

The Commuter

Commuter Contract

Suburban submitted questions about the Township's Request for Bids (RFB) several days prior to the September 10, 2004 due date for bids. In order for the Township to have sufficient time to respond to these questions, and then distribute these responses to prospective bidders, the due date for bids was extended to Sep. 27, 2004. The Commuter Parking Advisory Committee (CPAC) encourages the Township to move the RFB process along as soon as possible so that we can have a commuter bus service operated under contractual service quality provisions for the first time in Township history.

Once the bids are received, the Township has 60 days to evaluate the bids and select the winning RFB bidder. If a new bus company is the successful bidder, the Township will expect it to begin providing services within 30 to 60 days after award of the contract. Commuters will be notified via our Topica e-mail list as additional information on this contract award and implementation process becomes available.

Neilson Plaza Rehabilitation and Daily Parking

The rehabilitation work on Neilson Plaza has been substantially completed. The facility should not require this type of maintenance for another 15 years. The Parking Utility thanks commuters for their cooperation during this difficult, but nonetheless important, project.

Now that the work has been completed, the availability of daily parking at Neilson Plaza is also back to normal. In recent days, daily parking at Neilson Plaza has been available all day (Neilson Plaza has not been selling out its daily parking availability). The Parking Utility invites interested daily parkers to return to Neilson Plaza. The fee for daily parking fee is now \$4 per day.

Jersey City Service

Suburban had promised to initiate Neilson Plaza to Jersey City service once the rehabilitation of Neilson Plaza was completed but has not yet done so despite repeated requests to do so. The Township and the CPAC will continue to request this service for our commuters. The failure to initiate this service as promised is a clear example of why the CPAC believes that the operation of commuter bus service under a contract with service terms is vital to best meeting our commuting needs. If you are interested in this service, please sign up for our special e-mail list for this service by sending an e-mail to ebjc-subscribe@yahoo.com.

Transportation & Commerce Center (TCC) Redevelopment

The TCC redevelopment process is continuing with the Township and Toll Brothers continuing to negotiate the terms of a development contract for the site. Very little public information on this process has been made available public in recent months. As we get additional information on this process, it will be distributed to commuters via our Topica e-mail list discussed below.

Candidate Survey

The CPAC has developed a survey on commuter related issues for candidates for Township offices. The CPAC has requested responses by Oct. 1, 2004. Once these responses are received, they will be collated and made available to commuters on our web site and distributed by e-mail to our Topica e-mail list. If you are interested in these responses, please sign up for our Topica e-mail list using the instructions below so you will receive all the candidate's responses prior to election day.

The questions that the CPAC has asked the candidates to respond to are:

Q1a: In your opinion what are the proper uses for Parking Utility revenues such as commuter parking fees and rental payments?

Q1b: How would you determine if and when future fee increases are necessary?

Q2a: Is commuter parking a more, less or equally vital resource to East Brunswick than The Library or Crystal Springs?

Q2b: What do you see as a fair monthly permit fee for East Brunswick residents?

Q2c: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement (and why?): It would make economic good sense for the Township to subsidize commuter parking costs because it will result in higher real property values and greater tax revenues?

Q3a: What are your views regarding the impact on commuters of the redevelopment of the Golden Triangle?

Q3b: How much weight do you give these impacts against other concerns of the town?

Q4a: Have you accepted any campaign contributions or other campaign support from Coach USA or Academy Lines, any of their affiliated companies or management personnel in the past two years?

Q4b: Do you pledge not to accept any campaign contributions or other support from any bidder, their affiliated companies and management personnel for East Brunswick's commuter bus contract?

Q5: How should the Commuter Parking Advisory Committee fit in to the Township's management of the parking facilities and bus contract?

Q6: Do you have any other comments you would like to communicate to commuters?

Emergency Planning

On August 23, 2004, the CPAC distributed to our Topica e-mail list a communication from Suburban Transit regarding the operation of commuter bus service to East Brunswick during any future emergency. The full text of the communication can be found at

<http://lists.topica.com/lists/ebcnews/read> at the August 23, 2004 date. The CPAC will also distribute any additional emergency service information to commuters as it becomes available.

TCC Service Poll - To Be Direct or Not?

In the spirit of the election season, a new poll has been created for TCC Commuters at our Yahoogroups web site. Please note that you must join the ebcommuter Yahoogroups group as a member in order to vote in this poll. There is no cost or obligation to do either. If you are not already a member, you can join by clicking on the "Join This Group" button on the upper right hand side of the web site: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/EBCommuter>. The more commuters that respond to this poll, the better the Township will be able to serve the commuting needs of all TCC commuters. The poll can be accessed by commuters who have previously joined the ebcommuter Yahoogroup at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/EBCommuter/surveys?id=1385180>.

The purpose of the poll is to determine whether downtown and crosstown TCC commuters would prefer additional direct service (without a stop at Neilson Plaza) even if it means modestly reduced the frequency of service on the route. To date the voting is almost perfectly split between commuters preferring more direct service and those that want more frequent service instead.

Receive Newsletter and Commuter Service Information by E-mail

The CPAC delivers newsletters and other information by e-mail as it becomes available. Over 500 commuters have already signed up for this service and are made aware of important commuting developments as they occur. To subscribe, send an email to ebcnews-subscribe@topica.com. Then reply when you get the sign up confirmation message. You may cancel your subscription at any time. The CPAC will not disseminate your email address or use it for any other purpose. Our normal e-mail address remains ebcommuter@yahoo.com.