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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA Metro-North Railroad Project in Cortlandt Wins Planning Award

Complex Station Expansion, Traffic Improvements and Land Swap Recognized

MTA Metro-North Railroad's expanded Cortlandt Station, which opened last year, and the Town of Cortlandt has received a Planning Achievement Award by the Westchester Municipal Planning Federation in its annual competition the railroad announced today.

The station design solved several problems: how to improve roadway access to the station, how to make the train accessible to those visiting the Veteran's Administration Hospital on the west side of the tracks, and how to expand parking with minimal disturbance to the environment.

The new facility expanded parking on the west side and built a new entrance with an improved four-way, signalized intersection on Route 9A, providing safe crosswalks and sidewalks with curb cuts for wheelchairs and added parking on land that had been used as a training facility for operators of bull dozers and other heavy equipment.

"This was a good partnership between Metro-North and the Town of Cortlandt that did a lot of good things in one project," said John Tegeder, Director-at-Large of the Westchester Municipal Planning Federation. "Several properties needed to be swapped and that took some planning effort. The jury also appreciates the architecture of the station and hopes it becomes a model for other Metro-North stations. And from a practical perspective, it made the station much more convenient to reach."

"We accomplished many goals with this project: access for the disabled, more parking, environmental improvements, traffic safety and better connectivity to the VA hospital," said Metro-North President Howard Permut. "It could not have been done without the cooperation of many partners, especially the Town of Cortlandt."

"I am very excited that Metro-North has received the prestigious Westchester Planning Federation Award this year and we were proud to submit the application to the Federation on their behalf," said Linda Puglisi, Cortlandt Town Supervisor. "The Cortlandt Train Station, which had two phases and was completed in February of 2012, provides improved commuter opportunities for our many commuters in Cortlandt, for those using the trains for all purposes and for Veterans and VA employees who can now easily walk from the train station to the FDR VA. It's a tremendous asset for our Cortlandt community and congratulations to Metro-North."

Accessibility for the disabled was achieved with new elevators to serve both parking lots and the center island platform. The new overpass has enclosed staircases and a spacious, heated waiting area with numerous benches, a restroom and a coffee concession.

The award was presented at the Federation's annual awards dinner June 6 in Tarrytown. Accepting the award on behalf of Metro-North was Karen Timko, Director of Environmental Compliance, and Ms. Puglisi on behalf of the Town of Cortlandt.

The plaza includes a ground-level snack vending area, a parking pay station, a ticket vending machine and a restroom with a composting toilet. The lot has spaces for 720 cars, 10 motorcycles and ample bicycle parking. An additional heated shelter was built on the north end of the platform and the entire facility has new lighting, signage and emergency call boxes.

Native, drought-resistant landscaping, including maple, birch, pine and locust trees, complements the improvements. In addition, because the land had been continuously disturbed by machine operators in training, there was no vegetation and nothing to prevent erosion during storms.

Planners addressed this with drainage improvements as part of a comprehensive storm water pollution prevention system that included creation of a large, open detention pond planted with native wetland species. In addition, the lot was designed and sloped to completely avoid pre-existing wetlands at the northwest corner.

To build the improvements at Cortlandt, several land transfers and purchases had to be accomplished. Local 14 of the International Union of Operating Engineers relocated to property previously owned by the Keon Center Inc., which relocated to a new facility. Metro-North also purchased 2.1 acres from the Town of Cortlandt to put together the 9.5-acre site. In addition, Metro-North obtained a permanent easement from Peckham Industries to allow construction of the overpass extension and to enable future construction of a platform on the west side.

The project cost was \$34.7 million. The Federal Highway Administration's Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) program, in partnership with the Federal Transit Administration, contributed \$21.2 million. This includes a CMAQ grant to New York State Department of Transportation of \$5.2 million for the intersection improvements. MTA Metro-North's capital program contributed \$13.5 million to the project.

Design of the new facility was by Jacobs Engineers. Design of the Route 9A intersection improvements was by AECOM. Construction was by ECCO III Enterprises and construction management was handled by STV Inc.