



## Route 7-15 Norwalk

### PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING #3

#### Meeting Summary

Date: September 19, 2017

Norwalk City Hall Community Room

Time: 6:30pm

#### 1. Attendance

First Name	Last Name	Organization
<b>PAC Members</b>		
Elizabeth	Stocker	City of Norwalk
Christopher	Wigren	Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation
Jo-Anne	Horvath	Creeping Hemlock/Cranbury Neighborhood
Peter	Viteretto	Connecticut Chapter of American Society of Landscape Architects
Timothy	Densky	Empire Realty Trust
David	Waters	Harbor Point/Building and Land Technology
Jill	Smyth	Merritt Parkway Conservancy
Nancy	Rosett	Norwalk Bike Walk Commission/Merritt Parkway Trail Alliance
Tod	Bryant	Norwalk Preservation Trust
Jim	Carter	Norwalk Valley River Trail
Joanne	Ferrera	Silvermine Community
Ray	Rauth	Sound Cyclists
<b>Connecticut Department of Transportation Staff</b>		
Yolanda	Antoniak	CTDOT
Rich	Armstrong	CTDOT
Andy	Fesenmeyer	CTDOT
<b>Project Consultant Team</b>		
Stephanie	Brooks	FHI
Ken	Livingston	FHI
Paul	Stanton	FHI
John	Eberle	Stantec
Chris	Mojica	Stantec
Gary	Sorge	Stantec
<b>General Public</b>		
Diane	Jellerette	Norwalk Historical Society

#### 2. Welcome

Andy Fesenmeyer, of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), welcomed everyone to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Route 7/15 Norwalk Project. He noted that CTDOT recently underwent some reorganization, and introduced Ms. Yolanda Antoniak as Jen Sweeney's replacement in her role.



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### 3. Meeting Overview

Andy Fesenmeyer reviewed the meeting's agenda items, which will be covered using PowerPoint presentation slides:

1. PAC Meeting #2 Summary
2. Subcommittee Reporting
3. Review of Alternates
4. Public Scoping Meeting
5. Project Evaluation Matrix Conversation
6. Design Visualization Update
7. Next Steps/Questions

### 4. Review of PAC Meeting #2

Andy F. presented a brief overview of the topics covered at the second PAC meeting.

### 5. Subcommittee Reporting

The Purpose and Need Subcommittee meeting took place on September 12, 2017, and the Section 106 and 4f Subcommittee meeting took place on September 15, 2017. Andy F. recapped the Purpose and Need committee suggesting that they heard good comments with one of the main themes being the need to highlight the bike and pedestrian needs for the project. He suggested the team would be editing the Purpose and Need Statement and sending out to PAC members to continue the conversation. He also suggested that the statement will be continually updated as need be given input received as the project progresses.

For the Section 106 subcommittee, Andy F. noted that based on concerns and critical project elements suggested, the team is now developing additional committees including a Historical Design and Landscaping Subcommittee. One of the goals of this subcommittee will be to ensure that design plans meet objectives as to appropriate landscape features, with extensive review and consideration of historic context and guidelines. This subcommittee will meet during the daytime, most likely in a different location than the PAC meetings. Rich Armstrong noted that CTDOT would be open to adding other people within the community to be a part of this subcommittee. This includes individuals who are not a part of the PAC. Andy noted that the team will send out an email to the PAC with details about joining this subcommittee.

At least six PAC members expressed interest in joining this design working group. PAC members also suggested that they might include some consultants that have a history of working on the Parkway. PAC members stressed that new subcommittee members not in the PAC need to understand ground rules of what the PAC and project team are trying to do. This will help the subcommittee stay within the goals and objectives of this project.

### 6. Review of Alternates

John E. provided a brief review of current alternatives being considered. This included the extensive previous alternates developed prior to the consensus alternate in 2009, Alternate 21C as well as the new



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Alternate 26. He explained that this did not preclude additional alternates being looked at if they are proposed along the way. Public Scoping Meeting

John E., Andy F. and Ken L. provided details about the upcoming scoping meeting. The meeting will take place at the Main Norwalk City Hall building in the rotunda area on October 17, 2017 from 4:00 PM - 8:30 PM. Two identical presentations will be given at 5:30 and 7:30. Presentation topics will include the environmental review process, location and history, purpose and need, and the overall alternatives process. The public comment period will begin 30 days after the public scoping meeting, and will end on November 16, 2017.

Yolanda A. noted that scoping meeting information will be posted in local newspapers. It will be referred to as a “scoping/public information” meeting. Notifications will be placed in the Stamford Advocate, the Norwalk Hour, the project website, and the CTDOT website. Ken L. added that a Scoping Summary Report will be posted on project website.

The PAC requested that scoping meeting information also be posted to Nancy on Norwalk, Channel 12 and the City of Norwalk website.

### 7. Project evaluation matrix conversation

John E. provided a brief overview of how/why alternatives matrix is developed and used, and noted that the matrix is used as a tool for comparison of various alternatives. He detailed the alternatives screening process, with the first ‘sieve’ being whether an alternative met the basic purpose and need of the project. If so, then the alternatives can then be compared as to how *well* they meet purpose and need or how best they meet associated goals and objectives. He reviewed a number of sample matrices from a few projects and suggested the team would be drafting an initial matrix to identify the purpose and need elements and goals and objectives and other considerations. He suggested that CTDOT team would likely start with the previous matrix prepared for 7/15 (2008) and update possibly using one of the sample matrices presented.

John noted that the next PAC meeting, perhaps in November, would be dedicated to a review of project criteria matrix evaluations.

### 8. Design Visualization Update

John E. noted that the team will send updated design visualization link to the PAC on September 20, 2017. John and Chris M. explained that at this point in the project, the visualizations demonstrate only existing conditions, real time traffic, and a follow up of video of existing conditions would be developed and sent to PAC members as well.

The next round of visualizations will be developed subsequent to the scoping meeting in the coming months into next year, and will include Alternatives 21C and 26 as well as existing conditions. These visualizations will include comments received from PAC member review of links.

### 9. Next Steps

Andy F. noted that the main event coming up is the October 17 scoping meeting. Ken L. added that notifications will be provided via e-blast, newsletter, press releases and various publications listed above. Andy requested that PAC members join in notification efforts and promote this meeting among their constituents. After the scoping meeting, the project team will review all public comments received from and will begin doing some extensive engineering on the two alternatives (21C and 26).



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The next PAC meeting (meeting #4) will be in November 2017. This meeting will serve as a level one screening, with the original 2008 alternatives included as part of this initial screening. The PAC meeting will also be defining the evaluation matrix to be used.

John E. noted that the team is now updating the Purpose and Need document and will send to the PAC once completed.

The following discussion ensued:

### **Comments/Questions**

Comment: Would like to see details on the older alternatives so the PAC can re-familiarize themselves.

Comment: Would also like to see the original evaluation matrix.

Comment: Requested that both the old alternatives and the original evaluation matrix be placed on the website so the PAC can review.

- Team responded that they would place the previous alternates and original matrix on the project website.

Comment: For cyclists, the exit ramps need to be looked at very carefully. The team needs to examine the interface and understand the priorities for cyclists – what are their preferred routes? Would also like to see some origin and destination (STRAVA) data on cycling.

- The team responded that they will provide STRAVA information. They also noted that they have been talking and will continue to talk with Norwalk Valley Trail and other bike/ped groups to coordinate with them on their needs.

Q: Where are the new signals and exits going to be on Route 7?

A: The project team noted new signalizations on Alternatives 21C and 26 using the maps on the slideshow screen. A PAC member had difficulty understanding where signals and new ramps would be using just the aerial maps. The project team noted that once the visualizations are up and running it will be easier to see and understand where the new signals and exit ramps will be located.

Q: Can we speak at the scoping meeting as well as other members of the public?

A: Definitely. You will be a private citizen and not a member of the PAC at that time, we would love to have you speak as a member of the public.

Q: Last time we worked with our communities to develop the evaluation matrix, will we be doing this again?

A: Yes, the PAC serving as liaison to the public will have input to the evaluation matrix and more importantly the issues and concerns that should be reflected. CTDOT/Consultant team expects PAC members to communicate and gather project perspectives from their communities.



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Comment: The PAC would like to know more about NEPA/CEPA environmental language, and requested that the project team ensures that these concepts and definitions be a part of the public scoping meeting.

- The team responded that they will be sure to include definitions and basic environmental analysis information.