

REPORT OF MEETING

To:	Brian Slack, UCTC	Project:	Ulster County Transportation Council Long-Range Transportation Plan
From:	Arnold Bloch, FHI	Date:	3/31/15
Subject:	Stakeholder meetings		

Attendees:

Project Team

Dennis Dolye (UCTC)
 Brian Slack (UCTC)
 David Staas (UCTC)
 Arnie Bloch (Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. (FHI))
 Shawn Callaghan (FHI)

Stakeholders

Michael Berg (Friends of Woodstock)
 Vicky Gore (Gateway Community Industry)
 Tom June (U-GARC)
 Shelley O’Riley (U-GARC)
 Carol Hargrove (UCAT)
 Rosalie Calcagno (OFA)
 Gloria Ferraro (Ulster County Network Connects)
 Trevonne Gillard (A2B Taxi)
 Jaime Cathcart (A2B Taxi)
 Kathy Nolan (Catskill Mt. Keeper/UC Trails Advisory Committee)
 Cathy Canzian (RSVP)

Session 3: Public Transit and Human Service Transportation

2 PM – 3:30 PM

Arnie Bloch conducted an ice-breaker exercise where he asked participants to write down their answers to: “In 2040, my vision for the public transit and/or human service transportation in Ulster County is ____.” The answers to this exercise are included below.

In 2040, my vision for the public transit and/or human service transportation in Ulster County is:
Bigger & Better Than Today
Environmentally friendly
Cost effective as well as environment friendly
Cover more areas of Kingston and Ulster County
More routes
Comprehensive coverage across Ulster County
Universal access
A system that promotes for all individuals the ability to reach destinations based on their needs
Centralized, combined
Does not require an automobile to travel effectively throughout the county
An expanded system
Far reaching
Total public awareness of transit services
Seamless
Widespread
“Jetsons”
Public transportation is the primary form of transportation for all and free
High speed vacuum tube transit
Connected and Coordinated
Total coordination between services
Easier to connect between UCAT and City bus

Brian Slack conducted introductions around the room for all participants.

Facilitated discussion:

Question posed to the group “How well do existing public and human service transportation services meet the needs of residents of Ulster County?”

Stakeholder responses included:

- Transit is an afterthought, and it should be thought about when development is happening. For example, don’t build senior/low income housing far from centers.
- Coordination:
 - Would like it loop around to more communities for rural people; then take bus to a central location and connect to others.

- Coordinate Trailways, city bus, county bus to make connections. Streamline the system and make connections better.
- Choose one location and have the bus be there every hour.
- If we don't coordinate we don't get funding.
- Cost sharing: an example is people from Catskills can't get past Saugerties.
- Cost sharing with Green County, shared service all the way.
- No rules written on how to share services and how to divide the funding. Should form a co-op with rules and guidelines.
- School buses:
 - Use existing school buses for senior mobility.
 - Think about mixing pick-ups of children and adults.
 - Using school buses, no need to bus more transit buses.
- Many people are not able to own a car due to lack of money or disabilities.
- UCAT paratransit service is great. UCAT does great at picking up some houses.
- Low income riders no longer have to travel to Kingston for food stamps; they do it electronically.

The next question: "Are there specific, unmet needs in the county and regional transit network? How might these change over the next 25 years?"

Stakeholder responses included:

- Not meeting the needs of adolescents. It is hard for them to get a job, and it's especially hard for them to connect between UCAT and City buses.
- People can't conduct business without a car. To go to social services literally takes an entire day.
- Older people:
 - More elderly folks in the county and they are living longer. They will need more transportation in the future throughout the county.
 - Buses should stop at senior centers.
 - Currently:
 - Have to wait too long for transfers.
 - Not all of the stops have shelters.
 - People don't know how to use the system, so they are training the elderly to use it.
- Need to educate many people about routes/services.
- Ulster Garden facility not serviced well. (The road around Ulster Garden is private, but will be improved in the future.)

- People are moving south for better jobs. Low income jobs and population will increase.
- Will need to adequately serve Hudson Landing (AVR development) in Kingston: About 2,000 housing units will be built.
- Program where kids go to ski resort for activities. Pick up at the local grocery store and take a bus to the ski resort, with the resort paying for transportation.
- Need centralized calling system, so anyone can find out the best way to get to their destination.
- Other:
 - Can new technology mean that travel demand can be met by such applications as Uber, Lyft, Zip-cars, etc.?

Final question: “If there is one transit-related change you would like to see in the 2040 Plan, what would it be?”

Stakeholder responses included:

- Free fare.
- Fully integrated system using all resources. Affordable at all income levels.
- Around the clock service.
- Make the bus fleet greener.
- An app to help people plan their trips.
- Universal transit payment card: allow transfers to and from Trailways; Disabled riders would get a set \$ amount per month, removing the stigma of paying in other ways.
- Universal knowledge of public transportation services.
- More training on how to use the bus (not just for seniors).
- Wi-Fi on buses so people can work.
- Work with employers to set flexible work times (with incentives).
- More transit means more invested in the community.

Brian thanked the group for participating.