



Route 7-15 Norwalk

PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING #10

Meeting Summary

Date: June 17, 2025

(Virtual Meeting)

Time: 6:30 pm

Attendance

PAC Members	
Emily Burnaman	Norwalk Bike/Walk Commission
Jim Carter	NRVT
Todd Fontanella	WestCOG
Kristin Hadjstylianos	WestCOG
Alan Kibbe	Norwalk Association of Silverline Homeowners
Arianne Kolb	Merritt Parkway Conservancy
Francis Pickering	WestCOG
Nancy Rosett	NRVT
Peter Viteretto	CT ASLA
Christopher Wigren	Preservation CT
Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT)	
Mike Calabrese	CTDOT
Sebastian Cannamela	CTDOT
Neil Patel	CTDOT
Jeffrey Pfaffinger	CTDOT
Mandy Ranslow	CTDOT
Project Consultant Team	
Jason Ellis	BL Companies
Ken Livingston	FHI Studio
Sydney LaLuna	VN Engineers
Richard Franklin	Stantec
Andrew Lessard	Stantec
Reid Shankweiler	Stantec
Gary Sorge	Stantec



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1. Welcome

Neil Patel, of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), welcomed everyone to the 10th Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Route 7/15 Norwalk Project. Members of the CTDOT team, as well as the project consultant team, introduced themselves. Attending members of the PAC also introduced themselves.

2. Meeting Overview

Neil P. reviewed the meeting's agenda items:

1. Introduction and Project Update
2. Project Overview
3. Preliminary Design and Visualizations
4. Next Steps
5. Discussion

Neil P. provided an overview of the project and current schedule.

Neil P. turned over the presentation to Reid Shankweiler, of Stantec.

4. Presentation

Reid S. presented an overview of the project location and its significance due to its role in connecting major roadways and facilitating traffic flow in the region. He highlighted the missing connections between Route 7, Route 15, and Main Avenue at Interchanges 39 and 40 on Route 15 (Merritt Parkway). Reid S. emphasized the project's purpose and need and the importance of addressing roadway system linkages, safety, and mobility in the project area. The project aims to construct these missing connections to improve mobility between Route 7, Route 15 and local road corridors.

Reid S. highlighted the importance of addressing safety concerns, including substandard acceleration and deceleration lanes, steep changes in grade, sharp curves, and limited sight distance at Interchange 40. The project will focus on improving these safety aspects.

Reid S. explained the project aims to enhance mobility in the area by providing local road improvements at Interchange 40, including Main Avenue, Glover Avenue, and Creeping Hemlock Drive. These improvements will include bike, pedestrian, and transit facilities. All proposed improvements will be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Next, Reid S. and Gary Sorge, of Stantec, discussed the latest progress at the Preliminary Design phase and presented various visualizations to help convey the design intent of the proposed improvements to Route 15, Route 7, and local roads. They reviewed the proposed ramp connections and highlighted the importance of traffic calming measures, landscape character, and the integration of bike and pedestrian facilities.

On Route 15, acceleration and deceleration lanes would be extended with the addition of new ramp connections to Route 7 and the local roads. These improvements aim to enhance safety and traffic flow to and from the proposed ramp connections. Gary S. noted the grading and landscape improvements would be consistent with the historic character and guidelines of the Merritt Parkway, including native plant materials and smooth transitions from disturbed to undisturbed areas, as discussed in ongoing coordination with the PAC Landscape Subcommittee. This approach aims to maintain the aesthetic and functional integrity of the Merritt Parkway.

On Route 7, two new signalized intersections would be introduced to fully connect Route 15 and Route 7. The approach to the two new signalized intersections would shift the existing terminus at the Grist Mill Road signal further South to the proposed intersections. Within the project limits Route 7 would be transformed from an existing expressway into a boulevard-type facility with signalized intersections, traffic calming features, and landscape enhancements. In addition to the advance signage and warnings along Northbound Route 7, the project team will be



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providing additional traffic calming features approaching the new boulevard-type facility. North of the proposed intersections, the project team is looking to extend the proposed boulevard treatments within the footprint of the roadway going up to the existing intersection with Grist Mill Road. This will help transition the character of the roadway and improve safety approaching the intersections. Gary S. emphasized the importance of traffic calming measures, such as horizontal transitions, reduced lane and shoulder widths, wider medians, and median and roadside landscape enhancements. These measures aim to reduce speed and improve safety for all road users.

Reid S. then explained the proposed improvements to Main Avenue, Glover Avenue, and Creeping Hemlock Drive including the addition of bike lanes, shared use paths, and improved sidewalks. These improvements aim to enhance pedestrian and bike access while addressing traffic flow and safety concerns.

Reid S. detailed the improvements to Main Avenue, which include lowering the vertical profile to provide additional clearance to the Route 15 bridge, adding bike lanes, and creating shared use paths. These changes aim to improve pedestrian and bike access and enhance safety. The proposed signals at the new ramp connections have been designed to be coordinated to optimize traffic flow.

The project realigns Glover Avenue and Creeping Hemlock Drive to connect to Main Avenue at a new signalized intersection. This realignment eliminates the existing staggered intersection and will improve traffic flow and safety and provide better access for pedestrians and cyclists. Improvements to Creeping Hemlock Dr. include the addition of a new signalized intersection at the southbound off-ramp from Route 15. This will enhance safety for pedestrians and cyclists and improve traffic flow in the area.

The project will add signalized intersections at key locations on Main Ave., Glover Ave., and Creeping Hemlock Dr. These intersections will be coordinated to improve traffic flow and safety for all road users.

Reid S. and Gary S. discussed the replacement of the Route 15 bridge over Main Avenue and the Glover Avenue bridge over the Norwalk River. They emphasized the importance of maintaining the historic character of these structures while improving their functionality and safety.

The Route 15 bridge over Main Ave. will be replaced to provide additional clearance and accommodate new turn lanes and bike/pedestrian facilities. The design will maintain the historic character of the existing structure.

The Glover Avenue bridge over the Norwalk River will be replaced with a design that replicates the historic character of the existing two-barrel arch structure. This replacement will improve functionality and safety while preserving the bridge's historic significance. Both bridge replacements will maintain the historic character of the existing structures. The design will include stone facades and complimentary elements to replicate the original appearance and ensure the bridges blend with the surrounding landscape. The construction staging for the bridge replacements will be carefully planned to minimize disruptions and ensure safety. The project team will coordinate with archaeological and historical experts to preserve the integrity of the historic structures during construction.

Jeff Pfaffinger, CTDOT presented potential alignments for the Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT) through the project area. He noted that several other options were evaluated after coordination with the City of Norwalk and NRVT. He highlighted the feasibility of different options and the need for further engineering and design work to ensure a safe and accessible trail.

Jeff P. presented three potential alignments for the NRVT through the project area. These alignments connect to Perry Avenue and run up the east side of Route 7. Two potential options would then utilize the footprint of the previous off-ramp from Route 15, continue either North or South of the proposed ramp, and connect to the proposed shared use path facilities on Main Avenue and Glover Avenue. A third option would stay along the east side of Route 7 and provide a future connection to Oakwood Avenue.

Jeff P. discussed the feasibility of the proposed alignments, noting that further engineering and design work is needed to determine the best option. The goal is to ensure a safe and accessible trail for all users. The proposed alignments aim to integrate the NRVT with existing and planned bike and pedestrian facilities. This includes



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connecting the facilities along Main Avenue, Glover Avenue, and other local roads to provide a continuous and safe trail network.

Jeff P. emphasized the importance of community feedback in finalizing the NRVT alignment. The project team will continue to engage with stakeholders and incorporate their input to ensure the trail meets the needs of the community.

Jeff P. then outlined the next steps for the project, including the upcoming Public Information Meeting, final design phase, and ongoing coordination with stakeholders. He emphasized the importance of continued public involvement and feedback throughout the project. Jeff P. announced the upcoming public information meeting, which will be held in person at City Hall. This meeting will provide an opportunity for the public to learn more about the project and provide feedback. The project will move into the final design phase, which includes completing design plans, acquiring rights of way, and obtaining environmental permits. This phase is expected to take approximately two years. Ongoing coordination with stakeholders will continue throughout the final design phase. This includes engaging with the community, local officials, and other interested parties to ensure their input is considered in the project.

5. Discussion

1. Nancy Rosett, of NRVT, noted support for the Cross Walk and Pedestrian improvements on the local road facilities. She asked for clarification on the existing and proposed ramp movements, and clarification on the NRVT graphic showing how the potential NRVT alignments connected to Perry Avenue. Nancy R. also inquired about the possibility of additional PAC and public information meetings. Ken L. confirmed that there would be more meetings scheduled in the future to ensure continued stakeholder engagement and feedback.
2. Emily Burnaman, of Norwalk Bike/Walk Commission, expressed concerns about the current plan for the NRVT, emphasizing the need for an off-road path that aligns with the city's vision for a walkable Norwalk. She urged the project team to prioritize the NRVT connection and consider the community's goals.
3. Francis Pickering, of WestCOG, noted that the proposed improvements could generate additional traffic diverting from I-95. Neil P. responded that the amount of traffic diverting from I-95 would be controlled by the capacity of Route 15, which is not proposed to be improved under this project. Francis P. also emphasized the importance of the signal timing of the closely spaced Main Avenue signals. He noted to alleviate ramp congestion; signal detection can be provided along Route 15 to coordinate with the signals at the ramp intersections. Neil P. responded that the ramp detection is something that CTDOT can look into if needed based on the signal analysis.
4. Alan Kibbe, of Norwalk Association of Silverline Homeowners, noted the use of Route 7 as a North-South evacuation route and if during emergencies these signals would be coordinated to alleviate evacuating traffic. Alan K. also supported the potential for camping sites along the NRVT alignments. He asked if the apartment building along Glover Avenue was ever evaluated for acquisition and removal, in order for better alignment of the ramp connections. Jeff P. noted that this was not feasible because it was considered to be cost prohibitive to the proposed improvements.
5. Peter Viteretto, of CT ASLA, highlighted the importance of incorporating green infrastructure and maintaining the landscape character of the project area. He emphasized the need to incorporate the drainage and utilities design and for thoughtful design and long-term maintenance of green spaces. On NRVT, Peter V. noted that the design solution should be elegant when incorporating within the design of project area.
6. Todd Fontanella, of WestCOG, noted that the Main Avenue northbound curb alignment shown in the visualization should be reviewed to help restrict traffic illegally using the turn lane to bypass traffic through the intersection. This would help eliminate a potential conflict with the bike lane.



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7. Arianne Kolb, of the Merritt Parkway Conservancy, asked for clarification on the historic bridge replacements and if any portion of the structure is to remain. Reid S. responded that the structures will be fully replaced and designed to replicate the historic character of the existing bridges, in accordance with the Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) stipulations. Mandy Ranslow, of CTDOT, offered to meet with Arianne K. separately to review the MOA and go over any additional questions, if needed.
8. Jim Carter, of NRVT, noted that representatives from NRVT will be attending the Public Info Meeting and he looks forward to further discussion.

The meeting concluded at 8:10PM.