

Per Open Meeting Law requirements, an in-person meeting of the New York City Transit Riders Council (NYCTRC) was convened at 2 Broadway at 12:00 pm on Thursday, October 26, 2023. Members of the public and Council members unable to attend were present via Zoom.

## Member Attendance

Andrew Albert (Chair)	Present – in person
Burton M. Strauss Jr. (Vice Chair)	Present – in person
Stuart Goldstein	Present – in person
Christopher Greif	Present – in person
Marisol Halpern	Absent
Sharon King Hoge	Present – in person
Karen Hamilton	Present – in person
Cicely Harris	Present – virtual
Trudy L. Mason	Present – in person
Scott R. Nicholls	Absent

## Staff Attendance

Lisa Daglian (Executive Director)	Present
Kara Gurl (Planning & Adv. Manager)	Present
Jack Connors (Research & Comm. Associate)	Present
Jessica Spezio (Administrative Assistant)	Present

## Non-member Attendance

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Sean Fitzpatrick	MTA C&D
Sunil Nair	NYCT
Cate Contino	NYCT
Sara Wyss	MTA
Zafira Lateef	MTA C&D
Robert Lai	MTA
Ron Troy	Concerned Citizen
Mike Howard	Concerned Citizen
Jason Anthony	Concerned Citizen
David Kupferberg	Concerned Citizen

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Carl Perrera  
Rick Horan  
William Stanford Jr.  
Andrew Kurzweil

Concerned Citizen  
Concerned Citizen  
Concerned Citizen  
Concerned Citizen

***Approval of Agenda for October 26, 2023 meeting.  
Approval of Minutes for September 28, 2023 meeting.  
(With corrections noted)***

### **Chair/ Board Report:**

#### Twenty Year Needs Assessment

The MTA recently released the next Twenty Year Needs Assessment, which balances the need for investment in state of good repair for existing assets and the need for expansion. This is a very thorough assessment that includes repairing viaducts, improving ventilation, accessibility upgrades, and other projects.

#### Resiliency

Resiliency, particularly in dealing with recent rainstorms and torrential downpour, has been increasingly important. The MTA has plans to elevate subway entrances, installing drains, filters, and pumps, and address third-party water intrusions to prevent water damage. Resiliency has also been a priority on Metro-North, with the recent landslide in Briarcliff Manor, Westchester County, which temporarily halted Amtrak and Metro-North service.

#### Connecticut

The state of Connecticut has reduced funding for Metro-North, leading to upcoming schedule changes and service reductions. Some trains on the Danbury branch, New Canaan branch, and the mainline of the New Haven train service will be affected, but New York State service will not be affected.

Chris added that the disability community is very upset with Connecticut because the scheduled meeting location about service and fare changes was not accessible.

#### Station Re-NEW-vations

The MTA has completed station re-NEW-vations at Junction Blvd on the 7 Line, Morris Park on the 5, Whitehall Street on the R line, Hunters Point Ave on the 7, Beverley

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Road on the Q, Baychester Ave on the 5, Wall Street on the 2/3 line, Ditmas Ave on the F line, and 8<sup>th</sup> Street- NYU on the R/W line, among others.

#### Bus and Rail car Purchases

One of the MTA's newest problems is a shortage of makers and producers of rail cars both for the subway and commuter trains. There's a Chinese company that is making rail cars for so many transit systems all over the world, and we can't use them because of the Buy American provision which requires transit agencies to purchase train cars from companies located within the United States.

#### Congestion Pricing Update

The MTA has hired an attorney to counter the New Jersey lawsuit against congestion pricing, and there's concern about potential threats to the timeline. Advocates, including PCAC staff, are part of the Congestion Pricing Now coalition and are working with other organizations that supported the legislation in 2019. In addition to the lawsuit, a significant threat arises from multiple amendments in the THUD appropriations bill. These amendments aim to prohibit the implementation of congestion pricing and prevent the MTA from spending money raised by congestion pricing without exempting New Jersey drivers. PCAC staff will send more information to members about contacting their elected officials asking them to reject these amendments and sign on to a counter-amendment in support of congestion pricing proposed by Congressmembers Nadler and Goldman.

Trudy added that Long Island elected officials should be approached on this topic.

Stuart asked about the Port Authority gantry issue and whether there has been a resolution after the Port Authority refused to let the MTA install congestion pricing readers on their property.

#### Fitch Upgrade

The MTA credit rating from Fitch went up to an A from A-, allowing the MTA to borrow money at a lower interest rate.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave Subway

Senator Schumer was able to secure \$3.4 Billion for phase two of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave Subway extension, up to 125<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Presentation** by Sean Fitzpatrick, Deputy Chief of Staff, Construction and Development: Twenty-Year Needs Assessment

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View the presentation along with the Q&A: <https://youtu.be/0klInbN2Xdl?t=2136>

Sean provided an overview of the MTA's Twenty-Year Needs Assessment, a comprehensive blueprint for the transit system's future needs. He explained that the key pillars of the assessment are rebuilding, improving, and expanding the system.

Burt asked how the Twenty-Year Needs Assessment was put together and prioritized. Sean advised the report was primarily assembled by the MTA Construction and Development team, specifically the planning department led by Fredericka Cuenca. The effort involved a comprehensive examination of previous assessments that were more isolated and an analysis of the MTA's current and future needs.

Stuart asked if there are any older projects from past assessments that were not accomplished that remain a priority. Sean replied that while the Twenty-Year Needs Assessment is not a list of priorities, bringing the system to a state of good repair is a high priority.

Trudy asked if congestion pricing funding affects the work that can be done and whether cost of projects is considered. Sean said that receiving adequate funding does impact the MTA's ability to complete projects, and cost-effectiveness is one of the metrics for evaluating expansion projects.

Karen asked if the team considers which projects can be delayed and which need to be done sooner. Sean advised that the urgency of projects and repairs is taken into consideration.

Chris mentioned the importance of accessibility in future projects.

Andrew asked what the best way would be to give our suggestions on the Twenty-Year Needs Assessment. Sean advised to send it his way and he would be happy to receive feedback.

**Presentation** by Sunil Mair, Chief, Bus Technology: Update on Bus Initiatives (Zero-Emission Fleet, ABLE, and ACE)

View the presentation along with the Q&A: <https://youtu.be/0klInbN2Xdl?t=3921>

Sunil gave a presentation on bus initiatives including the zero-emission fleet and ABLE. Andrew asked how the drivers receive tickets when they violate bus lanes. Sunil advised that tickets are sent via postal mail.

Stuart asked what happens with electric buses if there is a full electric power failure and whether the Transit Authority generates its own power. Sunil advised they have back-up

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power generation and are working closely with Con-Ed to ensure they are getting the energy needed to keep buses running.

### **Old Business:**

Stuart raised the issue of dirty trains and stations including the 69<sup>th</sup> Street exit of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Street stop. He also mentioned the 8<sup>th</sup> Ave line Fulton Street station.

Mr. X suggested opening and fixing the lower level of the Bergen Street F/G tracks.

### **New Business:**

Chris suggested that the MTA needs to have better announcements or communications on how to submit complaints. They should make it easier for people to understand and submit comments and complaints.

### **Action Items:**

None

### **Adjourned**

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0klInbN2XdI>

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Daglian  
Executive Director