



Individual Environmental Assessment for
expansion in the GO Transit Georgetown
South Rail Corridor and an Express
Transportation Link between Lester B.
Pearson Airport and Union Station

Facilitator's Summary V1

May 2, '06 Introductory Workshop

Prepared for the Public Liaison Committee
Prepared by Ogilvie, Ogilvie & Company,



Location: Holiday Inn - 600 Dixon Road, Toronto

Time: 6:30 - 9:30pm



Robb's Discussion Ground Rules - May I Have Your Permission to Use These?

1. Act in good faith through all sessions, consider the best interests of all the people and things served by it, not just a particular segment or interest
2. Accept the concerns and goals of others as legitimate. This does not mean you have to agree with each other, simply respect each other's rights to be there and to hold different opinions.
3. Commit to fully explore the issues and search creatively for solutions - be skeptical of fast answers and quick fixes
4. Allow the facilitator to direct the process but stay in charge of the content
5. Keep differences of opinion alive for future work...use the Parking Lot / Cache for keeping unsettled issues on the table
6. When Enough Discussion is Enough- Once an issue has been dealt with, the issue is closed and should not be reintroduced at subsequent times unless new information is tabled that makes a compelling case for the issue to be re-visited.
 - Dissatisfaction with the conclusions is not reason enough to revisit the issue.
7. Views and Opinions- Participants are encouraged to express their personal views and the perspectives of the organizations they represent.
 - People must feel free to express their ideas without fear of being misquoted outside of the workshop.
8. The approach should be one of critiquing ideas, not individuals.
9. Equality - All participants should treat each other as equals, regardless of "Rank" or position in their respective organizations.

Overview of the Workshop - Robb Ogilvie



Introductory Workshop
Public Liaison Committee
May 2, 2006
Holiday Inn East
600 Dixon Road

Tonight's Agenda

6:30PM - 6:45PM... Introductions - Overview of the Workshop - Robb Ogilvie - Independent Public Facilitator
6:45PM - 7:30PM... Session 1- Facilitator's Suggested Guidelines for the Public Liaison Committee
7:30PM - 9:00PM... Session 2- Project Overview - Presentation by McCormick Rankin and Round Table Discussion
9:00PM - 9:15PM... Question/Comments Period for Observers
9:15PM - 9:30PM... Session 2 - Next Steps & Next Meeting
Adjourn

Introductions

- My name is Robb Ogilvie and I am the Independent Public Facilitator
- Debbie Clayton is an environmental planner with us who will keyboard a live-time summary of the discussions
- I would like to go around the table and ask everyone to introduce themselves



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- Commit to fully explore the issues and search creatively for solutions - be skeptical of fast answers and quick fixes
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- Keep differences of opinion alive for future work... use the Parking Lot / Cache for keeping unrelated issues on the table

Independent Public Facilitator

- Role**... My role is to enhance the public's (stakeholder) participation in the decision-making process and to assist the decision-makers in being responsive to the public's (stakeholder) concerns and suggestions.
- Tone**... I will at all times encourage actions that build trust and credibility for the process and among the participants.
- Openness**... I will ensure that information relevant to the public's understanding of the environmental assessment will be disclosed and made available on the project's web site. All meetings, workshops, charrettes and public information forums will have "real-time" recording and projection of the discussions... The draft summaries are shared with participants for errors or omissions and distributed to all participants.
- Respect for all**... I will avoid approaches that could protect a community interest or appear to divide and conquer.
- Confidentiality**... I have a responsibility to ensure that comments made to the public are genuine and capable of implementation.


Ground Rules continued...

- When Enough Discussion is Reached - Once an issue has been dealt with, the issue is closed and should not be re-introduced at subsequent times unless new information is tabled that makes a compelling case for the issue to be revisited.
 - Disaffection with the conclusions is not reason enough to revisit the issue.
- Views and Opinions- Participants are encouraged to express their personal views and the perspectives of the organizations they represent.
 - People must feel free to express their ideas without fear of being misquoted outside of the workshop.
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Session 1 - Facilitator's Suggested Guidelines for the PLC


Session 1 (p.4) -Purpose of the PLC

1. To act as a sounding-board whereby GO Transit and its consultants can test ideas and findings. The point is to have an opportunity to share new data and untested ideas without fear of the discussions ending up in the media the next day...
2. To provide advice, critique and suggestions to see that data is adequately collected and analyzed so that the end result will give a clear picture that leads to selection of the "best route" and best methods.



Hopes and Fears

- I would like to have a discussion about what we facilitators call "hopes and fears" about the PLC and the Study
- This helps me understand where you are coming from and gives me some idea of things I have to avoid/achieve



Purpose of the PLC

2. The PLC is not a decision-making body. GO Transit will attempt to incorporate the PLC's advice where ever possible, and where GO Transit choose a different course of action on an issue, GO Transit will provide the PLC with a detailed explanation of their reasoning.
4. To provide a sense of the broader community's reactions and concerns and how these might be addressed.




All of us have a specific role(s)

- Robb's role is to make sure the discussions are fair, transparent, balanced and informed
- Debbie's role is to record and prepare draft summaries
- Be a starter slide



Purpose of the PLC

5. To provide a direct, face-to-face channel of communications between and among all members the residents, environmental community, the business community, and GO Transit and its consultants.
6. To provide members with advance warning of potential problems before they become insurmountable



Community members

1. Keep track of what's happening in your community that is related to the project and table this information at the workshops
2. Give advice and perspectives on any proposals/reports tabled by the GO Transit or other members of the PLC...
2. Help the PLC function effectively by offering suggestions and alternatives to issues, concerns...
4. Communicate PLC discussions back to residents in your community
5. Try to anticipate potential problems and telegraph these insights and warnings to the PLC
6. Try to correct falsehoods, incorrect rumors, or misinformation that may be "floating around" the members neighbourhood



Session 1 - Facilitator's Suggested Guidelines for the PLC

GO Transit and its Consultants

1. Keep PLC members up-to-date on the project, as to avoid any miscommunication or misinformation.
2. Listen seriously to the advice and perspectives members of the PLC. Whenever possible take their advice and act accordingly.
3. Help the PLC function effectively by offering suggestions and alternatives to issues, concerns and problems being discussed.
4. Ensure the PLC receives any communication items that GO Transit is planning to send to residents and/or neighbourhoods.
5. Try to anticipate potential problems and articulate these issues to the PLC.
7. Provide accurate and straightforward answers. If a matter is of a confidential nature, then state that to the PLC.

Final Items and then Dennis...

- The PLC is an advisory mechanism to GO Transit. It is not:
 - a "public hearing" - municipal committee - a regulatory mechanism - a decision-making body
- Workshop Format:
- Facilitated Sessions:
- Time frame:
- Spokesperson for the PLC - Inezta Hausmanis
- Replacements or Alternates:
- Agenda:
- Meeting Summaries
- Parking Lot / Cache:
- Media
- Although the media have not been invited, if they show up and want to observe, how do you want the Facilitator to handle the situation?

Members of the Public

- Although members of the public are welcome to attend the sessions, they have no official role in the sessions.
- The Facilitator will ensure that a 20 minute time slot is kept open at the end of each PLC session for questions and comments by the members of the public...
- Each person will be asked to keep their comments to less than 5 minutes to give others time to raise their questions or make their comments.



Questions & Discussion

Question: We are talking about representing the interests of all of the people. We don't speak for everyone who is impacted on this line. Perhaps we should be more inclusive in the invitations for the members of this group.

Response: We will come back to this issue later tonight.

Comment: I think these are fairly good ground rule's. Where do things like approving the agenda and other process stuff?

Response: In a few minutes, I will show you how I think about things and see if you agree.

Question: Is point 2 on the purpose of this group include commenting on the design of the process as well as the data? E.g. the ToR.

Response: Everything about the IEA is open to discussion. In terms of working with Dennis so far, his approach is open to consultation. We can make it more clear that you will be commenting on each part of the study.

Follow-Up Question: Does commenting on mean consulted with? I want to be in the process and consulted as the study is being designed.

Response: We have to draft something in the ToR framework and then the group will be consulted on that. We won't start with a blank sheet of paper because that would be too difficult. We will follow the guidelines set out for us.

Follow-Up Comment: We just do not want to be presented with a completed ToR instead of being allowed to help design it.

Question: At the end of the day – this PLC has no power? I am a little concerned with point 3 of the purpose of the PLC.

Response: Advisory Committees' power is the advice they provide to the proponent. Although this group is not a decision-making body. Dennis and his team will take the different viewpoints into consideration. My personal opinion is that if an AC provides the proponent with advice, the proponent would be wise to implement and pay attention to as much of that advice as possible. There will be situations where you will have to agree to disagree, but Dennis would be wise to implement what he can. I can't promise that they will pay the kind of attention that they should, but my experience is that advisory groups such as yourselves provide a lot of good advice.

Comment: On the front it says PLC, but on one of the guides it says IEA. The advice we give is not to an independent body.

Response: I say Dennis, because he is the consultant that has been hired to do the Individual Environmental Assessment (IEA). He is the first person I try to convince, then he tries to convince GO Transit. It is not just Dennis, but he is my first line of defense.

PLC stands for Public Liaison Committee

IEA stands for Individual Environmental Assessment (as opposed to the other type of Environmental Assessment which is a Class Environmental Assessment). Mike will explain the differences there. This is a PLC to help with the study.

Facilitator: I see members of the public raising hands – please keep them until the designated Question and Answer session.

Follow-Up Question: Your ground rule suggests that all issues are surmountable – that is not always true.

Response: True, that ground rule reflects situations where advance notice would benefit the group and project. The 16th Avenue Trunk Sewer project is an example where community issues are presented from the liaison committee, and the Region tries to deal with them before they become a huge issue.

Question: This PLC is made up of representatives from community groups or groups of interest, but a lot of the discussions we will have will interface with the City of Toronto's OP, planning issues etc. This group is limited to the public and not politicians, but where does that interface occur?

Response: This is one form of consultation for this project, but there are several others. We realize you can not speak for everyone. When it comes to the City of Toronto, agencies and municipalities, there are other venues of consultation. We have a technical advisory committee and we meet with other groups separately. The railways, the conservation authorities, other heritage groups etc., are met with. Different representatives are met with from the City of Toronto.

Hopes and Fears of the PLC

- One community will get something that is to the detriment of another community. That it won't be equal to everyone. One area of the city would be put in jeopardy to save another area.
- I would echo those sentiments. There may be an outlying community that would benefit economically and no benefit to those that are negatively impacted.
- I hope that everyone in the community gets a voice and that the true benefits of all of the projects come forward and don't get lost in the negative ideas.
- The intent here is to get the total community input – that is why we have structured this group this way. We want to make sure we do the right thing. Our fear is that we will get into a very one-sided confrontation and I hope with your help we can work our way through that.
- I come to this without any preconceived notions. I am a blank slate. I am looking forward to learning and taking in quite a bit and hopefully bringing something from my immediate neighbours to the table.
- I hope that the best solution for the communities / city is found – not just one area.
- I am hopeful that this system can be seen as an urban transportation link to Toronto and not just a 905 commuter line.
- My hope is that this project is seen in a very long-term framework. How will this project fit in to how we see the city developing over the next 20 years? I am interested in the networks, and the cohabitation possibilities for the other forms of transportation in the city, that can work in the long term.
- I hope that we will clearly and transparently understand all of the various possibilities and that at the end of the day, if we find that there is a "better way" then the governments that started this project recognize it and fund it. My fear is that governments that don't get their way will yank their funding and that the funding is linked to deals that have already been made. You have to look at the 50-year game plan. The other fear is that we will be rushed. I know that there are only two of these meetings for the ToR and the first is to decide what we are all about. I hope we will take the time that is necessary to consult.
- I hope that we can come up with some practical solutions to address most of the hopes and quell most of the fears. I have never been on a project where everyone agreed, but I hope that both "sides" of a problem understand the issue. If I can solve an issue we will do our darndest to do that – if not, I will make sure to be clear on why we (the Project Team) cannot take the suggestion.

Session 2 - Project Overview




Study Background

- Previous study in 2004/5 initiated as a Class EA study
- Considered GO Transit Georgetown South expansion plus a privately operated Air Rail Link service (Blue 22) from Union Station to Pearson Airport
- Only options within the rail corridor were considered for the Blue 22 Union to Pearson service
- GO Board responded to public concerns by agreeing to carry out an Individual EA for the Project

How is This Study Different?

- Individual provincial EA
- Broader study area
- Will consider Airport transit options both within and outside the Georgetown South rail corridor
- More interactive public consultation



I am going to give you a lot of background and then Mike will give you a run down of the Environmental Assessment (EA) process. I will then give you an idea of some of the things to be included in the ToR to start the dialogue.

GO Transit decided to start this process over again and do this study as an Individual Environmental Assessment (IEA).

We will be considering transit options outside of the corridor and conducting more consultation than would be required for a Class EA.

Requirements of Ontario EA Act

- Problem Statement - Purpose and rationale for the Undertaking
- Planning Alternatives - Evaluation of Alternatives to the Undertaking
- Design Alternatives - Evaluation of Alternative Methods of carrying out the undertaking
- Environment that will be affected
- Measure to reduce impacts - mitigate measures
- Consultation undertaken

What is a Terms of Reference ?

- First step in EA Process
- Outlines framework for conducting the EA
- Must be approved by the Ontario Minister of the Environment

What is included in a ToR ?

- Problem Statement - Purpose of the study
- Description of the study area
- Range and Types of Alternatives to be considered
- Stakeholder consultation to be undertaken
- General work plan outlining the process to generate and evaluate alternatives
- Stakeholder consultation undertaken to prepare ToR

Study Purpose

Two Study Components are Mandated:

- To expand GO Transit's capacity to serve projected growth in interregional commuter travel demand between Halton and Peel Regions and the City of Toronto
- To provide an express transportation link between Union Station and LBPIA including the option of an Air Rail Link (Blue 22) service

Ultimately we will submit a report to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) for approval. It is really two steps. The first step is the Terms of Reference (ToR). We will develop it and then submit it to the MOE for approval to move forward. Once approved, the ToR will guide the other stages of the study.

The Ontario Environmental Assessment Act (OEAA) requires that we identify the problem and then it asks us to look at the advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives (planning alternatives). The next step is alternative methods (design alternatives). We have to talk about the environment (natural, social, economic and cultural things) throughout the project. We have to look at the measures to reduce impacts. We are going through a planning process to select the preferred alternative and then a detailed impact assessment will be conducted on the preferred alternative.

These are some of our initial ideas. The ToR has to include a problem statement; the study area; the range and type of alternatives (planning alternatives); detailed stakeholder consultation to be undertaken; a general workplan to evaluate the reasonable range of alternatives; and finally the consultation that we took to develop the ToR. As part of Dennis's presentation, we want to talk about our initial thoughts on the ToR as well as the consultation of stakeholders as we move forward.

In the ToR itself, we have to talk about the study purposes. The first mandate is to expand GO's capacity. The second is to provide an express link between Union Station and LBPIA (Pearson Airport) including the option of an Air Rail Link (Blue 22).

Additional Opportunities

- Local community considerations (to be identified and considered through consultation)
 - To protect local communities from adverse impacts
 - To derive local transportation benefits from the proposed services where feasible including enhanced local transit connections

Planning Alternatives ("alternatives to")

■ Alternatives for GO Transit Expansion Component:

- Do nothing
- Add additional GO bus service
- Add additional track(s) / train service in the corridor

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Planning Alternatives ("alternatives to")

Example alternatives for Express Transit from Union Station to the Airport:

- Do nothing
- Express bus service between Union Station and the airport using the Gardiner Expressway and Highway 427.
- Rail transit service within the CN/Western corridor with a connection into the airport (several options).
- Rapid transit service within the Eglinton corridor.
- Rapid transit service utilizing the north-south hydro corridor between the Kipling Subway Station and the Airport.
- Georgetown corridor subway.
- Etc.

We hope that the communities involved in this project will bring opportunities to the table that will benefit the community. We have to protect the local community as well as find local benefits from the undertaking.

For the GO expansion, in the Environmental Assessment Act (EAA), you have to look at the Do Nothing option – i.e. “what will happen if you don’t do anything?”. The other two options are 1) Don’t do it by rail; and 2) Add an additional track(s) / train service in the corridor to handle future demand. We will assess these and document our recommendation.

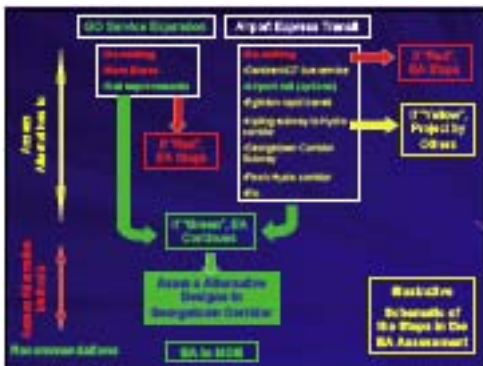
If Do Nothing is the recommendation, then the EA would stop. If the solution was additional bus service, this EA would also stop because GO does not need to do an EA to add buses. The only way this study will continue is if we require an additional track or trains.

This is the component dealing with express transit from union to the airport. These are the various preliminary alternatives that we have identified.

Planning Alternatives ("alternatives to")

Example alternatives for Express Transit from Union Station to the Airport:

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- Etc.



Alternative Methods

- "Alternative methods" are alternative design plans within the corridor
 - e.g. number of tracks, at grade or depressed, road crossings, number and location of stations, etc.
- These will only be developed and assessed after a decision is made on the Planning Alternatives
 - i.e. is the service to the Airport within or outside the corridor

If the Do Nothing was selected – this EA would stop. If the option of rail transit service within the corridor was chosen – we would continue on. If the other Eglinton or subway option was chosen, we would recommend that to the appropriate authority (it is not GO Transit jurisdiction).

One of the options would be up the Spadina subway to the airport. I mentioned the Bloor subway up the hydro corridor out to the airport as well. Another option is to use the subway, but then use Kipling up the 427 to the airport. Then there was the Blue 22 option in the corridor. The stars are the suggested stations on the line. In the ToR we will list the types of options we will look at. The ToR outlines the minimum that we will look at in the study. There is nothing in the ToR that stops you from looking at other good alternatives later in the process.

In assessing alternatives to – the top left box contains the three options that will be evaluated. If the items in red were chosen, then the study stops. If rail is chosen, then we continue with the EA. For the Airport express transit, we have more options. Again, if Do Nothing is the recommendation, we will stop. If it is yellow, then the recommendation would be passed to the appropriate jurisdiction. If the green option of a rail connection is chosen, then the two pieces of the study would come together because they are both in the corridor and one affects the other.

Once we reach that stage, we then look at alternative methods – design details like the number of tracks. We will then recommend all of the design components and the report gets written with public consultation and then submitted to the Ministry of the Environment. The Alternative Methods, as compared to the Planning Alternatives, are really the design issues, like the specifics to how close a line is to property, station locations etc. That is the more extensive portion of the study. We will only get into that after we have looked at the planning alternatives.

Consultation

Three core consultation streams directed to:

- Elected officials and their staff
- Public and community stakeholders
 - Public Liaison Committee
 - Stakeholders
 - General public
- Government and Review Agencies (TAC)

Using:

- Web site, newsletters, interviews, public and community meetings, electronic bulletin, etc.

This committee is one forum for getting input. It is an attempt to get a pulse on the community and an idea of the various interest viewpoints. We have the broader public, the newsletter and the web site to solicit public comments. In addition we have the various levels of governments and regulators that we will be talking to.



This is our projected schedule and a living document. Mike talked about the two PLC meetings...the intent is to have a public meeting to explain the ToR in late June. We will get comments from that Public Information Forum and amend the ToR. We will then submit the ToR to the MOE and they will take a minimum of 3 months to approve it. While they are doing that, we will be documenting each of the alternative details. We'll be progressing with the alternatives work and be consulting you on that. We will be meeting with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and other groups throughout this period as well. In the fall we would be looking at all of the facts and figures and trying to evaluate the alternatives. We will be consulting you on this and your assessment of the alternatives. Next Christmas, we will have the preferred alternative that we will study in more detail. The rest of the schedule is spent studying that preferred alternative.

Discussion/Questions?

Open Discussion:

- The Study Purpose
- The Range and Type of Alternatives
- The Study Process
- The Proposed Consultation Plan and Schedule
- Other Issues

Questions & Discussion

Questions and Comments Regarding the Study Purpose...

Comment: Some of the alternatives that we will be studying don't necessarily have to have the option of the word express. I think we just need to provide a transportation link between Union and the airport. I don't want to limit the scope of the study unnecessarily – i.e. define express as 22 minutes or less.

Response: My definition is not 22 minutes, but it is not a bus that takes 1.5 hours.

Follow-Up Question: Can we use the word direct and not express?

Facilitator: Express implies a higher speed than some of the options and Dennis is saying that as long as the option is faster than cart and buggy, it is considered express. Dennis' definition is not 22 minutes.

Comment: We should be talking about a transportation link available to the larger public. We are looking at an express public system.

Comment: Perhaps use the word rapid instead of express.

Comment: We assume that you are looking at options that are faster than the current options.

Response: As we look at the different options, we will be trying to make the option as fast as possible. If I was looking at buses on the Gardiner for instance, it would have an express lane to make it faster.

Comment: Rapid implies faster than other methods and express means no stopping.

Question: Is this the exact wording taken from somewhere or is this a summary from old documents?

Response: In the ToR, there would be background information as well. Yes, we summarized our presentation from other previous documents.

Comment: The previous slide talked about a range of alternatives and I couldn't find that in the wording.

Response: The stuff we are talking about after this slide is the purpose of the study.

Comment: It appears that the goal of this study is to increase capacity rather than a process to find a solution and not a problem.

Facilitator: Very astute. If Dennis were to put a description of the problem in front of the two study purpose points – what would it be?

Response: The essence would be GO's ridership demand problem currently and in the future. GO can't accommodate enough riders.

Comment: The problem is the transportation of people from one area to another. The assumption here is that it is GO ridership as the solution.

Response: This study is for GO Transit and by GO Transit. We are studying GO's capacity problem.

Comment: There are many related problems to GO's capacity in terms of commuter traffic in communities. It is not only GO's problem.

Question: We seem to be reinventing the wheel. Did we not have an airport express that ran efficiently in the past? Then it went to the TTC?

Response: Yes, we did have that. It is part of what we are looking at. All of the options are moving people from downtown to the airport and back – this is the problem statement. Many cities in the world have express links to their airport (like Ottawa).

Question: You stated that the problem that is being addressed is moving people from downtown to the airport and vice versa?

Response: Yes – it is good for the community, the economy etc.

Comment: In terms of the Ottawa example, we know the train going to the airport stops in key business areas for a reason.

Response: I wasn't suggesting that this should not stop. That is a detail that will be looked at.

Comment: Under the study purpose, if you took out the word "GO" – that to me is more of a purpose than focused on one solution that is based on GO Transit itself.

Response: The problem we are dealing with is GO's problem. If the MTO hired us, it would be their mandated problem that we would be looking at etc. There is a specific and focused reason for being hired to do this study.

Response: Another example would be a municipality doing a transportation master plan.

Response: There is always a proponent in an EA. Somebody has to initiate the study. I think what Dennis is trying to explain is that we are trying to address GO Transit's mandate. I think the focus of that problem is the inter-regional issue. People seemed concerned that it is not really worded as a problem. The second problem I heard was having the word express in the problem statement because you are worried that the quickest solution would be chosen. I think I am hearing that we need to better articulate what is the background to the problem statement. The problem statement is our starting point to look at the types of alternatives. Our initial thoughts are that these are the reasonable ranges of alternatives. We are thinking that we have a problem and are mandated to look at a reasonable range of alternatives for getting from point A to point B – we have to think of how to write the problem statement, what the range of alternatives are and then as we move forward, get some ideas on how we come to a conclusion.

Facilitator: I hope the message that you are getting from the group is that these have to be prefaced by a problem statement versus the study purposes. Even here, there needs to be some serious word-smithing.

Comment: I realize that you have to represent a client. GO Transit is the Government of Ontario, which is us, and then there is Blue 22, which is private. Union Station is very crowded already and especially when there are sports events. I don't see the benefit of a link from Union to the airport. Only about 17% of the airport traffic will go downtown.

Response: I am hearing that these should be options looked at as alternatives. Dennis's slides also talk about inter-regional opportunities – as companions to the problem statement. Maybe that is a way to discuss that as opportunities. I see these as things that we should also consider.

Comment: If I was someone in Mississauga, I would question this project because it has no benefit to those residents.

Comment: GO Transit is the proponent of the first bullet point – who is the proponent for the increased service to the airport? Is that now under GO Transit's umbrella?

Response: GO Transit is the sponsor for the study. When we go through the different options, if an option requires another sponsor, that would happen. If it was a Blue 22 plus additional options, another proponent may pay for part of the solution. It will depend on the recommended solution. Only if you get to the rail option in the GO corridor would there be a co-proponent.

Question: Whose desire for a faster link between Union and the airport is it? Who started this?

Response: The federal government brought the issue forward.

Follow-Up Question: It was really transport Canada's initiative that got the problem into an EA then?

Response: Yes.

Comment: All EAs are project driven and the right side of this chart is not GO Transit. Go Transit is not really the "authority" for the airport express portion. You have not generated an EA as a result of a proposal. Get to the issue of the environment versus an environmental assessment.

Response: I have also had people say the opposite, that if you have a project and a proponent then the process is just smoke and mirrors. This is the first project I have been involved with where the proposal is not clear. McCormick Rankin is going to have to look at all of the options for addressing the problems and then determine who the proponent will be. This is kind of an interesting situation. I would suggest that as we move our way through the ToR, we can talk about all of the alternatives in terms of advantages and disadvantages to make objective recommendations.

Comment: Without the Union/Pearson people here to talk with us, if our conclusion does not support them, they could just do another EA.

Response: That won't happen. I have never seen a situation where a proponent has done that.

Facilitator: Why can't we arrange for them to be at the table?

Response: We can.

Comment: If we eliminate the Blue 22 option, then there is no reason for them to be at the table.

Response: That is why Dennis did the diagram to show that only if you get to the green box you will have the Blue 22 folks involved.

Questions and Comments Regarding the Alternatives...

Comment by Mike Bricks: We are trying to say that we have a mandate to study the transportation problem to the airport and we are committed to looking at a range of alternatives and the advantages and disadvantages before the next stage of the design. I think we have some really good ideas about the problem and purpose statement to incorporate the discussions. The next question is – the range and types of alternatives...I think maybe we should spend some time looking at the airport link issue. Are there other options that we would be adding to that list?

Comment: I don't have a problem with UPEG not being here, assuming that there is not a project that someone is defending. If we are doing this in a real public process, it is strange in this context that we can look at all of the alternatives. I don't have a problem with them not being here as long as the above is not the case.

Response: The team will do some additional work on this.

Comment: To protect local communities...some of the opportunities are to talk about the good things that would happen if the traffic were alleviated or more stations were put in communities. I think we need to discuss other additional opportunities as well.

Response: We will do that when we get to the details of the study.

Response: Maybe we should brainstorm some of those opportunities. I hear we should not just look at protecting communities, but also enhancing communities. (Environmental, socio-economic...)

Comment: Long-term...it mentions long-term impacts, but I would be interested in long-term benefits – 50 years out.

Comment: Long-term impacts or benefits is something that has not been talked about at all. CEAA is not here either. CEAA requires that the EA study look at cumulative environmental effects, and so if there is a vibration problem that will effect your house...it will look at that.

Response: An EA that we just planned in Ottawa was based on a 30 year planning horizon. We are always looking at that long-term plan.

Response: In terms of CEAA, we have to look at number 1- current service levels on that corridor, and number 2 - future service levels on that rail corridor. The cumulative impact of the project and other planned projects.

Question: Can we have an extra meeting to deal with this stuff?

Response: Lets stick with 9:30pm to finish tonight and we will look at another meeting.

Comment: It strikes me that your colour-codes are subliminally leading to the conclusion you want.

Response: I used the red as stop and the green as go (not GO Transit).

Question: Would the idea of better and more efficient buses and or trains be a planning alternative?

Response: That would fit if we picked buses as a solution, then we would look at that in the alternatives methods. The suggestion is valid for the next phase.

Question: Going back to the question of UPEG not being at the table and the composition of the PLC – the woodbine entertainment group is listed as to be determined in the guide - why? When will it be determined and will they be at the table?

Response: They were invited and said they would have a representative here. They did not provide us with a name to put on the list, but they said they would be here.

Question: Was Humber College invited? Why the Woodbine Entertainment group and not the college?

Response: They expressed an interest.

Comment: There is speculation that this will be a “gambling train”.

Response: Woodbine has been a potential station site for a lot longer than Blue 22 has been around. It is a very large area that would have commuter parking lot space and the benefit of the racetrack. The problem is that the Halton and other stations are fairly close and it makes more sense to consolidate. 427 is a major transportation corridor – anytime you can get a GO station next to a major highway, you will take people off of that highway.

Follow-Up Comment: I know that GO was looking at Woodbine as a consolidation. Some of the documents made this a suspicion and Blue 22 mentioned having a stop in that area.

Response: You wouldn't have 3 stations in that small of a “block”. We would consolidate those stations into 2 or 1 and Woodbine was one of the options.

Follow-Up Comment: It seems very “convenient”.

Response: I look at it as getting people off the 427 before the QEW and into Toronto.

Questions/Comment Period for Observers

Question: The reason for the confusion at the beginning is that it was our understanding that TTC would be part of this committee and Transportation. I am surprised that the TTC is not here. They should be at this table. We were also told that councilors would be able to attend and participate. All of the councilors that were at the briefing presentation made by GO Transit and the consulting team were under that impression. Councilors from the TTC were also very interested in this committee. There is no point in making a decision and then getting to the red and telling us to stop. If we decide as a committee to proceed with these alternatives, all of the parties have to be at the table. Not after you make the decision. I have a problem with the whole set-up tonight. We also said that Blue 22 should be taken out of your presentation. Our briefing and what you are doing tonight seem to be completely different. TTC should be here because we are all in this and responsible...the feds, the province and the City. I don't agree that the meeting should be at 6:30pm and it should be in the community. I can get you a place free.

Comment: Meetings should be in a civic centre and I think you will be able to see more residents there. The study purpose – add the bullet point: “to serve the communities and neighbourhoods directly in the corridor”. This should be a driving principle. I continually hear two things from residents. 1. How it interfaces with St. Clair Avenue west, and the need for a station or the continuation of the grade separation there. Better integrate with the GO service on St. Clair. The second point is about the West Toronto Rail project, which involves the abandoned western corridor turned into a bike path from Dupont all the way through the village. The residents love that idea. The fate of that idea will be determined through this EA. The City council has said that this is a high priority. I want to be very clearly on record that this has to be part of the conclusion from this project.

Comment: I thought this was a serious EA with lots of meetings. I find that a major concern. Are the three core consultation streams equal? I find it troublesome that council recommendations are not incorporated. Who are the agencies and government reps? Who are the stakeholders? How much weight does the public consultation hold? The whole question of transportation – public transportation is something we care about. I have a whole lot of questions about the process.

Response: This is one forum for input. We will be meeting with councilors as often as they require. There are all of the government agencies as well that are being consulted. We have literally just started this study. We have had one meeting with council to date.

Follow-Up Question: Who are the stakeholders and how do you rate the input? For example, if the planning department says I like the idea and the councilor says that I don't – who do you listen to?

Facilitator: The general public means the residents and people that live in the study area as well as other interested people.

Follow-Up Comment: To develop trust, we have to know who you are talking to.

Questions/Comment Period for Observers

Response: The two meetings are for the ToR stage and then there are more meetings planned throughout the year and a half of studies. The two meetings I was referring to are tonight and the end of May. We have a PIF in June for the ToR. The actual study starts after that – meetings will happen throughout.

Comment: The minutes of the council meeting indicated that councilors would be invited but would not be a member of the committee. The TTC and the City would be met with separately.

Question: How was the PLC composition determined and how was it advertised? For the life of me, I don't understand why GO transit has bundled their express service. If you "un-bundled" those two parts of the proposal and just add extra trains it would be uncomplicated matters.

Response: With respect to the committee, we worked with the City of Toronto planning department and contacted all of the ratepayers groups. The groups in Etobicoke did not express an interest in our invitation. Those that responded to us are sitting at this table.

Response: The original Blue 22 was private and federal – not a provincial EA process. The federal process is far less rigorous. GO Transit is providing the opportunity for an IEA for a rail link to the corridor.

Question: What is GO's mandate? Is there a mandate for inter-regional or a mandate that also includes service to areas not just in and out of the city?

Response: It is an inter-regional service – not able to be provided by say the City of Toronto – it crosses boundaries. Having said that, we do run some local services like the Yonge Street line that we used to run on behalf of York Region.

Follow-Up Comment: It goes to purpose as it is stated as inter-regional travel. I just wanted to check that that was accurate.

Response: The majority of our station stops are in the City of Toronto. There are express trains that are full and we are struggling to fill in the gaps so everyone has an opportunity for good service.

Follow-Up Question: What is the minimum distance between stops roughly?

Response: 3 or 4 miles is desirable.

Comment: It was good to hear that Blue 22 was private but a public funding. You also said that it is not a done deal, but it was last year. Where is the Blue 22 and what is the status? Is it still on the table? Is SNC Lavalin behind it?

Response: I guess it stands that they cannot proceed with that project until they get EA approval.

Response: Until we go through the EA and IF it is the selected alternative, then it would still be on the table.

Question: The Toronto District School Board is represented here – there is a Catholic School on the line and no representation here. I am a property owner on the track and never received a notification of this meeting. If we are going to be affected, then it makes sense that we should be notified.

Response: I don't know if the Catholic school was invited. This meeting itself is not really a public meeting. In fact, normally it would be closed. This is a forum to get a flavour of the community and then we will have public meetings that everyone will be notified of. We will have a good draft of the ToR when we come to the public in June. This PLC is to give us some focused input.

Follow-Up Question: Can I suggest that everyone along the line get notification of the public meeting?

Response: Yes absolutely.

Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Facilitator: I suggest that an e-mail be sent to the PLC with tentative dates of May 24, 25, 31, or June 1 (Wednesday or Thursday) for the next meeting. Tonight's conversation will be picked up. We will start at 7pm at the next meeting.

Note: The venue will be changed - everyone will be notified of the location.

Comment: I would like this committee to request the proponent to ask TTC and the Union Station people to participate.

Comment: I think this is a public liaison committee – invite these people as resources and observers rather than a key participant.

Comment: If there is a reason that we are concerned that this is a done deal – it is because David Miller has publicly stated that it is a done deal.

Adjourn: 9:45pm