

Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Minutes of August 5, 2010

Union Station, Fourth Floor Conference Room
New Haven, Connecticut

Attendance: Members: Richard Carpenter, Morton Katz, Gail Lavielle, Yvonne Loteczka, Kevin Maloney, Richard Schreiner, Richard Sunderhauf and Alan Sylvestre. **ConnDOT staff:** Dennis King. **Guests:** Josh LeCar, Stuart Lerner, Brooke Hoberman and Robin Stein.

Chairman Maloney called the meeting to order at 1:35 PM. The minutes of the meeting of July 8 were approved as written.

Featured Speaker

Robin Stein, City of Stamford Land Use Bureau, Stuart Lerner of Stantec and Josh LeCar of Keep Stamford Moving provided a presentation on a recently completed study of improvements to the Stamford Transportation Center. The State was initially resistant to the study of the station, which was supported by funds from developers and the City of Stamford. The study should be released the week of August 9.

The Stamford Transportation Center is the second busiest station stop on the New Haven Line after Grand Central Terminal. Ridership is 23,400 per day for MTA users, 2300 per day for CTTRANSIT and 1200 per day for Amtrak. The facility was constructed in the mid 1980s. The last major update was in 2001.

There is a tremendous amount of new development in downtown Stamford. RBS is the latest with 400 thousand square feet of space. The UBS building north of the station site has 500 thousand square feet. Building and Land Technology is revamping the former Yale and Towne complex with 4000 housing units. The Transportation Center is in the middle of all this development.

More people alight at the station in the morning peak than board, a trend not anticipated in the design of the existing facility. Platform congestion is a problem as riders exit to pedestrian tunnels to reach corporate shuttles. Passenger waiting is concentrated at the center of the station, but there is platform capacity. Plans are focused on dispersing passengers along platforms, increasing access points and increased utilization of side platforms. This will be accomplished by construction of pedestrian bridges to nearby streets and surface parking, providing more access to the pedestrian tunnel and extension of platform space.

The existing bus depot is built under I-95 and needs improved lighting, signage and amenities. Real time information both on site and accessible by mobile devices would be desirable. Both the rail and bus portions of the facility need improved wayfinding signage. Choke points are a problem as passengers move through the facility and more covered waiting areas are needed. The study proposes a new station building over State Street, a reconfigured

bus/shuttle terminal, and renovation of existing waiting areas with an expanded waiting area on the east side. A TOD site is planned at the existing garage location.

The existing 800 space garage is deteriorating. There are long waits for monthly parking and insufficient space for daily parking. Options include replacement of the existing garage in-place or relocation of parking to several locations, including existing parking areas. ConnDOT plans to replace the garage and add 200 spaces.

Current vehicular traffic conditions around the facility are marginally acceptable. There are several traffic mitigation projects planned for Atlantic Street and Washington Boulevard as well as improvements to railroad underpasses. In general, an effort is being made to make the area around the station more pedestrian friendly.

Some contingency is being considered for freight uses of the rail line.

Cost estimates for short term improvements to the facility range from \$1.6 million to \$2.6 million. Cumulative total for all projects recommended in the study is approximately \$60 million to \$100 million.

Comments from the Public

None

Comments from Operating Entities

Richard Sunderhauf distributed the July 10 issue of *CTTRANSIT CONNECTION*. The issue covered the 2010 Connecticut Transit Rodeo, which was held on June 13. Commissioner Sunderhauf mentioned that CTTRANSIT was operating under a contract extension until the end of the month. Drivers for Southeast Area Transit (SEAT) have been without a contract for 14 months.

Richard Schreiner distributed copies of *SIGNALS*, a publication of URS Corporation prepared for ConnDOT covering progress on the Danbury CTC Project. *SIGNALS* will be published on a quarterly basis.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Maloney discussed several relevant news articles.

ITN America in the North Central Region is looking for volunteer drivers.

Regional high speed rail planning is in the news. New England States are supporting a plan to operate high speed rail Hartford-Springfield, with proposed extensions to Vermont and Montreal, Canada. Current maximum speeds on the line from Springfield to Vermont are 10 MPH; goal is to boost that to 60 MPH. A Quinnipiac University professor questioned the need for this project and its economic viability.

Old Business

Gail Lavielle suggested the 14th or 16th of September for the legislative briefing. Dennis King will follow up and determine room availability.

New Business

Chairman Maloney reminded those that are chairing hearings this autumn to follow up with press and MPO contacts.

The hearing chairs are as follows:	Waterbury (9/7)	Fred Riese
	Newington (9/29)	Alan Sylvestre
	Stamford (10/5)	Gail Lavielle
	New London (10/20)	Kevin Maloney

Chairman Maloney adjourned the meeting at 3:00 PM.