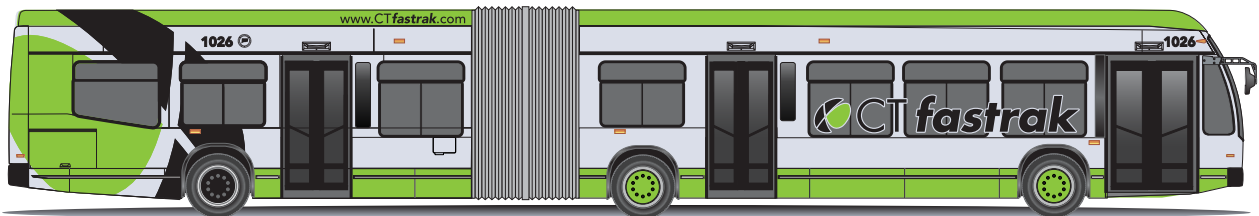


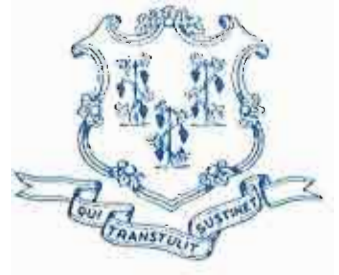


Connecticut Public Transportation Commission



CTfastrak Construction Progresses

Connecticut Public Transportation Commission




2800 BERLIN TURNPIKE, P.O. BOX 317546 * NEWINGTON, CT 06131-7546

DATE: December 31, 2013

TO: Honorable Dannel P. Malloy, Governor

Honorable Sen. Andrew Maynard and Rep. Antonio Guerrero
Co-Chairpersons of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

Honorable James P. Redeker, Commissioner of Transportation

FROM: Kevin Maloney, Chairman 
Connecticut Public Transportation Commission

I am pleased to submit to you the 2013 Annual Report of the Connecticut Public Transportation Commission as required by the Connecticut General Statutes section 13b-11a(e) and Public Act 13-277, section 74(d). The six recommendations contained in this year's Annual Report reflect public input received at the seven public hearings conducted by the Commission across Connecticut and information gathered at our monthly meetings, as well as the expertise and experience of our members. Recognizing the current constrained fiscal climate faced by the State of Connecticut, these recommendations do not call for any major new State-funded initiatives, though some of the recommendations would require incremental expenditures to current projects or services.

Overview of Recommendations

The first recommendation of this year's Annual Report stresses the importance of reserving all of the monies directed to the Special Transportation Fund for transportation purposes. Transfer of Special Transportation Fund monies to the General Fund deprives Connecticut's transportation infrastructure and services of these much-needed resources and also violates the trust that the Special Transportation Fund's supporting revenues are user fees and will benefit the transportation services and facilities upon which those who pay the gas tax, gross receipts tax, fares, and license and permit fees rely. In the longer term, the continued deferred investment in our transportation infrastructure that the diversion of Special Transportation Fund resources causes will erode Connecticut's attractiveness and make it harder to compete with other states for businesses and residents.

The inter-regional Coastal Link bus service, which operates along the Route 1 corridor between Norwalk and Milford, carries over 4,000 passengers per weekday and over 1.2 million passengers annually. The buses running this service are frequently at or above capacity with some occurrences where riders must be turned away. The Commission's second recommendation seeks a more secure funding mix for this service, whose current funding mix places this highly effective bus service in seemingly perpetual jeopardy.

Recommendation #3 commends the Department of Transportation for restoring full funding for the State Matching Grant program operated under Connecticut General Statutes section 13b-38bb. A twenty-five percent budget cut for this program two years ago led to service reductions in dial-a-ride programs for elderly and disabled persons in the approximately 130 municipalities which participate in this program, significantly reducing mobility options for those riders in many of the participating communities.

A more pro-active and aggressive public outreach and information campaign by ConnDOT for high profile transportation projects is proposed in the fourth recommendation. The example of ConnDOT's recent public outreach efforts on the *CTfastrak* busway project, which has been effective in communicating the project's design and its public benefits, is cited as a useful model for defusing fears and misunderstandings of other important and sometimes controversial transit projects, with the notable current example of the redevelopment of the Stamford Transportation Center.

A proposal by the Housatonic Railroad to operate a passenger rail service between Danbury and Pittsfield has been under development for several years now. This plan for a privately-operated, non-subsidized rail service has now drawn a commitment of significant financial support from Massachusetts for capital improvements on the northern portion of the route and has been moving from a speculative concept to a credible possibility. The Commission's fifth recommendation acknowledges ConnDOT's recent grant to help upgrade a six mile segment of the rail line with newer, heavier rail, and encourages further assistance by the Department as this proposal progresses, recognizing that it could produce significant additional fare revenue on Metro-North should it become a reality.

The sixth and final recommendation suggests several methods to address a concern heard across the state every year, namely the need for more local scale marketing and information concerning local bus services. Ultimately, the transit districts that raise this concern year after year are probably the best source of solutions which would have value in their communities and for their systems. Therefore, ConnDOT is encouraged to solicit potential solutions from the transit districts, perhaps using the quarterly transit district meetings as an appropriate forum.

Members of the Commission welcome your comments on the recommendations contained in the Annual Report. We appreciate your consideration of these proposals and welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss actions that can be taken to implement them.

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**ANNUAL REPORT
AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

DECEMBER 31, 2013

COVER PHOTOS:

Front cover photos, clockwise: New Britain Station and the bus-only exit from Route 72; Cedar Street Station passenger platforms; new Flatbush Avenue bridge spanning the rail line and CTfastrak; new Broad Street bridge in Hartford.

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ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION IN 2013

Kevin Maloney served his fourth year as Chairman of the Connecticut Public Transportation Commission in 2013, with Richard Schreiner serving as Vice Chairman, also for the fourth year. Frederick Riese continued as the Commission's Administrative Vice Chairman. The Commission held 11 monthly meetings and conducted seven public hearings during 2013.

Monthly Meetings

As set forth in Connecticut General Statutes section 13b-11a(j) and Public Act 13-277, Section 74(i), the Commission met on the first Thursday of each month. For 2013, five of these meetings were held at the Connecticut Department of Transportation headquarters in Newington, three were held at Union Station in New Haven, and three at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford. The March meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather.

The monthly meetings featured presentations by invited speakers on timely transportation topics. In January, Gene Colonese, Administrator of ConnDOT's Office of Rail, spoke about the preparations ConnDOT and Metro-North took to protect rolling stock and infrastructure in preparation for the arrival of Hurricane Sandy, the post-hurricane restoration of service, and additional steps to protect infrastructure that have been taken since the storm. In February, the Commission heard from Mike Sharff, Director of Planning and Development for Peter Pan Bus Company, about the operations of that company and about the role Peter Pan, and more generally the private bus operators, play in the provision of transit service. As noted, the March meeting had to be cancelled due to weather. The April meeting featured Kelly Kennedy, Executive Director of Bike Walk Connecticut, updating the Commission on efforts by her group to encourage bicycle usage and safety.

Stephen Gazillo, Director of Transportation Planning and Consultant Projects at URS Corporation, discussed the Central Connecticut Rail Study which is analyzing options for passenger rail service between Waterbury and Berlin, at the May meeting. In June, the Commission was addressed by Holly Parker, Director of Sustainable Transportation Services at Yale University, concerning the bicycle sharing program recently instituted at the university. The following month, Donald Shubert, President of the Connecticut Construction Industries Association, discussed the past history and present picture of federal financing for transportation and how this picture will affect Connecticut.

ConnDOT's Transit and Ridesharing Administrator Michael Sanders provided an up-to-the-minute status report on the *CTfastrak* busway project at the August meeting. The September meeting featured an overview of the short term car rental business by

Michael Serafino, Vice President for Sales and Market Development at *zipcar*. David LeVasseur, OPM Undersecretary for Intergovernmental Relations, explained the effort to consolidate the existing regional planning organizations into eight councils of government when he spoke at the Commission's October meeting. The scheduled speaker for the November meeting was unable to appear due to a last minute conflict.

These speakers provided valuable insights into current developments on many of the salient issues in public transportation in Connecticut. The Commission is very appreciative of their presentations.

Public Hearings

Pursuant to C.G.S. section 13b-11a (b) and Public Act 13-277, Section 74 (b), the Commission conducted seven public hearings during 2013 to gather input from transportation providers, transit users, local officials, regional planning organizations, non-profit organizations and members of the public. These hearings were conducted across the state and split between spring and fall schedules. The Commission visited Norwalk, Bristol and Putnam in May, Orange and New Milford in September, and Enfield and New London in October. Testimony at these hearings covered a mix of purely local issues and issues which were raised in multiple venues or which the Commission has heard at other hearings in recent years.

The dominant topic at the Norwalk public hearing was that of overcrowding on the Coastal Link bus service which runs between Norwalk and Milford. On repeated occasions, these buses are so full that bus drivers must pass by passengers seeking to board the buses as the buses do not have even standing room to offer. Other issues raised in Norwalk were the diversion of monies from the Special Transportation Fund for non-transportation uses, concerns about the lack of information on the Stamford Transportation Center development proposals, procedures for the handling of unruly passengers on Metro-North trains, the preference of many of the 'millennial' generation to use public transit instead of automobiles, and the need for public restrooms at the Norwalk Transit District bus facility.

Issues raised in Putnam included the consolidation of the regional planning organizations, the need for interregional bus service to and from the area, the lack of publicity and marketing for the Northeastern Connecticut Transit District service, a desire for designated, signed bus stops in the region, the potential for more efficient and better coordinated paratransit service run through the transit district as opposed to by separate non-profit entities, problems accommodating wheelchairs on transit buses, and the increasing popularity of bicycle/bus bi-modal trips.

The Bristol public hearing highlighted the Central Connecticut Rail Study which is evaluating potential passenger rail service options between Waterbury and Berlin, the

lack of bus service to Southington and Terryville/Plymouth, the effort to designate and sign formal bus stops in the region, and an upcoming U-Pass program for students and faculty at Central Connecticut State University.

The salient comments of the Orange public hearing were calls for better interregional bus service, the need to alleviate overcrowding on the Coastal Link bus service, the need for expanded bus/rail shuttles and dial-a-ride service, more marketing and information for existing transit services, the need for transit service to the industrial district in Orange, and a desire for a Metro-North station in Orange.

Two issues dominated the New Milford hearing, namely support for the Housatonic Railroad's proposed passenger rail service on the Berkshire Line between Danbury and Pittsfield, Massachusetts and a call for more bicycle amenities and infrastructure such as bike lanes, signage and trails, including rails to trails.

The Enfield hearing focused on various aspects of one topic, that of the role that public transportation, particularly the proposed Springfield Line commuter rail service, can play in promoting economic development. Specific aspects of this issue were support for the relocation of the Windsor Locks train station to its historic downtown location where it can serve as a catalyst for development, the desire for a rail station in the Thompsonville section of Enfield, and the conclusion of a Capitol Region Council of Governments study showing that the Knowledge Corridor along the Springfield Line has many favorable aspects for transit-oriented development. The value of the new Magic Carpet bus service in Enfield, which was instituted in January of 2013, was also highlighted.

The final hearing, which was held in New London, saw calls for the extension of Shore Line East service eastward to Westerly, Rhode Island, support for passenger rail service along the so-called Central Corridor from New London north to Willimantic, Storrs, Amherst and on to Brattleboro, Vermont, and for improved fare collection on Metro-North and Amtrak trains, as well as for better track announcement information for arriving trains, particularly at New Haven. The expanded Shore Line East service to New London was praised.

More detail on the testimony given at the seven public hearings can be found on pages 18-48 of this Annual Report.

PROJECTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE COMMISSION STRONGLY SUPPORTS EFFORTS TO SAFEGUARD THE SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FUND. THE RESOURCES OF THE SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FUND MUST BE RESERVED TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF CONNECTICUT'S ROADS, BRIDGES, AND TRANSIT SYSTEMS. TRANSFER OR DIVERSION OF THESE FUNDS FOR OTHER USES UNDERMINES CONNECTICUT'S TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND VIOLATES A TRUST BETWEEN THE STATE AND THOSE WHO PAY THE TAXES AND FEES WHICH FUND OUR TRANSPORTATION NEEDS.

The current biennial budget for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 transfers \$109,700,000 from the Special Transportation Fund to the General Fund. These transfers continue a trend which has seen \$1.3 billion in funding from the Special Transportation Fund, including funds from the petroleum products gross receipts tax, siphoned from their intended transportation uses to other governmental purposes. These transfers have a significant impact on the state of repair of our road and rail networks and the quantity of transit services that can be provided to Connecticut's residents.

Another effect of these diversions is to undermine any discussion of creating new funding sources to support transportation. Any effort to increase transportation funding, whether through increases in the motor fuels tax, bus or train fares, instituting highway tolls, or increasing other user or license fees to support transportation depends on the public trusting that any new or increased fees it is asked to pay will ultimately support the transportation infrastructure and services on which it relies. The repeated diversion of funds from the Special Transportation Fund violates this trust.

The passage of Public Act 13-277 last session sought, in part, to address this concern. Section 76 of this act adds language to Connecticut General Statutes Section 13b-69 saying "The resources of the Special Transportation Fund shall be used only for transportation purposes." This new language is an encouraging recognition of the need to address this issue, but may not be an adequate safeguard since it does nothing to prevent future transfers or diversions. Recognizing this, there has been some discussion of a constitutional amendment to guarantee the future sanctity of the Special Transportation Fund from further diversions. While the Commission is not at this point endorsing that call, we do recognize, as do many transportation leaders in Connecticut, that we can't ask users to pay more without a guarantee that they will get what they're paying for. Nor can we fund such major infrastructure investments such as the rebuilding of the Interstate 84 Aetna Viaduct in Hartford or the Interstate 84/Route 8 interchange in Waterbury, or even smaller needs such as new bus storage and maintenance facilities or routine roadway resurfacing, without the monies the Special Transportation Fund was created to provide.

2. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT SUSTAINED SUPPORT ADEQUATE FOR THE CONTINUED OPERATION AND GROWTH OF THE COASTAL LINK BUS SERVICE BE PROVIDED. THE COASTAL LINK, OPERATED JOINTLY BY GREATER BRIDGEPORT TRANSIT, NORWALK TRANSIT AND MILFORD TRANSIT, IS HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL, CARRYING APPROXIMATELY 1.2 MILLION PASSENGERS ANNUALLY. MANY BUSES ARE AT OR ABOVE CAPACITY. IN SPITE OF THIS SUCCESS, THE TEIP(DSS)-FUNDED PORTION OF THIS JOBS ACCESS PROGRAM IS PERPETUALLY IN JEOPARDY, AND FUNDING REMAINS INSUFFICIENT TO ADDRESS EITHER OVERCROWDING OR EXPANSION. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT SUSTAINED SUPPORT ADEQUATE FOR THE CONTINUED OPERATION AND GROWTH OF THIS IMPORTANT PROGRAM BE PROVIDED.

The Coastal Link bus service operates along the Route 1 corridor between the coastal communities of Milford and Norwalk, with connecting services to Stamford, Danbury, Derby and New Haven. It is a demonstrated success, averaging over 4,000 passengers per weekday, almost 3,000 per Saturday and greater than 1,000 per Sunday. The route carries more riders by itself than many of the bus systems in Connecticut, the Danbury and Waterbury Branches of the New Haven Line or Shore Line East. The Coastal Link is a model of cooperation, providing a one-seat ride for passengers through three different bus systems.

As highlighted at the commission's Norwalk hearing, the service struggles annually for adequate funding. Transportation Employment Independence Program (TEIP) funds provided through the Department of Social Services have on occasion been reduced retroactively after months of service have been provided, leaving the operating agencies to scramble to cover expenses.

Riders on some trips complain about being unable to board buses so full that no seats or standing room is available. This problem is especially acute during midday/early afternoons, on Saturdays, and in the early morning.

Budgetary constraints mean that not all trips on the Coastal Link can run through from Norwalk to Milford. At several points during the day, the length of the line is truncated and service is not provided to the endpoints in Milford and Norwalk.

For the same reasons, service is not supplied consistently during the course of the day. During the week, for example, buses operate on 20 minute headways during the peak, but only once per hour between 9:50am and 2:50pm, and after 6:50pm until the close of the service day. Not coincidentally, when lower service levels are provided, buses are overcrowded.

At a minimum, the Coastal Link requires stable funding to continue to operate the baseline service available today. Additional investment of state funds would be required to support additional buses to provide a consistent level of service throughout the day and improve service quality.

3. THE COMMISSION COMMENDS CONNDOT FOR RESTORING FUNDS TO THE SECTION 13b-38bb MUNICIPAL DIAL-A-RIDE PROGRAM. THIS MUCH NEEDED PROGRAM PROVIDES MOBILITY TO SENIORS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACROSS THE ENTIRE STATE AND IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT TO SMALL RURAL COMMUNITES.

In both its 2011 and 2012 Annual Reports, the Commission articulated its concern over loss of funding for the Section 13b-38bb Municipal Grant Program. The program, available to each municipality in the state, supports local bus dial-a-ride programs for seniors and persons with disabilities. Approximately 130-135 municipalities apply for funds through the program each year.

Funding for the program was reduced in the 2011 budget process from \$4 million (the historical usage level) to \$3 million, which translated to a cut of 25% in program funds to individual towns and cities. Service was cut across the board and rural towns with limited public transportation options were hit especially hard.

Recognizing the broad-based negative impact of this reduction, Commissioner Redeker and his staff indicated that the department would restore funds to the program in FY 2014. ConnDOT followed through and allocated funds necessary to fully support the program this fiscal year, up to the \$5 million as originally apportioned to the program.

The restoration of funds had an immediate impact on the provision of service across the state. In Waterbury, for example, a full time bus was added during the weekday. Riders in Ridgefield received a half hour extra service each weekday afternoon. In the Estuary Region, while the restored funds did not allow for increased service, they prevented a further reduction of service due to inflationary cost increases.

According to the Connecticut Commission on Aging, Connecticut is the seventh oldest state in the nation and the population of those over 65 is projected to grow by 64% by 2030. Other statistics show that rather than moving out of the area, most retirees continue to stay in the communities and homes in which they have always lived.

Transportation access is a significant need for the aging population, especially in small communities. Dial-a-ride programs such as those supported by the Municipal Grant Program are key to the ability of seniors to remain in their homes and live independently.

4. THE COMMISSION COMMENDS CONNDOT FOR ITS EXCELLENT WORK TO INFORM THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE PROGRESS AND PROJECTED BENEFITS OF CTFASTRAK. THE COMMISSION ENCOURAGES THE DEPARTMENT TO APPLY THESE TECHNIQUES TO PROVIDE THE PUBLIC WITH INFORMATION ON OTHER HIGH PROFILE PROJECTS SUCH AS THE STAMFORD TRANSPORTATION CENTER.

A more active outreach by ConnDOT to present the *CTfastrak* project to the public over the last two years has been very effective in explaining the multi-faceted aspects of the service which will operate over the 9.4 mile busway and in countering misconceptions that the busway project involved solely direct service between Hartford and New Britain. The enhanced outreach by ConnDOT has led to a better public understanding and a more favorable perception of *CTfastrak* by the public.

A more vigorous and pro-active outreach effort for other high profile transit projects, especially those which may be prone to some level of controversy, may pay dividends in lessening political headwinds and gaining public support for those projects. Comments made at the Commission's public hearing in Norwalk indicate that the redevelopment of the Stamford Transportation Center falls into this class of projects about which there is some level of public skepticism. Understandably, early stages of the evaluation of competing development proposals and negotiations with potential developers of the new Stamford Transportation Center did not lend themselves to a high degree of information sharing with the public. However, now that a developer has been selected and the project components have taken shape, a healthy dose of outreach and information should once again, as was the case for *CTfastrak*, prove highly effective in educating the public about the rationale for and benefits of the new Stamford Transportation Center development.

A similar outreach for other major transit projects, such as the NHHS commuter rail service, would also serve both ConnDOT's and the public's interests.

5. THE COMMISSION HAS FOLLOWED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSAL BY THE HOUSATONIC RAILROAD FOR PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN DANBURY AND PITTSFIELD FOR SEVERAL YEARS. WITH THE RECENT COMMITMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT FROM THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, THIS PROPOSAL HAS BEGUN TO MOVE FROM THE CONCEPTUAL REALM TO A MUCH MORE CREDIBLE POSSIBILITY.

Over the last several years, the Housatonic Railroad has been evaluating the potential operation of passenger service between Danbury and Pittsfield to a market including weekend travelers, tourists, owners of second homes, prep school students and their families, and others. Last year, the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission received a \$240,000 planning grant to evaluate station locations and related infrastructure needs in Berkshire County and is expected to complete its work in mid-to-late 2014. Since last year's Annual Report, Governor Deval Patrick of Massachusetts included the Housatonic project as one of four major rail transportation initiatives he was proposing, and subsequently made a commitment of \$113,800,000 to fund improvements on the Massachusetts segment of this line. More recently, on November 14, 2013, the Massachusetts legislature reported a massive transportation bonding bill out of committee which includes funds earmarked for three specific rail projects including Housatonic's proposal.

In Connecticut, ConnDOT has recently awarded \$1,625,000 to Housatonic to fund the bulk of a project to replace antiquated, lightweight rail along the Berkshire Line in Cornwall and Kent with 140 pound rail suitable for potential passenger service. This work is likely to be performed in 2014.

The implementation of passenger rail service on the Berkshire Line may very well involve an incremental approach beginning with the extension of the Danbury Branch service to New Milford, either by extending Metro-North's operation on that line or by operation by Housatonic.

In either case, beyond the initial service to New Milford, the more ambitious proposal for passenger rail service to Pittsfield would also benefit Metro-North revenues since the bulk of the new ridership is anticipated to come from the New York City area and would use Metro-North service to access the Housatonic passenger trains, whether at Danbury or New Milford. A ridership study by Market Street Research found that this new ridership could result in as much as \$20,000,000 in new revenues to Metro-North.

The restoration of passenger rail service on the Berkshire Line does offer the promise of a valuable addition to the transportation picture in western Connecticut with potentially no operating subsidy involved. It may boost overall rail ridership, augment Danbury Branch revenues by promoting intra-state commuting between

the New Milford area and lower Fairfield County, and boost economic activity in northwestern Connecticut and Massachusetts, while potentially removing some auto trips from our roads as well. Therefore, the Commission looks forward to continuing to follow this proposal with interest and encourages the department to assist in whatever ways it can.

6. THE COMMISSION ONCE AGAIN NOTES REPEATED TESTIMONY FROM SEVERAL TRANSIT PROVIDERS IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE STATE THAT THE PUBLIC DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT AWARENESS OF AND INFORMATION ABOUT EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE THESE SERVICES.

The need for more effective dissemination of information about new and existing transit services has been a recurring theme at the Commission's hearings across the state. John Filchak of the Northeastern Connecticut Transit District noted that a major shortcoming of that system is that much of the public is not aware of its services or has never ridden its buses. He reported that generally riders are pleasantly surprised once they get on an NECTD bus. Karen Burnaska of Transit for Connecticut similarly noted that the lack of such very basic knowledge as where to catch the bus can be an impediment to would-be riders. In 2012, a Capitol Region Council of Governments study found that this so-called "information gap" was identified as the top unmet need in their most recent Locally-Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan, meaning it was the #1 barrier to the enhanced use of transit service, ranking higher than even the provision of additional services.

The internet can be a very valuable tool for making information on transit routes and schedules available. Greater Bridgeport Transit has been a leader in such efforts, including providing real time information to riders on the locations and arrival times for its buses. ConnDOT's website also provides links to the state's transit providers, allowing information to be garnered there. But very commonly, transit riders do not have smart phones or other convenient access to the internet and cannot readily procure the information they need. Nor in some cases is there even an awareness of the services that are offered. Information in a more low-tech format is often needed.

Addressing this need can be challenging. ConnDOT has no dedicated marketing staff and no marketing budget. Historically, marketing activities undertaken by ConnDOT have focused on large, consultant-designed promotional campaigns promoting transit ridership or ridesharing in general. However, marketing for individual services is often sporadic and inconsistent.

Though the Commission has heard this and similar testimony repeatedly over many years, we do not have any one solution to offer to overcome this deficiency. Rather, several potentially helpful measures are here offered, all of which would be implemented on a local scale.

As described on pages 14-15 of this report, the simple presence of bus stop signs can be a helpful marketing and public awareness tool. Many smaller transit

systems do not have formal bus stops and associated signage and, therefore, potential riders are not as aware of where and how to catch a bus as they could be.

Targeted local marketing efforts such as the Northwestern Connecticut Transit District's 2012 mailing of Dial-a-Ride publicity to Winsted households can boost ridership, as it did in Winsted. Another transit district trades advertising space on its buses for publicity about its system on a local radio station.

In Waterbury, the Council of Governments funds a position at the United Way's 211 Info Line for a person who is knowledgeable about transportation services who can both field any transportation questions and can answer related social service inquiries which often have an integral transportation component to them. Alternatively, New York has set up a dedicated 511 transportation information line service.

Another concept might be to set aside for marketing purposes a specified small percentage of the funding each operator receives. Though these funds would not be available for the operation of some additional increment of transit service, the enhanced public awareness of the local transit services may more than compensate for a marginal reduction in operational funding in terms of total ridership served. The New York State DOT employs this concept for its transit services, with the marketing set-aside acting as an operating reserve when need be.

Lastly, since many transit districts have cited the lack of marketing and information as a problem for their systems, perhaps a roundtable discussion of this matter at an upcoming quarterly meeting of the transit districts would yield other fruitful ideas, since the transit districts themselves are the ones most likely to know what outreach efforts would bear fruit in their communities.

OTHER TRANSIT ISSUES ARISING FROM COMMISSION HEARINGS

The following six issues have been raised at one or more of the Commission's 2013 public hearings. While these issues do not lend themselves to discussion as individual recommendations, they do justify mention as topics whose relevance transcends the specific situations in which they were raised at our hearings.

Bicycle usage, bicycle amenities: The increasing popularity of cycling was highlighted at the Commission's hearing in New Milford but was also raised at other hearings. Education and infrastructure were cited as the two major needs to accommodate and promote cycling. Automobile drivers need to be educated to "share the road" as one popular campaign puts it. A speaker in New Milford summarized that bicycle-friendly communities begin with "lines and signs". Lines designate bicycle lanes on roads while signs alert drivers to share the road with cyclists.

Bicycle trails, including rails-to-trails conversions, were cited as being desirable not only for their recreational value but also for their economic value. Examples of rail/trails in Millerton, New York and on Cape Cod were given as having been successful not only in serving the cyclists but also in bringing economic activity to the destinations as the cyclists buy food and other items in the communities.

ConnDOT was commended at the New Milford and Enfield hearings for being very helpful with the extension of bicycle trails over State highway bridges in those towns, and specifically in Enfield where the Windsor Locks Canal Bike Path was extended over the Route 190 bridge.

The desirability of intermodal trips involving bicycles was also raised. Kelly Kennedy, Executive Director of Bike Walk Connecticut, spoke at the Commission's regular monthly meeting on April 4 and mentioned that the use of bicycle racks on buses has been increasing at an impressive rate, an observation confirmed by CPTC member Rich Sunderhauf, a driver for CTTRANSIT. Loosening the restrictions on bicycles aboard trains was advocated, and one speaker at the New Milford hearing spoke of the bicycle trains of the 1890s which brought cyclists from Manhattan up to Canaan, Connecticut for day trips. Such service was also common in the 1930s and 40s.

Lastly, at the Commission's June 6 meeting, Holly Parker, Director of Sustainable Transportation Systems at Yale University, discussed that school's use of the vendor Zagster, which is essentially the bicycle equivalent of *zipcar*, to run a bike-sharing program at Yale which can hopefully be expanded beyond campus to other areas of New Haven in the near future.

Inter-regional bus transit: In four of the seven public hearings it held in 2013, the Commission heard testimony from both regional transit officials and the general public expressing the need for more inter-regional bus services.

At our May 14 Putnam hearing, John Filchak, Director for the Northeastern Connecticut Transit District, testified about the need for connections from his District to the Worcester, MA transit system and his efforts to enable that connection, perhaps in the Webster, MA area. In Bristol, on May 22, Francis Pickering, Transportation Planner for the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency (CCRPA), testified that they are submitting a TIGER grant application to the USDOT to fund bus service between Waterbury and Bristol, a trip that presently requires six hours to accomplish via a very circuitous routing.

Karen Burnaska, Coordinator for Transit for Connecticut, opined at our September 18 Orange hearing that one of the most significant needs identified by her organization was “expanded and improved inter-regional services”. Then, at our final hearing for 2013, held in Enfield, Pam Brown, Director of Social Services for the Town of Enfield, testified about the need for a connection from the Enfield local bus service to the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVRTA) bus system. The Commission has taken testimony about the need for Enfield residents to access PVRTA to reach Springfield as far back as 2007.

Ironically, what appears to be the most successful inter-regional bus service in the state, the Coastal Link operated jointly by transit districts of Norwalk, Bridgeport and Milford, is suffering from two consecutive years of reducing funding, despite the fact that it is operating at full capacity, having carried about 1.2 million trips in 2012. See Recommendation #2 of this report (page 6) for a more detailed discussion of the Coastal Link service.

Designated and signed bus stops: Smaller transit systems commonly do not have designated bus stop locations. In these systems, riders seeking transportation simply flag the bus at some point along its route. During 2013 and other recent years, the Commission has heard from several systems, including the Northwestern Connecticut Transit District, the Northeastern Connecticut Transit District and the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency on behalf of the New Britain-Bristol Division of CTTRANSIT, of their desire to formalize their bus stops with fixed, signed locations for passengers to board. These systems have recognized that the signed bus stops are one of the most effective tools to promote public awareness of the local transit service and to educate would-be riders as to how and where to board the bus. In addition to this issue of being directly raised by regional planning staff and transit districts at the Commission’s Putnam and Bristol hearings this year and at the Winsted hearing in 2012, this issue was also raised by Karen Burnaska of Transit for Connecticut at our Orange hearing where

she cited the lack of such basic information as where to board the bus as an example of the information gap that can be a barrier to expanding transit ridership.

Track announcements for arriving trains: Two speakers at the Commission's New London hearing commented that a lack of information concerning the track upon which their trains would be arriving at New Haven had caused difficulties including missing the train. No announcements concerning the track were made and the message board was not working. Last year the Commission received similar comment of this situation occurring at Bridgeport station.

When trains have to switch tracks, there is often very short notice, or even no official notice, of the track switch. This leaves riders scurrying to get to the other side of the tracks, sometimes arriving too late. The Commission can clearly understand that when little or no notice of a train's arrival on a non-customary track occurs, this would cause problems for commuters. Some improvement of the dissemination of information in this area seems to be in order.

Uncollected train fares: Three speakers at the Commission's New London public hearing mentioned observing rail fares going uncollected. One of these cases involved an Amtrak fare on a short trip from Mystic to New London. The other two occurrences involved Metro-North. One commenter, who is a frequent rail traveler, said he typically observes fares going uncollected on eastbound New Haven Line service for riders getting on at Stamford. He stressed this is not an aberration but an occurrence he observes more often than not.

The Commission assumes that Metro-North performs periodic assessments of the adequacy of its fare collection practices and that it has a handle on the amount of revenue leakage that is occurring as a result of non-collection of fares. Further, we assume that Metro-North has made some evaluation of the cost of the revenue lost compared to the cost of collecting the incremental fares. However, beside the revenue loss, it is discouraging to those who pay their fares to see others riding for free, whether intentionally or not, and if this situation is more than just an anomaly, it risks encouraging other less conscientious riders to try their luck at beating the system.

Increasing demand for bi-state services: While cross-border rail and bus connections with New York are well established (Metro-North's New Haven Line, CTTRANSIT's I-Bus to White Plains, and HARTransit's shuttles to the Harlem Line), there is an increasing demand for other cross-border trips from Connecticut to Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The planned commuter rail service on the Springfield Line is the foremost example of this, however at least four other examples have been raised at the Commission's hearings. These include the Housatonic Railroad's proposed passenger service from Danbury to Pittsfield,

Massachusetts, a bus connection from the Northeastern Connecticut Transit District system to Worcester which is already in some level of discussion, a desire to link the Enfield Magic Carpet local bus service to the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority system for access to Springfield, and a potential, long-range extension of Shore Line East service to Westerly, Rhode Island. While very understandably we tend to frame our thinking and planning on serving trips within our state borders, there is an increasingly frequent demand for services which traverse Connecticut's northern and eastern boundaries. The Commission is confident that ConnDOT is well aware of these travel patterns but we highlight this issue for the benefit of other readers of this report.

2013 PUBLIC HEARINGS
SCHEDULE AND SUMMARIES

Connecticut Public Transportation Commission

NEWINGTON, CT 06131-7546



2013 Public Hearings Schedule

In accordance with C.G.S. Section 13b-11a(b) and Public Act 13-277, Section 74(b), the Commission is directed to hold public hearings in each of the metropolitan areas within the state, as determined by the Commission, for the purpose of determining the adequacy of rail, bus, motor carrier, and other public transportation services and facilities.

The Commission conducted a schedule of seven public hearings, as listed below, during the spring and fall of 2013.

<u>TOWN</u>	<u>MODERATOR</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
Norwalk	Richard Schreiner	May 8	Norwalk City Hall
Putnam	Frederick Riese	May 14	Putnam Town Hall
Bristol	Morton Katz	May 22	Bristol City Hall
Orange	Richard Schreiner	September 18	Orange Town Hall
New Milford	Frederick Riese	September 24	New Milford Town Hall
Enfield	Morton Katz	October 15	Enfield Town Hall
New London	Frederick Riese	October 22	New London City Hall

**Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Public Hearing**

Norwalk City Hall
125 East Avenue
Norwalk, Connecticut
Wednesday, May 8, 2013 – 7:30 PM

CPTC VOTING MEMBERS

Yvonne Loteczka
Kevin Maloney
Robert Rodman
Kiernan Ryan
Richard Schreiner
John Zelinsky

CPTC EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Fred Riese

CDOT STAFF

Dennis King

INTRODUCTION:

Hearing moderator Richard Schreiner opened the hearing at 7:37 pm, welcoming the attendees and introducing the Commission members and ConnDOT staff in attendance. He then briefly explained the function of the Commission and the purpose of tonight's hearing.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Louis Schulman is the Administrator of the Norwalk Transit District (NTD). He welcomed the Commission to Norwalk. NTD was established in 1974 and ran about 19 buses in 1978. Today it operates about 100 buses providing service in Wilton, Norwalk and Westport, regional bus services along the coast and to Danbury, as well as rail shuttles in Greenwich, Norwalk and Westport. NTD also operates door-to-door services. Mr. Schulman thanked the Governor, legislature and ConnDOT for the state capital support that keeps equipment in a state of good repair and helps NTD provide a reliable service to the public. NTD completed a new transfer station in 2011 and is looking at the installation of a GPS/AVL system to provide greater efficiencies and better customer service information. He thinks ConnDOT's effort to reduce the number of funding silos is a good idea. This would, in turn, reduce the paperwork burden and increase flexibility for the transit districts in the operation of their services.

NTD is experiencing some challenges. The biggest of these is the Coastal Link, a route operated jointly by NTD, Milford Transit District and Greater Bridgeport Transit (GBT). This route is quite successful, and carried about 1.2 million trips last year. Despite its success, funding to NTD for the Coastal Link service was reduced in each of the last two years. The service is supported in part by Transportation for Employment Independence Program (TEIP) funds through the state Department of Social Services (DSS). Last fiscal year, these funds were reduced retroactively at year end. The Coastal Link has had a deficit of in operating support of from \$92,000 to \$120,000 annually. This year NTD received an operating increase in its urban fixed route services funding of 3.5%, but no increase for the Coastal Link. Due to its operating deficit, reductions in Coastal Link service will begin July 1. The Coastal Link has been operating for eight years now. Therefore, Mr. Schulman suggested that at this point this is a proven success and ConnDOT should consider it as a core service.

The Coastal Link buses are running at capacity and are sometimes so full that additional riders can't get on the buses. (see testimony of James Walker below) GBT provides 50% of the Coastal Link service and therefore receives the largest share of its revenues. NTD and Milford Transit District supply 25% of the Coastal Link service.

Jim Cameron, Chairman of the Metro-North Rail Commuter Council, thinks we have turned a corner in the provision of Metro-North service. We are halfway through the delivery of the new M-8 rail cars. The new cars performed well during the past winter. Metro-North also adopted a passenger bill of rights as suggested by the Commuter Council. Communications between Metro-North and rail passengers are much improved and riders are getting much more information. Another accomplishment cited by Cameron is the designation of certain cars as 'quiet cars' on Metro-North trains.

Cameron next contrasted ConnDOT's performance on communications with the public on the New Britain Busway and the Stamford Transportation Center. ConnDOT has done a marvelous job on public communication and awareness on *CTfastrak* since the CPTC's public hearing in Plainville. This contrasts with ConnDOT's efforts at the Stamford Transportation Center. For six years now we have known that the old garage at Stamford Station was in need of repair or demolition. Under the guise of TOD, the department partnered with the development community to replace the garage, and is not keeping the public well informed about this process. There is a lack of transparency. There will be about 3 years of disruption coming up that could create a "commuter diaspora." Users of the rail have had no input. The Council has persuaded the governor to create a task force on this issue but it has only met twice. The selection of the winning developer still has not been announced. Mr. Cameron pointed out that the selection of the developer is based on a formula of 1/3 engineering considerations and 2/3 financial benefit to the state. Cameron feels that this formula should have been reversed.

Cameron also noted that though the new development at Stamford Station will have more parking than is currently available, there will be more demand for the parking from other tenants of the development. So he felt that the net change to rail commuters may not be a positive one.

Lastly, Mr. Cameron mentioned HB 6363, which would replace the current Metro-North Rail Commuter Council with a new Council covering all the rail systems in the state. The membership of the Council would be completely revamped and the Governor, rather than the members, will choose the chairman of the new council. The same bill would eliminate the CPTC. There was discussion that the Commission should submit a letter in support of the continuance of both bodies to the Transportation Committee.

Jackie Lightfield feels that ConnDOT should be doing a better job with a vision for the future. Current commuting choices are horrendous. Millennials prefer travel by transit and are moving to cities where they don't have to drive. Young people are leaving the area in order to avoid 1-2 hour commutes. Improved rail connections between Danbury, Stamford and Norwalk are needed. She would like to see the train in Fairfield County operated more like a subway with more stops and greater service frequency.

Urban Mulvehill has been using the rail service as a commuter from Norwalk to NYC for over 40 years. He voiced concern about the level of training that Metro-North staff have received to respond to health emergencies. He feels that automatic defibrillators should be provided on each train. He also questioned the policy for dealing with unruly passengers and feels that the current approach is not well thought out. He cited an example of an unruly passenger causing the lockdown of a train at South Norwalk while that passenger was apprehended by police. His critique of the incident was that the apprehension of the unruly passenger was a higher priority than the safety of the other passengers.

The lost and found program is another area that he feels is not managed well. Only about 1 in 6 missing items actually get turned in. Better publicity and awareness of the lost and found procedure is needed to increase the percentage of items that get turned in.

Lastly, Mulvehill sees the rail service as not particularly conducive to cyclists. A friendlier, more flexible bicycle policy is needed. As it is, bikers are discouraged from using the trains and are turned away even when there is enough room to accommodate them.

James Walker is a Bridgeport resident and is City Editor at the Norwalk Hour. He has been a rider of the Coastal Link for the past 5 years. He described himself as an angry commuter, citing that he has been passed up 8 times in the last 7 months because buses were too overcrowded to pick him up. When he gets on, he finds the buses are so crowded that people are standing or sitting on the floor, or standing forward with the driver. Buses run late and he is often late arriving to work. He has no other good options for travel. Use of Metro-North involves a 25-minute walk. He has had on occasion to take a cab or ask other staff for rides when the bus is too crowded to provide service. When problems arise, he has a difficult time dealing with the three different Coastal Link operators, with the Norwalk Transit District being the easiest and most helpful to deal with. He feels there is an overall problem with the way the service is operated and questioned whether providing the service through three different operators is the best way to go. He mentioned that the overcrowded conditions have really been a problem the last two years, and that when he is on the bus, he has to stand for most of his trip.

Jo-Anne Horvath of Norwalk was concerned about the redevelopment of the Stamford Transportation Center. She has fears that the new facility will not be commuter friendly. She believes that the old parking garage at the station should be rebuilt in the same location. The existing garage is both convenient for commuters and compliant with ADA requirements. ConnDOT should encourage transit-oriented development but this should occur within ¼ to ½ mile of the station rather than putting commuter parking at that distance.

Mary Teresa Conrad has been a bus rider in Norwalk, and is a former employee at SWRPA. She complained that there was no public toilet at the new WHEELS transfer facility and no public phone available. Toilets at bus stations are a necessity. She also feels it is important to keep the Bridgeport ferry terminal at its current location near the rail station.

Gail Lavielle, State Representative for the 143rd District in Wilton, Norwalk and Westport, has introduced 17 transportation bills this session. She first complimented ConnDOT Commissioner James Redeker as an excellent leader for that agency and a good partner for those seeking to

improve public transportation. Lavielle said she has three guiding principles in all the legislation she has submitted and all are in line with the objectives set forth by Commissioner Redeker. Lavielle also said she has been talking to Transportation Committee co-chair Tony Guerrero to see what can be done to save the Metro-North Rail Commuter Council and the CPTC which are both targeted in House Bill 6363.

Lavielle said her three guiding principles are:

- Ensuring adequate funding for our transportation infrastructure needs
- Prioritizing rail investments where demand already exists and an immediate return on investment is highly likely, and
- Improving the commuter experience and making mass transit a more attractive alternative.

Regarding the first point, estimates to maintain and improve our transportation infrastructure over the next 3-5 years range from \$3 billion to \$5 billion. Therefore, all revenues that are raised for transportation purposes and placed in the Special Transportation Fund need to stay in that fund and be used only for transportation. To ask Fairfield County residents and other state taxpayers to pay more for transportation, whether in increased fares or even in tolls, is not palatable if the money raised is then diverted to other purposes. Money raised for transportation needs to be put in a “lockbox”. She is supporting legislation to protect the Special Transportation Fund from being raided for non-transportation purposes.

Regarding prioritizing rail investments, Lavielle said that the New Haven Line and its branches are an existing market with large volumes of ridership and substantial unmet needs. She contrasted this to the New Britain Busway and the Springfield Line high speed rail project which will serve markets which she characterized as much more speculative in nature.

Lavielle is herself a former commuter. She feels that the commuting experience needs to be improved, including better availability of parking at railroad stations, wi-fi on Metro-North trains, encouraging TOD along the Danbury Branch, keeping fares at existing levels, and extending the valid time period for honoring monthly rail tickets when rail service has been disrupted for more than 48 hours.

Lou Schulman spoke again to answer some questions from the Commission. He said he will speak with the Milford Transit District and GBT about the issues raised by James Walker. Overall, he believes the current framework for operating the Coastal Link works well and he doesn't see where having a single operator of the service would save any money. He also mentioned that the Coastal Link service employs 40' buses, saying he wanted to correct any misimpression that smaller vehicles were being used.

Steve Mayglothin is a local taxi driver. The City of Norwalk is restricting the ability of cab drivers to service customers in locations around the city and especially at railroad stations. The drivers feel harassed by constables and will be ticketed if they try to serve the prohibited pick up areas. Mayglothin said in the past there was some abuse by some taxi drivers. But now, only five taxis are allowed to queue up at the train station. Drivers cannot use the parking meters to hold additional spots in the queue. There is a group of drivers that are banding together to seek

legal advice as this is hurting their incomes and their ability to service customers. All the taxi companies in Norwalk agree that this is a problem.

Commissioner Schreiner closed the hearing at 9:29 p.m.

Connecticut Public Transportation Commission Public Hearing

Putnam Town Hall
126 Church Street
Putnam, Connecticut
Tuesday, May 14, 2013 – 7:30 PM

CPTC VOTING MEMBERS

Yvonne Loteczka
Kevin Maloney
Russ St. John

CPTC EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Fred Riese

CDOT STAFF

Dennis King

INTRODUCTION:

Hearing moderator Frederick Riese opened the hearing at 7:38 pm, welcoming the attendees and introducing the Commission members and ConnDOT staff in attendance. He then briefly explained the function of the Commission and the purpose of tonight's hearing.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

John Filchak, Director of the Northeastern Connecticut Transit District and the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments, first discussed the Council of Governments and regional issues, then described the character of the region, and lastly moved on to a detailed description of transit services and issues in the region. Filchak mentioned that he previously served two terms as a member of the Transportation Strategy Board.

Filchak first asked how many ways Connecticut has been divided for various governmental and administrative functions. When he recently undertook to answer this question, he was able to come up with 110 ways. The current efforts to redefine and consolidate the 14 regional planning entities led him to reconsider that question. The General Assembly's Planning and Development Committee is currently looking at options to consolidate Connecticut's regional planning entities into no more than eight bodies, all of which would be structured as Councils of Government. Some of these eight would act together in the function of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) so that there would be no more than five MPOs in Connecticut. He mentioned that ConnDOT would like to transfer some engineering functions to the MPOs in hopes of shortening the project development process, especially for smaller projects. It can currently take three years to get a crosswalk designed.

The General Assembly has created the Municipal Opportunities and Regional Efficiencies (M.O.R.E.) Commission to look at the delivery of state and local services with an emphasis on regional approaches. Representative Tim Larson is the chairman of the M.O.R.E. Commission. Speaker Brendan Sharkey is a strong advocate of regionalism. Filchak mentioned that a study by the Boston Federal Reserve District found Connecticut and Massachusetts to be the most fragmented states in terms of the delivery of government services.

Filchak cited a savings of \$70,000 that was realized by undertaking property assessment revaluations by grouping the 12 towns of the Northeastern Connecticut region as opposed to

undertaking those revaluations separately. In another partnership unique to the region, the Council of Governments has operated the local transit district since 1998. The selectmen of the region's 12 towns serve as the board of directors of the transit district. The partnership of the transit district and the Council of Governments keeps costs down.

The Northeastern Connecticut Region is very rural in nature, with a population of 87,912 for the 12 towns. The historic mill villages within the region are characterized by long-term high unemployment (26.4% for North Grosvenorsdale), low high school graduation rates, and other indicators of poverty such as high teen pregnancy rates and high rates of state assistance and food stamp recipients.

Moving on to the local transit services, the Northeastern Connecticut Transit District (NECTD) runs both a deviated fixed route service and an elderly and disabled direct service. The route structure of the deviated fixed route service consists of a northern loop (Putnam and Thompson), a southern loop (Killingly and Brooklyn), and a connecting shuttle route between the two loops. The route system serves all the senior and public housing units and major medical facilities in the region. Hours of operation are 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday and 7:00 am through 1:30 pm on Saturday. Annual ridership has grown steadily from 29,712 in 2008 to 45,123 in 2012.

Filchak reported that Woodstock and Thompson saw big growth in population after the MBTA extended train service to Worcester. He is working with the Worcester transit system to look into a connecting bus route, perhaps having buses meet in Webster, Mass. Filchak also mentioned that there are commuters from his region who drive all the way to North Attleboro, Mass. (east of Providence) to get trains into Boston.

Filchak said that at present there are no interregional transit connections from the NECTD to any other systems with the very limited exception of two trips per day from the Windham Region Transit District to Danielson, which connect those two systems.

A major shortcoming of the NECTD system is that much of the public is not aware of its services or has never ridden its buses. The appearance of the vehicles discourages ridership, especially by professionals, and there is a lack of any marketing for the system. Generally, riders are pleasantly surprised once they get on an NECTD bus. The bulk of the ridership occurs between 7 am and 1 pm due to the large percentage of senior citizens in the ridership. Work trips are not a large percentage of NECTD's ridership but they are growing in number.

Filchak noted that since Peter Pan ceased making a stop in downtown Danielson, there is no commercial bus service to or from the region.

Filchak believes the transit district can operate bus service more cheaply and efficiently than any local non-profit agencies can. The non-profits often obtain a vehicle with Section 5310 funding, put their logo on it, and then operate the vehicle only for very limited hours per week. The transit district could meet those needs more efficiently by pooling trips and with fuller use of the vehicle.

Not all NECTD riders actually pay fares. Many have passes or vouchers issued to them and do not pay fares. In fact, Filchak said that only 19,500 passengers of the 45,000 carried last year paid the \$1.00 fare. The District also earns \$10,000 to \$12,000 in advertising on its buses. In addition, it trades advertising space on the buses for air time with a local radio station.

The NECTD system has fixed bus stops but no bus stop signs. It would like to pursue getting signs to mark the bus stops and make the system more visible.

If additional funding were available, the NECTD would like to add a second bus to the southern loop and perhaps acquire 24- or 28-passenger buses instead of its current 22-passenger vehicles. The 22-passenger vehicles can supposedly accommodate 16 passengers and two common wheelchairs. But Filchak said there is no such thing as a common wheelchair these days and his vehicles cannot actually accommodate two wheelchairs at one time. The district will send a second vehicle to pick up a second wheelchair before trying to fit two on one bus. Bigger buses would help this situation although they might have a problem fitting into someone's driveway with the lift deployed.

The transit district receives a per capita amount of \$1.65 per resident of the region. The Council of Governments charges the district a management fee of \$115,000 per year. Ridership on the weekday buses averages over 200 per day early in the month but tails off during the month for an average of 200 riders per day. Bicycle racks are getting a lot of use on the buses. Many times the bicycles are taken one way on the bus and ridden the other half of the trip.

Moderator Riese closed the hearing at 9:00 p.m.

**Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Public Hearing**

Bristol City Hall
111 North Main Street
Bristol, Connecticut 06010
Wednesday, May 22, 2013 – 7:30 PM

CPTC VOTING MEMBERS

Morton Katz
Yvonne Loteczka
Kevin Maloney
Robert Rodman
Russ St. John
Richard Schreiner

CPTC EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Fred Riese

CDOT STAFF

Dennis King

INTRODUCTION:

Hearing moderator Morton Katz opened the hearing at 7:43 PM, welcoming the attendees and introducing the Commission members and ConnDOT staff in attendance. He then explained the function of the Commission and the purpose of tonight’s hearing.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Francis Pickering, Transportation Planner for the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency, opened his remarks by saying there are two significant rail projects active in his region. The Springfield Line high speed rail project passes through Berlin, a town in the region. The RPA strongly supports this project. The Berlin train station is being refurbished with a TOD grant as part of this project. New train stations at North Haven, Wallingford and Enfield will be constructed as a later phase of the Springfield Line project.

The Central Connecticut Rail Study very directly impacts the Central Connecticut Region. This study is analyzing the return of passenger rail service on the east-west corridor which bisects the region. ConnDOT and a consultant team are working on this project and have already assembled demographic and origin-destination information for the corridor. Five options are being considered in the study. These are:

- Do Nothing
- Transportation System Management (maximize transit services that can be done with existing resources)
- Light rail service between Waterbury and Berlin
- Heavy rail passenger service between Waterbury and Berlin
- Extension of the CTfastrak busway service into the study corridor

Costs for the various improvements span a very large range. Passenger rail service in this corridor ceased in 1960. Two previous studies of the reinstatement of passenger rail service here did not produce any results. CCRPA and the region’s municipalities feel that the “do nothing” alternative is not acceptable.

The local bus service has some major inadequacies. Bus service in Bristol shuts down at 4:30 pm, limiting its usefulness. Bus service is needed in the region's towns that don't have any service, namely Plymouth/Terryville and Southington. Pickering attended a meeting last week about extending bus service to Plymouth.

CCRPA is about to submit a TIGER grant application to USDOT for bus service between Waterbury and Bristol. Currently, a bus trip between these cities would require 6 hours via very circuitous routing. The small TIGER grant being requested would provide service to Waterbury, Thomaston, Plymouth, Terryville, several industrial parks and Bristol.

Regarding the long-sought bus service on Route 10 in Southington, DATTCO says there is too much traffic on Route 10 to allow bus service to be operated efficiently. The multiplicity of strip malls along that route is the major source of this problem. The presence of many malls is also a traffic hindrance along Route 6 in Bristol where it also results in a very poor pedestrian environment. The lack of pedestrian walk lights on Route 6 is a major factor in the poor pedestrian situation. The situation will only be worsened if Route 6 is widened. Pickering said that access management is needed on Routes 6 and 10 to improve traffic flows and safety.

The region has received great support from ConnDOT and Connecticut Transit on getting bus stop signs. Connecticut Transit did a good job on the bus stop signs in its region because it had a lot of data on the stop locations. Bus drivers can supply anecdotal information but there is no hard data on the optimal locations for stops in the Central Connecticut Region. Automatic passenger counters are needed to collect this information. In the absence of this data, estimates on the number of bus stop signs needed for the region have ranged from ConnDOT's estimate of 800 signs to CT Transit's estimate of 300.

Pickering said that the bus routes and schedules in the region will be revised to feed into the *CTfastrak* system. The bus hub in New Britain will be moved to the busway station. The Bristol Express bus route will be rerouted to run on the busway to access Hartford.

Pickering next addressed transit services to and on the CCSU campus. Unlike UConn, CCSU does not have a transportation logistics manager on staff. Although there have been longstanding complaints about parking shortages at CCSU, a CCRPA study of parking on the campus found an extra 1,000 unused spaces on the busiest days of the year. As an outgrowth of this study, wayfinding signage will be installed directing travelers to free parking and to transit routes.

Overall, transit usage at CCSU is low. The existing CCSU shuttle will be discontinued due to low ridership and will be replaced with a U-Pass system for students and faculty to ride CT Transit and DATTCO buses. Seventy-five percent of CCSU students live on bus routes.

A new CCSU transportation plan will be released this summer. Enthusiasm for the plan is so high that some of the ideas in the plan have already been implemented.

In response to questions from the Commission, Pickering noted the following points:

- Other than for Dial-a-Ride service, there are no municipal contributions to transit service in the region.
- Regarding bus stop signs, CT Transit says they will replace lost signs free of charge.
- Ridership on the Bristol/New Britain transit system is 2,500 passenger trips per day or 1,250 people per day.
- 1,000 new units of housing will be developed in Bristol on a site directly across North Main Street from Bristol City Hall.
- Paratransit trips cost 10x as much to provide as fixed route trips, or roughly \$35 per trip vs. \$3.50 per trip, respectively.
- In some recent cases, the combination of very large passengers and their wheelchairs can reach 800 lbs. This is causing the paratransit system to resort to larger vehicles which get poorer gas mileage and have poor visibility for the drivers.
- The company that made the new MV-1 model taxicab vehicles went out of business a couple of weeks ago. Pickering expressed that money could be saved by moving some paratransit trips to taxi service.
- There has been a significant increase in transportation demand for dialysis treatment and developmentally-disabled day care center clients in the Central Connecticut Region.

Moderator Katz closed the hearing at 8:50 pm.

Connecticut Public Transportation Commission Public Hearing

OrangeTown Hall
617 Orange Center Road
Orange, Connecticut

Wednesday, September 18, 2013 – 7:30 PM

CPTC VOTING MEMBERS

Yvonne Loteczka
Richard Schreiner
Robert Rodman

CPTC EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Fred Riese

CDOT STAFF

Dennis King

INTRODUCTION:

Hearing moderator Richard Schreiner opened the hearing at 7:35 pm, welcoming the attendees and introducing the Commission members and ConnDOT staff in attendance. He then briefly explained the function of the Commission and the purpose of tonight's hearing.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Karen Burnaska of Monroe is the Coordinator for Transit for Connecticut, a statewide coalition dedicated to increasing the awareness of the benefits of public transportation and advocating for increased investment in public transit, especially bus transit. Investment in bus transit generates short-term and long-term jobs. Transit for Connecticut believes that a reliable and predictable source of funding is needed for bus transit services.

The most significant needs identified by Transit for Connecticut are expanded and improved inter-regional services, more bus/rail shuttles, and dial-a-ride services for people not able to drive or take fixed route transit.

In 2012, Transit for Connecticut undertook a planning report titled *Connecticut's Bus Needs Analysis*. It laid out a 5-year plan to increase bus ridership by 64% through an increase of \$77.7 million in operating funds and \$234.7 million in capital funds to expand fixed route service, ADA service, express bus service, and provide service to unserved communities. Among inter-regional bus services, Burnaska specifically mentioned the Coastal Link between Norwalk and Milford. Ridership on the Coastal Link has experienced strong growth and now often has to turn passengers away due to full buses. It needs to expand its frequency and hours of operation to accommodate the growth in demand. Another growth area has been the bus to rail shuttles, notably those of the Norwalk Transit District. But ridership has also been up for bus transit generally across Connecticut.

Burnaska said that the aging of Connecticut's population will lead to a greater need for transit services. There is also a need for bus service for workers on shifts other than first shift, and for weekend employment. Transit for Connecticut sees an on-going need for the State to encourage transit use.

Asked about the proposed CT Transit fare hike, Burnaska said that while an increase from \$1.30 to \$1.50 may not seem like much, for many riders that increase is significant. Other operators are also increasing their fares, generally from levels which are higher than those of CT Transit. If fares are increased, Burnaska would like to see the extra revenue used to expand service rather than to reduce deficits. In response to another question, she said that Transit for Connecticut submitted testimony to legislators last session in support of safeguarding the revenue in the Special Transportation Fund from use for non-transportation purposes.

Lastly, Burnaska sees a need for more marketing of bus transit service so that the public knows what is available. Information needs can be as basic as not knowing where the bus stops are.

Orange First Selectman **James Zeoli** says Connecticut Transit does an awesome job on the Route 1 corridor and the service there is well used. As a former owner/operation of a school bus company, he believes CT Transit buses incur unnecessary extra wear and tear and operating expenses by often stopping too frequently on Route 1, sometimes at every other business. This hurts timeliness and efficiency. Such closely spaced stops would be understandable in a snowstorm or for disabled riders, but under normal circumstances, it is not warranted.

Zeoli then mentioned the example of a New Haven resident who is an employee of the Orange Parks and Recreation Department. This young man takes one bus from Whalley Avenue on the New Haven/Woodbridge line to the New Haven Green where he transfers to another bus to Route 1 in Orange. This employee gets up at 4:15 every morning to make this trip and he is never late. The availability of this transportation has allowed this young man to turn his life around from some problems and he is now the only Parks and Rec Department employee other than the superintendant with keys to the department's facilities. Zeoli says this story is just one example of why bus transit on Route 1 is so valuable. It is also illustrative of how the proposed fare increase will hurt some low income riders. For the town employee he spoke of, Zeoli said 90% of his 2-week paycheck goes toward rent each month.

Orange operates three vehicles (an 18-passenger bus, a 12-passenger van and a 10-passenger van) for its elderly and disabled service. The service carries everyone from young disabled riders to riders in their 80s and 90s and is mostly funded by the Town with some State assistance. One of the vans was purchased with help from the local Rotary Club. As an indication of the level of usage, Zeoli said this latter van is one year old and has 46,000 miles on it.

Zeoli would like to set up a Transportation Management Association (TMA) for the businesses in Orange's industrial district including United Illuminating, Pez, Aurora Foods and a couple of smaller operations. Transit service is needed, particularly from 6:00 to 9:00 am and from 3:00 to 6:00 pm. Even a shuttle van from Route 1 to these sites would provide valuable service. Many employees take transit from the New Haven Green to the West Haven Green to these employers. Zeoli cited Henry Jadach of the Milford Transit District as having been extremely helpful in providing service. Again, many of the workers earn \$8-10 per hour and stand to be hurt by the CT Transit fare increase. Zeoli also mentioned that Orange is extending Edison Road to connect to Marsh Hill Road, allowing for a full transit loop in the industrial district.

Zeoli has been Orange's First Selectman for eight years. It was 2-4 years before he took office that ConnDOT first proposed center turning lanes on Route 1. In the two locations where center turn lanes have been added, namely from Route 114 east to West Haven and in the Milford Mall stretch, the center turn lanes work very well and help move traffic flow.

The last topic Zeoli addressed was the potential New Haven Line train station for Orange. The newly-opened West Haven train station is nice but it won't help the 1,100 employees at United Illuminating's headquarters or the 300 workers each at Pez and Aurora Foods, or workers at the Christmas Tree Shops or A.C. Moore. Zeoli said there has been slow progress on a public/private partnership for the proposed Orange train station. He has been working with ConnDOT on this concept with five previous commissioners now. The current proposal with a selected developer includes parking spaces for 1,000-1,200 cars. Orange has created a TOD zoning district around the train station site. Zeoli says the town both wants and needs a train station. Zeoli concluded by saying that a train station in Orange and center turning lanes on US-1 are the town's top two transportation priorities.

Moderator Schreiner closed the hearing at 8:28 p.m.

**Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Public Hearing**

New Milford Town Hall
10 Main Street
New Milford, Connecticut
Tuesday, September 24, 2013 – 7:30 PM

CPTC VOTING MEMBERS

Kevin Maloney
Richard Schreiner
Robert Rodman
Yvonne Loteczka
Russ St. John

CPTC EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS CDOT STAFF

Fred Riese

INTRODUCTION:

Hearing moderator Frederick Riese opened the hearing at 7:35 pm. He welcomed the attendees, gave a brief description of the Commission and of the purpose of tonight's hearing, and introduced the Commission members present.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Nancy Sutherland is a New Milford resident and has been a HART bus rider since her car broke down in May. In the following months, she has taken the bus everywhere. She was counting on using the bus when she took a job at Macy's in the Danbury Mall. Her shift would run until 9:30 pm but the last bus for New Milford leaves at 8:30 pm so she has to forfeit the last hour of her shift each day to catch that bus. She believes the local bus service should run later into the evening.

Sutherland also faulted HART for both an excessive fare increase and for insufficient public notice of the fare increase hearings. HART gave only 30 days notice of the fare increase hearings and did not publish notice widely enough. This is why the fare hearings were so poorly attended. For her, the fare increase is over 100%, going from 60c to \$1.50. She also complained that the HART website does not provide an agenda for meetings of the directors so she cannot tell what topics will be discussed.

One bus stop she frequently uses, on Federal Road in Brookfield, is poorly lighted and on a curb. She can't tell if an approaching vehicle is a bus or a UPS or FedEx delivery truck. She also does not want to have to stand on the curb to catch the bus. There are no bus shelters, which she sees as a big deficiency. She also says she has not been able to get requested information from HART.

Commission member Richard Schreiner, who is Director of Service Development for HART, explained that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recommended that HART raise the eligibility age for senior fares to 65. HART had been using an age of 60 for eligibility. Virtually all bus systems in Connecticut now use age 65 as the definition of a senior rider, as does Metro-North. Ms. Sutherland's fare increased so steeply because she no longer qualifies for the senior

fare and the regular fare rose from \$1.25 to \$1.50. Schreiner also said he had provided substantial information to Sutherland but that she was welcome to contact him again.

Senator Michael McLachlan, 24th District, supports the enhancement of passenger and freight rail service between Danbury and Pittsfield and also from Danbury to Derby. Improvements to passenger service can be made with relatively small investments here compared to other rail improvements in the Northeast.

Colin Pease is Vice President for Special Projects at the Housatonic Railroad, which operates freight service between Pittsfield and Danbury and also from Danbury to Derby. Four years ago, the railroad began looking into the feasibility of operating passenger rail service between Pittsfield and Danbury. Such service would serve four principle markets:

- Visitors to the region
- Commuters from the region
- Owners of second homes in the region
- Students

To gauge potential ridership on such a service, Housatonic hired Market Street Research, a firm that uses a methodology similar to that used to determine passenger demand for airlines. When that market study indicated a sufficient level of ridership, Housatonic then hired Steven Shepherd of Williams College to evaluate the economic benefits of such a service. Professor Shepherd's evaluation showed that the proposed rail service would generate \$1 billion in direct economic benefits and 633 new jobs over a ten year period. These figures did not include any potential transit-oriented development along the line. Pease drew a comparison to the Downeaster passenger service in Maine, which has generated benefits including a new retail, office and residential development valued at \$110 million in an old mill property in Saco, two new hotels and a residential/retail complex in Old Orchard Beach valued at \$20 million, a 30-acre site for sale in Portland intended for mixed housing and commercial development, and a new medical facility in Brunswick. By 2030, Maine's consultant estimates that the benefits from the Downeaster will include 17,800 new jobs, \$244 million per year in transportation cost savings for resident households, and an additional \$75,000,000 in tax revenues accruing to the State of Maine from the resultant economic development.

Pease said the proposed passenger service would tap an in-migration of people who will spend money here to build houses or as tourists and shoppers. The railroad's market research showed that more than 80% of the new riders into the region would be from metro New York. He also mentioned that if transit-oriented development were factored into the equation, it would add substantially to the economic benefits resulting from the service.

As for implementation of the new service, Pease said the entire rail line will need to be rebuilt, as at present it can only accommodate low speed freight trains. The cost to rebuild the line will be \$1.3 million per mile. The line from Danbury to Pittsfield is 90 miles long and from Danbury to Brewster is 15 miles.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts gave a \$240,000 grant to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to study station locations for the proposed service in Massachusetts. Governor Deval Patrick asked Housatonic to provide for an inspection of the Massachusetts portion of the

line by train. Gov. Patrick specified he wanted an actual train to run the line, not high-rail equipment, for the inspection. The inspection party consisted of Gov. Patrick, his Secretary of Transportation, and his top rail administrator. Subsequent to the inspection, the Governor made a commitment of \$113,800,000 to fund improvements in Massachusetts but only if the rail line will connect to New York City. That money has been appropriated and is committed. It is Pease's understanding the Gov. Patrick's administration is working with the Malloy administration and with ConnDOT. Gov. Patrick has discussed potential shop, coach remanufacturing and layover facilities in Massachusetts.

In response to questions concerning an implementation timeframe and fleet size, Pease said that if all funding and approvals were available today, it would take three years to implement the service. The price tag for the whole project would be \$200 million. A fleet of 30-36 coaches and six locomotives is envisioned. Intercity coaches from Massachusetts may be available. ConnDOT has FL-9 locomotives in storage in New Haven which could be rebuilt and would work very well for this service, especially with their dual diesel and electric capabilities. There may also be F-40 locomotives available in Massachusetts. Eight trains per day in each direction are proposed.

Pease said Housatonic's market research showed that the availability of free wi-fi service on the trains is critical, and was ranked as the most important amenity and second only to service frequency and cost in importance to riders. Bicycle accommodations on the trains were also shown to be very important, being mentioned by 47% of respondents as very important or somewhat important. The comfort of the cars is also very important. The rail line itself would remain a single track line but some passing sidings would be necessary. If commuter service is extended to New Milford, it will be necessary to double track the line between Danbury and New Milford.

As presently envisioned by Housatonic, it would be optimal for Metro-North to extend its Danbury Branch service to New Milford. Housatonic would then run from Pittsfield through New Milford to Brewster, connecting to the Harlem Line. In New Milford, the Housatonic service would connect to the Danbury Branch via a cross-platform transfer, enabling passengers to travel efficiently to South Norwalk and Stamford. Over eighty-five percent of the ridership would be out of New York City. A total of two million one-way fares per year is foreseen.

Susan Clayton, a member of the North Canaan Board of Selectmen, noted that the end of passenger rail service to North Canaan in 1971 started an economic downturn there. Both she and the Northwestern Chamber of Commerce, of which she is a member, support Housatonic's passenger service proposal. It would encourage tourism in the region and would be environmentally beneficial.

Tom Vrba addressed the issue of how to pay for the improvements of rail and bus service that other speakers are advocating. Connecticut already has the highest per capita bond indebtedness of any state. Vrba believes more resources should be moved from highways to transit. We should stop widening the highways and instead better support bus, rail and bicycle travel. More bicycling and telecommuting would be components of his ideal world. If passenger service on

the Berkshire Line is reinstated, Vrba would rather see the Housatonic Railroad, a private company, run the service than have a public entity operate it.

Carl Dunham is a lifelong resident of New Milford and a practicing attorney with over 40 years of experience in economic development and land use and planning. He strongly supports the restoration of passenger rail service on the Berkshire Line and noted the commitment of Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick to fund the upgrading of the line in Berkshire County. Dunham believes such service would improve the economic base for the New Milford area. As the owner of a bed and breakfast and a wedding facility, he noted that tourism is a big economic driver in Connecticut.

Mr. Dunham's second point was to support an access road allowing through traffic to avoid downtown New Milford. Planning for such a bypass dates back to the late 1950s. Such a connection would extend from Route 7 going north to Route 202 and would alleviate traffic in the center of town.

Andy Grossman is a member of the New Milford Economic Development Commission. As such, he is enthusiastic about passenger rail service to New Milford. He sees such service as useful in avoiding sprawl development and in avoiding costs to repair and widen highways. It also offers environmental benefits and would provide economic vitality to the downtown district.

Tom O'Brien, a New Milford resident, seeks a more walkable and bikeable environment. He was pleased to hear Colin Pease say that bicycles would be welcome on the trains. It is also important to accommodate bicycles at the train stations.

O'Brien then focused on multi-use trails. He thanked Mayor Murphy for her important help in opening the 5-mile northern segment of the Housatonic River Trail which will, when completed, run from Lover's Leap State Park to Gaylordsville. Other important multi-use trails mentioned by O'Brien were the Housatonic Covered Bridge Trail, the Still River Greenway, the Norwalk River Valley Trail and the Western New England Greenway.

Russell Moore stressed the importance of the rail/trail concept, using the examples of the rail/trails in Millerton, New York and on Cape Cod as successful, well used trails. New Milford is a nice town but has narrow roads with no shoulders and is dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists.

Terry Burke of Cornwall spoke of the bicycle trains of the 1890s which used to bring cyclists from Manhattan up to Canaan. Burke feels that a modern version of this service today would bring many tourists here. He also thought a multi-purpose trail along the Housatonic Railroad would be well used. Burke supports the passenger rail service proposal, believing it would help tourism, particularly bicycle tourism. These visitors would boost the local economy by purchasing food and making other expenditures. He mentioned that battery-powered bicycles for elderly cyclists is a growing market.

Marti Fine, a Danbury resident, supports all modes of public transportation, but particularly bicycles. She said that more cyclists means safer cycling as the increasing number of cyclists

raises awareness on the part of drivers. More cyclists also leads to more vibrant cities. She will continue to ride her bicycle in Danbury despite the absence of cycling amenities but she knows other cyclists who won't. If the roads were made safe for cycling, it would lead to more healthy people, a better environment and a better local economy. She said many other states have done so much more than Connecticut to promote and accommodate bicycles, including in the area of multimodal trips involving bicycles and trains.

David Fine, also of Danbury, said he and Marti moved there from Milwaukee 3-4 months ago. Milwaukee has been designated a Bicycle-Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists. Such a designation is based on a city incorporating the five e's as they relate to cycling:

- Engineering
- Encouragement
- Evaluation
- Education
- Enforcement

Fine said the use of bicycles for trips to work in particular can change the character of a community because these are high frequency users and bicycle commuting reduces the need for parking.

Fine will attempt to ride his bicycle all winter in Danbury as he did in Milwaukee.

Fine sees a need for bike racks in downtown Danbury and for an integration of biking into the local park system. He noted that Bicycle-Friendly Communities, of which there are only two in Connecticut (Simsbury and South Windsor) start with 'signs and lines'. Lines designate bicycle lanes on roads and signs alert drivers to share the road with cyclists. In Connecticut, we started with the bike racks on buses, which are great, but when you do not have any other bicycle infrastructure in place, it is not very productive.

In Milwaukee, bike rack usage on buses has far exceeded expectations. To promote more cycling locally, Fine said the bicycle and travel needs assessment forms need to be enforced, HART needs a first mile/last mile program for bikes, and local communities need to adopt a timetable to secure designation as Bicycle-Friendly Communities.

Rob Wotzak lives in New Milford but grew up on the North Shore of Long Island. He sees downtown New Milford as a walkable place, but as a small town, you quickly run out of room for cycling. Not a single school in town is safe to bicycle to. If the Route 7 bicycle trail is completed, he feels people will be surprised by how much usage it will receive. He mentioned that three or four of the ten employees where he works in Newtown use bicycles to commute to work.

The bicycle-safe roads in New Milford are out in the country, not near downtown. He proposed a route using Grove Street, crossing Veterans' Bridge, then south using side streets along Route 7 for the bicycle trail.

Wotzak cited the Wassaic Trail in Millerton, NY as very popular with cyclists who often pack downtown Millerton restaurants and stores. Cyclists have revitalized towns along Metro-North's Hudson Line, using the train to get to towns along the line and then cycling there.

Mayor Pat Murphy stressed the importance of the local bridge program and asked that the State continue to fund it. With 50 local bridges in town, New Milford hopped on this program right away when new funding recently became available. She also feels that sidewalks should be incorporated into the design for all bridges on State roads. On any given day, you can find a young mother pushing a baby buggy in the road on Route 7. Also there are no pedestrian crossings on Route 7 except at Veterans' Bridge and this was added only after much bellyaching.

Mayor Murphy said the Cape Cod Rail Trail has been well used and led to a big tourist season on the Cape. She is a believer in such multi-use trails. A north-south bike trail in the Route 7 corridor is in both the town and regional plans of conservation and development. Some General Electric Housatonic River remediation funding has been used by the Town to construct a portion of that trail. Another block of GE funding will be used to construct another portion of the trail.

Mayor Murphy supports the Housatonic Railroad's passenger service proposal and said the railroad has worked well with the Town and been a good neighbor.

Moderator Riese closed the hearing at 9:30 p.m.

**Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Public Hearing**

Enfield Town Hall
820 Enfield Street
Enfield, Connecticut

Tuesday, October 15, 2013 – 7:30 PM

CPTC VOTING MEMBERS

Kevin Maloney
Robert Rodman
Yvonne Loteczka
Morton Katz
Russ St. John
Ed McAnaney

CPTC EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Fred Riese

CDOT STAFF

Dennis King

INTRODUCTION:

Hearing moderator Morton Katz opened the hearing at 7:35 pm. He welcomed the attendees, gave a brief description of the Commission and of the purpose of tonight's hearing, and introduced the Commission members and ConnDOT staff present.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Mary Ellen Kovalewski, Director of Policy and Planning at the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), spoke on several recent studies undertaken by the Council. CRCOG is committed to supporting transportation choices within the Capitol Region.

In 2010, CRCOG received a Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant to carry out a number of studies related to the Hartford-Springfield Knowledge Corridor. Many of the grant activities were focused on how the Hartford-Springfield-New Britain region could better coordinate land use, economic development and transportation to best take advantage of major new investments in bus rapid transit and rail coming to the region over the next decade, and also create an environment that would support increased ridership on these new services.

Last month, CRCOG released a major study on economic development opportunities likely to be spurred by the over \$1.5 billion in bus rapid transit and rail investments underway in the Knowledge Corridor. The study, *Making It Happen: Opportunities and Strategies for Transit-Oriented Development in the Knowledge Corridor*, was commissioned by CRCOG and was prepared by the consulting firms of Jonathan Rose Companies and the Center for Transit-Oriented Development. Cities across the country are pursuing transit-oriented development as a way to achieve many goals including: 1) increased economic competitiveness through improved quality of life, 2) reduced traffic congestion, 3) lower transportation costs for households, 4) improved air quality, 5) reduced costs for providing city services, and 6) management of growth. Planning for transit-oriented development or TOD includes not only trains and buses but also bicycling and walking.

The six key findings of the *Making It Happen* study, which covered 18 stations on the CTfastrak, Springfield Line and Amtrak Vermonter corridors, were:

- The demographics of the Knowledge Corridor are promising for transit-oriented development.
- Corridor-centered growth is needed. It is estimated there will be 50,000 new transit-supportive jobs in knowledge-based industries like health care, education and public administration in the corridor over the next 25 years.
- TOD-supportive businesses and industries are growing.
- TOD needs more than transit. Transit alone does not make a market for new development.
- Achieving the potential for TOD in the region will require proactive efforts by public and private sector parties.
- Active leadership is crucial for success. This leadership should come from the two state governments and from anchor institutions such as colleges, universities and hospitals.

In addition to the TOD market study, the HUD grant also funded three Transit Enhancement Bus Studies covering Enfield, Manchester and the Day Hill Road/Griffin Road area of Windsor. Each study had a local advisory committee and incorporated public input. The final product of the Enfield Transit Study became the service plan for the Magic Carpet bus service instituted in Enfield in January of this year.

The Manchester Transit Study evaluated transit routes both within Manchester and connecting Manchester with the surrounding area. Among the recommendations of the study were:

- Create a transit hub at Buckland Hills
- Create a transit mini-hub at Spencer Street
- Update Route 83 Silver Lane
- Separate Routes 82 and 84
- Eliminate unproductive route segments
- Create a U-Pass system for local college students
- Improve marketing.

The Windsor Transit Study looked at the potential for creating a transportation management association (TMA) within the Day Hill Road/Griffin Road corporate area to improve transit service to employment sites and to connect them to the Windsor train station.

Kovalewski then covered an upcoming transit analysis that CRCOG will be undertaking in concert with ConnDOT to review current Hartford area bus routes. The study will incorporate service adjustments to best take advantage of CTfastrak service, Hartford's Intermodal Triangle project and the Springfield Line commuter rail service. This study, which will require 12-18 months to complete, will also extend to encompass transit service to New Britain, Middletown and Bradley Airport.

Doug Glazier of Windsor Locks expressed his concerns about potential traffic tie-ups in downtown Windsor Locks if the train station is relocated to downtown. He said Amtrak and ConnDOT had relocated the Amtrak station to the current South End site precisely because of traffic delays caused by the gate system at the former site. A station move back to the downtown

site will cause these problems to recur but they will be worse than those previously experienced, he feels. Gate closures can back traffic up for 3-4 minutes.

Glazier disagreed with First Selectman Wawruck and Economic Development Consultant McMahon who feel that the relocation of the train station will be a catalyst for an economic resurgence in downtown Windsor Locks. Glazier served on the Redevelopment Agency in Windsor Locks in the 1970s, 80s and 90s. He sees many vacant properties in downtown Windsor Locks and little demand for commercial space there. He does not foresee either visitors or businesses coming to Windsor Locks from surrounding towns.

Peter Bryanton, chairman of the Economic Development Commission in Enfield, said his town is enthusiastic about a potential train station in the Thompsonville section of Enfield. He has spent 10 years working to develop an intermodal transit center at Thompsonville. Currently, he has a \$3.5 million Federal Transit Administration grant from 2005 to put toward this project, along with a \$3.4 million Federal Highway Administration grant to be used for improvements to river access at the site, including a fishing pier, boat launch, bike path and possibly a marina or commercial amenities. A \$350,000 brownfields grant is also available for the station area. A 2009 feasibility study for the Thompsonville transit center found that a commuter rail station could be supported in Enfield and that the facility could be a catalyst to draw people to the area. It noted that a sizeable percentage of Enfield's population is transit dependent.

The HUD Sustainable Communities Initiative study found Enfield to be a "catalyzed" community, i.e., ready for transit-oriented development. Bryanton also noted that Enfield has several bicycle paths and that in 2010, ConnDOT extended the Windsor Locks Canal Bike Path over the Connecticut River as part of the Route 190 bridge reconstruction. This bike path could be further extended to the transit facility site. Bryanton noted that Routes 190 and 220 in town present a lot of safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists.

State Representative David Alexander (58th District) of Enfield, whose district includes Thompsonville, is a member of the General Assembly's Transportation Committee and is very interested in what the Springfield Line commuter rail service can do for this area. On a macro level, this is the biggest public transportation project in New England and will enhance connections to New York, Boston and Montreal. With all the universities and colleges in the region, this corridor fits the mold as an area where transit will flourish. Rep. Alexander related his experience in Seattle regarding how much mobility that city offers with just transit. He mentioned a new light rail line in Phoenix, a city to which he almost moved. He feels the upcoming Springfield Line service will really appeal to young people and will help reverse the 'brain drain' in which Connecticut is losing its young people.

On the local level, Rep. Alexander really wants to see a transit station in Thompsonville. This area is the hub of north central Connecticut. Train stops are needed between Hartford and Springfield to serve north central Connecticut. There should be stops at Windsor, Windsor Locks and Thompsonville. Besides helping to keep young people in the area, the line will help draw visitors from a potential new Springfield casino into the area.

Alexander said Sen. Kissel feels ConnDOT and the Administration are ignoring north central Connecticut and concentrating investment and interest on the corridor between Hartford and New Haven, with then a stop in Springfield. Double-tracking of the line is from Hartford southward but not northward, Alexander said.

Rep. Alexander and Commission member Ed McAnaney, who is also First Selectman of Suffield, discussed the importance of replacing the Connecticut River Bridge on the Springfield Line. This is presently not a financially programmed component of the rail plan. They agreed that the Connecticut River Bridge needs to be replaced even if it is the last phase of the Springfield Line upgrade.

First Selectman Stephen Wawruck of Windsor Locks thanked the Commission for its past support of the Windsor Locks train station relocation. He said the town is on the cusp of purchasing the historic train station from Amtrak for \$1.00. ConnDOT has the first right of refusal to buy the property, and securing ConnDOT's waiver of this right is the one remaining hurdle for the town to acquire the station.

Wawruck agreed with Doug Glazier that when the buildings along Main Street were knocked down for urban redevelopment in the 1960s, the Town never fulfilled its promise to rebuild downtown. The relocation of the train station out of downtown was part of the problem preventing the comeback of downtown.

Wawruck also agreed that problems associated with the closure of the train crossing gates was the primary issue that led to moving the train station 35 years ago. Wawruck responded that gate and signal technology now is better than it was 35 years ago. The Town has hired a consulting firm to look at downtown traffic issues associated with the rail station. CRCOG awarded Windsor Locks a \$250,000 grant to do this study. The Town also hired Fuss and O'Neill to do a downtown redevelopment study for a multi-phase plan to rebuild downtown Windsor Locks.

Regarding double-tracking of the Springfield Line, Wawruck said that the State made a decision to use available Federal funding to double track the line south of Hartford and defer double-tracking north of Hartford. He sees the outlook for additional Federal funding as dubious, so the State will need to step up to the plate to get this done.

On the subject of downtown redevelopment, Wawruck said that the condominiums at Waterside Village have just been sold to a West Hartford developer. The property at 2 Main Street is being redeveloped, and there is interest in the Montgomery Mills building. There is much buzz and activity in anticipation of the train platform being relocated.

Wawruck said a bus link from Windsor Locks station to Bradley Airport will be the short-term solution for making that connection because a rail link is too expensive right now.

If nothing is done to ameliorate traffic at the railroad crossing gate, Wawruck would agree with Doug Glazier about the congestion that would cause downtown. However, the congestion study did come up with solutions. Wawruck said even high level Amtrak officials who have been at the Windsor Locks station sites agree with moving the Windsor Locks station downtown. One

hundred and twenty-five parking spaces would be available if this move were made today. Wawruck's discussions with the East Windsor Board of Selectmen regarding a rotary in Warehouse Point at the east end of the Route 140 bridge have been favorable. Further, he noted that the Windsor Locks Planning and Zoning Commission is changing zoning in the downtown district to allow 3 and 4-story buildings and mixed use buildings in the TOD district. Still needed are a commitment from ConnDOT to double-track the line north of Hartford and money for up-and-over crossings at Windsor, Windsor Locks and Thompsonville.

Pam Brown, Director of Social Services for the Town of Enfield, helped start the Magic Carpet bus service which went into operation last January. She advocates for the continuation of its funding and for funding to allow expansion to some unserved areas of Enfield. The Magic Carpet operates two circular routes, running from 7:00 am to 11:00 pm Monday through Friday and 7:00 am to 7:00 pm on Saturday. The two routes are clockwise and counterclockwise versions of largely the same loop, serving high demand locations within Enfield. Brown said she is already getting daily feedback from residents who like the service. Enfield is doing a survey of the route system to see if it can be improved.

Neighborhoods in the eastern and southern portions of Enfield still need service. There is also no connection to the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) bus system. Since Springfield is an important commercial draw for Enfield residents, this is an important unmet need. Brown would like to have the bus get to the Mass Mutual offices in northern Enfield where this connection to PVTA could be made. The problem is that adding Mass Mutual to the route would reduce service frequency too much.

The Magic Carpet service is presently averaging 70 riders per day. The service uses two 18-passenger buses and just had its first full bus last Saturday. Brown noted that the service recently carried 141 passengers in one day for an open house at a local school. Asnuntuck Community College, which has a pre-paid arrangement with Magic Carpet, contributes 20% of the system's ridership. Brown seconded an earlier comment that Routes 190 and 220 are very unfriendly to bicycle and pedestrian traffic and that it is very difficult for either to cross these roads.

When asked why there were 1,000 responses to the initial, pre-service demand survey but only 70 riders per day, Brown said there were two reasons for this. The Magic Carpet service is not accessible to much of Enfield and the frequency of service is not enough for many would-be users.

Jason Smith of Windsor Locks favors moving the local train station to the historic downtown site. Smith works in Enfield but lives in Windsor Locks and would love to use the train and his bicycle to get to work. His wife, who works in Bristol, would look into the possibility of using the train and the CTfastrak to commute to work.

Domenic Alaimo is a member of the Enfield Planning and Zoning Commission and was raised in Thompsonville. He faulted the State for its spending on the busway project instead of putting the money into Amtrak's Connecticut River Bridge. He also criticized Windsor Locks for knocking down its buildings for urban redevelopment but never putting anything back.

Melissa Everitt of Enfield expressed her strong support for a transit center in Thompsonville. Creative ideas and creative spending are needed to spur growth in Enfield. Everitt said walking and bicycling are popular activities in Enfield. She feels the social infrastructure to support transit is in place in town.

She had visited Enfield for 30 years before becoming a resident a year ago. As a new resident, she was taken on a tour of the transit center site by Peter Bryanton. She became aware of the layers of planning work for transit that have been done in this town, which demonstrates Enfield's deep commitment to transportation. There is a lot of potential here for the transit center and for transit-oriented development.

Moderator Morton Katz closed the hearing at 9:38 pm.

**Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Public Hearing**

New London City Hall
181 State Street
New London, Connecticut
Tuesday, October 22, 2013 – 7:30 PM

CPTC VOTING MEMBERS

Richard Schreiner
Yvonne Loteczka

CPTC EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Fred Riese

CDOT STAFF

Dennis King

INTRODUCTION:

Hearing moderator Frederick Riese opened the hearing at 7:34 pm. He welcomed the attendees, gave a brief description of the Commission and of the purpose of tonight's hearing, and introduced the Commission members and ConnDOT staff present.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Joe Hindreth of Montville, a personal care assistant, said his client needs ADA transportation but lives outside the ¼ mile radius from a fixed route transit line. His client, who was also present at the hearing, has lived in Montville for four years. Dennis King of ConnDOT promised to look into this matter for Mr. Hindreth.

Terry Hall of Mystic, a former member of the Connecticut Public Transportation Commission, has resided in Mystic for the last six years. Hall is pleased to see the passenger rail service project for the Springfield Line progressing. He feels the service will provide needed mobility options and it is a very important initiative for corridor towns.

Hall believes the next rail passenger service expansion should be the extension of Shore Line East service to Westerly, Rhode Island. He cited examples in other states where commuter rail services in adjacent states are interconnected. The missing link in eastern Connecticut is the segment east of New London. Shore Line East service was first established to Old Saybrook. It was then extended to New London. But there is still no interconnectivity to Rhode Island and Massachusetts. He advocated the extension of Shore Line East service to Westerly with a stop in Groton and possibly also in Stonington Borough. Local residents who don't have access to rail now would love to see this. He also would like to see the new M-8 equipment used on Shore Line East to New London.

On the Rhode Island end, Hall said passenger service presently extends to Wickford but that station does not have a full level of service.

Jan Lindberg of Stonington described himself as a prolific rail passenger who travels mostly out of New London. He applauded the expanded Shore Line East service to New London and said the fares are inexpensive, especially for senior citizens and off-peak travelers.

On the New Haven Line, Lindberg said he often sees a lack of conductors collecting tickets from riders getting on at Stamford and heading east. These passengers get free rides to Bridgeport or New Haven. Lindberg says this condition is typical, rather than exceptional.

Lindberg mentioned that Amtrak's Midway Yard in Groton would be an appropriate location for Shore Line East equipment to lay over if need be, either should Shore Line East be extended to Westerly or even in lieu of the early 6:55 AM train out of New London needing to start from New Haven.

Lindberg also mentioned that he frequently observes SEAT buses from Old Mystic village going out Route 1 to Route 2 in Pawcatuck. In maybe 50 observations of this bus, he has seen maybe one person on the bus. He feels this route is not connecting to the right traffic generators. It does not connect to another route and apparently serves no major draw in Pawcatuck.

Linda Puetz of Hanover, Connecticut has a twenty-year interest in community transportation. She took SEAT Bus 1 from Three Rivers College to tonight's hearing. She has taken trips across the country by bus and on Amtrak and has lived in San Francisco where she relied heavily on public transportation.

Puetz stressed the link between transportation, energy and employment. Locally, low wage workers in particular are dependent on SEAT buses. She said she couldn't get from Sprague to Norwich without walking two miles on a poor road to reach a bus line. She sees downtown New London as a great area but said many people can't get there from surrounding towns because of a lack of public transportation.

Puetz said there are 42 separate social service agencies which have some role in providing transportation in eastern Connecticut. This piecemeal planning of transportation needs to stop, she said. We need a transportation plan to tie these services and modes together. She recommended a process including charettes with potential user groups such as schools, veterans' groups, churches and other stakeholders be used to gather public input for a coordinated transportation plan.

She also feels that many potential bus riders don't know how to use the bus system and lack basic information about it.

Tim Hanser lives and works in New London and has lived in several area towns. He is the Director of Public Works for the City of New London but was speaking as a private citizen. He related his thoughts as to how to make existing services work better. First, he discussed a recent trip he and his wife took to New York City using Shore Line East and Metro-North. He hadn't thought ahead to buy his Metro-North ticket. The purchase of that ticket at New Haven took enough time that he missed his 3-minute window to make the connection there. He mentioned that if he could have purchased an electronic ticket or if there had been a Metro-North ticket kiosk at Shore Line East stations or even in the tunnel at New Haven, he could have made his train. Then his Metro-North ticket was not collected on the train. He suggested that tickets should be collected before riders are allowed to board the train.

Hanser also said that track information at New Haven is not clear. The boards on the platform that give track information often do not work.

When he lived in Brooklyn and worked in Manhattan, he often took the East River ferry on his commute to and from work. That ferry offered a coffee service which was very popular with passengers. He suggested that a similar service on Shore Line East would prove popular and would also generate some revenue.

Hanser said that afternoon Amtrak-run Shore Line East trains are rarely on time and frequently are substantially late. This is in contrast to the Shore Line East trains which are very reliable as to on-time performance. He also noted that many Shore Line East riders from New London will drive to Old Saybrook to take the train because of gaps in the schedule of service at New London. After the 5:10 pm arrival in New London, the next Shore Line East train does not arrive at New London until 7:32 pm. A 5:32 train out of New Haven only goes as far as Old Saybrook. Later evening trains don't run past Old Saybrook, so passengers from New London drive to Old Saybrook to take the train.

Adding a Shore Line East stop at East Lyme would be a big boon to the region, Hanser felt. Such a stop could also benefit Rocky Neck State Park.

Regarding bus service, Hanser tried to take the bus to reach his former job at Pfizer in Groton but due to a 30-45 minute transfer time between the two routes involved in that commute, he could not do it. These routes are not well coordinated. In contrast, he noted that the train-to-bus commute his sister makes at the Merritt 7 complex in Norwalk is very well coordinated. Lastly, Hanser said the SEAT website is terrible.

Margaret Pordes of New London feels it is not appropriate or efficient that SEAT uses full-size diesel buses on some very narrow local streets. The buses usually have 3-5 passengers on them; they are not full. She feels big buses are not needed but smaller vehicles would suffice. She noted that smaller buses work fine in Stonington. Also, she does not like the smell of the diesel buses.

She reiterated a point made by Mr. Hanser that better track announcements are needed at New Haven. Her daughter has missed trains there because of this problem. Lastly, she said that it is not only Metro-North that has problems with uncollected tickets but that she has experienced this on Amtrak when traveling from Mystic to New London.

Todd O'Donnell, owner of Union Station in New London, said the expansion of Shore Line East to New London was many years in coming but has increased ridership dramatically. In 2010, there were 12,274 Shore Line East riders to New London. For 2013, this number will jump to 42,000 riders. Even more people would ride Shore Line East to New London if they could get a return train here late at night. Since they can't, many of the local riders travel out of Old Saybrook.

Most of O'Donnell's testimony concerned the Central Corridor rail proposal for passenger rail service on the New England Central Railroad corridor from New London to Willimantic, Stafford Springs, Palmer and Amherst, Massachusetts and then Brattleboro, Vermont. This service

would serve 23 communities in Connecticut and Massachusetts. O'Donnell said there are more than 62,000 college students directly on the line, more students than along the so-called Knowledge Corridor. In addition to four colleges in New London, O'Donnell listed Eastern Connecticut State University, UConn and UMass, as well as other colleges in Amherst. In addition, one million visitors per year are expected at the new Coast Guard museum which will open in 2017. At a minimum, the Central Corridor service should run to Storrs. UConn students from the Avery Point campus would use the line rather than drive to Storrs on Route 32 for classes they must take there. Lastly, O'Donnell said that a special scenic ride on the Central Corridor from New London to Brattleboro which included many politicians among the passengers was enthusiastically received by all the politicians.

Bob Stuller feels that State Pier is not used to full advantage and that more freight could move out of the area by rail rather than truck. Stuller is also part of a group called Reconnect New London whose goal is to reconnect the Hodges Square neighborhood along Williams Street with the rest of New London. He said that past transportation projects have isolated this neighborhood. ConnDOT owns property in the area and he would like to engage the department in discussions about addressing the isolation of the Hodges Square neighborhood.

Bud McAllister first agreed with the comments of Todd O'Donnell. He also said that a transportation study of the city done a few years ago needs to be updated. New London needs to be a walkable and bikeable community. New London has turned a corner and McAllister feels it is moving in a good direction.

He closed by saying that the Central Corridor rail service would directly serve 60,000 college students and would do wonders for New London.

In addition to the above testimony presented at the hearing, **Grant Westerton**, President of the Connecticut Marine Trades Association, submitted written testimony for this hearing. Mr. Westerton expressed that the increased levels of Shore Line East service to New London have increased the conflict between rail and marine traffic at the moveable bridges east of New Haven, particularly at the Connecticut River, Niantic River and Shaw's Cove Bridges between Old Saybrook and New London. He cited a US Coast Guard standard that no recreational boat should have to wait longer than twenty minutes for a bridge to open and no commercial vessel should wait longer than ten minutes.

According to the results of a 2011 study of bridge openings done by the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency "only 33-42% of the bridge closures are limited to 20 minutes or less". Therefore, the remainder of the bridge closures are violations of the USCG standard. He said that bridge operators typically close a bridge 10 minutes before a train arrives, and it takes four minutes to open a bridge after passage of a train. With 54 daily weekday trains and 49 weekend daily trains, the bridge closure periods when waterways are unavailable to boaters can be a majority of the 6 am to 9 pm timeslot for boating activity. For the Connecticut River Bridge, Mr. Westerton said that the channel is available to boaters only 329 minutes of the 900 minutes from 6 am to 9 pm or 36% of the day. He said this inflicts economic impacts on marinas, boatyards, service yards and boat dealers, in addition to the delays caused to boaters.

Moderator Fred Riese closed the hearing at 9:00 pm.

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

As constituted by Section 13b-11a(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Connecticut Public Transportation Commission is composed of eleven gubernatorial and eight legislative appointees, as well as ex-officio representatives of the Commissioners of the Department of Transportation and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, and the co-chairmen of the Transportation Committee of the General Assembly. Current members, including the designees of the State agencies, are listed below.

Christopher Adams

Chris has been an attorney in the Connecticut General Assembly for over seventeen years, working closely with legislators, agencies and members of the public, taking policy initiatives, and making them work in practical ways. He is interested in transportation of all types, including bicycling (he's a licensed Category 3 racer), and he served on the Old Saybrook Bikeways Committee. But his passion is railroad transportation. He has served on the Board of Directors of the New Haven Railroad Historical and Technical Association, and currently serves as its photo archivist. He also served on the Board of Trustees for the Railroad Museum of New England. His background and interest in railroad history have given him some understanding of railroad operations and culture, and he's one of the few attorneys in Connecticut that has taken and passed the Northeast Operating Rules Advisory Committee exam. Chris joined the Commission in 2007.

Richard Carpenter

Mr. Carpenter is the former Executive Director of the South Western Regional Planning Agency, a position he held from 1966 until his retirement on March 31, 1999. In this position, he was involved in land use and transportation planning for that eight town region of one-third million population. Previous to being appointed to the CPTC, he was a member of the Governor's Railroad Advisory Task Force from 1974 to 1983, serving as its Chairman from 1974 to 1981. Mr. Carpenter's chief interest is the improvement of passenger and intermodal rail freight service. He served on the East of the Hudson Rail Freight Operations Task Force as the invited representative of Congressman Jerrold Nadler of New York. He is also a member of the Interstate 95 Coastal Corridor Transportation Investment Area Committee, one of five such committees working with the Transportation Strategy Board.

Mr. Carpenter is also the author of the book: "A Railroad Atlas of the United States in 1946 – Volume 1, The Mid-Atlantic States", published by Johns Hopkins

University Press in 2003. Volume 2, covering New York state and New England, was published in spring of 2005. Volume 3, which covers Indiana, Ohio and the Lower Peninsula of Michigan and which was published in December 2008. Volume 4, which covers Illinois, Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, was published in October 2011.

Morton N. Katz - Bus User

Attorney Morton N. Katz of Avon has been a consistent user of the Avon-Canton commuter bus to and from Hartford since its inception. His stop in Hartford is two blocks from Superior Court. He uses bus travel extensively to go to New York. The bus line to Springfield takes him to the bus terminal three blocks from the Amtrak station where he can catch the North Shore Limited to Cleveland. He makes frequent trips via Amtrak through the Northeast Corridor to New York, Delaware and Pennsylvania. He serves as a Magistrate in a number of G.A. Courts and is Assigned Counsel with the Public Defender's Office and a Justice of the Peace. Morton has twice received the Secretary of the State's Award for Dedicated Public Service.

Mort serves with Connecticut Legal Services providing *pro bono* legal services to indigent clients. He is the 2010 recipient of the Hartford County Bar Association Pro Bono Award and is a recent recipient of the French Legion of Honor for his services in the liberation of France in World War II.

William C. Kelaher – Rail Labor Representative

Mr. Kelaher is the Assistant National Legislative Director for the Transportation Communication Union AFL-CIO. He represents the Railroad Clerks in New England, New York and New Jersey. He is also a former District Chairman of Lodge 227, New Haven, Connecticut that represents members of Amtrak and Metro-North in the states of Connecticut and New York. Bill resides in West Haven.

Yvonne A. Loteczka - Mobility Impaired Transit User

Ms. Loteczka is chair of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Task Force. Yvonne was Co-chair of the Special Act 90-10 Elderly and Disabled Transportation Subcommittee. She also served on a subcommittee of the Wethersfield Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities that compiled and completed the first Directory of Services for the Disabled for the town of Wethersfield.

Kevin Maloney – Trucking Company Management

Kevin Maloney is the President/CEO of Northeast Express Transportation, Inc. which operates NEXTAir, NEXTCourier and NEXTDistribution. He presently serves on the Board of Directors of the Motor Transport Association of Connecticut and, during

2010, he was reelected as the president of the Connecticut Messenger Courier Association. He served on the Board of Directors of the Air and Expedited Carrier Association for over twenty-five years and was its president from 1987 through 1991. He has served on a variety of air freight industry committees formed to establish standards of performance and communication for the non-integrated, door-to-door air freight product. In 2012, Mr. Maloney was appointed to the Regulatory Fairness Board (Region I) of the Small Business Administration and was appointed Region I chairman in 2013.

Edward G. McAnaney

Mr. McAnaney is the First Selectman of Suffield, being first elected in November 2011. He served as the Judge of the Suffield-East Granby Probate District for 11 years through 2011. He is also a Magistrate of the Superior Court and practices law in Suffield. He has a life-long interest in railroading and is a conductor and brakeman for the Naugatuck Railroad and a trustee of the Railroad Museum of New England.

Mr. McAnaney served in the U.S. Navy for 28 years, commanding ten units during that time including Naval Coastal Warfare Squadron 25 in Iraq and, briefly, the George Washington Carrier Battle Group.

Robert Rodman

Mr. Rodman, a resident of Avon, represents transit users who are sixty years of age or older. Transportation modes have been intertwined with his life. He initially lived in the Boston metropolitan area where he was a rider on a variety of transportation modes including trolley cars, buses and trains. Upon moving to the suburb of Sharon, Massachusetts just prior to World War II, he traveled on the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad that served as an important transportation link to Boston.

Russell St. John - Railroad Company Management

Mr. St. John is the former President of the Connecticut Central Railroad, now a part of the Providence and Worcester Railroad, a regional freight carrier for whom he acts as a consultant. Russ is intimately involved in the rail freight business in Connecticut. He has worked with several groups to preserve rail freight lines in this state. Russ is active on the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce where he serves on the Legislative Committee and the Rail Council. He currently serves as a member of Connecticut's Operation Lifesaver Program. He represents Granby on the Board of Directors of the Greater Hartford Transit District and has been interested in rail and bus commuter issues.

Richard Schreiner – Transit District Representative

Mr. Schreiner is Director of Service Development for the Housatonic Area Regional Transit District (HARTransit) in Danbury. He has expertise in the areas of transit operations, transportation planning, service design, procurement, public relations and regulatory requirements. He is the former Executive Director of the Long Island Sound Taskforce (now Save the Sound), a non-profit environmental organization. Mr. Schreiner resides in Derby with his wife and children.

Richard Sunderhauf - Bus Labor Union Representative

Mr. Sunderhauf, appointed to the Commission in 1998, is active in the affairs of the Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 425, AFL-CIO, which represents the bus operators and mechanics of Connecticut Transit's Hartford Division. Richard is a bus operator for that company. He is particularly interested in system and equipment improvements, increased service and ridership on public transportation, and decreased congestion on our roads. Richard resides in Rocky Hill with his wife Brenda.

Alan Sylvestre

Mr. Sylvestre brings a perspective that is informed by more than thirty-five years of using public transportation to get around the Greater Hartford area. Al is an American Planning Association-certified land use planner and works as an economic geographer at the Connecticut Department of Labor. His knowledge and experience are further enriched by his roles as advisory board chairman and client of the Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind.

Ex-Officio Members

James P. Redeker

Mr. Redeker was appointed Commissioner of the Department of Transportation in 2011, after serving as Bureau Chief for the Bureau of Public Transportation, a position which he also still holds. He joined the Department in 2008 after a 31-year career in public transportation in New Jersey, culminating with the position of Director of Capital Planning for New Jersey Transit.

Senator Andrew M. Maynard

Senator Maynard represents the 18th Senatorial District which encompasses Griswold, Groton, Stonington, North Stonington, Plainfield, Preston, Sterling and Voluntown and also serves as a co-chairman of the Transportation Committee.

Representative Antonio Guerrero

Representative Guerrero represents the 29th House District, which encompasses Rocky Hill and portions of Newington and Wethersfield, and serves as co-chairman of the Transportation Committee.

Frederick L. Riese

Mr. Riese is the designee of Commissioner Daniel Esty of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. Mr. Riese is a Senior Environmental Analyst with the Office of Environmental Review. He has served on the Commission since its inception in 1984, acting as Interim Chairman from 1997 through early 2002. He had previously served for five years on both the Connecticut Public Transportation Authority and the Governor's Railroad Advisory Task Force.

W. David LeVasseur

Mr. LeVasseur represents Secretary Benjamin Barnes of the Office of Policy and Management. Dave was appointed Acting Undersecretary of Intergovernmental Policy at OPM on January 5, 2011. In that capacity, he oversees the Office of Responsible Growth, which coordinates state agency actions by emphasizing comprehensive planning among several disciplines including: housing, economic development, transportation, brownfield redevelopment, and natural resource protection.

From March 26, 2010 to January 5, 2011, Dave served as the Director of Municipal Finance Services at the Office of Policy and Management. From September 6, 2001 to March 26, 2010, he served as Undersecretary of Intergovernmental Policy at OPM.

Prior to joining state service, Dave served three terms as first selectman of the town of Killingworth, Connecticut and was engaged in the private practice of law. He is a graduate of Western New England College/School of Law, admitted to practice before the Connecticut Bar and served in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps from 1979 – 1983.

AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION

NOTE: During the 2013 General Assembly session, Connecticut General Statute Section 13b-11a was repealed. The identical language was passed in Public Act 13-277, Section 74. Therefore, during calendar year 2013, the Connecticut Public Transportation Commission operated under both C.G. S. Sec. 13b-11a and Public Act 13-277, Section 74.

C.G.S. Sec. 13b-11a. Connecticut Public Transportation Commission

Sec. 13b-11a. Connecticut Public Transportation Commission. (a) There shall be in the Department of Transportation a Connecticut Public Transportation Commission which shall be a successor to the Connecticut Public Transportation Authority and which shall consist of nineteen members, who are electors of the state. Eleven of such members shall be appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be a representative of business and industry and a regular user of railroad or truck freight service; one a regular commuter using railroad passenger service; one a regular bus user; one who is permanently mobility impaired and a frequent bus user; one a working member of a railroad labor union; one a working member of a bus labor union; one a representative of railroad company management; one a representative of trucking company management; two representatives from separate local transit districts and one a person sixty years of age or older. The remaining eight members shall have a background or interest in public transportation and be appointed as follows: Two by the president pro tempore of the Senate; two by the minority leader of the Senate; two by the speaker of the House of Representatives; and two by the minority leader of the House of Representatives. The Commissioner of Transportation, the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and the cochairpersons of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to transportation, or their respective designees, shall serve as nonvoting, ex-officio members of the commission. The term of each member of the commission shall be four years. The term of any member who was appointed by the Governor and who is serving on the commission on October 1, 1985, shall expire December 31, 1985. The term of any member who was appointed by any legislator and who is serving on the board on October 1, 1985, shall expire December 31, 1987. Vacancies on said commission shall be filled for the remainder of the term in the same manner as original appointments.

(b) The commission shall advise and assist the commissioner, the Governor and the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to transportation in the performance of their functions and duties relating to the planning, development and maintenance of adequate rail, bus and motor carrier facilities and rail, bus and other public transportation services including the adequacy of such services for elderly and disabled users in the state and any other matters affecting the quality of public transportation facilities and services in the state. At least once each year, the commission shall hold public hearings in each of the metropolitan areas, as determined by the commission, within the state for the purpose of evaluating the adequacy of such rail, bus, motor carrier and other public transportation facilities.

(c) The commission shall assist the commissioner in developing regulations to formalize arrangements between the department and local transit districts, between local transit districts and transit system operators and between local transit districts.

(d) Repealed by P.A. 77-33, S. 1.

(e) On or before January first, annually, the commission shall submit in writing to the commissioner, the Governor and the Connecticut Transportation Strategy Board, established pursuant to section 13b-57e, (1) a list of public transportation projects, which, if undertaken by the state, would further the policy set forth in section 13b-32, including projects specifically for elderly and disabled users; (2) recommendations for improvements to existing public transportation service and projects, incorporating transportation service and projects relative to the needs of elderly and disabled persons and including proposals for legislation and regulations; (3) recommendations for disincentives to free parking, including urban and suburban employment centers; (4) off-peak transit services; and (5) the establishment of urban center loop shuttles. The commissioner shall notify members of the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to transportation and finance, revenue and bonding, on or before January first, annually, of the availability of the commissioner's comments and analysis of priorities. A written copy or electronic storage media of such comments and analysis shall be distributed to members of such committee who request them. The commissioner shall meet with the commission at least once during each calendar quarter.

(f) The commission may, upon its own motion, undertake any studies it deems necessary for the improvement of a balanced public transportation system within the state, including the improvement of such system for elderly and disabled users. The commission shall have other powers and shall perform such other duties as the commissioner, the Governor and the General Assembly may delegate to it.

(g) Subject to the provisions of chapter 67, and when authorized to do so by the commissioner, the Governor or the General Assembly, the commission may appoint such officers, agents and employees and may retain and employ other consultants or assistants on a contract or other basis for rendering legal, financial, technical or other assistance or advice as may be required to carry out duties or responsibilities. The staff of the department shall be available to assist the commission.

(h) The members of the commission shall receive no compensation for their services as members but shall be reimbursed for the expenses actually and necessarily incurred by them in the performance of their duties. No member of the commission who is otherwise a public officer or employee shall suffer a forfeiture of his office or employment, or any loss or diminution in the rights and privileges pertaining thereto, by reason of such membership.

(i) A quorum of the commission for the purpose of transacting business shall exist only when there is present, in person, a majority of its voting membership. The affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum shall be required for the adoption of a resolution or vote of the commission.

(j) The members of the commission shall elect one of the members as chairperson with the responsibility to act as presiding officer at meetings of the commission. Regular meetings

shall be held at least once in each calendar month and as often as deemed necessary by a majority of members. Any member absent from (1) three consecutive meetings of the commission, or (2) fifty per cent of such meetings during any calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned from the commission, effective on the date that the chairperson notifies the official who appointed such member.

(k) The commission shall have access through the Department of Transportation to all records, reports, plans, schedules, operating rules and other documents prepared by rail and bus companies operating under contract with the state of Connecticut which pertain to the operations of such companies and to any documents that the commission may require from the department to carry out its responsibilities under this section and sections 13b-16, 13b-17 and 16-343, provided this subsection shall not apply to any plans, proposals, reports and other documents pertaining to current or pending negotiations with employee bargaining units.

The Connecticut Public Transportation Commission is charged with the annual task of presenting a list of recommendations which, if undertaken by the State, would further the policy set forth in Section 13b-32 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

SECTION 13b-32

“IMPROVEMENT IN THE TRANSPORTATION OF PEOPLE AND GOODS WITHIN, TO AND FROM THE STATE BY RAIL, MOTOR CARRIER OR OTHER MODE OF MASS TRANSPORTATION ON LAND IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE WELFARE OF THE CITIZENS OF THE STATE AND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITS RESOURCES, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY. THE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF A MODERN, EFFICIENT AND ADEQUATE SYSTEM OF MOTOR AND RAIL FACILITIES AND SERVICES IS REQUIRED. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF SUCH FACILITIES AND SERVICES AND SHALL PROMOTE NEW AND BETTER MEANS OF MASS TRANSPORTATION BY LAND.”