



**Statement by Carolyn Konheim
Chair, Community Consulting Services
Brooklyn Borough Board, December 12, 2005
Atlantic Yards Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)**

Following on the presentation that Brian Ketcham, Executive Director of CCS, made last Monday in regard to what the Borough Board should look for in regard to traffic, Carolyn Konheim was asked by the Borough President to address transit and pedestrian issues. Her statement follows this recap of her relevant experience.

Carolyn is the principal author of the landmark 2003 Brooklyn Transit Agenda based on an analysis of the borough's transit needs developed with most of the borough's community boards. It is supported by the Brooklyn delegation to the New York State Assembly, the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, the NYC Transit Riders Council, Straphangers Campaign, Save the G Coalition, #3 Line Transportation Committee and Transportation Alternatives. Its strategies form the backbone of the conditional support of the Downtown Brooklyn Development Plan by Community Board #2's Transportation and Public Safety Committee of which Carolyn is now a member.

For the committee, Carolyn and Brian, both environmental professionals, donated detailed analyses of the scope and DEIS of the DTB rezoning. In regard to transit, Carolyn built a widespread insistence that the DEIS assess the impact of the City's largest rezoning proposal on the capacity of subway line-haul service, not just on stations and stairways and include the embryonic plans for Atlantic Yards. In response, a supplemental DEIS was issued 10 days before the ULURP hearing before the City Planning Commission. In her analysis of the SDEIS, Carolyn found that, among several fundamental flaws, it used entries into Manhattan as the surrogate for subway links into DTB from the rest of Brooklyn, which her analysis showed was the chokepoint. This was partially corrected in the FEIS, but manipulated to avoid the need for any substantive service mitigation, such as expanding the subway fleet to be able to respond to growing demand, the extension of the LIRR into Lower Manhattan (connected to a full length Second Avenue Subway), with four stops in Brooklyn to relieve the at-capacity A/C and 4/5 lines, introducing state-of-the-art bus services in subway-starved southern Brooklyn and free MetroCard transfers between nearby subway lines to better utilize capacity (e.g., between the #3 and the L in East New York to free up space on the hugely crowded L as it approaches growing Williamsburg.) This was a key point in Carolyn's analysis of the Greenpoint-Williamsburg rezoning EIS and her work with East New York groups.

Carolyn has promoted these concepts with the Brooklyn Chamber in Albany and Washington, as a contributor to the Southern Brooklyn Transportation Study and at hearings on the Regional Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, the Second Avenue Subway, the MTA Capital Budget and fare increase and the scopes of the LIRR extension study, the Atlantic Yards DEIS and the DTB Transportation Blueprint (a response by the City to criticism of the deficiencies of the DTB DEIS.) She is providing similar services to Defenders of Brooklyn Bridge Park.

Carolyn has also been the most prolific pro bono analyst of the DTB Traffic Calming Project, initiated and nurtured by Brian Ketcham over two decades. She has drawn on her experience in cities abroad, serving on the Transportation Research Board Pedestrian Committee and redesigning both ends of the Brooklyn Bridge for bicyclists and pedestrians to propose more effective strategies to protect neighborhood streets from through traffic and smooth traffic flow (but curtail speeds) on major arteries.

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1) Is the DEIS presenting an accurate picture of baseline conditions in 2008, 2016, 2025?

- Does the Atlantic Yards DEIS account for the eventual full build out of DTB rezoning?
- Does it fully examine trips from Brooklyn into DTB or continue emphasis on trips to Manhattan?
- Does it replace background subway ridership growth of only 0.5%/yr with level to reflect growth outside DTB and riders needed to maintain Brooklyn's 20% share of jobs in Manhattan by 2025?
- Is the DEIS using MTA Transit Demand Model, kept up to date with on-going passenger counts?
- Closest approximation: NYMTC's regional model. Southern Bklyn model maybe better.
- Map and table extracted by CCS from NYMTC model of 2007 for 6-10 AM show:
 - Atlantic Avenue already heaviest location of exiting passengers; how many are transfers?
 - 1/3 more inbound riders get off in Downtown than get on to go to Manhattan
 - Heaviest ridership – B, D, N, Q, next A/C, then 2,3,4,5
 - Chokepoint into Atl Yds more than into Man, can absorb residential growth of DTB
 - Need to know peaking pattern—is it same as to/fr Man? 46% 8-9 AM, 42% 5-6 PM

2) Does the DEIS assume realistic, fully documented factors for transit use?

- Need to correlate development outside DTB with ridership growth, 4%/yr avg. 1998-2002
- Travel mode of DTB and Atl Yd development needs to be based on Brooklyn examples
- All assumptions, survey data must be documented in DEIS
- CCS estimate: Arena subway trips 32% in PM peak hour vs. 58% residential

3) Is train capacity properly calculated?

- Must be based on MTA standards, not CEQR, assume 10% more can fit on trains

4) Are transit trips assigned to the proper lines?

- Trips must be based on where people coming from based on current use and growth. Brooklyn Chamber is tracking borough wide development, need GIS to map development.

5) Are transit deficiencies accurately reported?

- DTB FEIS: B in AM/PM, 3 in PM over capacity, but 5 more passengers/car deemed "not significant impact." (CCS found more impact using MTA car capacity, current rider patterns.)
- Potential for added capacity? All lines in "shoulders," not in AM peak on B, A/C, 4/5, 3 in PM

6) Does the DEIS use MTA model to assess how proposed transit improvements meet needs?

- Jay-Lawrence St connection does nothing for DTB-bound riders, only to Man.
- Junius/Livonia connection: better access fr So Bklyn to DTB, frees up space on L
- Other MetroCard transfers from lines w/o direct access to Atl Yds (A, C, F, G)
- Improve access to Man East Side (V train into Bklyn, more Ls, 2nd Ave Sub to Bklyn)
- Need more cars, but no rehab of cars to expand the fleet because no storage space
- No improvement for B and no incentive to get southern Bklyn drivers out of cars
- Extension of LIRR to Low Man w/four Bklyn stops connected by BRT might do so
- BRT with GPS bus tracking fastest way to increase service to transit-poor areas
- Restructure bus routes to serve current riderhip patterns and future demands

7) How can those services be funded?

- Only untapped source is ending E-Z Pass discount (\$112 million/yr) and Man CBD entry fee via E-Z Pass on bridges and across 59th St. (\$1 billion). Over 20 years, could fund all above.

8) Does DEIS consider attributes of pedestrian environment other than sidewalk capacity?

- How well are pedestrian desire lines accommodated?
- Are pedestrian pathways visually and physically interesting and inviting?
- Is DEIS considering alternatives, like the Pacific Plan, which creates more neighborhood retail streets? (Big improvement: replacing Gehry "tipsy towers" w/ traditional design.)
- Is the DEIS reporting and addressing the very high pedestrian crashes in the 4th/Atl/Flatbush intersection, by more than a pedestrian subway tunnel to the Arena?
- Is the DEIS exploring the proposal of the DTB Traffic Calming Study to simplify and improve traffic and ped movements in the 4th/Atl/Flatbush intersection by redirecting surrounding streets to create a giant roundabout? (It was not pursued primarily because it would require the taking of one small property--not an obstacle to Atlantic Yards project.)