

**July 23, 2012**

MTA Chairman Joseph Lhota is once again trying to unfairly malign the communities from Queens Village to Hicksville for their successful campaign to derail the unwanted and unneeded \$1.5 billion LIRR Third Track Megaproject boondoggle. According to *Newsday*, Chairman Lhota, addressing the Long Island Regional Planning Council meeting on July 10 (*Newsday* 7-11-12 “MTA Chief Cites LI “NIMBY” Mentality”), acknowledged that the third track proposal was “quite controversial” and the opposition, he said, had been “textbook NIMBY”, but the MTA would continue to work with local and state legislators to advance the project.

Once again we have to ask, “Say it ain’t so, Joe?” MTA Chairman Lhota, who was nowhere to be seen or heard during the Third Track public hearings, has been misinformed or has chosen to ignore the hundreds of pages of well-reasoned testimony and documents that were presented by the concerned citizens of the negatively impacted communities. Shame on Mr. Lhota and his MTA bureaucrats for refusing to recognize and acknowledge that the LIRR Third Track Megaproject was given a full and fair public hearing and the local communities won the debate fair and square.

MTA Chairman Lhota’s continual ridicule of local concerned citizens is offensive. He should be reminded that such tactics, and worse, did not prevent reasoned public comments from being presented during the MTA Third Track Megaproject public hearings. Therefore, rookie MTA Chairman Lhota should know what did not work then, will not work these many years later either. The taxpayers of New York and Long Island should praise the residents of Bellerose, Floral Park, New Hyde Park, Garden City, Mineola, Carle Place, Westbury, Hicksville and every hamlet, village and town in between for saving hard pressed taxpayers from yet another multi-billion dollar MTA folly. It is now 2012, and the MTA LIRR Third Track battle has been fought and won by WE THE PEOPLE of the local communities and not the goliath MTA.

Since Chairman Lhota obviously wants to rewrite history, he should be aware that when it comes to the discredited and defeated LIRR Third Track Megaproject, it was not a matter of “not in my backyard” but rather, “**enough in our backyard.**” Floral Park and its sister communities have already shouldered more than their fair share of the entire region’s transportation burdens, including the hundreds of trains that already rumble through our communities, without stopping, every day of the year. The all but laughable “reverse commute” justification for the over \$1.5 billion MTA Third Track Megaproject has been completely debunked and is unsupported by any real facts. Given the ever increasing price tag, which spiraled out of control from its initial \$400 million to over \$1.5 billion today without even one bulldozer destroying one local home, perhaps the MTA could buy every reverse commuter a new Prius and save the New York taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars!

MTA Chairman Lhota has yet to apologize for his previous uncalled for disparaging of our local concerned citizens, so this most recent attack should come as no surprise to local residents. Like the Russian hockey team, the MTA’s professional lobbyists and special interest

groups expect to win every time, so when they lose to a bunch of dedicated and organized amateurs, they can't believe they lost! There was no "do-over" for the 1980 Russian hockey team nor will there be for the defeated 2007 MTA LIRR Third Track Megaproject.

The LIRR Third Track is dead and buried: Time for MTA Chairman Lhota to turn the pages of history and simply, move on.