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Press Release

May 17, 2013

LIRR

IMMEDIATE

Proposed Track Extension at Port Washington Yard Would Pave the Way for Better Service on Port Washington Branch

Additional AM & PM Trains Means More Seats, Express Service & Improved Service for CitiField/U.S. Open Events & Grand Central; Big Benefit for Port Washington, Plandome & Manhasset Customers

The LIRR's proposal to build track extensions at the existing Port Washington Yard will immediately improve train service for Port Washington Branch customers and also will mean more service to the East Side of Manhattan at Grand Central Terminal once the East Side Access project is completed.

The track extensions will allow two additional trains to be stored at the Port Washington Station, paving the way for additional express service and improved service to Citi Field and U.S. Open events – both served by the Port Washington line.

Port Washington, Plandome & Manhasset customers especially will benefit from the additional train storage capacity.

Once the East Side Access project is complete, the LIRR estimates that approximately 45% of its Port Washington Branch customers will opt for trains heading to Grand Central with commuting time cut by up to 40 minutes a day as crosstown subway and bus trips become a thing of the past. In order to offer the additional service to Grand Central, the LIRR requires more space to position extra trains at the existing Port Washington yard so they can be ready for the AM rush.

"This track extension project at our existing yard will have immediate benefits for Port Washington customers," said LIRR President Helena E. Williams. "We will be able to improve service with more express trains and more service to special events at Citi Field and the U.S. Open. Port Washington, Plandome & Manhasset customers in particular will see the improvements."

LIRR representatives met with North Hempstead Supervisor Jon Kaiman and Town Councilwoman Dina De Georgio on February 9, 2012, and again last month to discuss the Railroad's plan and available options. At the April 17 meeting, the LIRR outlined a plan for community outreach.

The LIRR has pledged to work with town officials and community leaders to try and minimize the impact of the project on parking at the Port Washington station. Under a preferred proposal, the LIRR would purchase a piece of property from the Town of North Hempstead at fair market value and also utilize a portion of the LIRR's Haven Avenue lot, resulting in the loss of approximately 40 parking spaces. If the LIRR uses only its own property for the track extensions, the entire LIRR Haven Avenue lot, including approximately 140 parking spaces would be needed for the track extensions.

"The LIRR is aware that parking is at a premium in Port Washington and is an important concern to our customers," said Williams. "We are working to minimize the impact of this project on parking opportunities, which our customers need to access LIRR service."

The LIRR does not believe the project will negatively impact the overall appearance of the Port Washington station and yard area, which currently is used to store trains. The two extra trains that will be stored on the proposed track extensions will be utilized throughout the day.

The additional yard space at Port Washington will improve train service for Port Washington Station customers in the following ways:

- Increased AM and PM Peak service
- Enhanced express service
- Frequent service to two Manhattan terminals (once East Side Access opens)
- More service for special events such as Mets games and U.S. Open Tennis.

The Port Washington, Plandome & Manhasset stations pose special challenges because they are served by a single track over the Manhasset viaduct. This makes it especially important to be able to position trains at the existing Port Washington yard to be ready for AM service.

This summer, the LIRR will establish an information center at the Port Washington station to fully explain the options and seek community input. The two options are:

Option A: Extension of Yard Tracks 1 & 8:

This option would be possible if the LIRR could purchase – at fair market value – a 7,900 square foot parcel of land now part of the East Parking Lot and currently owned by the Town of North Hempstead. The town's lot, with restriping, would not lose any parking spots. Under this option, there would be a net loss of approximately 40 parking spaces on the LIRR's lot on the Haven Avenue side of the station.

Option B: Extension of Track 1 and Creation of Track 0:

Under this option, the LIRR would confine the new track to its own property, but would have to reclaim its own land it currently leases to the Town for commuter parking along Haven Avenue at a loss of approximately 140 parking spaces.

"We are very excited about the opportunity to provide more and better service to our Port Washington customers," said Williams. "This project will allow us the ability to deliver the kind of additional service we know they want."