

Citizen Participation and Its Importance in Determining New York City Subway Station Capital Improvements

by

Anthony Mannin Ng

Bachelor of Arts, Economics
Bates College, 1994

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master in City Planning

at the

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

June 1998

© 1998 Anthony Mannin Ng. All Rights Reserved.

The author hereby grants to MIT permission to reproduce and distribute publicly paper and
electronic copies of this thesis document in whole or in part.

Author.....
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
May 21, 1998

Certified by.....
Ernesto Cortés, Jr.
Martin Luther King Jr. Visiting Professor
Thesis Advisor

Accepted by.....
Lawrence Bacow
Professor of Law and Environmental Policy
Chair, MCP Committee

JUN 22 1998

LIBRARIAN

Citizen Participation and Its Importance in Determining New York City Subway Station Capital Improvements

by

Anthony Mannin Ng

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning
on May 21, 1998 in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master in City Planning

ABSTRACT

Due to the disinvestment in the NYC subway system during the 1970s, station conditions deteriorated just like other components of the subway system (e.g. subway cars, tracks). A capital program to reinvest in the system has been in place since 1982 and has restored the general health of the system considerably. However, the focus of this capital program to date has been on the system's rolling stock and other subway infrastructure, and not so much subway stations. As station conditions are a component of subway service aside from the subway ride itself and the condition of the subway car, poor station conditions can contribute to notions of a lack in service. A rational, "scientific" process has been designed by New York City Transit (NYCT) to select station rehabilitation projects. This thesis will demonstrate that this process is not as rational as NYCT considers it to be and the existence of such a selection process does not free NYCT from having to be accountable to citizens, local elected officials, and communities. The selection process is actually quite political and citizens can most effectively intervene in this process by understanding it and utilizing the practice of politics to amass citizen power in the form of groups, so as to affect the station rehabilitation projects to be undertaken. A case study of a community organizing effort surrounding the poor conditions of a subway shuttle line's stations, in a Brooklyn, New York community, will be the basis for illustrating this.

Thesis Advisor: Ernesto Cortes, Jr.

Title: Martin Luther King Jr. Visiting Professor

Acknowledgements

This thesis could not have been completed without knowing that I had the love, support, and hope of my family: Mom -- I have found much inspiration in the strength you have exhibited these past few years. Dad -- I know that you'll always be there somehow. Benny -- For holding it down back at home these past two years, I know it's been a little tough, but I think brighter days are near. Connie -- My booger head sister, keep your head up and college will be here sooner than you think. Nor could this thesis have been done without the camaraderie of my close friends and roommates, O-Dog, Big Boy aka Little Gil, and Dreds -- 440 YOU KNOW!!!!

I'd also like to thank and acknowledge the following people for their assistance in this endeavor: To Ernie Cortes, for his unfailing ability to provoke my thought about power, politics, relationships, and interests. Phil Clay, for his diligence as my reader. Analia Penchaszadeh, for her insightful comments on organizing, and her experience with the Franklin Avenue Shuttle. Charles Planck, who gave me a lot of leads and information as I started researching this topic. Julie Wagner, for her contacts surrounding those who are committed to public involvement in transit issues. Tarry Hum, for your encouraging comments on my topic when it was still in its formative stages. Wells Chen, for being there with me at my thesis defense. Joe Rappaport, who provided key contacts, information, and access to his files about the Franklin Avenue Shuttle. Arlene Grauer, for your patience in answering my questions about the New York City Transit station rehabilitation selection process. Jonathan Sigall of PCAC. To those involved in saving the Franklin Avenue Shuttle -- Mable Boston, Connie Hall, Frances Byrd, Mauricia Baca -- thank you for reflecting on your efforts with me. For emotional support in the last few days of putting this together, I'd like to thank Camille Tsao, Mona Fawaz, Maria Elosua, and Ketsia Colinet.

And lastly to Rebecca -- We've shared much in the past four and a half years, and while we are not together anymore, let's take this time to strive towards a better understanding of ourselves and what we had. No matter what happens, I'll always have a warm place in my heart for you.

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
1 Recent History of the New York City Subway System	11
2 The Social Impacts of the Station Selection System and Its Effects on Issues of Equity	22
3 Effectiveness of Existing Mechanisms of Citizen Input in Fostering A More Open Transportation Planning Process	33
4 Politics As A Means To Achieve Greater Citizen Participation	39
5 The Franklin Avenue Shuttle and the Communities of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, and Prospect Heights	50
Conclusion	76
Bibliography	79
List of Interviews	82

Introduction

If someone were to ask a New York City (NYC) native like myself about the role that the NYC subway system plays in one's daily life, I'd have to respond that its presence is integral. The subway is used by NYC's residents to get to work, and school; access services; arrive at the city's major commercial shopping areas and cultural institutions; and to travel throughout the city to visit friends, and family.¹ Not only does the subway help the local economy function and aids in the mobility of its residents, it also serves to instill a sense of tolerance amongst New Yorkers. A ride on the NYC subway, will expose you to the diverse population of this city, people of every conceivable race, ethnicity, and class. The need to share such close space for a few minutes a day forces New Yorkers to relate to those who have different backgrounds in a unique way, even if it is on a cursory level.

The tone of the above description concerning the popular use of the subway system, and its ancillary role as a social engineering lab probably would not have been as positive if one were asked to describe the subway system as it emerged out of the 1970s. In the early 1980s, the NYC subway system was in an utter state of disrepair. Subway fires and derailments were commonplace, subway cars experienced breakdowns after barely 7,000 miles of service and were strewn with graffiti, with some pieces serving as testaments to the beauty of this urban artform, but the majority, being black magic marker tags (aliases) of graffiti writers.² Subway stations were antiquated and crumbling and depending on the neighborhood and time of day, not safe places to be.

¹ Sixty-three percent of the 1.4 million people that work in Manhattan's central business district arrive by mass transit (Seeley, 1982 in Cohen, 1988: 371). Half of all shopping trips are taken by subway (Sandler, 1986 in Cohen, 1988: 371).

² Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). *MTA Capital Needs & Opportunities, 1992-2011 – published May 25, 1990*, p.3.

The terrible state of the subway system convinced New York State legislators to heed Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Chairman Richard Ravitch's call in November 1980, to implement a capital program to restore the region's mass transit to a state of good repair.³ In January 1981, the state legislature passed the Transportation Systems Assistance and Financing Act, which created new avenues of financing that would allow the MTA to raise funds for a prolonged capital program. Two of the more important financing vehicles created by the act was: 1) the authorization of the MTA to issue revenue bonds and other obligations backed by the farebox revenues of the NYC subway, bus, and commuter rail system 2) the ability of the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority (currently known as MTA Bridges and Tunnels) to borrow money for MTA mass transit projects. Since 1982, the MTA Capital Program has been involved in making the needed capital improvements to rebuild the subway system and improve service. Capital improvement projects are planned in five year intervals, which allow for greater comprehensiveness in terms of the scope of the rebuilding projects and provides a more stable funding environment than if capital plans were approved annually.

The capital program has done much to return the system to respectability and good service in the past 16 years. By 1990, the NYC subway system had seen marked improvement – three quarters of the subway cars, were new or overhauled; two-thirds of the track in the subway system had been replaced; subway cars ran an average of 30,000 miles between breakdowns, which was four times better than in 1982; ninety percent of the subway cars were air-conditioned, and all were graffiti free.⁴ As of 1996, distance between breakdowns reached an all-time high of 78,842 miles, thru-put (the percentage of trains that actually pass through a

³ The MTA oversees the management of the New York Metropolitan region's subway, bus, and commuter railroad lines. More information about the structure of the MTA will appear in the pages to follow. Additionally, it should be noted that the MTA's buses and commuter railroads were in poor condition in the early 1980s as well.

⁴ MTA (1990). *Op.cit.*, p.3.

station as scheduled) was at 94.7%, subway ridership levels were at 1.108 billion, which represented the system's highest level since 1972, and was an increase of 1.4% over 1995; 1996 was also the fifth year in a row that ridership increased.⁵

The original mandate of the capital program, which was to rebuild and improve service, forestall a cycle of neglect by meeting the system's physical needs, and to position the network to meet the region's mobility requirements by the 21st century has since been refined to strive towards the following: 1) the central goal of full restoration of the entire network to a state of good repair 2) a program of continuing scheduled maintenance and normal replacement of critical elements 3) addressing and eliminating barriers to ridership growth, such as overcrowding, capacity limitations, cumbersome fare collection, and antiquated stations.⁶

While its clear that initiatives to improve the subway system's rolling stock (buying new subway cars and overhauling old ones), replace dilapidated track, update track signals, repair tunnels, and retain better-equipped maintenance shops, have addressed goals one and two above, it has only been in the early 1990s where elements of goal three have begun to be addressed (e.g. installation of electronic fare readers for the transit system's MetroCard automated fare collection system began in 1994). Based on a 1992 MTA report regarding capital needs and opportunities for 1992-2011, the MTA has identified subway stations are a top investment priority. The MTA understands that modernized stations with renovation and repair of original surfaces, better passenger flow, better lighting and signs, and more secure fare collection areas will play a big role in maintaining the satisfaction levels of current riders, and help attract new riders.⁷ Similarly, New York City Transit's (NYCT) 1989-1991 operating budget proposal stated "...to attract additional customers, the physical conditions of the stations – the point at

⁵ MTA. *1996 Annual Report*. p.22, 28, 30.

⁶ MTA (1990). *Op.cit.*, p.4.

which we sell our product – must be improved.”⁸ These sentiments are true, as station conditions as the first of two indicators that a rider will use to gauge the health and service level of the subway system. The second indicator is the condition of the rolling stock and the nature of the ride to one’s destination. Therefore, it is difficult for one to claim that the subway service they receive is satisfactory if the subway station that is used to access a ride on the transit system is antiquated, drab, in need of repairs, is unsafe, or has poor lighting and signage.

Indeed, rehabilitating subway stations have not been the primary focus in the capital programs to date. The poor physical condition of the subway cars and track in the early 1980s, accounted for much of the poor subway service at the time. This warranted the concentration of the first two capital programs on rolling stock and trackwork as a first step in rebuilding the system. While these aspects of the system have gotten better, the majority of the system’s stations are still in need of structural repairs, and modernization. Additionally, if the MTA is to fulfill their task of rebuilding the entire subway system, station rehabilitation will need to be pursued more vigorously. As of January 1998, only 97 stations were in a state of good repair. 91 stations have been fully rehabilitated, and six stations are brand new ones, which were included in two line extensions (three on the Archer Avenue line in Queens, and three on the 63rd Street line from Manhattan to Queens) in the late 1980s.⁹

With the above in mind, the purpose of this thesis is concerned with looking at what communities can do to bring about station improvements in a more timely manner. In a very real sense, it is the one aspect of the system that has probably improved the least, and taken the longest to implement, since the MTA capital program has been in place. As stations have a

⁷ MTA (1990). *Op.cit.*, p.31.

⁸ MTA Office of the Inspector General. *Assessment of the New York City Transit Authority’s Station Modernization, Restoration, and Upgrade Programs*. Report MTA/IG 89-17, September 22, 1989, p.1.

⁹ Arlene Grauer, Deputy Director of Planning, Station Programs, NYCT Dept. of Capital Program Management, January 22, 1998.

spatial dimension and are located in the neighborhoods of New York City, the selection of those stations that have been rehabilitated or will be rehabilitated is also a reflection of how sensitive NYCT is to the social impacts of their station rehabilitation decisions. One major social impact is the notion of equity in ensuring that subway stations are in a state of good repair. In order to ensure that station rehabilitation projects are chosen in an equitable manner, NYCT has a station selection process that devises rankings of all 468 stations based on criteria such as station structural conditions and passenger usage.¹⁰ Stations are chosen with this formal, “scientific” method. Other less scientific criteria such as whether each borough is receiving a nearly equivalent amount of station rehabilitation projects, is considered as well, however, the NYCT is quite mindful of using the rankings as the primary means to select station rehabilitation projects. If a station has not been included based on the rankings, the consideration of the less scientific criteria represents a point of intervention that citizens and communities can use to voice their needs and concerns regarding their neighborhood subway station in an attempt to have it included in a capital program. Additionally, as this is one point of intervention, are there other ones that citizens and communities can use to give feedback and suggestions to NYCT about subway station conditions? The presence of a forum or avenue which citizens can use to voice their concerns, does not ensure that their input will be heard. This thesis will also examine whether an understanding of politics, relationships, interests, and power can help citizen participation be more effective, by building institutions and strengthening existing ones in order to obtain the power to affect decisions regarding which stations are chosen to receive rehabilitation. Furthermore, is it possible that an organization called the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), which conceives of organizing and power in this manner, have any principles

¹⁰ Until the closing of the Dean St. station in Brooklyn, in September, 1995, the NYC subway system consisted of 469 stations.

that may be applicable for citizens wishing to insure equity in the station rehabilitation process? Utilizing a case study of how a predominantly African-American community in Brooklyn, New York, struggled to obtain improvements for the subway stations of a shuttle line that runs through their neighborhood, we will learn two things: 1) how power, politics, relationships, and interests manifested itself in this struggle 2) whether any of IAF's organizing principles were present or may have been applicable in this struggle.

En route to the case study, this thesis will progress in the following manner -- Chapter one will provide us with a needed, but brief history of the NYC subway system and the current station rehabilitation selection process. Chapter two will discuss the social impacts of the station selection process and how equitable it is. Chapter three will discuss the existing mechanisms that allow citizens to give feedback in to the transit system subway service. Chapter four will discuss how citizens must understand politics and power if they are to build groups and institutions with the power to affect public policy decisions. Included in this chapter is a look at how the IAF aids in the creation of such institutions. Chapter five will include the case study, and a concluding chapter will follow it.

1

Recent History of the NYC Subway System

The entity responsible for the day-to-day maintenance and operation of the NYC subways and buses is the New York City Transit Authority (NYCTA). NYCTA is part of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), the umbrella agency that oversees the respective agencies that manage the bus, subway, commuter rail lines, and bridges and tunnels, that serve the New York metropolitan region which includes NYC, Long Island, and several Lower Hudson Valley counties. Within the MTA, Long Island Railroad (LIRR) and Metro-North Commuter Railroad (MNCR) manage the metropolitan region's commuter rail lines; Long Island Bus and MTA Bridges and Tunnels are self-explanatory. Each of these respective agencies can be thought of as departments (or components) of the MTA. The MTA was created by New York state legislation in 1965, with the mandate of continuing, developing, and improving public transportation and to implement a unified public transportation policy in the New York Metropolitan area.¹¹ NYCTA solely managed the city's subways from 1954-1967, replacing the Board of Transportation as the city's subway operator, who had held this role since 1940. NYCTA officially merged with the MTA in 1968, and technically, is no longer an authority, as it is the MTA that now has bonding power, and would issue bonds on behalf of NYCTA for any

¹¹ MTA. *1996 Annual Report*, p.63.

projects they undertake. Therefore, its official name is MTA New York City Transit (NYCT) or simply NYCT.¹²

According to Cohen (1988), the decline of the system in the 1970s was due to the MTA's increased emphasis in new subway route construction at the expense of maintaining existing infrastructure and equipment between the years of 1968-80. Expansion of the system was made possible during this time period due to increases in federal aid via the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1970 (and its subsequent amendments), and increases in state aid due to the creation of the MTA. In fact, MTA expenditures between 1968-74 averaged \$107.1 million annually, whereas from 1975-1980, annual expenditures averaged \$197.4 million (both in current dollars). The increase in state and federal aid was funneled towards new route construction, and not investment in infrastructure maintenance. A look at the composition of capital expenditures during NYCTA's management (1954-67) and the MTA's management between 1968-80, reveals this shift in policy – from 1954-67, 44.1% of the capital budget was spent on infrastructure rehabilitation and renewal, and only 17.5% on new route construction. The remaining 38.4% was allocated to the purchase of new subway cars. From 1968-80, 22.9% of the capital budget was spent on modernizing existing infrastructure, 41.2% towards new route construction, and nearly 36% on fleet renewal (see Table 1).

**Table 1 -- Amount and Composition of Subway Capital Expenditures, 1954-1980
(in constant 1967 dollars)**

<i>Component</i>	1954-1967		1968-1980	
	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Infrastructure	\$391,585	44.1	\$223,655	22.9
New Cars	\$340,906	38.4	\$349,814	35.9
New Routes	\$154,756	17.5	\$401,361	41.2
Totals (1954-1980)	\$887,247	100.0	\$974,830	100.0

Source: New York City Comptroller, Annual Reports (1954-1980) in Cohen, 1988.

¹² I will use MTA NYCT and NYCT interchangeably throughout the rest of the thesis, (after this section's brief discussion of the history of the formation of the MTA) to refer to NYC Transit.

Another factor that made the time ripe for expansion was NYCTA's rebuilding of the system's capital plant during their tenure as the manager of the NYC subway system. When the MTA incorporated the NYCTA into its operations in 1968, the system was in a state of good repair, and did not require any major system rehabilitation. This freed up funds to be used for subway expansion efforts.

Cohen also mentions that the city's fiscal crisis of 1975 played a role in the decline of subway service, but its impact was smaller than most would want to believe. In 1975, several New York banks refused to finance the city's bonds. As a result, city funds originally earmarked as capital aid for subway improvements, were reallocated to the city's expense budget (e.g. between 1975-77, this reallocation amounted to \$210 million). The city's cuts in subway funding were largely offset by the increase in state and federal aid, but still impacted NYCT's operating budget, which ultimately led to the decision to defer maintenance on subway cars, and other infrastructure. This coupled with the fact that most of NYCT's experienced and best skilled mechanics retired in large numbers in 1968, explains the decline in service that would characterize the system until the early 1980s. Additionally, the fiscal crisis was the deathknell for the MTA's new routes program, as the city could not access capital funds from the bond market. The fact that two state bond issues -- one each in 1971 and 1973 -- that would have allocated capital aid to the new routes program were defeated, did not help matters either. As a result, expansion projects such as the Second Ave. line in Manhattan were discontinued.

History of NYCT's Station Rehabilitation Program

The fact that the first two MTA capital programs of the 1980s largely addressed the rolling stock and trackwork of the system did not mean that stations were entirely neglected.

The first capital program of 1982-86 called for the modernization of 50 stations at a cost of \$227 million (current dollars). Modernization aimed to be comprehensive in its scope of work, and included structural repairs, architectural work, better lighting and public information provisions, and in some cases improved station layouts.¹³ In 1983, it proposed adding another 20 stations to the original list and announced its intention to start modernizing 200 stations by 1993. However, by the end of 1988, modernization had only begun at 22 stations, and by June 30, 1989, 14 had been completed. In May of 1989, four stations were dropped from the modernization list to provide money for implementing MetroCard. In 1989, NYCT estimated that at the rate they were progressing, it would take more than 100 years to modernize the entire system.

Modernizations increased in cost, and were postponed or delayed for a variety of reasons, among them being poor performance by contractors and consultants, and the reluctance of NYCT to hold them accountable for their mistakes; the use of obsolete (and in some cases, incorrect) blueprints; unforeseen field conditions, changes in design and construction standards that the NYCT wants applied, and design errors and.¹⁴ The average completion delay as of March 1989 was 29 months.

Due to the poor results of the station modernization program, NYCT instituted a station restoration program in 1987. The scope of work pursued in restoration was the same as modernization, but did not include structural repairs, as these repairs were deemed to be too costly and time consuming. Unfortunately, the restoration program ran into similar problems as the modernization program, which primarily manifested itself in project cost overruns. By the beginning of 1989, only seven stations out of the original list of thirty to be restored were completed.

¹³ MTA Inspector General's Office (1989). *Op.cit.*, p.1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.6, 12.

To complement the station restoration program, NYCT instituted a station upgrade program in 1988. The scope of work in this program was the least daunting of the three, and focused on improving the appearance of 25 stations a year by removing abandoned fixtures, unused wires, and other visual clutter, and by improving signs, advertising, and security; stations were also painted if necessary.¹⁵ By the end of 1988, 25 station upgrades had been completed.

The cost overruns and delays in completing station work justified an investigation by the MTA Office of the Inspector General that was completed in 1989. (The Inspector General is an autonomous agency within the MTA that is charged with investigating any poor practices in MTA operations and management that it deems worthy of scrutiny.) The negative tone of the 1989 report led NYCT to reconsider the way they rehabilitated stations. One of the major reasons why costs increased so much in the station programs of the first two capital plans was the lack of understanding of the true conditions at subway stations, which resulted in inaccurate scoping of work to be done and poor initial cost estimates.

NYCT's lack of understanding of a station's true conditions manifested itself in the emergency repair of the Nevins Street station in Brooklyn, which is a major transfer point for the system's 2, 3, 4, and 5 lines. The station was slated to be included in the restoration program for 1992, however, a comprehensive station structural condition survey conducted between late 1988 and October 1989 identified the station as one of 133 system-wide that had major structural deficiencies, such as steel corrosion and crumbling concrete. In the summer of 1990, an NYCT engineer who happened to be at the station discovered further structural flaws which required the use 12 x 12 timbers to support the station's sagging mezzanine floor. In September 1990, the MTA Board approved a \$10 million emergency contract to reconstruct the mezzanine floor at Nevins Street. This crisis crystallized to the MTA, the need to consider structural concerns as

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.2.

part of a station rehabilitation program, and that simply improving station appearance, which were the focus of the station restoration and upgrade programs, could not be considered adequate station rehabilitation. Consequently, the first two capital plans were flawed in that they shied away from the more time-consuming and costly work of structural repair.

As mentioned earlier, NYCT conducted its first comprehensive structural condition survey of all 469 stations between late 1988 and October 1989 in order to better understand the full scope of work that it needed to perform at stations. The structural condition data was combined with other criteria to create a balanced selection criteria ranking system that NYCT uses to prioritize which station will be next to receive a full station rehabilitation. Full station rehabilitation is as comprehensive, and addresses the same concerns as the modernization program. Recognizing that all stations will not be able to wait until their turn comes up to have repairs made at their stations, NYCT has programs that specifically address lighting, signage, communications, etc., in those stations that have deficiencies in these areas. Known as campaign projects, they help to address station conditions in the interim time between when a station commences modernization work and while its awaiting its turn. This also helps to decrease the scope of work that may have to be done at a station when it is time for it to be rehabilitated. Unless a station has been identified for a full station rehabilitation or campaign work, no improvements or repairs of any type will be performed in a capital program, which is bound to concern those stations that have capital improvement needs that arise in between capital programs.

The balanced selection criteria system

1992-96 was the first capital program that used the balanced selection criteria. It was used to determine the station rehabilitation projects for 1994, as those for 1992 and 1993 were chosen by utilizing other criteria. The balanced selection criteria system consists of a station ranking system and the subsequent consideration of other more qualitative factors in determining the stations that will be rehabilitated in a capital program. Station rankings are determined by assigning points to quantitative criteria such as structural conditions, usage (passenger flow), felonies committed, and other miscellaneous criteria (which includes key stations) of a station. Table 2 below describes how the points awarded.

Table 2 -- Balanced Selection Criteria Point System, NYCT Station Rehabilitation Program

<p>Structural condition: Up to 51 points for the worst condition. Stations receive a structural rating between 1 and 5 (1 being the best, 5 being the worst). Each rating is equivalent to 10.25 points.</p> <p>Usage: Up to 25 points for the highest number of customers. Usage includes the turnstile counts for a station and if the station is a transfer point between subway lines, any transfers from one subway line to another.</p> <p>Felonies: Up to 8 points.</p> <p>Miscellaneous criteria: Up to 2 points each can be awarded to a station if it meets some of the following criteria – terminal station on a subway line; part of a transportation complex; an intermodal station; a handicapped accessible station with Americans with Disability Act (ADA) key station designation; AFC (automated fare collection) core station; has secured outside funding or potential developer funding; near a point of interest.</p>

Source: NYCT, Station Selection Policy, Rehabilitation Program, 1993; Arlene Grauer and Janet Jenkins, NYCT Dept. of Capital Program Management.

Once the points are assigned to each station, some further analysis is done to finalize the list of stations to be rehabilitated. The subsequent qualitative factors that are considered are the availability of funding for the work to be done; whether there are other planned NYCT

construction projects that would advance/delay a station rehabilitation; whether a station is part of a station complex (if so, all the stations in the complex are rehabilitated at the same time); whether the station can be grouped with other stations on a subway line to be rehabilitated; geographic distribution -- insuring that a relatively equivalent amount of stations is rehabilitated in each borough, which is termed borough equity; the strategies needed to address the any inconvenience that riders will be subjected to. Fifteen to twenty percent of stations chosen by ranking according to the point system can be changed during this phase when other factors are considered.

The station rankings are compiled by the NYCT Dept. of Capital Program Management (CPM), and it is CPM that takes the first cut at selecting what stations will be rehabilitated. While usage figures are updated annually (primarily for information's sake), an actual re-ranking of the stations based on the balanced selection criteria point system does not occur until NYCT CPM is selecting the stations to be included in the next capital program. A re-ranking does not need to occur every year, as passenger usage changes annually, and it's costly to conduct structural conditions surveys annually. In fact, the structural conditions survey has only been done once, back in the late 1980s. CPM continues to rely on these ratings, as they still represent a good baseline assessment of each station and are aware of less structurally sound stations they need to closely monitor. It's generally rare that criteria other than these two change and affect the points assigned to a station.

Obtaining approval for the station rehabilitation projects within the MTA Capital Program

Once NYCT CPM chooses the stations to be included in the next capital program, it becomes part of NYCT's five year capital plan, which is a portfolio of capital needs of the

subway and bus system (e.g. rolling stock, automated fare collection system, trackwork). The NYCT Capital Program Committee (CPC) which includes the president of the NYCT, approves and signs off on the agency's portfolio of capital needs and projects. NYCT's list of capital projects is then submitted to the MTA Board of Directors for review so as to be included in the MTA capital program. The other agencies that manage the NY metropolitan region's commuter railroads, bus, and bridges and tunnels, submit their capital needs to the MTA Board for review as well.

The MTA Board of Directors consists of 17 members, from the government, corporate and transit worlds of NYC. The Board is selected by the governor of New York state, Mayor of the City of New York, and executives of the seven outlying New York state counties served by the MTA. There are two non-voting members on the Board -- 1) a representative from the MTA Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee (PCAC), which provides a voice for users of the MTA system 2) a representative from labor. Once the MTA approves the capital program, it needs to be approved at the state level by the Capital Program Review Board (CPRB).

The CPRB was created in 1982 via public authorities law and is in charge of reviewing and approving the MTA's five year capital plans. The CPRB is also in charge of monitoring the expenditures made in each year of the capital plans to insure that the projects are being carried out and completed on schedule and within budget. Performing these two functions help it fulfill its statute in the public authorities law that dictates that the CPRB insures that the MTA capital plan addresses the needs of all the communities and areas served by the MTA (NYS public authorities law, section 1269-B, 15-282). The CPRB consists of four members, all appointed by the Governor, but with one each coming by recommendation from the temporary president of the state senate, one by the speaker of the state assembly, and one by recommendation of the Mayor

of the City of New York. Two non-voting members are appointed as well, and are based upon the recommendation of the minority leader of the state senate, and the minority leader of the state assembly. The current makeup of the CPRB is Cathy Nolan, the state assembly representative; the state senate representative is currently vacant; state transportation commissioner Joseph Boardman is the governor's own appointee and the NYC Dept. of Transportation commissioner is generally the NYC mayor's representative. The NYC representative only votes on the portion of the capital program related to NYC. In order for a capital program to be approved, the CPRB must vote unanimously in favor of it.

Station Rehabilitation Program Approval Process as Points of Intervention

As the above description of the MTA capital program approval process illustrates, the station rehabilitation program is “competing” for funding against other projects within NYCT and with projects from the other MTA agencies. Essentially, the station rehabilitation element of a MTA capital plan undergoes four levels of approval -- NYCT CPM, NYCT CPC, the MTA Board of Directors, and the CPRB. Approval of the overall MTA capital plan implies approval of the station rehabilitation projects, as this element is embedded in the MTA capital plan. (For the remainder of this thesis, we will continue to refer to it separately as the station rehabilitation capital program/project approval process keeping in mind that it's embedded in the approval of the overall MTA capital plan).

Each approval level can be considered as a point of intervention where citizens can intervene to make claims for subway station improvements not included in a capital program. As each level is cumulatively accountable to the one above them, each in turn holds greater power over the other level(s) in determining the projects that will be included in a capital program, with

the CPRB holding the greatest power in such decisions. While no direct accountability measures (e.g. public hearings) to the public exist at each of these approval levels, theoretically, citizens looking to affect the list of station rehabilitation projects in a capital program can amass themselves in a group and choose the approval level where they would intervene. The level at which to intervene depends on what stage of capital program formation the MTA is in. Other considerations would be whether it is better to get in at the first approval level (NYCT CPM), or directly contact the two levels that have greatest power, the MTA Board or the CPRB. This latter consideration is tied to the nature of the subway station improvement desired – the greater the resistance to include it, the higher up the decisionmaking ladder one needs to go. Recognition of this process and the power that each entity has in shaping the station rehabilitation program (and other aspects of a capital program) is important if transit riders and communities want to affect subway station capital investment decisions which impact the level of subway service that NYCT offers.

2

The Social Impacts of the Station Selection System and its Effect on Issues of Equity

In devising the balanced selection criteria ranking system, NYCT greatly operationalized and made their station selection process more rational. The rankings strive to be as scientific as possible in the criteria it uses to assign points, yet some flexibility still exists to account for things not easily quantifiable. The question that arises is whether such a selection process is fair as there is always the chance that a station can be included or removed from the capital program despite its ranking. In the best case scenario, one can consider this as being attentive to unexpected circumstances that may arise; in the worst case scenario, the flexibility of the selection process can be abused, resulting in an inequitable outcome.

Interestingly enough, the flexibility of the process is not the only aspect that may lead to inequities. Usage criteria and structural condition are heavily weighted in the ranking process. This emphasis will undoubtedly choose older stations and those that are the most used, the majority of which are in midtown and lower Manhattan, the two central business districts of NYC.¹⁶ Even some of the miscellaneous criteria may ultimately end up favoring stations in Manhattan, rather than those in the outer boroughs, as points of interest and the availability of developer funding are two that are more difficult to find in NYC's outer

¹⁶ Janet Jenkins, Associate City Planner, Level II, NYCT Dept. of Capital Program Management, Station Programs

boroughs.¹⁷ According to the balanced selection criteria point system alone, this would be deemed a fair outcome, as the criteria have been properly applied. However CPM understands that utilizing the rankings alone would lead to inequities of this sort, and upset the elected officials that represent those parts of the city where few stations were selected.¹⁸ Not only would the elected officials of these neighborhoods be upset, but it's likely and possible that residents, community groups, subway users, merchants, and institutions of the same neighborhoods would express discontent as well. As there are all these competing interests who have a stake in the rehabilitation of a neighborhood's subway station (and other transportation policies for that matter), it becomes clear that:

“Transportation policy decisions become reflections of political power and products of complex political interactions aiming to achieve consensus among diverse interest groups. What may seem irrational or unfair according to one perspective can usually be explained as the result of a political process that had to recognize and respect other perspectives as well.”¹⁹

Indeed, the fact that the station selection process looks at factors (e.g. availability of funding for the work to be done; whether there are other planned NYCT construction projects that would advance/delay a station rehabilitation; borough equity issues, etc.) outside of simply the rankings is a testament to the NYCT's understanding of the political nature of transportation policy decisions. One can view this as their responsiveness to the transit users of the system as they have institutionalized and embedded the consideration of these factors in their station selection procedures. This eliminates the time, cost, and loss of legitimacy as a

¹⁷ Due to time constraints, I was not able to verify the definition with NYCT officials, yet I suspect the points of interest that the NYCT refer to are most probably based in Manhattan, and are of the tourist trap kind. As such, Manhattan stations will gain more points in the points of interest categories than outer borough stations.

¹⁸ Janet Jenkins. Janet also stated that when CPM devises their list of station rehabilitation projects, it does not discriminate against a station that has low ridership. For example, a station that has high ridership, and a structural rating of 3, does not necessarily get the nod ahead of a station with lower ridership and a structural rating of 4, as the latter station is a greater threat to public safety than the former.

transit agency that would surely arise if the diverse stakeholders of station rehabilitation projects had to ask that these factors were reviewed each time a station was considered for selection.

Reconciling the interests of diverse groups is a complex political process, which takes on an added dimension of complexity when the group making the claim is of an ethnic and or racial minority and is low-income as well. Due to the systematic discrimination that has occurred in this country against minorities, the issue of equity for these groups increases exponentially over those who are non-minorities. Additionally, low-income minorities (and transportation disadvantaged individuals – e.g. the disabled) disproportionately depend on transit for their urban mobility.²⁰ Therefore the simplest indicator of equity that is applied to racial minorities accounts for the quality of the infrastructure and service used by transit authorities in serving communities of color compared with mostly white neighborhoods.²¹

The indicator of equity described above falls under the rubric of service equity, which considers what it means to have poor service. Transportation is an unusual public service in that it is not consumed simply for its own sake, but its value depends primarily on how well it provides access to other places.²² When one claims that they are getting poor service, are they expressing their discontent about the quality and conditions of existing transit service, or are they lamenting about the lack of existence of transit services at all? The latter scenario could be the definition of poor service if one is living on the periphery of an urban area that is not served by any type of mass transit, thereby making it difficult to get anywhere without an

¹⁹ Martin Wachs in Susan Hanson (editor). *The Geography of Urban Transportation*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2nd edition, p.270.

²⁰ David C. Hodge in Susan Hanson (editor). *The Geography of Urban Transportation*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2nd edition, p.370.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.371.

²² *Ibid.*, p.370.

automobile. Measuring equity by quality of service implies that all are entitled to the same levels of service regardless of the cost in providing that level of service.

Equity can also be measured using criteria that will discuss fiscal equity and financing equity. Fiscal equity examines how fares are used to support operating expenses. Scrutiny surrounds something called a user cross-subsidy, which is determined by calculating the difference between the actual proportion of the cost of a trip paid by the fare and the average system proportion.²³ If one is paying more than the system average, they are subsidizing others who are paying a smaller proportion of their share of the operating costs. For example, let's say that the operating cost per mile of a subway ride in City X was \$1.50. The fare is \$1.00, and in City X, 30% of the fare supports operating expenses, which makes the system proportion 30 cents. Someone rides the train for half a mile, which amounts to an operating cost of 75 cents. This rider has paid 45 cents (75-30) more than the system proportion, and is subsidizing someone's ride that costs less than the system proportion of 30 cents. Policies that have been put in place to address user cross-subsidy inequities are fare zones, and higher fares for travel during peak hours. According to Hodge (1993), fiscal equity also looks at how capital expenditures are allocated or declined, which in turn affect the existence, quality, and or service that is provided or not.

Financing equity refers to what taxes are being used to help finance (subsidize) urban transportation infrastructure and by implication, reveals who is "supporting" this public transportation. Some taxes are user-oriented, such as a gas tax and motor vehicle excise tax, and other taxes have no direct relationship to transportation, such as income, sales, and property tax. Essentially, financing equity examines who is paying for public transportation,

²³ *Ibid.*, p.365.

and the impact of the taxes on the proportion of their income that is going towards supporting public transportation.

Despite the discussion about the three different measures of equity, the remainder of this thesis will focus on subway service issues and capital investment decisions as the measures of equity. These two measures of equity are interrelated, as the lack of capital investment impacts service levels. While our discussion in the previous section included capital expenditures under fiscal equity, I have chosen to separate it for clarity's sake. In order to illustrate the political nature of transportation decisions, the issue of equity with respect to minority communities, and the difficulties that arise when a capital need surfaces between capital programs, the next section in this chapter discusses how a station improvement decision was made at the Grand Street station in Chinatown, Manhattan.

Grand Street Station

Located in Manhattan's Chinatown, this station experiences intense overcrowding. The station only has two stairwells that are two people wide that allow users to ascend and descend to the station below. Grand Street station has the 17th highest turnstile count during the week, serving more than 17,000 riders each weekday, and the 9th highest turnstile count on the weekends.²⁴ This is rare, as turnstile counts for stations tend to be higher during the workweek as opposed to the weekend. Additionally, the passenger flow within the station is impeded due to the location of the token booth. During rush hours, lines for the token booth often back up towards the entrance/exit of the station making it difficult to leave or enter the station. The

²⁴ Ellen Chen, Executive Director, Manhattan Neighborhood Renaissance Local Development Corporation; Jon R. Sorenson, "Green Light for \$12B Transit Budget." *New York Daily News*. July 11, 1997.

overcrowding becomes more treacherous during inclement weather, when rain, ice, sleet, or snow increases the chance that one may slip and fall when using the stairs.

In the spring of 1997, City Councilwoman Kathryn Freed, whose district includes Chinatown, and members of some of Chinatown's community groups testified at an MTA Board of Directors meeting about the conditions at Grand Street station. Freed and the community members were told that the MTA had no money to add another stairwell, and that the population boom and expansion of Chinatown is only temporary – once this ends, the overcrowding will lessen.²⁵ This was an unrealistic assumption, as Chinatown will always serve to be a social, cultural, and economic destination for Chinese from all over NYC and the NY metropolitan region. In fact, the D/Q subway line that serves Grand Street station is used by many Chinese who live in Brooklyn to get to Manhattan's Chinatown. Couple this with the many non-Chinese that visit the neighborhood as well, and it ensures that Grand Street station will continue to be a popular stop on the D/Q line for the foreseeable future. Therefore, there is little chance that turnstile counts will decrease.

Due to circumstances that will be explained later in this thesis, the CPRB was still in the midst of approving the 1995-99 MTA capital program last spring as well. As Kathryn Freed is one of the more powerful members of the city council, she managed to get State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, whose assembly district also includes Chinatown, involved in the struggle to obtain a new stairwell for Grand Street station. Silver used his power as the state assembly speaker to say that he would urge the NY State Assembly to not approve the financing for the 1995-99 capital program if it did not have a provision for adding a new stairwell to the Grand Street station. No sooner did Silver utter these words, did the MTA manage to find \$5 million to pay for a new stairwell which will be located across the street and to the west of the

two existing stairwells. Once the Grand Street provision was included, the CPRB approved the MTA's 1995-99 capital program in July 1997, which cleared the way for the state senate to approve the financing need to back the capital program. Work on adding the new stairwell is slated to begin this summer, and will take a year to year and a half to complete.

This case is important, as it highlights the political nature of subway station improvement decisions in NYC. If citizens, and or community groups can gain access to the elected officials who are among the power brokers of the NYC transit world, it's likely that the citizens will have an impact on a decision that is favorable to them. From Sheldon Silver, to Kathryn Freed, to some of Chinatown's community groups, to the CPRB – one thing was apparent – each entity understood their relationships with each other, and possessed a strong sense of their respective power and interests as well. This understanding made the intervention at the two station rehabilitation program approval levels – MTA Board of Directors and CPRB – more effective in obtaining a station improvement decision.

The ability to intervene at two of the station rehabilitation program approval levels I discussed earlier, with the use of politics, has major implications for those communities that want subway station improvements and rehabilitation, yet are not included in a capital program. The Grand Street case is a perfect illustration of the difficulties presented to NYCT when a capital need which arises in between capital programs, or while one was being formulated, presents to NYCT. An implication of this is that the station rehabilitation selection criteria is incomplete, as it was not able to identify the safety hazard at Grand Street that was brought on by poor subway station conditions. As this is the case, can a more open transportation planning process, that includes citizen input concerning station conditions be better incorporated into the station selection process, so that station projects that are chosen

²⁵ Ellen Chen.

and designed for a capital plan truly represent an attempt to attain equitable levels of service for all communities, especially communities of color? As citizen input was expressed via the political power and organization of a few community groups in the Grand Street station case, are there other more formal, existing mechanisms of citizen input that exist?

Can more open transportation planning help address service inequities raised by poor subway station conditions?

What occurred in the Grand Street station was not only a display of how power, politics, interests, and relationships, operates, but fragments of an open transportation planning process in action, as local elected officials sided with the community they represented to obtain a needed subway station improvement.

Subway station improvement decisions, and by implication, transportation planning, stresses the importance of greater public involvement of those affected by plans as much as other aspects of contemporary planning (U.S. Dept. of Transportation, 1996; Flyvbjerg, 1983). A transportation planning process that is more open aims to involve the public who will be most affected by a plan.²⁶ While this openness relies heavily on citizens, it also includes public officials, political parties, interest groups, or the specific target population of a program (i.e. the users); essentially transportation planning involves more than just transportation planners.²⁷ The primary value of input from citizens and other non-transportation planners lies in the fact that it can make the process of arriving at transportation planning decisions more democratic. In addition:

²⁶ Flyvbjerg, 1983, defines open planning in three ways -- greater public involvement of those affected by plans; greater openness to other types of planning; greater openness towards the effects of planning on general societal development (e.g. impacts on real income, energy policy, social values). Open planning is used in my thesis to refer to greater public involvement.

“The purpose of citizen participation is to see that the decisions of government reflect the preferences of the people. The basic intention of citizen participation is to insure the responsiveness and accountability of government to the citizens. Secondary reasons for citizen participation are – it helps create better plans, it increases the likelihood of implementing the plan, and it generates support for the agency.”²⁸

A more open transportation planning process helps to break down the expert/non-expert dichotomy that is prevalent in transportation planning, as the technical data that can be utilized to make decisions can be endless. Shattering this dichotomy is important in assisting a move away from a purely rational/economic perspective of transportation planning, which values experts and top-down planning, towards transportation planning that is bottom-up, and gives more emphasis to social impacts and equity issues. The rational/economic method of transportation planning can't account for everything, which makes the inclusion of citizen input potentially worthwhile, as they may be able to provide information based on their point of view as a transit user and not a transit agency. Therefore, more information will result in plans that truly attend to ridership needs. Consideration of these factors allows for accountability more so than the delivery of mass transit services based solely on rational economic precepts such as revenue generated, and operating costs.

Ultimately though, a more open process that incorporates greater citizen input is a reflection of citizen power, and according to Arnstein:

“is the means by which they (have-not citizens) can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society.”²⁹

²⁷ Bent Flyvbjerg. *Citizen Participation and Openness in Transportation Planning*. Proceedings of the World Conference on Transport Research, Hamburg 1983, Vol. I, p.5.

²⁸ D. Jordan in Flyvbjerg (1983), p.7.

²⁹ S.R. Arnstein in Bent Flyvbjerg, 1983, p.4.

As witnessed in the 1970s, citizens amassed such power in cities such as Boston and NYC to stop the construction of major highways through inner city neighborhoods (Gakenheimer, 1976; Moss, 1989) and halted the construction of highways that would have torn up communities and forever altered the physical, social, and economic landscapes of these two cities.

The Grand Street station case and our discussion about the balanced selection criteria station selection process illustrate two points of intervention that currently exist that allow those other than transportation planners to be in the process of determining station improvement decisions. One point of intervention is within the balanced station selection process, where an individual, group, or community can intervene if their station is not included in the list of stations to be rehabilitated in a capital program by appealing to the portion of the selection process that looks at more qualitative criteria. Yet the window of opportunity to intervene at this juncture is limited in the sense that once NYCT CPC has approved their list of capital projects, it is up to the MTA Board of Directors to approve NYCT's capital program. Those in the Grand Street case utilized the second point of intervention, which are the different station rehabilitation project approval levels, and had to intervene at the MTA Board of Directors approval level and the CPRB approval level as they missed intervening at the initial NYCT CPM level, as the capital need at Grand Street station arose in between the formation of the 1992-96 capital program and the 1995-99 capital program.

As we have identified two points of intervention in the station rehabilitation selection process where non-transportation planners can enter into the planning process, our next chapter, will examine the existing mechanisms of NYCT citizen input, and determine whether they are just as useful in reflecting citizen interests and gathering additional information that NYCT can

use in its capital planning decisions as input from citizens via the points of intervention. It is important to consider these existing mechanisms, as not every community has the access to power via local elected officials, nor the social capital in the form of strong community groups and leaders, to affect station improvement decisions in the manner apparent with Grand Street station. For the communities without such access to power, or social capital, the effectiveness of these mechanisms may be their primary means to insure equitable subway service and station conditions.

3

Effectiveness of Existing Mechanisms of Citizen Input in Fostering a More Open Transportation Planning Process

Existing mechanisms of citizen input

As fragments of a more open planning system were exhibited in Grand Street, could what was achieved, been achieved if NYCT's mechanisms of soliciting citizen input were utilized? If so, the manner in which citizen input was expressed may have been an inefficient way to obtain a subway station capital improvement. If the existing mechanisms of citizen input can foster a more open transportation planning process and use citizen input as an aid in subway station rehabilitation project selection and design decisions, this will negate the need for a community to expend precious political and social capital to obtain an equitable level of service that they should be provided with as fare-paying transit riders. If these mechanisms can't effectively foster more openness, our Grand Street case may be the "model" for obtaining station improvements that the NYCT fails to identify through their own capital planning procedures. The NYCT mechanisms of citizen input that allow riders to provide information, suggestions regarding service improvements, and any other feedback regarding any aspect of subway service are as follows: NYCT Office of Government and Community Relations (OGCR); MTA OGCR; the NY Transit Rider's Council which is part of the larger MTA Permanent Citizen's Advisory Committee (PCAC), which also includes the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) Commuter Council, and Metro-North Commuter Council (MNCC); NYCT

Customer Service; public hearings and MTA Board meetings; and outreach that occurs as part of the final scope and design phase of a station rehabilitation project; transit advocacy groups like the Straphanger's Campaign.

NYCT OGCR: NYCT OGCR is essentially the "public relations arm" of NYCT and represents the agency line (viewpoint) on all NYCT-related transit issues. It publicizes information about current NYCT initiatives, fare programs, route, service change, and repair information. NYCT OGCR has a staff of 10, with five acting as borough representatives. The OGCR is charged with dealing with elected officials, organized groups, and community boards. When subway and or bus riders have an issue of concern regarding transit service in their neighborhood, OGCR is in charge of arranging a meeting between the local community board and appropriate transit officials to discuss these issues. OGCR's remaining roles include 1) setting up neighborhood task forces to monitor the progress and any inconveniences associated with large capital projects 2) performing the community outreach needed to elicit suggestions over the work to be performed in the final scope and design phase of a neighborhood's station rehabilitation project.

MTA OGCR: The MTA OGCR works with elected officials at the city and state level to lobby for legislation that will be favorable to the MTA. Such legislation could include appropriation bills, and public transportation regulations. In addition, it funnels correspondence it receives concerning the service of the MTA system to the appropriate MTA agency. The MTA OGCR is staffed by five people.

MTA Permanent Citizen's Advisory Committee (PCAC), NYC Transit Rider's Council: The NYC Transit Riders Council (NYCTRC) is part of the larger MTA PCAC, which was created by state legislation in 1981. The PCAC was originally formed in 1977 by the MTA Board of Directors, and consisted of 29 members. PCAC sought state enabling legislation in order to assure their autonomy. The legislation also mandated the creation of the two other commuter councils, who represent the interests of LIRR and Metro North riders. Collectively, the three rider councils make up the PCAC, whose role it is to be the voice of the users of MTA facilities, provide the MTA Board with suggestions on transportation policy, and to hold the MTA Board and senior management accountable to MTA riders. The PCAC has 35 members, with 15 coming from the NYCTRC, and 10 each from the LIRR and Metro North commuter councils. It receives an annual budget from the MTA to support its five-person staff and expenses. The composition of the NYCTRC consists of five members recommended by the Mayor of the City of New York, 5 by the NYC Public Advocate, and one each from the five borough presidents of NYC. Accountability is engendered when PCAC and NYCTRC offers its stance on transit issues at NYCT public hearings and MTA Board meetings, and by its presence on the MTA Board of Directors as a non-voting member since 1995. The Transit Rider's Council also has monthly public meetings, and quarterly meetings with the President of NYCT, who is currently Lawrence G. Reuter. PCAC and NYCTRC act as transit rider advocates when it produces position papers, and organizes public forums regarding NYC transit issues.

NYCT Customer Service: With a staff of eleven, NYCT Customer Service takes on the task of responding to every letter and phone call it receives from an individual, concerning transit service provided by NYCT. (Letters from a group go to NYCT OGCR). In March, 1998, NYCT received 2,488 letters and phone calls, 1,514 of which are closed (been answered), and 974 are pending.³⁰ The correspondence they receive include some about policy issues, service levels, or commendation of transit workers. For March 1998, 48% consisted of transit delay verification for

³⁰ Peggy Milstone, Manager of Correspondence Unit, NYCT Customer Service, 4/28/98. Peggy also noted that the March total for this year was up 21% from last year (1997).

employers, so that employees late to work due to a transit delay would not be reprimanded; 20% were related to NYCT's paratransit program, which allows disabled people to schedule a van ride to a point of destination for the cost of \$1.50 -- pick-up is arranged at the person's home; 323 letters/phone calls concerned MetroCard, the system's electronic fare system. NYCT Customer Service funnels correspondence to the appropriate NYCT agency to provide any answers it cannot do itself. For example, station renovation issues go to CPM; simple station maintenance, such as a paint job, go to field managers. Customer Service also administers a NYCT employee suggestion program, and produces monthly reports that summarize the types of correspondence that each NYCT department received, which clues them into what the riding public that has contacted customer service is concerned about.

Public hearings: Public hearings are scheduled whenever a change in transit service is slated to occur, such as the reduction of a subway route's operating hours by more than an hour or a train route's scheduled frequency by more than 25 percent.³¹

MTA Board Meetings: The MTA Board of Directors meets once a month, and provides half an hour where it transit users, elected officials, etc., can sign up to speak in front of the MTA board with a transit concern they may have.

Outreach to communities before the final scope of station rehabilitation work is done: The balanced selection criteria system that NYCT has put in place has served to eliminate the need to consult communities concerning the order in which stations are selected to receive a full station rehabilitation. Initial cost estimates of station rehabilitation projects are based upon the educated speculation of management staff of NYCT CPM, so that something can be included in the capital plan.³² NYCT does not know the extent of the work that will be performed until they do a more detailed scope and design of the work as the project commencement time approaches. It is at this implementation stage that NYCT involves the community surrounding the subway station in planning for the work. NYCT OGCR sets up meetings with the community board where the station rehabilitation is taking place to solicit citizen input regarding issues the community would like to see the scope and design of the project address.

Straphanger's Campaign: Housed within the NY Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), the Straphanger's Campaign is the most vocal mass transit advocacy group in NYC. The group is savvy at using the media and publicity stunts to illustrate their points regarding transit service. The Straphanger's Campaign (Straps for short) has been in existence since 1979, and has two full-time staff members. As the Straps are housed within NYPIRG, they can call on some of their resources, such as volunteers, to aid them in their work. The effectiveness of this group lies in their ability to form collaborations with other groups, institutions, and elected officials, on transit issues that they work on.

Effectiveness of the citizen input mechanisms in fostering greater citizen participation

The tasks and mandates of each citizen input mechanism influences the effectiveness, or rather, the power that each one has in voicing ridership concerns. Consequently, this determines the speed and comprehensiveness with which this information can be incorporated into the design of capital improvement work done on subway stations. A common thread that runs

³¹ MTA NYCT. *Proposed Subway Service Revisions*. March 14, 1995

³² Arlene Grauer, April 9, 1998.

throughout the existing mechanisms of citizen input (except for the Straphanger's Campaign, and to a lesser degree, NYCTRC) are that they all operate within the system and have been designed to placate ridership needs and concerns. These mechanisms are a "quick and dirty" way of letting citizens feel as if they have a stake or input into the decision making process, and don't place enough emphasis on creating the relationships with transit officials that will lead to accountability. Individual letters and phone calls represent atomized action, and prevent people from seeing that they have similar interests and concerns as others. Without the ability to assemble, people cannot organize to affect change. Subsequently, transit advocacy groups like the PCAC, NYCTRC, and the Straphanger's Campaign can't work on transit issues on their own. To be effective, these groups need to collaborate with others who have similar interests in order to amass power and share organizational resources.

These mechanisms may be effective in getting smaller capital needs and minor service inequities corrected (e.g. replacing stairway handrails, painting of the station walls, keeping stations clean, etc.), however, for larger capital needs and major service inequities (e.g. renovating a subway station, shutting down a train station), these mechanisms of citizen input may not be too effective. It is these larger issues where transit officials will flex their designation as "experts" and resent any "non-expert" (i.e. non-transportation planners) input as their identity, sense of self-worth, and training, has led them to believe that they are the only ones capable of "solving" these issues – it is their responsibility and that of no one else. Listed below are the specific limitations of each citizen input mechanism, with respect to addressing substantive inequities in capital investment and subway service.

NYCT OGCR – It would be difficult for the NYCT OGCR to play a significant role in addressing large service inequities, as they are not in a position to ever directly advocate for ridership needs. While they may grease the skids for change, they have no capacity to follow up or hold transit officials accountable for action. That is the role of the citizens who are a part of any community board meeting with transit officials. Additionally, NYCT OGCR only deals with elected officials,

community boards, and other organized groups, whose transit interests may not coincide with those riders not affiliated with any of the three entities OGCR is mandated to deal with.

MTA OGCR -- MTA OGCR's main role is to lobby for city, state, (and when need, federal) legislation that is favorable to MTA's operations. As such, they represent the interests of the transit agency (the MTA) which may not always coincide with transit user interests.

MTA Permanent Citizen's Advisory Committee, NYC Transit Riders Council -- NYCTRC is the one mechanism of citizen input that is working within the MTA to ensure that the needs of NYCT riders are met. The NYCTRC possesses some key relationships with those that hold the power in the public transportation world of the New York metropolitan region. Despite the fact that the PCAC seat on the MTA Board is non-voting, they still have access to the Board members. Direct access to the NYCT President and other upper level NYCT management exists as well. While NYCTRC has these relationships, their ability to hold these transit officials accountable is limited to speaking at public hearings and MTA Board meetings about issues they support. In this sense, NYCTRC wields a carrot, and not a stick over these transit officials. As PCAC is mandated by law, an uneasy relationship with the MTA still exists in the sense that PCAC is funded by the MTA. While it's impossible for the MTA to not fund the PCAC, there is the possibility that it can underfund them, thereby curtailing the effectiveness of their work. Additionally, the NYCTRC and by association, the PCAC, are not well known to the NYC mass transit public, which brings into question how extensive is their connection to the grassroots riding public. While the PCAC has a seat on the MTA Board of Directors, its non-voting status does not allow it to put any teeth behind their suggestions on MTA transportation policy.

NYCT Customer Service - While NYCT is pretty efficient in responding to ridership correspondence, administers an employee suggestion program, and creates summary reports for NYCT departments, no tracking is done on the part of Customer Service to understand the ultimate outcome of the information they collect and the correspondence they pass on. This represents a loss in accountability that could be created if Customer Service tracked correspondence in this manner and was permitted to take action on delinquent/unsatisfactory responses. This lack of accountability exists for its department summaries as well. It appears as if Customer Service is quite content in responding to the public if they can handle it on their own, or channeling transit user concerns to the appropriate NYCT department.

Public hearings -- Public hearings are not the most effective way to elicit citizen input concerning NYCT operations. They favor those who have good public speaking skills, and have the ability to fit such a meeting into their schedule, as such hearings may conflict with work or occur at the end of a long workday. Public hearings place the responsibility of input overwhelmingly on the transit users affected by MTA policies. In some sense, policies have been designed and decided upon by the time they reach a public hearing, since any worthwhile input from MTA users should have been elicited when the MTA policies were still being researched and designed. For these reasons, public hearings will always have an element of imperfection surrounding them.

MTA Board meetings -- The problems associated with using MTA Board meetings as a vehicle for citizen input are similar to those of a public hearing. In addition, meetings only occur once a month and MTA users are only allotted half an hour to speak.

Outreach to communities before the final scope of station rehabilitation work is done -- Each station rehabilitation has a certain budget that was submitted as part of a capital plan. When NYCT CPM discovers additional work that needs to be done due to inspection and citizen suggestions during the final scope and design phase, it's possible that this work will not be performed, especially if it will lead to a significant increase in cost, and put the station rehabilitation over budget. This possibility speaks to the need to have a better understanding of station needs and conditions before a capital plan is drawn up, so that a more precise budget can be determined. Outreach to communities should occur earlier if this is to be avoided.

Straphanger's Campaign – Again, the most vocal and probably inclusive transit advocacy group, yet are small and can't advocate on transit issues alone. As stated earlier, the effectiveness of this group lies in their ability to form collaborations on transit issues they are working on, which poses a challenge each time the Straps embarks on a new issue.

Implications of the limited effectiveness of current NYCT mechanisms for fostering citizen participation

The discussion in this section demonstrates that the mechanisms available for citizen input regarding service and capital expenditure inequities are limited in their effectiveness. These mechanisms will work if the service inequities are small (e.g. how clean are subway stations) but their impact will be limited if the service inequities involve capital projects such as subway station improvements and changes in service such as scheduling. The atomized nature of these mechanisms highlights a problem of bureaucracies -- they treat people as clients, customers, and consumers, which translates to a different way of dealing and thinking about transit riders than if you considered them as citizens before anything else. As current citizen input methods are limited in filtering subway rider concerns about service and capital investment inequities to NYCT management, this implies that citizens may well want to use what happened in the Grand Street station as a "model" of for how to express citizen concerns. To express citizen concerns in the manner that the community groups and local elected officials did in Chinatown, one needs to understand the role of politics in helping to establish interests, relationships, and power. It is to such a conception that we now direct our attention to.

4

Politics as a Means to Achieve Greater Citizen Participation

As NYCT's citizen input mechanisms don't give enough power to riders to voice their concerns over capital expenditure inequities, one must consider how the use of politics can help transit riders amass the power in the form of organized people (e.g. groups, coalitions, etc.) in order to have a more effective voice in these matters. Groups, institutions, or communities, must understand each other internally and externally before they can amass power. The politics utilized to do this is not that of electoral politics, but rather those politics where individuals have relationships that allow them to disagree, argue, interrupt, confront, and negotiate, and through this process of conversation and debate, arrive at a consensus or compromise about a particular course of action.³³ The presence of personal relationships are key, if politics is to be practiced effectively by individuals. As individuals practice politics with one another, a trust develops which paves the way for people to clarify and better understand their interests. The conversation that occurs in politics is a manifestation of what Lindblom (1990) terms probing. Probing attempts to incorporate as much information as possible in attempting to understand interests. Information that ranges from an analysis performed by a social scientist, to stories or accounts based on one's reactions of love, hate, revulsion, sympathy, admiration, or horror to social conditions are all useful in helping people understand their true interests.³⁴ No piece of

³³ Ernesto Cortes Jr. "Reweaving the Social Fabric." *Boston Review*, Vol. 19, Nos. 3&4, p.12.

³⁴ Charles Lindblom. *Inquiry and Change*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990, p.32.

information is too trivial, if it can help to impress upon others what their interests are. Probing eventually leads to the formation of volitions, which are choices regarding outcomes, and plans, based on the probing that has occurred. Choices made without probing are decisions based on incomplete or faulty information, and does not represent one's true interests, but their preferences, as more quality information would illuminate the ephemeral nature of these preferences. It is not until people practice politics and have conversations in a group, that one realizes this, as conversation provides the exchange of information needed for people to recognize their true interests.

Currently, decisions concerning most of our society's pressing problems are not decided by politics, but rather by the courts, money, or physical force.³⁵ In this environment, it is difficult to see the benefits of practicing politics as a way to devise solutions. Practicing politics implies that it is a group activity, and not something that can be done alone. Yet, the average American citizen has shied away from politics, and is not interested in participating in public life. The greater sense of political self that Americans had earlier this century was primarily sustained through a more robust civil society, where involvement in associations allowed Americans to identify their self interests and advance them in connection with those of others.³⁶ In order for civil society to become strong again, citizens must rediscover their roles as citizens, among them being their birthright to be political. Wolin (1989) defines politicalness as:

“...our capacity for developing into beings who know and value what it means to participate in and be responsible for the care and improvement of our common and collective life. To be political is not identical with being a part of government or being associated with a political party. These are highly structured roles, and

³⁵ Ernesto Cortes, Jr. *Power, Politics, and the Revitalization of American Democracy*. MIT Dept. of Urban Studies & Planning class, May 5, 1998.

³⁶ Dennis Shirley. *Community Organizing for Urban School Reform*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997, p.20.

typically highly bureaucratized. For these reasons, they are opposed to the authentically political.”³⁷

Wolin is not off the mark when he states that individuals in contemporary society have failed to exercise their right to be political and engage others and public officials in discussions about policies and initiatives that affect their lives. Citizens no longer have the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversation that allows them to probe their interests in the hopes of reaching a settlement, and would rather have an “expert,” such as the social scientist, policymaker, economist, etc., perform this task for them. This is a result of our market-oriented consumer culture and society, where we are conditioned to make choices from a menu devised by experts.³⁸ Our society’s pre-occupation with the market forces and culture leaves us with little ability to imagine that politics can allow us to make better choices. We become impaired to the fact that much of the information we use to make decisions, which range from advertising, to sensational news stories, to soundbites, is inadequate and based on the interests of those who disseminate this information.

As citizens, a wider recognition of our power to make and unmake political authority, and by implication, policies that affect our society is needed.³⁹ If citizens are to be more political, an understanding of power needs to exist. Power is about the ability to get things done. All human relationships involve some aspect of power, and it is the nature and the role of the relationship that determines the level of human fulfillment possible, and the conception of power that is to be practiced.⁴⁰ While two forms of power exist – organized people and organized money -- power operates in two ways – there is unilateral power and relational power.

³⁷ Sheldon S. Wolin. *The Presence of the Past*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989, p.139.

³⁸ A perfect example of this is women’s fashion and how fashion magazine editors, and designers dictate the style and tastes of the clothes conscious female public on a seasonal basis.

³⁹ Charles Taylor. *Philosophical Arguments*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995, p.219.

⁴⁰ Bernard Loomer. “Two Kinds of Power,” *Criterion*. Winter, 1976, p.13.

Unilateral power uses coercion to instruct and direct people to do things. This concept of power uses people as instruments to achieve ends and views compromise as a sign of weakness. Those in a unilateral relationship are primarily concerned with themselves, and vest all their energy and time into making themselves self-sufficient so as to be able to influence others and affect others to perform actions that will advance their own purposes. A unilateral relationship implies that one is non-communal, and self dependent with respect to motivation, strength, and resources. Dependency on others is considered a weakness, and deadens one's sensitivity to the interdependency that humans have with one another. Those who practice unilateral power view others as the competition, the enemy, and as something to be conquered. This also contributes to the non-communal aspect of unilateral relationships. It should be no surprise that those who have power due to organized money, practice unilateral power. One only needs to examine the business practices of our country's major corporations to see the competitive mentality that characterizes their relationships with other corporations and the rest of society. Indeed, the negative connotation of power that most people have is due in large part to those who conceive of and wield power in a unilateral manner.

Relational power is reciprocal, and based on love, and respect, where one not only has the capacity to act, but also has the reciprocal capacity to be acted upon.⁴¹ Relational power involves both giving and receiving. Individuals who practice relational power are open to including others and new ideas in their worlds, and the ability to do this is as much a mark of power as the strength needed to exert an influence.⁴² This ability implies that one is comfortable in their identity and is "large" enough to make room for another without feeling as if their being or identity is threatened. Therefore, the other is not deemed a threat, and is not an entity that

⁴¹ Ernesto Cortes, Jr., in Henry Cisneros (editor). *Interwoven Destinies: Cities and Nation*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1993, p.299.

needs to be conquered, which is the case in a unilateral relationship. Contrasted with unilateral power, those who practice relational power have a more communal view of society. One who is communal understands that he/she is a creature of contexts, is interdependent of others, is shaped by past and present relationships, and is open to how these relationships and new ones can continually transform oneself and others they have a relational relationship with.

Relational power emerges when individuals practice politics. As stated earlier, politics strengthens personal relationships and builds trust amongst people. This process also affords those who deliberate together, a level of mutual respect, as citizens who are contemplating collective action, owe one another reasons, and attention to one another's reasons.⁴³ The creation of this trust, and respect leads to the development of a network of relationships where all participating members are transformed into individuals and groups of greater stature.⁴⁴ When this transformation in one's self and others can occur, relational power can be used to amass power in the form of organized people, as individuals and groups now have the capacity and willingness to initiate actions together. By working together, coalitions and groups can form that can wield and display power in the public arena.

Whether power is practiced in a unilateral or relational manner, consent needs to be obtained in order for power to manifest itself. According to Nyberg (1981), there exists five types of consent that exist along a passive/active continuum and determines how power is delegated. The forms of consent are arranged on this continuum according to increasing degrees

⁴² Loomer. *Op.cit.*, p.20.

⁴³ Joshua Cohen and Charles Sabel. "Directly-Deliberative Polyarchy." *European Law Journal*, Vol. 3, No.4, December 1997, p.327, 329.

⁴⁴ Loomer. *Op.cit.*, p.26.

of willingness and the quality of information one has when deciding whether to give one's own consent.⁴⁵ Table 3 below portrays this continuum:

Table 3 -- Nyberg's Consent Continuum

1. **Consent based on sanctions such as physical violence, fines, or other consequences that would be less desirable than not consenting.** Consent offered under these circumstances is the least willing, produces opposition, and represents unstable power.
2. **Consent based on false, partial, and or biased information.** One who offers consent with such faulty information believes they are acting rationally. It's quite likely that this consent would not be granted if the individual was aware of the poor nature of the information.
3. **Consent based on habit and apathy.** One follows the lead of someone because there is no reason not to, or because one is accustomed to being a follower. Someone of this nature prefers to endure things as the way they are, rather than endure the personal, social, and political entanglements that are inevitable when one engages in questions, or negotiations that will affect their lives.
4. **Consent based on conformity to custom.** Having been raised in a certain tradition is often times enough to ensure continuous consent to that tradition. Consent based on custom is probably the most common type of consent.
5. **Consent based on informed judgment.** This consent is the basis for delegating power to a concentrated few with the understanding that they can be removed if they are proving unsatisfactory to those who delegated power. This critical approval of delegated authority is based on the understanding that organized consent, and its withdrawal are the ultimate source of power. In addition, consent based on informed judgment requires one to have negotiation, listening, and deliberation skills, which allow an individual to weigh options, judge accordingly, and commit to the judgments made.

Source: David Nyberg. *Power over Power*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981, p.47-50. Ernesto Cortes, Jr. *Power, Politics, and the Revitalization of American Democracy*. February 10, 1998.

Practicing politics helps us to move towards granting consent based upon informed judgment, as more information becomes available for individuals to make decisions with. Therefore relational power grows to the point where it can be used to affect change. The democratic promise of this country is re-established as well, since the voices and information being used to determine policies that address the pressing social issues of the communities of our nation are no longer solely those of the experts, or elites, but include "ordinary" people as well. Indeed, democracy is a political ideal that is concerned with making binding collective decisions

⁴⁵ David Nyberg. *Power over Power*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981, p.47.

via the pooling of dispersed information relevant to the problem, which is subsequently employed to help create solutions to practical problems.⁴⁶

Achieving greater citizen participation through community organizing: The Industrial Areas Foundation

Most of the discussion in the previous section concerning politics, power, interests, and civil society, is indicative of the philosophy that supports the work of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF). The IAF is the center of a national network of broad-based, multi-ethnic, interfaith organizations in primarily poor and moderate income communities that works to restore local democracy.⁴⁷ IAF's central role is to build the competence and confidence of ordinary citizens and taxpayers to reorganize the relationships of power and politics in their communities in order to reshape the physical and cultural face of their neighborhoods.⁴⁸ The organization is over 50 years old, was created by Saul Alinsky, and provides leadership training for nearly 40 organizations that represent nearly 1,000 institutions and over 1 million families, in New York, Texas, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nebraska, Maryland, Tennessee, and the United Kingdom.⁴⁹

In order to build the broad-based organizations that IAF believes is integral to re-establishing democracy and affecting policies that concern communities, the initial efforts of any IAF organizing campaign is to focus on identifying leaders. An IAF organizing campaign is usually the result of institutions (e.g. churches), and residents who form a sponsoring committee that finances and oversees the work of the IAF organizers in their community. The organizers conduct one-on-one meetings with residents and other individuals of importance in the

⁴⁶ Cohen and Sabel. *Op.cit.*, p.317, 320.

⁴⁷ Ernesto Cortes, Jr., (1993). *Op.cit.*, p.294.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.294.

community to identify leaders who are interested in affecting change. A leader in the eyes of the IAF has particular qualities, among them being: 1) the willingness to build relationships in a community 2) have the ability to develop a following 3) are those who may already possess a network of relationships in the community. IAF deems these qualities more important than good public speaking skills, as those that look and sound good may not be interested in being relational, and are only interested in self-aggrandizement. Additionally, their skillfulness in the public arena does not mean that they necessarily possess networks of relationships, which someone who doesn't have these skills, may have. The IAF would rather have someone who is already "wired in", as this person already has relationships and credibility in the community. (The speaking skills can be taught at a later date by the IAF organizers.) Of course, the best of both worlds is obtained if a leader is identified who has a combination of public arena skills and networks of relationships.

The process of identifying leaders is a long and arduous one. The one-on-one meetings generally last for half an hour, and an organizer attempts to meet with 10-15 people a day. Meetings continue for as long as they need to.⁵⁰ While not every individual that an IAF leader meets with has leadership potential, many of these meetings provide names of people who would be interested in partaking in efforts to affect change. After many meetings, a pattern often emerges, and the same name keeps cropping up. This knowledge allows the IAF organizer to map the network of relationships in a community and aids in his/her work in identifying leaders.

Once a group of leaders are identified, house meetings are held where these leaders can come together to share their concerns about the neighborhood, acknowledge others in the

⁴⁹ Ernesto Cortes, Jr., (1994). *Op.cit.*, p.12.

⁵⁰ Ernesto Cortes, Jr., Southwest Regional Director of IAF, conducted nearly 1,000 one-on-one meetings between January 1974 and August 1974 when he was organizing communities in San Antonio to form COPS – Communities Organized for Public Service, which is the oldest and most established of all the IAF organizations.

neighborhood who share similar concerns, and begin building the relationships needed to practice politics and develop relational power. Shortly after some initial house meetings, public actions are decided upon by the group that serve to test and develop the leadership that has been identified to date, but also to begin affecting change in the community. The first few public actions are “winnable” issues – getting streetlights changed; performing basic research on an issue that the community faces, etc. Succeeding on these issues instills a sense of accomplishment on the part of these leaders, and prepares them to act publicly on larger issues in the futures.

It is at this stage that the IAF organizers give training concerning skills that individuals will need to practice politics and be successful in public life – negotiating, deliberating, listening, and facilitating meetings. Training is also given on issues that community residents will need to understand if they are to become powerful advocates for their communities. Among these issues are the nature of inequality, globalization and its effects on the local economy, the meaning of democracy, and the role and responsibility of citizens in it. The discussion of these topics is meant to encourage the leaders to engage in discussion, deliberation, and debates with the one another. In doing so, they are becoming agitated to the point where their imagination about what is possible grows endlessly. As the training continues, leadership, networks of relationships, and a sense of confidence and ability to act grows. Public actions become more complex, and address larger issues – school reform, obtaining sewer lines, developing new initiatives in healthcare and job training. The public action could entail a protest, rally, negotiations with elected officials, etc. After a public action is executed, the IAF organizers help the community leaders evaluate what has occurred. Ample material surrounding the public action, ranging from the planning and strategizing phase to implementation, to what actually occurred, abounds after

its execution, which the IAF organizers will use to further their understanding about politics, power, and relationships.

A key philosophy behind the IAF training of leaders is the iron rule – “Never do for others what they can do for themselves.” This philosophy resonates with the idea that citizens in a democratic society have the right and are obligated to practice politics to shape decisions that affect our lives. As opposed to having elected officials, business people, and other elites make decisions for the majority of society, an active citizenry that practices politics is well versed to negotiate with these elites to formulate decisions that are more democratic. Armed with an understanding of power and interests, this active citizenry can hold our elected officials and other decision making elites accountable to public policies and help them create public policy as well. Once one has undergone IAF training, one will always have the capacity and skills needed to act publicly.

If the organizers are successful in training and agitating the leaders, the broad-based organization grows, as those who were not initially a part of it get interested, and may be brought in via those networks of relationships that have flourished or been strengthened due to learning the practice of politics. In building a broad-based organization, the goal is to have 30 primary leaders, who are in touch with 300 secondary leaders, who in turn are in touch with 1,000 tertiary leaders.⁵¹ This network is crucial, when public displays of power are needed concerning issues of importance to the communities IAF works in. The leaders of the broad-based coalition tend to be from organizations that are faith-based congregations, as they are built on networks of families, friends, and neighbors.⁵² This provides fertile ground for IAF to perform its work, as they believe that people from faith-based congregations are more likely to have networks and be

⁵¹ Christine Stephens. *Power, Politics, and the Revitalization of American Democracy*. March 10, 1998.

⁵² Ernesto Cortes, Jr., (1993). *Op.cit.*, p.303.

“wired in.” This is advantageous to the creation of the broad-based organization as the leaders are tied to the religious institutions, which have a history and presence in the community, and ensures that the broad-based organization will always have some representation from these community institutions. In this respect, the broad-based organization is establishing its own legitimacy, presence, and institutional power, in order to be a perennial “force” to be reckoned with in the design and choice over local public policy.

Applicability of IAF organizing principles to stimulate greater citizen participation amongst NYC subway riders

For some important reasons noted earlier, the existing mechanisms of citizen participation is limited in expressing the concerns of communities regarding their neighborhood subway station. As these mechanisms lack the power to express ridership concerns in a manner that will result in an equitable outcome, can some of the IAF organizing principles be utilized to give NYC subway riders more power in expressing concern about service and capital expenditure inequities and making suggestions regarding subway service? If a certain group of transit riders can amass the power to hold NYCT accountable to subway station planning decisions, their input is no longer atomized, but rather, highly organized. Chapter 5 will discuss how a community in Brooklyn, New York, struggled to obtain improvements for the subway stations and supporting elevated structures of a subway shuttle line that runs through their neighborhood. While its clear that some mobilization, use of power, and key relationships were utilized in this organizing effort, how does it compare to the organizing principles that the IAF espouses? Based on this case study, we will be able to discuss similarities and differences between the organizing activities that occurred in this Brooklyn community, and the organizing that the IAF engages in.

5

The Franklin Avenue Shuttle and the Communities of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, and Prospect Heights

Indeed the communities of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, and Prospect Heights in Brooklyn, New York, have faced the issue of service and capital expenditure equity with respect to subway service. These three communities (to be referred to as “community” or “the community” from here on), located in north central Brooklyn, are predominantly African-American. Table 4 gives some demographic data that has been aggregated to acquaint us with these neighborhoods.

The service and capital inequities (to be simply referred to as inequities from here on) that this community faced were related to the Franklin Avenue Shuttle, a 1.4 mile, elevated four station subway line that runs through this community.⁵³ The Shuttle connects the A/C subway line with the D/Q subway line, two of NYC’s most utilized subway lines (Figure 1). The Shuttle allows residents from southern Brooklyn to get to points in north and central Brooklyn, and vice versa. The Shuttle can be used to access some of Brooklyn’s more important institutions, as it runs in close proximity to the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Prospect Park, the Brooklyn Public Library’s Central Branch, Brooklyn Children’s Museum, Interfaith Hospital, Prospect Heights and Clara Barton high schools, St. Francis De Sales School For the Deaf and Medgar Evers College.

⁵³ The Shuttle consisted of five subway stops until the closure of the Dean Street station in September of 1995.

Table 4 -- Aggregate Demographic Data of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, and Prospect Heights

	Amount	Percentage
Persons	239,496	100.0
Male	108,967	45.5
Female	130,529	54.5
White	19,325	8.07
Black	196,705	82.13
Amer. Ind., Eskimo, Aleut.	877	0.37
Asian or Pacific Islander	2,511	1.05
Other	20,078	8.38
Hispanic (of any race)	38,475	16.06
Persons age 25 and over with at least a high school degree or equivalent	95,059	65.69
Persons below poverty level (for whom poverty is determined)	62,649	100.0
White	4,809	7.68
Black	47,728	76.18
Amer. Ind., Eskimo, Aleut.	190	0.30
Asian or Pacific Islander	628	1.00
Other	9,294	14.84

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, STF3B data; The figures in this table are aggregated census data from the four zip codes that represent these neighborhoods -- 11216 and 11221 for Bedford-Stuyvesant; 11225 for Crown Heights; 11238 for Prospect Heights.

As discussed in the introduction, the MTA started its capital program in 1982 to restore the subway system to a state of good repair. The combination of the lack of capital infrastructure maintenance throughout the 1970s, and the heavy focus on rolling stock and other subway infrastructure in the first two capital programs during the 1980s, served to make the Franklin Avenue Shuttle the most neglected and dilapidated subway line in the early 1990s. No where was the indication of the Shuttle's poor health more evident than in the conditions of its subway stations, with the three worst ones being the Botanic Garden, Park Place, and Dean Street station. (The other two stations are Prospect Park, where one can transfer to the D/Q, and Franklin Avenue, where one can transfer to the A/C.) Throughout the

Figure 1 -- Brooklyn Portion of NYC Subway Map Indicating The Franklin Avenue Shuttle



Franklin Avenue Shuttle (S)

D/Q Subway Line

A/C Subway Line

line's five stations, but predominantly at the three mentioned above, one found dim lighting, graffiti strewn walls, deteriorating and crumbling platforms and canopies, missing or uneven steps in stairways, litter on the tracks and platforms, broken windows in the fare collection station building (Park Place and Dean Street station), rusting in the steel canopy support columns and steel members that support the platforms and outdated communications systems.⁵⁴ The deplorable conditions of the Shuttle's stations was the most visible indicator of the line's problems, and clued transit officials to further problems. Other problems included the existing and continued development of cracks along the Shuttle retaining walls, the continued use of steel braces to support the retaining walls in certain locations (in place since 1982), corrosion on its eight elevated street bridges, and dilapidated track throughout the Shuttle line.

Residents of the community and users of the Shuttle waited with tolerance throughout the 1980s for their Shuttle to be repaired and rehabilitated. Their tolerance was based on the understanding that the first two capital programs had to concentrate on rolling stock and other subway infrastructure and that when compared to conditions in the rest of the subway system during the 1980s, the conditions of the Franklin Avenue Shuttle were similar.⁵⁵ The sentiment of the community was to monitor the Shuttle conditions, and wait until their turn would come up to receive repairs via the capital program. Yet, as the decade was closing out, and as other aspects of the subway system were improving, this similarity became less apparent, and instead became a stark contrast in quality and service.

⁵⁴ Seelye, Stevenson, Value, & Knecht (STV). *Study for the Franklin Avenue Shuttle, NYCT, Vol. 4: Existing Conditions -- Stations and Platforms*. August, 1991.

⁵⁵ Joe Rappaport, Straphanger's Campaign.

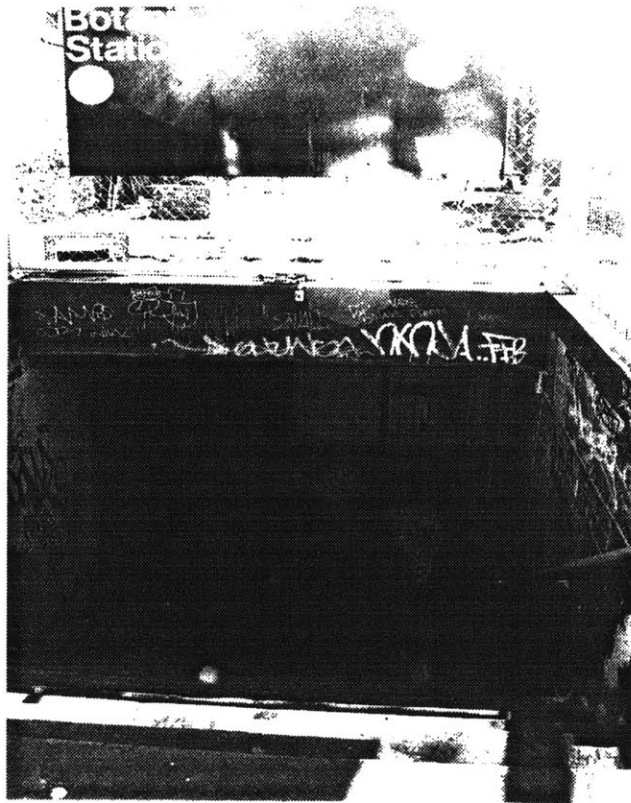


Photo #1: Botanic Garden Entrance, October 1996



Photo #2: Botanic Garden Station, October 1996



Photo #3: Botanic Garden Station Platform, April 1998. Looking Out on Closed Portion of Platform -- Deteriorated Wooden Planks

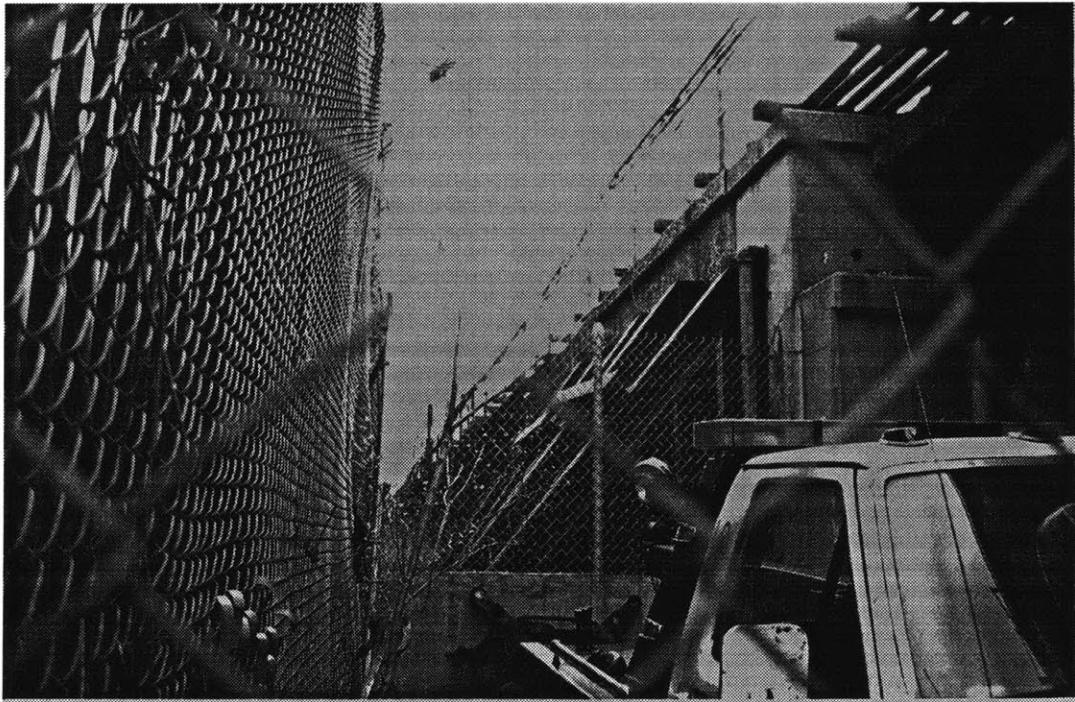


Photo #4: Steel Braces Supporting Retaining Wall By Dean Street Station, April 1998



Photo #5: Closed Dean Street Station, April 1998

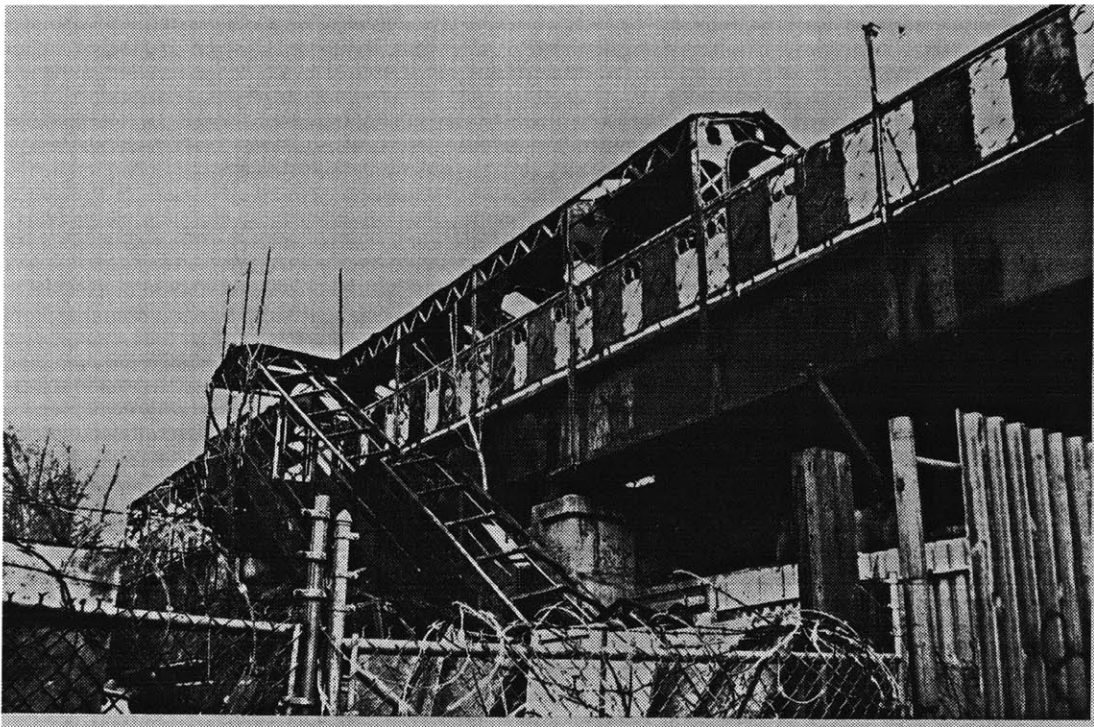


Photo #6: Closed Dean Street Station, April 1998 -- Canopy-less Stairway and Rusting Elevated Platform

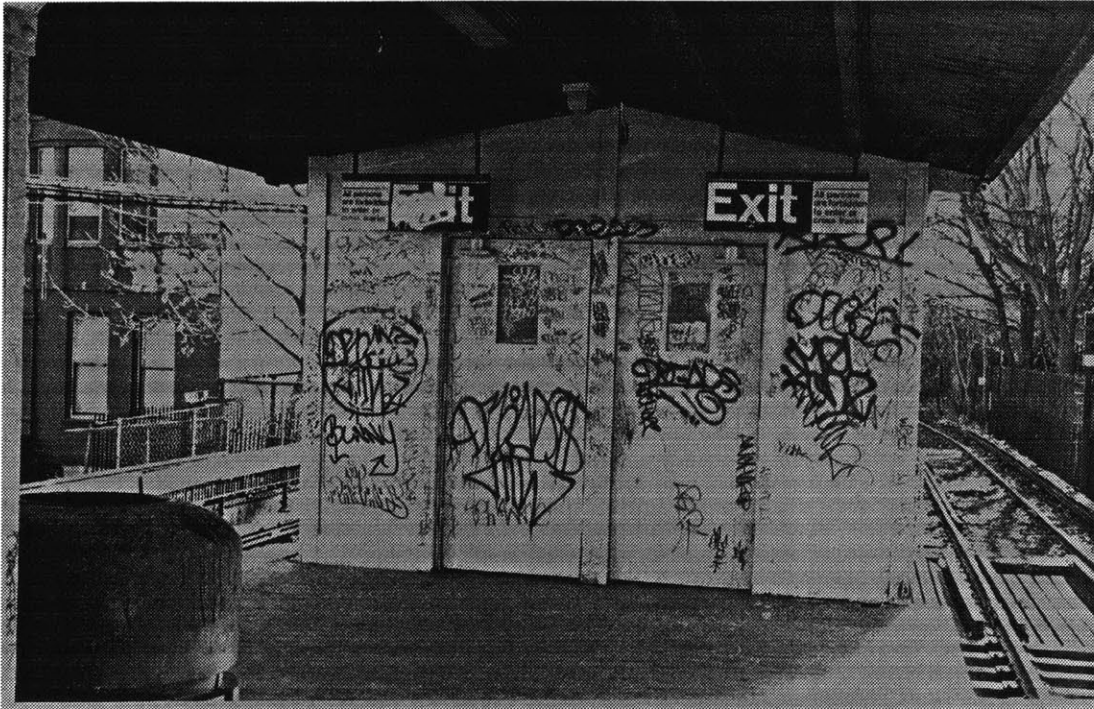


Photo #7: Park Place Station Platform, October 1996



Photo #8: Park Place Entrance, April 1998



Photo #9: Franklin Avenue Station, Shuttle Terminus, April 1998 --
Undergoing Reconstruction



Photo #10: Franklin Avenue Station, Shuttle Terminus, April 1998 --
High School Students Utilizing Shuttle

In February of 1993, Shuttle users and the community finally get the news they had been waiting many years for. NYCT will rehabilitate the Franklin Avenue Shuttle as part of their 1992-96 capital program. The work would begin in 1996, and the rehabilitation would restore the Shuttle's track, infrastructure, and stations to a state of good repair -- essentially a total line reconstruction would occur. However, in late May 1993, the Franklin Avenue Shuttle rehabilitation was scrapped as NYCT was forced to defer some capital projects due to the fact that the city was trimming its budget, and decided to cut \$500 million in capital funding to the MTA NYCT's 1992-96 capital program. NYCT stated that it would include the Shuttle in its next capital program. No sooner had the issue of service and capital investment equity been corrected, did it become an inequity again. Station rehabilitation and station lighting improvement projects represented a total of \$300 million in cuts in capital projects, which reinforced the lack of emphasis on station improvements from the first two capital programs.

Fearing that the deferral of the Franklin Avenue Shuttle rehabilitation was a step towards shutting the Shuttle down, a "Coalition to Save the Franklin Avenue Shuttle," was formed. This fear was not unrealistic in the sense that NYCT had considered shutting down the line twice -- once in the late 1970s, and once in the mid 1980s -- due to the extremely poor physical conditions of the Shuttle. The coalition, with the exception of one person, was mostly a small group of residents who live in the neighborhoods of Crown Heights and Bedford-Stuyvesant. As the struggle to save the Shuttle progressed, the coalition expanded, but the core members of the coalition -- those who regularly met at least once every week to two weeks to strategize about what steps to take were the following: Mable Boston, Transportation Chair, Community Board (CB) #8; Constantine (Connie) Hall, Transportation Chair, CB #9; Helmuth and Connie Lesold -- long time residents in the community. Helmuth passed away in September of 1994; Joe

Rappaport, Straphanger's Campaign. As the struggle to keep the Shuttle ensued, two other individuals became part of this core Coalition – Frances Byrd, Chairman of the Paul Robeson Independent Democrats, a local democratic club, and Chief Charles Joshua, Executive Director, Central Brooklyn Coordinating Council.

Hall, like Helmuth Lesold, was a long time resident of the community, and both had monitored the condition of the Shuttle throughout the 1980s. Lesold made his living as a technical writer, so he knew how to debunk the reasons NYCT would cite to close the Shuttle down (e.g. too old and expensive to maintain). He constantly wrote letters to the NYCT to urge for its rehabilitation, and was integral in organizing letter-writing campaigns and contacting local elected officials in halting the two NYCT threats to close the Shuttle. Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, Lesold would attend MTA Board meetings and Straphanger's Campaign meetings concerning the Franklin Avenue Shuttle, and acted as the Shuttle's primary watchdog in these years.

As Lesold had done in his years as a watchdog of the Shuttle, the Coalition concerned itself with writing letters to and meeting with elected officials, and MTA and NYCT officials urging them to re-instate the Shuttle into the 1992-96 capital plan; sought out community leaders and organizations that were interested in joining the Coalition to save the Shuttle, and spoke at public hearings and MTA Board meetings. The coalition sponsored public actions that demonstrated support for the Shuttle.

While some of the history and background concerning the Franklin Avenue Shuttle struggle has been presented so far, the remaining history will now be presented in a more precise chronological order. The ensuing history and order is the amalgamation of newspaper articles, interviews, correspondence between members of the core Coalition, transit officials, and elected

officials, public statements, and news releases.⁵⁶ The dates are that which was found on the respective documents, and in some instances represent an approximation of when the event occurred. Presenting the history in this manner will allow us to have a more enriching understanding surrounding the issues and actors involved in the struggle to save the Franklin Avenue Shuttle.

Franklin Avenue Shuttle Chronological Order

May 16, 1994: A tour of the Botanic Garden stop on the Franklin Avenue shuttle was given to local elected officials and reporters by the Coalition to Save the Franklin Avenue Shuttle to illuminate the poor conditions of the Shuttle, particularly at this station. Among the elected officials present were: Brooklyn Borough President Howard Golden, City Council Member Mary Pinkett, Council member Annette Robinson, NYS Assemblyman Al Vann, State Senator Velmanette Montgomery, and U.S. Representative Major Owens. Groups present were the Straphangers Campaign, PCAC, NYC Environmental Justice Alliance, First Church of God and Christ, and CB #8 and 9. All who were present urged Mayor Giuliani to restore the \$500 million in city funding towards NYCT that was cut in May, 1993, which would allow the Franklin Avenue Shuttle rehabilitation to go forward.

October 19, 1994: Coalition members meet with Assemblyman Al Vann, who's assembly district encompasses the neighborhood where the Shuttle runs, but more importantly, is the Chairman of the NYS Assembly Standing Committee on Corporations, and Authorities, which oversees the MTA. The Coalition expressed their hope that Assemblyman Vann would approach State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, and Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan (who sits on the CPRB) to enlist their support and that of the State Assembly in this matter.

October 31, 1994: The Coalition arranged a protest on this Halloween day urging MTA NYCT to repair the Franklin Avenue Shuttle and not to defer its rehabilitation until the next capital plan. Some protesters were dressed in ghost costumes and handed out leaflets that read "Don't Make A Ghost out of the Franklin Avenue Shuttle."

Nov. 16, 1994: A survey of Franklin Avenue Shuttle users conducted by the Coalition revealed that seven percent considered the Shuttle safe, 47.7% ride the Shuttle twice a day, 59% considered the Shuttle stations worse than other stations in the system, and 84.9% believed that the Shuttle should be repaired. Two hundred and eighty-five people Shuttle users answered the survey. The Shuttle serves nearly 10,000 - 12,000 people daily, with the majority being high school students, senior citizens, and health workers, who are among the most transit dependent populations in the city.

Nov. 16, 1994: A letter to MTA Board members by the Coalition lists those projects that are still proceeding in the 1992-96 capital plan that the Coalition believes have less of a priority than the Franklin Ave. Shuttle. Among these projects are the 66th St. stop that serves Lincoln Center in Manhattan, (which was in far better condition) and some fare collection improvement initiatives.

Nov. 22, 1994: Alan F. Kiepper, President of NYCT writes a letter back to Gene Russianoff, Straphanger's Campaign, and Beverly Dolinsky, Executive Director, PCAC, stating reasons why they cannot defer the projects that the Coalition recommended be deferred in their Nov. 16, 1994

⁵⁶ This history could not have been re-created without the assistance of Joe Rappaport of the Straphanger's Campaign, who gave me unlimited access to their files concerning the Franklin Avenue Shuttle.

letter. However, Kiepper had instructed his engineering staff to continue designing all deferred projects in case funding becomes available.

Nov. 23, 1994, NY Daily News, "MTA may okay Brooklyn shuttle rehab," by Lisa Rein: At an MTA Board meeting, Mable Boston, member of the Coalition to Save the Franklin Avenue Shuttle states –"Our community is part of the city. We pay taxes. We beseech you to reinstate this project." The MTA board, voting to cut 22 stations from its station rehabilitation program, decided to ask NYCT officials to consider saving the shuttle. The MTA Board asked NYCT staff to perform a comprehensive review of options for progressing work on the Shuttle and to apprise the Board of their findings. NYCT officials made no promises, about what could be done. The article stated that Board members are moved by the campaign to save the shuttle.

Nov. 30, 1994: Letter to John Egan, Chairman of the MTA Capital Program Review Board (CPRB) from Peter Stangl, Chairman and CEO of the MTA, informing John about the MTA approved list of projects to be deferred due to the \$500 million funding shortfall. The 22 stations deferred, in addition to the deferral of the Franklin Avenue line reconstruction amount to \$354 million or 70.8 percent of the \$500 million in cuts.

Dec. 16, 1994, Transcript of MTA NYC Transit Committee meeting: This transcript offers insight into the way the MTA Board of Directors was thinking about the shuttle and whether to rebuild it. Jerry Foreman of NYCT Capital Programs devised the 7 minute figure that fellow board member Virgil Conway was keen on using in saying that another 7 minutes a day in travel by bus, if the shuttle is closed down for repairs or permanently, is not a big deal. Board member Dyson made an interesting point concerning the fact that in a world of reduced resources, people have to get used to the idea that they can't get everything that they want. "It's very hard in this city because people are used to the idea of vociferously demanding everything they want."

Dec. 20, 1994: Mable Boston of CB #8 said she expected the Coalition to urge the CPRB to reject the 1995-99 capital program plan if it did not include a provision about the Franklin Ave. shuttle. Assemblyman Al Vann continued stating that "My vote for the capital program and my continued support for MTA rebuilding funds rests on an understanding that construction on the Shuttle will move forward by the end of 1996."

Jan. 9, 1995: As agreed to in the November 1994 MTA Board meeting, NYCT will see whether there was a way to still rehabilitate the shuttle. A report will be released detailing the background of the Shuttle rehabilitation project and the various options considered to address the needs of the line and its customers. NYC Transit will submit their report at the Feb. 1995 NYC Transit Committee meeting.

Feb. 22, 1995: In letters to MTA Board Members and NYCT President Alan Kiepper, the Coalition urges them not to just build a tunnel between the Botanic Garden station and the 2, 3, 4, 5 Franklin Av. Station. Instead, the coalition advocates fixing the Franklin Av. Station at the terminus of the Shuttle line and rehabilitating the Botanic Garden stop in addition to building a tunnel and doing structural work near the tunnel.

March 14, 1995 subway service revisions: Due to further scheduled transit funding cuts, there is now talk of cutting back service on several subway lines. Among the service cuts proposed, is the replacement of Shuttle service between Prospect Park and Franklin Ave. with bus service between the hours of 11pm and 6am. Substitute bus service will augment existing parallel B48 bus service. Passengers will have free transfer between the buses and trains. This change in service would begin in Nov. 1995. The public hearings on these proposed cuts will be on May 2, 1995 at 6pm in Brooklyn Borough Hall.

March 23, 1995: NYCT responds to the Feb. 22 letter stating that it did not recommend any Shuttle reconstruction option in particular, just that the Franklin Avenue Shuttle project is being designed in a way where any of the options can be pursued if funding becomes available.

April 7, 1995: A caravan of supporters of the Franklin Ave. shuttle leafletted passers-by at Restoration Plaza in Bedford-Stuyvesant, and toured other parts of Central Brooklyn today to visit the offices of local elected officials, so as to remind them to save the Shuttle -- which means sparing it from service cuts and continuing the pressure to have it be rehabilitated. The group visited the offices of Assembly members Al Vann, Roger Green, Jim Brennan, Clarence Norman, and Rhoda Jacobs and Council member Annette Robinson. Among the coalition members on the tour were several Prospect Heights HS students, members of the NYC Environmental Justice Alliance, and the Straphanger's Campaign. Members of CB #8 and #9 were present as well.

June 10, 1995: The Coalition sends E. Virgil Conway, the new MTA Chair and former Board Member a letter re-affirming the importance of rehabilitating the Franklin Ave. shuttle. This is done in light of his comments and belief that he finds it very difficult to support any rebuilding of the shuttle as long as there is a bus alternative.

July 11, 1995: A town hall meeting is scheduled from 6-7:30 at Interfaith Hospital, which is right near the Shuttle Park Place stop. The meeting was planned to inform people about the proposed service cuts to the shuttle, the stalling in agreeing to repair the shuttle, and the proposed closing of Dean St. station. NYCT is interested in closing down Dean St. station as it states that the costs of keeping it open are greater than the farebox revenue that the station brings in. NYCT equates low farebox revenue as low ridership, which was the official reason given to close the station down. As an interesting note of contrast, a July 19-25 New York Press article appears the following week that states that you can't use the number of people who pay fares at Dean St. station as an accurate indicator of ridership, but must include fare evasion as well, since far more people evade than pay the fare at Dean St. Yet this difference would probably add at most, another 100 riders to the daily count of 98 that existed as of July 24, 1995. Any closing of the Shuttle would contradict NYCT promises to date that the station won't be closed until rehabilitation work begins on the Shuttle. The town hall meeting was sponsored by Chief Charles Joshua of the Central Brooklyn Coordinating Council, CB # 8, #9, and the Straphanger's Campaign.

July 13, 1995, NY Daily News: more than 100 people showed up to the town hall meeting on July 11. The MTA will decide on service cuts to the shuttle and whether to close down Dean St. station in August. "There are times I work 4 to 12 midnight and I need to get home," said Katie Johnson, who lives near Eastern Parkway, but works at a hospital in Coney Island. "At night, if I miss a bus, I may have to wait 20 to 25 minutes for the next one." "Closing the shuttle is just one more step toward cutting off services to minority neighborhoods," said Constantine Hall, chairman of CB #9's transportation committee. "Without transportation, you can't work; if you can't work, you can't survive." Tito Davila, MTA spokesman who was at the meeting stated that the Franklin Ave. shuttle was one of the capital projects deferred because it had low ridership and because "duplicate forms of transportation are available," which is a reference to the B48 bus which runs parallel to the Shuttle. Davila's statement highlights how rational criteria don't fully capture the richness of a situation and may lead to poor planning.

July 18, 1995: Al Vann testifies in front of a NYC Transit Committee meeting about the need to reconstruct the Franklin Ave. shuttle. Vann states that the plans to close Dean Street station and the lack of attention to rehabilitating the line shows the ignorance of the MTA to the current needs of the line and anticipated increased usage due to planned economic growth in Crown Heights, Bedford-Stuyvesant, and Flatbush. Interfaith Hospital is obtaining new financing for a new building which will begin construction in two years. Several housing developments in the area are being developed, and Vann and other legislators are working on developing an economic development zone for the area. The deplorable conditions of the shuttle have contributed to low ridership. The decline in ridership has been further compounded by the lack of security, inadequate lighting, inaccessibility to the elderly and handicapped. "The closing of the Dean St. station and the line in the evening hours can not now be justified by low ridership and ultimately a cost savings measure when conditions have continued to exist which caused low ridership."

Sept. 10, 1995: The Coalition, neighborhood residents, and elected officials protested the closing of the Dean St. station today. The protesters also released a letter to the U.S. Dept. of Transportation Secretary Frederico Pena, asking him to investigate whether the closing is a violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as it will have a disproportionate impact on racial minorities. The station abuts Brooklyn census tracts 221 and 225, which are respectively, 98.3% and 94.4% non-white. The closing of the Dean St. station is the first one since 1962, when Worth Street in Manhattan closed. "The MTA itself killed Dean Street by treating it like a pariah for decades," said Tina Miller, president of the Dean St. Neighborhood Assn. "Who would use a station that is so dirty, dim and dangerous?" Miller also stated that the MTA made no attempt to install new turnstiles and electronic gates that would have curbed fare abuse. "The MTA broke its promise to me and to shuttle riders to repair the shuttle before shutting this station," said Assembly Member Al Vann.

Nov. 15, 1995, statement of Alan Foster (NYC Transit Riders Council, Associate Director, PCAC) before the MTA Finance Committee: The city funding cuts of 1993 "inspired" MTA officials to be less dependent on city and state funding and become more self-sufficient. Therefore, a new capital program for 1995-1999 was created to reflect these changes in the nature of funding. The proposal for the 1995-1999 capital plan was being considered that month by the MTA Finance Committee. The plan did not include the Franklin Ave. shuttle. This represented a broken promise to the community, as it seemed like plans to rehabilitate the Shuttle were moving along. While at the end of 1994, the Franklin Ave. Shuttle was one of the projects deferred to offset cuts in the city's capital contributions, Alan Kiepper, NYCT President stated that the fact that the design of the project was moving forward was proof of NYCT's commitment to the project, and also promised that the Shuttle would receive top priority in the next capital program. At this time, the Dean St. station is closed, when it has been stated all along that it would not close until rehabilitation on the line started. So two promises were broken – that the Shuttle would be included in the next capital program and that the Dean St. station would not be closed until the rehabilitation on the line started.

Nov. 16, 1995, NY Daily News, "Stations lose out in TA plan," by Lisa Rein: The 1995-99 capital plan comes in at a cost of 11.9 billion dollars and for the first time, it is partly funded by the farebox revenue, based on the fare hike that went into effect in the end of 1995. The capital plan will only rehabilitate 33 stations. 74 were planned for rehab in the capital program that began in 1992, but city budget cuts and poor cost estimates by the TA forced 25 stations to be dropped from the list. "The feeling is there are higher priorities," stated Jerome Forman, head of capital programs for NYCT. "NYCT lied to the public and to a Brooklyn community," said Gene Russianoff, staff attorney for the Straphangers Campaign. NYCT is still spending \$7 million on design plans for the shuttle. Almost every station on the 1995-99 capital program is one that was deferred from the current plan or earlier capital plans. Forman states that the new priority is buying and rebuilding 2300 buses and 840 new subway cars. "Stations had a window during the last few years, but now the priority is shifting.

Nov. 27, 1995, MTA Board Meeting: At this board meeting, there was discussion of the Franklin Avenue Shuttle with respect to it being a part of the 1995-99 MTA Capital Plan. MTA Board Member Bernard Beal (who is one of two African-Americans on the Board) stated that he was tired of seeing the issue of the Franklin Avenue Shuttle continually raised. At the beginning of the meeting. Letitia James of Al Vann's office, and Ira Greenberg of Assemblyman Nolan's office indicated that she would veto the 1995-99 capital program plan if it did not include the rehabilitation of the Franklin Ave. shuttle as a project. Beverly Dolinsky, PCAC, mentioned the fact that "funding for the rebuilding of the shuttle keeps getting postponed, and that the shuttle has been studied for more than 20 years. It will only get more expensive the longer there is any inaction on the part of the MTA. It could have been rebuilt at a fraction of the cost 20 years ago."

February 1996: The first flyers for the March 7, 1996 town hall meeting to Save the Franklin Ave. shuttle are mailed out. The meeting is to be held at the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Center Community Room.

February 8, 1996: Several shuttle supporters (Joe Rappaport, Gene Russianoff, Alan Foster, Cathy Nolan, Mable Boston, Lars Larmon – Interfaith Medical Center, Gillian Wilson (Prospects Heights HS), Julie Sze, NYC Environmental Justice Alliance, Francis Byrd) speak in support of the Franklin Ave. shuttle before the NYS Assembly's public hearing on the MTA's proposed 1995-99 capital plan and also to offer some commentary concerning the proposed nature of the financing of this capital plan. Non-speaking supporters present, that are part of the Coalition to Save the Franklin Ave. Shuttle included Luevirdia Ravenel of the Central Brooklyn Coordinating Council, Joseph Lawson of the Washington Avenue Merchants Association, and several students from Prospect Heights HS.

Joe Rappaport states that MTA's station program has been plagued by cost overruns, poor management, and safety problems. "Rehabilitations are often received poorly by riders and surrounding communities." Complaints have ranged from slippery floor tile, shoddy work, quick decay and flooding. The independent MTA IG is looking at aspects of the stations program. Straphangers has urged the IG to conduct post-audits of station work, surveying riders for their opinions. NYCT has been loathe to do this.

Gene Russianoff's (Straphanger's Campaign) -- the 1995-99 capital plan is the fourth one, and ends the 1992-96 plan a year early. The 1995-99 program includes no new state funds for transit rebuilding. This is contrary to the past 15 years, when the state legislature provided nearly a quarter of overall transit rebuilding funds. The MTA would rather finance the 1995-99 capital plan via bonds that will be repaid by future fare hikes and cuts in service.

Alan H. Foster (Associate Director of the PCAC) – "The 3 capital programs to date have done a lot – NYCT has purchased new buses and subway cars, rehabilitate stations, replace track, build Archer Ave. line and 63 Street subway lines." Foster then went on to express his concerns with the way this capital program was being financed – "The new capital program takes the last two years of the third capital plan and rolls them into a new five year program. The MTA only has funding for 95 and 96. The rest of the program is funded by farebox revenue (pay-as you go financing) and through bonding. The Nov. 12 fare hike to \$1.50 meant that 10 cents of that increase was earmarked for pay-as-you-go capital funding. The MTA Board was asked to delay the fare increase until the CPRB had reviewed the capital plan. The MTA plans to spend \$125 million in subway fares and \$90 million in commuter rail fares each year to pay for capital projects. This is the first time that riders have been asked to foot part of the bill for infrastructure improvements (they do it for operating expenses). This capital plan calls for a significant increase in bonded debt – 50 percent in the case of NYCT – and the debt will be repaid from revenues. Therefore farebox revenue would be taking a double hit.

NYCT will only rehab 33 stations in this capital program, leaving 325 stations to be rehabbed next century. The most glaring omission from this capital plan is the Franklin Ave. Shuttle project. Nearly 10,000 weekday riders take the Shuttle." "This is more than the travel that occurs during the week on the LIRR's Montauk branch or its Oyster Bay and West Hempstead branches combined."

Catherine Nolan – Chair of the NYS Assembly Labor Committee, and Assembly representative to the MTA Capital Program Review Board. Her statement about why the meeting is being held is telling: "My colleagues in the Assembly and I decided to hold this hearing as we have become increasingly concerned about the direction that MTA has taken in the past year." Nolan was referring to the fact that the MTA is now proposing a new capital plan for 1995-99, and is heavily dependent on revenue from fares – it raised fares so as to help it finance future capital investments. This is the first time that the MTA has raised fares to help fund the capital program before looking to city, state and federal sources first. The region's transit system allows over 5 million riders daily to get to work. Without it, the

NY metropolitan region would not be the economic and cultural engine that it is. Therefore, the system requires a public investment.”

Mable Boston -- Chair of the Transportation Committee of CB#8. She has been working with CB #3, #9 and with many city-wide and community groups and Assemblyman Al Vann on this issue over the last three years. “If you review other projects that were cut in 1993 from the MTA’s third capital program because of city funding cuts, you will see that every one of them is back in this new proposal from the MTA. Only the shuttle is no longer in the MTA’s program.” “We are taxpayers in my community. We are residents of the city and the region, and we pay our fares. It is time that we get treated fairly, and that our shuttle gets fixed.”

Lars Larmon -- Director of Public Affairs, Interfaith Medical Center – Interfaith, located on Prospect Place, between St. Mark’s and Classon Ave. is right along the shuttle. Staff and patients come from all over Brooklyn, as well as other parts of the city. Hospitals function 24 hours a day, and Interfaith has 3 work shifts. “The alternatives ... waiting for buses late at night to connect with different train lines, taking time-consuming detours, are all unacceptable. We simply cannot afford any further erosion of services in an area that is already underserved in too many ways. We’re not talking about a deserted line in a deserted neighborhood. So we say to those who would close the Shuttle for even a few minutes – forget about it. We need more service not less. Not only must it remain open, but it must be rehabilitated. The people of this community deserve better, not worse.”

Gillian Wilson, junior class president, Prospect Heights HS – a large percentage of Prospect Heights and Clara Barton HS students use the shuttle and get on and off at the Botanic Garden station, which is approximately 1-2 blocks away from these two high schools. Many students are afraid to use the station due to inadequate lighting and unsafe conditions. The shuttle also runs late, making it hard for students to get to school on time. “on behalf of the students and other passengers, I am simply asking you to force the MTA to guarantee us the level of safety, security, and service that we are entitled to as NY residents.”

Julie Sze, NYC Environmental Justice Alliance – The communities of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, and Prospect Heights are predominantly African and Caribbean American, and the failure of the NYCT to include the Shuttle in the 1995-99 capital plan represents an inequity issue

Francis Byrd, Chairman, Paul Robeson Independent Democrats – “We were surprised and angered when the newest capital plan was released and we found that the Franklin Ave. shuttle was completely removed from the MTA’s capital program. There was no prior warning or explanation given for the MTA’s action. The MTA’s action makes several things clear to our community – First, the management of the MTA does not keep its word. To say that they have lied to our community would not be too strong a word. Second, that the closure of the Dean St. station mirrors that intent of MTA management to close the entire shuttle or allow it to fall to such a level of disrepair that a serious accident would force its closure. Lastly, the management of this quasi-public agency holds our community and elected officials in such low regard that it can break its word with impunity.”

Feb. 9 –March 6, 1996: Letters to Shuttle supporters, elected officials, and transit officials inviting them to the March 7, 1996 town hall meeting are sent out.

March 7, 1996 (based on a 3/11/96 NY Daily News article): More than 200 people braved sleet and snow to come out to a town hall meeting to show their support for improvements to the shuttle. There were two hours worth of speaking from local activists, the Straphanger’s Campaign, Washington Ave. Merchants Assn., Central Brooklyn Partnership, CB #3, 8, 9, and students from the two local HS. Assemblyman Al Vann said that as chairman of the Committee on Corporations,

Authorities, and Commissions, he would make sure the shuttle was included in any five year plan the MTA submitted to the Legislature.

Late April, 1996 (based on an article in *The City Sun*, May 22-28, 1996, Vol. 12, No. 19.) The MTA reinstates the Franklin Ave. shuttle in its 1995-99 capital program. The town hall meeting in March, and hundreds of phone calls and postcards to the MTA played a key role in winning the Shuttle's restoration, Coalition members said. The new capital program proposal also relies less on fare-backed bonds, which could have raised fares by 20 cents in 1999 or 2000. The reconstruction will include an 18 month shutdown, and is essentially the same as the original construction proposal in 1993 --- a) completely rebuilt tracks, signals, structures, and stations b) a new connection between the Shuttle's Botanic Garden station and IRT 2, 3, 4 lines at the Franklin Ave. station c) elevators and escalators at Franklin Ave. shuttle station to provide an internal transfer between the Shuttle and the A/C line d) a new station house at Park Place with a ramp for disabled users. By closing the line for 18 months, the MTA will save \$17 million of the original \$80 million cost estimate for the Shuttle. The project will now take 30 months and not 40 months. A shuttle bus will replace the shuttle during the shutdown.

May 7, 1996: A letter to Deborah Hallmore of NYCT OGCR listing the key members of the Coalition to Save the Franklin Ave. shuttle that should be invited to be a part of the Franklin Avenue Shuttle Task Force, an advisory committee that consists of citizens and NYCT officials to oversee the reconstruction of the Shuttle.

May 24, 1996: On behalf of the Coalition to Save the Franklin Avenue Shuttle, Chief Charles Joshua writes a letter to MTA Chairman E. Virgil Conway, to further discuss the creation of a working committee between MTA, NYCT, and community representatives that will monitor the project. The tone of the letter is positive, and expresses the hope that such a working committee would help ease the long years of distrust the community has developed toward the MTA. Chief Joshua also talked about the need for input from the community concerning the scope of the project and firm commitments about when the project will begin.

May 29, 1996: A letter from Lawrence G. Reuter, President of NYCT reassuring the Straphangers of the scope of the project and how it will be undertaken (e.g. closing of the line for 18 months).

July 12, 1996: A letter from the Coalition to Jack Lusk, Lois Tendler, and Deborah Hallmore (all are with NYCT OGCR except Jack Lusk). The Coalition was pleased that a citizens advisory committee is set up. The Coalition states in this letter that they want to "play a real role in decision-making, including how the stations look and in the selection of art and vendors." To include elected officials in this advisory committee would be to dilute the cohesiveness of the group, and make it harder to get true community involvement. The coalition also aims to have the NYCT address the following issues as they relate to the reconstruction of the Shuttle: substitute bus operation and security issues, non-diesel buses, accessibility, other community involvement, local artists and vendors, and the use of NYCT construction workers.

Sept. 12, 1996: The CPRB vetoes w/o prejudice the 1995-99 capital plan.

July, 1997: The CPRB finally approves the 1995-99 capital plan.

September, 1997: Work finally begins on the reconstruction of the Franklin Avenue Shuttle.

The Franklin Avenue Shuttle organizing efforts

In my discussion with the core Coalition members, it became apparent that Joe Rappaport and his group, the Straphanger's Campaign (the Straps, for short), were the lead organizers of

this effort to save the Franklin Avenue Shuttle. The other members of the Coalition welcomed the expertise and understanding of transit policy that Joe brought to the Coalition. The community members (Connie Hall, Mable Boston, Frances Byrd, Chief Charles Joshua, Connie Lesold) of the core Coalition used their standing in their community to talk to people to get them interested in supporting efforts to save the Shuttle. Mable and Connie were well-poised to do this in their roles as transportation chairs of their community board. Frances Byrd made presentations regarding the "plight" of the Shuttle to community groups. Chief Joshua managed to identify Shuttle supporters from Bedford-Stuyvesant via his organization, the Central Brooklyn Coordinating Council and had some ties to local elected officials. Additionally, he was helpful in halting NYCT's plan in the summer of 1995 to replace Shuttle service with bus service at night. While each core member had an understanding of their role and particular strength in the Coalition, all spoke at public hearings, and made presentations to community groups or individuals at one point or another in the struggle to save the Shuttle.

In the strategizing meetings, it was often Joe who took the lead in recommending next steps that the Coalition should take, which elected officials they should contact, etc. For example, Joe had done a power analysis of those who make decisions regarding NYC subway budgets (i.e. the four approval levels I discussed earlier in this thesis). This analysis pointed towards Al Vann, and Cathy Nolan as two key individuals the Coalition had to have on their side if the Shuttle was to be saved. While Joe recommended actions and initiatives to take, it was the Coalition as a whole that decided if they would carry out the actions (e.g. tour of Botanic Garden station).

It is also clear that the core Coalition members had a basic understanding of politics, power, relationships, and interests. The group practiced politics at their strategizing meetings

when deciding what action to take. Each core Coalition member understood their role, and interests in saving the Franklin Avenue Shuttle. Connie Hall, Connie Lesold, Mable Boston, Frances Byrd, and Chief Joshua knew that they had the relational power to motivate and mobilize people in the community into action. These links to the community helped the core Coalition to identify some who came to the strategizing meetings to offer their suggestions on next steps, or those groups or individuals willing to lend their name to the cause. This was integral to expanding the base of support for the Shuttle, even if it was in name only. At the height of the struggle to save the Shuttle, 34 organizations appeared on the letterhead that the Coalition was using to contact public officials, transit officials, and other Shuttle supporters.

It was in the interest of the other core Coalition members to let Joe Rappaport lead the strategizing meetings as they conceded to his knowledge and expertise concerning NYC transportation policy. According to IAF, this may not be the iron rule working, but the community members understood their interests and role in this Coalition and consented to having Joe take the lead in recommending strategies. One coalition member remarked to me that since transit issues are his “full-time” job, they did not mind Joe recommending strategies and taking the lead at times. While the core coalition members did learn a little but about NYC transit policy in this struggle, they still don’t see themselves as a transit advocate like Joe. In some ways, they viewed him as an expert, and it was in their interest to let him “run the show” at times.

With respect to relationships, the core Coalition understood that it was important to have Al Vann and Cathy Nolan on their side. Vann and Nolan agreed to side with the community on this issue as it was in their interest to do so. The Shuttle ran through Vann’s district, which meant he could gain or lose votes depending on how this issue turned out. Recognizing this for

himself, Vann used his standing as the head of the Chairman of the NYS Assembly Standing Committee on Corporations, and Authorities, which oversees the MTA, to press state legislators for support on the issue. According to Letitia James, of Assemblyman Vann's office, Al Vann engaged in "horse-trading" with other state legislators to gain support for this issue. This implies that Vann needs to understand, or should understand the interests of those he "horse-traded" with. Cathy Nolan was approached by the Coalition as she is the one member of the CPRB who has historically expressed support for mass transit in NYC. Nolan has been an assembly member since 1984 and been on the CPRB since 1989.

According to Joe, the core Coalition did gain some meeting facilitation skills, knowledge about how NYC mass transit policy works, and learned who the transit policy decisionmakers are, from this experience. The core Coalition members now have a cursory knowledge with which they can use to address any future transportation issues they may encounter. Their improved meeting facilitation tactics has furthered their skills as individuals who can act in the public arena.

While it was important that the core Coalition was busy contacting elected officials and transit officials early on to impress upon them the need to re-insert the Shuttle in the 1992-96 capital plan, they were operating at an atomized level. Additionally, they were arguing their case from a Melian perspective.⁵⁷ This perspective was on display when coalition members "lamented" at public hearings and MTA meetings, saying that the TA lied to them and broke promises to repair the Shuttle when it removed the Shuttle from the capital plan and took the

⁵⁷ A Melian perspective refers to a dialogue that occurred between representatives of Athens and representatives of Melos, a neutral city-state that existed during the Greek Empire. The Athenians visited the Melians to say that it was in their interest to surrender to Athens and pledge loyalty to them, or risk annihilation. The Melians refused on the ground that they were peaceful, neutral people, and had faith that their kin, the Spartans, would protect them. Essentially, the Melians took the moral high ground, believing that no one can argue against the morals and ethics they espoused. Yet the Athenians demonstrated later on that morals alone, were not enough to prevent the eventual

moral high ground in other instances. One would have to attribute some credit to Mauricia Baca in helping the Coalition move away from a Melian perspective, and towards a path that displayed power in the form of organized people.

Fresh from working on a Straphanger's Campaign initiative to halt a subway and bus fare hike, Mauricia was subsequently hired by the Straps to be a full-time organizer in the Franklin Avenue Shuttle struggle. At the time she entered the Franklin Avenue struggle, NYCT had determined that it could not include the Shuttle reconstruction as one of the capital projects in its 1995-99 capital program. Mauricia's role was to go and talk to all individuals and organizations in the community that the other core Coalition members did not have a chance to speak to yet. During January and February of 1996, Mauricia met 3-4 people per week, made 200 phone calls, wrote between 50-100 letters, and made presentations to community groups and high school students (at times the presentations were done in tandem with Frances Byrd) in her two month organizing stint. Out of these efforts, she managed to identify a handful of individuals, including some high school students who were interested in assisting in efforts to save the Shuttle. Their assistance came in the form of attending some of the core Coalition strategizing meetings and providing a space to for the Core Coalition to meetings. Some even spoke in support the Shuttle at a NYS Assembly hearing regarding the 1995-99 capital program. Mauricia also worked with some NYPIRG interns, to talk to Shuttle riders to raise their awareness about what was occurring. Her efforts resulted in a 1500 name list of Shuttle supporters that was used to mail flyers (The high school students helped on this mass mailing) out inviting these supporters to the March 7, 1996 town hall meeting regarding the Shuttle, and it's conspicuous absence from the

annihilation of the state of Melos. Therefore, being morally astute and ethically correct will not insure that you will get what you want -- in this case it did not prevent Melos from being taken over by the Athenians.

1995-99 capital program. This meeting was largely credited with helping convince the MTA that they could not leave the Shuttle out of the 1995-99 capital plan.

Did IAF-style organizing occur here?

The Franklin Avenue Shuttle was saved due to the hard work put in by many people, groups, and local elected officials. However, in describing how the general coalition was formed, would it be correct to say that it resulted from community organizing efforts? Utilizing the IAF definition of community organizing, one can say that some relationships were re-organized to affect public policy, but the ultimate goal of IAF organizing, which is the creation of a broad-based institution, did not occur.

IAF organizing is based on agitating and engaging people to discover their interests. At no point in the struggle did people deliberate and discover for themselves that the Shuttle was a main interest of theirs. Rather, members of the core Coalition presented this issue to the community via meetings, and presentations. The nature of these interactions focused on the Shuttle, and never focused on whether this was indeed something that the community should utilize their social and political capital in obtaining. According to one coalition member, this was a very real concern, as it was made apparent to her by some community members that most of the community did not ride or care about the Shuttle. While the core Coalition members deliberated to discover their interest of saving the Shuttle for themselves, this was not done between the core Coalition and the community. The question that arises, be it rhetorical or academic, is in whose interest was it to save the Shuttle? One assumes the answer is the community, yet my research shows that it did not become an issue for some members of the community until the core Coalition presented it as such in meetings and presentations with

community groups. The core Coalition organizing methods succeeded in raising awareness and support for the Shuttle, yet it did not leave the community with a better understanding of how politics, power, relationships, and interests could help them to arrive at this conclusion on their own. Additionally, those members of the Coalition that merely lent their name (or organization's name to the cause), or showed up to one or two town hall meetings lacked these skills and the working knowledge about the NYC transportation world that the core Coalition developed, as well. Mauricia's organizing efforts and the outreach done by other core Coalition members in to the community did not include training in the skills needed to practice politics, which is an integral role for an IAF organizer.

The immediacy of the plight of the Shuttle not only made intense IAF organizing difficult, it's absence precluded any chance that a broad-based organization could have arisen out of the organizing efforts that occurred. In fact, IAF philosophy would have dictated that there was a broad-based organization in the community prior to the start of the Shuttle plight that would have been able to address the Shuttle issue. An IAF presence in this community implies that if the Shuttle was identified as an issue out of the community's practicing of politics, the fight to save it would have been more of a true grassroots effort. While people were aware of the poor state of the Shuttle in the 1970s, and 1980s, no organized pro-active efforts were taken to have the Shuttle fixed. People like Helmuth Lesold, who monitored the Shuttle did not know of any other way to express concern as a citizen and rider, but to write letters to the MTA and attend MTA and NYCT meetings concerning the Shuttle. In this sense, no probing, practicing of politics, or relationships were developed to allow early Shuttle watchdogs to believe they had an alternative way to get the Shuttle fixed. It was not until the community nearly lost the Shuttle, that the community identified as a serious issue for the community.

Since IAF organizing leads to building institutions with longevity, it is not clear that such an entity was created here. Currently, a Franklin Avenue Shuttle Task Force that comprises some of the core members of the coalition and transit officials meet monthly to monitor the progress of the rehabilitation of the Shuttle. Upon first glance, one could consider this a broad-based organization that is responsible for holding NYCT officials accountable to their agreement to rehabilitate the Shuttle. Yet this task force includes transit officials, and the Coalition members who sit on the task force are volunteers. The creation of a task force is not a foreign practice for the NYCT when it comes to large scale renovation projects. The factor that makes the Shuttle task force unique is the fact that it was set up prior to the beginning of any construction, whereas other task forces are set up once construction begins. The Coalition members on this task force have played no role in giving input regarding the design and scope of rehabilitation of the Shuttle stations and structures, as these have been determined since the early 1990s. Input has been garnered from them considering the use of local artists and the appearance of their work in the redesigned stations. Once the rehabilitation of the Shuttle is complete, Connie Hall envisions that one potential role of the Coalition will be to monitor the conditions of the Shuttle to ensure that it never reverts to the terrible state of disrepair that it was in during the past 30 years.

While the Franklin Avenue Shuttle was saved mostly due to community mobilization efforts, aspects of IAF organizing were present. The fact that more IAF principles were not present does not detract from the efforts garnered to save the Franklin Avenue Shuttle. It's meant to point that there are similar themes to organizing, whether done the IAF way or in the manner here at Franklin Avenue Shuttle. If anything, one can say that the core Coalition exhibited more aspects of IAF organizing than the non-core members of the Coalition, yet even

these aspects were fleeting. Additionally, Mauricia Baca performed duties similar to that of a lead IAF organizer. While her outreach efforts were done by all members of the Coalition at one point or another, the fact that she was working full time gave her the time to develop relationships with people. By working full-time, she could respond to returned calls, and go to as many meetings as possible, which all aids in developing relationships that the other core Coalition members could not foster due to their life “constraints” such as a daytime job. Interestingly enough, several core Coalition members saw the organizing efforts that Mauricia and previous Straphanger’s staff engage in as “their” (the Straps) job, since they did not envision themselves as transportation advocates.

Conclusion

Based on our discussion above of the Franklin Avenue Shuttle organizing efforts, it is apparent that IAF organizing tactics would not have been applicable here. Among the major reasons for this are:

- 1) salvaging the Shuttle is a single issue, and IAF tends to work more comprehensively
- 2) the immediacy of situation would not have allowed IAF to perform their intense organizing efforts, where a broad-based organization is built up
- 3) the core Coalition members entered the struggle with a basic understanding of politics, citizenship, and the right to hold public officials accountable. The presence of this basic understanding does not mean that training in how to negotiate, listen, debate, etc., in order to practice politics is not needed by the core Coalition members, yet IAF may not have identified these people as the natural leaders they seek, since they all possessed some aspects of a public persona

While the aspects of IAF training may not have been as important here, the IAF manner in which to think about politics, power, relationships, and interests is quite applicable in a mobilizing endeavor like the Shuttle. Indeed, the experience of the core Coalition members left them with a taste of this, and they have gained a working knowledge of what to do in case they are faced with future transit issues in their community

As we have seen, NYCT is still very insular when it comes to deciding on which stations should be included in their list of station rehabilitation projects. Additionally, capital needs that arise in between capital programs have difficulties getting addressed (e.g. Grand St. station). If citizen input and participation is to be better utilized, the NYCT will have to see that it is in their interest to do so. It will take a showing of organized people to press for an opening up of the process of station selection. As it stands now, NYCT CPM makes the initial selections, opening up the station selection process would mean that discussions with communities and the subway riding public about what stations to include would have to occur at this juncture when a new

capital program is being formulated. My research has demonstrated that the station rehabilitation selection process is a political process, and if communities are to become more engaged in this process, it would have to demonstrate their interest in doing so. Yet this would require that communities, transit groups, etc. have practiced politics beforehand to identify opening the station selection process as an important transportation issue, or community development issue. Herein lies the challenge, as people can't organize if conversations and deliberation of such an interest are not divulged to each other. Additionally, there is the chance that after such conversation, this will not be identified as an issue. Again, the key is to have a process, where conversation about what is needed and what should be done occurs. This is where the organizing concepts of IAF (e.g. identifying and training leaders, house meetings) could be used to provide a "guide" as to how to set up such a process.

In particular, one can examine how the IAF organization in San Antonio known as COPS – Communities Organized for Public Service -- has designed a process where communities work with city council members to decide what projects should be funded by the city's annual CDBG allocation. The San Antonio communities negotiate and deliberate amongst themselves about what capital improvements are needed in their neighborhoods. House meetings and neighborhood meetings ensue where this list is trimmed down, and refined. Finally, community leaders work with their local city council person to finalize the list of projects citywide. In addition to looking to the IAF for how a deliberative-democratic capital planning process can be designed, instances where public involvement in transportation planning decisions has been successful, can be referred to as well.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ The public involvement techniques used in planning a light rail line in South Sacramento, CA were creative, committed, and purposeful, as South Sacramento is a diverse racial and ethnic community comprised of Chinese, Southeast Asians, Latinos, and African-Americans. For more information, see U.S. DOT, "South Sacramento, CA, Light Rail Transit," *Public Involvement for Transportation Decision-Making Case Studies*. September, 1997.

The nature of subway station planning cannot continue to progress in the manner it exists now if riders want more accountability. One must remember that the station selection process has been shown to be political in this thesis, and allows for the consideration of factors other than a station's rank in determining the list of station rehabilitation projects. While this provision allows for organized money to weigh in on a decision to modernize a station or not vis-a-vis the availability of developer money, it also allows organized people to weigh in as well via an effort such as what occurred in the Franklin Avenue Shuttle. Additionally, citizens can also weigh in at the MTA and CPRB approval levels for station rehabilitation projects, if they have missed the NYCT approval levels. Therefore, the station selection process has been tacitly designed to be political, which obligates communities, individuals, and groups who are concerned about subway station conditions as an indicator of subway service, to get engaged and help determine the list of stations and station projects to be pursued in any capital program. As I have mentioned time and time again in this thesis, this implies that citizens must understand politics, power, relationships, and interests. Without these, it is possible that another NYC community will undergo a similar struggle as this Brooklyn community did, which will surely beg the question then of, "How could this have been prevented?" Let us take stock of what occurred at the Franklin Avenue Shuttle, and recognize the opportunities that citizens of NYC can take to change the subway station selection process to ensure that a debacle such as the Shuttle never happens again.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Altshuler, Alan. *The Urban Transportation System*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1979.
- Christensen, Daphne, & Pikarsky, Milton. *Urban Transportation Policy and Management*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath & Company, 1976.
- Cohen, James K. "Capital Investment and The Decline of Mass Transit in New York City, 1945-1981." *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 3, March 1988, pp.369-388.
- Cohen, Joshua, & Sabel, Charles. "Directly-Deliberative Polyarchy." *European Law Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 4, December, 1997, pp.313-342.
- Cornelius, James V. & Taebel, Delbert A. *The Political Economy of Urban Transportation*. Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press Corp., 1977.
- Cortes, Jr., Ernesto. "Reweaving the Social Fabric." *Boston Review*, Vol. 19, Nos. 3&4, June-September 1994, p.12.
- Cortes, Jr., Ernesto. "Reweaving the Fabric: The Iron Rule and the IAF Strategy for Power and Politics," in Cisneros, Henry G. (editor). *Interwoven Destinies: Cities and the Nation*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1993.
- Crick, Bernard. *In Defence of Politics*. Baltimore: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1964, pp.15-33.
- Fielding, Gordon J. *Managing Public Transit Strategically*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1987.
- Flyvbjerg, Bent. *Citizen Participation and Openness in Transportation Planning*. Proceedings of the World Conference on Transport Research, Hamburg 1983, Vol. I, pp.1-31.
- Flyvbjerg, Bent. "The Open Format and Citizen Participation in Transportation Planning." *Transportation Research Record*. Vol. 991, pp.15-22.
- Gakenheimer, Ralph. *Transportation Planning as Response to Controversy: The Boston Case*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1976.
- Grieder, William. *Who Will Tell the People: The Betrayal of American Democracy*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992, pp.222-241.
- Hanson, Susan (editor). *The Geography of Urban Transportation*.. New York: The Guilford Press, First Edition, 1986.
- Hirschman, Albert O. *Rival Views of Market Society*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992, pp.35-53.

- Hodge, David C. "My Fair Share: Equity Issues in Urban Transportation," in Hanson, Susan (editor). *The Geography of Urban Transportation*. New York: The Guilford Press, Second Edition, 1995, pp.359-375.
- Lindblom, Charles E. *Inquiry and Change*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Loomer, Bernard. "Two Kinds of Power," *Criterion*. Winter, 1976, p.11-29.
- Long, Norton E. "The Citizenships: Local, State, and National." *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 1, September 1987, pp.4-14.
- Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). *MTA Capital Needs and Opportunities, 1992-2011*. May, 25, 1990.
- MTA. *1996 Annual Report*.
- MTA. *1995-1999 Capital Program*.
- MTA Office of the Inspector General. *Assessment of the New York City Transit Authority's Station Modernization, Restoration, and Upgrade Programs*. Report MTA/IG 89-17, September 22, 1989.
- MTA Office of the Inspector General. *Review of the MTA Capital Program*. Report MTA/IG 91-12, October 17, 1989.
- MTA Office of the Inspector General. *Review of the Procedures Used By The NYC Transit Authority to Estimate the Cost of Certain Capital Projects*. Report MTA/IG 87-13, December 12, 1987.
- MTA Office of the Inspector General. *Review of NYC Transit's Third Capital Program*. Report MTA/IG 96-1, September 1996.
- Moses, Stanley, Felix. *Southwest Corridor Project*. UMass-Boston Doctoral Thesis, 1989.
- New York City Transit (NYCT). *Station Selection Policy, Rehabilitation Program, 1993*.
- Nyberg, David. *Power over Power*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981, pp.15-91.
- Schumaker, Paul D. "Citizen Preferences and Policy Responsiveness," in Clark, Terry Nichols (editor). *Urban Policy Analysis: Directions for Future Research*. London: Sage Publications, 1981, pp.227-243.
- Seelye, Stevenson, Value, & Knecht (STV). *Study for the Franklin Avenue Shuttle, NYC Transit Authority*, Vol. I, III-V, August 1991.

- Shirley, Dennis. *Community Organizing for Urban School Reform*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997.
- Taylor, Charles. *Philosophical Arguments*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995, pp.204-224.
- Thomas, John Clayton. *Public Participation in Public Decisions*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995.
- Toulmin, Llewellyn M. "Equity As A Decision Rule Determining the Distribution of Urban Public Services." *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 3, March 1988, pp.389-413.
- U.S. Department of Transportation. *Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decision-Making*. September, 1996.
- U.S. Department of Transportation. "South Sacramento, California, Light Rail Transit, La Linea Del Sur," *Public Involvement for Transportation Decision-Making Case Studies*. September, 1997.
- Wachs, Martin. "The Political Context of Transportation Policy," in Hanson, Susan (editor). *The Geography of Urban Transportation*. New York: The Guilford Press, Second Edition, 1995, pp.269-286.
- Wilson, Robert H. (editor). *Public Policy and Community: Activism and Governance in Texas*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997, ch.3, 5, 8.
- Wolin, Sheldon S. *The Presence of the Past*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989, pp.137-150.

LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Mauricia Baca, Former Straphanger's Campaign organizer for the Coalition to Save the Franklin Avenue Shuttle

Mable Boston, Transportation Chair, Community Board #8, Brooklyn, NY

Frances Byrd, Chairman, Paul Robeson Independent Democrats

Ellen Chen, Executive Director, Manhattan Neighborhood Renaissance Local Development Corporation (NYC)

Jim Cohen, Dept. of Public Management and Economics, John Jay College (NYC)

Arlene Grauer, Deputy Director of Planning, Station Programs, NYCT Dept. of Capital Program Management (CPM)

Ira Greenberg, New York State Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan's Office.

Constantine (Connie) Hall, Transportation Chair, Community Board #9, Brooklyn, NY

Margaret Campbell Jackson, Senior Associate, Director of Planning, Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates (Boston)

Letitia James, New York State Assemblyman Al Vann's Office

Janet Jenkins, Associate City Planner, Level II, Station Programs, NYCT Dept. of CPM

Ken Martin, Government Relations Specialist, MTA Office of Government and Community Relations

Peggy Milstone, Manager of Correspondence Unit, NYCT Customer Service

Yvonne Morrow, New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver's Office

Robert Paaswell, University Transportation Research Center, Region 2, City College of New York

Analia Penchaszadeh, Master in City Planning Candidate, MIT Dept. of Urban Studies and Planning

Joe Rappaport, Straphanger's Campaign

Jonathan Sigall, Associate Director, Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA

Steve Strauss, Manhattan Representative, NYCT Office of Government and Community Relations

Unnamed source, NYC Transit