

# *The Commuter*

## **Neilson Construction FAQ**

The Commuter Parking Advisory Committee (CPAC) has received numerous questions from commuters regarding the construction at Neilson Plaza. In an effort to address these questions, the CPAC has started a FAQ (frequently asked question) series. You can find them at our Yahoogroups web site <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/EBCommuter>. We have briefly summarized a few of these issues below. More complete answers can be found online at messages 1508, 1523, 1532 and 1543.

1. *Are Neilson Plaza monthly permits valid at the TCC during this construction?* Yes.
2. *How long is construction expected to last?* The total project is not expected to end until late 2005. The construction and inconvenience at Neilson will relocate about late May when crews move to another part of the structure for several months to eventually return to work on levels 1, 2 and 3.
3. *How long will the new parking patterns be in effect?* Parking patterns will be modified as necessary during different phases of the project until final completion.
4. *Why do the first commuters to arrive have to park on the upper deck?* So that the middle floors can be closed to traffic and the work can begin as soon as possible in the morning.
5. *Can Neilson permits be suspended until construction has been completed?* No.
6. *During what hours is construction taking place?* It starts as soon as the levels above the work area are filled and the work can safely begin.
7. *When are the lower levels opened?* When the upper levels are at capacity, usually around 6:30 a.m.
8. *What happens to unruly or inconsistent commuters who move barriers or do not follow the rules?* They will be given tickets and/or banned from using the facility.
9. *How has the experience to date been?* The majority of commuters have cooperated, followed the rules and remain considerate of their fellow commuters. Only a few commuters have caused problems to date and these have been addressed on an individual basis.
10. *Why does a concrete structure need repairs?* All buildings, including concrete ones, need maintenance. Concrete buildings contain expansion and steel locking joints. These need to be checked for corrosion and replaced as needed on a regular schedule. Failure to do so can result in major damage to the structure. This type of maintenance needs to be done every 15 years or so.
11. *Why are the light on levels P6 and P7 not operating properly?* The lights are the responsibility of the Condominium group, Tower II. The Parking Utility has spoken with their representatives and they have assured us that the lights will be fixed as expeditiously as possible.
12. *How is a daily parker supposed to pay the \$3 daily parking fee at Neilson on weekends?* If you do not have a permit, please put the daily fee in an envelope, write the vehicle's license plate number on the envelope and drop it into the black box in the lobby of the terminal by the ticket windows.
13. *How many daily spots are there available for use at Neilson today?* Only 220, versus the previous 330. Consequently, it fills up very early and many Neilson parkers have had to moved to TCC. The additional TCC traffic has required expanding the daily parking area and increasing bus service levels.

## **Odds and Ends**

***Contract litigation update:*** On February 17, the Appellate Division ruled that the Township's request for proposal (RFP) for commuter bus service was sufficiently ambiguous that it should be revised and rerun. The Township is currently in the process of drafting a revised RFP. Once the revisions are completed and approved by the Township Council, the contract will again be put up for bid. The Court ruling and several articles on the ruling and the Town's plans can be found on our Yahoogroups and Topica web sites. We will disseminate additional information about this process as it is developed.

***Emergency service notifications:*** Suburban Transit has been using their email emergency service notification service during the recent snow storms. About 250 email addresses are on the email list and commuters have commented that they have found this information useful. To sign up for this service, please send an email to [suburban.commuter@coachus.com](mailto:suburban.commuter@coachus.com) and indicate if you wish to receive information about the PABT, Crosstown and/or Downtown lines. Please note that this service is not operated by the CPAC. You should also be able to check service status in an emergency at 800-222-0492 at extensions 246, 255, 271 and 275.

***TCC redevelopment:*** Responses for the redevelopment of TCC are due at the end of March. The CPAC will summarize these responses in a future newsletter.

***TCC service improvements:*** Effective March 24<sup>th</sup> the bus leaving the PABT at midnight will stop at the TCC before proceeding on its normal route. Please be aware that this service is only a trial basis and depends upon its usage by TCC commuters. Also all buses returning to the TCC in the evening should be automatically stopping at the additional stop for daily parkers on the driveway area.

***Jersey City bus from Neilson:*** Please let the CPAC know by sending us an email if you are interested in a bus from Neilson Plaza to Jersey City with connecting PATH and ferry service to downtown.

***Crosstown service:*** Suburban Transit has added an additional Crosstown bus to the schedule effective March 24. Both a new morning and evening bus were added to address crowding issues. Please notify the CPAC if you are aware of a certain bus or time that is often subject to overcrowding so we can help address this situation. The CPAC has also been informed that drivers are to stop at any major avenue to let commuters off upon request.

***Downtown route:*** The primary Downtown route is now through the Lincoln Tunnel starting after the first three buses in the morning. It is the view of most commuters that this new approach has been generally quicker than the previous Holland Tunnel route.

## **Receive Newsletter and Commuter Service Information by E-mail**

The CPAC automatically delivers newsletters and other information by e-mail as it becomes available. The power of this e-mail list was illustrated by the Council's modification of the parking fee increase. Commuters that have signed up for this service are made aware of important commuting developments as they occur. Almost 500 commuters have already signed up for this service. To subscribe, simply send an email to [ebcnews-subscribe@topica.com](mailto:ebcnews-subscribe@topica.com), then reply when you get the sign up confirmation message. You may cancel your subscription at any time. The CPAC will not disseminate your e-mail address or use it for any other purpose. Our normal e-mail address remains [ebcommuter@yahoo.com](mailto:ebcommuter@yahoo.com).