

**October 9, 2012**

Once again, the MTA's Long Island Railroad has been found to be wasting tax payers' money and its workers wasting a lot of time on several routine construction projects on Long Island. According to the MTA's own Inspector General, which reviewed staircase replacement projects in Great Neck and Deer Park as well as a fence replacement in Manhasset, LIRR workers started their workdays too late, ended their work days too early and wasted too much time in between, a complete "triplification" of waste, mismanagement and inefficiency!

At the Great Neck staircase project, for example, LIRR workers took 115 days over six months logging 5,677 hours of labor costing New Yorkers \$261,000 for a project that was budgeted to have taken 10 weeks and about 2500 hours of labor at a cost of under \$100,000, which is two and a half times less than what the Great Neck staircase project ended up costing. This is not surprising to our LIRR Mainline communities, however, which saw the LIRR's Third Track Megaproject spiral out of control from about \$400,000 to over \$1.6 BILLION without even one bulldozer rumbling through our neighborhoods. MTA Chairman Joseph Lhota should be ashamed that he wants to resurrect the Third Track construction megaproject boondoggle, given the MTA's chronic history of underestimating how much taxpayer money is needed and how long its construction projects will take to complete.

Unfortunately, we do not have to go to Great Neck to see how badly MTA Chairman Joseph Lhota's construction projects really are in action, or should we say inaction. Floral Park knows all too well how inefficiently and how slowly it takes the LIRR to construct and complete replacement staircases. After watching several staircases at the now outdated and non-ADA compliant Floral Park station crumbling before our eyes, engineers finally declared them unsafe and in need of immediate replacement. We have now watched for months as entrances and staircases have been under repair, with no end in sight. Could it be that the same MTA management that let waste and inefficiency go unchecked in Great Neck is now doing the same thing in Floral Park? We demand that MTA Chairman Joseph Lhota tell us a date when his "routine" staircase construction project in Floral Park will be completed and how much it is going to cost New York taxpayers.

One way for the MTA to demonstrate that it is changing its ways is to completely FINISH the construction at the Floral Park LIRR station by the end of the year, 2012 and not 2013 or 2014. Shame on MTA Chairman Joseph Lhota for having to wait until his MTA Inspector General's report to inform him what the mainline communities have been saying for years: maintain what it already has and do it on time and on budget.

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