

Attention Raritan Valley Rail Line NJ Transit users. You are urged to visit www.raritanvalleyrail.com, sign the petition and contact NJ Transit officials and your respective elected officials in order to promote "the One-Seat Ride" into Manhattan.

Raritan Valley Rail Coalition "We Need a One Seat Ride!"

The advocacy of a "one-seat" ride into Manhattan for Raritan Valley riders has a long history. In 1998, the late Congressman Robert Franks fostered the establishment of the Raritan Valley Rail Coalition (RVRC), a bipartisan group for the specific purpose of seeking a "one seat" ride into Manhattan.

Currently, Raritan Valley line commuters destined for Midtown Manhattan must exit their diesel-powered train at Newark Penn Station and change to another train operating on the Northeast Corridor, often on a separate platform and requiring two level changes, to take them into Midtown's Penn Station New York. Diesel-powered trains are not permitted to operate in the Hudson River tunnels.

RVRC supported the Access to the Region's Core (ARC) project from its inception to the project's cancellation in 2010. That project would have created two new tunnels under the Hudson River, more than doubling the number of peak hour passenger trains that could cross the river from New Jersey. . Part of that project was the acquisition of unique dual-powered (diesel and electric) locomotives which would have made it possible for the Raritan Valley Line to have a one-seat ride into an expanded Penn Station New York. Despite the cancellation of the ARC project, NJ Transit has gone forward with the acquisition of the dual-powered locomotive at a cost of approximately \$360 million.

At this point, N J TRANSIT is far along in its testing of the locomotives to determine their fitness for use in commuter service. Now, approximately, six months from their anticipated clearance for use, NJ Transit has been silent on a deployment plan for the dual-powered locomotives and hasn't even revealed a methodology that would govern their deployment. Through deployment of these locomotives NJ TRANSIT could conceivably provide "one-seat" service on the Raritan Valley Line to Penn Station New York for:

- All off peak week day trains
- All weekend trains
- An equitable allocation of peak period trains, am and pm.

The RVRC recognizes that all the peak hour slots into and out of Penn Station New York are currently fully subscribed by other lines. The RVRC estimates that, since the Raritan Valley Line represents 10 percent of the ridership that could theoretically reach Penn Station, New York; therefore, an equitable allocation of the dual- powered locomotives would award the Raritan Valley Line two peak hour trains in the morning, two peak hour trains in the evening, as well as all off-peak weekday and weekend trains. (Peak hour is defined as arriving in NYC between 7:30 am and 8:30 am)

The possible implementation of Amtrak's proposal for new rail passenger tunnels under the Hudson River will require at least a dozen years to complete and its funding – and realization -- is far from a certainty.

The Current Opportunity

Why the fixation on the “one seat” ride? In 1996, the Morris & Essex line achieved a “one seat” ride into Manhattan (called MIDTOWN DIRECT) shortening that corridor’s rail trip time to Midtown Manhattan. Ridership grew substantially **Studies showed that property values rose significantly and people flocked to the various communities along the route, proving that people will move into a community if there is a quality ride into NYC.** A “one-seat ride” would reduce the Raritan Valley Line’s travel time into Penn Station New York by 15 minutes.

The RVRC has pleaded with NJ TRANSIT to discuss a permanent deployment plan for these dual-powered locomotives, as well as the methodology to be used in developing the final plan. To date, NJ TRANSIT has not been responsive to these pleas.

URGENT ISSUE

As the dual-mode locomotives are now well along in their testing, a deployment plan is likely to be instituted reasonably soon and could be put into regular service, without consultation, next year. The RVRC thinks it is important for the residents and businesses along the Raritan Valley Line to address this deployment plan before its issuance as an **urgent issue.**