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# Regional Plan Association

235 East 45th Street • New York, New York 10017 • Telephone: (212) 682-7750

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
March 18, 1980  
at  
METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY  
One Madison Avenue  
(Leather Room, 12th Floor)  
New York City  
4:30 p.m.

## AGENDA

The agenda below is divided between items requiring Board action and a number of reports for general information purposes. The reports will not be discussed unless there are questions.

- I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES -- January 15, 1980
- II. FINANCIAL REPORT
  - A. ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION FUNDS. Dick Anderson. The Program and Finance Committee is considering establishment of three or more Regional Plan Association Funds, the purposes of which are to provide an endowment for research projects, internships and fellowships, and a general cash reserve. A Board resolution will be proposed.
  - B. ANNIVERSARY DINNER. Ricki Gardner. The 51st Anniversary Dinner on March 25 will honor Donald B. Smiley of Macy's. A report will be provided on the program and expected attendance.
  - C. COMPLETION OF THE FUTURE OF AUTOMOBILE TRAVEL PROJECT. John Keith. One of the Association's most significant research projects in recent years is "The Future of Automobile Travel," funded by a number of government agencies, foundations, and private corporations. The Board authorized initiation of the project though the full budget was not obtained, and the \$150,000 raised has fallen short of what is needed to finish the project. Staff estimates that \$50,000 in general funds will be required to complete the study, unless outside grants are obtained. Fund raising has been unsuccessful thus far, yet our commitment to complete the work should be honored. Board approval is requested.

III. ACTION

- A. TRANSPORTATION FINANCE PROPOSAL. Attached is an issue of The Region's Agenda incorporating the Association's statement on transportation finance and a summary of Governor Carey's recent proposal, accompanied by a New York Times editorial on the latter. Should RPA "make its feelings known" on the Carey proposal specifically? A resolution of endorsement will be advanced.
- B. TIMES SQUARE PROPOSALS. John Keith. On March 10, interested Directors were presented with descriptions of "The City at 42nd Street" proposal for redevelopment of a portion of the Times Square area and the Frederick DeMatteis superblock proposal for Sixth to Seventh Avenues north of 42nd Street. The Board will receive a report and recommendation as a result of that meeting. Approval of next steps will be requested.
- C. CANDIDATES FOR DEVELOPMENT CHOICES FOR THE 1980's FORUM. William B. Shore. The Association has been asked to convene an advisory forum during late spring as part of a public/private council to investigate the most important development issues facing the nation. The Council is to be staffed by the Urban Land Institute. The Urban Land Institute and HUD, which is financing the project, hope to come out with ideas for encouraging higher-density development patterns than the nation has been building by improving design and construction and providing attraction for people to choose higher densities. The forum for which Regional Plan is responsible is to include participants from all states along the Eastern Seaboard from Virginia to Maine. Within a \$30,000 budget, Regional Plan is to provide a discussion agenda backed with written and audio-visual information, identify the forum members and experts to address them, and prepare a written and audio-visual report to the national Council. Advice on forum membership is requested.

IV. REPORTS

- A. NOMINATING COMMITTEE. Kenneth Axelson. The Nominating Committee recently reported 14 candidates for vacancies in the Class of 1983 and others that may arise during the year. The list was distributed to the Board for comment. In accordance with the Bylaws, the proposed Class of 1983 will be distributed to the membership in advance of the Annual Meeting in May, where election is to take place.

- B. NEW JERSEY COMMITTEE. Edward Jesser. The Geraldine Dodge Foundation is meeting this month to consider a three-year \$150,000 grant request to underwrite initiation of a newly-staffed New Jersey Committee. Meetings with leading bankers and industrial leaders of the State yielded positive response on the need for the New Jersey Committee. Requests for business support are being distributed. The objective is to have the Committee staffed and in operation early in the coming fiscal year.
- C. BRIDGEPORT EVALUATION. Dick Anderson. The study of Bridgeport's development potential has been initiated. Senior Planner Ruth Plawner is gathering project information, and an agreement with the City of Bridgeport for \$25,000 toward the \$100,000 budget is near execution. The draft report and slide presentation are due by late summer.
- D. HACKENSACK MEADOWLANDS. Dick Anderson. About 75 government, business, and civic leaders have been invited to a March 20 meeting at Mutual Benefit in Newark to review latest developments on the Hackensack Meadowlands issue and consider possible strategies for encouraging the most appropriate development of the District. The meeting is being hosted by Bob Van Fossan, who, with Ned Jesser, has spearheaded the Association's efforts to convince State officials that Meadowlands development should not compete with surrounding communities. The major objectives are review of the Meadowlands Master Plan and close monitoring of the proposed Berry's Creek Center.
- E. FUTURE OF MANHATTAN. William B. Shore. The February 26 breakfast at New York Telephone was considered highly successful by the 75 participants. The next step is to incorporate the results of the small-group discussions in a final report for possible publication.
- F. TRI-STATE TASK FORCE. William B. Shore. The Task Force on the Future of Tri-State Regional Planning Commission has drafted an interim report. It moves in the direction recommended by Regional Plan. The final Task Force report is due later in the year.
- G. NEW JERSEY WATERFRONT COMMISSION. Eric Outwater. Last year, the State of New Jersey established a broadly-representative commission to consider many development issues facing New Jersey's lower Hudson waterfront. The Commission is a direct outgrowth of one of Regional Plan's recommendations. A report is due shortly. We

have made available copies of The Lower Hudson (1966), a background volume for The Second Regional Plan, to members of the Commission, and we have assisted their staff.

- H. PATERSON. Pursuant to the Association's report on The Potential of Paterson (1972), staff was asked to comment on a proposed highway link from Routes 80 and 20 to the City's downtown loop road. A letter to Commissioner Gambaccini of NJDOT is attached.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

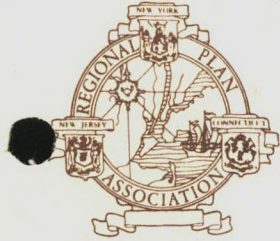
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Attachments

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## Regional Plan Association

235 East 45th Street • New York, New York 10017 • Telephone: (212) 682-7750

February 29, 1980



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Mr. Louis J. Gambaccini  
Commissioner  
N.J. Department of Transportation  
Transportation Building  
1035 Parkway Avenue  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Dear Commissioner:

Completion of a link from Interstate 80 and Route 20 to the Paterson Central Business District is essential to expedite downtown development. Regional Plan staff has reviewed the five alternatives studied. We find that the City of Paterson is wise in favoring Alternate III.

Because Alternate III does not encroach on Paterson's Historic District, it will allow the completion of the needed link in the shortest time, providing a facility that will be adequate for the near future. We urge strongly that a refined design of Alternate III be expedited, so that construction can proceed at an early date.

Alternate III has the advantage that in the longer term, its capacity--somewhat constrained in the proposed configuration by a number of left turns on the loop road extension--can be increased by adding an outbound link from Market Street alongside the bus garage property. We urge that the possibility for such a link be preserved during the planning of the historic district.

Please enter this Association comment in any public record that is to be established on the proposed highway segment.

Sincerely yours,

John P. Keith  
President

JPK/cc

cc: Martin Sukenick, Paterson Restoration Corp.  
Thomas Johnson, N.J. Dept. of Transportation  
Mayor Kramer, City of Paterson  
Sidney Willis, Paterson Dept. of Community Development  
Jeffrey Stone, Paterson Regional Development Corp.  
Russell Mullen, Assistant Commissioner

## Taxing the Pump to Save Public Transit

Governor Carey has combined courage and calculation in finally asking the Legislature to shift some of the growing burden of public transit costs to motorists. The most dangerous deficits exist in the metropolitan New York City area, where public transportation will soon be running at least \$300 million deeper in the red, and deeper still in future years. The gap can be closed only through a combination of fare increases and subsidies, and the bulk of the subsidies are best raised from gasoline taxes.

Mr. Carey's proposals will obviously be challenged by various constituencies, but they are broadly fair and reasonable. The Governor would ask motorists in the metropolitan region to pay a special 2 percent surcharge on gasoline and diesel fuel. Then, statewide, he would change the present 8-cent-a-gallon levy to 8 percent, insuring an increase in revenue as gasoline prices continue to rise. And he would replace the relatively unproductive franchise tax on oil company operations in New York with a new 2 percent franchise levy, also designed to yield growing amounts as prices rise. No one should be fooled into believing that the franchise tax will actually fall on the oil companies. About half the amount will be deductible from their Federal taxes; most of the rest is sure to be passed on to motorists (home fuels will be exempt).

More than two-thirds of the taxes thus raised would be earmarked for the Metropolitan Transportation Au-

thority, which would gain new subsidies totaling more than \$200 million in the first year. It would have to look to bus, train and subway fares for some of the rest, plus perhaps some toll increases on bridges and tunnels in the region. The disproportionate burden on automobiles is only right in places where alternative transit exists; the cumulative gasoline taxes should contribute to fuel conservation. Most important, rising fuel prices would produce growing subsidies to meet public transit's rising cost of operation.

A final benefit of this approach is that it dramatizes the fact that the wage increases being sought by transit workers will come directly out of taxes and charges on the driving and riding public. Some labor increases are essential; excessive demands backed by strike threats will need to be resisted.

Given the Governor's sensible economic as well as political approach, one can only deplore the first reactions in the Legislature. The opposition from districts with little public transit was predictable. But there seems to be little appreciation of the depth of the problem among the representatives of districts that vitally depend on public transportation. Mr. Carey's plan deserves better. The Governor seeks a sound remedy for runaway costs; public transportation is one of New York's major competitive advantages. It is a resource that needs to be saved and reliably nurtured. The public will pay many times over if the Legislature resists this approach. It should make its feelings known.