity to the Long Island railroad  
9           right-of-way.

10                   In Floral Park's written  
11           comments to the draft scoping document  
12           dated June 13, 2016, and submitted on our  
13           behalf by our counsel, it was stated that:

14                   "A draft scope should provide  
15           for residential property value impact  
16           analysis. Even if residential properties  
17           will not formally be taken through Eminent  
18           Domain, local residential property values  
19           could be adversely impacted by the  
20           encroachment of infrastructure from the  
21           project.

22                   "The draft scoping document  
23           should be revised to describe a  
24           residential property value impact analysis  
25           to be undertaken, including identification

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           of the areas that would be included in the  
3           analysis."

4                       Despite this clear request,  
5           the MTA has simply refused to conduct such  
6           a study. Floral Park believes that such  
7           refusal of such a study, clearly the  
8           system -- the socioeconomic impacts  
9           required to be addressed under SEQRA. And  
10          the proof of this is in the MTA's own  
11          Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

12                      In the DEIS, the Long Island  
13          railroad analysis documents, as it must,  
14          that full taking of a commercial property  
15          would have a tax impact on the community.  
16          In the DEIS, the MTA assesses, as it must,  
17          the real estate impacts of a loss of seven  
18          commercial properties along the Main Line.  
19          Yet a diminution in the property values  
20          assessment is different and should be  
21          included in the DEIS.

22                      For example, if the property  
23          values of residences along the Main Line  
24          in Floral Park decline, then not only will  
25          property owners be permanently impacted,

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 but Floral Park's tax base as a whole will  
3 be impacted, and ultimately those in  
4 buildings providing municipal services  
5 will be adversely impacted.

6 Our concern regarding the  
7 impact on property values is real. In  
8 Floral Park, to accommodate the third  
9 track, the MTA proposed the in-village  
10 right-of-way up to residents' property  
11 lines, and to construct a retaining wall  
12 several feet high at some locations, and  
13 then have trains run across this retaining  
14 wall literally feet from people's homes.

15 If homes along the Main Line  
16 have their value diminished, say, just  
17 10 percent as a result of this  
18 construction, the decrease in value will  
19 ultimately result in the decrease in tax  
20 base as these property owners rightfully  
21 seek to lower their assessments. Not only  
22 will these property owners suffer, but  
23 every resident in the village will bear a  
24 corresponding increased share of their  
25 overall tax burden.

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 Admittedly, I'm just guessing  
3 at the potential decrease in property  
4 values as a result of this project. But  
5 at this stage of the SEQRA process, we  
6 should not be forced to be guessing at  
7 impacts. And despite the lack of details  
8 provided by the MTA in the draft scoping  
9 document, we identify this impact, and  
10 it's incumbent upon the MTA to provide a  
11 study and the analysis of this impact.

12 And now that the MTA has  
13 provided certain details, such as the  
14 in-filling and retaining wall, the need  
15 for the study is even more apparent.  
16 Others have stated maybe this is a great  
17 project. But if it is such a great  
18 project, it should be able to withstand  
19 the scrutiny that the SEQRA process is  
20 supposed to provide. For that, we need  
21 the details, and despite the many meetings  
22 we've had and the hearings you're  
23 conducting, we just don't feel we're being  
24 given the details necessary to represent  
25 our residents, as other representatives of

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           Floral Park have said. Thank you.

3                   (Applause.)

4                   THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
5           next speaker is Frank Brechtlein, followed  
6           by Thomas Gannon and Diane Bentivegna.

7                   MR. BRECHTLEIN: Good  
8           afternoon. Thank you for allowing me to  
9           express my views.

10                  My name is Frank Brechtlein,  
11           and for what it's worth, I was a 36-year  
12           commuter on the Long Island railroad.

13                  Presently a resident for the  
14           past 46 years of the Village of Floral  
15           Park. The village that was founded and  
16           built next to the railroad and dependant  
17           upon the railroad for trade and commerce  
18           in its early days.

19                  First of all, I'd like to  
20           commend the MTA, the Long Island railroad,  
21           and the governor's office for putting  
22           together a very impressive array of charts  
23           and contentions aimed at persuading the  
24           opponents of this third rail expansion  
25           project to consent thereto.

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Without having studied the zones containing of legal ramifications, the engineering specifications, the environmental concerns, and the voluminous logistics, I've come to the conclusion that this would be a severe hardship to the village and its citizens to embark on this proposed third rail project.

Abutting the Main Line are two elementary schools and a third school within two blocks of the tracks, as well as a village recreation center with ball fields and a beautiful pool complex, completed only two and a half years ago. My fear is that these properties would be compromised and encroached upon with reduction of property use or even possibly the loss of the pool.

Also bordering on the Main Line are numerous commercial establishments, whose businesses will be severely obstructed and lost forever. Also affected will be homeowners who will experience situational and environmental

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2 risk and unpleasantness, as well as a  
3 diminishment in the value of their home.  
4 And there will be considerably less real  
5 estate transitions.

6 Traffic problems and parking  
7 will be inconveniently altered. The  
8 village will experience a loss of revenue  
9 from trade, parking permits, and the  
10 dislocation of parking meters, with  
11 increased expenditure for lengthy and  
12 numerous road repairs caused by the  
13 projects earth-moving equipment and  
14 heavy-duty transport vehicles.

15 Moreover, it has been my  
16 observation that these so-called capital  
17 improvements generally take longer than  
18 planned and significantly exceed the  
19 budgeted amount. The necessity of the  
20 third rail track expansion is at least  
21 questionable, with the available funds  
22 best used for eliminating the highly  
23 trafficked grade crossings, making  
24 improvements to elevated stations so  
25 they're accessible to the handicapped and

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2 elderly, and upgrading the technical  
3 devices and equipment systemwide.

4 Failing to sway the governor  
5 in his quest for this expansion, then it  
6 will be incumbent upon our State  
7 legislature to deny the needed funds from  
8 the State's budget for this ill-advised  
9 project. I have often seen and heard  
10 Floral Park residents refer to their  
11 village as, What a beautiful place to  
12 live. Well this phrase will no longer  
13 apply once this expansion has begun, at  
14 least not for the duration of the project.  
15 Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
18 next speaker is Thomas Gannon.

19 MR. GANNON: Good afternoon.  
20 My name is Thomas Gannon and I'm  
21 superintendent of Public Works in the  
22 Building Department for the Village of New  
23 Hyde Park.

24 I am responsible for the  
25 delivery of municipal services, including

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           sanitation pick up, for over 3,500  
3           residential and business properties within  
4           the village; roadwork for over 26 miles of  
5           village roads and emergency snow removal  
6           and ice control; the maintenance of trees;  
7           park maintenance services and many other  
8           community services the village relies  
9           upon.

10                   All of the aforementioned  
11           services are dispatched from our DPW  
12           facility located at 498 Stewart Avenue.  
13           This facility houses over 25 municipal  
14           vehicles and 27 employees. Our facility  
15           sits directly adjacent to the Floral Park  
16           facility, which also houses the Floral  
17           Park pool and rec center. This, in  
18           itself, puts demand on parking and  
19           vehicular congestion in the area.

20                   Due to our location, every  
21           vehicle that leaves or returns to our  
22           facility must do so by traveling Stewart  
23           Avenue to Covert. This route will be  
24           severely hampered during construction,  
25           while there will be closures at either New

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           Hyde Park Road or Covert Avenue. Drivers  
3           will be using Stewart Avenue to cut  
4           through and use Plainfield Avenue and  
5           Floral Park to get to the other sides of  
6           the tracks. This route will be used in  
7           the opposite direction as well when work  
8           begins on the Plainfield Avenue area.

9                       The bottom line is that the  
10          high volume of traffic in these areas will  
11          significantly impede the efficient  
12          delivery of municipal services that the  
13          taxpayers are accustomed and entitled to.  
14          I didn't see any remediation or mitigation  
15          in the DEIS for this adverse impact.  
16          Measures must be taken to ensure that  
17          vital municipal services are not limited  
18          as a result of this project. Thank you  
19          very much.

20                       (Applause.)

21                       THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
22          next speaker is Diane Bentivegna. And if  
23          you'll just permit me, I'll call the names  
24          of the next five speakers so they're  
25          ready. Edward Thompson, Richard Pfeiffer,

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 Rosemary Marggraf, Joe Trioano, and Gary  
3 Angelillo.

4 MS. BENTIVEGNA: My name is  
5 Diane Bentivegna, I'm a life-long resident  
6 and homeowner in the Village of New Hyde  
7 Park, and I live two blocks from the Main  
8 Line. I'm the daughter, sister, and aunt  
9 to five other families who live along the  
10 Main Line. I'm also a member of the New  
11 Hyde Park Long Island railroad Taskforce.

12 And my comments refer to  
13 Chapter 17, the portion of the DEIS that  
14 evaluates greenhouse gas emissions that  
15 would be generated or reduced by the  
16 construction and operation of the proposed  
17 project.

18 It states that "improving the  
19 overall reliability, attractiveness, and  
20 convenience of mass transit is an  
21 important part of maintaining and  
22 increasing transit use into the future,  
23 and reducing traffic congestion, and thus  
24 reducing region-wide greenhouse  
25 emissions."

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2 Well I looked into that  
3 statement and I found four studies that  
4 completely refute that statement. There's  
5 a 2003 study from the Infrastructure and  
6 Environment Development Research Group  
7 that confirms that rail service increases  
8 do decrease vehicle travel, but by a  
9 surprisingly modest amount.

10 In 2011, researchers from the  
11 University of Toronto found that increases  
12 to road capacity were quickly matched by  
13 increases in traffic volume. But it also  
14 found that increases in transit service  
15 had absolutely no affect on transit  
16 volumes. In the authors' own words they  
17 state, "these results fail to support the  
18 hypothesis that an increased provision of  
19 public transit affects vehicle miles  
20 traveled."

21 A University of California  
22 Davis study in 2009 found that higher  
23 residential densities and greater land use  
24 mix did decrease vehicle travel, but found  
25 no statistically significant link between

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2       better transit service and less driving.  
3           Jared Walker, Ph.D, and  
4       associates of the Public Transit  
5       Consultants, published a study in 2011  
6       called "Human Transit: How Clearer  
7       Thinking About Public Transit Can Enrich  
8       Our Communities and Our Lives." In it,  
9       they state, "to our knowledge, no transit  
10      project or service has ever been the clear  
11      direct cause of a substantial drop in  
12      traffic congestion."

13           So claiming that a project  
14      you favor will reduce congestion is  
15      unwise. The data just doesn't support  
16      that conclusion. And I have in my  
17      statement the documented evidence.

18           Chapter 17 also acknowledges  
19      that the result -- the project would  
20      result in some additional greenhouse gas  
21      emissions associated with operating  
22      electrical locomotives. It will increase  
23      emissions associated with local  
24      park-and-ride and taxi trips to and from  
25      stations, and it will cause direct

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           emissions associated with construction  
3           vehicles and indirect emissions associated  
4           with extraction, production, and delivery  
5           of materials.

6                     But it's also important to  
7           note that weather is a major influence on  
8           many assets on all modes of  
9           transportation. Their safety, mobility,  
10          accessibility, their economic efficiency  
11          and their infrastructure. And railroads  
12          are no exception. And, in fact, railroads  
13          suffer from a variety of atmospheric and  
14          environmental factors, many of which are  
15          unique to railroads.

16                    Precipitation and fog lead to  
17          decreased visibility for signals to  
18          locomotive engineers. Flash floods can  
19          lead to washouts in tracks. Warping of  
20          tracks due to uneven thermal expansion in  
21          the summer or buildup of snow and ice on  
22          the tracks in winter can lead to decreased  
23          speeds and potential derailments.

24                    Since locomotives and cars  
25          are high-profile vehicles, high-speed

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           crossings can influence stability.  
3           Weather can lead to serious delays on  
4           railroads, as we all know, and result in  
5           loss in economic inefficiency. The  
6           vulnerability of the railroad system to  
7           climate changes arise mainly from the  
8           susceptibility to sudden unforeseen  
9           changes in weather or climate patterns and  
10          from potential increases in the intensity  
11          and frequency of extreme weather events.

12                   All of these concerns have  
13          already been raised by Mr. Michael  
14          Rossetti, the strategic planner and  
15          economist at the Department of  
16          Transportation Vullaby Center in his  
17          paper, "Potential Impacts of Climate  
18          Change on railroads."

19                   So my question is two-fold.  
20          What scientific data is supporting the  
21          claim that this project will reduce  
22          traffic congestion? And what specific  
23          measures are being planned to address  
24          these serious issues that will have a  
25          direct impact on transit in the future?

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2 THE HEARING OFFICER: Please  
3 conclude your comments.

4 MS. BENTIVEGNA: I am.

5 I leave you with one  
6 question. Is more better? Is this  
7 \$2 billion investment in another  
8 antiquated third track going to address  
9 these 21st century serious problems that  
10 are projected to take place in our future?

11 (Applause.)

12 THE HEARING OFFICER:  
13 Mr. Edward Thompson.

14 MR. THOMPSON: Good  
15 afternoon, thank you for having me. My  
16 name is Edward Thompson, I'm vice  
17 president of Molloy College in Rockville  
18 Centre.

19 Rockville Centre is a little  
20 south of here, but we have 5,000 students.  
21 Most of them come from the south shore of  
22 Nassau County, but many of them come from  
23 this area.

24 We support the project. I've  
25 heard very carefully the issues of the

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 nearby residents, and would encourage all  
3 steps to mitigate any problems that have  
4 been mentioned today. But at Molloy  
5 College we're very concerned about the  
6 future of our graduates on Long Island.

7 Increasingly, many of our  
8 graduates are leaving Long Island because  
9 of the length of the commute, the  
10 difficulty of the commute, the difficulty  
11 to live in downtowns with good access to  
12 the city and to good jobs. We believe  
13 that this project will add to the general  
14 movement of transit-oriented development,  
15 which we support, not only in this  
16 project, but in other areas of Long  
17 Island.

18 I also represent tonight a  
19 group, Vision Long Island, which is a  
20 smart-growth organization that, again,  
21 supports transit-oriented development.  
22 And the Energy Partnership, a public  
23 policy organization, that has thought  
24 deeply about this issue for many years.  
25 We represent not-for-profit groups and

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           businesses, and there's a wide level of  
3           support for the project in the group and  
4           across Long Island. Thank you.

5                   (Applause.)

6           THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
7           you.

8           Our next speaker is Richard  
9           Pfeiffer.

10                   (No response.)

11           THE HEARING OFFICER: Then  
12           the next speaker after that is Rosemary  
13           Marggraf, followed by Joe Troiano and Gary  
14           Angiello.

15           MS. MARGGRAF: Hi. My name  
16           is Rosemary Marggraf, I'm a resident of  
17           Floral Park.

18           Before I moved to New York, I  
19           used to live in Washington, D.C. You may  
20           have heard of the wonderful subway system  
21           there. It started off as a wonderful  
22           system. And I used to work in the city,  
23           and while it was being built there were  
24           many, many parking problems, and I saw  
25           businesses that had been around since the

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2 Civil War crumble.

3 So this parking situation  
4 that we have in Floral Park, it will be  
5 impacted, and there will be businesses  
6 that will not be able to stay afloat.  
7 It's a long time to have to shoulder the  
8 burden of nobody being able to park  
9 around. That's one thing.

10 Another thing that's been  
11 discussed is the elimination of  
12 bottlenecks, and having a third track  
13 sounds like a great idea. We have another  
14 bottleneck, and that's the tunnel into the  
15 city. Nobody seems to have addressed that  
16 really. Yes, I know that there is, in the  
17 future, the building of the Grand Central  
18 Station Terminal, that tunnel there.  
19 But that's, you know, five years or more  
20 off to be completed, if it's completed on  
21 time.

22 We've got a bottleneck all  
23 the time at the tunnel. During rush hour,  
24 that seems to be a problem. So you can  
25 build as many third, fourth, fifth tracks

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 as you want, but if you've got a problem  
3 getting into Manhattan, and that's where  
4 so many people are going, this is Long  
5 Island railroad commuters, it's a problem  
6 so you've got to deal with that, too.

7 Money's going to have to be  
8 allocated, at some point after this is  
9 built, to fix up the tunnel, to get more  
10 trains in there. Yes, we're going to have  
11 the Grand Central, but the line going into  
12 Penn Station is going to be a problem.  
13 Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
16 you.

17 Joe Troiano is our next  
18 speaker.

19 MR. TROIANO: Good afternoon.  
20 I'm a 56-year resident of Stewart Manor.

21 Back in 1961, when my parents  
22 made the decision to relocate from Park  
23 Slope, Brooklyn to this region, they  
24 really looked at trying to find a walkable  
25 community, similar to what some of the

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2 amenities in Brooklyn offered, but the  
3 suburban quality of life.

4           I have, in my 56 years, lived  
5 in all three communities in this region.  
6 As a child growing up, my parents' home in  
7 Stewart Manor; as a young, married parent  
8 in our first home in New Hyde Park, on the  
9 north side of Floral Park; and back to two  
10 subsequent homes in Stewart Manor where  
11 we've raised our children.

12           Coincidentally, and it wasn't  
13 planned, we tend to have move closer to  
14 the railroad with each move, that wasn't  
15 necessarily planned.

16           But there were a lot of  
17 degradation factors to consider when my  
18 parents moved out here as well. Planes,  
19 and trains, and automobiles, we've heard  
20 that before. We're in the flight path of  
21 Kennedy Airport. While cars were not a  
22 problem with road congestion 56 years ago,  
23 certainly today it is a quality of life  
24 issue both on major thoroughfares and  
25 local roads at just about any time of the

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2 day.

3 Really the only one of the  
4 three major transportation items, buses  
5 aside, that has a contributing positive  
6 affect on property values throughout the  
7 years has been the railroad. Certainly  
8 nobody wants to live in the flight path of  
9 Kennedy, sometimes I feel they're putting  
10 their landing gear down on my den roof.  
11 It is known and studied that the Long  
12 Island region, and our local economy,  
13 benefits.

14 My father and I, along with  
15 my four siblings, always use the railroad  
16 to commute to our jobs in Manhattan. My  
17 brother, Mike, continues to use mass  
18 transit to this day, even though he's  
19 completely visually impaired and needs a  
20 guide dog. But yet, if he did not live in  
21 a region such as ours he would just go on  
22 Social Security Disability, rather than  
23 run his own law practice on Court Street  
24 in Brooklyn.

25 Our nephew, who suffers from

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 the same genetic eye disease, relocated  
3 back from North Carolina, where my sister  
4 had relocated years ago, to finish out his  
5 master's degree in St. John's, and choose  
6 to live in the New York/Metropolitan area  
7 where he can thrive and flourish in the  
8 work place, and he would be completely  
9 lost in a region like Raleigh.

10 These factors, along with so  
11 many others, are why our continued  
12 investment in our mass transit  
13 infrastructure, and really all of our  
14 infrastructure, is important. We can't  
15 sit still, we have to do it in a  
16 thoughtful, measured manner. We have to  
17 take advantage of federal funds that are  
18 provided, especially if it's going allow  
19 us to invest in other items that are  
20 necessary, such as positive train control  
21 and signal upgrades, because a job half  
22 done is like a job not done at all. So we  
23 really want to try and focus on those  
24 items as well.

25 I'm supportive of this

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2       project in the terms of mitigating the  
3       environmental factors that will occur.  
4       But no matter what I've heard, whether it  
5       was the recent Second Avenue Subway  
6       completion or even past projects that the  
7       railroad has done at Herricks and in  
8       Mineola, during the process you hear  
9       people say it is disruptive, it's a  
10      burden. And the overriding comment you  
11      heard after it's done is, It was worth it.  
12      Thank you.

13                               (Applause.)

14                   THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
15      you.

16                   Our next speaker will be Gary  
17      Angelillo, followed by Donna Squicciarino,  
18      Tim Dalton, Matt Whalen, and Chris Capese.

19                   MR. ANGELILLO: Good  
20      afternoon. My name is Gary Angelillo and  
21      I live in Westbury, Carle Place area, and  
22      I've lived with the Long Island railroad  
23      in my backyard about 50-feet from my house  
24      for the past over 30 years. I don't think  
25      many people here have that.

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2 I believe that the third rail  
3 has to increase the problems with the Long  
4 Island railroad by at least 30 percent. I  
5 don't see how it cannot. I think the  
6 retaining walls and sound barriers should  
7 be much higher than shown in the  
8 brochures, at least to ten feet. This  
9 could alleviate the noise and pollution  
10 problems which we currently have.

11 Also the problems for the  
12 four years of the construction project has  
13 to be addressed more thoroughly. We lived  
14 with the Westbury Avenue Bridge that took  
15 over a year to do, and those problems were  
16 a pain in the neck and that was only one  
17 bridge.

18 I feel, also, the cost will  
19 go up, as most projects do. It's  
20 \$2 billion now, who knows what it's going  
21 to be later. There will have to be a tax  
22 increase that all Long Islanders will have  
23 to pay.

24 So I'm against the project  
25 and I hope you reconsider it. Thank you.

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2 (Applause.)

3 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
4 you.

5 The Honorable Donna  
6 Squicciarino, followed by Tim Dalton.

7 MS. SQUICCIARINO: Thank you.  
8 My name is Donna Squicciarino representing  
9 the Village of New Hyde Park as a Trustee  
10 and a resident of New Hyde Park for over  
11 20 years.

12 We all agree that the  
13 at-grade crossings are deadly and our  
14 community is in desperate need to get rid  
15 of them. Doing that alone is an enormous  
16 project in itself.

17 Our -- this project will  
18 realistically affect our neighborhood for  
19 years. The construction, trucks, detours  
20 and noise will have a tremendous adverse  
21 impact on the character of our New Hyde  
22 Park community. Our quiet residential  
23 streets will be filled with detouring  
24 cars. Our quiet residential streets will  
25 be filled with cars that had to redirect

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 their parking. Our quiet residential  
3 streets will now have safety concerns for  
4 our children who are out playing in the  
5 streets.

6 With the strain on traffic  
7 flow, we also have to deal with combatant  
8 noise and vibrations. The noise for the  
9 past years -- the noise will last for  
10 years and the vibrations may last forever.  
11 Each train generates a substantial amount  
12 of vibration that can be felt by  
13 homeowners near and far from the rail.

14 But the most severe vibration  
15 is felt from freight trains. Freight  
16 trains generate a severe amount and  
17 residents can literally feel their homes  
18 shake with each freight car that passes.

19 This project does not address  
20 freight. Is that intentional omission?  
21 This project does not address the  
22 disclosure or intentions. We look for an  
23 assurance that the current restrictions  
24 and the operation for freight will remain  
25 in place.

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I also remain skeptical that the low noise retaining walls will provide any relief. It is also noted that these walls are only offered to one side of the tracks. No relief plans for the residents living on the north side of the railroad?

Taxes and property values are also a tremendous concern. It is clear that the project would cause a significant potential for decreases in property values. Years of construction, traffic and noise will create an unsightly environment, new homeowners will look elsewhere. Sellers will have difficulty selling. Taxes are at the top of the list, what will the trickle-down effect be on our taxes?

It has been communicated that two businesses will be taken from the New Hyde Park community for this project. Those generate a tax loss of \$300,000. How will the decrease in tax rates be absorbed? Our residents will have to absorb it. Are we getting tax credits for

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 these losses?

3 A greater and more  
4 undetermined amount -- an undetermined  
5 affect to our property taxes will be seen  
6 through the tax abatement process. Homes  
7 in the construction zone will apply for  
8 tax adjustments and they'll be granted.  
9 The true shift of tax burden to our  
10 residents is immeasurable, and it's a  
11 tremendous concern.

12 Lastly, the amount of time  
13 predicted on this project is completely  
14 unrealistic and a gross misrepresentation.  
15 Evidence to the contrary can quickly be  
16 found by looking at similar projects. I  
17 believe that an honest time frame would  
18 more likely be two to three times what  
19 you're predicting, if not greater.

20 Time is crucial. Each delay  
21 in this project will adversely affect our  
22 community. Each delay will decrease the  
23 cost -- the property values of our homes.  
24 What assurances can be made that when time  
25 runs into months and years of over run,

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 what will our recourse be?

3 The scope of this project is  
4 just too big. The adverse affects on our  
5 communities are far too great. The last  
6 three months have illustrated the Long  
7 Island railroad has some cleaning up to  
8 do. They're clearly not ready for this  
9 type of work. I suggest we direct our  
10 investment in actually improving this  
11 antiquated system. Why don't you invest  
12 our money on improving signals, minimizing  
13 those problems, invest the money in better  
14 interchanges, invest the money on  
15 double-decker trains, invest on  
16 technology, safety for these trains. Our  
17 cars are more sophisticated.

18 Spend money so that  
19 signals -- speed adjusters can affect --  
20 can control transit in a better manner so  
21 that one more train doesn't have to crash  
22 into a wall.

23 I strongly urge the governor  
24 to reconsider this project and leave this  
25 third track aside. We're all in favor

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           that the at-grade crossings need to go.  
3           How much can our residents endure? And  
4           how many years of construction do we have  
5           to go through? Thank you.

6                       (Applause.)

7                       THE HEARING OFFICER: Next  
8           speaker is Tim Dalton, followed by  
9           Harrison Feuer, Matt Whalen and Chris  
10          Capece,

11                      MR. DALTON: Tim Dalton,  
12          long-time resident of Floral Park, third  
13          generation, also business owner in Floral  
14          Park.

15                      I would just like to address  
16          at the beginning your public outreach to  
17          the community and the businesses within  
18          the affected area. Not at one time during  
19          this whole process have I run into really  
20          anybody from the Long Island railroad. My  
21          business is directly across the street, I  
22          never saw anybody, never met anybody. So  
23          I don't know how much of an outreach that  
24          really goes back to.

25                      I'm a survivor of the raising

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           of the Floral Park railroad station back  
3           in the '60s. My family's business is  
4           directly across the street, and at that  
5           point in time the raising of the tracks  
6           did almost put us out of business, but we  
7           survived. But at the same time, it also  
8           changed our community greatly.

9                       Where it says throughout your  
10          document that there will be no impacts,  
11          nothing has to be mitigated through this,  
12          is just unbelievable. Any type of  
13          construction within such a small area,  
14          involving small businesses, mom's and  
15          pop's, shutting down, you know, locations  
16          where people come from the north side of  
17          Floral Park to the south side to stop at  
18          the grocery store, maybe get their nails  
19          done or whatever, this will have a direct  
20          impact on those businesses and their  
21          employees.

22                      Maybe there's not any large  
23          employer within Floral Park, let's say 50,  
24          60 employees. But if you put all the  
25          employees that are involved with all the

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2 local businesses with this type of impact,  
3 you will see people losing their jobs.

4 In addition, I don't see  
5 anything addressed in the DEIS of where  
6 the workers for this project will be  
7 located. Will they be coming and parking  
8 on our street to do their job? Where will  
9 they be parking? Where will their jobs  
10 be? How will they be trucked in and out?

11 Just closing down South Tyson  
12 Avenue will have such a bad adverse affect  
13 on our small downtown, it is just  
14 unbelievable. Again, I was alive through  
15 the first renovation, and now I have to  
16 endure it the second time. That was for a  
17 modern Long Island at that point in time.  
18 This doesn't seem like a project that's  
19 had much thought. We went through this  
20 ten years ago, Floral Park commented. All  
21 of the those comments from the past DEIS  
22 should be included in this complete study.

23 And again, with Donald Trump  
24 speaking with the governor again, I agree  
25 we should use the more strict federal

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2 standards so we can get federal funds to  
3 help support this project, instead of on  
4 the taxpayers of Long Island. We're  
5 already the most taxed portion of New  
6 York, and where's the money coming from.  
7 It's coming from the residents that are  
8 directly affected.

9 And being a resident of  
10 Floral Park, what I find also to be highly  
11 insulting, is we receive no benefits. We  
12 get no further train stops, we get no  
13 additional parking, we get no remediation  
14 to what the whole problem is.

15 So really whatever you do do  
16 will have a long-lasting affect on the  
17 Floral Park residents. I'm third  
18 generation within our community, and I  
19 have a lot of friends. But if people  
20 start moving, property values start  
21 disintegrating, we can't afford our  
22 schools, and so on, you will see people  
23 move to other portions of Long Island and  
24 our community will change. Thank you very  
25 much.

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2 (Applause.)

3 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
4 you.

5 Our next speaker is Harrison  
6 Feuer.

7 MR. FEUER: Good afternoon.  
8 I'm Harrison Feuer. I'm here on behalf of  
9 the Long Island University who stands in  
10 support of this project.

11 Long Island University is one  
12 of Long Island's largest employers with  
13 more than 3,000 employees, and Long Island  
14 University's total economic impact has  
15 been measured as more than \$1 billion.

16 Long Island is one of the  
17 most prosperous, but least accessible,  
18 communities in this country, and the third  
19 track is crucial to sustaining Long  
20 Island's accessibility and ensuring its  
21 long-term viability.

22 Long Island is part of a  
23 region that's constantly reinventing  
24 itself to be an attractive place to find  
25 jobs and live, especially for a younger

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2 and highly educated population. However,  
3 in order to keep our youth from leaving  
4 Long Island, we need to invest in and  
5 sustain industries that are able to  
6 provide young people meaningful and  
7 high-paying jobs that can support the high  
8 cost of living.

9 LIU has prioritized fostering  
10 young entrepreneurs who are the life blood  
11 of our economy and future success.  
12 Currently LIU is developing an innovation  
13 tech part. LIU's Innovation and  
14 Entrepreneurship Institute will provide  
15 opportunities for students, companies, and  
16 researchers to merge together to develop a  
17 merge of technologies and businesses.

18 For generations, Long Island  
19 served as the bedrock of the financial  
20 industry to provide the calm away from New  
21 York City. It is vital to find ways to  
22 make it attractive for Wall Street to move  
23 operations to Long Island rather than New  
24 Jersey. Part of the these efforts involve  
25 incentives to locate and relocate on Long

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2 Island, but investment in infrastructure,  
3 particularly transportation  
4 infrastructure, is key to ensuring the  
5 long-term viability of our region.

6 Long Island simply cannot  
7 stay competitive without an improved rail  
8 system. According to the American Public  
9 Transportation Association, the Long  
10 Island railroad is the busiest commuter  
11 railroad in the country, so it's  
12 imperative that we continually reinvest in  
13 it.

14 In a few years, the \$10.8  
15 billion East Side Access project can have  
16 a huge impact on Long Island businesses if  
17 the railroad is modernized. Without a  
18 third track, we will fail to exploit the  
19 full benefit at the expense of Long  
20 Island's future. Our regional economy and  
21 local property owners will benefit from a  
22 third track. The overall affect will put  
23 Long Island in a stronger position to  
24 sustain the industries that will keep  
25 young talent in the communities and

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           maintain a vital economy. Thank you.

3                   (Applause.)

4                   THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
5           next speaker is Matt Whalen.

6                   MR. WHALEN: Good afternoon.  
7           My name is Matt Whalen, and I'm the senior  
8           vice president for Avalon Bay Communities.  
9           We are a housing developer here on Long  
10          Island, luxury rental developer.

11                   We own about 4,000 apartment  
12          homes here on Long Island and about 85,000  
13          across the country. I'd like to add a  
14          little upon the last speaker, because I  
15          like to think that I'm representing some  
16          of the young people on Long Island who  
17          we're really in a competition to keep here  
18          on Long Island.

19                   Avalon Bay is in support of  
20          this project. We've watched the trends of  
21          the demographics on Long Island. We watch  
22          our young people leave the area. We'd  
23          like to think in investing over a billion  
24          dollars in Long Island in the last ten  
25          years, that we've done our job to keep the

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young people here on Long Island. And we know that one of the number one aspects of them choosing to stay in this region is transportation efficiency.

So Long Island is in competition, not only regionally but nationally, to keep our young people. And we're losing our young people to New Jersey, we're losing our young people to North Carolina, we're losing our people to California.

I would just add a different perspective, because I think there's been a lot of legitimate concerns raised by local residents of Floral Park. And those concerns have been taxes, property values, and traffic. And what I would tell you is, transportation improvements can help Long Island grow and increase the tax base, and actually improve the tax situation on Long Island. Improving infrastructure actually helps with the traffic issues and takes cars off the road.

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2 And the last thing I would  
3 submit is a lot of people have expressed  
4 very legitimate concerns about property  
5 values in Floral Park. If we lose our  
6 young people, which we have been doing, I  
7 believe that we can keep them here by  
8 transportation improvements and they're  
9 the ones that are going to buy these  
10 folks' homes later on who are worried  
11 about not being able to sell them or the  
12 diminution of value.

13 I've done a lot of public  
14 hearings, and our experience with  
15 apartment homes are not the most popular  
16 thing out there. I had a suitcase thrown  
17 up on stage and they said pack your bags.  
18 So this is not easy, I know that it's an  
19 important dialogue. I'm impressed by the  
20 respectful nature of everyone's comments,  
21 and I'm confident that the governor's  
22 team, with Dave Kapell involved, can find  
23 some solutions to make sure this goes  
24 through. So thank you very much.

25 (Applause.)

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2 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
3 you.

4 Our next speaker is Chris  
5 Capese and will be followed by George  
6 Drance, Ann Corbett, John Moloughney,  
7 Nadia Holubriycz-Ortiz -- I'm sorry,  
8 correct me when you get up -- and Bill  
9 Corbett.

10 MR. CAPESE: My name is Chris  
11 Capese, I'm with Avalon Bay Communities.

12 And I am also -- I was born  
13 and bred in Floral Park, so I understand,  
14 I think, some of the issues that some of  
15 the local residents are discussing. And  
16 they're legitimate concerns.

17 I think globally, however, I  
18 support this project. I think it's an  
19 incredible opportunity for Long Island and  
20 incredible opportunity for Long Islanders  
21 to increase capacity, to not only Penn  
22 Station, but into Grand Central eventually  
23 with East Side Access.

24 It's -- unfortunately, we're  
25 one of those communities in New York Metro

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2 that's been around for a long time, and  
3 you see a lot of progress being made on  
4 the West Coast that's different than some  
5 of the challenges that we have here on the  
6 East Coast. And these are some of the  
7 growing pains that, unfortunately, we need  
8 to deal with.

9 You know, Long Island is a  
10 community at the end of the day, and we're  
11 not going to get rid of our cars  
12 100 percent, it's just not going to  
13 happen. However, to the extent that we  
14 can get cars off the road and decrease  
15 traffic, I think this is an opportunity we  
16 have to take advantage of. And no matter  
17 what side of the island you're on, I think  
18 we need to make a bipartisan effort to  
19 support the governor in this initiative.

20 So I think with that said,  
21 Long Island should be the tail wagging the  
22 dog on this particular opportunity. So  
23 thank you very much.

24 (Applause.)

25 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 you.

3 Our next speaker Mr. George  
4 Drance, followed by Ann Corbett and John  
5 Moloughney.

6 MR. DRANCE: Good morning. I  
7 thank you for the opportunity to express  
8 an opinion or two here, I want to thank  
9 you for that.

10 And I had intended to listen  
11 a lot and hoped to learn a lot, I think I  
12 did. I have, as a consequence, limited my  
13 remarks, which I hadn't planned to do,  
14 because of the wonderful and articulate  
15 statements coming from the Floral Park  
16 trustees that you've heard before.  
17 Everything they've said deserves serious  
18 consideration by the governor and the  
19 organizations that are here.

20 On the other hand, we cannot  
21 deny -- first let me tell you, I have a  
22 degree in transportation from NYU with a  
23 minor in economics. So these overall  
24 considerations are valid things to be  
25 cranked into the equation, but I urge you

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           to please take, especially the comments of  
3           our trustees, Dr. Pombonyo and all of our  
4           people, with regard to diminishing the  
5           impact on our local people. And basically  
6           that is the concern.

7           You cannot deny that we must  
8           consider the future of our young people  
9           leaving the island or who's going to buy  
10          our houses when we expire. I've -- but I  
11          ask you to please take into serious  
12          consideration the comments made by the  
13          Floral Park trustees. Thank you very  
14          much.

15                        (Applause.)

16           THE HEARING OFFICER: I'm  
17           just going to hold you for one minute, you  
18           didn't mention your name at the beginning.  
19           I know I called you to the stand. Can you  
20           state your name for the record.

21           MR. DRANCE: I'm sorry. My  
22           name is George W. Drance, D-R-A-N-C-E. I  
23           have owned homes and taken the railroad  
24           from the Nassau Boulevard station, from  
25           Huntington station, from Babylon station,

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           and Floral Park station for the past  
3           26 years, and it's been a lovely place.

4                     We hear so much about City  
5           planners thinking for ways to build  
6           walkable communities. Thank God we have a  
7           walkable community. Don't spoil it.

8                     (Applause.)

9                     THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
10          next speaker is Ann Corbett, followed by  
11          John Moloughney.

12                    MS. CORBETT: Ann Corbett,  
13          former Mayor of Floral Park and one of the  
14          spokespeople for Citizens Against Rail  
15          Expansion Care.

16                    Earlier I wanted to confirm  
17          that the entire Long Island railroad  
18          right-of-way was within the Incorporated  
19          Village of Floral Park and is actually one  
20          of the study areas discussed in the DEIS.  
21          And unfortunately, at the open house I  
22          couldn't find an expert to verify that.

23                    In the document it states  
24          that the Village of Floral Park and Nassau  
25          County has a population of 9,304 people,

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           which is incorrect. The population is  
3           15,977.

4                   On page S11, parking, "the  
5           proposed project would add a significant  
6           amount of new parking near train stations  
7           in the study area." The stations slated  
8           for new parking facilities are New Hyde  
9           Park, Mineola, Westbury, and Hicksville,  
10          but not Floral Park, where parking for  
11          commuters is at a premium.

12                   The threat of permanent loss  
13          of parking space at the Floral Park  
14          station as a result of third track  
15          construction is worrisome. It would be  
16          very detrimental and inconvenient for the  
17          residents, many of whom are commuters, if  
18          parking spaces are lost and no spaces are  
19          created.

20                   The surface parking lot and  
21          the proposed three or four, six and seven  
22          multilevel parking garages at stations  
23          mentioned, would be costly to build and  
24          costly to keep clean, maintained and safe.

25                   Are these being built on the

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2 Long Island railroad property? On private  
3 property? Or village properties? Will  
4 the villages lease the garages from the  
5 MTA or LIRR? Who will be responsible to  
6 maintain, clean and police the garages?  
7 Are contracts on these -- with these  
8 villages drafted and ready to be signed or  
9 are they being negotiated? Who will  
10 decide on the parking fees and reap the  
11 fees?

12 In the Incorporated Village  
13 of Floral Park, the village reaps the  
14 parking lot and station parking and pays  
15 the MTA LIRR for the use, and is  
16 responsible for maintaining the lots,  
17 which includes resurfacing, tracking,  
18 lighting, et cetera, not just sweeping and  
19 removing snow. And is responsible for  
20 patrols by the Floral Park Police  
21 Department that keep the lot safe.

22 This is an expense to the  
23 village taxpayers. I negotiated the last  
24 contract involving these parking lots with  
25 the MTA. I think we reached a pretty fair

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           agreement, but the cost falls on local  
3           taxpayers and commuters. Nothing is free  
4           when it comes to parking.

5                       In the early 2000s I walked  
6           the length of the Floral Park Long Island  
7           railroad station with representatives from  
8           the railroad to point out the  
9           deterioration of the station, which was  
10          elevated in the '60s. A service elevator  
11          has since been closed down, no attention  
12          has been given to make the station  
13          hospitable to the disabled, travelers  
14          lugging suitcases, the elderly and mothers  
15          pushing baby strollers. Granted the  
16          escalator that goes up to the station  
17          platform was finally replaced, but it took  
18          13 months, and all of the very steep  
19          stairways were replaced over a  
20          two-and-a-half-year period. General  
21          maintenance or enhancements of facilities  
22          has been disappointing.

23                      In 50 years ago -- in  
24          50 years, I wonder what the condition of  
25          the proposed multilevel parking garages

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           and the new railroad stations will be if  
3           Floral Park is an example.

4                   On pages 12 to 14, vibration,  
5           "under tie pads will be used along  
6           sections of the new rail corridor located  
7           within 100 feet of residences." Under tie  
8           pads used for property ties reduce  
9           vibrations, but what is the plan for the  
10          maintenance of under tie pads and concrete  
11          ties? What has been the railroad's  
12          experience with under tie pads?

13                   The MTA LIRR has an ongoing  
14          costly program for replacing a huge number  
15          of concrete ties on existing tracks in the  
16          rail system that were found to be  
17          defective or have deteriorated. Have all  
18          the concrete ties on the two main lines  
19          been inspected and replaced if they are  
20          from the defective batch? Is there a  
21          potential for damage to the existing two  
22          Main Line concrete ties and under tie pads  
23          when construction work to install the  
24          third track takes place? Is the cost of  
25          unanticipated damage to the existing track

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           ties factored into the cost of the third  
3           track project or a separate cost?

4                       With the expected increases  
5           in rail traffic, the MTA use of under tie  
6           pads or sound attenuation walls to reduce  
7           noise and vibration should be considered  
8           where residences and schools are 100 feet  
9           from the right-of-way, along the  
10          four-track section of the rail system that  
11          runs from the point where the third track  
12          construction is slated to begin in Floral  
13          Park, west to include the Floral Park  
14          station, and on west through the west end  
15          of Floral Park, Bellerose Village, and the  
16          Floral Park Bellerose school, and on to  
17          the Queens border and Jamaica. Thank you.

18                       (Applause.)

19                      THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
20          next speaker is John Moloughney.

21                      MR. MOLOUGHNEY: Here I am.  
22          A long-time resident of Floral Park. John  
23          Moloughney, long-time resident of Floral  
24          Park.

25                      My concern is, I have

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2 children and grandchildren that live in  
3 New Hyde Park, and it would be very nice  
4 instead of doing this third track, do all  
5 those grade crossings. I have a daughter  
6 that has to cross, she walks across the  
7 railroad, and she said you wouldn't  
8 believe the amount of people that try to  
9 beat the train. And I say, I know how  
10 many accidents do they have with people  
11 dieing. Okay.

12 In that regard, what is this  
13 new thing with sleep apnea? You have all  
14 these people dying because the engineer  
15 falls asleep, I have never heard of that.  
16 I'm a retired trailer driver, we never --  
17 if you fell asleep at the wheel, you had  
18 an accident, but then you stood up and you  
19 said that. These people come up with this  
20 sleep apnea. I mean, the Long Island  
21 railroad has been running trains back and  
22 forth all over, and now we have sleep  
23 apnea. I mean, come on. This is a thing  
24 to get out.

25 If you had an accident, you

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2 were driving, you got a ticket or you  
3 spent time in jail. These guys are going  
4 to get a pension and we're going to have  
5 to pay for that, okay.

6 And the other side of that,  
7 if you get on the train in Floral Park or  
8 Bellerose, the train goes, what, 300 feet  
9 and stops 'cause there's an interlocking  
10 right by Queens Village. Then you get  
11 going again, you have to stop in Jamaica.  
12 Instead of doing the third track, fix  
13 these switches so when you get on the  
14 train, when you stop in Jamaica you're at  
15 the platform, you're not half a mile away,  
16 okay.

17 And, I mean, Cuomo, he wants  
18 to do LaGuardia, Kennedy, and this, where  
19 is the money coming from? That's what I  
20 like to know. This is going to come out  
21 of --

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. MOLOUGHNEY: I'm retired,  
24 I don't have much of this, okay. I mean,  
25 really. He wants to be president, I

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2 guess, I don't know.

3 But, I mean, it's got to come  
4 from some place. So fix all the  
5 infrastructure, and then at the end when  
6 you get done with that, maybe you'll have  
7 the money left for the third track. Thank  
8 you.

9 (Applause.)

10 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
11 next speaker is Nadia Holoubriycz-Ortiz.

12 MS. HOLOUBRIYCH-ORTIZ: My  
13 name is Nadia Holoubriycz-Ortiz, I'm a  
14 resident of Floral Park, also president of  
15 Hillcrest Civic Association within Floral  
16 Park.

17 I come today with one  
18 explicit goal: To appeal to Governor  
19 Cuomo, the Metropolitan Transit Authority,  
20 and Long Island railroad to build a new  
21 ADA compliant transportation at Floral  
22 Park.

23 The idea that over \$2 billion  
24 is slated for this visionary project, yet  
25 the Floral Park station is going to remain

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           untouched, is incomprehensible. The  
3           \$27 billion 2015 to 2019 MTA Capital  
4           Program was approved by the MTA board on  
5           April 20, 2016, with objectives that  
6           include enhancements such as ADA  
7           compliance, yet the Floral Park train  
8           station is not part of the equation.

9                       In justifying the need for  
10          this third track project, the MTA's  
11          20-year Capital Needs Assessment from 2015  
12          to 2034, analyzed future population and  
13          employment trends, identified the largest  
14          employment growth in areas such as Suffolk  
15          County, and rejected increased demand for  
16          travel from the outer boroughs of New York  
17          City to employers on Long Island. Yet  
18          over 6,000 disabled residents, who are  
19          employable but are unemployed in Nassau  
20          and Suffolk County, who could potentially  
21          use the Long Island railroad to commute to  
22          work, are being denied access to stations  
23          that are inaccessible to them.

24                      The New Hyde Park station,  
25          Merillon Avenue station, Mineola station,

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Carle Place station, and Westbury station are all being brought up to ADA compliance under this ambitious enterprise, but this plan starts just east of the Floral Park station. And as most recently as January 10th of the new year, Governor Cuomo announced an additional \$120 million to enhance 16 train stations in Nassau and Suffolk counties with state-of-the-art technology, including new facilities, Wi-Fi, charging stations, public art, new platform waiting areas, general station renovations, and improved signage. But the Floral Park train station will remain in the 1960s with no ADA compliance.

Our train station is 58 years old and has never seen an improvement or renovation project. The facade is crumbling, concrete is breaking away, and rust can be seen from top to bottom. Access to the tracks are by 12 metal staircases, each comprised of 40 steps from street to track level. One escalator for Platform B leads to one westbound

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           track on the Hempstead line and one  
3           eastbound track on the Main Line. There  
4           is no public elevator.

5                       In his 2017 State of the  
6           State Address, Governor Cuomo cites New  
7           York's credo as providing opportunity for  
8           all. He speaks of New York's  
9           unprecedented social progress and how a  
10          bright light of opportunity shines for all  
11          New Yorkers. This sort of outlook does  
12          not apply to Floral Park residents.

13                      If I might cite some  
14          statistics about Floral Park residents  
15          from the 2010 census. The population is  
16          approximately 16,000. Of that, 2,348 were  
17          over the age of 65; 761 were disabled and  
18          under the age of 65, including me; and 920  
19          children under the age of five resided in  
20          Floral Park. That's a total of 4,029  
21          residents, exactly 25 percent or  
22          one quarter of our total population.

23                      Any resident within our  
24          25 percent population bracket with a  
25          mobility impairment, either temporary or

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2 permanent; any resident with a medical  
3 condition that compromises their ability  
4 to navigate 40 steps up and 40 steps down;  
5 any family with young children in  
6 strollers, cannot access the station.  
7 Twenty-five percent of Floral Park  
8 residents cannot use the train station  
9 that is in the center of the village that  
10 they live in.

11 This does not sound like  
12 Governor Cuomo's plan of social progress.  
13 There is no bright light of opportunity  
14 for all New Yorkers, and the mere fact  
15 that I have to come and ask for an ADA  
16 compliant train station and articulate the  
17 inadequacies, is a sad task indeed. It's  
18 counterintuitive to Governor Cuomo's  
19 conviction of social progressiveness.

20 The Floral Park train station  
21 must be renovated and updated, and it must  
22 become ADA compliant. There's no  
23 question, there's no debate, there's no  
24 compromise. And this is not a favor and  
25 it's not a bargaining tool for mitigation.

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2 This is a public right to public  
3 transportation. Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our  
6 next speaker is Bill Corbett. He will be  
7 followed by Frank Dehler, Dave Kapell,  
8 Kathleen Gaida, and Nicholas Zacchea.

9 MR. CORBETT: My name is Bill  
10 Corbett. I want to thank you for your  
11 attentiveness to the speakers today, and  
12 at the Westbury hearing you were really  
13 taking in what they were saying.

14 Another speaker said -- and  
15 I'm part of the Citizens Against Rail  
16 Expansion. We have -- it's a coalition of  
17 business people, local civic  
18 organizations, and political elected  
19 officials and former officials who are  
20 opposed to the third track project.

21 I might say that I've been a  
22 resident of Floral Park for 73 years.

23 Another speaker said they handed in 5,000  
24 petitions, what they didn't tell you is  
25 they were collected by paid people. I

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2 read that in the newspaper. Last time  
3 this came up, we put in over 10,000, all  
4 by volunteers, nobody was paid a cent.

5 We're limited to three  
6 minutes, so I'm going to hit a few bullet  
7 points. I'll be handing in a 20-page  
8 summary of comments. I'm also handing in  
9 summary from Perry Criscitelli, president  
10 of Floral Park West End Civic Association.  
11 He specifically comments on the Bellerose  
12 railroad station and the Floral Park  
13 station and problems that the railroad has  
14 at the West End.

15 I don't think anybody opposes  
16 the grade crossings, they're very  
17 important for safety reasons, but I like  
18 to talk about the DEIS and where it is  
19 inadequate and where it fell short.

20 Number one, it doesn't go  
21 into enough detail on remediation of the  
22 toxic soil that exists within 9.8 miles.  
23 We know there's very dangerous chemicals  
24 that have been used on the railroad over  
25 100 years. They mention that in their

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2 statement, but what they don't do is give  
3 us details as what's going to be done when  
4 taking away those chemicals, some of which  
5 are now barred by the federal government.  
6 And of course of illness in Garden City,  
7 Floral Park, and Bellerose of people  
8 abutting the tracks having become ill.

9 Another shortcoming is the  
10 staging area. We haven't been given  
11 enough detail. We are assuming Belmont  
12 Racetrack will be used for staging. We  
13 haven't had any assurances that the gate  
14 in the West End of Floral Park will not be  
15 used to take the heavy equipment in and  
16 out of Floral Park.

17 The loss of parking is a  
18 severe problem. During the construction,  
19 a loss of between 36 and 50 parking spots,  
20 which are critical. We're not sure if  
21 that loss will be permanent, but we do  
22 need additional parking in Floral Park.  
23 In the future, studies say that we will  
24 have a shortage. Why wait, why not fix  
25 the shortage now and give us more parking?

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2 We're certainly in favor the  
3 improving the stations, giving us  
4 handicapped access. We also feel there  
5 needs to be remediation done on the work  
6 that's going to be done. When the  
7 railroad fixed the tracks and made a  
8 switch to the west of Bellerose station,  
9 people were inconvenienced, there were  
10 bright lights shining in their bedrooms.  
11 They were told there's nothing you can do,  
12 you have file local ordinances.

13 There's also the increase of  
14 proposing the tracks. We know the freight  
15 is going to be increased. We know Suffolk  
16 County pulls garbage through Floral Park  
17 and New Hyde Park on the trains all  
18 through the night. On News12 yesterday,  
19 there was a piece about people in Suffolk  
20 County who were concerned about  
21 radioactive waste being carried on the  
22 railroad. Also toxic waste, we have that  
23 same concern.

24 We know that the proposal is  
25 going to take at least five years. When

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2 you say \$4 million, we know it's going to  
3 be much more than that. I think it's very  
4 imperative that everybody here know that  
5 our hope is to block the funding in the  
6 New York State Senate. And we hope  
7 everybody will write Senator Hannon and  
8 Phillips, ask them not to fund this  
9 project until all of these concerns are  
10 properly addressed and the local residents  
11 aren't unduly handicapped. Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
14 you.

15 Our next speaker is Frank  
16 Dehler. Mr. Dehler?

17 (No response.)

18 THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay,  
19 we'll call his name again in a few minutes  
20 if he returns.

21 Dave Kapell is our next  
22 speaker.

23 MR. KAPPELL: Good afternoon.  
24 Thank you for hearing me.

25 My name is Dave Kapell, I'm

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2 the executive director of the Right Track  
3 For Long Island Coalition. Our coalition  
4 has mushroomed to 5,000 members, and we  
5 speak -- our members speak for over  
6 two million people on Long Island who have  
7 come together to support the Long Island  
8 railroad enhancement project, because we  
9 believe it is the key to unlocking the  
10 full potential of our region in the 21st  
11 century.

12 The two existing tracks  
13 through the Main Line corridor were built  
14 in the 19th century when people rode to  
15 the train station in horse and buggy.  
16 Today it's the busiest commuter railroad  
17 in the country, and runs at full capacity  
18 during peak hours in one direction.

19 Without a third track,  
20 service cannot be expanded to meet the  
21 growing needs of a region of three million  
22 people, especially the young people who  
23 hold transit as a top priority in deciding  
24 where to live, work, and raise a family.

25 Unless we can attract these

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2 young people, Long Island will continue to  
3 fall behind regions that aggressively  
4 compete with us for talent. We respect  
5 the fact that a project of this magnitude  
6 cannot be built without local impacts.

7 But the Draft Environmental Impact  
8 Statement is to be commended for including  
9 important mitigation measures to minimize  
10 short-term inconvenience and the  
11 elimination of seven dangerous,  
12 unattractive grade crossings, construction  
13 of six garages with 2,300 new parking  
14 spaces, five new beautiful  
15 state-of-the-art train stations, and sound  
16 walls to reduce noise and vibration in  
17 residential districts, ensures that the  
18 project will be transformative for the  
19 local communities.

20 This is a \$750 million  
21 commitment to the local communities, it's  
22 a once in a lifetime opportunity for a  
23 State investment. Three million Long  
24 Islanders should be able to enjoy the same  
25 convenient access to transit as corridor

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2       communities do now. After all, it's the  
3       Long Island railroad.

4                   As importantly, the lack of  
5       the third track denies the flexibility of  
6       system needs to respond effectively to  
7       frequent often traffic incidents that are  
8       a major cause of delays that plague the  
9       system and frustrate 300,000 daily  
10      commuters who depend on it to support  
11      their families. These commuters have  
12      previously been without a voice on a  
13      project that would dramatically improve  
14      their lives and those of their families.

15                   You've already received a  
16      petition that bears the signatures of  
17      4,542 Long Island commuters, 2,596 of them  
18      live in Main Line corridor communities. A  
19      beautified Main Line corridor will be the  
20      21st century pride of the Long Island  
21      railroad system and the envy of Long  
22      Island. This can only raise property  
23      values, which will help keep taxes down.

24                   We urge you to move ahead and  
25      build the third track now. But before I

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           give up the mic, I want to endorse the  
3           request and demand made by Nadia -- I  
4           can't pronounce the last name -- Ortiz,  
5           for handicapped access to the Floral Park  
6           station. This is a reasonable and  
7           respectable request and we encourage you  
8           to entertain it. Thank you very much.

9                           (Applause.)

10                   THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
11           you.

12                   We have two more registered  
13           speakers at this time, they are Kathleen  
14           Gaida and Nicholas Zacchea.

15                   We had called the name of  
16           Frank Dehler. If he's here, he'll be the  
17           third speaker if he remains.

18                   MS. GAIDA: Good afternoon.  
19           My name is Kathleen Gaida and I do not  
20           believe that the installation of a third  
21           track will benefit me as a New Hyde Park  
22           homeowner, as a commuter or as a taxpayer.

23                   Adding complexity to a system  
24           that's unable to cope with current demand  
25           levels makes no sense. The underlying

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           infrastructure is broken and should be  
3           fixed before you consider anything like  
4           adding a third track.

5                       Concerns about peak traffic?  
6           Don't throw good money after that by  
7           adding more volume to a broken system.  
8           Improve the system efficiency by spending  
9           the money on maintenance of trains,  
10          tracks, and switches, and fix whatever's  
11          wrong with Jamaica.

12                      Reverse commuting? That's a  
13          figment of someone's imagination. And if  
14          you don't believe that, try riding an  
15          eastbound train in the morning. Unless  
16          and until there's connecting  
17          infrastructure at the destination  
18          stations, reverse commuting is simply a  
19          nice thought with nothing to back it up.

20                      If you've ever been waken in  
21          the middle of the night by a freight train  
22          thundering through your neighborhood,  
23          you'd agree that the argument for  
24          commuter-only transportation is nothing  
25          more than an empty promise. And what are

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2 these trains carrying? I can't support  
3 the installation of a third track that  
4 will increase transportation of poisonous  
5 materials through my neighborhood.

6 Freight trains cause other  
7 damage as well. As I reported last May,  
8 structural integrity is an issue. The  
9 shelves in my curio cabinet literally fell  
10 to pieces as a freight train sped past  
11 late one night. I didn't receive  
12 financial compensation for my material  
13 losses, and I can't regain the memories  
14 that were lost. And now you want to add a  
15 third track.

16 I'm also seriously concerned  
17 about the hazardous chemicals that have  
18 been used for years as defoliants with all  
19 that poison sinking into the soil along  
20 the tracks. Stirring up dangerous and  
21 potentially life-impairing contamination  
22 to install a third track seems a high  
23 price to pay for something we don't need.  
24 Will additional health care be available  
25 to those of us who will be exposed to

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2 those hazardous chemicals? I somehow  
3 don't think that's provided for in your  
4 plan.

5 With regard to the  
6 elimination of grade crossings, I'm in  
7 support as long as the designs make sense  
8 and the work is done sequentially, not  
9 concurrently. Probably should start with  
10 New Hyde Park Road, since that's  
11 considered a dangerous intersection, and  
12 with good reason with the conversion of  
13 several roads there. But please rethink  
14 the design, so that the result doesn't  
15 look like part of the highway system in  
16 the Bronx. With no offense to the Bronx,  
17 but there's a lot of concrete there and a  
18 lot of things that merge, and this design,  
19 if you look at it, looks just like that  
20 only you've got these underpasses that you  
21 wouldn't be able to see through.

22 Accidents and fatalities are  
23 sure to result from this ill-conceived  
24 design. The design for Covert Avenue,  
25 near me, is also unacceptable. As a

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2 pedestrian, the journey from my house to  
3 any location north of the Main Line track  
4 would become perilous. I'd have to risk  
5 life and limb to get to the walkway and  
6 then back up while cars and trucks whiz  
7 past me. After that I have to make my way  
8 back to the west side so I could reach my  
9 home, again with cars and trucks traveling  
10 at increased rates of speed with limited  
11 line of sight. As a driver, I'll be  
12 trying to navigate around those  
13 pedestrians doing their best to make it  
14 safely to the other side.

15 I'm also concerned about  
16 potential disruptions in the event of an  
17 emergency. Will it take ambulance, police  
18 and fire vehicles longer to reach my home  
19 if required? Years of construction and  
20 disturbance will accompany this project,  
21 despite any protestations to the contrary.  
22 That puts me and my neighbors in jeopardy,  
23 and that's not acceptable.

24 I'd like to believe that we  
25 who reside within the impacted community

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           are more than collateral damage to a  
3           grandiose expansion plan. We've invested  
4           our lives, our futures, and our finances  
5           in this community, and we want to be proud  
6           to call it our home. If we wanted to live  
7           with multilane roads, parking garages, and  
8           a railroad station that looks like it  
9           belongs in the heart of a commercial  
10          neighborhood, we could easily have settled  
11          elsewhere.

12                       Like those of you who are in  
13          power, we deserve to be treated with  
14          respect and to have our voices heard. For  
15          me, that means you'll consider logical and  
16          more economic alternatives to the third  
17          tract that will not serve the interest of  
18          me or my community. Thank you for  
19          listening.

20                       (Applause.)

21                       THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
22          you. Next Nicholas Zacchea.

23                       MR. ZACCHEA: Thank you. My  
24          name is Nick Zacchea, I'm a resident of  
25          Floral Park.

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2 I had some statements  
3 prepared, but from what I've been hearing,  
4 everybody who's concerned about the  
5 development of the third track has said  
6 basically all that I had intended to say.  
7 Everybody covered the environmental  
8 elements of it quite satisfactorily, so I  
9 won't get into that.

10 The first observation I like  
11 to make is the fact that people who seem  
12 to be in favor of the track, don't seem to  
13 be concerned about the environmental  
14 aspects of it. We heard from somebody  
15 from Long Island University, we heard from  
16 some of the institutional executives,  
17 we've heard from somebody from Avalon  
18 Development Corporation. Avalon  
19 Development Corporation was actually  
20 almost insulting. They didn't care about  
21 the environmental aspects of the track,  
22 what they were concerned about is making a  
23 profit. They were concerned about their  
24 development. In fact, that's what they  
25 said.

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2 So I'm kind of shocked at the  
3 fact that the people who are in favor of  
4 the project don't really care, are not  
5 really concerned, about the environmental  
6 impact to the residents of Floral Park.  
7 Not only are they not concerned, but the  
8 governor is not concerned as well.

9 From what I heard, the  
10 governor has little concern for the issues  
11 of environment that are occurring, that  
12 will occur, that are bound to occur in our  
13 village. And so that's the observation I  
14 wanted to make.

15 The other observation I  
16 wanted to make, and it has to do in  
17 general with the entire project. The  
18 governor has articulated -- said, stated  
19 why the project is necessary. But the  
20 governor has never provided any  
21 documentation, any evidence, any support,  
22 that could be used to verify or support or  
23 to confirm his contentions that the  
24 project is needed. And so because the  
25 governor said it's needed, does not

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           necessarily mean that it is, in fact,  
3           needed. And I don't think the governor  
4           realizes that it's up to him to provide  
5           evidence, documentation in support of the  
6           need of the project. And until that is  
7           done, until the governor provides support  
8           for his reasons for wanting the project  
9           developed, then I think the project should  
10          not go ahead.

11                       But it has gone ahead. An  
12          Environmental Impact Statement was  
13          developed, 2,500 pages of engineering and  
14          scientific data. The project, the  
15          documentation, was given to us around the  
16          holidays, given to us around Thanksgiving  
17          time and before the Christmas holidays.  
18          That would not have been so bad if it was  
19          not replete with engineering and  
20          scientific data.

21                      It's really unconscionable  
22          for the governor to hire an environmental  
23          firm and pay millions of dollars to that  
24          firm to conduct an environmental study and  
25          then give it to us, essentially laymen,

1           1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project  
2           and expect us to analyze the information  
3           in that document and come up with what  
4           would be bona fide objections to what an  
5           engineering and scientific firm has  
6           developed.

7                       And so I think, unless the  
8           governor can provide the Village of Floral  
9           Park and the affected communities with  
10          funding to be able to do the same kind of  
11          intensive review of that environmental  
12          document that was put into it when the  
13          document was developed by the engineering  
14          firm, then I think that the project should  
15          not go forward. The project should not  
16          good forward until the governor is able to  
17          provide the affected communities with  
18          funds, with monies that will enable them  
19          to do a thorough scrubbing of that  
20          document to determine whether or not the  
21          environmental elements that are contained  
22          in the document are valid or not. Thank  
23          you.

24                       (Applause.)

25                       THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 you.

3 Our next speaker will be the  
4 Honorable Thomas Tweedy, Mayor of Floral  
5 Park.

6 MR. TWEEDY: At the onset, I  
7 wish to speak to the issue of handicapped  
8 access at the Floral Park train station.  
9 And to make the record clear, and remove  
10 any doubt where the Village of Floral Park  
11 stands on this issue.

12 Unfortunately, some members  
13 of the public and the press are under the  
14 impression that the village has not raised  
15 these concerns about handicapped access  
16 since the new third track project was  
17 announced. This is incorrect, as we've  
18 raised this issue at every meeting we've  
19 had with representatives from the MTA LIRR  
20 since last January.

21 Floral Park believes that,  
22 independent of this project, the LIRR  
23 should have implemented improvements of  
24 the Floral Park station to make it fully  
25 compliant with ADA standards. However,

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2 the DEIS makes it clear that the third  
3 track will require some modifications to  
4 the Floral Park station, and yet the LIRR  
5 is still not proposing to make the station  
6 handicap accessible.

7 Concerns of scheduling and  
8 construction impacts in the DEIS are  
9 presented as "conservative estimates,"  
10 your word. However, there is no basis  
11 provided for construction schedule  
12 substance in the DEIS. To the contrary,  
13 experience with other MTA projects  
14 suggests that schedules presented in the  
15 DEIS could be highly optimistic, if not,  
16 unrealistic. It seems the design build  
17 approach is being used to shield the  
18 public from the transparent presentations  
19 of how local residents and businesses will  
20 have to grapple with construction impacts.

21 If the design build  
22 contractors tell the LIRR that the  
23 construction schedule assumptions are  
24 unrealistic, will the Long Island railroad  
25 reopen the SEQRA process so that the

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 impacts may be properly considered? This  
3 leads into the other issues, such as  
4 temporary construction staging areas and  
5 how long they may -- they are schedule  
6 to -- I'm sorry, customer disruption --  
7 schedule disruptions, while construction  
8 drags on.

9 As a small local business  
10 might be able to endure business  
11 interruption for six to nine months, what  
12 will happen as construction drags forward?  
13 Initial estimates for this project were  
14 \$1.5 billion, now the DEIS projects it at  
15 \$2 billion, 25 percent increase, what  
16 changed? What happens if it costs more  
17 than \$2 billion? We know of MTA projects  
18 that were grossly underestimated when  
19 presented to the public. How will this be  
20 paid for? We still do not know. Thank  
21 you very much.

22 (Applause.)

23 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
24 you.

25 Earlier we called the name of

1 1-19-17 LIRR Expansion Project

2 Frank Dehler, has he rejoined us?

3 (No response.)

4 THE HEARING OFFICER: I guess  
5 not.

6 Our next speaker then is  
7 Steven McCallister.

8 MR. MCCALLISTER: Good  
9 afternoon. Steven McCallister, I'm a  
10 resident of Floral Park, but today I'm  
11 speaking as the police commissioner of  
12 Floral Park Police Department.

13 I have several concerns, but  
14 two I'm going to speak to. One is the  
15 construction phase at the South Tyson.  
16 Where do we plan on staging the employees,  
17 their cars and equipment? As you may or  
18 may not know, that area is extremely  
19 densely populated already. Any additional  
20 parking would be -- make a bad  
21 situation -- exacerbate an already bad  
22 situation.

23 Second is at the grade  
24 crossing at Covert, which I applaud. Any  
25 grade crossing removal is an improvement.

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2 Where is that traffic going to be  
3 diverted? On Tulip Avenue, presently now  
4 east/west direction, we have 10,000  
5 vehicles on a daily basis. On Plainfield  
6 Avenue, which intersects Tulip Avenue,  
7 which runs north/south, is 8,000. Any  
8 additional traffic -- you can imagine  
9 during the peak hours, a.m. rush and p.m.  
10 rush, we're at a standstill already. Any  
11 additional traffic coming from the east  
12 now, that's no longer provided to go  
13 across Covert Avenue to seek out Jericho  
14 Turnpike, is just going to crush our  
15 village.

16 I know the project is  
17 projected at three to four years. We know  
18 problems happen, weather and other  
19 conditions, so realistically four to  
20 five years, that's a lot of a burden to  
21 ask of the Floral Park community, and also  
22 Floral Park Police Department.

23 With increased traffic, we  
24 have increased accidents. Increased  
25 accidents, we have the chance of increased

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2 injuries. Every one of those requires a  
3 response from the police department and  
4 fire department when there's an injury.  
5 That takes away from vital services to the  
6 rest of the village. I don't know how  
7 or -- I didn't read anything in the DEIS  
8 about how that problem could be  
9 alleviated.

10 That's all I have for you  
11 today and thank you for your time.

12 (Applause.)

13 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
14 you.

15 I'm going to ask if we have  
16 any additional registered speakers? Not  
17 at this time.

18 All right. This hearing is  
19 scheduled to go until 2:00. It is now  
20 1:51, we will remain here, but we're going  
21 to take a brief recess. And of course,  
22 we'll be back again this evening from 6:00  
23 to 9:00 to hear additional speakers.

24 Thank you very much for being  
25 with us today.

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2 (Whereupon, a short recess  
3 was taken at this time.)

4 THE HEARING OFFICER: Ladies  
5 and gentlemen, the time is 2:00, we are  
6 formally concluding this hearing. But if  
7 you still wish to speak, we will be back  
8 again this evening between 6:00 p.m. and  
9 9:00 p.m.

10 Thank you very much for your  
11 participation.

12 (Time noted: 2:00 p.m.)  
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## C E R T I F I C A T E

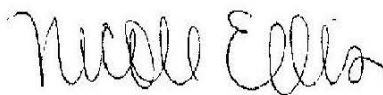
STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  : ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

I, NICOLE ELLIS, a Notary Public for and  
within the State of New York, do hereby certify:

I reported the proceedings in the  
within-entitled matter, and that the within  
transcript is a true record of such proceedings.

I further certify that I am not related to  
any of the parties to this action by blood or by  
marriage and that I am in no way interested in the  
outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
hand this 23rd day of January 2017.



---

NICOLE ELLIS

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1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 The Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 7:17 p.m. - 7:22 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 BRIAN McGRANE

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1                   MR. McGRANE: We have a  
2                   problem with the proposal, not only  
3                   because of the traffic that's going to,  
4                   you know, obviously build up on, and  
5                   that's in the surrounding areas, but also  
6                   the idea of bringing in freight because  
7                   the ridership is down.

8                   I used to take the rail road  
9                   when I worked for the State as an  
10                  investigator, I used to take it into Penn  
11                  Station, grab the subway and go to work.  
12                  Even then the ridership was down and that  
13                  was in the '90's. So, you know, people  
14                  are not amassing in New Hyde Park train  
15                  station so the argument to build up  
16                  ridership is really a moot point, there is  
17                  no build up of ridership.

18                 So we're concerned about the  
19                 freight and types of freight that they  
20                 carry through here, because it's such a  
21                 large and congested area. Now for a  
22                 couple months I had a sales job, it was in  
23                 Mineola, right off Mineola Boulevard and  
24                 right down the block from the train  
25                 station. And to try and park off of

1 Mineola Boulevard or even get anymore near  
2 Mineola Boulevard in the morning, 8:30 in  
3 the morning to try to get to work, the  
4 parking was horrendous. And, of course,  
5 in the Village of Mineola it's all on one  
6 side of street, so it's even less  
7 available. So the other side of the  
8 street is not available for parking due to  
9 the street cleaning and the sanitation  
10 pick up.

11 So this line runs from  
12 Jamaica through Floral Park through New  
13 Hyde Park, which I used to take going into  
14 the city. Of course it goes through  
15 Merillon, Mineola and straight out to  
16 Hicksville. And I don't know how far they  
17 want to extend it. I know this is the  
18 Hicksville line, if they want to extend it  
19 further east into Suffolk County. Suffolk  
20 County is blessed with a little more area  
21 and space, as opposed to what we have  
22 here.

23 And right now our area has  
24 been so overdeveloped, it's resembling  
25 Queens, certain sections of Queens. And I

1 moved in from Ozone Park in 1969 just  
2 before I turned five, this area looked  
3 like the country. Now it resembles  
4 nothing like what I moved into.

5 So, again, we've had enough  
6 changes, we want to keep some type of  
7 quality of life and we're not being heard.  
8 And our vote, we thought, spoke for us in  
9 November. We voted for a particular  
10 candidate whose platform was the objection  
11 to a third rail. There are other types of  
12 changes and other types of construction  
13 that could be done on behalf of the rail  
14 road at less cost to those taxpayers, such  
15 as myself and others, that they could do  
16 to make any type of improvements, that  
17 seem to be overlooked or ignored. And  
18 pressing forward this type of development,  
19 and it's not going to be conducive to our  
20 neighborhood. So we'd like to see it  
21 stopped, killed basically, and have  
22 alternative views -- alternative plans  
23 looked at, considered.

24 Today, as I was saying  
25 before, we left the house, we had a

1 two-car accident on Lakeville Road. A  
2 two-car accident, which precluded a US  
3 Postal Service tractor trailer from going  
4 around in that particular accident, which  
5 in turn collided with another car. And  
6 that tractor trailer has been down on my  
7 block, on Franklin Avenue, for the last  
8 two and a half hours. And there we're two  
9 Nassau County police officers right there.  
10 I went across the street to speak to them,  
11 and they're still doing the paperwork and  
12 the reports on their computer in their  
13 vehicles.

14 And we had quite a bit of  
15 traffic coming down, not only turning onto  
16 Franklin and going toward Kamda, they're  
17 coming down Franklin and going towards  
18 Hillside Avenue. It basically looks like  
19 Queens or Brooklyn or the Bronx, areas  
20 that I'm very, very familiar with, and I  
21 don't want my neighborhood looking like  
22 that.

23 Plus the 24-hour  
24 construction, plus the decibel range.  
25 Anything over 80 decibels is going to be

1 more than an annoyance, it's going to be  
2 ear splitting, and it can range up to 140  
3 decibels. And to do this on a 24-hour  
4 cycle, plus the dust, filth, potential  
5 asbestos in the area, Agent Orange,  
6 exposure to other volatile compounds,  
7 pesticides. All these things we can live  
8 without.

9 I read a book in college, an  
10 environmental science course called Silent  
11 Spring by Rachel Carson, and she named  
12 Nassau County, specifically, for the  
13 spraying of aldrin and DDT, and other  
14 types of compounds that the county had  
15 done quite a bit of spraying. And many  
16 people contracted breast cancer and other  
17 types of cancer since the '50's living in  
18 this area, and it's all related to the  
19 spraying of DDT and aldrin.  
20 Unfortunately, many people don't know it.  
21 They're not aware of it.

## C E R T I F I C A T E

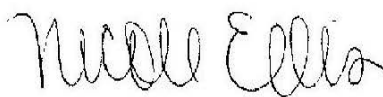
STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  : ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

I, NICOLE ELLIS, a Notary Public for and  
within the State of New York, do hereby certify:

I reported the proceedings in the  
within-entitled matter, and that the within  
transcript is a true record of such proceedings.

I further certify that I am not related to  
any of the parties to this action by blood or by  
marriage and that I am in no way interested in the  
outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
hand this 20th day of January 2017.



---

NICOLE ELLIS

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

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9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 8:42 p.m. - 8:43 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 JANICE HURNETT

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 MS. HURNETT: I have a couple  
2 questions.

3 What's the time frame? Who's  
4 going to pay for it, taxes or the Long  
5 Island commuters? Both are extraordinary  
6 right now. What's the budget? How are  
7 you considering this when we're decades  
8 late on the big dig from Grand Central to  
9 Queens? And that's over budget, so I  
10 don't see how this is improving anything  
11 on the east end of Long Island. They're  
12 just not that type of community. That's  
13 it.

## C E R T I F I C A T E

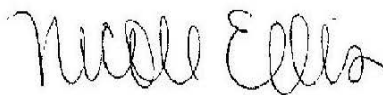
STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  :   ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

I, NICOLE ELLIS, a Notary Public for and  
within the State of New York, do hereby certify:

I reported the proceedings in the  
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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
hand this 20th day of January 2017.



---

NICOLE ELLIS

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 The Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 7:23 p.m. - 7:24 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 MAFALDA McGRANE

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 MS. MAFALDA: I'm totally  
2 against it, as well. I have a 13-year old  
3 son that I'm concerned with, if they will  
4 be building and digging down so far and  
5 bringing up all the pesticides, Agent  
6 Orange. I'm concerned for his health, for  
7 his children. We already have cancer in  
8 the family and I don't want to see that  
9 going down his line.

10 I'm also handicapped, and if  
11 I were to take the train the way they're  
12 speaking, they said the way they're going  
13 to be building it, is that it would be a  
14 longer walk to get to the train and to get  
15 on to it for a handicapped person. I  
16 don't know exactly, but in the last  
17 meeting they had mentioned that. They  
18 said for a handicapped person it would be  
19 a longer walk.

20 And I'm just concerned with  
21 that, and again, with all the pesticides.  
22 The noise, the traffic in the morning. I  
23 have to take him to school, it's a  
24 madhouse already in the morning, and I  
25 can't imagine, you know, taking him to

1 school trying to get over to New Hyde Park  
2 Road and across.

3 And just the little stores  
4 that are going to be losing business right  
5 down Covert Avenue. And for the people  
6 that are going to lose their houses. And  
7 like I said, I'm just against it and I  
8 hope that it does not go through.

## C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  : ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

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NICOLE ELLIS

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 The Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 8:30 p.m. - 8:40 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 MICHAEL MCCARTHY

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1                   MR. MCCARTHY: I'm a resident  
2 of New Hyde Park, and was listening to the  
3 comments spoken by the other residents in  
4 regard to the rail expansion on Long  
5 Island Rail Road here in New Hyde Park and  
6 out east to Hicksville.

7                   I am aware of the accident  
8 that took place on the rail a couple weeks  
9 back between New Hyde Park Road and Nassau  
10 Boulevard with the train derailment. And  
11 I was surprised at how awfully  
12 ill-prepared the rail road was to handle a  
13 minor train derailment. Although I do  
14 understand the rail was split, but I think  
15 it took an exorbitant amount of time to  
16 make the repair. And I'm not a commuter  
17 to the rail road and I pity those who are.

18                  I'd also like to know when  
19 and how the passthrough on Denton Avenue  
20 is going to be widened to mitigate the  
21 rail crossings at New Hyde Park Road,  
22 South Twelfth Street, Covert Avenue? I  
23 haven't heard any discussion about this  
24 passthrough underneath the track at Denton  
25 Avenue, and I'd like to know why -- why is

1       it forgotten? It's there, people use it,  
2       nobody's mentioned it.

3               I've heard other terms  
4       discussed today, and one that, when I  
5       heard it, I was thinking back to the  
6       Vietnam War, when our forces were in  
7       Southeast Asia and the wounded were being  
8       treated with the Sikorsky helicopters and  
9       these containers with operating equipment  
10      for medical staff to render life-saving  
11      surgeries at time to our soldiers in  
12      combat.

13              It also made me think of an  
14      accident here that happened many years ago  
15      somewhere between 1978 and 1982. It was  
16      an automobile accident. It was on the  
17      Cross Island Parkway, it was north of the  
18      Belmont Racetrack on an off-bound side,  
19      but just south of Jamaica Avenue at Exit  
20      27E. There was a major accident, which  
21      involved a lamppost that was planted in  
22      the middle of the median, fixed by either  
23      the State or the County; State of New  
24      York, Nassau County or State of New York,  
25      Queens County. Light post, it was hit by

1 a car heading north on the Cross Island  
2 Parkway, he hit the base of the lamppost  
3 and the lamppost fell completely across  
4 three lanes on the Cross Island Parkway  
5 south of Jamaica Avenue.

6 Now the thing that was so  
7 surprising and annoying about this, it was  
8 on the Wednesday eve of Thanksgiving,  
9 about 8:00, and you can imagine the volume  
10 of traffic that was on the roads that day,  
11 the weather was clear if I'm not mistaken,  
12 but the accident did happen anyway.

13 And within five minutes the  
14 traffic coming off the Throgsneck Bridge  
15 heading south on the Cross Island Parkway  
16 came to a stop. And it continued to back  
17 up across the bridge and impacted both the  
18 Cross Bronx and I-95. Traffic eastbound  
19 north on I-95 had no way to go south and  
20 if they wanted to go back to use the  
21 Whitestone Bridge, they're finding once  
22 they got off there, traffic backed up on  
23 the LIE and all the other parkways, such  
24 as Grand Central Northern Boulevard,  
25 backed up with traffic trying to make it

1 past the Cross Island.

2 And naturally, the traffic  
3 backed up I-95 into Greenwich and parts of  
4 Connecticut. And within three hours, as I  
5 remember, hearing from the news casts that  
6 were broadcasting that night, the effects  
7 of the accident were felt at the Delaware  
8 Water Gap.

9 Now again, relating to this  
10 incident here in New Hyde Park with just a  
11 derailment and how badly impacted the  
12 region was, gives you pause to think of  
13 how they handled crisis situations in  
14 Vietnam. And again they relied on a  
15 Sikorsky helicopter with a container, box  
16 like they use on the trailer trucks or you  
17 see on these ships going to various parts  
18 of the world, these great big containers,  
19 boxes, those were 40 to 50 feet long, but  
20 I think the ones that are used hospital in  
21 Vietnam for were about 30 feet.

22 But I also remember the fight  
23 that took part between Queens County and  
24 Nassau County over who's going to move the  
25 lamppost, because it was anchored in

1 Nassau County and it fell in Queens  
2 County. And again, the response to this  
3 minor traffic derailment in New Hyde Park,  
4 it made me think why couldn't somebody  
5 think of some means of setting up an  
6 emergency response team that would include  
7 a Sikorsky helicopter and a container  
8 filled with equipment that would probably  
9 be needed to assist in freeing up the  
10 bottlenecks created by any kind of  
11 accident.

12 I would think the boxed car  
13 it would have to have provisions to carry  
14 ten people from five different trades. I  
15 would think an iron worker who's  
16 qualified, the propane torch type. I  
17 would think an electrician, because again,  
18 I was surprised that nobody from LILCo  
19 came out to cap the line on that wire was  
20 still exposed on the Cross Island. They  
21 could have capped the line, moved the pole  
22 and freed up this terrible mess, nobody  
23 came. And I think a firefighter would be  
24 another one, and police, and a carpenter.  
25 I think if those five trades, two of each,

1 to accompany this emergency response  
2 container would be a step in the right  
3 direction to at least begin to correct or  
4 mitigate an interruption of any kind.

5 Now I can't very well imagine  
6 an iron worker pulling an S-7 cart out on  
7 the Long Island embankment in Mineola,  
8 that's why I say a helicopter, a  
9 helicopter could land some place or if  
10 need be, provide a means to lower it. I  
11 mean, there's got to be somebody some  
12 place in some kind of emergency  
13 preparedness capability to be able to  
14 think of some proper response, you know,  
15 to mitigate these incidents that seem to  
16 be occurring far too often.

17 And I would again ask the  
18 Governor, since it's reputed that he lived  
19 in this area at some time in his life, to  
20 remember that this is a democracy and not  
21 an autocracy. And I didn't know he became  
22 Caesar with his election to governor. I  
23 mean, he's got to think of the people that  
24 live in these areas and respond  
25 appropriately to no matter where these

1        mishaps would occur.

2                    And I thank you for the time  
3        to take my remarks and I'll end with that.

4

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## C E R T I F I C A T E

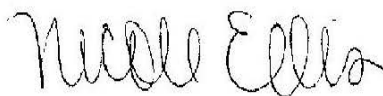
STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
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COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

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NICOLE ELLIS

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 The Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 7:29 p.m. - 7:31 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 MAUREEN NEWMAN

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 MS. NEWMAN: My question  
2 concerns finance. How will this project  
3 be paid? The present Cuomo budget has a  
4 \$3.5 billion deficit in it. If the budget  
5 starts with the deficit, I have serious  
6 concerns as to how this will be paid. I  
7 watched what happened with the Second  
8 Avenue Subway, when funds disappeared and  
9 construction holes and construction sites  
10 were just left until money came back and  
11 that destroyed the community on Second  
12 Avenue.

13 Secondly, I want to talk  
14 about the delays that are cited as a  
15 reason for this kind of rail. Most of  
16 those delays exist with the present  
17 infrastructure. Just this past month, no  
18 trains could go from Jamaica into Penn  
19 Station because a rail broke. Repeatedly  
20 this is happening because the  
21 infrastructure that's going to have to  
22 support the third rail is already having  
23 trouble supporting the two rails.

24 And my last comment, again,  
25 is that I live in Floral Park, we have two

1 Rail Road stations, neither one allows for  
2 handicap access. So residents in Floral  
3 Park and Bellerose, if they are in any way  
4 disabled, there's no way they can take the  
5 Long Island Rail Road. So while we're  
6 building for people, we're forgetting the  
7 people who already are in need of  
8 improvements in the rail road. That's it.

## C E R T I F I C A T E

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NICOLE ELLIS

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3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 The Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 8:06 p.m. - 8:08 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 PREMA PAMULAPATI

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 MS. PAMULAPATI: I live in  
2 Fifth Avenue, New Hyde Park, which is too  
3 close to the rail road tracks, the train  
4 tracks. And I have small kids at home and  
5 also older parents live with me.

6 I'm a little concerned about  
7 during construction, will you have lot of  
8 pollution? I just want to know what are  
9 the preventative actions you're going to  
10 take during construction. After  
11 construction, most of the things that will  
12 build wall, kind of thing. But I would  
13 like to know what are the preventative  
14 things during construction for the kids?  
15 Which may affect many different things.  
16 I'm not expecting any, but in case of how  
17 do -- are we going to address, this is one  
18 concern I have.

19 Another one is -- another  
20 concern is if we have train tracks,  
21 another one means it's going to have lot  
22 of traffic. And also, we do have  
23 vibration now little bit. But when  
24 traffic -- too much traffic means we're  
25 going to hear lot of vibration as well.

1 The sound, okay, they're going to build a  
2 wall, but vibration, if anything happens  
3 to the property, who is responsible for  
4 that? Because -- this is my concern  
5 because of the property, it can cost.

6 That's why I would like to  
7 know what are the preventative actions  
8 we're going to take to not affect the  
9 properties because of the vibrations.  
10 That's all I have.

## C E R T I F I C A T E

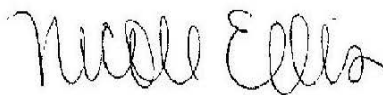
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NICOLE ELLIS

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 The Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 6:54 p.m. - 6:55 p.m.  
14

15 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

16 JAMES PELTER

17 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1                   MR. PELTER: My comment is  
2                   regarding the attenuation wall.

3                   I live on 230 Whitehall  
4                   Boulevard, Garden City. My concern is the  
5                   height of that wall. I wanted to make  
6                   sure that I gave comments stating the  
7                   highest possible wall that we could have  
8                   there.

9                   I think an eight-foot  
10                  minimum, ten-foot would probably be  
11                  better. The reasons being, even though  
12                  the engineering could show the sound  
13                  attenuating would benefit from the lower  
14                  wall, I think the sight -- a line of  
15                  sight, because now they're using it as a  
16                  staging area, I guess, for the trains, and  
17                  it seems as if there's some work being  
18                  done on there, and not only is the sound  
19                  averting, but the eye sore is as well.

20                  So I hope my comments would  
21                  positively reflect the need for a higher  
22                  wall there. That's it.

## C E R T I F I C A T E

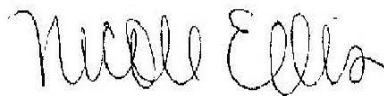
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NICOLE ELLIS

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 The Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 9:31 p.m. - 9:34 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 PETER PINTO

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer.  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1                   MR. PINTO: My concern is  
2                   that these apartments have parking and  
3                   garages in the back and they got abolished  
4                   to take down these garages and rebuild  
5                   them. But the residents of this Birchwood  
6                   apartment complex, they're going to be  
7                   losing parking spots for a long time, and  
8                   I'm recommending that the damage that's  
9                   done by the third track and the rebuilding  
10                  of the apartments garages, the garages in  
11                  the back should include a second tier so  
12                  they have ample parking and they benefit  
13                  by the disturbance of the third track  
14                  going right alongside and taking down  
15                  their parking garages.

16                 To give serious consideration  
17                 to the construction of a two-tier parking  
18                 garage for the residents of Birchwood  
19                 Apartments, which is located on Old  
20                 Country Road and Roslyn Road and Mineola.  
21                 I want to improve the quality of life with  
22                 the construction, that's all. They're  
23                 going to be inconvenient, it's going to  
24                 be, you know, like a time when they have  
25                 no longer parking garage. And that

1 duration could be one year, two years,  
2 three years. And so being penalized for  
3 the lack of parking, construct a  
4 second-tier garage.

5 And my name is Peter Pinto,  
6 my daughter lives at the Birchwood  
7 Apartments and nobody ever listens to  
8 anybody. It's like, that's life when it  
9 comes to doing the right thing. My wish  
10 is that everybody gets a better quality of  
11 life out of into the future. Okay.

## C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
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COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

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NICOLE ELLIS

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 The Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 7:41 p.m. - 7:41 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 BRENDAN POWER

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1                   MR. POWER: First and  
2           foremost, I just want to go on the record  
3           and say I'm against the third rail.  
4           Everybody brought up a lot of good points,  
5           a lot of questions still need to be  
6           answered.

7                   The one thing I want to bring  
8           up, which I thought was interesting, was  
9           from the 2013 census. It said nearly  
10          92 percent of workers who live in New York  
11          work somewhere within the five boroughs.  
12          So they talk about these reverse commuters  
13          but, you know, where are the people that  
14          want to reverse commute? That would be my  
15          question. And that's it.

## C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  : ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

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NICOLE ELLIS

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 The Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 7:32 p.m. - 7:35 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 MARIA RASTELLI

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 MS. RASTELLI: Hi. My name  
2 is Maria Rastelli. I'm Power of Attorney  
3 and daughter of Farrow Bartolota, who owns  
4 the home on 118 Covert Avenue in New Hyde  
5 Park. The house is on the east side of  
6 Covert Avenue, north of the rail road.  
7 The property is quite tight.

8 We have addressed some issues  
9 in regard to the grade of the driveways  
10 that will be -- that we can access with  
11 cars. There will be no longer any parking  
12 on the street.

13 I have found at this point  
14 that one of my main concerns, which has  
15 been in the past also, is the parking  
16 accessibility for an Able Ride, for  
17 handicap school buses, since we have a  
18 handicapped, hearing-impaired child, and  
19 an elderly dad, at 93, which needs a  
20 wheelchair.

21 It is a very dangerous  
22 property line since there will be a very  
23 short sidewalk and the street is right  
24 there, and Able Ride and the bus would not  
25 be able to stop in front of the house,

1       number one.

2                   If we were to use the  
3       driveway at whatever elevation it's going  
4       to be prepared at, it's going to make  
5       it -- there's an angle in which you need  
6       to pull straight forward to get into that  
7       driveway that you need to access it from  
8       the west side of Covert Avenue, which is  
9       the further lane from that house, which  
10      then it -- the cars would have -- the car  
11      would have to stop with a left-hand  
12      signal, and this could back up the cars  
13      all the way to Jericho Turnpike. And cars  
14      should have courtesy to be able to stop to  
15      make that left-hand turn, which we've  
16      experienced in the past, lacks  
17      tremendously, which will back up the  
18      traffic under the tunnel going to  
19      southbound on Covert Avenue.

20                   This is very concerning to  
21      me. I would love to be able to leave the  
22      property, unfortunately, we don't even  
23      know, under these circumstances, unsure  
24      circumstances, anyone that would buy the  
25      property. I need this. That matter that

1 I just described -- addressed, along with  
2 the fact the future of owning this  
3 property with the possibility of  
4 eventually selling.

5 I've been in touch with  
6 several representatives and will continue,  
7 and I would appreciate that you also give  
8 me the time to contact us. Thank you.

## C E R T I F I C A T E

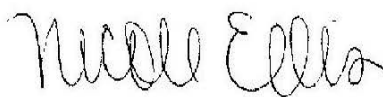
STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  : ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

I, NICOLE ELLIS, a Notary Public for and  
within the State of New York, do hereby certify:

I reported the proceedings in the  
within-entitled matter, and that the within  
transcript is a true record of such proceedings.

I further certify that I am not related to  
any of the parties to this action by blood or by  
marriage and that I am in no way interested in the  
outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
hand this 20th day of January 2017.



---

NICOLE ELLIS

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 The Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 8:00 p.m. - 8:02 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 WILLIAM STEIGNER

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1                   MR. STEIGNER: First off, the  
2                   expansion should have been built in the  
3                   1930's and '40's for the third track, but  
4                   right now it cannot be done, it is because  
5                   it's too late.

6                   The only other issue I want  
7                   to talk about is inspection  
8                   infrastructure. The infrastructure should  
9                   have been inspected every weekend to  
10                  prevent a lot of equipment damage or track  
11                  damage. But will the -- will this support  
12                  the local economy -- the construction  
13                  support the local economy? No, it will  
14                  not because a lot of businesses are  
15                  forcing Long Island workers to shuffle  
16                  from their home in Long Island to New York  
17                  City, and it shouldn't be like that. The  
18                  local economy should be for Long Island  
19                  workers who should stay on Long Island and  
20                  not make the trek to New York City.

21                  During the construction there  
22                  will also be property disturbance and  
23                  there's four of them. John Lewis Childs  
24                  School, the Floral Park Recreation Center,  
25                  the Floral Park Library, and the Bellerose

1       Elementary School. Those are the four  
2       properties that are going to be disturbed  
3       as construction starts. And the sound  
4       impact is going to worry and force people  
5       to either move out or complain to the MTA  
6       because of how loud it is.

7                   But they should have done  
8       this in the 1930's and '40's before the  
9       population boom. And that is all I have  
10      to say right now.

## C E R T I F I C A T E

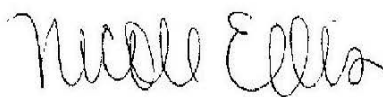
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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
hand this 20th day of January 2017.



---

NICOLE ELLIS

1  
2 NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
3 MTA/LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

4 -----X

5 LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

6 RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

7 -----X

8 The Inn at New Hyde Park

9 214 Jericho Turnpike

10 New Hyde Park, New York

11  
12 January 19, 2017

13 6:58 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
14  
15  
16

17 STENOGRAPHIC TRANSCRIPTION OF PRIVATE COMMENTS OF

18 FRANCINE YESNER

19 REPORTED BY: Nicole Ellis, Stenographer  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 MS. YESNER: So all I want to  
2 say is that that area where you're going  
3 to be doing some construction on  
4 Plainfield near Terrace Avenue or all  
5 along that way, maybe from Elizabeth  
6 Street to Terrace or even a little before  
7 that -- beyond that, is, I guess, the Long  
8 Island Rail Road power station and maybe  
9 LIPA as well, and it's very unattractive.  
10 And walking past there when it's dark  
11 feels dangerous. And I feel that it  
12 lowers property values and that it's  
13 probably the most unattractive place in  
14 Floral Park.

15 So I would like to ask that  
16 some kind of wall could be constructed to  
17 conceal that power station. That's it.  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

## C E R T I F I C A T E


STATE OF NEW YORK            )  
  : ss.:  
COUNTY OF QUEENS            )

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marriage and that I am in no way interested in the  
outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
hand this 20th day of January 2017.



---

NICOLE ELLIS

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MTA/LONG ISLAND RAILROAD

-----x

LONG ISLAND RAILROAD EXPANSION PROJECT

RE: DEIS PUBLIC HEARING

-----x

The Inn at New Hyde Park

214 Jericho Turnpike

New Hyde Park, New York

January 19, 2017

6:33 P.M.

B E F O R E :

SUSAN MC GOWAN,

THE HEARING OFFICER

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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Susan McGowan  
Long Island Railroad General Manager  
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Donna Betty  
Long Island Railroad Chief Planning Officer

Joseph Zacharia  
Project Manager New York State Department  
of Transportation

ALSO PRESENT:

Other Project Participants  
The Public  
The Press  
The Media

Marc Russo,  
Stenographer

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2

**P R O C E E D I N G S**

3

MS. PICCA: Good evening,

4

everyone.

5

And thank you for attending

6

today's public meeting for the Long Island

7

Railroad Expansion Project.

8

My name is Elisa Picca. I'm the

9

Executive Vice President of the Long Island

10

Railroad.

11

In just a moment I'll be going

12

through the program for this evening.

13

But first, I would like to

14

invite you to stand and join me in the Pledge of

15

Allegiance.

16

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

17

MS. PICCA: Thank you very

18

much.

19

And thank you for taking the

20

time from your busy schedules to be here today.

21

Your input and feedback to this project are

22

crucial and they are greatly appreciated.

23

This public meeting is part of a

24

robust community outreach process for the Long

25

Island Railroad Expansion Project that began last

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 year and that will continue throughout the project  
3 duration.

4

5 In a moment, we're going to show  
6 you a short video about the proposed project.

7

8 After that, we will take comments from those of  
9 you who have registered to speak. For those who  
10 would like to speak and have not yet registered,  
11 we encourage you to do so. There's still plenty of  
12 time to do so and you can do that at the table out  
13 front.

14

15 The purpose of the meeting today  
16 is to discuss the Long Island Railroad Expansion  
17 Project and, in particular, the Draft  
18 Environmental Impact Statement, or Draft EIS, that  
19 was released on November 28th, 2016.

20

21 The environmental process began  
22 last spring with the release of a Draft Scoping  
23 Document and continued through the summer with the  
24 release of the Final Scoping Document.

25

26 Since that time, we have  
27 performed extensive environmental analyses, which  
28 are all presented in the Draft EIS. This report is  
29 available on our project website,  
30 [www.amodernli.com](http://www.amodernli.com).

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25

It's also available at local village halls and at libraries along the project corridor.

And it's also available at our Project Information Center at the Mineola station.

In response to public requests for more time to comment on the Draft EIS, Governor Cuomo has extended the comment period until February 15th, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

The Draft EIS comment period for this project was already much longer than those for much larger projects, like the Second Avenue Subway and the new Tappan Zee Bridge. Now because of your input, there's more time to comment.

When Governor Cuomo announced this project, he made it clear that it would be completely different from prior proposals. Unlike prior proposals, the third track would be built entirely within the Long Island Railroad's right-of-way.

The Governor's announcement -- the Governor's announcement over a year ago, we have implemented an unprecedented public outreach

1

2 program and thanks to your input, we are able to  
3 make the following commitments:

4

5 To take no residential  
properties;

6

7 To modify all seven grade  
crossings in the project area;

8

9 To add sound attenuation walls;

10

11 To improve passenger rail  
stations with enhancements like full-length  
platforms;

12

13 To add more than 2,000  
additional parking spaces; and,

14

15 To use innovative methods to  
speed construction and to minimize its impacts.

16

17 All of these project elements  
are examples of our commitment to community  
18 outreach. Your input is important to us and it is  
19 important to the process.

20

21 Your comments will be entered  
into the public record and reviewed accordingly.

22

23 While we are here at a formal hearing today, there  
are many other outreach efforts and many other  
24 opportunities to comment.

25

Our project team has had

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 hundreds of meetings with local officials,  
3 business leaders and residents and many of the  
4 members of our team are here today to listen to  
5 your comments.

6

We've maintained our Project  
7 Information office at the Mineola Train Station on  
8 the south side platform. The hours are posted on  
9 our the project website and we encourage everybody  
10 to visit, to discuss the project and to submit  
11 comments.

12

You can also provide comments on  
13 the project website or by e-mail to:

14

info@amodernli.com.

15

Finally, we have visited  
16 residential properties that share a property line  
17 with the Long Island Railroad multiple times, and  
18 as early as last week, to remind residents of  
19 these public hearings.

20

Now I'd like to turn your  
21 attention to a short video that will discuss the  
22 project need and highlight its benefits, which  
23 include improved service reliability, improved  
24 safety and quality of life. The project would add  
25 much needed capacity to the main line and

1

2 eliminate all street level grade crossings within  
3 the project area.

4

5 Incorporating extensive input  
6 from local communities, the project team is  
7 exploring neighbor friendly and innovative  
8 construction methods and practices to keep the  
9 impact of construction as minimal as possible.

9

(Video presentation.)

10

(Applause.)

11

MS. PICCA: Thank you.

12

13 Now I'd like to introduce you to  
14 representatives from the Long Island Railroad and  
15 the New York State Department of Transportation,  
16 as well as our Hearing Officer.

16

17 To my far right, we have Ms.  
18 Donna Betty, Long Island Railroad Chief Planning  
19 Officer.

19

20 Seated next to her is Mr. Joseph  
21 Zacharia, Project Manager, New York State  
22 Department of Transportation; and,

22

23 To my immediate right is Ms.  
24 Susan McGowan, Long Island Railroad General  
25 Manager of Public Affairs.

25

Susan will serve as our Hearing

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 Officer today and I will turn this meeting over to  
3 her at this time.

4 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
5 you, Elisa.

6 And we'd like to thank all of  
7 you joining us and taking the time to participate  
8 this evening.

9 Before we begin, I have to ask  
10 your patience because there are a few procedural  
11 items that I must read. So bear with me.

12 This public meeting is an  
13 opportunity to hear from you regarding the  
14 project's environmental review process, in  
15 particular, the Draft Environmental Impact  
16 Statement, or DEIS -- or Draft EIS, I should say.

17 The Draft EIS includes a wide  
18 range of technical analyses on topics such as:

19 Air quality;

20 Noise;

21 Land Use;

22 Socioeconomics;

23 Traffic;

24 Parking; and much more.

25 It also reviews any potential

1

2 property impacts from the proposed project,  
3 including easements and commercial property  
4 acquisitions.

5

6 Today's proceedings also serve  
7 as the public hearing in accordance with the New  
8 York State Eminent Domain Procedures Law, or EDPL.

8

9 As Vice President Picca noted  
10 earlier, no permanent takings of residential  
11 properties will be needed for this project.

11

12 Building station platform areas,  
13 retaining walls and LIRR infrastructure along the  
14 entire 9.8-mile project corridor would require no  
15 full property takings of any type. It would  
16 require four partial acquisitions of  
17 non-residential properties, which would not affect  
18 any structure.

18

19 It would also require three  
20 permanent or temporary easements of  
21 non-residential properties and one temporary  
22 easement at a multi-family cooperative residential  
23 property.

23

24 Multiple options at the seven  
25 grade crossing locations were also evaluated. For  
these grade crossing options, we have identified

1

2 full acquisitions of up to four commercial  
3 properties for which the State will work with the  
4 owners to provide relocation assistance within  
5 their communities.

6

In addition, partial  
7 acquisitions affecting eight non-residential  
8 properties could be needed but in all situations,  
9 this will not affect the continued operation of  
10 the businesses.

11

Finally, the grade crossing work  
12 may need some permanent rights to access some  
13 parcels of commercial property during and after  
14 construction and some temporary rights to access  
15 other parcels of property during and after  
16 construction in connection with construction, or  
17 with maintenance needs after construction. None  
18 of these rights of access will permanently impact  
19 the operation of the businesses affected.

20

For complete details about the  
21 grade crossing options, please refer to the DEIS  
22 or visit the DOT table in the open house area here  
23 tonight.

24

Again, no permanent takings of  
25 residential property will be required for this

1

2 project.

3

4 Those who may be impacted by  
5 property acquisitions have already been contacted  
6 by the State. Pursuant to the EDPL, the project  
7 team has studied the proposed project and is able  
8 to determine the relocation requirements for each  
9 grade crossing option and determined which plan  
10 would be preferable.

11

12 This information will be  
13 considered along with other relevant factors when  
14 selecting the project's final design.

15

16 New York State DOT and Empire  
17 State Development will provide extensive support  
18 for the four commercial properties that may be  
19 fully acquired with day-to-day relocation  
20 assistance as required, including:

21

22 Help in finding suitable  
23 replacement sites;

24

25 Reestablishment expenses; and,  
26 A variety of moving expense  
27 options.

28

29 The State has studied the local  
30 real estate market and concluded that there will  
31 be a sufficient number of replacement properties

1

2 to satisfy the needs of any displaced commercial  
3 occupant, irrespective of the design option  
4 selected. Property acquisition would not commence  
5 until the final design option has been approved.

6

For each affected property  
7 owner, they will be contacted by a real estate  
8 specialist who will explain the proposed  
9 construction and the acquisition process. Any  
10 potentially affected property owners present here  
11 today may visit the DOT table in the open house  
12 area until the end of this hearing, at 9:00, for  
13 further detail about the process or to ask any  
14 questions they may have.

15

Now in order to give public  
16 comment, we ask that if you haven't already done  
17 so, that you sign in at the registration table out  
18 front.

19

We're also asking that everyone  
20 limit their comments to three minutes, and that's  
21 intended to give everyone here a chance to speak.  
22 We have quite a number of speakers scheduled this  
23 evening.

24

Again, this meeting is not the  
25 only opportunity that you'll have to comment on

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 the project. You can continue to provide comments  
3 through February 15th at the project office at the  
4 Mineola station, by mail or online at:  
5 [www.amodernli.com](http://www.amodernli.com).

6

We have representatives and  
7 experts here from the Long Island Railroad and the  
8 New York State Department of Transportation, who  
9 are available to consult with you on the project  
10 and they're located in the open house room.

11

If you prefer to give your  
12 comments privately, because we know that not  
13 everyone is comfortable speaking in front of a  
14 large audience, you can sign up at the front desk  
15 and give comments to a private stenographer who  
16 will make sure that your comments become part of  
17 the permanent record.

18

Now, because this is a formal  
19 hearing and because we're entering your comments  
20 into the public record, we here on the dais will  
21 not be responding to your comments or questions.  
22 However, we do have staff here in the building who  
23 will do their best to answer your questions and  
24 concerns.

25

Now if you have any special

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 needs, please be sure to get in touch with one of  
3 our staff members, either in the open house room  
4 or located at the back of the room and we'll do  
5 our best to accommodate your needs.

6

And one final thing, if you  
7 haven't already done so, please set your cell  
8 phones to vibrate or silent.

9

I'm going to call the names of  
10 the first five speakers and ask that they make  
11 their way up to the front row of seats so they can  
12 prepare themselves.

13

There are two microphones, one  
14 on the right and one on the left. After I call  
15 the first five speakers, I will call the name of  
16 the very next speaker. And when you come up to  
17 speak, please say your name and your affiliation,  
18 if you're part of an organization. Then you'll  
19 have three minutes to speak.

20

We have a timer, a countdown  
21 clock. The countdown clock will show as green  
22 until you have 30 seconds. Then it will turn  
23 yellow and finally when you're out of time, it  
24 will turn red. And if we're running short of  
25 time, I may give you a gentle reminder.

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2

So here are the first five

3

speakers.

4

Elaine Phillips;

5

Richard Nicoletto;

6

Nicholas Episcopia;

7

Kevin Fitzgerald; and,

8

Dominick Longobardi.

9

If I've mispronounced anyone's

10

name, I hope you will correct me.

11

First we have the Honorable

12

Elaine Phillips, New York State Senator.

13

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

14

Thank you for giving me the

15

opportunity to speak this evening.

16

Thank you as well to the

17

representatives of the Long Island Railroad, the

18

MTA and the Governor's office for holding this

19

public meeting in the affected community.

20

Getting input from the people in

21

businesses most directly impacted by this project

22

is critical. I've been informed by many elected

23

-- I've been informed that many elected officials

24

and organizations from Suffolk County have spoken

25

over the past few days. And while I respect their

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 opinions, we must never lose sight of the  
3 residents and businesses that actually live and  
4 work along the 9.8 mile construction corridor.

5

The third track proposal has  
6 been called a transformative project. Those who  
7 characterize it that way are absolutely correct.  
8 It is transformative. But it is also a disruptive  
9 project. It is a massive undertaking requiring  
10 years of construction in residential, let me  
11 repeat, residential areas.

12

Many in the audience tonight are  
13 worried that this combination of disruption and  
14 transformation will be -- affect their  
15 neighborhood seriously.

16

Respectfully, I'd ask as you sit  
17 here tonight collecting their comments, don't just  
18 hear them, really listen to them. Because the  
19 concerns they have are real and the questions that  
20 they are asking are important.

21

Small business owners in  
22 downtown New Hyde Park and Floral Park are worried  
23 about surviving the years where construction makes  
24 it so hard for customers to get to their stores  
25 that they simply may go elsewhere.

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Homeowners are worried that re-routing traffic from major thoroughfares down their residential side streets will impact their family's safety.

People who live right along the track where Agent Orange and other pesticides were sprayed decades ago, are scared about what will happen when all those chemicals and the soil are dug up.

Local school districts are concerned that the construction will prevent them from transporting all their students to school.

The MTA and other third track proponents often equate this project with progress. And I understand and respect their reasoning. But I also ask them to understand and respect that everyone raising concerns about this project also supports progress. We all want Long Island's economy to grow. We want to see people getting jobs. We want a strong -- we want strong infrastructure. Everyone benefits from that.

However, these worthy goals must be achieved in a way that respects all communities. Many people here don't feel that's

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2 happening right now with this project.

3

4 So often when people want  
5 something, they have a tendency to see things as  
6 they wish them to be rather than as they really  
7 are. When you consider this project, don't just  
8 look at what you hope it will be. Look at what it  
9 really means to everyone sitting here tonight.  
10 Look at the disruption. Look at the impact on  
11 quality of life. Look at the economic impact.

11

12 These concerns must be  
13 respected, answered and addressed. Nothing should  
14 be finalized until this happens.

14

15 Thank you once again for  
16 listening.

16

17 (Applause.)

17

18 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
19 you.

19

20 Our next speaker is the  
21 Honorable Richard Nicoletto, Nassau County  
22 Legislator.

22

23 MR. NICOLELLO: Thank you very  
24 much and thank you for hosting this forum.

24

25 I want to thank the panel. I  
know it's going to be difficult to sit there

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2 passively and listen to people and especially it  
3 may get quite emotional.

4

5 I also want to thank Lisa Black  
6 from the Governor's office, as well as Hector  
7 Garcia, who've done a terrific job, a very  
8 professional job, of presenting the case.

8

9 A word about the process. The  
10 DEIS Environmental Impact Statement was released  
11 on November 28th consisting of some 800 pages.  
12 You had the holiday period and now the first thing  
13 into the new year we're having these forums.

13

14 I think the community should  
15 have been given more time. It reminds me a little  
16 bit of litigation where you're an Exxon and you're  
17 on the other side a smaller party and you paper  
18 them over, you push the process forward in order  
19 to use your resources.

19

20 So I think this process should  
21 have been longer. I think the communities should  
22 have had more time to prepare themselves for  
23 this -- for this hearing.

23

24 Having said that, there have  
25 been interested parties, interest groups and the  
26 Governor's coalition who come out in favor of it,

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2 the labor unions. But today's hearing and these  
3 hearings are about environmental impacts.

4

And as Elaine Phillips just  
5 said, our State Senator, it's important to listen  
6 to the voices of the people who are going to be  
7 affected environmentally. They are concerned.  
8 This is a four- to five-year construction period.  
9 There's going to be dust. There's going to be  
10 disruption, vehicles in the roadways. There's a  
11 problem of rodents.

12

They're concerned about the  
13 digging up of the soil that may be contaminated.  
14 Our residents are concerned about what comes  
15 afterwards, the additional vibrations, the  
16 additional noise that comes with additional trains  
17 on the tracks, as well as freight in our  
18 communities.

19

We just recently had within the  
20 last couple of months, a derailment in Garden City  
21 Park. The concern is that there is a freight  
22 vehicle that's going to -- a freight train that's  
23 going to face similar circumstances.

24

Our -- our common knowledge and  
25 expectations that we hope this doesn't come to

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2 pass is, that if this project goes forward, the  
3 cost will actually be more than what you're  
4 saying. The time to construct it will actually be  
5 less.

6

I believe the damages to the  
7 community can be -- will probably be more than  
8 what you're suggesting. And I also believe that  
9 the -- the inconvenience to commuters during this  
10 four to five-year period will be more than what  
11 you're suggesting.

12

I also believe that the  
13 improvements, and there's no doubt that they'll be  
14 improvements, will not be a significant as you're  
15 suggesting and most commuters will not even  
16 realize the benefit that's there.

17

I do not believe that the  
18 economic benefit that has been proposed will ever  
19 be substantiated except for the freight facilities  
20 that have been built in Suffolk County.

21

So to sum up, let me just say  
22 this. As I said, there's going to be many people  
23 here who are going to be voicing their concerns.  
24 I ask that you listen to those voices about the  
25 environmental impacts of this project. I ask that

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2       you step back and you look at methods and means in  
3       which you can accomplish the same or similar  
4       things with less impacts on the community.

5                       And again, I thank you for  
6       giving us this opportunity.

7                       (Applause.)

8                       THE HEARING OFFICER:    Thank  
9       you.

10                      Our next speaker is the  
11       Honorable Nicholas Episcopia, Mayor of Garden  
12       City.

13                      MR. EPISCOPIA:    Thank you and  
14       thank you very much for having us here this  
15       evening.

16                      I would like to cover, quickly,  
17       a couple of different topics.

18                      The first topic is, as I'm sure  
19       you understand, the length and complexity of the  
20       Draft Environmental Impact Study is beyond the  
21       abilities of local villages like us to analyze and  
22       critique ourselves.  Because of the complexity of  
23       the document and the very short time frame to do  
24       it, albeit even though two weeks was extended,  
25       we've retained, in conjunction with our neighbors

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2 in New Hyde Park and Floral Park, the law firm of  
3 Beveridge and Diamond, which is an expert  
4 environmental law firm --

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. EPISCOPIA: -- as well as  
7 the Vertex Companies, which is a nationally known  
8 in 16, 17 states, environmental engineering firm.

9 They will be reviewing and  
10 critiquing this document all at our own expense.  
11 If there are discrepancies, if there are items in  
12 the document that we believe need correction or  
13 things need to be addressed, we will send that to  
14 you. We certainly hope we get a response to it  
15 because that's the purpose of spending this money.  
16 It is beyond us to go through this to be able to  
17 do this on our own.

18 The second thing I would like to  
19 go through is eminent domain and the taking of  
20 property. In our discussions that we had with  
21 the -- the staff that came to the villages, the  
22 taking of property on a permanent basis was never  
23 really discussed. They said that they would  
24 probably need space to store equipment, what have  
25 you, maybe this would move as the project moves up

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2 and down the nine miles and no one seems to know  
3 where it's going to start, stop, what have you.

4

But in any event, no one talked  
5 about really eminent domain and taking property.

6

In the DEIS there are three pieces of property by  
7 the New Hyde Park Railroad Station that are being  
8 taken by eminent domain. And at the end of

9

December we received a letter from Mr. Joseph  
10 Brown, the Regional Director of New York State  
11 Department of Transportation, who specifically  
12 said that we should be ready for eminent domain  
13 property being taken either on a permanent or a  
14 temporary basis.

15

I don't know whether that  
16 includes the property -- I assume it includes the  
17 property that's already in the DEIS and if I may,  
18 I'm going to leave you a letter that we've drafted  
19 to Mr. Brown. And what that letter specifically  
20 does is questions exactly when we are going to  
21 find out what properties will be taken by eminent  
22 domain and where they'll be. And I think that's a  
23 pretty fair question.

24

In summation, my own personal  
25 opinion on this is, the people who studied the

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2 railroad and the history of this improvement and  
3 this project, the first thing they took a look at  
4 was Mr. Nowakowski's comments way before this  
5 was -- this was -- that this project was started  
6 or the -- the study on the project was started and  
7 he very clearly said, the main problem is the  
8 switches, the switches out of Penn Station, the  
9 switches east and west of the Jamaica Station.

10 It's a sincere belief of myself  
11 and other people here that that was what should  
12 have been addressed first and then see what  
13 happens after that and then, if need be, you know,  
14 do the third track or propose the third track.

15 Thank you very much.

16 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
17 you.

18 (Applause.)

19 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
20 speaker is the Honorable Kevin Fitzgerald, Deputy  
21 Mayor of Floral Park.

22 MR. FITZGERALD: Good evening.

23 I'm Kevin Fitzgerald, Deputy  
24 Mayor of the Incorporated Village of Floral Park.

25 Thank you for allowing me and

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2 our residents to comment on this potentially  
3 significant intrusion into our daily lives.

4

5 Approximately a decade ago the  
6 same project was presented to us and it as in the  
7 style of the people of Floral Park, all documents  
8 were reviewed to weigh the impacts and potential  
9 benefits.

9

10 Throughout the scoping process,  
11 our residents, along with our business community,  
12 has voiced and written their opposition to the  
13 project. The opposition has been one that has  
14 been vocal for the past decade.

14

15 This morning I spoke about the  
16 social -- the potential social and economic  
17 effects that this project could have on our  
18 community.

18

19 This evening I would like to  
20 focus on the alternatives and responses to those  
21 alternatives that are set forth in Chapter 18 of  
22 the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

22

23 It would seem that this project  
24 could achieve a few of the goals if more analysis  
25 was done on the alternatives. For example:

25

Why is intra-island service and

1

2 reverse commute service so critical?

3

4 What independent, unbiased  
5 studies have been done that show that these types  
6 of commuters are growing or will grow in the  
7 future?

8

9 Which major employer or  
10 employee -- employers have committed to expanding  
11 their businesses in Eastern Nassau or Suffolk  
12 Counties?

13

14 And if they have committed, why  
15 would they not try to hire from those local  
16 communities?

17

18 Separately, one of the  
19 alternatives that was dismissed in the DEIS is the  
20 previous main line corridor improvement projects.  
21 In this DEIS, that previous proposal from about a  
22 decade ago, was dismissed and amongst the reasons  
23 was that there would be a lengthy construction  
24 schedule within village shopping areas.

25

26 This would still be true within  
27 Floral Park, especially if the proposed work  
28 around South Tyson Avenue lasted for the proposed  
29 320 days, or the work around Plainfield Avenue  
30 would work -- would last for approximately 180

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2 days.

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Separately, the bi-level train alternative was dismissed for reasons such that the Atlantic Avenue branch cannot support bi-level trains. Although that appears to be true, I do not understand why that would be a reason as it's my understanding that in the near future, all trains to and from Atlantic Avenue will operate via shuttle from Jamaica and would not need to have bi-level trains.

Separately, there is only one four-sentence paragraph on the use of sidings and the incremental use of these sidings seems to be dismissed without any fact based discussion.

And lastly, there are no references that I could see that any expert consultants were used to review the alternatives. Who at the LIRR, which is the lead agency, made these determinations and what are their qualifications in doing so?

As a taxpayer, a project with a \$2 billion proposed price tag deserves more than a few paragraphs which amounts -- which amount to nine pages of an over 2,000 page document on each

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2 alternative.

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In conclusion, I look forward to submitting additional written comments before the deadline that would be put forth once our outside counsel and engineering firm have studied the DEIS, along with providing written comments as an individual on behalf of my family.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

Our next speaker is the Honorable Dominick Longobardi;

Followed by, if you'll just give me a minute, Esther Fortunoff;

Paul Floroff;

Bruce Stillman;

Jessica Moloughney; and,

Thomas Madera.

If those speakers could make their way to the front near the microphones. Front seats are all open.

Go ahead.

MR. LONGOBARDI: Good evening.

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My name is Dominick Longobardi  
and I currently serve as a Trustee in the Village  
of Floral Park.

As was with the previous scoping  
hearings, I want to take this opportunity to thank  
you for taking the time to listen to our concerns  
regarding the main line corridor project.

And I also want to thank Lisa  
Black and Hector Garcia and John McCarthy for  
their professionalism during this time and the  
staff that we've dealt with.

At this juncture, we have been  
at this process for several months. And after  
reviewing the voluminous document, my fellow local  
officials and neighbors are still asking many of  
the same questions we had during those scoping  
hearings.

The document addresses concerns  
raised by the scoping hearings in a cursory manner  
at best. Unfortunately, due to the lack of  
justification, construction details and process,  
we are all still in the dark as to what is going  
to happen with the project during construction,  
especially if you live along the line.

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We have heard every proponent and supporter state that there will be a little pain but it is for the greater good. That is easy to say if you live in Greenport or anywhere out east that will not have to bear the burden of construction.

Again, through this process all we are trying to do is simply find out and decipher how much pain we are talking about. Once we know, then we can determine how much good is the greater good and how much of this pain -- how much of this will be pain.

Let me use Section 10 of the DEIS, which talks about transportation as an example. The section spends a lot of time on what is currently happening, what will happen if we do not do the project and the expected results if we do do the project. Very little is said regarding specifics on what and how will happen as the project is being constructed.

As an example, pages are devoted to current loss of service projects at each of the proposed grade crossings in an effort to support why the project should be done.

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And by the way, thank you for including the matrix on the LOS so that we could all understand what those categories are.

Grade crossings should be eliminated as a matter of safety. While no one would disagree by linking the elimination of the crossings as part of the expansion project, you are falsely expressing a casual relationship that should not exist. It is correct that everyone wants to see these eliminated but for safety, not for the project. Safety is safety. Let's not forget that.

Continuing in Section 10, more pages of information are spent on vehicle trips projected in and out of each train station affected by the elimination of grade crossings. In the case of Mineola, some of these projections are made based on the already established residential housing projects going on in that village.

The need for additional parking is addressed further in the section. All of this discussion rounds out describing what will happen with traffic if the project is done and without

1

2 the project being done. While this is necessary,  
3 it does not in any way -- it does not address in  
4 any way, impacts during the construction phase and  
5 truly does not even address the traffic issues at  
6 hand.

7

In regard to parking at the  
8 affected train stations, the document says that  
9 the increase in parking space needs projected  
10 through 2040, would cause the Floral Park train  
11 station to see an increase of parking needed to  
12 accommodate an additional 238 cars, as shown in  
13 table 10-39.

14

This, according to the  
15 description on page 10-72, is based upon increased  
16 ridership due to the completion of the East Side  
17 Access project as determined by the LIRR.

18

The DEIS further states on the  
19 next page, and I quote, "The parking shortfalls  
20 identified at Floral Park and Merillon Avenue and  
21 Carle Place Stations in the year 2040, without the  
22 proposed project, would remain the same in 2040  
23 with the proposed project."

24

The additional parking demand  
25 forecasted at each of the seven stations due to

1

2 the East Side Access and continued annual growth  
3 will be monitored and assessed at each of the  
4 seven stations after completion of the East Side  
5 Access Project and after completion of the  
6 additional off-street parking capacities to be  
7 built as part of the project.

8

In other words, here we are,  
9 again, providing no details of the project.  
10 Again, associating this project with the promise  
11 of another project to provide justification. And  
12 simply put, Floral Park and its neighbors getting  
13 the brunt of the burden without any of the  
14 benefit.

15

To summarize, I have used some  
16 of the information in this document in order to  
17 highlight the lack of justification for the  
18 project. Let me make it clear that our Village  
19 has, and continues to ask for specific details on  
20 impacts to our community and those that surround  
21 us, especially during the construction phase.

22

I could go on and on with  
23 different types of questions but I think everyone  
24 can understand that the lack of details and  
25 justification shown for the project, there is no

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2 way it can be endorsed or condoned by reasonable  
3 -- by a reasonable person.

4

I did forget one question and I  
5 think that it is the most important one to be  
6 asked, how is this being paid for and by whom? It  
7 is an absolutely disservice to everyone here and  
8 those in the entire State that this question is  
9 not answered but I'm sure the answer is that it  
10 will ultimately be paid for by every one of us.

11

(Applause.)

12

MR. LONGOBARDI: I urge you to  
13 reconsider this project at a later -- as a later  
14 option to other remedies to improve the Long  
15 Island Railroad service, especially those outlined  
16 in the main line Mayor's letter supporting the  
17 ideas of Long Island Railroad President  
18 Nowakowski.

19

The limited -- the limited  
20 benefits of this project do not in any way justify  
21 the proposed expense and disruption of the  
22 everyday lives this project will cause the  
23 residents of Floral Park and their neighbors.  
24 Simply, the pain of the greater good has not been  
25 justified.

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Thank you for your time and

3

consideration.

4

(Applause.)

5

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next

6

speaker is Esther Fortunoff.

7

MS. FORTUNOFF: Hi. I'm Esther

8

Fortunoff, resident and business owner on Long

9

Island.

10

My family has been in business

11

here since 1964.

12

This project seems to be to be a

13

wonderful one. It seems to be a big step forward

14

for Long Island. It will bring our transportation

15

system into the 21st century and make the system

16

better. It will be easier to recruit people for

17

new jobs on Long Island and to attract talent to

18

the area. It will also be easier to bring shoppers

19

to Long Island.

20

This is a much needed project to

21

help us grow and the increased parking will be

22

fantastic.

23

Thank you.

24

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

25

you.

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(Applause.)

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THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next

4

speaker is Paul Floroff;

5

Followed by Bruce Stillman.

6

MR. FLOROFF: Good afternoon.

7

My name is Paul Floroff.

8

I want to thank you for giving

9

me the opportunity to speak tonight.

10

I do support this project and if

11

anyone is asking, I am a reverse commuter. I've

12

been reverse commuting from Glen Head, New York,

13

which is on the Oyster Bay branch, out to

14

Hauppauge in the middle of Suffolk County.

15

Over the past ten years my

16

commute has gone from 35 minutes to 45 minutes.

17

And I have seen a massive increase in -- in

18

traffic.

19

Now I believe that this project

20

can be paid for by cutting the budget of the

21

Department of Defense and eliminating all funding

22

for addiction treatment.

23

Thank you.

24

(Applause.)

25

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

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2

Our next speaker is Bruce

3

Stillman;

4

Followed by Jessica Moloughney.

5

MR. STILLMAN: So I'm Bruce

6

Stillman. I'm President of Cold Spring Harbor

7

Laboratory, which is in Nassau County on Long

8

Island and we are one of the world's most

9

prominent medical and biological research

10

institutions and we employ 1,100 employees, many

11

of whom live in Western Nassau County around this

12

area or in Queens or Brooklyn and even in

13

Manhattan.

14

And we have a very substantial

15

amount of reverse commuters who we provide free

16

shuttle service from Syosset train station to Cold

17

Spring Harbor Laboratory to our multiple campuses.

18

And one of the biggest problems that we have is

19

attracting people who have spouses who work in New

20

York City and people who work either at Cold

21

Spring Harbor Laboratory or the many companies --

22

well over, nearly 30 now, that we've spun off from

23

the technologies at Cold Spring Harbor and have

24

established -- many of them are on Long Island.

25

These people want to live closer

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2 to the City because of their spouses working in  
3 the City and reverse commute by train, not by car  
4 to Cold Spring Harbor.

5

6 So this is a real need. It has  
7 been a need for a long time and there are also  
8 very substantial economic benefits that the --  
9 that have been very, very clearly articulated by  
10 the Long Island Association and other studies that  
11 people reverse commuting by train will increase  
12 the number of jobs on Long Island.

13

14 I think we all understand, my --  
15 I've lived here for 37 years. My children grew up  
16 in -- in Nassau County and we -- and both live in  
17 the City at the moment but my son reverse commuted  
18 to Mineola for -- for a long time. And to provide  
19 jobs on Long Island for our kids, where a huge  
20 number that are leaving and I think this project  
21 has the potential to reverse the economic downturn  
22 on Long Island and provide a lot more jobs. That  
23 is certainly true at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory  
24 and we're very strongly supportive.

25

26 We've had a very close look at  
27 the proposed plans and while we understand that  
28 there is a disruption between Floral Park and

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2 Hicksville, I think the benefits for this will be  
3 -- greatly enhance Long Island. It will enhance  
4 the neighborhoods in the long run and it will  
5 certainly greatly enhance our ability to recruit  
6 talented people from all over the world.

7 So thank you very much.

8 (Applause.)

9 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
10 you.

11 Our next speaker is Jessica  
12 Moloughney.

13 MS. MOLOUGHNEY: That's a little  
14 high for me.

15 My name is Jessica Moloughney  
16 and I live near South 12th Street in New Hyde  
17 Park.

18 And my question is, in Chapter  
19 13 of the DEIS it says, construct parking garage  
20 at South 12th Street. This would be completed  
21 before parking is eliminated on the south side of  
22 Third Avenue to accommodate construction staging.

23 Where is this parking garage  
24 going to be located and how long will it take to  
25 build it?

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2

That's it.

3

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay.

4

Thank you very much.

5

(Applause.)

6

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next

7

speaker is Thomas Madera;

8

He will be followed by:

9

Rich Murdoco;

10

Theresa Cohen;

11

Patrick Maloney;

12

Dennis Feeney; and,

13

Colin Hammer -- or Hamer.

14

Mr. Madera.

15

MR. MADEIRA: Thank you for the

16

opportunity.

17

I have lived on Covert Avenue

18

and Eighth Avenue since 1980. Saw my son born

19

there, go off to college, get married and saw my

20

wife become reduced to needing a wheelchair.

21

Therefore, it was with great

22

surprise in this day and age and anger that I

23

noticed that at the crossing going north towards

24

Jericho Turnpike there is a walkway only on one

25

side of the street forcing individuals to cross

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2 over, which is dangerous under any conditions,  
3 even more so with the planned construction.

4 And how that function was not  
5 made ADA accessible in this day and age is beyond  
6 me. Now that's an oversight that I can imagine  
7 happening as of 12:01 tomorrow when regulations  
8 are going to seem to be evaporated, but I didn't  
9 expect it in this plan which is designed for so  
10 long.

11 So I seriously request that you  
12 folks consider either building a walkway on both  
13 sides or putting some kind of elevators -- and the  
14 gentlemen in the back who are all excited about  
15 the possibility of work and getting to build this,  
16 I'm sure would be happy to hear that.

17 Thank you very much.

18 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
19 you.

20 (Applause.)

21 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
22 speaker is Rich Murdoco.

23 MR. MURDOCO: My name is Richard  
24 Murdoco. I'm the founder and publisher of the  
25 Foggiest Idea and I'm a land use columnist who

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2 writes professionally on regional real estate  
3 development issues.

4

5 I'm here tonight to share my  
6 perspective on the LIRR's third track proposal.

6

7 Each week I actively work to  
8 educate the public on the impacts of real estate  
9 development through my published writing and  
10 advocate for sound planning principles throughout  
11 the tri-state region.

11

12 As a planner, I press  
13 policymakers, elected officials and other  
14 stakeholders for data-driven land use strategies  
15 that are responsive to measured community needs.  
16 It is rare that I endorse a project and only do so  
17 when an effort meets a clear demand.

17

18 The simple truth is that Long  
19 Island needs the third track and this need will  
20 only continue to grow in the coming years. As  
21 such, I not only strongly endorse this project but  
22 hope to help residents understand its critical  
23 role in the economic future of the New York  
24 metropolitan region.

24

25 In November 2016, I wrote an op  
ed for *Crain's New York Business* that argued that

1

2 the LIRR network can barely handle the demands  
3 placed upon it today, yet alone the challenges  
4 ahead in the future decades. The piece highlighted  
5 that the sizeable investments the MTA is making in  
6 the rail systems is part of a larger cohesive plan  
7 and argued that each improvement amplifies the  
8 economic benefits of another.

9

With East Side Access a new  
10 double track between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma a  
11 revamped Penn Station on the horizon, it's  
12 important to remember that all these ample  
13 investments will be for nothing if there are only  
14 two LIRR tracks in the 9.8 mile stretch between  
15 Floral Park and Hicksville.

16

I wrote the piece because it's  
17 important for people to realize that when the LIRR  
18 fails, especially in one of the most heavily  
19 trafficked rail corridors in the country, the  
20 losses in productivity and economic activity echo  
21 throughout the metropolitan area.

22

The system presently lacks the  
23 resiliency and redundancy needed to keep the  
24 trains moving. The third track can help protect  
25 commuters against these costly system failures and

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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ensure the trains keep going.

Now is our opportunity to make an investment that will resonate throughout Nassau and Suffolk Counties and help us get the most out of these other large transit projects.

As I concluded in *Crain's*, such cohesive efforts will only solve our woes if the transit system is fully reliable, resilient and functional.

Simply put, both Long Island and New York City needs the third track for all of these grand plans to work. A 9.8-mile section of rail must delay us any longer.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next speaker is Theresa Cohen;

Followed by Patrick Maloney.

MS. COHEN: Good evening.

I'm Theresa Cohen and I am both a Long Island Railroad commuter and also a New Hyde Park resident.

What my concerns are with is the

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2 third track. I feel as though the focus on the  
3 environmental issues and the quality of life in a  
4 small community should be addressed; the noise  
5 pollution, the air pollution, the sight pollution.  
6 We don't really constant trains running through  
7 our Town, especially if they're going to be full  
8 of freight or chemicals.

9 Focus on the land view and the  
10 community character with trains constantly running  
11 through.

12 Keeping Long Island Long Island,  
13 not making it Queens is a big concern because  
14 we're right on the border.

15 Okay. I do not want elevated  
16 parking in New Hyde Park. As a commuter, I'm not  
17 walking into a tiered parking late at night. Very  
18 concerned about that.

19 Without crossings, the speed and  
20 the -- the content of the freight trains is a  
21 consistent concern.

22 With the third track in our  
23 Town, again, the freight.

24 The economic impact is negative,  
25 I feel, to New Hyde Park.

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And what -- what will New Hyde Park gain for the fact that we're going through this and we have this track through our Town all the time from this point forward?

Time factor project -- of the project is a big concern. Three years. I don't -- I don't understand that when Herricks took years and years and years.

Now putting aside myself as a resident and purely going as a New York commuter on the railroad every day, so far we're at the 20th of the month, I think, there were three times I was delayed by an hour-and-a-half getting to work because of a broken rail and that did not happen anywhere on the tracks, it was in the tunnels.

So I don't understand how --

(Applause.)

MS. COHEN: -- you know, this big bottleneck we're going to have is going to help us when -- I hate to tell you but every morning it's -- it's the tunnels that are causing the trouble.

And, also, I have to go through

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2 Atlantic Avenue. That has had three problems so  
3 far this year. So there we go.

4 Thank you so much.

5 (Applause.)

6 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
7 you.

8 Our next speaker is Patrick  
9 Maloney.

10 MR. MALONEY: Good evening.

11 My name is Patrick Maloney. I'm  
12 a resident of Garden City.

13 To -- to pivot off of what the  
14 last speaker just said, I get your text messages  
15 that tell me about delays on the main line and the  
16 Ronkonkoma line. And I've gone through them for  
17 2015, the end of 2015, 2016, 2017. For my review  
18 of '16 and '17, I found that you've told us three  
19 times about a problem with a broken down train  
20 blocking the track on this 9.8 mile stretch of  
21 track.

22 The delays, as I said, are the  
23 broken rails in the tunnels, the switch problems  
24 in Jamaica, the switch problems west of Jamaica,  
25 the switch problems east of Jamaica. That's where

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2 your problem is. That's where you're losing time.

3 It's not that your trains are

4 constantly breaking down somewhere between Floral

5 Park and Hicksville. If they are, you're not

6 telling us.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. MALONEY: With respect to

9 what everyone seems to agree on, which is we'd

10 like the elimination of at grade crossings.

11 The most recent, horrible fatal

12 accident on the Long Island Railroad tracks was in

13 Suffolk County. Why don't we take the money, which

14 I'd like to know where it is to begin with, and

15 use that to eliminate all of the at grade

16 crossings --

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. MALONEY: -- and not link

19 them to this proposal.

20 I also challenge both the State

21 and the MTA with respect to pollution.

22 We know the chemicals that are

23 in the ground. We know they're going to become

24 airborne when the construction is undertaken. We

25 know they're going to get into the groundwater

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1

2 from runoff from rain. We know they're going to  
3 affect us who live along the railroad.

4

5 I challenge the MTA and the  
6 State of New York to agree to legislation that  
7 will waive sovereign immunity, that will waive  
8 notice of claim requirements and will waive the  
9 statue of limitations for latent diseases that  
10 residents here develop over the years from  
11 exposure to the pollutants that you are going to  
12 be releasing in this construction.

12

(Applause.)

13

14 MR. MALONEY: And we've also  
15 heard, you know, many people saying, you know, we  
16 want this. Forty-five hundred people were noted  
17 in the newspaper. Well, they didn't come to our  
18 stations and ask us to sign the petition. If  
19 someone called me up and said, Andrew Cuomo will  
20 give you a magic flying pony that will allow you  
21 to get to work in record time and we're going to  
22 put the stable in somebody else's yard and make  
23 them shovel the manure, I'd be in favor of it too.

23

(Laughter.)

24

(Applause.)

25

MR. MALONEY: But unfortunately

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2 -- unfortunately, we are the ones here who are  
3 going to spend the next five years, or ten years,  
4 knee deep in Andrew Cuomo's manure.

5 Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
8 speaker is Dennis Feeney.

9 Followed by Colin Hamer.

10 MR. FEENEY: Good evening.

11 My name is Dennis Feeney. I'm a  
12 proud member of Laborers Union Local 1298 for 30  
13 years and a life-long Nassau County resident.

14 I am also a part-time commuter  
15 on the Long Island Railroad.

16 Before beginning my comments,  
17 I'd like to thank Governor Andrew Cuomo, the MTA,  
18 and the Long Island Railroad for proposing the  
19 third track project. Our union and others stand to  
20 benefit greatly from this project, as do many  
21 residents of Nassau County and Long Island.

22 It will finally bring Long  
23 Islanders a long awaited, and much needed update  
24 and expansion of our roads and rails.

25 I have been allowed to speak

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2 over the last two days at the public hearings.

3 Thank you for the opportunity to  
4 do so.

5 During the prior two days of  
6 public hearings, we've heard lots of support for  
7 this project. There have also been voices of  
8 opposition and those that are trying to paint a  
9 picture of these two very credible agencies as  
10 being reckless and operating with little or no  
11 regard for the public or employees of the project.

12 We are all entitled to our  
13 opinion.

14 I have been one of the voices of  
15 support and continue to be and tonight I wish to  
16 speak in support of the MTA and the Long Island  
17 Railroad.

18 Over the course of my 30-year  
19 career as a road and heavy construction laborer,  
20 I've had the opportunity to work on several Long  
21 Island Railroad projects. All of these projects  
22 have bordered residential or commercial property,  
23 been in operational stations or in areas with a  
24 high volume of both vehicular and pedestrian  
25 traffic.

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The reason I mention this is because first and foremost on their list is protection of the public and their property without exception. We have at times encountered situations that required us to access the work site through private property but always with ample warning and with the utmost respect for these property owners.

In areas that have a high volume of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, extensive planning goes into keeping the public safe and free from hazards while traveling through our work zones.

Our foremen and shop stewards are trained extensively to set these detours up properly, maintain them and constantly monitor them so that we may meet the rigorous standards that the MTA and Long Island Railroad have set forth to keep the public safe.

In addition to keeping the public safe, these two agencies are also extremely committed to keeping the workers safe on their projects. Contractors are required to have safety programs in place and they are constantly being

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2 monitored by the MTA and Long Island Railroad  
3 safety professionals to ensure these programs are  
4 being followed properly.

5 On behalf of my fellow union  
6 members, I'd like to say thank you to the MTA and  
7 Long Island Railroad for putting so much effort  
8 into providing us with a safe work site.

9 And in closing, it is safe to  
10 say that these two agencies operate in a very  
11 responsible manner. And as the opposing public  
12 tries to build steam with their argument saying  
13 otherwise, please consider what I have spoken  
14 about here this evening.

15 Thank you once again for your  
16 time and the opportunity to speak.

17 I look forward to the approval  
18 of this project as do so many of us Long  
19 Islanders.

20 Thank you.

21 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
22 you.

23 (Applause.)

24 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
25 speaker is Colin Hamer;

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2

And he will be followed by:

3

Joe Mesophante;

4

Frederick Wells;

5

Frank Pugliese;

6

Daniel Karpen; and,

7

Ann Corbett.

8

MR. HAMER: Good evening.

9

My name is Colin Hamer. I'm a

10

senior at Chaminade High School in Mineola and a

11

resident of Huntington, New York.

12

I support Long Island Railroad's

13

third track. For me and most Chaminade students,

14

especially freshmen and sophomores, the Long

15

Island Railroad is essential. We rely on the

16

railroad as one of our main transportation

17

options.

18

Chaminade draws students from

19

all over Long Island. As a result, transportation

20

to and from Chaminade is critical. Many towns

21

offer bus service in the morning and right after

22

school. But for many Chaminade students our

23

school day does not end right after the last

24

period. We are all active in sports, clubs and

25

other extracurricular activities. So bus service

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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2 is not an option.

3

4

We rely on the Long Island  
Railroad to travel home at night.

5

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10

Also, many students participate  
in activities that bring us to the school on  
weekends. For these events, the Railroad is our  
only mode of transportation. So in order to  
participate fully in all that Chaminade offers, we  
must have a reliable and frequent train service.

11

12

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14

15

Since Chaminade is a high  
school, it draws students regionally. We all have  
friends in neighboring towns and villages. To  
meet up socially on the weekends and at other  
times, we rely on the Long Island Railroad.

16

17

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20

When people ask me why Chaminade  
is so special, I tell them it is the camaraderie  
and lasting friendships I have developed over the  
last four years. The LIRR has facilitated our  
efforts to build these relationships.

21

22

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Chaminade teaches us to do the  
right thing at the right time for the right  
reasons no matter who is watching. With this  
motto in mind, I urge the Long Island community to  
approve the third track.

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Thank you.

3

(Applause.)

4

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

5

Our next speaker is Joe

6

Mesaphante;

7

Followed by Frederick Wells.

8

Mr. Mesaphante?

9

(No response.)

10

THE HEARING OFFICER: All

11

right.

12

If Mr. Mesaphonte is here -- not

13

here, we will move on to Frederick Wells.

14

Mr. Wells.

15

MR. WELLS: Good evening.

16

I'm Frederick Wells. I reside

17

in Laurelton, Queens. I periodically rely on the

18

Long Island Railroad.

19

Yes, we want a train every 15

20

minutes at Hicksville, Mineola and -- what is it,

21

Floral Park. But this -- this third track thing

22

is -- is more than just -- it's more than just a

23

convenience factor for the folks that's traveling

24

east and west.

25

We have people who rely on NYCE

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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2 bus or people that drive tractor trailers, things  
3 like that, that need to cross it, go across it and  
4 the issue is, when you're building this -- when  
5 you're building this third rail and you're  
6 building these corridors like to bypass like say  
7 New Hyde Park Road and these other north-south  
8 corridors that cross it, the question is like,  
9 like how deep -- how deep will you be digging so  
10 that -- so that a bus or a tractor trailer can go  
11 passed? You know, can go -- go through the  
12 underpass or will you be building an overpass at  
13 some of those -- at some of those stations -- some  
14 of those -- some of those crossings?

15 Will you be building the  
16 overpass so that the train can go through smooth?

17 And then third, is the third  
18 track enough or do you think you need a fourth  
19 track? Do you think you need a fourth track to  
20 actually run this smooth service. Because --  
21 because if you want to run an express, you may  
22 need four tracks to do it, you know, both  
23 directions.

24 You know, three tracks may not  
25 be enough. It's like you doing a peak direction

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2       seven train, you know, peak direction seven  
3       express, you know. That's not enough for -- for  
4       the bulk of Long Island Railroad commuters,  
5       especially with the way NYCE Bus and Suffolk  
6       County Transit is running their system. You know,  
7       you really need to do more with that.

8

Thank you.

9

THE HEARING OFFICER:    Okay.

10

Thank you.

11

(Applause.)

12

THE HEARING OFFICER:    Our next

13

speaker is Frank Pugliese.

14

And he will be followed by

15

Daniel Karpen; and then,

16

Ann Corbett.

17

Mr. Pugliese.

18

MR. PUGLIESE:    Good evening.

19

My name is Frank Pugliese. I'm

20

a resident and private citizen of New Hyde Park.

21

I want to thank the Railroad for

22

this opportunity.

23

The salient issue of moving

24

people east and west is one I can well appreciate.

25

As you may recall in 1990 during

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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2 the Harold Interlocking Project, when trains were  
3 going in one direction during the rush hour, to  
4 our western terminals, I saw an improvement in  
5 timeliness and quality of service.

6

I think that the issue that you  
7 could be looking at is a European model of a  
8 rush-hour commutation with all trains going one  
9 direction to our western terminals and then in the  
10 evening going out east in one direction during a  
11 core period of time.

12

Perhaps requesting the  
13 cooperation of many employers at the western  
14 terminals, as well as the eastern terminals to get  
15 cooperation to stagger working hours, may be a  
16 good way in some respects reduce the issue of  
17 having to go to a third rail.

18

You have a very good existing  
19 track bed. I think that if you can get enough good  
20 civil engineers to improve the existing track bed  
21 to get good quality service, having those trains  
22 and toilets well cleaned at the opportunities when  
23 they have to go into the yard in Pennsylvania  
24 Station or Atlantic Avenue or out east towards  
25 Port Jefferson Station. And those issues, getting

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2 the cooperation of the buses which make connecting  
3 connections with the arriving and departing  
4 trains, I think is one of the most sensible things  
5 the Railroad could do.

6

As a former commuter who relied  
7 on this kind of service, I think it would really  
8 be great if you could get the cooperation of  
9 Suffolk County and Nassau County buses to give us  
10 cooperation with the connections going into those  
11 individual Railroad stations.

12

I don't want to see any of my  
13 neighbors in any way adversely impacted by this  
14 project. I respect my neighbors and I don't want  
15 them to be in any way inconvenienced.

16

If I have to live with these  
17 grade crossings for the rest of my life in my  
18 hometown, I will do so, so that my neighbors are  
19 in no way impacted by this project.

20

I thank you.

21

(Applause.)

22

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

23

Mr. Daniel Karpen.

24

MR. KARPEN: My name is Daniel  
25 Karpen, I'm a professional engineer. I reside at

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2 3 Harbor Hill Drive, Huntington, New York and I've  
3 been using the Long Island Railroad on and off for  
4 the last 40 years.

5 Several comments. Number one,  
6 the track from what's called the Queens Corporate  
7 Center, several miles west -- east of Jamaica, to  
8 Floral Park and possibly a little beyond, is in  
9 very poor condition and has been so for the last  
10 30 years. The trains jump -- jump around quite a  
11 bit. They're really smooth coming out of Jamaica  
12 and all of a sudden they start jumping around.

13 So this project should also  
14 include to -- for the cumulative effects required  
15 by SEQRA, to include in it rehabilitation of the  
16 track from roughly the Queens Corporate Center to  
17 Floral Park because that needs rehabilitation.  
18 That's comment number one.

19 Comment number two. We need to  
20 have small car parking lots at all the train  
21 stations along the main line to -- from Floral  
22 Park to Hicksville.

23 The Town of Huntington. Put in  
24 a small car parking lot at Cold Spring Harbor.  
25 The small car lots -- the small car places are

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2 close to the tracks. If you want to park a big  
3 SUV, you've got to go down the hill and walk all  
4 the way up.

5

6 So we need to have surveys of  
7 how many small cars are using -- are parked at the  
8 train stations, then re-stripe all the lots  
9 immediately within the next 30 days to accommodate  
10 all the people who can't get there right now.

11

12 That can be done immediately. All you need is a  
13 can of black paint to get rid of the white lines,  
14 a ruler and a can of white paint and someone to  
15 paint the lines and some signs, small car parking  
16 lots.

17

18 And for example, in Hicksville  
19 they've got a parking garage filled with small car  
20 parking at the bottom. You want to park an SUV,  
21 drive all the way to the top of the parking  
22 garage.

23

24 Third, if you're going to put in  
25 parking and people park at the Railroad station,  
the closest places to the tracks, put in charging  
stations for your Tesla, Nissan Leaf or Chevrolet  
Vault because there's more electric cars and then  
charge a dollar an hour for charging up your car

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2 so you can help pay for this.

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And I've made up a Superman  
rating chart for the Long Island Railroad.

Unfortunately, it takes five minutes to put into  
the record. But you have a copy, Susan, so you  
can -- you can enjoy reading it and chuckle a  
little bit.

And let's make one comment about  
the Long Island Railroad.

I'll look at the section on  
politicians, outstanding performance. The  
politicians are quiet.

Acceptable praise for Long  
Island Railroad, not quite adequate.

Promises made to have the best  
Railroad in the country, 90 days. Unacceptable.

Let's have a bond issue for  
capital improvements. Total failure. Screaming  
at the MTA. No promises made or kept.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
you.

Ms. Ann Corbett;

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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2

Followed by:

3

Lynn Pombonyo;

4

Lawrence Montreuil;

5

Mary Metrosino;

6

Michael Jacob; and,

7

Mary Conway.

8

MS. CORBETT: Ann Corbett,

9

former Mayor of Floral Park and a spokesperson for

10

CARE, Citizens Against Rail Expansion.

11

Last January the Governor

12

decided to take this project off the shelf, which

13

was unwelcome by many of our Long Islanders.

14

Since January's announcement, the people in

15

communities along the main line have been faced

16

with trying to understand the new and very complex

17

proposal for constructing this railroad track

18

that's almost ten miles long at a cost of \$2

19

billion and perhaps more.

20

This time around the public was

21

told that the environmental review would follow

22

New York's SEQRA, State Environmental Quality

23

Review Act process and the more comprehensive

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federal, National Environmental Policy Act review

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process would not be -- would not be followed.

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The federal review is much more thoughtful and comprehensive and more protective of the public interests than the State review process.

In May and in November 2016, we were provided environmental review documents that have not given us enough information.

The November DEIS has 2,500 pages with -- that includes its appendices, that the average person would find most challenging to try to decipher and understand. It is not presented in a user friendly format.

Nevertheless, I have some comments. In figure 12.5, three green dots show where noise monitors were situated in Floral Park. They are to the east of South Tyson Avenue Extension and the Floral Park Station platform.

What noise and vibration data was collected?

Were any measurements of noise or vibrations to the west of South Tyson Extension recorded?

This stretch of elevated tracks that serves the Floral Park Station has trains

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2 traveling east and west to Hempstead and the main  
3 line communities that produce an excessive amount  
4 of noise and vibration every day right now.

5

6 The noise and vibration from  
7 passenger and freight trains rumbling on the  
8 tracks is disturbing to residents living in  
9 apartments and workers in businesses along South  
10 Tyson Avenue and Woodbine Court, Atlantic Avenue  
11 and Tulip Avenue and other roadways and, also,  
12 there's a school only a few blocks away to  
13 consider.

13

14 Many residences and business  
15 offices near the Floral Park Station, I believe,  
16 are within 15 feet of the elevated four tracks on  
17 the right-of-way.

17

18 What will the MTA do to reduce  
19 the vibrations and noise generated by future  
20 increases in the number of freight trains and rail  
21 cars, dead head trains, rail service equipment,  
22 construction equipment or passenger trains that  
23 will transverse this stretch of four tracks at the  
24 Floral Park Station from South Tyson Avenue  
25 Extension to Carnation Avenue?

25

Was this part of the study? If

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2 not, will it be in the future?

3

4 We expect there will be plenty  
5 of noise and vibration and other inconveniences,  
6 both day and night for months, once the two  
7 existing bridges at South Tyson Extension undergo  
8 replacement and the placement -- and the Hempstead  
9 line switch for the third track is installed.

9

10 If this project does move  
11 forward, I want to thank you for giving the public  
12 a time extension and I will be submitting  
13 additional written comments.

13

Thank you.

14

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

15

you.

16

(Applause.)

17

Next we have the Honorable Dr.

18

Lynn Pombonyo, a Trustee from the Village of

19

Floral Park.

20

MS. POMBONYO: Good evening.

21

My name is Dr. Lynn Pombonyo. I

22

am here as a resident and Trustee of the Village

23

of Floral Park.

24

I'll begin by saying that I

25

appreciate all of the comments that were made

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2 regarding the importance of having a railroad that  
3 is up-to-date, safe, state-of-the-art, and brings  
4 our commuters to and from the destinations, which  
5 they need to go to.

6

7

I'm going to talk about the  
Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

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At today's earlier public  
hearing, I addressed Chapter 3, Socioeconomic  
conditions and Chapter 13, Construction in the  
DEIS and the profound impact the proposed  
construction plan will have on the Village of  
Floral Park, in particular: The flow of traffic on  
the two lane main thoroughfares of South Tyson,  
Plainfield and Tulip Avenues;

Parking.

The businesses and other  
properties surrounding the track construction area  
will suffer significant negative socioeconomic  
impacts.

The Incorporated Village of  
Floral Park is a densely populated community, in  
fact, one of the highest in Nassau County. Many  
of our residential properties are 40 by 100 foot  
plots of land, a large number of which abut the

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2 Long Island Railroad and proposed third track and  
3 Hempstead branch right-of-ways.

4

DEIS Chapter 3, Socioeconomic  
5 Conditions, page 3-17 states:

6

The proposed project would not  
7 result in any impact to the Tulip Avenue business  
8 district in Floral Park.

9

And further, on page 322, the  
10 proposed project would not result in any  
11 significant adverse socioeconomic impacts and,  
12 therefore, mitigation is not necessary.

13

When you consider the DEIS  
14 statements in Chapters 3 and 13 together, you see  
15 the inconsistencies in research findings that do  
16 not reflect the socioeconomic impacts resulting  
17 from the construction period, which may be  
18 temporary in duration but will likely be long term  
19 with respect to impacts.

20

The Village of Floral Park and  
21 its residents will be affected in significant ways  
22 which remain to be addressed in the Final  
23 Environmental Impact Statement.

24

For example, as I cited earlier  
25 today, the definition of the word temporary,

1

2 repeatedly stated throughout the DEIS, awards  
3 temporary lane and road closures and temporary  
4 easements which will occur sporadically throughout  
5 the construction projects.

6

7 In the DEIS and subsequent  
8 communications from the LIRR, temporary is a term  
9 that can refer to both weekends and/or periods of  
10 time lasting one year or more. The severity of  
11 adverse socioeconomic impacts could vary greatly  
12 and thus temporary must be defined more precisely  
13 for every phase of the construction project in the  
14 Final EIS.

15

16 DEIS Chapter 13, pages 13-27  
17 states: Construction of the proposed project  
18 would require temporary easements for construction  
19 access on a number of parcels, some of which may  
20 have active businesses. The precise parcels to be  
21 selected by the design build contractor.

22

23 Numerous Floral Park residential  
24 properties on 40 by 100 foot plots also abut the  
25 proposed third track area where major overhead and  
underground utilities will be located -- relocated  
from the south to the north side of the  
right-of-way and ongoing third track construction

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2 will be taking place.

3

4 On both sides of the  
5 right-of-way, many blocks of homes on small  
6 parcels of land are located in close proximity to  
7 the streets, tracks and each other.

8

9 The Final EIS must address the  
10 socioeconomic impact on these neighborhoods, our  
11 families and their homes where construction and  
12 equipment may well consume their properties, both  
13 in their backyards and in their streets in front  
14 for temporary but yet to be defined periods of  
15 time.

16

17 In closing, DEIS page 321  
18 describes the economic and fiscal benefits of the  
19 third track project based on the in plan,  
20 input/output modeling system. And those benefits  
21 are many.

22

23 The DEIS contains numerous  
24 references to the positive socioeconomic impact  
25 that the third track will have. The DEIS,  
however, is incomplete in the use of such an  
analysis of the local communities -- villages and  
communities such as Floral Park where the  
socioeconomic impact of the construction phase

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2 will be the most significant and potentially  
3 damaging.

4

5 I now strongly reiterate that  
6 these serious shortcomings of the DEIS be  
7 addressed in the Final EIS Statement.

8

9 Thank you very much.

10

11 (Applause.)

12

13 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

14

15 Our next speaker, Lawrence --  
16 the Honorable Lawrence Montreuil. And please  
17 correct me if I've mispronounced your name.

18

19 MR. MONTREUIL: Thank you.

20

21 My name is Lawrence Montreuil.  
22 I'm the Deputy Mayor of the Village of New Hyde  
23 Park.

24

25 I speak on behalf of the  
residents in New Hyde Park.

26

27 In Chapter 1 in project  
28 description, it describes the train delays that  
29 resulted from main line events occurring over a 44  
30 month period. The narrative suggests that there  
31 would -- there would have been fewer delayed or  
32 cancelled trains if there were a third track on a  
33 9.8 mile stretch from Floral Park to Hicksville.

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The DEIS fails to justify this supposition.

The report lacks data to explain how many of the delays and cancellations would have been prevented if the third track existed.

In reviewing the data, it's apparent that many of the main line events cited would have blocked three tracks not only two.

Also, most of the main line events that resulted in train delays and cancellations are the result of Long Island Railroad equipment failures. Long Island Railroad defects in trains, rails, signals, et cetera, caused 55 percent of the events and resulted in 55 percent of the delayed trains.

The focus of the Railroad to improve congestion on the main line should be on addressing the root cause of these controllable events by improving maintenance and equipment. Instead, the Railroad is investing a large amount of public funds and causing substantial adverse impacts to find ways around the self-imposed hardships they create as a result of inadequate maintenance.

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Further, the DEIS fails to explain the reliability improvement the Railroad system overall will achieve by completing the project relative to other capital projects. The project then represents only a small segment of the Long Island Railroad system and the project need is not justified.

To sufficiently describe the project purpose and need, the Railroad must explain the degree to which the project will improve system reliability for the \$2 billion the project is estimated to cost.

The Railroad must also explain how other projects will improve system reliability and provide estimated costs for those projects.

The incremental reliability gains of each project should be compared along with its cost and impact.

Failing to consider the project and its impact on the system reliability in total, relative to other improvements the Railroad can make, results in segmentation of the larger Long Island Railroad system of which the main line is a component.

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The projects that should go forward are those that have the least impact and cost and the highest contribution to system reliability. Insight to the other projects that should be included in this comparison are included in the current MTA/Long Island Railroad capital budget.

It's interesting that the Long Island Railroad expansion project is conspicuously absent from the currently approved capital plan. This begs the question, if the expansion project was so vital to improving system reliability, why was it not included in the capital plan? Clearly, the MTA and Long Island leadership valued the other projects over this one. This supports the fact that the expansion project is not the transportation imperative that promoters described in the DEIS but rather a political boondoggle to garner votes by the Governor.

Moreover, considering only ten miles of the project scope while ignoring most more modern projects throughout the system, the leadership of the MTA and Railroad apparently feels -- having a greater impact on system

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2 reliability represents segmentation of the larger  
3 capital plan from the Railroad.

4 By limiting the scope of the ten  
5 miles of the main line and not considering the  
6 whole action of the Railroad system, the Railroad  
7 is running afoul of the SEQRA rules against  
8 segmentation of projects. Consequently, the  
9 environmental review process should be scraped.

10 Thank you.

11 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
12 you.

13 (Applause.)

14 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
15 speaker is Mary Metrosino;

16 She will be followed by Michael  
17 Jacob;

18 And Mary Conway;

19 Ms. Metrosino.

20 MS. METROSINO: My name is Mary  
21 Metrosino. I am a resident of Floral Park for 47  
22 years.

23 And I would like to see it  
24 remain a beautiful area.

25 I read the estimated cost of

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1

2       this project is \$2 billion. Why spend money on  
3       something we don't want or need? The MTA claims  
4       they need this for the passengers. They don't have  
5       sufficient trains. Yet, I've seen during rush  
6       hour only five or seven cars on a locomotive.

7

      Freight trains go through and  
8       the number of cars are unbelievable.

9

      Instead of spending money on  
10      something we don't want or need, why don't they  
11      put it to better use. We can use more and better  
12      security with the transportation system. Every  
13      day somebody's getting mugged, robbed or killed.  
14      You can make necessary improvements that are  
15      needed such as escalators, elevators.

16

      On December 29th, I had a  
17      visitor come to my home. We went shopping and she  
18      had bundles. So I accompanied her to the train  
19      station. I was embarrassed by the condition. It  
20      was raining. Leaks all over. Only one escalator  
21      and it wasn't operating. And the escalator only  
22      goes up. There's no descending elevator --  
23      escalator.

24

      The rest rooms were closed.

25

      What we do need are escalators

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2 and why isn't there one going up to the platform  
3 -- I mean coming down?

4

When somebody's carrying  
5 packages, even with an escalator it's difficult.  
6 We really need an elevator.

7

Under these conditions, how can  
8 you expect a handicapped, an elderly or a parent  
9 with children to use this transportation?

10

Now this third track will be  
11 going through -- near two schools, a very active  
12 recreation center, homes and businesses. Because  
13 of greed, you are putting people's lives at risk.  
14 Think if an accident should occur, how tragic this  
15 would be.

16

Unless you can come up with a  
17 better solution, this plan should be abolished  
18 because it's too dangerous and you will never  
19 recoup the money you're spending on it.

20

You said you're going to give us  
21 more parking space available. How can you give us  
22 more parking space available in Floral Park when  
23 we have no land and instead you're taking it away  
24 from us by this third track?

25

Last but not least, I read the

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2 Second Avenue Subway cannot be completed because  
3 of the lack of funds. How can you even consider  
4 building a third track?

5

6 Governor Cuomo has too many  
7 projects going at the same time. He should  
8 complete one before he starts another.

8

Thank you for listening to me.

9

10 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
11 you.

11

(Applause.)

12

13 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
14 speaker is Michael Jacob.

14

15 MR. JACOB: Oh, I broke the  
16 microphone. There we go.

16

Good evening.

17

18 My name is Michael Jacob. I'm  
19 both a resident and business owner, as well as the  
20 President of the Floral Park Chamber of Commerce.

20

21 Businesses in Floral Park,  
22 particularly those stores, restaurants,  
23 professional offices in the vicinity, the  
24 construction will see diminished business.  
25 Staging areas, dirt, noise, road closures will  
make it less attractive to want to visit Tulip

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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2 Avenue and the surrounding streets. I would  
3 suspect that those businesses already on the  
4 margin might even have to close.

5

6 We also know that no time lines  
7 with any true reality have been established. It  
8 is one thing -- one thing to go a few months with  
9 disruption but to go a few years is untenable for  
10 a business which requires regular traffic to  
11 maintain its revenue stream. I can't imagine a  
12 short time frame will be possible. It took the  
13 Long Island Railroad over three years just to  
14 replace a few simple staircases.

15

16 Will the MTA, Long Island  
17 Railroad and the State of New York chip in and  
18 build a system of paying these businesses which  
19 will be hurt due to the construction?

20

21 Floral Park is a wonderful  
22 community. Building this third track could  
23 ultimately change the valuable enclave forever.  
24 It is also a myth to state that people want to  
25 reverse commute from Manhattan, Brooklyn and  
Queens to Nassau and Suffolk County. Any of us  
that have kids in their 20s know they all want to  
move to Brooklyn and Long Island City and they

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2 have no interest in working in Long Island.

3 (Applause.)

4

MR. JACOB: This concept is  
5 beyond ridiculous. How would anyone get from the  
6 train station to their offices on Long Island? So  
7 unless you're next to a station, unless you're  
8 planning on building a subway, a tram or something  
9 else, somebody's still going to have to drive to  
10 their offices. So anyone who wishes to work on  
11 Long Island will drive to their job and that's the  
12 end of the story.

13

In business we look for  
14 opportunities to invest in vehicles that will  
15 allow us to grow and prosper. The government and  
16 the agencies which support it seem to look for  
17 opportunities which do not add value, do not allow  
18 for calculated growth and will not result in  
19 anyone prospering other than the few large  
20 contractors who get the job for the construction.

21

If the track will not allow for  
22 growth and prosperity, if the MTA and Long Island  
23 have clearly stated that they had other priorities  
24 for Long Island, then why should the track be  
25 built? I suggest that someone starts to connect

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2 the dots on why we're building instead of making  
3 the investment the Long Island Railroad has  
4 previously outlined.

5

Thank you.

6

(Applause.)

7

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

8

you.

9

Next, Mary Conway.

10

And if you'll just permit me, I

11

need to give the next five names.

12

Kent Retier;

13

Andrew Sparberg;

14

Carol O'Neill;

15

Bill Corbett; and,

16

Dave Kapell.

17

MS. CONWAY: Hi. I'm Mary

18

Conway. I lived in Floral Park for most of my

19

life and my concern with the third track project

20

is the freight.

21

When I was reading over the

22

Draft EIS, I saw that it was very similar in the

23

paragraphs dedicated to freight as was written in

24

the scoping document. Basically, it says that

25

it's, you know, it'll be three trains round trip,

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2 freight trains, going through the main line and  
3 that doesn't expect to change and that any -- that  
4 the freight trains will be operated only off peak  
5 times not during peak times.

6

And while that's an assurance  
7 and comforting to the commuters on the Long Island  
8 Railroad, it doesn't help the people that live in  
9 the Village of Floral Park who live there off  
10 peak. We live there, you know, during peak hours  
11 and off peak. So they'll be disruptions to us, to  
12 our children in school, to the residents, you  
13 know, that are trying to use the library or the  
14 recreation center.

15

The one thing I noticed while  
16 looking at the DEIS is that they often refer to  
17 current capacity constraints and it just seems to  
18 be a very ambiguous term and when it's ambiguous  
19 you become a little bit suspicious and I'm --  
20 suspicious or concerned.

21

I'm concerned when there are  
22 other agencies of New York State that I believe  
23 are looking into more freight, such as it's the  
24 New York Metropolitan Transportation Council, of  
25 which the MTA is a voting council member. And in

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2 their interim, I think it's the Regional Freight  
3 Plan of 2015, they talk about increasing freight  
4 traffic and they talk about the capacity  
5 constraints.

6

And the capacity constraints  
7 relate to passenger trains, you know, east of the  
8 Hudson, which is us on Long Island and how these  
9 railroad are dedicated to passenger trains and not  
10 freight trains and that's a capacity constraint.  
11 So that has me concerned when you have the MTA and  
12 one State agency saying we don't anticipate an  
13 increase in freight and then the other side, the  
14 New York Metropolitan Transportation Council  
15 saying, you know, we anticipate a freight  
16 increase.

17

I would hope that the Final EIS  
18 refers to the terms in the transfer agreement  
19 between the New York Atlantic Railway and the MTA  
20 for the use of the Long Island Railroad tracks for  
21 freight transportation. That transfer agreement  
22 was executed, or renewed last year and so those  
23 terms are available to the MTA and I would hope  
24 that they would include that in the Final EIS.

25

That to me would be a comfort to

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2 see something concrete that, yes, they're limited  
3 to three round-trip trains and, you know, it's not  
4 going to be more than that. I'm concerned that  
5 with the extra track there will be more freight  
6 trains and they'll be off peak and that won't be  
7 good for us in the Village of Floral Park or New  
8 Hyde Park.

9

10 Lastly, the reason I'm concerned  
11 about the freight train is noise. And I was  
12 disappointed that in the portion of the Draft EIS  
13 on noise, there's no reference to any like  
14 airplanes and helicopters. In Floral Park we have  
15 the helicopters flying over the main line route  
16 out to the Hamptons. And those helicopters have  
17 to fly low because the planes are coming in on  
18 their descent to Kennedy. Those are the -- those  
19 are the factors that we live with. That is the  
20 noise that we endure on a day-to-day basis.

21

22 The planes, the helicopters and  
23 freight trains would create a perfect storm of  
24 transportation noise and I believe this has to be  
25 addressed in the Final EIS in order for it to be a  
full and a complete evaluation.

26

Thank you.

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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2

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

3

you.

4

(Applause.)

5

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next

6

speaker is Kent Retier.

7

MR. RETIER: Hi. Kent Retier

8

from Garden City. I live backing up to the

9

tracks. And I've been really incensed by the

10

politicians and commercial organizations that are

11

coming from Suffolk County and telling us how to

12

run our life -- how to run our County.

13

Yesterday we heard from Suffolk

14

County Executive and we heard from the ex

15

Greenport Mayor and we were notified that all of

16

the ten Town Supervisors in Suffolk County were

17

working in support of the third track in our

18

backyard and that includes the Supervisor from

19

Babylon, the Supervisor from Huntington,

20

Smithtown, Islip, Brookhaven, Riverhead, Southold,

21

East Hampton and Southampton.

22

These politicians are now

23

dictating to our Mayors and our homeowners in

24

Nassau County on how we should be running our

25

lives for their benefit.

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I would imagine that all the Mayors in the Villages along this ten-mile stretch might be highly insulted, incensed and infuriated that we just should cow tow to their wishes and needs. We can see by the fact that this ten-mile stretch will have no stations on it where the commuters can get on and off. That it will not benefit any of us who live here in any way.

We know that the garbage dumps are polluting the groundwater and the bays and rivers in Suffolk County. We can see that the garbage dumps in Suffolk County have all been closed by EPA and DEC in order to protect those waterways. And we can see that the garbage must be moved by train along this ten-mile stretch with no stations on it.

We also know that \$2 billion is being funneled into our area for this ten-mile stretch of track and we know that the group from the Right Track for Long Island that they expect Suffolk County to reap \$12 billion in economic growth because of this third track project.

We also heard the Suffolk County Executive state yesterday that the few should

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2 sacrifice for the benefit of the many. And so far  
3 as I can -- as far as I can tell, \$2 billion and  
4 \$12 billion adds up to \$14 billion and how someone  
5 could say that we should sacrifice for them when  
6 \$14 billion is being given to everybody else but  
7 us is beyond comprehension.

8

Thank you.

9

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

10

you.

11

(Applause.)

12

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next

13

speaker is Andrew Sparberg;

14

Followed by Carol O'Neill.

15

Then Bill Corbett; and,

16

Dave Kapell.

17

Mr. Sparberg.

18

MR. SPARBERG: Good evening,

19

ladies and gentlemen.

20

My name is Andrew Sparberg. I

21

am a long-time Nassau County resident, total of 58

22

years and I'm a retired Long Island Railroad

23

manager as well.

24

I wholeheartedly support this

25

project. I understand the concerns of the people

1

2 whose homes and businesses are immediately  
3 adjacent to the project area but this is a classic  
4 case of doing the greatest good for the greatest  
5 number. It must be built. To eliminate grade  
6 crossings and not build the third track would be  
7 completely foolish.

8

I grew up in a community a few  
9 miles north of this project area and for the last  
10 39 years I've lived a few miles south of this  
11 project area. During about half of my 25 years  
12 working at the Long Island Railroad, I was the  
13 manager in charge of documenting and summarizing  
14 all reports about train performance and delay  
15 analysis.

16

My professional career in  
17 transportation has encompassed over 40 years. The  
18 Tri-State Regional Planning Commission before the  
19 Long Island Railroad, and since my retirement at  
20 the City University of New York where I instruct a  
21 course about the history of New York mass transit.  
22 So I certainly understand and support the  
23 transportation benefits of the third track. The  
24 Draft EIS has well documented those positive  
25 impacts.

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But I want to focus on another aspect of this project, vehicle traffic safety. That impacts everyone, even those individuals who may never ride the Long Island Railroad.

Since I first received a driver's license in 1965, I have traveled between the north and south shores of the Island countless times operating a private car. On occasions too numerous to remember, I've driven across the main line here in New Hyde Park and other communities.

In the larger project area, there are only two north-south limited access highway; the Meadowbrook and Wantagh Parkways. Because these parkways do not allow any commercial vehicles, there's an intense burden on Nassau County's north-south arterial roadways, which have intersections and traffic lights and railroad grade crossings. Two of these key north-south roadways are Covert Avenue and New Hyde Park Road and they cross the Long Island Railroad main line right in this immediate vicinity and there are constant conflicts between train and vehicle movements at those locations.

It's noteworthy at Covert Avenue

1

2 and New Hyde Park Road along with South 12th  
3 Street, that accounted for 54 of the 66  
4 train/vehicles collisions and three of the five  
5 fatal collisions during the three-year period  
6 documented in Chapter 15 of the Draft EIS. The  
7 elimination of these three crossings is reason  
8 alone to push this project to a rapid completion.

9 Opponents often cite that the  
10 alleged interference with free movement of  
11 emergency vehicles between either side of the  
12 tracks is reason to stop the project. This is a  
13 phony argument. When the crossing gates are down,  
14 there is interference with free movement with  
15 emergency vehicles responding to incidents when  
16 seconds may count. Eliminating these grade  
17 crossings will mean a huge enhancement of public  
18 safety on both sides of the tracks. Police, fire  
19 and emergency vehicles will never have to wait for  
20 a train to pass.

21 Grade crossing accidents, which  
22 are particularly gruesome and tax the resources of  
23 responders will be a memory. Let's not have a  
24 repeat of the Metro North accident in Valhalla,  
25 New York in February 2015 that killed six people

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2 on a train because that train struck a vehicle  
3 that did not clear a grade crossing.

4

5 I just want to leave with one  
6 final point. Just west of here is the Village of  
7 Floral Park. Between 1960 and '62, and I remember  
8 it very well, the Long Island Railroad eliminated  
9 three dangerous grade crossings in that  
10 municipality at Carnation, Tulip and Plainfield  
Avenues.

11

12 On June 29th, 1962, *Newsday*  
13 noted in its headline, "LIRR and Floral Park rise  
14 to happy occasion." Let's hope that in a few  
15 years we can see another headline saying, LIRR and  
16 main line communities celebrate the end of the  
seven dangerous grade crossings.

17

Thank you very much.

18

19 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
you.

20

(Applause.)

21

22 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
speaker is Carol O'Neill.

23

24 MS. O'NEILL: Thank you very  
much for letting me speak tonight.

25

When I think --

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THE HEARING OFFICER: Would you speak right behind the microphone. Speak into the mic and state your name again.

MS. O'NEILL: Carol O'Neill. I'm a 52-year resident with my family, who've moved on, of Floral Park.

I've seen Floral Park has grown immensely and we haven't taken sight at all of some of the great statistics in Floral Park that we're fighting for.

First of all, it's a phenomenal town to live in. It's definitely children friendly. I mean, you can go on any day of the week, except when the ice is on the ground, that you can go to the park and the kids are playing there.

We have a very low crime rate. I mean, our children get a phenomenal education. They're going to be ten feet away from one of the grade schools when they're doing this work. Don't tell me the chemicals -- I spoke to a fellow outside, one of the suits outside and I said to him, you know, what's going to happen with all the dust and the dirt and everything. And he said,

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2 oh, we'll hose it down with water. Hello?

3 They're going to hose it down with water and then  
4 what do you have, you have mud.5 I don't understand. First of  
6 all, Plainfield Avenue now is congested, very  
7 congested during the rush hour which is from 4:00  
8 until about 6:30. That's one of the main streets  
9 you're going to take over. Where are they going  
10 to park these big cranes and everything else?11 I mean, we drive -- we do have  
12 to drive. We don't have buses in Floral Park. We  
13 drive. But, I mean, how are rescue vehicles going  
14 to get around?15 And another thing I'd like to  
16 say too, it is now a definitely known fact that  
17 some of these very bad crashes have not happened  
18 except for what they call sleep apnea. How come  
19 they don't come up with that device now that will  
20 be able to tell you -- I read a lot about it. If  
21 a person's under the influence of alcohol or drugs  
22 or if they're suffering from a breathing problem.  
23 I mean this is a definite diagnosis now.24 And another thing, they were  
25 talking before -- I'm not going to even -- I had a

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2 book that was filled with all of the things I was  
3 going to do but everything was discussed tonight.  
4 The one thing that I don't understand though,  
5 there's no transparency. I've gone on the  
6 website. Forget it.

7 You try to ask questions, they  
8 put you on hold to talk to somebody else. I've  
9 been fighting for five years for a stupid -- right  
10 on the corner of Terrace Avenue and Plainfield  
11 Avenue, a billboard. And I've called the Town  
12 thinking it was the Town's fault. They said, oh,  
13 no, that's Long Island Railroad property. You  
14 have to call them.

15 It's disgusting. It's just a  
16 big blob of nothing. Usually there's nothing on  
17 it. It's just -- the kids are scribbling or  
18 whatever they're doing. And the Long Island  
19 Railroad they tell me they'll have somebody look  
20 into it. Well, five years later I've given up on  
21 it.

22 The trains are filthy. If you  
23 go into the City, they used to be immaculate. I  
24 commuted into the City years ago. The trains were  
25 immaculate. The people that worked on the trains

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2 were very, very good. Now if a train's delayed,  
3 you can't even understand what's coming through.  
4 Fix your sound system.

5

I stayed at the Jamaica Station  
6 one day and I must have asked four different  
7 people there. I think they worked for the  
8 Railroad and they were as confused as I was. So I  
9 had to go upstairs and go over and around and take  
10 it out. I mean, to me, I think they have so many  
11 little things that they could really do that would  
12 -- just the signals, 90 percent of the signals  
13 aren't working on a given day.

14

And I do think Cuomo has a very  
15 big idea that he wants this to be for cargo. And  
16 the fellows that are talking here that are in the  
17 union, my husband was a union man. I can feel for  
18 them. But what about the teamsters that drive  
19 trucks that did it too? I mean, I think there's a  
20 lot that has to be still explained to us. We're  
21 residents, I mean, we're not people that are just  
22 looking around in this Town.

23

We rely on our rescue. Our  
24 police department is probably one of the best  
25 police departments in Nassau County.

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2

(Applause.)

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MS. O'NEILL: I mean, I don't think Suffolk County as as good. They have more crime than they can shake a stick at and they're going to come in and tell us what to do. Take care of your own County.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Bill Corbett.

MR. CORBETT: Hi. I'm Bill Corbett. I'm a spokesperson for Citizens Against Rail Expansion, CARE, which is an organization of local civic and other organizations and elected officials and former elected officials who are opposed to this project.

We're not opposed to the grade crossings. We think that's a very important thing for safety.

I just want to make a few points to supplement what I said this afternoon and with the 20 pages that I gave in of comments.

But one of the other speakers

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1  
2 talked about all the landfills being closed in  
3 Suffolk and just yesterday on News 12, some people  
4 out in Suffolk were having almost a riot because  
5 they were trying to close a transfer station and  
6 it talked about hundreds of tons of garbage that's  
7 going every day onto the Railroad. And we think  
8 with that happening, that it's going to be more  
9 and more -- and we think a lot of the  
10 justification but the Railroad's not talking about  
11 is to carry more freight, more garbage and we're  
12 certainly concerned with that.

13 Also, the toxic waste in the  
14 track bed. That's been spoken about. We think  
15 that's really important.

16 I think the people in Suffolk  
17 County are not for this. I think a few rich,  
18 influential business leaders came forward. They'd  
19 like to see it happen but the Suffolk County  
20 people who moved out there to get away from Bronx,  
21 Brooklyn and Queens, they went out to a suburban  
22 environment, a rural environment, do they really  
23 want these huge industries to be moved out that  
24 are being promised? Do they really want more  
25 people coming out there that cause more problems

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they have with their water supply?

I think, also, I want to give you one example of what a bad neighbor the Railroad is. About ten years ago we had hearings. I brought in a box full of debris that had fallen down off the tracks between Tyson Avenue and Tulip Avenue. You can see the wheels from the street. There's nothing to block debris from coming down. I had ten of these pretzels, these iron pieces that hold the track to the -- the track railing to the cross piece.

I had huge pieces of metal that had fallen off equipment. I brought those in. I showed them to the hearing officer. The second time we had a hearing I actually brought in pictures. I gave them in. I handed them in. And a couple of months ago at a hearing, I once again raised the fact that there is some simple screening, a simple thing is needed, it would probably take two men one day to do this and when I spoke to a Railroad employee, a lower level employee, they told me, you know, we really don't do anything until somebody gets hurt.

So I think it's time. And I'll

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2 ask you, Ms. McGowan, if you could look into that  
3 because this doesn't have to wait years for the  
4 track to be done. This is very simple. It could  
5 be very helpful to help preserve people's lives.

6

One more point, the parking. We  
7 know that when this happens in Floral Park, we're  
8 going to lose between 35 and 50 spots during the  
9 construction. We have consistently been asking  
10 what's the -- what's the long-term result going to  
11 be? Are we going to lose those places permanently  
12 under the tracks? And we know we're going to lose  
13 some parking but no one will tell us what the  
14 long-term impact is.

15

So Floral Park has a serious  
16 parking problem. One woman came up to me tonight  
17 and said she was inside and one of the men assured  
18 her that Floral Park's only going to lose three or  
19 four parking spots. That's the kind of  
20 misinformation that's going around.

21

So appreciate the chance of  
22 talking. I would appreciate it if you could look  
23 into that situation we have on South Tyson and we  
24 do thank you for your courtesy of hearing us.

25

Thank you.

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2

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

3

you.

4

(Applause.)

5

THE HEARING OFFICER: All

6

right.

7

Our next speaker is Dave Kapell.

8

And if I can ask for your

9

patience just a moment, I'm going to read the

10

names of the next five speakers so they can come

11

up and be prepared.

12

Maria Clark;

13

Karen Retier;

14

James Hershler;

15

Bob Citro; and,

16

Dorothy Episcopia.

17

MR. KAPELL: Good evening.

18

Thank you for the opportunity to

19

speak.

20

My name is Dave Kapell. I'm

21

Executive Director of the Right Track for Long

22

Island Coalition.

23

We're a coalition of 5,000

24

members, including 2,600 that live in corridor

25

communities and we speak for over two million

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people on Long Island.

I'm here tonight to read a letter into the record from the Mayor of Port Jefferson at her request.

I'm writing on behalf of the residents of the Incorporated Village of Port Jefferson to express our interest in and support for the third track project.

We in Port Jefferson are the literal end of the line for the Port Jefferson branch and view this project as essential, both to the expansion of service to our community and the eventual electrification of the Port Jefferson branch, both of which are necessary to reduce travel time to New York City.

Any reduction of time in the commute to Manhattan will have enormous economic benefits to the Village of Port Jefferson and the other communities along the line. Sincerely Margo Garant, Mayor.

Thank you.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

Our next speaker, Maria Clark.

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MS. CLARK: Good evening.

Maria Clark is my name. I live in New Hyde Park. I live on the south side of where the railroad tracks are.

We do have one of our major concerns on that area is that we don't have ambulances and the fire trucks that need to be down that way. And when there's construction going, we won't be able to have these emergency equipment by us.

Many people have mentioned that many of the accidents on the Railroad -- and just taking a look -- looking at the last six months, the work train by Merillon Station, the derailment very recently and the Brooklyn crash, these are elements that you need to fix on the Railroad. You need these fixes done before you start this big production.

Most of us in the surrounding areas are extremely happy that the grade crossings will be affected. However, why don't you prove to us by doing a good quality job, efficient job of changing the grade crossings before you decide to do the third rail?

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(Applause.)

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MS. CLARK: We would have a lot more trust in what's going to happen.

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Also, we've been notified in meetings throughout New Hyde Park that it may possibly -- all this work that's going on, may impact the price of our homes and may devalue the price of our homes. If that happens, then the taxes collected would be less than what they need for the schools and for the village.

So what will happen? Our taxes need to be raised to supplement what we're losing in the price value of our houses.

So these are the things that we're concerned about.

Thank you.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next speaker is Karen Retier.

MS. RETIER: Hi. Karen Retier.

When you want to do a great job, you need to model your behavior and ideas after

1

2 someone or something that has already done an  
3 extraordinary job.

4

5 We are here tonight to discuss a  
6 possible LIRR train expansion and in order to have  
7 that discussion, we must look at the finest  
8 railway system in the world and that is the Swiss  
9 Railway System.

9

10 Beginning in the early years of  
11 the last century, the Swiss invested in technology  
12 and infrastructure. Having had a large railway  
13 system for approximately the same time as the  
14 LIRR, the Swiss approach railways a bit  
15 differently. The Swiss made sure plenty of space  
16 was built into all cities and landscapes, unlike  
17 the very motorized culture of the US, where  
18 building a rail line is a huge problem in terms of  
19 finding enough pieces of land to possibly expand  
20 an existing railway.

20

21 The proposed less than ten-mile  
22 area designated for expansion is now too densely  
23 populated to even consider expanding a railway.

23

24 We have residential homes that  
25 abut the tracks;

25

Schools next to the tracks;

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2

Churches next to the tracks;

3

Businesses next to the tracks;

4

Large dangerous petroleum plants

5

like Hart Petroleum right next to the tracks;

6

Historic post offices next to

7

the tracks;

8

Children's baseball fields next

9

to the tracks;

10

Bird sanctuaries next to the

11

tracks;

12

Parking lots next to the tracks;

13

and,

14

Pool and recreation centers

15

right next to the tracts.

16

So the time has passed for

17

railway expansion in this very densely populated

18

area.

19

Just like the Swiss but,

20

unfortunately 100 years later, we need to remove

21

the bunsen burners used to defrost the Jamaica

22

switches and replace with them some modern

23

technology.

24

(Applause.)

25

MS. RETIER: We need green

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2 locomotives. The LIRR has to stop spraying  
3 dangerous toxic chemicals in their right-of-way  
4 without ever even telling one their schedule.

5

6 How could thousands of tons of  
7 contaminated soil ever be removed safely without  
8 poisonous dust becoming airborne. Haven't enough  
9 people died of cancer in this corridor already?

10

(Applause.)

11

12 MS. RETIER: We need to make the  
13 LIRR the best passenger line possible by adding  
14 more switches so we don't have another train  
15 derailment like the one we did in Garden City and  
16 we need to invest in trains with -- are you ready?  
17 Positive train control, like the Swiss trains all  
18 have so that we do not have another horrible  
19 derailment like the one in Hoboken or the January  
20 derailment in Brooklyn.

21

22 All the derailments could have  
23 been prevented if the trains had positive train  
24 control. Every day we continue to operate trains  
25 without positive train control, we risk having  
another deadly crash.

26

27 We also need to train the LIRR  
28 engineers on simulators like the Swiss do. And,

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2 also, constantly give them refresher courses to  
3 the LIRR engineers like the Swiss Railway System  
4 requires.

5

6 Also, in Switzerland, if the  
7 train shows signs of overcrowding, the Swiss add  
8 more trains. In other words, the Swiss run more  
9 trains at busy times.

10

11 We must also accept the fact  
12 that in order to have the best passenger line, we  
13 have to designate it as a passenger line and get  
14 the overweight freight trains off this small,  
15 densely populated corridor.

16

(Applause.)

17

18 MS. RETIER: The heaviest trains  
19 in the world are freight trains and freight trains  
20 break rails. Just like the Swiss, we must move  
21 any freight to an alternate mode of transportation  
22 and that, of course, is to be decided by the  
23 experts. Whether it would be better suited for  
24 Suffolk to move their garbage out on a barge  
25 system from their own ports or on the side of the  
Expressway.

26

27 It is unfortunate it took the  
28 Long Island Railroad 100 years longer than the

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2 Swiss but it's never too late to improve  
3 technology and explore new ways of improving  
4 everyone's lives.

5 We need to have the gold  
6 standard, not the substandard.

7 (Applause.)

8 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
9 speaker is James Hershler.

10 Followed by Bob Citro; and,  
11 Dorothy Episcopia.

12 MR. HERSHLER: Thank you.

13 James Hershler. I live in  
14 Floral Park for about 30 years and I've commuted  
15 to the City the whole time.

16 I think the most striking thing  
17 about the DEIS is its admission that after  
18 spending billions of dollars and damaging  
19 communities and the residents' quality of right,  
20 the end result will be one more rush hour train  
21 into the City each morning and one more rush hour  
22 train out to Long Island in the afternoon. That's  
23 it. And that's at page S-20 of the Environmental  
24 Statement.

25 Can this really be worth it?

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2 The Long Island Railroad's own statistics show  
3 that commutation into New York City has been  
4 declining over the past 30 years. So what do they  
5 do? They try to justify it, claiming there will  
6 be more reverse commute trains. Do we really need  
7 them?

8 I've been on the platform each  
9 day 30 years, I have seen these reverse commute  
10 trains. They were half empty 30 years ago, 25  
11 years ago, 15, 10. They're still half empty.  
12 When is this reverse commute supposed to start  
13 happening?

14 They project there's going to  
15 be a need for them in the future based on what?  
16 Have they ever actually ridden on this Railroad?  
17 They claim there's a one to two percent growth  
18 rate a year in this very small segment of their  
19 ridership. Really, who is going to pay fares to  
20 get on the subway, to get on the Long Island  
21 Railroad to go from New York City to Long Island,  
22 then take a cab or a bus or ride a bicycle just to  
23 get to a low paying job? And do these projections  
24 consider that the higher paying jobs are more  
25 likely going to be going to e-commuting in the

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2 future? Is that part of their analysis? Who  
3 knows.

4

5 Then the DEIS claims, well,  
6 there's a need to bypass trains that are disabled  
7 along a ten mile stretch of the railroad. But  
8 your own reports show that these incidents are  
9 happening throughout the system, not just a  
10 ten-mile stretch of track. The obvious question  
11 is, isn't the answer, maintain your equipment  
12 better, solve the problem, don't spend money  
13 trying to go around it?

13

14 This proposal makes about as  
15 much sense as widening the New York City streets  
16 so that people can drive around the pot holes.

16

(Laughter.)

17

(Applause.)

18

MR. HERSHLER: Thank you.

19

20 The most remarkable thing about  
21 this proposal is how heavily it relies on  
22 everything but the third track. Eliminating grade  
23 crossings, upgrading stations, modernizing  
24 switches and signals. You don't have to build  
25 another track to do all these things. And the  
benefits are undeniable. They're obvious and

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2 they're not based on projections.

3

4 We know they will reduce traffic  
5 congestion and pollution and eliminate train horns  
6 and prevent collisions between trains and vehicles  
7 if you get rid of the train -- the grade  
8 crossings. But in this statement do they ever  
9 actually consider this alternative? Replace the  
10 grade crossings first and then see if this reverse  
commute actually develops.

11

12 No, they dismiss this with one  
13 sentence out of thousands of pages of documents.

13

14 Do the right thing. First  
15 eliminate the grade crossings. Fix the switches  
16 and signals. Maintain trains so people can use  
17 the bathrooms, see out the windows and don't have  
18 to sit on advertising posters that they use for  
19 seat coverings. And spare the commuters a rate  
increase or two once in awhile.

20

21 Where are priorities of this  
22 Railroad, the MTA and the Governor? Shouldn't  
23 they adequately maintain their facilities before  
24 asking for billions of dollars based upon  
25 projections that may never come to pass? If they  
keep misallocating their resources this way, some

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2 day there's going to be a failure at a really bad  
3 place and when they're dragging bodies out of the  
4 train, the third track is not going to do them any  
5 good.

6

Thank you.

7

(Applause.)

8

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. I

9

just want to -- our next speaker is Bob Citro.

10

I just want to let the audience

11

know that we have more than 20 additional

12

speakers. So I've been allowing people to go over

13

the three minutes but I know there are a lot of

14

people who are still waiting. So if you could do

15

your best to stick -- I know you all have a lot to

16

say but try to stick with three minutes so that

17

all of your neighbors have a chance to give their

18

views as well.

19

Thank you.

20

Mr. Citro.

21

MR. CITRO: Thank you.

22

My name is Bob Citro. I'm a

23

resident of Mineola.

24

I -- the prior speaker probably

25

covered half my points but I'll go over them

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2 quickly again because they probably bear  
3 repeating.

4

I also was looking for a reason  
5 for this \$2 billion expenditure and how it was  
6 going to make life better.

7

Going through the report, which  
8 is quite difficult for a layman to read, I  
9 couldn't find it. I see a table in there that  
10 talks about main line events causing late or  
11 cancelled trains. And it talks about by year how  
12 many occurred. And in 2016 through September, it  
13 says 693.

14

I guess the insinuation is that  
15 these would go away. Some of them I'm not sure  
16 how. For example, bridge struck at the Westbury  
17 Station. It would seem to me that if you have to  
18 stop trains for an overpass, you're going to stop  
19 them all.

20

Even if I allowed that maybe the  
21 693 would be on time, for the same time period on  
22 your website you show 12,855 late trains through  
23 September. That's about five percent improvement  
24 if you could eliminate all of those 693. It  
25 doesn't seem worth \$2 billion.

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I won't repeat the statement that I can't figure out the linkage between the crossing elimination and the third track. In Mineola they've eliminated two crossings in recent times. Roslyn Road very recently, Herricks Road quite awhile ago, probably 20 year ago.

Both of those I think were very successful projects but there's only two tracks and they were still successful.

A couple of other things, you said earlier and it's something that I caught again when I was reading after your comments. They'll be no permanent residential takings. I thought there was going to be no residential takings at all. Where did the word permanent come from?

Looking a little further in one of the tables in the -- in the evaluation, I see that they say, some temporary easements may be possible. Like the other gentleman said, it's a throwaway line buried somewhere in the middle but what does no permanent residential takings mean?

I happen to live very close to the Railroad. I'm in probably the narrowest part

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2 of your right-of-way. I'm very concerned about  
3 that statement.

4

Also, there's a statement about  
5 temporary access may be needed. Again, it doesn't  
6 talk about commercial versus residential so  
7 reading through the document I'm not sure if I  
8 could figure that out.

9

Now I'm watching the clock.

10

Lastly, as I was looking at the  
11 plans, they talk about high speed cross overs,  
12 which is Mineola on the east end. They chose to  
13 locate those right behind a parallel residential  
14 block. I'm not sure why you would put switches  
15 behind -- so close to residential housing when  
16 approximately 1,000 feet to the east there's  
17 commercial property over a much wider  
18 right-of-way, it would seem to be operationally  
19 easier for the Railroad to access, maintain and  
20 use them. And, frankly, the noise level from  
21 trains passing through high speed switches is not  
22 desirable.

23

Last comment, it's been talked  
24 about a lot about the freight -- the freight train  
25 increase and the trash being hauled. I

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2       communicated for 30 years to Manhattan. I found  
3       Railroad employees rank and file to be excellent,  
4       knowledgeable and very good at what they do.

5                   The freight is not being hauled  
6       by you, it's being hauled by New York Atlantic.  
7       I'm not so sure about them. I mean, we all read  
8       in the paper about a car -- an accident in Queens  
9       where the engineer for Atlantic jumped out of a  
10      train and ran away. I'm not so sure I like this  
11      freight company operating in our County.

12                   Thank you.

13                   (Applause.)

14                   THE HEARING OFFICER:    Thank  
15      you.

16                   Our next speaker is Dorothy  
17      Episcopia;

18                   She will be followed by:

19                   Douglas Hayden;

20                   Raymond Pagano;

21                   Doris Riggers;

22                   Bernard Riggers; and,

23                   Kevin Flood.

24                   MS. EPISCOPIA:    Good evening.

25                   I am a past president of the

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2 Eastern Property Owners Association of Garden  
3 City.

4

5 Tonight I'm speaking as a  
6 private resident.

7

8 And first -- before I say  
9 anything, I would like you and I'd like everybody  
10 here from Floral Park, New Hyde Park, the  
11 gentleman from Mineola to know that there are many  
12 residents who support our Mayor in talking about  
13 this issue and in opposing it or, at least,  
14 finding fault with the way certain things are  
15 being presented. We have had experience in the  
16 past with this.

17

18 We clearly understand the  
19 meaning of the right of eminent domain, which you  
20 have. And I agree with so many things these  
21 people said, I'm going to get to the point and say  
22 -- agree with what this last gentleman said. I  
23 have a problem with the use of, we may have to do  
24 this. And you yourself said it. We might have to  
25 do that. We may have to do this.

26

27 What are you really going to do  
28 when it comes to private residences? Yes, maybe  
29 you're not going to knock down houses as you were

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2 possibly going to do ten years ago. But that  
3 doesn't mean you're not going to be bringing the  
4 track up to somebody's bedroom window if you have  
5 to. I do not like the use of, we might, we may.  
6 It's too, too ambiguous.

7

I think instead of doing this  
8 project, I have to agree with these people, if  
9 you're really seriously sincere about safety, and  
10 we are, fix the grade crossings if that's what you  
11 have to do. Fix the broken tracks. Fix the  
12 switches and make it safe until you have -- make  
13 sure you do not have a tragedy with a derailment  
14 where people really are killed. You're very  
15 fortunate that that hasn't happened. And we've  
16 had how many now in the last couple of months.  
17 Enough.

18

Do it right. Fix it right. And  
19 then if you have to do this third track, figure  
20 out how to do it and be able to say, we definitely  
21 aren't going to have this may, may not, will. We  
22 are, we aren't and we can then properly address  
23 it.

24

This is getting ridiculous.

25

I think in addition to fixing

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2 the safety aspects you might do well to spend some  
3 money buying new cars where people don't rip the  
4 heck out of their clothes trying to get in and out  
5 of the seats. This is ridiculous.

6

Please do it right.

7

I grew up in a neighborhood  
8 right where I think this gentleman might live in  
9 Mineola. And I know how close some of these  
10 houses are to the tracks.

11

Please keep in mind that you  
12 need to deal with the people and be concerned with  
13 the people whose lives, whose quality of life,  
14 whose safety -- everything, whose property values.  
15 They have a right to it. You would be concerned  
16 about yours.

17

Please take into account these  
18 things.

19

I also object to civic leaders,  
20 politicians, business people from another County  
21 telling us what we have to have. And I will not  
22 personally be affected by this railroad but we are  
23 concerned about the hundreds and hundreds of  
24 people who will be.

25

Please keep that in mind.

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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2

Thank you.

3

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

4

(Applause.)

5

THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next

6

speaker is the Honorable Douglas Hayden, Village

7

of Floral Park.

8

MR. HAYDEN: Good evening.

9

I -- I don't come before you

10

tonight as Village Justice of Floral Park. I come

11

before you tonight as a life-long resident and

12

someone who spent a considerable time in State

13

service as the former General Counsel and

14

Executive Director of the New York State Insurance

15

Fund.

16

Back then, as it is today, the

17

MTA has been a colossal failure and waste of money

18

and a big money pit. And that was just known

19

throughout the State.

20

And I'd like to phrase something

21

that my father, who traveled into the City his

22

whole life used to say, never on time, all the

23

time.

24

And when I look at these reports

25

and how this has been jammed down us and -- and

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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2 average citizens that have to take time to read  
3 through all this, I'm embarrassed.

4

What also is embarrassing is  
5 that this Governor wants to try to spend \$2  
6 billion, estimated, and tell us that there not  
7 going to be taking some property and disruption of  
8 our Island as we know it in our community of  
9 Floral Park, as we've known it our whole lives.  
10 That's an outright lie and an outright fraud.

11

The fact that *Newsday* and others  
12 are buying into this reverse commute, there has  
13 been no study, no statistic that I have seen or  
14 anybody has shown me that validates that in any  
15 shape or form, another form of a lie.

16

Here's the real issue going on  
17 right now on Long Island and New York State.  
18 Under this Governor, factual and statistical, more  
19 residents have fled New York because of high  
20 taxes. And it's because of this wasteful spending  
21 and these lies that are perpetrated on residents  
22 and hardworking taxpayers. And I just ask simply,  
23 when is it all going to stop?

24

This will be a major disruption.  
25 This will destroy the fabric of the main line and

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2 those residents in communities that live along  
3 that line and that is undeniable and factual. All  
4 these goodies that you're promising, we still  
5 don't have an adequate station. Why do we have to  
6 negotiate that? Why do we have to negotiate ADA  
7 compliant and an elevator? That in and of itself  
8 is problematic to me --

9

(Applause.)

10

MR. HAYDEN: -- and I don't

11

understand why that's part of a negotiation.

12

I simply say, as I said before,

13

and I know you have no decision making in this,

14

this Governor is leading us down a bad road and

15

when I hear people from the LIA and someone who

16

may become the future heir apparent of the MTA

17

this morning talk in favor of it, I find that

18

hilarious.

19

Thank you for your time.

20

(Applause.)

21

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

22

you.

23

Our next speaker is Raymond

24

Pagano;

25

Followed by Dolores Riggers.

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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MR. PAGANO: Thank you.

Good evening.

And I am President of the Nassau  
County Council of Civic Associations.

Much of what you've heard here  
tonight has been some of the sentiment that we've  
heard from our membership varying from Floral Park  
into Hicksville.

While a majority of the members  
do support the expansion for a viable Long Island  
future, it is also understandable the apprehension  
and concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact  
Study that was performed, does have a lot of  
detail, perhaps a bit more than folks had an  
opportunity to review, but within that expansion  
the sweeteners that are mentioned, such as station  
upgrades, additional parking, eliminating grade  
crossings and, of course, the economic gains are  
great. However, there are other concerns of the  
communities.

The outreach and public  
involvement is key. We should have the MTA/Long  
Island Railroad continuously engage with the

1  
2 public throughout the communities being affected.  
3 I believe, much like Governor Cuomo had done with  
4 the community reconstruction program and Nassau  
5 Executive Ed Mangano with the panel on the Bay  
6 Park Sewage Treatment facility, the MTA/Long  
7 Island Railroad should look at an advisory panel  
8 of the community members that will be a part of  
9 the decision making and input throughout the  
10 future of the third main track. This way from  
11 concept to reality the communities will be engaged  
12 real time, not waiting for a scheduled public  
13 engagement.

14 I believe this will also bring,  
15 perhaps, the trust and what the community is  
16 looking for from the MTA/Long Island Railroad that  
17 we are going to work together.

18 What better way for the MTA/Long  
19 Island Railroad to pursue this third main track  
20 and see its success than to have the communities  
21 involved, again from concept to reality. Who  
22 better to understand the needs of the community  
23 and where you may have certain construction and  
24 maintenance protection of traffic schemes in  
25 place, who would better understand how that

1

2 affects the community than the actual residents of  
3 the community.

4

They will represent the seniors,  
5 the children, the handicapped, those that maybe  
6 don't have a voice in this.

7

Lastly, the residents want the  
8 MTA/Long Island Railroad to hold true to the  
9 schedule and the budget. It was mentioned here  
10 earlier about cost, funding and where is that  
11 coming from. Well, we would like a pledge from  
12 the MTA/Long Island Railroad that at no point  
13 during the future of this expansion work that  
14 taxes, property taxes, commuter fares will be  
15 hiked as a result of this expansion project.

16

The council believes, just as  
17 the MTA/Long Island Railroad, is asking for the  
18 trust and support of the communities. The  
19 communities are asking the MTA/Long Island  
20 Railroad to be honest and to be accountable moving  
21 forward.

22

Thank you for your time.

23

And we're looking forward to the  
24 next engagement.

25

Thank you.

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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2

(Applause.)

3

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

4

you.

5

At this time, I just need to

6

check with our stenographer. Do you need to

7

change a tape or anything?

8

THE STENOGRAPHER: No.

9

THE HEARING OFFICER: No.

10

Okay. Very good.

11

Also, just some housekeeping to

12

let you know, the registration table has now

13

closed. It's after 8:45. We have 17 remaining

14

speakers and we will be here to allow those

15

registered speakers to make their statements.

16

Our next speaker, Dolores

17

Riggers.

18

Thank you for your patience.

19

MS. DOLORES RIGGERS: Hi. I'm

20

Dolores Riggers from Garden City.

21

And I have a couple of

22

questions. I'm wondering if you, the Long Island

23

Railroad, *Newsday*, Governor Cuomo had informed the

24

public the whole truth concerning the causes of

25

most of the train delays which involved the

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1

2 malfunctioning of the antiquated switching system?

3

4 Do you really think the public  
5 would have chosen the very expensive, disruptive  
6 and lengthy time frame required to build the third  
7 track when a better result could be achieved at a  
8 much lower cost and with much less disruption by  
9 replacing the old, broken switching system with a  
new modern one?

10

My second question, why the rush  
11 to close the time frame for public comments? The  
12 communities along the Long Island Railroad have  
13 requested more time to study the over 1,000 page  
14 impact document for good reason. Experts had to be  
15 retained in order to wade through the very  
16 technical document. What is wrong with a  
17 three-months' time frame for the communities to  
18 study, analyze and present an informed commentary  
19 of this document?

20

The duplicity of your not  
21 revealing the entire true nature of the third  
22 track proposal and then the forced rushing of the  
23 time period for an intelligent response leads me  
24 to agree with my neighbors and many residents that  
25 this is indeed the bottom line which is at play

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2 here.

3

4 The expansion of the lucrative  
5 freight traffic, please respect we, the people by  
6 telling us the truth.

7

8 And I have one more comment to  
9 make, which I hadn't prepared but please do not  
10 confuse the need for the elimination of grade  
11 crossing with the need for any kind of imaginary  
12 need for the third track.

13

Thank you.

14

(Applause.)

15

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

16

you.

17

Our next speaker is Bernard

18

Riggers.

19

Followed by Kevin Flood.

20

MR. BERNARD RIGGERS: Good

21

evening.

22

My name is Bernard Riggers.

23

And I came today to give my

24

spiel and everyone before me has done a great job.

25

And so I only have two items

26

that I'd like to address. These items are when

27

the work is done on the third track and they're

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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2 digging up all the soil, it's -- it's come to my  
3 attention that in the '70s between, I think it was  
4 '73 and '79, the Long Island Railroad was spraying  
5 Agent Orange along the tracks to eliminate the  
6 vegetation which grows along the tracks.

7

There were lots of things --  
8 what can I say, it was the Department of Health  
9 made various studies that Agent Orange is -- it  
10 doesn't disintegrate and there's evidence where  
11 the United States government has put in -- used  
12 Agent Orange in Vietnam and it has been now 40  
13 years and the toxins are still active.

14

One of the things that concern  
15 me is when the earth, the soil is disrupted, the  
16 contaminants will get into the air and we'll  
17 have -- the workers that are working on the  
18 tracks, the people that live nearby, the  
19 contamination in the dust is going to be in the  
20 air.

21

Another item that has to be  
22 addressed is that there are numerous wells along  
23 the tracks. And now when the work is done on the  
24 third track, the -- I believe since they're going  
25 to do the freights, they're going to have huge

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2 pilings and when they drive this piling down, it's  
3 going to go into the wells that are situated along  
4 the tracks. Now these wells were all incorporated  
5 into the community water systems. Now these wells  
6 were drilled originally by the Long Island  
7 Railroad to provide water for the steam engines.  
8 So it concerns me quite a bit.

9

Thank you.

10

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

11

you.

12

(Applause.)

13

Our next speaker is Kevin Flood.

14

He will be followed by Ernest

15

Gentile.

16

Mike Longobardi.

17

Nicole Marks.

18

Richard Pfeiffer; and,

19

Mike Pappacena.

20

Mr. Flood.

21

MR. FLOOD: Hi. Good evening.

22

Kevin Flood, resident, Village

23

of Floral Park.

24

On May 24th, 2016, I had an

25

opportunity to come before you to address some

1

2 concerns during the scoping hearing. What I  
3 specifically addressed was the future of the  
4 Hempstead line, the existing infrastructure and  
5 the plan to relocate it within the Long Island  
6 Railroad right-of-way and the close proximity of  
7 the construction and new track to our recreational  
8 facility and pool.

9

Although some of these topics  
10 have been further addressed in the DEIS, I am not  
11 satisfied with the impact statements provided, due  
12 mainly to the lack of details.

13

I have also additional questions  
14 and concerns that I'd like to bring to your  
15 attention after reading the DEIS. For time, I'll  
16 just address one tonight, the rest I'll submit in  
17 writing.

18

Once again, what impact will the  
19 Long Island Railroad third track expansion have on  
20 the operation of the Hempstead Line?

21

The DEIS briefly states that the  
22 Hempstead line will have an interlocking plan,  
23 signals and a universal crossover installed east  
24 of the Floral Park station in order to take one of  
25 the existing Hempstead line tracks and turn it

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2 into the new third track just east of Floral Park  
3 station.

4

5 Surely this will have an impact  
6 on the Hempstead line west of Stewart Manor  
7 Station and we deserve to know how. If you take  
8 one track from the existing two-track Hempstead  
9 line, that leaves one track left for operations.

10

11 I find it ironic that the Long  
12 Island Railroad is pushing for a third track on  
13 the main line but choosing to turn Hempstead into  
14 a one track operation.

15

16 The DEIS states that in the 2040  
17 build condition, four trains currently routed to  
18 Atlantic Terminal will no longer be accessible on  
19 the Hempstead branch but rather route directly to  
20 Manhattan. It touts the additional service to  
21 Manhattan for the Floral Park, Queens Village and  
22 Hollis stations but specifically leaves out the  
23 Bellrose train station.

24

25 Does the third track project in  
the 2040 build condition intend to terminate the  
use of the Bellrose train station?

26

27 I find it ironic that the Long  
28 Island Railroad is pushing for a third track on

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2 the main line and providing new stations and  
3 upgrades for the impacted areas while ignoring the  
4 deteriorating conditions of the Floral Park  
5 station and hinting at limiting or terminating  
6 service at the Bellrose Station.

7

8 The DEIS states the number of  
9 trains running on the Hempstead line is currently  
10 70 per 24-hour period. It projects the number of  
11 trains running on the Hempstead line's future is  
12 58 per 24-hour period. Please explain in detail  
13 why there is a reduction in the number of trains  
14 servicing the communities on the Hempstead line?

15

16 I find it ironic that the Long  
17 Island Railroad is pushing for a third track on  
18 the main line in order to provide more train  
19 service but decreasing the number of projected  
20 trains on the Hempstead branch.

21

22 In closing, I would also like to  
23 point out a concern for all New Yorkers. How will  
24 this two plus billion dollar project be paid for  
25 if it's not covered under federal funds? It will  
surely be paid for Long Island Railroad riders  
through increased fares. But increased fares are  
not enough to cover the cost, which leads to an

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2 increase in taxes.

3

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Does the increase in fares and taxes support the supposed benefits of the third track project? The DEIS should disclose more information on the source of the funds and how and who will ultimately pay for this \$2 billion mega project.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

you.

Our next speaker is Ernest Gentile.

MR. GENTILE: Good evening.

My name's Ernest Gentile.

I am a resident. I am a school board member here in New Hyde Park, Garden City Park Union Free School District.

While I'm not speaking as a board member but a resident, I would like to speak about the elimination of tax revenue that is going to be a part of this third track project.

If you're going to be eliminating properties, homes, devalue property

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2 and there's nothing in the impact statement that  
3 says about any remuneration to the villages, the  
4 towns, the school district anywhere in that  
5 statement. I haven't seen anything that applies,  
6 any remuneration.

7 So today in *Newsday* there was an  
8 article about the school districts getting \$75  
9 million in Nassau and Suffolk County, which is a  
10 very small increase to the taxpayers.

11 So my suggestion would be to  
12 take \$1 billion out of the \$2 billion, fix the  
13 railroad crossings, okay, and give the school  
14 districts or the taxpayers the other billion in  
15 Nassau County and then --

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. GENTILE: -- we could fully  
18 fund the schools because right now the schools are  
19 not funded because there's what they call unfunded  
20 mandates. Probably unfunded mandates in your Long  
21 Island Railroad as well. And the union, I  
22 believe -- well, being a union member myself is  
23 shortsighted because this is what they call a one  
24 shot, meaning it gets done and then it's over and  
25 you don't have anything. But if they took the

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2 money and spent it on restructuring their tracks,  
3 their switches and upgrading their systems, okay,  
4 to where they do operate properly then we would  
5 not need a third track.

6

7

So that's my comments for this  
evening.

8

(Applause.)

9

10

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
you.

11

12

Our next speaker is Mike  
Longobardi.

13

Followed by Nicole Marks.

14

MR. LONGOBARDI: Good evening.

15

16

Thank you for the opportunity to  
speak.

17

18

19

My name is Mike Longobardi. I'm  
the First Assistant Chief of the Floral Park Fire  
Department.

20

21

I'm here on behalf of Chief John  
Florio, Sr. and the members of the department.

22

23

24

25

The Floral Park Fire Department  
is sworn to protect and serve the residents of  
Floral Park. We also provide 24/7 mutual aid  
between our neighboring departments and ours.

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We achieve this goal through a dedicated hard work of volunteer residents who respond 24 hours a day, seven days a week from all directions in the Village.

We are extremely concerned about the impact this project will have on our ability to respond to the firehouse and get out in a reasonable and efficient time to do our job. This project will affect the heart of the village around the Floral Park station and the lines east from there and will affect our ability to respond through main arteries in this village to reach areas we cover.

This great village has a large percentage of elderly and senior citizens who need our ambulance ready to go, manned quickly in an emergency and able to respond and reach its destination in a very efficient manner. That, coupled with the need to respond to the hospital in a manner of minutes for certain emergencies, could be seriously inhibited on any given day depending on what the construction plan entails.

Our ability to respond could be further inhibited by the traffic jams and

1

2 re-routed traffic flowing through -- during the  
3 construction. No plan has been set forth to  
4 determine what this could possibly do to our  
5 response other than to create roadblocks and  
6 problems and inhibit our ability to efficiently  
7 respond to emergencies.

8

Your schedule calls for 556 days  
9 of the Floral Park Station to South Eighth Street  
10 with 320 of those days on South Tyson and 180 days  
11 on Plainfield. It is our understanding that those  
12 two intersections are going to be done  
13 simultaneously. If simultaneously, you are cutting  
14 off our access to half our village and seriously,  
15 seriously delaying our response to any emergency.

16

These are also the main access  
17 routes to both primary hospitals that we respond  
18 to. How could we provide a schedule that ensure  
19 minimal interruptions or even be sure this work --  
20 this will work when you have not contacted the  
21 Fire Department or had any sit down to do work  
22 together or make a plan to deal with this?

23

This cuts off half the Village  
24 in our response. And safety should be priority  
25 one.

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25

As for the construction itself,  
what materials and equipment will be brought into  
the Village?

Will there be hazardous or  
flammable materials in the Village during this  
project?

Will there be a storage site in  
Town at the beginning or area of the track  
exposing us to long-term hazards that are just a  
spark away?

We saw firsthand in New York  
City on the evening of May 16th where gas fell on  
a generator at a construction site under an  
elevated train on Broadway uptown and caused a  
huge fire -- causing a ripple effect through the  
transportation system.

What are the plans for the  
construction, storage and staging areas? Safety  
should be priority one.

This construction will require  
heavy equipment, drilling and disruptions of the  
ground. Has there been any assessment of the  
infrastructure and the expected disruptions?

What is the effect on the

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1

2 existing gas and water lines and possible leaks  
3 and problems this may cause -- thereby causing us  
4 to respond?

5

6 Where will your equipment be  
operating from?

7

8 What roads will be closed while  
this is going on?

9

10 All these issues affect our  
11 ability to respond in an efficient and timely  
manner and serve the area that we cover.

12

13 As you can see, there are many  
14 unanswered questions and serious concerns, only  
15 some of which are mentioned here that will have an  
16 impact on the protection and well being on the  
17 residents of Floral Park and the neighboring  
18 villages and our brothers and sisters protecting  
them around us.

19

20 And just as a final point, off  
21 the record -- off the notes, I can't stress enough  
22 the impact of closing Plainfield Avenue and Tyson  
23 and doing them simultaneously. That is the middle  
24 of our Village. It will seriously, seriously cut  
25 off our response to the northern half of the  
Village and cause a major problem.

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2

Thank you for your time.

3

(Applause.)

4

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

5

Our next speaker is Nicole

6

Marks.

7

MS. MARKS: Good evening and

8

thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

9

My name is Nicole Marks and I'm

10

a resident of Franklin Square.

11

I'd like to mention that I'm

12

also a millennial who shares many of the

13

residents' concerns as previously mentioned.

14

However, I fully support this project.

15

It would directly benefit me in

16

many ways, and many like me, even though I'm not a

17

daily LIRR commuter. And I realize that might

18

sound selfish but in reality this project would

19

actually bring Long Island into the 21st century.

20

We are foolish if we believe

21

that things are okay the way that they are. For

22

me, and many like me, traveling to the north

23

shore, which is mere minutes away can be very

24

cumbersome due to delays with the transit system,

25

messy vehicular and pedestrian traffic, I'd rather

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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2 drive ten minutes out of my way rather than  
3 crossing the tracks here at the New Hyde Park  
4 Station.

5

This project would alleviate  
6 many of the issues that Long Islanders experience  
7 on a daily basis, whether commuting to work, going  
8 shopping or about personal business.

9

Being born and raised in Queens  
10 right on the other side, I find that I now  
11 typically avoid many of the local businesses that  
12 I've been a patron of for many years, due to where  
13 I live.

14

Traveling across two LIRR  
15 stations adds unnecessary time and headaches to my  
16 commute and this project will help alleviate my  
17 daily concerns and make traveling around Long  
18 Island much easier and less stressful for Long  
19 Islanders and anyone who wants to come and visit.

20

Residents need to realize that  
21 we live next door to New York City and Long Island  
22 is continuing to grow. We are neighbors to the  
23 greatest city in the world and to hold off on this  
24 project will just make major improvements  
25 difficult and if not impossible in the future.

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There are pros and cons to every proposed project and I think this project adequately addresses concerns that were previously raised. You cannot make every single person happy and the goal is to do the greatest good for the most. And I believe that this project does that and that's why I support it.

(Applause.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Richard Pfeiffer.

Followed by Mike Papasina.

MR. PFEIFFER: Good evening.

My name is Richard Pfeiffer of Floral Park. I'm part of a committee to stop the third track.

I'm going to change the subject a little from main line to Hempstead line because it impacts Floral Park probably more than -- more than you really know.

You know, one of the things that was spoken this morning about the main line and the third track would be to -- to do away with --

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2 with -- what did we say, with backups on the third  
3 track -- I mean, the third rail backups. And it  
4 was nice to see that the Railroad in their wisdom  
5 has gone ahead and is double tracking Farmingdale  
6 to Ronkonkoma, which is a great thing.

7

8 But on the other hands, we in  
9 Floral Park, because of the switches which  
10 somebody just spoke about, we're going to have a  
11 single track service from Stewart Manor to Queens  
12 Village, a single track. That means everybody in  
13 Nassau County that's on the Hempstead line all the  
14 way to Hempstead, is going to be backed up because  
15 a chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

15

16 So you could have four tracks  
17 but from those stations on, it's going to be one  
18 track. And if something happens on that one  
19 track, they'll be no eastbound service, they'll be  
20 no westbound service. It's going to be a  
21 gomostrophy, (phonetic) if you don't mind me  
22 saying so.

22

23 But going back to the -- to the  
24 Hempstead line, I live on the Hempstead line  
25 between tunnel 3 and the -- and the station. In  
the 1960s when they elevated Bellrose and Floral

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1

2 Park, they also elevated the section of the  
3 Hempstead line from Floral Park station down to as  
4 far as the beginning of New Hyde Park.

5 At that point talking about  
6 easements and backyards, they took 15 feet of  
7 everybody's property from Tunnel Street up to  
8 Plainfield Avenue, took all the garages down, took  
9 everything down, fenced it in and used that as the  
10 point to elevate that section of the Hempstead  
11 line.

12 So when you talk about  
13 easements, and I know you talked about the fact  
14 that the contractor will decide where these  
15 easements are going to go, I mean this -- you talk  
16 about an easement, 1,500 feet of easement when  
17 they knocked everything down and they took 15 feet  
18 of everyone's backyard. But, of course, it was  
19 replaced. I'm not saying it was permanent but it  
20 was replaced after construction was done.

21 Getting back again to the  
22 Hempstead line, where Floral Park Station is --  
23 now we're going to have Floral Park Station with  
24 one track. It has -- neither side of the station  
25 has handicapped accessibility. Anyway, we have an

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1

2 escalator on the -- on the platform now heading  
3 westbound and it's not ADA accessible. It's wide  
4 enough for me to get on and go up. If somebody's  
5 got a real disability, it's not going to work.

6

7 The other side of the platform  
8 where the trains -- where both lines are going to  
9 go east and west are going to be on that side of  
10 the platform, there is nothing, absolutely nothing  
11 and without that I just don't see how we can  
12 operate anyhow.

12

Thank you.

13

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

14

you.

15

(Applause.)

16

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay.

17

Our next speaker is Mike Pappacena.

18

19 As he comes up to the  
20 microphone, I'm going to read the names of the  
21 last speakers because they've been very patient.  
22 I just want them to know we haven't forgotten  
23 them.

23

So following Mr. Papasina, we'll

24

have:

25

Harry Chohan;

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1

2

Anthony Ceukas;

3

And my apologies in advance if

4

I'm mispronouncing.

5

James McHugh;

6

Julian Lobachewski;

7

Tom Redmond;

8

Patricia Magin;

9

Bernadette Smith;

10

Brigid McGlynn; and,

11

Matthew Sexton.

12

We'll be getting to all of you

13

tonight.

14

Mr. Pappacena.

15

MR. PAPPACENA: Sure. My name

16

is Mike Pappacena and I'm a resident of Garden

17

City and the railroad tracks run through my

18

backyard so this project is very near and dear to

19

me.

20

And I will echo a lot of the

21

sentiment and statements that were made by my

22

neighbors in the communities of Floral Park, New

23

Hyde Park and Garden City who are opposed to this.

24

You showed a very interesting

25

propaganda video when I first came in that spoke

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1

2 about the improvement of the quality of life. But  
3 you're not really considering the quality of life  
4 of the people that live and abut the tracks or  
5 close to the tracks. And that really needs to be  
6 taken into consideration. Okay.

7

8 It's hard for me to believe with  
9 the amount of construction that needs to go on  
10 that there will be no easements, either temporary  
11 or permanent, on my property and there is very  
12 little transparency from the Railroad on what  
that's going to mean.

13

14 I actually had a Railroad  
15 representative come to me and say, oh, if they got  
16 to park their truck on there, maybe you can, you  
17 know, get something from the contractor that they  
18 could lease my property. That doesn't seem to be  
19 a suitable answer and certainly not what I want to  
hear. Okay.

20

21 I've also taken a look, you  
22 know, understanding all the different things,  
23 construction projects like this are going to do  
24 what? It's going to dig up the dirt. We've  
25 already heard about the Agent Orange and other  
chemicals that are there.

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1

2

There are going to be rats.

3

Okay. It's going to make my house possibly

4

unlivable during that construction period, not to

5

mention the long-term devaluation of my property.

6

Okay.

7

What is the State, what is the

8

Railroad going to do for people like myself?

9

All right.

10

There seems to be no answer,

11

nothing adequate in the proposals, nothing said at

12

any of the hearings on how they're going to look

13

to take care of the residents that live along

14

these -- along these right-of-ways. Right.

15

You talk about construction

16

windows, nothing is going to get done in that four

17

years. You can't even put sidewalks under --

18

under Nassau Boulevard in less than a year or the

19

staircase in Floral Park. Construction will run

20

over. That's going to be a fact.

21

When are you going to do the

22

work? Okay. I hear the trains coming through my

23

backyard. Right. When are you going to shut down

24

those trains to actually physically do the work?

25

Weekends? Are you going to do it overnight and

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 put up big spotlights so I can't sleep? All these  
3 things were not made clear and it should be clear,  
4 transparency for the residents. Okay.

5

We talk about reverse commute  
6 and I will speak this because I spent years  
7 working on Long Island in Melville coming from  
8 Queens and I also spent years commuting into  
9 Manhattan. Okay. Where do people work on Long  
10 Island that's near a railroad station. other than  
11 maybe Mineola and the court houses? Maybe a  
12 little bit in Hicksville.

13

It's not pragmatic to expect  
14 people to take a train to these stations. Are the  
15 going to Uber it to their jobs. It's just a  
16 fallacy. We know it's for the freight. We see the  
17 freight trains coming through the backyard.  
18 Whatever shenanigans or -- or make believe stuff  
19 you're trying to jam down the throats of the  
20 people that live along those tracks, we know what  
21 the real reasons are and we're not happy about it.

22

Thank you.

23

(Applause.)

24

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

25

you.

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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2

Our next speaker is harry

3

Chohan.

4

MR. CHOCHAN: Hello.

5

Thank you for allowing the

6

opportunity to speak.

7

My name is Harry Chohan and I

8

live in Garden City.

9

The LIRR tracks run directly

10

behind my home. Anyone who is in favor of this

11

project does not understand the negative impact

12

this project will have on individuals, families

13

and businesses directly impacted by it.

14

Anyone in favor of this project

15

is quick to voice questionable benefits of adding

16

a 9.8 mile track that does not address the real

17

issue of congestion at the main hub in Jamaica.

18

Those in favor of this project would only benefit

19

from the construction phase or increased freight

20

when and if it's completed.

21

I'm not opposed to anyone

22

working and making a living. I understand many

23

will be working hard on this project to make a

24

living. Many who would be working hard on this

25

project are the same hard working individuals we

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2       rely on to help build the infrastructure we depend  
3       on every day to get us from point A to point B.

4

5                       I support the many trades that  
6       would be working on this project but I can think  
7       of many other infrastructure projects that could  
8       benefit from the billions slated for this  
9       debatable project.

9

10                   What those in favor of this  
11       project fail to realize is that at the end of the  
12       day they get to pack up and go home or are in no  
13       way are directly impacted by the third track.  
14       Once the project is complete, they'll move on to  
15       another project and the third track will be a  
16       distant memory.

16

17                   On the other hand, individuals,  
18       families and businesses directly impacted by the  
19       project get to live the nightmare 24 hours a day,  
20       seven days a week, 365 days a year for the rest of  
21       their lives or until they are fed up enough to  
22       pack up and leave.

22

23                   Some may have the resources to  
24       do so but those who do not have the luxury will be  
25       left to live the nightmare for the rest of their  
26       lives.

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2

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4

5

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20

21

22

23

24

25

Many have been living in their homes for 30 plus years and they've worked hard to build the equity that the third track threatens to eat away. Property values will be impacted.

Already having the tracks behind our homes impacts property values and moving the trains closer will only further diminish property values.

If this project does move forward, I hope that anyone in favor of this project understands the short and long-term sacrifices being made by individuals, families and businesses that are directly impacted by it.

I also hope that the LIRR/MTA does all they can to help address the concerns and fears of the people directly impacted by this project.

The DEIS mentions a retaining wall and sound wall. The DEIS states on -- in Chapter 12 on page 20, in table 12.7, that the sound attenuation walls were elevated at a height of four feet above top of rail. Sound attenuation walls on retaining walls in fill-in sections will most likely be four feet above top of rail. Stand-alone sound attenuation walls would likely

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1

2 be between six to eight feet height.

3

4 For the stand-alone sound  
5 attenuation walls, six to eight feet is not enough.  
6 Some of the trains, especially freight that pass  
7 by my home are 20 feet high with debris. The  
8 sound walls need to not only block track noise  
9 but, also, visually block out the unsightly trains  
10 that will be closer to my home.

11

12 If this project does move  
13 forward, the sound walls need to be a minimum of  
14 20 feet from the top of the rail. There is no  
15 benefit to the Town or Villages that will be  
16 impacted by the third track.

17

Thank you.

18

19 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
20 you.

21

(Applause.)

22

23 THE HEARING OFFICER: Our next  
24 speaker is Anthony Ceukas.

25

Mr. Ceukas.

26

A VOICE: He left.

27

28 THE HEARING OFFICER: All  
29 right.

30

Thank you.

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2

We'll move along to James

3

McHugh.

4

MR. MC HUGH: Good evening.

5

My name is Jim McHugh. I'm a

6

28-year resident of New Hyde Park. I was President

7

of the New Hyde Park Park Civic Association for

8

many years and I live in north New Hyde Park.

9

The good thing about going near

10

the end is you get to summarize and not,

11

hopefully, repeat what other people have said.

12

Basically, this is about running

13

freight. Anybody that tells you, whether you read

14

it in *Newsday*, it's about reverse commutes, it's

15

about running additional passenger service, that

16

is simply not correct.

17

The Long Island Railroad makes

18

money off of running freight. Okay.

19

(Applause.)

20

MR. MC HUGH: The service that

21

you give is subsidized, most of that service, the

22

passenger service. You make your money off of

23

franchising the freight. So let's pretend that

24

that capacity of running that freight isn't going

25

to increase over the years in the future, that

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 isn't correct either. It will be increased  
3 because you're making money off of it. Let's be  
4 logical about this.

5 Also, we know the long-term plan  
6 for the MTA, once Governor Christie's gone in New  
7 Jersey, is to build that tunnel under the Hudson  
8 River. The eventual -- eventually the plan is to  
9 run freight to the mainland off of Long Island and  
10 back. That's the long-term plan. So let's be  
11 honest about this and that's all about dollars.

12 The other thing is we're  
13 building transfer stations. We know there's going  
14 to be three of them so we know this is the plan,  
15 is to take containerized shipping, take it off of  
16 trucks, put it on the rail and run it. That's the  
17 plan. So let's not -- all the smoke and mirrors,  
18 *Newsday*, it's about running freight.

19 The other thing as a New Hyde  
20 Park resident, which I think is shameful, and  
21 that's the grade crossings. There's absolutely no  
22 reasons those grade crossings couldn't have been  
23 done over the years without a third track. That's  
24 a safety issue. That's a life and death issue.  
25 Okay. And it's shameful that it was held hostage

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1

2 for the third track. That's shameful.

3

4 This is about quality of life  
5 and it's about public safety and we shouldn't put  
6 billions of dollars over both of those things.

7

8 And that's what's going on here. And the  
9 Governor, he's running for re-election in two  
10 years and it looks like he wants to run for  
11 President. So he's got to show, look at what I've  
12 done. Success. Okay.

13

14 So lets be honest, *Newsday*, this  
15 is what it's really about. Long Island  
16 Association too, it's about making money. Okay.  
17 And they're not too concerned about the quality of  
18 life of the people in the corridor. That's the  
19 truth.

20

(Applause.)

21

22 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank  
23 you.

24

25 Our next speakers will be:

26

27 Julian Lobachewski;

28

29 Tom Redmond;

30

31 Patricia Magin;

32

33 Bernadette Smith;

34

35 Richard McGlynn; and,

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2

Matthew Sexton;

3

Mr. Lobachewski;

4

MR. LOBACHEWSKI: My name is

5

Julian Lobachewski, resident of New Hyde Park.

6

As a trains system analyst with

7

some 25 years in financial services, I look at the

8

plan and I see three problems.

9

One, quite frankly, is the lack

10

of accommodation for the folks who might not be

11

officially handicapped but certainly reduced

12

mobility with age, given the demographics of

13

villages such as New Hyde Park. That's problem

14

one.

15

Problem two is that the last

16

time Long Island Railroad/MTA/whatever attempted

17

projects this vast was the Babylon branch

18

elevation, which took some 30 years. The last

19

station completed in 1980, Massapequa Park. We

20

know that this isn't an isolated incident because

21

the project at Herricks Road crossing took some

22

six years to complete.

23

So these estimates, one starts

24

to look suspiciously at these estimates and

25

certainly what contingency plans are for when

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 these projects go far beyond the projected  
3 optimistic estimates.

4

Now the third point I'd like to  
5 make is that right now on paper the plan it takes  
6 ten minutes to go from New Hyde Park to Jamaica.  
7 It takes another ten minutes to go from Jamaica to  
8 Woodside, roughly the same distance, although  
9 realistically the Woodside to Jamaica trip tends  
10 to double more often than I care to admit to.

11

The problem is, is if you're  
12 adding capacity from -- from Hicksville to Jamaica  
13 and you're not adding capacity from Jamaica to  
14 Woodside, what good is this track to add capacity,  
15 if you're going to get bogged down between Jamaica  
16 and Woodside? If this is truly an issue of  
17 reverse commute to be able to go from the City out  
18 to Long Island.

19

If you're not adding additional  
20 capacity what would essentially be the fifth track  
21 in that corridor between Jamaica and -- and  
22 Woodside.

23

That would be it.

24

Thank you very much.

25

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2

(Applause.)

3

THE HEARING OFFICER: Tom

4

Redmond is our next speaker.

5

MR. REDMOND: Tom Redmond. I'm

6

from the Village of Mineola. I'm 24 years old.

7

And there weren't too many

8

people from Mineola here tonight but there's a

9

reason for that. I believe there was about five

10

of us in this room. I know one of them was

11

against it, he recently spoke. I understand his

12

concern because he lives along the tracks.

13

But the reason why a lot of

14

Mineola residents aren't in this room is because

15

the Village of Mineola, the residents, a majority

16

of us are for this project, otherwise there would

17

be more residents here.

18

(Applause.)

19

MR. REDMOND: There's a lot of

20

residents in Mineola that are for this. That's --

21

we're okay with it. That's why a lot of them

22

aren't here.

23

And Mineola's pretty prepared

24

for the third track already. We've had four major

25

projects for the third track. We've had Herricks

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 Road underpass was built for it. Part of the  
3 third track is actually built above that. People  
4 don't realize that. If you go on Google Maps the  
5 third track is partially built in Mineola already.

6 So Mineola's really not going to  
7 be affected by it. The Mineola Intermobile Center  
8 was built for the third track. The Mineola Bridge  
9 was built for the third track. If you look  
10 underneath the bridge, there's a spot for the  
11 third track to go through it.

12 The Roslyn Road underpass was  
13 also built for -- look on Google Maps again,  
14 there's a spot for the third track to go through  
15 that. And part of that was smart planning. We've  
16 had great leadership in Mineola with past mayors  
17 and they actually worked with the Railroad and  
18 they said we're going to remain neutral on this  
19 but with these projects they were built to handle  
20 a third track. So Mineola's in pretty good shape.

21 I'm a member of the Mineola Fire  
22 Department so with response it's not going to  
23 affect us. We have protocol not to go over the  
24 main line because it's too dangerous to go over  
25 the main line with the heavy traffic and trains.

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1

2 So we use the Mineola Bridge and Roslyn Road  
3 underpass. We do not use any existing grade  
4 crossings. So it would not affect our response  
5 time at all.

6

I'm very much for this project.

7

8 A lot of my neighbors are for the project and I  
9 live just outside of the downtown area of Mineola.  
10 We're developing many buildings in Mineola  
11 downtown and a majority of the Town is for that  
12 and this third track will help with those new  
13 residents in our Village and all the existing  
14 residents that work in Manhattan.

15

16 The only area that used to have  
17 a concern with it was Albertson Place and there's  
18 no panic there anymore because this is a different  
19 project than the first time. Originally they were  
20 apparently going to lose five feet of their  
21 property. That's no longer the case. There's  
22 going to be a sound wall built there so a lot of  
23 residents there are more happy with this project  
24 now.

25

I'm sure there still are some  
concerns, one spoke before on that block. And we  
actually have a board member on that block and the

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1

2 board is neutral. They're not against it. They  
3 didn't come out for it but they're not against it.  
4 So there's no panic in Mineola at all and that's  
5 why a lot of our residents aren't coming out  
6 because we're ready for the third track to come  
7 through Mineola.

8

Thank you.

9

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

10

you.

11

(Applause.)

12

THE HEARING OFFICER: The next

13

speaker is Patricia Magin.

14

To be followed by Bernadette

15

Smith.

16

Ms. Magin.

17

(No response.)

18

THE HEARING OFFICER: Ms.

19

Smith, Bernadette Smith.

20

MS. SMITH: Hi. My name is

21

Bernadette Smith. I am a life-long resident of

22

Floral Park.

23

I'd like to take a minute to

24

mirror many of the concerns of my neighbors in

25

terms of the negative impacts that this project

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1

2 will have on our neighborhood and our value of  
3 life.

4

5 But I am not against the grade  
6 crossings. I think safety is really an important  
7 part of this project and I wish there was someway  
8 we could separate these two things.

8

9 I'd like to specifically speak,  
10 however, personally speaking, I live on Magnolia  
11 Avenue in Floral Park, which is just east of  
12 Tunnel Street and on the Hempstead line. I'm on  
13 the south side of the Hempstead line.

13

14 And if you look at Appendix A,  
15 Section 3.3.2 of the DEIS, you'll see a Floral  
16 Park -- at Floral Park a new No. 15, right-hand  
17 turn that will be installed to allow double track  
18 operation on the Hempstead branch while providing  
19 a route for the new third track.

19

20 This construction will be a  
21 slight -- will require a slight modification in  
22 the southeast edge of the center island platform  
23 of 97 inches. A new, this is the most important  
24 part for me, a new No. 20 universal crossover will  
25 be installed on the Hempstead branch just east of  
Tunnel Street. This will improve operations and

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1

2       avoid conflicts with the new third track  
3       connection at Floral Park.

4

5                       I was just looking at the  
6       pictures in the other room and it is not just one  
7       universal crossover but rather it is two. Where I  
8       live there are five houses just east of the tunnel  
9       of Tunnel Street. In addition, there is currently  
10      under construction nine more houses right along  
11      that corridor as well.

11

12                      These universal turnovers --  
13      crossovers are existing right in the middle of  
14      residential property now at this point. That  
15      tunnel is also a walk and a cross through from the  
16      entire part of the neighborhood here where people  
17      walk underneath to make it to the recreation  
18      center and the pool buildings -- and the whole  
19      pool center.

19

20                      I find the -- the universal  
21      crossover No. 20 means that the trains will be  
22      coming by between 45 and 60 miles an hour and  
23      crossing over at that point before they pull into  
24      the station. That's what it's generally speaking.  
25      They said it's about double. One gentleman told  
26      me 45 to 60 miles an hour. Another gentleman told

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1

2 me 40 miles an hour. That's really fast for a  
3 train coming through my yard.

4

As Mr. Pfeifer spoke earlier,  
5 we -- many years ago they took 15 feet off the  
6 back of my yard and I didn't get a replacement of  
7 anything so my property line is only 85 feet deep,  
8 minus the amount of my house size, you could guess  
9 I'm probably about 35 feet from the railway right  
10 there, from the actual railroad.

11

It's a steep height and the  
12 trains will be coming through at around 45 to 60  
13 miles an hour with a cross over right there. I'm  
14 very concerned for safety. I'm very concerned for  
15 derailments. We have recently had a spout of  
16 derailments. I'm very concerned. And I couldn't  
17 really get enough valid answers about how the  
18 safety would be improved for my household and for  
19 my children.

20

Thank you.

21

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

22

you.

23

(Applause.)

24

THE HEARING OFFICER: Next is

25

Brigid McGlynn.

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2

Then followed by Matthew Sexton.

3

MS. MC GLYNN: Hi. I'm Bridig

4

McGlynn.

5

I'm here to also speak, along

6

with my neighbor Bernadette Smith who just spoke,

7

about that section -- let me find it here, Section

8

3.3.2 of Appendix A, where they discuss that

9

universal cross over.

10

And first, I just want to paint

11

a picture of this area. So my bedroom window has

12

been overlooking the railroad tracks for the past

13

24 years. It's right there out my window. We

14

have five homes that are there, all built around,

15

you know, the '60s or before. So our houses are

16

very close to those railroad tracks.

17

Just west of that is that tunnel

18

where the majority of the town walks through,

19

bikes through, runs through, even sleds through

20

when it snows. The children, the adults, everyone

21

is always going through that tunnel.

22

Then just east of us, nine more

23

homes are being build. These large homes are

24

really just going to be accommodating families

25

most likely because that's what Floral Park is,

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 it's families living in these homes. And now with  
3 this addition of a cross over, a universal cross  
4 over, like she said, 20 -- 20 universal crossover.  
5 The trains are going to be traveling 45 to 60  
6 miles an hour most likely. From my window I see  
7 -- there's a sign that says 60 miles per hour is  
8 the speed limit.

9 Undoubtedly a crossover is just  
10 going to increase the risk of a derailment. That  
11 can't be denied, rather than a straight-away  
12 track. And the chance of that is just too  
13 dangerous. With all of the families, all the  
14 children, all of the people who are just moving  
15 around that area, living in that area, why is it  
16 there?

17 This area is also elevated so  
18 even if it is moving at a slower pace, the gravity  
19 will just bring that train down into our  
20 backyards, into the tunnel, into this whole area.  
21 And so this is my main concern here.

22 But also to speak, just in  
23 general, about the whole project, I too am a  
24 millennial. I'm a young professional who people  
25 are trying to say you're trying to pull onto Long

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1

2 Island or maybe get the reverse transportation  
3 happening. I live in Floral Park and I work in  
4 Brooklyn and I choose to not take the trains due  
5 to the delays, due to the nonsense that happens.  
6 I drive to work every day and I do not want to  
7 really see this expansion project happening if  
8 it's going to be affecting the safety.

9

Further in the future, my  
10 family, do I want to move them to Long Island if  
11 the safety of children aren't even taken into  
12 account with these high speeds and with the  
13 possibility of derailment.

14

So that's my main concern.

15

Thanks for listening.

16

(Applause.)

17

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank

18

you.

19

Matthew Sexton.

20

Thank you for your patience.

21

You waited a long time.

22

MR. SEXTON: Thank you very

23

much.

24

I have four pages of my comments

25

to go on line so I'll try to keep this kind of

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2       brief.

3

4                       Before I begin, I would like to  
5       thank Lisa Black, as well as John McCarthy on  
6       their outreach.

7

8                       I know they're in a difficult  
9       position and as a resident of Floral Park, I hope  
10      they are able to continue to work with our  
11      concerns as well as the potential negative impacts  
12      as this project relates to our Village.

13

14                      Within the past year, the Mayor  
15      of Floral Park, Thomas Tweedy, was interviewed on  
16      TV55 and he referenced Floral Park's train station  
17      as being the gateway to Nassau County. The train  
18      station is 57 years old and it really looks like  
19      the gates of Rome after the Huns got done  
20      pillaging it.

21

22                      (Laughter.)

23

24                      MR. SEXTON: It took me about 20  
25      minutes to think about that one.

26

27                      It's time for us to update,  
28      beautify and make our station ADA compliant.

29

30                      Furthermore, our station is  
31      considered a category 2 train station due to the  
32      number of ridership that is there.

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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Our Village can strongly benefit from main line service. Main line service that would allow our trains to maybe stop every single half-hour would not only make our Village more marketable and improve our home values, but for the men and women who do have to commute into the City, it would offer them more opportunities to get back and forth.

We're a family-centered Village and right now we don't get enough train service, making it difficult for families to take care of their children and to live inside our Village.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which was 2,000 pages long and I'm not going to pretend that I looked through every single page in that document, does state, I believe, a 20 percent increase in train traffic, both freight and commuter traffic.

Due to the outreach by New York State, Lisa Black and John McCarthy, residents on Charles Street were able to address this with sound barriers that will assist them due to the increase in transportation. I asked that it be considered, as well as move forward, that these

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 sound barriers go the length of the Village of  
3 Floral Park.

4

5 I live on Verbena Avenue on a  
6 dead end street and I can hear trains until 2:00,  
7 3:00 in the morning in the spring and summer when  
8 I have my windows open. I would appreciate a  
9 little bit of peace and quiet and I think that  
10 this could help with that type of noise pollution.

11

12 Finally, Governor Cuomo passed  
13 the tax cap. The tax cap greatly restricts the  
14 ability of my Village to go out and improve our  
15 Village. I know they work very diligently on  
16 improvements. I know they're currently undergoing  
17 a road project but this third rail project will  
18 increase traffic in Floral Park and we're  
19 handcuffed because of the tax cap.

20

21 I ask that the Governor's office  
22 seriously consider sitting down with the Village  
23 of Floral Park, discussing ways that they can  
24 assist with our roads so that we can re-pave them  
25 with our traffic, as well as the beautification of  
26 our downtown area.

27

28 I'm sure as a resident of Floral  
29 Park, we would be willing to make some sort of a

1-19-17 LIRR PM

1

2 financial sacrifice so that we could do this  
3 ourselves but with this tax cap it's quite  
4 difficult. And if we're going to make the Floral  
5 Park train station actually look like the gateway  
6 to Nassau County, it would be in the best interest  
7 to the Governor of New York State to assist us  
8 financially so that we can also achieve our goals  
9 and maintain the beautification of Floral Park.

10 Thank you and have a great  
11 evening.

12 THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.  
13 (Applause.)

14 THE HEARING OFFICER: I'll give  
15 it one more shot with Patricia Magin. We called  
16 her name a few minutes ago -- if she's re-entered  
17 the room.

18 (No response.)

19 THE HEARING OFFICER: No.  
20 In that case, we are concluding  
21 this hearing this evening.

22 While this concludes this  
23 evening's DEIS hearing, the EDPL hearing remains  
24 open until February 15th at 5:00 p.m.

25 The DEIS comment period is also

1-19-17 LIRR PM

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open through February 15th at 5:00 p.m.

And there are still ways to  
comment. Stop by our Mineola office. Stop by the  
website at [www:amodernli.com](http://www.amodernli.com) and you can leave  
comments there through February 15th.

Thank you so much everybody for  
coming out and participating in this hearing  
tonight.

(At 9:30 p.m., the proceedings  
were concluded.)

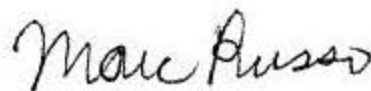
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STATE OF NEW YORK )  
SS.  
COUNTY OF NEW YORK )

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 182, 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 1st day of February  
2017.



-----  
MARC RUSSO

# MGR Reporting

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