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STATE OF MAINE

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
and  
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION  
IN COOPERATION WITH  
THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PUBLIC HEARING PURSUANT TO THE NATIONAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT TO SEEK PUBLIC COMMENTS  
REGARDING THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE  
PROPOSED ACADIA GATEWAY CENTER IN THE COMMUNITY OF  
TRENTON, MAINE

Held on September 7, 2006, commencing at 7 p.m.

APPEARANCES:

TRACY PEREZ, MAINEDOT  
RON ROY, MAINEDOT  
ANNA PRICE, MAINEDOT  
JAMES DUNCAN, DMJM HARRIS

MODERATOR: JIM FISHER, HANCOCK COUNTY PLANNING

Taken Before: Tammy M. Smith  
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1           **QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

2    Susan Lawsley

3    Beth Lieberman

4    Cathy Stanley

5    Marge Dole

6    Dick Salisbury

7    Lee Brown

8    Tom Testa

9    Art Dole

10   Joanne Haracz

11   Peter Lazas

12   Bill Hinckley

13   Tom Sawyer

14   Jim Cameron

15   John Courtin

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1 MS. PEREZ: Good evening. Thank you  
2 for coming out tonight. I'm Tracy Perez from  
3 MaineDOT. Tonight is a public hearing on the  
4 Acadia Welcome Center in Trenton. We've been  
5 here many times before. Tonight is a little  
6 bit different in that it is a formal public  
7 hearing which is required by the  
8 Environmental Act in which we're doing the

9 environmental assessment under. The format  
10 will be very similar to what we've done in  
11 the past, but we are recording this. A draft  
12 of the transcript has to be submitted to the  
13 Federal Transit Administration.

14 I'm going to introduce Jay Duncan, a  
15 consultant, in a minute who will take you  
16 through what we've been up to for the last  
17 feels like at least five years. I think it's  
18 only been eight months. And then we're going  
19 to open it up to public comments. Jim Fisher  
20 from Hancock County Planning will facilitate  
21 that. And I know you all know who you are,  
22 but every time you come up to speak you have  
23 to say your name into the microphone. We  
24 have to have a record for the Federal Transit  
25 Administration.

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1 Tonight, as I said, is the final public

2 meeting for the environmental assessment  
3 which is now public. There are copies of the  
4 executive summary in the back. There's also  
5 a sign-up sheet. And if you would like, we  
6 can send you a copy or there's one available  
7 at the town office as well as the Ellsworth  
8 Library. If you do want a copy, make sure  
9 you see me at the end of the meeting or take  
10 my card and let me know. Comments tonight  
11 will be transcribed in a document, but after  
12 that, comments have to be submitted to me in  
13 writing. We have 60 days to respond to all  
14 public comments. We then submit the  
15 environmental assessment as well as your  
16 comments and our responses to those comments  
17 to the Federal Transit Administration, who  
18 will in two to three weeks give us what we  
19 hope will be a finding of no significant  
20 environmental impact, and that will allow us  
21 to move forward into the second phase of the  
22 project, which is preliminary design. We'll  
23 be doing more design work and come up with a  
24 firmer idea of what it will cost and then

25           come to the town and state as well as federal

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1           agencies and get all the necessary permits.  
2           If all these are going according to schedule,  
3           we hope to be beginning construction in 2008  
4           and have the first phase of the project open  
5           in 2010.

6           Jay will explain a little bit more, and  
7           I ask that you hold your comments and  
8           questions to Jay until the end because he may  
9           answer them when he goes through, and then  
10          we'll open it up to the public for comments.

11          MR. DUNCAN: Good evening everybody.  
12          We're going to talk about the process we've  
13          been going through for the last about eight  
14          months. Many of you have been here before,  
15          so we're going to give you a quick overview  
16          first of what we've been up to. These are  
17          the things we want to cover tonight on the  
18          purpose and need, talk about how it's refined

19 a little bit during the process, get into the  
20 benefits and the impacts as we have evaluated  
21 them throughout the process and the next  
22 steps, then we'll open it up for you to be  
23 able to provide your comments. This is the  
24 -- from the beginning of the process we  
25 started out, we had what we want to achieve

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1 at the end of the process. Basically what we  
2 want to do is support (inaudible) to use the  
3 island (inaudible). The first thing we want  
4 to do is create transit use, get people off  
5 other cars, access the parking and Mount  
6 Desert Island and Trenton areas by using  
7 transit rather than the cars, provide visitor  
8 information about Acadia National Park and  
9 increase the knowledge about what the park  
10 has to offer, not only the park, but also  
11 regional uses and give general business

12 information and what this area has to offer,  
13 provide rest rooms for visitors, increase  
14 those facilities to be able to service this  
15 area much better than we do now, provide Down  
16 East Transportation with a consolidated  
17 facility for their administration, their  
18 operations, their maintenance, storage and  
19 fueling of the buses. Right now it's not  
20 very secure, it's not very efficient. And  
21 also we'd like to support the expansion of  
22 the island. Right now it's very difficult.  
23 And the property itself, protecting the  
24 resources, the value, the nature of the  
25 property, which is the focus of this project

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1 here.  
2 The site location, we have a map here  
3 and also up here. Basically we're north of,  
4 about a mile and a half north of the  
5 airport. On the western side is the location

6 of the site. I'll give you more of a close  
7 up in terms of this parcel that we're  
8 actually looking at. Here's Route 3 here,  
9 369 acre parcel that Friends of Acadia has an  
10 option to buy. This is the focus of this  
11 study, what we see here in this outline, the  
12 actual outline of the project we're talking  
13 about here tonight.

14 Just to give you an overview of the  
15 process that led up to the (inaudible).  
16 First we looked at all the studies that were  
17 out there that was conducted before we got  
18 involved, studies in the region, studies  
19 locally, and then we pulled some of the  
20 alternatives in terms of the specific sites  
21 we wanted to look at. Actually, there was a  
22 process before us where they did a lot of  
23 that. We looked at that again just to kind  
24 of do a reality check, looked at how that  
25 process, you know, occurred and if we needed

1 to do anything else. And we talked about  
2 that a lot. Then we looked at the location  
3 and we kind of developed a program. The  
4 program describes all the different  
5 automobiles that we need to have in play. We  
6 allocated that in developing building  
7 layouts. We did a first level analysis of  
8 certain criteria and reduced that number down  
9 to (inaudible). We did another analysis and  
10 then we identified environmental impact and  
11 things like that. So the end of that process  
12 was what call a preferred alternative. So  
13 that's the layout that we want to focus in  
14 on. And some of you were at the alternative  
15 meeting when we talked a lot more about  
16 that. Here's the bays so the buses come in,  
17 and this is dedicated just to buses. And  
18 here's a remote piece of it. And this is  
19 Maine National Park Service piece of it. We  
20 have some, you know, large RV parking here,  
21 some overflow parking that is up here during

22 peek periods. And this is the main facility  
23 back here and then some employee parking for  
24 Down East Transportation. So those are  
25 generally the elements. We also have some

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1 trails going through the property between and  
2 then up into Beaver Pond. Those are the  
3 general elements of it. We look down closer  
4 -- we put this one up because we wanted to  
5 kind of give you a sense of how this looked.  
6 We actually did some field investigation last  
7 fall, and then because of the weather, we  
8 didn't have enough information. So after we  
9 developed the plan the first time, we went  
10 out and did some more research, got some  
11 better information and revised it to try to  
12 reduce the wetland impact even more.  
13 This is just the roof plan to kind of  
14 give you a sense of how from, you know, the  
15 top view. The building would be all

16 integrated together. And again, I want just  
17 to stress this is a conceptual plan. This is  
18 just a sense of, you know, using our  
19 expertise and our design guidelines. We  
20 thought this would be, you know, one option.  
21 As this project moves forward, these things  
22 will be flushed out further. These aren't  
23 construction plans. After this hearing we're  
24 not going to get out there and, you know, put  
25 a shovel in the ground. There's still a lot

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1 to have happen, a lot more design, a lot more  
2 coordination. So again, this is just a  
3 concept of what we see this facility fully  
4 based on the character of the site, the needs  
5 of the users.

6 This is technically the front of the  
7 facility here. This is the rear. There will  
8 be a parking guard, and he will be visible.

9 We have common entrance here. There's also a  
10 petty good-sized rest room facility here for  
11 visitors. We're talking 40,000 square feet  
12 generally is the layout we have here. So  
13 that's the first floor. And then we do have  
14 some second floor space in the welcome center  
15 side where there will be offices and things  
16 like that. But for the most part, the  
17 facility is a one-floor configuration.

18 In terms of the maintenance facility on  
19 the back end of the site, we have the main  
20 building here. This is actually a wash bay,  
21 and then there's some storage which would  
22 help keep the buses warm and enable them to  
23 operate better in the wintertime.

24 This here is kind of what you would see  
25 coming in from Route 3. So the intent of it

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1 is to kind of make it appear like you're  
2 entering the park. We have a lot of similar

3 elements. You have cobble stones that are in  
4 the park now to make this very inviting.  
5 That's just kind of a sense of what it could  
6 look like. And also there's bike lanes  
7 throughout the property and the walkways to  
8 encourage bike use and trail use. And this  
9 is the courtyard. And finally we did a  
10 little rendering of the maintenance facility  
11 which would be further back from the rest of  
12 the property and visitors.

13 To summarize, the project is certainly a  
14 benefit to the park. One of the big issues  
15 is trying to get more cars out of the park  
16 and get people on the transit and improve the  
17 situation there. There's also an opportunity  
18 to provide recreational and educational  
19 opportunities. There's a lot of that that  
20 Friends of Acadia is involved with and the  
21 park is involved with that is also located on  
22 this property as well.

23 In terms of the wetlands, we have about  
24 a little over two acres of wetland impact.  
25 We are going above and beyond what is

1 suggested anyway that mitigation be  
2 substantial to address that impact. The  
3 wetlands are mostly in the front, so we're  
4 suggesting, committing actually, to  
5 mitigation. Also, the former uses of the  
6 property did do some damage to the existing  
7 wetlands has had an impact on the property  
8 when it was lost. We really want to improve  
9 this situation significantly over what's  
10 there now. In terms of water quality,  
11 there's environmental features of the creek  
12 and other features on site.

13 You have now a number of cars entering  
14 and exiting Route 3 in this location. Most  
15 of you know that traffic can be tough there.  
16 We are recommending a traffic signal. We are  
17 also suggesting dedicated turning lanes to  
18 bring traffic that's turning out of the

19 mainstream traffic. The traffic light would  
20 change once a certain number of cars got into  
21 view, and it would only last a certain period  
22 of time. That's our recommendation, and that  
23 certainly needs to be worked out. MaineDOT  
24 needs to sign off on that. In order to  
25 accommodate the turning lanes, we have to

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1 widen the right of way a little bit, so we  
2 have a small take in there.

3 This is this phasing plan. Here we show  
4 the full plan. And even though we evaluated  
5 the impact of everything because we have to  
6 look at the worse case, there are discussions  
7 to phase this project. One reason is the  
8 funding. Not all of it is available. And  
9 then we're also looking at what's the most  
10 dire need to get on line. And the focus --  
11 Phase 1 is the roadway, this parking lot and  
12 maintenance facility and the uses associated

13 with that, so that would be the first phase.  
14 We're suggesting that would happen in 2009  
15 right now, construction starting in 2008,  
16 would be on line in 2009. The Phase 2 piece  
17 then is the parking lot, the main parking  
18 lots and the bus way and the (inaudible)  
19 center, the entrance and the rest rooms and a  
20 good portion of the visitor center; so it  
21 would be sales and information. So the first  
22 phase you provide access to the buses, you  
23 provide parking and then you provide some of  
24 the access to the National Park Service  
25 facility, and that's 2012. Now Phase 3 right

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1 now we have -- this is 2012 as well, but  
2 that's kind of, you know, (inaudible). We  
3 wanted to maximize the investment in Phase  
4 2. And then we have Phase 4 which is the  
5 theaters. The first phases are really public

6 funds for the most part. So that's the  
7 phases that have to be determined.

8 In terms of the ability to operate, all  
9 the parties have gotten together and decided  
10 this is one scenario at this point. First of  
11 all, Friends purchases the property, and the  
12 intention is that they would sell a portion  
13 of it, the 21 acres that we would need, to  
14 MaineDOT. MaineDOT would then build Phase 1,  
15 as we suggested, and then lease the land back  
16 to Down East Transportation. Down East  
17 Transportation would then operate and  
18 maintain the property. So the roadway, their  
19 building, they would maintain the upkeep of  
20 it because they'd be the primary users. In  
21 terms of Phase 2, it's probably more  
22 appropriate for National Park Service to  
23 operate all the visitor center, so basically  
24 they would maintain it and would make sure  
25 it's cleaned. So in Phase 3, that's the rest

1 of the National Park Service building.  
2 MaineDOT leases the land to National Park  
3 Service.

4 So basically, that's the end of the  
5 presentation. We have the information up  
6 here. We can get that to everybody right now  
7 I'm going to turn it over to Tracy who can  
8 turn it over to Jim.

9 MS. PEREZ: All right. Thank you.  
10 We're having a little trouble hearing.

11 We are not at this time looking at a  
12 dedicated bus way or trail way from this site  
13 down to (inaudible) other than the driveway.  
14 Other than the immediate traffic impact,  
15 we're not looking at (inaudible) to Route  
16 230. We are working with the town through  
17 other parts of the DOT to address some of  
18 those issues (inaudible) Hancock County.

19 Now I'm going to turn it over to Jim.

20 MR. FISHER: Well, I also apologize for  
21 the sound system. It's a mystery to me.

22 Thank you for coming. My role is only

23 to help get individuals up to the microphone  
24 so that you can ask your question. Because  
25 we have everything recorded by stenographer,

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1 it's important for you to state your name.  
2 And with that, I'll open it up. Are there  
3 any questions or comments?  
4 MR. GREENE: My name is Steve Greene  
5 from Bar Harbor. Is there adequate cellular  
6 phone coverage in the area? Because the idea  
7 here is to increase mobility. It's going to  
8 be a big flood of people, but I don't see any  
9 provisions for banks of pay phones. A lot of  
10 people are going to be calling ahead, you  
11 know, is our room ready, even while they're  
12 on the shuttle to call back to base or one of  
13 the shuttles coming or Mom, I'm on my way  
14 there. Everybody that comes has a cell  
15 phone, and if they can't use them in this

16 facility, our contingency plan has to be put  
17 in place, and what major planners do is they  
18 actually bring in additional facilities to  
19 put up. A lot times it's a temporary tower,  
20 and they'll have to put in something a bit  
21 more robust than that to be able to have cell  
22 phone access. In particular, when this all  
23 comes on line, it will be 2012. There's an  
24 awful lot more location-based services with  
25 the mobile internet. They're going to be

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1 available.

2 MR. FISHER: Would anybody like to  
3 respond to that?

4 MR. DUNCAN: Certainly the specifics of  
5 the design from a pay phone standpoint hasn't  
6 been flushed out. In terms of cellular,  
7 that's certainly a private investment  
8 question. It could be accommodated. We are  
9 very very concerned about any towers or

10 anything that will degrade the look. I  
11 understand it's a concern. I have the same  
12 problem. But in terms of that, that's  
13 certainly a possibility. Pay phones would  
14 absolutely be part of this facility.

15 MR. FISHER: If we still have pay  
16 phones 2012.

17 Other questions, comments?

18 MS. KATES: My name is Ellie Kates, and  
19 I think why you're not getting so many  
20 questions coming from the rest of us is  
21 because we have not been involved. We would  
22 like to be involved. I'm wondering why  
23 haven't we been that involved in this.

24 MR. FISHER: We had a committee formed  
25 by the town select board to represent the

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1 community in other meetings and in the  
2 planning. We created a website

3 Acadiagateway.com. We tried to put  
4 information there. I believe this is the  
5 second or the third newsletter we've sent  
6 out. So we've certainly made an effort, and  
7 I take to heart that in future planning we'll  
8 continue to make an effort to bring public  
9 involvement in the process.

10 Any other comments or questions?

11 MS. LAWSLEY: Susan Lawsley. I have  
12 two questions. What elements of the land use  
13 are inconsistent with existing zoning right  
14 now, and how is sewage and waste water to be  
15 handled and what's the expected volume that  
16 will need to be handled?

17 MS. PEREZ: With regards to land use,  
18 this property has three different zones. The  
19 first part is your rural commercial zone.  
20 This is larger than that other zone. This is  
21 40,000 square feet total. The rest of it,  
22 that is the size of that is consistent with  
23 this zone of that area. This facility also  
24 is consistent with the your corridor  
25 overlay. The sewage, we have to meet all

1 regulations.

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Do you have an  
3 estimate of expected volume of sewage and  
4 waste water?

5 MR. DUNCAN: We have calculated that.

6 MR. FISHER: Thank you. Someone else?

7 MS. LIEBERMAN: My name's Beth  
8 Lieberman. If Friends of Acadia buys this  
9 and we pass it off to DOT and then they have  
10 to hand it off to the National Park Service,  
11 is there a guaranty that there will be  
12 funding for this beautiful building and that  
13 plaza and we won't be left with a parking  
14 lot?

15 MS. PEREZ: I'll try to answer it. It  
16 will be done in phases. The first phase,  
17 which is the maintenance facility, we do have  
18 most of the funding. Friends of Acadia will  
19 (inaudible) 360 acres. MaineDOT will

20 purchase that facility from the Friends of  
21 Acadia. At that time we will develop it  
22 using federal and state funding. I'm not  
23 sure whether we'll sell it or rent it or  
24 lease it to the Park Service. We're looking  
25 at different options. The town received

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1 money to help cover the cost of the facility,  
2 but it would be -- the rest of the lot and a  
3 majority of the land would be preserved by  
4 Friends of Acadia. DOT would only own the  
5 part in the front. Does that answer your  
6 question?

7 MS. LIEBERMAN: If the rest of the  
8 funding doesn't come through, do we have a  
9 parking lot?

10 MS. PEREZ: No. The first phase that  
11 we're going to build is that maintenance  
12 facility in the back and the parking that's

13 necessary for the people who work there and  
14 the small amount of parking which is because  
15 of one of the needs for people who car pool  
16 in and out of this area or who may want to  
17 take the Down East Transit bus to Ellsworth  
18 or Bangor. We wouldn't build the second  
19 phase, the major parking lot, unless we had  
20 the money to build the whole facility. If we  
21 don't get the funding for the mobile  
22 facility, we're not going to go with just the  
23 parking lot.

24 MR. DUNCAN: And the nature of the site  
25 is that initially in Phase 1 that the parking

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1 lot that is there, because of the tree line,  
2 it's actually streamed from -- you can see  
3 there's a roadway. You wouldn't be left with  
4 a parking lot.

5 MR. FISHER: Great, we have another  
6 question.

7 MS. STANLEY: Hi. I'm Cathy Stanley.  
8 Going along with what she said, right now you  
9 can get on the Island Explorer at the Trenton  
10 supermarket. I don't see people doing that.  
11 We ride it on occasion, and generally we're  
12 the only ones going out of the parking lot  
13 when we've ridden. There are people riding  
14 from the campgrounds and various places. How  
15 are we going to get those people on the bus  
16 if there's no facility for three more years?  
17 You know, it's wonderful if they want to ride  
18 the bus. I go along with that  
19 wholeheartedly. But what is going to get  
20 these people to park up here and get on that  
21 bus if there's nothing else to bring them in  
22 here?

23 MS. PEREZ: That's why we're not just  
24 building a parking lot. We're building a  
25 mobile facility. There will be signs telling

1 people this is where you are and this is  
2 where you get your information for the park.  
3 More than twenty percent of the people who  
4 visit the area are what we call the  
5 (inaudible). They're not just people like  
6 myself who don't live nearby. They're people  
7 who stay in Bangor or Ellsworth because the  
8 hotel costs are lower. It's always been our  
9 plan to address day business for the park as  
10 well. There's lots of things we're going to  
11 do to encourage people to park there.

12 MS. STANLEY: But that's not until  
13 2012, so we've got three years. Who's going  
14 to be promoting this in the meantime?

15 MS. PEREZ: Well, promoting it --

16 MS. STANLEY: To get people in there  
17 until 2012 when there's a reason to go there.

18 MS. PEREZ: Until there's a facility  
19 there, there's no reason for people to go  
20 there, but once the facility is built, I  
21 think we won't have a problem getting people  
22 to park there and to use the Island Explorer.

23 MS. STANLEY: Okay, so in 2009 nobody  
24 can get on the bus there?

25 MR. DUNCAN: You're asking about Phase

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1 1?

2 MS. STANLEY: Right.

3 MR. DUNCAN: That's the commuter  
4 service. The parking garage is for the  
5 commuter service.

6 MS. PEREZ: We would have limited --  
7 Island Explorer will start the route in that  
8 facility in the morning. We will have very  
9 limited parking space there for people to  
10 park. There will only be parking here for  
11 people who want to car pool. For our first  
12 phase we're not looking to serve a large  
13 number of people. It will just be that one  
14 trip in in the morning and the one trip back  
15 in the afternoon.

16 MS. STANLEY: So they'll only go as far

17 as the airport after that? So they're not  
18 going to be able to get the bus every twenty  
19 minutes then?

20 MS. PEREZ: Not until Phase 2.

21 MS. STANLEY: So we have to go down to  
22 the airport to get it?

23 MS. PEREZ: Yes.

24 MR. FISHER: I'd like to add that we've  
25 had some discussions about ways to encourage

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1 tourists to take Route 3 as opposed to Route  
2 230. There have been concerns expressed  
3 about the rising level of traffic on Route  
4 230, so we're talking about when Phase 2 is  
5 built, adding some signage in Ellsworth that  
6 will keep people on Route 3 and heading in  
7 the direction of the park.

8 Any other questions or comments?

9 MS. DOLE: My name is Marge Dole, and

10 I'm wondering if this facility, when it's  
11 built, plans to keep it open all year round.  
12 Will we be running buses all year round?  
13 MS. PEREZ: The Island Explorer runs  
14 seasonally currently, but Down East  
15 Transportation does run buses year round.  
16 They will be using this facility year round.  
17 We're hoping that this will be run all  
18 season, the visitor center for the park. I  
19 think the Island Explorer eventually will  
20 grow and the season will expand, making an  
21 expansion of the service provided by Down  
22 East Transportation on their other routes.  
23 It's designed so that in the summer the whole  
24 facility could be open and all these certain  
25 parts used year round.

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1 MS. DOLE: But the ones that are open  
2 in the winter, would you consider solar  
3 energy instead of oil heat?

4 MS. PEREZ: I think we would look at  
5 what's called (inaudible), which is an  
6 environmentally green (inaudible).

7 MR. SALISBURY: Thank you. My name's  
8 Dick Salisbury. I got the pleasure of  
9 attending all of the public meetings that  
10 have existed in the Town of Trenton. I want  
11 to share with you a kind of inescapable gut  
12 gnawing that I'm having here tonight. Maybe  
13 it's something that can be resounded by the  
14 element of truth, but I'm not going to feel  
15 well until I get it off my gut.

16 At the April 26th meeting, a  
17 representative of the Maine Department of  
18 Transportation said, quote, we must have a  
19 business plan for 20 years in order to secure  
20 federal funds. The gnawing I have in my gut  
21 is this: If Phase 1 and 2 get completed, it  
22 isn't much of a business plan if you don't  
23 have any knowledge at all or can satisfy the  
24 residents of the Town of Trenton about the  
25 money for Phase 3 because the money for Phase

1       3 is what makes this really a beautiful  
2       project. And I'm not sure, Ron, what you  
3       meant when you said you have to have a  
4       business plan in order to get federal funding  
5       for 20 years. If that is the case, excluding  
6       Phase 3, which I suspect a lot of people  
7       think is a very typical piece to whether or  
8       not the voters in the Town of Trenton would  
9       approve a project like this without knowing a  
10      little bit more about the funding of Phase 3.  
11      I kind of feel like what you're saying to us  
12      is we know you're going to get Phase 1.  
13      We've got that money. We think we know where  
14      Phase 2 money is hiding, but the thing that  
15      really makes this a beautiful project and a  
16      true gateway is Phase 3; and we don't have  
17      the damn foggiest idea where that money is  
18      coming from.  
19      MS. PEREZ: Phase 3 is little

20 interesting because (inaudible). That's why  
21 we have not at this time secured the funding  
22 for it. We have funding through the Federal  
23 Transit Administration for the first phase.  
24 We are fairly confident that we will get  
25 Federal Transit Administration money. When I

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27

1 say that, it's because they have been working  
2 with us as partners in planning from the very  
3 beginning. The Island Explorer is a model  
4 national for cleaner transportation. Phase  
5 3, because it's a joint-use facility, it's no  
6 longer just a transit facility, Federal  
7 Transit Administration (inaudible). At this  
8 point in time the National Park Service has  
9 not been able to get money yet. We're not  
10 saying that they won't be able to do that,  
11 it's just, they just haven't yet.

12 MR. DUNCAN: I'm not sure you  
13 understand what Phase 3 is and what Phase 2

14 is. Originally Phase included only, it was  
15 this whole building here. Phase 2 only  
16 included this part over, which is kind of  
17 very lopsided, and what we do is that we only  
18 build Phase 2. So as a result of that  
19 thinking, we made Phase 2 include this half  
20 of this building, actually, more than half of  
21 it, a walkway across to this and a walkway  
22 (inaudible), which I've got here. And it  
23 actually provides significant room for the  
24 parks service. You're going to have a pretty  
25 nice-looking facility.

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28

1 MR. SALISBURY: Someone just said the  
2 difference is we'd only have \$40 million to  
3 do Phase 3. You're certainly not suggesting  
4 what you just said, sir, costs \$40 million?

5 MS. PEREZ: No. I meant \$40 million to  
6 do all 4 phases at once.

7           MR. FISHER: I'd like to make sure some  
8           people in back get a chance, and then we'll  
9           come back up.

10          MR. BROWN: Lee Brown. My one question  
11          that comes up is local use of this. We're  
12          going to put this Phase 1 in, and I believe  
13          Cathy said you're going to have one set of  
14          buses taking off in the morning. Does it  
15          really cost that much more to have four more  
16          buses to be able to provide through the day  
17          service back and forth to this facility if  
18          somebody wants to use it? I don't see it  
19          being used very much, you know. Maybe just  
20          one or two people is every day going in and  
21          out at the same time, but myself, you know,  
22          if I wanted to use it, it's not convenient.  
23          You know, it's just not going to be used. Is  
24          four buses that would be going back and  
25          fourth, actually, three buses --

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1 MS. PEREZ: I'll let someone from Down  
2 East Transit discuss the cost.

3 MR. TESTA: My name's Tom Testa. I'm  
4 the planner for the Island Explorer project.  
5 What's likely to happen is the buses running  
6 to and from the Phase 1 facility, we're  
7 envisioning commuter service, year-round  
8 commuter service from that facility to Bar  
9 Harbor, continuing onto the Jackson Lab.

10 That's the concept at this point. As far as  
11 the visitors are concerned, the campground  
12 buses, the buses that you have available now  
13 that start at the Trenton Marketplace, it's a  
14 very good possibility, very likely I think,  
15 that those campground buses would start and  
16 end their route at this new facility. It  
17 only takes about three and a half minutes to  
18 get from the Trenton Marketplace up to the  
19 commuter facility. So the start and end  
20 point would probably be (inaudible). What  
21 you would not have until the visitor  
22 components are put into place is express bus  
23 service from Trenton to the (inaudible) onto

24 Bar Harbor. What we're envisioning, once the  
25 visitor facility, Phase 2 facility gets put

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30

1 in place, we are envisioning express buses.  
2 If you use the Island Explorer, you know that  
3 it gets to Bar Harbor, but it is a slow ride  
4 because it stops at all those campgrounds on  
5 the way into town. Once the new facility is  
6 provided, we want to have essentially nonstop  
7 service. We need to work on other issues  
8 regarding the intersections of 230. We need  
9 a stop light there. We do not provide any  
10 publicity either at the IGA or at the  
11 airport. Until there's more parking  
12 available, we don't dare do that because we  
13 don't want to swamp either place with cars.

14 MR. FISHER: Another comment?

15 MR. DOLE: I'm Art Dole. First I want  
16 to commend this group for putting together a

17 great deal of detail. It makes it much clear  
18 what might happen. I'm curious about the  
19 economic impact on the Town of Trenton, both  
20 its businesses and its residences.

21 MR. FISHER: Does anyone from your team  
22 want to talk about that part of the  
23 analysis?

24 MR. DUNCAN: We did a limited market  
25 study to focus on what type of uses this

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31

1 money -- we'll talk about facility price,  
2 what might work here. One of the key things  
3 I said before is we cannot compete with local  
4 businesses. The study identified that there  
5 wasn't a lot (inaudible). This could  
6 potentially increase tax revenue by  
7 increasing the value of the property around  
8 it. We haven't calculated that. That's just  
9 a point we did look at, the economic impact,  
10 a tax issue. And we talked about that,

11 looking at the documents to offset the  
12 existing taxes. We did look at the impact of  
13 public safety service to this site, and we  
14 got feedback from the parties that provide  
15 that service that it doesn't cost any more to  
16 cover the site in general. Certainly if  
17 there were more calls and the fire department  
18 has to come here more often, that would be  
19 increased cost.

20 MS. HARACZ: We looked at a few  
21 things. Overall, we've got 45 jobs on this  
22 site here. That's a number that will be  
23 seasonal because of the way the facility is.  
24 This would also allow Down East  
25 Transportation to expand their facility. We

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1 think there will be probably ten permanent  
2 year-round jobs, so about forty-five jobs  
3 generated here. The other part is the

4 construction for a larger facility such as  
5 this. Phase 1 will generate about 98 jobs  
6 for construction workers to build Phase 1,  
7 then go onto 79 for Phase 2, Phase 3, about  
8 54. If you look at the purpose of facility,  
9 it will also help us to support and advertise  
10 local businesses.

11 MR. FISHER: Are there any other  
12 questions?

13 MR. LAZAS: Hi. I'm Pete Lazas. I  
14 just have a question. When you were talking  
15 about the different phases, I thought I read  
16 in the (inaudible) that the operation at  
17 Thomas Island wouldn't moved to the new  
18 facility until Phase 3, but now you're saying  
19 it will be moved during Phase 2. I just want  
20 to make sure I'm clear of that.

21 MS. PEREZ: The new design for Phase 2  
22 would absorb what is now Thomas Island, so it  
23 would be moved in Phase 2.

24 MR. LAZAS: I also would like to speak  
25 for the Trenton Chamber of Commerce. Maybe I

1 could answer a little more of Mr. Dole's  
2 question.

3 We talked about this at many meetings  
4 that we came to the conclusion that it would  
5 be a good thing for the businesses in Trenton  
6 if five points we came up with were talked  
7 about and brought to the table. A few of us  
8 from the Chamber as a delegation went to the  
9 Acadia National Park. We went to the Friends  
10 of Acadia. We went to Hancock County  
11 Planning. We spoke finally with the DOT and  
12 we presented these five points. Three of  
13 them are basically things that have to do  
14 with how actual businesses in town will be  
15 affected by this new center. And from all of  
16 the parties involved, we got positive  
17 responses. We also went to the selectmen  
18 first. I don't want to leave them out. The  
19 other two that aren't strictly that have to  
20 do with the business, they're sort of

21 twofold. They have to do with our businesses  
22 in town plus how they will affect the people  
23 of town. One of them is the issue of the  
24 scenic byway, is something that we put in our  
25 new comprehensive plan. We want to have the

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34

1 byway that now ends in Thomas Island extended  
2 to the Trenton-Ellsworth town line, and we  
3 wanted the help from all the parties I  
4 mentioned to get this done. The last one,  
5 which also is twofold and probably more  
6 important to the people of town than the  
7 scenic byway is we're asking, as I think the  
8 Town of Trenton has asked for years, to try  
9 to get more traffic off of Route 230 and back  
10 on Route 3, especially visitor traffic in the  
11 summer. Our businesses are mostly on Route  
12 3. We want to have that traffic directed  
13 back towards our businesses. And by that

14 token, it would make the residents who live  
15 on Route 230, it would make their  
16 neighborhoods a little bit safer. We were  
17 told that with that issue that when it gets  
18 to Phase 3 there will be signage put up, and  
19 as Jim just said, maybe during Phase 2 that  
20 will be going up in Ellsworth. We said  
21 that's not soon enough. We wanted the  
22 signage there this summer. We don't want to  
23 wait until the year 2012. So Tracy and Ron  
24 suggested that we talk to a man named Victor  
25 Smith who's with the DOT and go with him and

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35

1 talk to the people in Ellsworth, and we've  
2 done that. And hopefully we're on the right  
3 track. We also hope that Tracy and Ron can  
4 sort of nudge Victor Smith a little bit to at  
5 least get a few of the signs that we all  
6 agreed to put up in Ellsworth. And they  
7 would just be directional signs. All we'd be

8 doing is basically getting the tourists going  
9 on that path and not to take the back road  
10 down to Route 230.

11 So anyway, we do endorse the center and  
12 we think it will help business if those five  
13 points are adhered to.

14 MR. FISHER: Thank you, Pete.

15 I want to mention on behalf of the  
16 Hancock County Planning Commission in the  
17 Town of Trenton there is a yellow brochure on  
18 the table -- you might pick one up; you will  
19 receive one in the mail if you're a resident  
20 of Trenton in the next day or two --  
21 announcing a meeting on the 12th at 7 o'clock  
22 at the town office to discuss the proposed  
23 comprehensive plan. It really shocked us  
24 that it went through on the first draft. But  
25 there's a discussion on the 12th, I think

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1 that's Tuesday night, at 7 o'clock. It's a  
2 public informational meeting I hope you  
3 consider attending.

4 Other questions or comments?

5 MS. SARGENT: Carol Sargent. I just  
6 would like to add more to the issue in  
7 regards to Route 230. Having a young son  
8 when you're out trying to be able to do  
9 outside activities with them, it would be  
10 nice to get the signage up ASAP in regards to  
11 that because they can't go out in the road  
12 without having tourists going 90 miles an  
13 hour. Having a traffic light at 230 has been  
14 a thorn in my side in regard that it takes  
15 this for you guys to finally think about  
16 that. That's been asked for for how many  
17 years? It kind of irks me personally in  
18 regards to that because it seems like there's  
19 not enough tragedy or accidents there, but  
20 yet this only has to do with traffic. That  
21 same amount of traffic has gone through Route  
22 230 onto this main road, the same that's  
23 going to be going in and out of here. I want

24 to know why it takes this to make that an  
25 issue now.

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37

1 MS. PEREZ: I am not an engineer. I'm  
2 a planner. But I will try to explain.

3 First, there's many different departments in  
4 the Maine Department of Transportation.

5 Traffic condition is handled by (inaudible).

6 That's a separate division. They do certain  
7 standards for which they decide where to put

8 in a light, and it's based on the volume of  
9 traffic and the rate of accidents there.

10 It's a mathematical formula.

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Question and comment  
12 inaudible).

13 MS. PEREZ: (The first part of this  
14 answer was inaudible.)

15 From inside you can see the mountain.

16 MR. FISHER: You may not be able to see  
17 our trails, and actually you can walk from

18 the preliminary parking lot around the side  
19 of the building where the sun rises. It's  
20 really very nice.

21 MR. HINCKLEY: My name is Bill  
22 Hinckely. I represent the Mt. Desert Island  
23 Chamber of Commerce. (Question and comment  
24 inaudible.)

25 We find it very critical that we

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38

1 maintain that 25-year partnership with Acadia  
2 National Park. We have one full-time staff,  
3 three part-timers. We go through park  
4 training each year. (Inaudible) goes through  
5 chamber training each year, and it's been  
6 very successful. We get a lot of comments  
7 from businesses from all the over the United  
8 States and the world and we get one-stop  
9 shopping for chamber and park information.  
10 And it's really critical that we're

11 cross-trained. We feel it very critical that  
12 this park doesn't (inaudible) on the  
13 facility. And we would like to have input  
14 into the design of this. There's some  
15 concerns that have been brought up tonight.  
16 Overall, this is a very good project,  
17 especially for the Town of Trenton and the  
18 rest of the island. By moving this center up  
19 more towards the center of Trenton, right now  
20 we can turn traffic around for three or four  
21 miles which brings it partway through the  
22 town. This will pretty much service the  
23 visitors all the way back into the Trenton  
24 town line, so it's critical that we do have  
25 this partnership and have the input and keep

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39

1 that working together in the future.

2 MR. DUNCAN: Even though we did mention  
3 the Thomas Island closing Phase 2, in Phase  
4 1, in the very beginning we assumed that

5       there would be services of that type in the  
6       first phase.

7           MR. FISHER: Would anyone else like to  
8       speak?

9           MS. STANLEY: I'm still Cathy Stanley.  
10       Did I understand that we're planning to have  
11       a light at the entrance where before you  
12       thought maybe not doing that?

13          MS. PEREZ: In the final phase.

14          MS. STANLEY: So not for a while?

15       Well, I just hope that you wouldn't repeat  
16       the Wal-Mart, Home Depot, slash, fiasco.  
17       Those turning lights can be really long.

18          MS. PEREZ: The light will be activated  
19       by the line of cars waiting to get out so  
20       that it will minimize the impact of stopping  
21       traffic on Route 3.

22          MS. STANLEY: I think those turning  
23       lanes are long enough.

24          MR. FISHER: Are there other questions  
25       or comments tonight?

1           MR. SAWYER: I'm Tom Sawyer. One of  
2           the things we asked you to do last time you  
3           were here was a traffic impact study, and I  
4           haven't seen much of that except the traffic  
5           light that you propose. And the other part  
6           is the last time we asked you to show the  
7           potential for the Town of Trenton to own this  
8           property is we can actually get at least  
9           income from the Town of Trenton so that  
10          somehow Trenton could actually benefit from  
11          this property.

12          MS. PEREZ: When the facility is built  
13          and the Town of Trenton is interested in  
14          owning the facility, we would be glad to work  
15          with them.

16          Are there any other comments or  
17          questions?

18          MR. CAMERON: My name is Jim Cameron.  
19          One of the advantages that we have perceived  
20          with this project is recreational activity

21 for the town. And I was questioning, I know  
22 there's limited trail associated with Phase 1  
23 through 3, but there's 360-some acres worth  
24 of land there. I guess I was questioning any  
25 opportunity you have opened up for Maine

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41

1 trails or recreational activities such as  
2 cross-country skiing.

3 MS. PEREZ: Yes. It's just that those  
4 aren't eligible for the funding we're using  
5 for this part, and that would have to be  
6 worked out through the Friends of Acadia for  
7 the rest of the land. We're looking at what  
8 would happen on that, but other things could  
9 happen that it would work out with Friends of  
10 Acadia. We are looking at a trail study for  
11 the residents. We're looking at a trail  
12 study for the purposes of how to best  
13 preserve the property.

14 MR. FISHER: I'm very active with the

15 Healthy Maine partnerships. This is a great  
16 opportunity. I hope you can take advantage  
17 of it.

18 MR. SAWYER: I have a huge concern  
19 about what I would like to see. I would hate  
20 to see anything impact that or harm that in  
21 any way.

22 MS. PEREZ: One of the things that  
23 we're looking at seeing is this facility  
24 right here. And the MaineDOT feels the best  
25 thing we can do is to protect the heath so

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42

1 the deer yard would be protected.

2 MR. SAWYER: That would keep people  
3 from going back in there forever?

4 MS. PEREZ: People would be able to go  
5 back in there. I think it would be  
6 heightening. It would be a higher level of  
7 protection for the heath, so it may be

8 walking trails; and that would be it. It  
9 probably wouldn't be ATV's or snowmobiles.

10 MR. COURTIN: I'm John Courtin. I'm  
11 the president of Friends of Acadia. Our  
12 purpose is to protect the 248 acres that were  
13 not used before for the deer yard, and that's  
14 the reason we're involved in this. The  
15 traditional uses that occur back there right  
16 now would continue subject only to what's  
17 required to property protection.

18 MS. SARGENT: In regards to adding  
19 more things to do in the back trails or stuff  
20 like that, is it possible to incorporate more  
21 bike trails?

22 MR. FISHER: I had occasion to walk  
23 from Ellsworth to Bar Harbor the other day  
24 taking pictures, and actually the shoulder  
25 are very wide all the way down; so the width

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1 isn't so much an issue, but there is a lot of

2 traffic. For families it will probably never  
3 be a comfortable ride. We're always looking  
4 for different ways to incorporate bicycles.

5 Any other questions or comments?

6 MS. PEREZ: Thank you all very much for  
7 coming.

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1                   REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION

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3           I hereby certify that the foregoing is a  
4 true and accurate transcript of the public  
5 hearing Maine recorded by me and reduced to  
6 typewriting at my direction this 12th day of  
7 September, 2006.

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Court Reporter, Tammy M. Smith

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