



MTA Press Releases

[Select Language](#) ▼

Press Release

April 12, 2017

LIRR

IMMEDIATE

LIRR Announces Launch of New Early Morning Train for the North Fork, the 'Fisherman's Train,' and Shares Slate of Proposals for East End Service Enhancements

LIRR Proposes North Fork Weekday Train With Midday Arrival in NYC and Doubling of In-Season Weekend Service to North Fork; Proposed South-Fork 'Commuter Connection' Aims to Reduce Traffic Congestion

The Long Island Rail Road and a coalition of East End elected officials and community groups discussed proposals for enhancing train service on the North Fork and South Fork. The railroad is seeking the public's input before determining which options to pursue.

In the latest in a series of discussions between the LIRR and East End elected officials and members of the public, the LIRR provided potential service enhancements for both the North and South Forks. On the North Fork, the LIRR is proposing to provide up to four roundtrips between Ronkonkoma and Greenport during the weekday and would allow for a mid-day arrival in New York City as requested by community members. Additional Ronkonkoma – Greenport roundtrips were also proposed for weekend service which would provide more opportunities for day trippers heading in either direction.

On the South Fork, discussions centered around a potential new "Commuter Connection" that would consist of six new intra-island trains each weekday during non-summer periods.

"We are very pleased by the collaborative, productive dialog that the East End communities and elected officials have engaged in with the railroad," said LIRR President Patrick Nowakowski. "This partnership will result in substantial service improvements for area stakeholders."

Assemblyman Fred Thiele said, "My thanks to the Long Island Rail Road for their continued efforts to increase and improve train service to the East End. Our journey to provide more trains and commuter service for our local residents has taken a major step forward. Our latest meeting on April 7 is further evidence of that fact. We have reviewed service enhancements and schedules and have provided the LIRR with additional information to fine tune these proposals. Increased service on the North Fork is close to being finalized. On the South Fork, a one seat train to Penn Station providing direct morning service from the Hamptons to Penn Station is under consideration, in addition to the 'Commuter Connection' which would provide daily Intra-Island commuter service on the South Fork. The South Fork enhancements are being planned for 2018. We will again be meeting with the LIRR later this Spring to further refine these concepts."

Senator Ken LaValle said, "I am pleased that by working together we are on the path to provide better train service for the residents of the East End. There has been a need to improve the system for a long time, and I commend the LIRR for working in partnership with all of the interested groups to reach the common goals. I look forward to the refined enhancements and know that the East End will benefit greatly when they are commenced."

Assemblyman Anthony Palumbo said, "Over many months we have had very productive discussions with the LIRR and I am thrilled that we are going to implement these changes. The previous schedule was decades old and did not adequately serve the constituency of the North Fork. We will continue to work collaboratively to ensure that the implementation of this new schedule will go smoothly and efficiently. This will be a wonderful new addition to the growing need for public transportation on the East End."

Following review and examination of potential service opportunities, LIRR is recommending enhancement to an existing westbound one-seat-ride train to Penn Station to originate further east, providing a morning train direct from the Hamptons to Penn Station. Completion of a new signal system between Speonk to Montauk, which is currently under construction, would be required before this potential service could be implemented.

The LIRR also announced that on May 22 it will inaugurate a new summer early morning train timed to be convenient for early-morning fishermen. The train will originate at Ronkonkoma at 3:49 a.m. with service to Greenport, where it will arrive at 5:04 a.m. This service enhancement is separate from the slate of potential service changes for further East End enhancements under discussion.

Future meetings are anticipated as the dialogue continues and service proposals get further refined. Based upon the future consensus coming out of these collaborative meetings, LIRR staff must advise the MTA Board of the anticipated service changes. At that point, a timeline for service implementation would be developed, while the railroad reorganizes crew and equipment allocations.

The railroad will continue to investigate longer term investments to further enhance service options on the East End.

Proposed North Fork Weekday Service Enhancements

The LIRR is proposing to shift existing scheduled to allow for a morning departure from the North Fork that provides a mid-day arrival in New York City as requested by the community. The train could depart Greenport in the mid-morning and make all local stops to Ronkonkoma, where it would arrive in time to connect to a train due into Penn Station in midday. (This train would take the place of a current train that departs Greenport at 12:42 p.m., to connect to a train arriving at Penn Station at 3:33 p.m.)

To allow for this train, the LIRR would reschedule the existing train that originates in Deer Park at 7:54 a.m., and terminates at Riverhead at 8:55 a.m. This train could instead originate in Ronkonkoma in the morning and would make all local stops to Greenport. This train would be well-timed to receive passengers from an eastbound train originating in New York City in the future, when the completion of the Ronkonkoma Branch Double Track project and the Main Line Expansion Project allow the LIRR able to increase morning eastbound service to Ronkonkoma.

For weekday evenings, the LIRR is proposing to create a new evening train departing Yaphank and stopping at Medford before arriving at Ronkonkoma. This train, too, would be well-timed to connect passengers to a waiting westbound train at Ronkonkoma once the Main Line Expansion Project and Ronkonkoma Branch Double Track project are completed and LIRR reverse-peak train service is enhanced.

Options

The LIRR is proposing two options for North Fork weekday service enhancements. Option 1 would consist of the improvements noted above and leave existing afternoon trains unchanged.

Option 2 would include the changes noted above and would add an afternoon round trip to Greenport but eliminate a mid-afternoon round-trip to Riverhead which is used by approximately 10 people.

North Fork Weekend Service Enhancements

After re-establishing year-round weekend service to the North Fork in the fall of 2016, the Long Island Rail Road is now proposing to double weekend service to the North Fork from May through October.

The current year-round weekend service consists of two round trips per day, operated by one crew over a nine-hour period between approximately 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Under two alternatives being put forward, weekend service day would be essentially doubled from May to October, with addition of a second train crew dedicated to North Fork service.

Options

The LIRR is proposing two options for North Fork seasonal weekend service enhancements. Option 1 would allow for three round trips to Greenport in the late morning, early afternoon and mid-evening, plus a new early evening round-trip as far as Yaphank. Option 2 would allow for four round trips to Greenport in the early morning, late morning, mid-afternoon and evening.

South Fork Proposed Enhancements

The LIRR is proposing to create a South Fork-exclusive “Commuter Connection” service that would consist of six trains per weekday for travel exclusively within the South Fork, and to extend one morning Penn Station-bound train.

South Fork-Exclusive Commuter Connection

The LIRR is proposing to add six trains per day serving the eastern segment of the Montauk Branch. These trains, which would not connect with trains to or from trains to New York City, would include three one-way trips east of Speonk in the mornings, and three in the afternoon during commuting times. They are proposed with the hope of reducing traffic congestion on Montauk Highway/Route 27 by providing motorists with an alternative, and the hope of stimulating the East End economy by offering an environmentally friendly way to travel within the South Fork.

Extension of Morning Direct Train to Penn Station

Under existing schedules, a year-round weekday direct train to Penn Station departs Speonk at 5:08 a.m. The LIRR is proposing to originate that train at Southampton and make stops at Hampton Bays and Westhampton before continuing on its existing route from Speonk making all stops to Babylon then running express to Jamaica, arriving at 6:41 a.m. for connections to Brooklyn and Hunterspoint Avenue, then running express to Penn Station to arrive at 7:02 a.m.