



**NORRISTOWN HIGH SPEED LINE EXTENSION STUDY
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (Draft EIS)**

**King of Prussia Rail Project
Valley Forge Homes – Neighborhood Meeting
June 21, 2016, 7 p.m.**

On June 21, 2016, SEPTA held a meeting for residents of the Valley Forge Homes neighborhood in Upper Merion Township to present the latest information related to the King of Prussia Rail project and provide an opportunity for public feedback. The meeting included a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview of the project, as well as alternatives considered to date, as well as plans displays depicting the latest engineering design alignment alternatives along the PA Turnpike right-of-way.

The meeting began with Liz Smith introducing Ed Mustard, the President of the Valley Forge Homes Association. Mr. Mustard gave a few brief remarks.

During SEPTA's presentation some attendees provided a few remarks.

- I have a two story house across the PA Turnpike from Red Lobster. Will this be in my line of sight?
- I read the Economy League report. Water treatment in the township allows 140% of the federal maximum count of bacteria allowed in the water. Has the extension of the rail and increased amount of people to the area and the effect on the water treatment been looked at yet? How are we going to figure out if this infrastructure can handle the induced ridership?
- What can we do for you to stay away from Upper Merion Township? This doesn't have anything to do with us. It would destroy our township. Traffic is already terrible. Who gets a vote?
- It appears the businesses are pushing for this to happen.
- Will there be an opportunity to hold a yes or no vote on the LPA?

Following the presentation, SEPTA team members were available at several of the plans displays set up around the room to field individual questions and comments. The following summarizes comments and concerns were heard at the display boards:

- Several residents were appreciative of SEPTA's efforts to reduce impacts to their neighborhood, and felt that the new designs were heading in the right direction.
- Resident had questions regarding noise impacts from the new rail line. Inquired if noise studies have been complete based on shifting the proposed alignment to the north side of the Turnpike, and how the noise would travel across the lanes of traffic to the residential side. Wanted to know if SEPTA could provide a comparison of noise impacts for each of the alternatives so he could understand the effects each alternative would have on the residents before indicating a preference.

- Inquired about potential impacts the proposed project could have on their home during construction and during operations, and who would be responsible for repairs. Indicated they have a pool in their backyard, and want to ensure any changes to the bedrock or water table won't have a negative impact to their property. Inquired if the current condition of their property can be documented prior to construction, and if compensation for potential repairs post-construction would be available. Also suggested project engineers repair current flooding issues on the ballfields if the project is built on the north side.
- Resident inquired about the timing of future activities. I provided an overview of the current schedule for environmental clearance, design and construction.
- Resident stated she didn't agree with other assessments that the project would increase crime and bring the wrong element to the community. She believes that workers traveling to King of Prussia to work low-wage jobs at the Mall or retail outlets likely live in north Philadelphia and would continue to utilize the bus instead of traveling to the 69th Street Transportation Center to access the NHSL extension. She also stated that while these workers may be poor, they are hard-working and tired, not criminals. She added that two trolley lines currently operating in Delaware County would do a better job of connecting higher-wage workers to the new extension, thereby increasing the likelihood these workers would travel to KOP for work in the business park once the extension is built.
- A resident inquired if the rail line would be elevated over US 202 for the North/South extension. She added that while there may be a visual impact, it would be preferable to the extension along the south side of the Turnpike.
- A resident stated the project would not be helpful in relieving local traffic congestion. She stated that current residents will continue to drive. When prompted, she agreed that new developments may bring new residents to the area that may be more inclined to use transit if it's already available.
- A resident stated she heard that people will park at the Mall to use the new extension, leading to problems finding parking spaces. She was unaware of the proposed park-and-rides for the project, and believed the proposed locations of these park-and-rides may limit those from traveling to the Mall specifically to access the train.
- A resident inquired about the height of the structure and what the potential visual impacts would be.
- A community member who lives in Upper Merion Township but not within Valley Forge Homes was pleased with the new alignment and overall thinks the KOP Rail project is progressive and a good thing for the area.
- A resident inquired about at what point will testing current infrastructure like the water treatment centers be completed. With the induced ridership this is a concern for him. He also inquired about other, nonspecific infrastructure capacity concerns.

- A resident observed that the KOP Rail extension would connect nicely to the trolleys that run in Delaware County.
- A resident asked if we could give him a better indication of what we could see from his backyard, as we are doing with some of the residents that were part of the backyard visits.
- A resident inquired about how the project can ensure up front that any damage caused by construction or operation is paid for by SEPTA.
- Several residents stated their preference for an open question and answer session, instead of discussions at the display boards, and were concerned that all questions/comments were not being captured.



**NORRISTOWN HIGH SPEED LINE EXTENSION STUDY
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (DRAFT EIS)**

**King of Prussia Rail Project
Brandywine Village – Neighborhood Meeting
June 29, 2016, 7 p.m.**

On June 29, 2016, SEPTA held a meeting for residents of the Brandywine Village neighborhood in Upper Merion Township to present the latest information related to the King of Prussia Rail project and provide an opportunity for public feedback. The meeting included a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview of the project, as well as alternatives considered to date, as well as plans displays depicting the latest engineering design alignment alternatives along the PA Turnpike right-of-way. Following the presentation, SEPTA opened the floor to public questions and comments. The following is a summary of questions and comments that were expressed during the Q&A:

1. Does your consulting firm group continue on through the FEIS and engineering?
2. Instead of rail, have other options been looked at like running natural gas buses? The way I see it is at the end is the casino and the mall. What is driving this project? We're road choked as it is. I do not want a train breaking down above my house and police and emergency personal will need to come into my backyard. As residents, why do we have to take this project on? I want to see something else other than rail.
3. Look at Upper Darby and the area around 69th street.
4. The NHSL was in the areas before people moved in and knew what they were moving in, into.
5. Why can't you use Abrams Yard? What about elevating your structure over the current rail lines. (Norfolk Southern's rail)
6. Wouldn't the alignment be better if you ran under US 202?
7. Did you consider improving bus routing? Have you considered other improvements like Hughes Park station or Gulph Mills station?
8. Where does the term "Locally Preferred Alternative" come from? I do not believe this is the locally preferred alternative and would like you to stop using that term.
9. Your line is running over/along our drinking water source.
10. What about running the rail line along the river and use the nature trail to the north? Why wasn't that option explored?
11. The height of the structure will impact us since the rail line will be so high. I prefer the at-grade option. I do not want my town to fall apart because of this rail line.
12. I was at the meeting in March. What made caused this alignment change? Was it the Valley Forge Homes meeting? Both of the neighborhoods are going to see it.
13. Could you revisit looking at the Abrams Yard route and use the industrial park from the west? I hope you studied this option already.
14. What about using the road to nowhere from Bridgeport and come in from the west? Use the back part by the river.
15. When the rail line crosses Allendale, how high will it be? Watch all the cars run into the pillars.
16. Is the voting by DVRPC, UMT Supervisors, etc. anonymous?

17. Does SEPTA pay the consultant fees? This doesn't benefit the residents.
18. Are you going to cut off bus service?
19. Will the rail line need more local buses?
20. I didn't know anything about these meetings. Your notification to the residents was not good.
21. What is the deal with going over 202? Where is it running to and from?
22. I do not like the at-grade option. I am confused about the options. My concerns include noise, pets, children, accidents, etc. Have you looked at the cost of catastrophes?
23. All I hear is that you are making it more convenient for 6,000 bus riders.
24. I heard six (6) new N5 cars were purchased for this project. Is that true?
25. Is Rambler is extending its hours and changing the route for KOP Rail?
26. (References the Economy League report) Why did they only release positive impacts? What about the noise, crime and changes in property value?
27. Val Arkoosh has been named as the chairwoman to the board of DVRPC.
28. Can you bring a 3D version of the alignment to the next meeting?
29. Can you test the route out before you build this? Can you use buses to simulate the route to see if people will use it?
30. How much does 6,000 people bring into the area? Why don't we get paid off?
31. Is there a study on how many people travel on route 422?
32. I didn't know about the March public meeting. What is the purpose of this project?
33. What about using all the abandoned rail? (i.e. Norfolk Southern's rail)
34. How many homes are being displaced when the rail goes across 202?
35. How many of the 9500 riders are already transit riders?
36. It doesn't make sense. If more rail leads to less congestion then the buses will be able to travel.
37. We need to talk to our Supervisors.
38. Do stakeholders get a vote? What is the first entity that gets to vote?
39. I don't think this will alleviate congestion.
40. Neither option, over nor under 202, are good options. I am concerned about snow falling from the rail onto 202.
41. How far from the rail do you study the effects of vibration, noise, etc.? I think you should go $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. You'll be blasting rock.
42. What's the barrier up to the backyard? What will you do for them? Noise walls?
43. It was a nightmare during I-76 construction. Homes will be affected. Your FAQs say otherwise. What about Brandywine Village and Valley Forge Homes? You're taking properties. We need more information on property takings. I don't think we are going to know about property takings until it is too late.
44. I want some clarity on the voting process. If the UMT Supervisors vote no can the project still move forward?
45. I am a former regional rail rider and I've ridden other lines of SEPTA. The system is in disarray. For \$1.2 billion let's see how it is being addressed and what can be fixed.
46. I don't care about a 3 seat burden. I don't want the rail line.
47. (Question directed to Bill Jenaway) If the money is there how do you stand?
48. Valley Forge Homes (new neighborhood near Wegmans) has no access to the rail line.
49. Build a mall in Philadelphia if SEPTA has all that money!
50. How many transit riders come to shop versus work?
51. Has the turnpike approved this plan?
52. There was just a large sinkhole on the Brandywine Village side along the turnpike.

53. Is it buried somewhere how many employers offer tax free, transit checks or pay for transit?
54. Who has access to the notes being taken tonight? I want to see a transcript of the meeting minutes.
55. I think if we come up with a plan to communicate to drop congestion like paying employees for travel time if they get to work on time.
56. This is financially motivated by the mall.
57. How will this affect our taxes?
58. Will there be a township meeting before the decision is made?
59. Is Walker Field for sale?
60. During construction, how will this project affect fire, police, EMS, etc.?
61. Where are the people coming from who commit crimes?

The following summarizes comments and concerns heard at the display boards:

- Major concerns included crime, noise, type of person coming to the area, drainage.
- Request for paid postage comment cards.
- Resident requested occasionally meeting during the day/late afternoon (works night shift but happen to be off this week)
- At the end of the presentation, it would be helpful to have a slide explaining abbreviations (e.g.: DVRPC, FTA, DEIS, etc.)
- Concerns about visual impacts