



NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF MPOs FREIGHT WORKING GROUP

April 19, 2023
Virtual Meeting
2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

MEETING NOTES

Participating

- BMTS – Leigh McCullen
- CDTC – Chris Bauer (Chair)
- FHWA – Gautam Mani, John Formosa
- GTC – Jody Binnix
- HOCTC – Julie Richmond, Rick Reichert
- NYMTC – Yevgeniy Galinski
- NYSDOT – David Rosenberg, Jim Davis
- OCTC – Lauren Bennett
- SMTC – Mike Alexander (Co-Chair), Mario Colone
- UCTC – David Staas
- NUAIR – Dave Whitaker
- NYSAMPO Staff Support – Rich Denbow (Cambridge Systematics)

1. Roll Call

Bauer opened the meeting and conducted the roll call.

2. NUAIR Drone Delivery – Overview and Activities

Dave Whitaker, Chief of Development at Northeast UAS Airspace Integration Research Alliance, Inc. (NUAIR), presented. NUAIR is a nonprofit established in NYS in 2012. They manage the New York Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) test site, one of seven UAS test sites in the US. They work with the FAA, NASA, private industry, standards bodies, and international organizations. NUAIR is funded by public agencies and commercial customers and has a grant from NYS. In NY they engage with the Thruway Authority, NYSEDA, PANYNJ, New York Power Authority, and others.

Whitaker discussed several UAS applications across NYS and work underway to enable the next generation of aviation systems. Drone use continues to expand in survey and mapping applications, especially in work locations with vehicular traffic that poses a danger to workers. The data that is collected is immediately available and downloadable, which saves time on the back end of processes.

Alexander asked what considerations planners should think about as far as future UAS infrastructure needs.

A: UAS charging requirements can place extra demand on the electric grid. NUAIR has been working with the Syracuse airport on its long range plan, which is one of the first to incorporate demand for electric power over the long term. They are also looking at how to prevent UAS interference with commercial air traffic.

Galinski asked about capabilities of electric helicopters, such as cargo capacity, range, and maximum or typical speed. What would be the costs of using electric helicopters once in full commercial operation?

A: The cost depends on the aircraft type and function. Whitaker discussed examples, and said we will see existing manufacturers consolidate over time.

Reichert commented that HOCTC routinely uses an in-house drone and staff surveyor to collect new imagery and high accuracy elevation data. This is a tremendous asset to have.

Binnix asked how the partnerships with the hospital were developed. Flying medicine over I-81 is far beyond a “normal” operating procedure. Was there someone at the hospital that championed this project, and what facility changes will the hospital need to make to accommodate drones for pick up/delivery?

A: These are great questions. At the hospital, interest started with the CEO, who established a dedicated group tasked with identifying technologies and opportunities to automate hospital operations. The group assisted with data collection so they could make a case to management about what was operationally and economically effective. The hospital is also looking at establishing a corridor to transfer samples between the hospital and its centers. Hospital leadership understands that this is a long process, that these are test cases and it will take time to adjust and retest. The hospital has added facilities for some of this activity.

Alexander provided several UAS-related references and resources:

- [Helpful Drone Acronyms](#) (from NUAIR)
- [Drones take to the sky, potentially disrupting last-mile delivery](#) (McKinsey article)
- [Can You Zone Drone Use](#) (APA article)
- [Drone Zoning: Urban Planning’s Next Frontier?](#) (APA article)
- Pablo Air - S. Korean Co. partnering with NUAIR: [Website](#) with interesting videos and information
- <https://nuair.org/2021/05/26/making-drone-deliveries-scalable-and-economically-viable/> - NUAIR projects and on-going relationship with SUNY Upstate Medical to assist in medical deliveries in Syracuse.
- <https://nuair.org/2021/03/24/nuair-lays-automation-groundwork-for-high-density-vertiports/> - Information and links to documents NUAIR helped develop for Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and Vertiport operations (Large “air taxis” for people and/or cargo and the infrastructure needed to support them).
- <https://nuair.org/2022/11/29/vports-to-create-intl-aam-corridor-syracuse-quebec/> - NUAIR’s work with Vports in Canada to further develop vertiports and AAM infrastructure to support an international AAM Cargo corridor between Canada and New York.

3. Freight Session and Amazon Tour at NYSAMPO Conference

The NYSAMPO Conference (May 9-10, 2023 in Syracuse) will feature a session titled “Cleaning up Goods Movement” on May 9th from 9:30 to 10:45. It will be moderated by Gerry Bogacz, NYMTC and feature the following presentations:

- Clean Freight Corridors Planning - Gerry Bogacz, NYMTC
- NYC Clean Trucks Program - Susan McSherry, NYC DOT
- NY NEVI Program - Carolyn Ryan, NYSDOT

There will also be a tour of the Liverpool Amazon facility on Thursday, May 11.

4. NY State Freight Plan Update

Rosenberg provided an update on the NYS Freight Plan. NYSDOT completed the current freight plan in August 2019. States need to update their freight plans every five years in order to access federal freight funds. NYSDOT went through a procurement process and selected a contractor. The contract was approved in March and work is getting underway now. The update will build on the existing freight plan. They will update the Atlas, the designated freight networks, and commodity flow data. We will be able to drill down to a facility in a specific location and download data. The update will incorporate new IIJA requirements, one of which addresses commercial vehicle parking. The plan will look at parking supply and demand statewide. NYSDOT plans to purchase Transearch data. Rosenberg said NYSDOT looks forward to getting input from this group as they go through the process.

5. Roundtable Discussion

Bauer noted that railroad safety has been a hot topic in the Albany region for awhile.

Galinski mentioned Nikola Motors is developing a fuel cell powered truck that will use a hydrogen fueling filling truck as an alternative to building out hydrogen fuel stations. Bauer mentioned a company in the Albany region that has almost completely shifted its focus from EV to hydrogen fueling.

6. Updates

Bauer: CDTC is currently underway with a truck parking study. They are planning to present a poster on it at the NYSAMPO conference.

Alexander: SMTC will soon begin an update of its regional freight profile.

Binnix: GTC is planning to release a RFP soon for a regional freight study.

Mani: Mentioned an upcoming FHWA national peer exchange on Freight Resiliency for Climate-Related Disruptions, which will take place in Chicago, IL on September 13-14, 2023.

7. New Business

None.

8. Adjourn

Bauer adjourned the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for July 2023.