



March 20, 2015

Cross Harbor Project
PORT AUTHORITY OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY
Re: Comments on TIER1 DEIS

PortSide New York commends the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) for undertaking this project.

We believe that freight movement in the region needs to be improved, that it needs to be diversified as to transportation mode, that the reliance on trucks needs to be reduced, and that waterborne transportation needs to be re-developed.

We believe there are workaday reasons for this change and that good planning for emergencies, natural and manmade, calls for alternatives to bridges and tunnels, and more redundancy and alternatives. The 9/11 attacks, the 2003 blackout, and superstorm Sandy tell us that. Emergency waterborne evacuation and resupply and emergency ferries were key during 9/11. There was a massive waterborne evacuation of Manhattan during the 2003 blackout, and emergency ferries were key after Sandy.

Being an organization with a water focus, PortSide New York will address comments below on the proposed rail float operations rather than the tunnel.

Reasons to make the change current regional freight handling

- The reliance on trucks has led to excessive traffic. This is a drag on business. During the Comprehensive Port Improvement Plan (CPIP) planning process, many Brooklyn businesses complained that traffic to NJ ports was so bad that driving times were too long and too unpredictable, making it hard to schedule their pick ups.
- Much of the study focuses on the need to improve freight movement for the future, but we contend that for everyone the truck burden is excessive NOW because it:
 - slows driving times
 - leads to serious air pollution problems (waterborne transportation causes less air pollution)
 - causes such wear and tear on roads and bridges that they are in a constant state of repair (or shambles).

Aspects to consider

We recommend making the barge a combined roll-on, roll-off (RORO) barge. Because:

- This will help service businesses in NYC East of the Hudson. The belt of manufacturing businesses from the Brooklyn Navy Yard to Sunset Park and big box stores lining the Brooklyn waterfront are likely customers.
- Servicing trucks will help the carfloat business grow faster, as the service grows, carfloat frequency will increase making the service more desirable.
- The RORO option will allow oversize items, large construction equipment, the modular houses being assembled in the Brooklyn Navy yard, etc to be moved without jamming up the roadways.
- This would also allow the possibility of adding air freight to the service. The FedEx and UPS depots for most of the boroughs are within a few hundred yards of the waterfront. The FedEx a depot in Sunset Park a short drive from your float bridges.
- It would make the service a stronger resiliency asset because people could be evacuated on buses, emergency equipment such as ambulances or firetrucks could be mobilized to the location, temporary housing trailers, or food and medicine in bulk could be delivered, etc.

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We recommend looking at other NYC locations that could be temporary/emergency docking locations:

The arc of World Trade Center story from construction to destruction captures the possibilities. Original steel tridents of the buildings were brought in by water; the WTC 9/11 rubble was removed by water from at two sites in lower Manhattan.

The original WTC 9/11 rubble removal plan was to truck it out which would have taken two years, exposed the city to toxic dust and overburdened the roads and bridges. The rubble was removed by water, cutting the removal time from two years to eight months. More at <http://portsidenewyork.org/911-maritime-response/>

Manhattan no longer has a heavy lift cargo area, and it should. The barge float could, as above, deliver oversized items (generators, building components, emergency).

Resiliency plans for lower Manhattan are being discussed (“the Big U” now called “the Dryline” more at <http://ny.curbed.com/tags/big-u>). It should include a port facility that could receive a barge float for evacuation/removal or delivery of items.

We recommend looking at other locations in NYC that could be long-term partners for regular service

Look into distribution from Hunts Point by water.

- Roberta Weisbrod and Alex Jordan completed a study on marine and rail distribution several years ago.
- Post Sandy, Mal McLaren of McLaren Engineering participated in a study of how to make Hunts Point more resilient and recommended waterborne distribution.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Carolina Salguero
President
PortSide New York