



Connecticut Public Transportation Commission



Historic Windsor Locks Train Station



Current Amtrak Windsor Locks Station

Candidate Sites for New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Line Station in Windsor Locks

DATE: December 31, 2012

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 2012 Annual Report of the Connecticut Public Transportation Commission as required by the Connecticut General Statutes section 13b-11a(e). The nine recommendations contained in this year's Annual Report reflect public input received at the five public hearings conducted by the Commission across Connecticut and information gathered at our twelve monthly meetings, as well as the expertise and experience of our members. The Commission is cognizant of the fiscal situation currently faced by the State of Connecticut. The nine recommendations of this Annual Report do not call for any new services other than one which would be run privately and would not involve any State-funded operating subsidy.

Overview of Recommendations

The first recommendation stresses the importance of transit service to many of our citizens, to employment opportunities and to host communities and, therefore, recommends that adequate funding to support the successful network of existing transit services be maintained. Most of Connecticut's transit systems are experiencing substantial gains in ridership with some systems at all-time highs.

The second recommendation spotlights the opportunities for transit-oriented development and revitalization if the railroad station for Windsor Locks is sited at the historic train station downtown rather than at the location of the existing Windsor Locks station which is in a remote and isolated site south of town and offers no opportunities for any transit-oriented development or economic spin-offs when the new Springfield Line passenger rail service commences operation.

The role of better marketing and dissemination of information about existing transit service to maximize the public benefit derived from our transit investment is highlighted in the third recommendation, along with one very modest example of such an effort.

The importance of the State Matching Grant Program to support local paratransit services was discussed at three of the Commission's five public hearings and several of its monthly meetings. The results of the \$1,000,000 funding cut made to this program in the last budget are discussed in the fourth recommendation which recommends the restoration of this cut.

Active involvement by the State of Connecticut in the NEC Future study being conducted by the Federal Railroad Administration to look at the needs of, and potential improvements to, Amtrak's Northeast Corridor infrastructure and service is advocated in recommendation #5. The sixth recommendation recognizes an on-going study by the Housatonic Railroad to develop an unsubsidized passenger rail service on the Berkshire Line between Danbury and Pittsfield, Massachusetts and, as this proposal takes shape, requests ConnDOT's assistance, as appropriate.

The seventh and eighth recommendations thank ConnDOT for its advocacy and its funding support for two important facility projects, namely the demolition of an abandoned, State-owned building at the Waterbury train station which will allow for other improvements at that site to go forward, and the development of a new bus storage and maintenance facility in Willimantic for the Windham Region Transit District.

Lastly, the assistance of ConnDOT in making user-friendly upgrades to the Commission's website is requested in the ninth recommendation. Following the last recommendation are four short discussions of other issues raised at the Commission's public hearings. These issues concern smoking on railroad station platforms, public announcements at rail stations when arriving trains have been switched to alternate tracks, the provision of rest room facilities at transit hubs, and the consideration of transit availability when facility siting and land use decisions are made.

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, 2012

COVER PHOTOS:

The historic Windsor Locks train station (top) and the current Amtrak station south of downtown Windsor Locks (bottom). The Town would like to see the train stop restored to the downtown location with a restored station in order to promote transit-oriented development and other economic benefits when enhanced passenger service commences on the Springfield Line. (Photos courtesy K. Maloney, 2012)

DEDICATION

The Commission dedicates this year's Annual Report to Tom Cheeseman and Frank Partridge. Tom was a member of the Commission from 2000 through 2011 and served as its chairman from 2002 to 2009. Tom was also the Administrator of Middletown Area Transit during his tenure on the Commission. Members fondly recall Tom for his devoted efforts on behalf of public transportation, his easy going manner and his endless supply of very corny puns, always kept at the ready. Tom passed away on February 1, 2012.

Frank Partridge, who passed away on August 28 of this past year, was the bus labor representative on the Commission from its creation in 1983 until 1989 and also served on the predecessor Connecticut Public Transportation Authority from 1975 until 1983. Frank always carried himself with quiet dignity and a seriousness of purpose and is warmly remembered by those who served with him.

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ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION IN 2012

Kevin Maloney served his third year as Chairman of the Connecticut Public Transportation Commission in 2012, with Richard Schreiner serving as Vice Chairman, also for the third year. Frederick Riese continued as the Commission's Administrative Vice Chairman. During 2012, the Commission was saddened by the deaths of former chairman Tom Cheeseman on February 1 and former vice chairman Frank Partridge on August 28.

Monthly Meetings

As set forth in Connecticut General Statutes section 13b-11a(j), the Commission met on the first Thursday of each month. In 2012, five of these meetings were held at the Connecticut Department of Transportation headquarters in Newington, two were held at Union Station in New Haven, three at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, one meeting was held at Greater Bridgeport Transit, and one at the offices of the Greater Hartford Transit District.

The monthly meetings featured presentations by invited speakers on timely transportation topics. Charlene Casamento, then the ConnDOT Bureau Chief for Finance and Administration, briefed the Commission on the upgrades and management of the 23 highway service plazas at the February meeting. In March, Mary Tomolonius, Executive Director of the Connecticut Association for Community Transportation, discussed the role of public transportation in Connecticut and some current issues facing providers and users. Colin Pease, Vice President for Special Projects at the Housatonic Railroad, updated the Commission on the proposal by his company to operate non-subsidized passenger rail service on the Berkshire Line between Danbury and Pittsfield at the April meeting.

The Commission's May meeting was held at the Greater Bridgeport Transit bus facility where the Commission was briefed on the operations of GBT and on communication and technical initiatives recently undertaken by GBT. Douglas Holcomb, Executive Director of GBT led the presentation. In June, Mario Marrero of the Capitol Region Council of Governments discussed the history and the current operations of the Jobs Access and Reverse Commute program in the Capitol Region designed to assist low income residents in accessing employment sites. The July meeting featured Joe Martin, Account Executive with the Providence and Worcester Railroad, discussing the operations and recent initiatives of his company in Connecticut. ConnDOT's Assistant Administrator of the Office of Rail, Richard Jankovich, discussed the new M-8 railcars, the catenary replacement project on the New Haven Line, the Stamford Station project, Shore Line East and other timely passenger rail issues at the Commission's August meeting.

Marco Henry, President of Yellow Cab and William Scalzi, President and CEO of Metro Taxi discussed the taxi industry in Connecticut, new technological developments in the industry, regulation of the industry and their recommendations for improving the industry at the September meeting. In October, the Commission heard from Lisa Rivers, Supervisory Transportation Planner at ConnDOT, about the New Freedom Program and initiatives that have been funded through it and also about the State Matching Grant program for paratransit operations. Lastly, the November meeting featured Donald DeVivo and Cliff Gibson, the President and Chief Operating Officer, respectively, of DATTCO, who discussed the history of their company, its current operations, its partnerships with ConnDOT and some issues facing the company and the industry.

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

During 2012, the Commission conducted five public hearings to gather input from transportation users and providers, local officials and planners, non-profit organizations, and other members of the public. The first of these was held in Waterbury in May. The Commission visited Bridgeport and Storrs in September and Winsted and Windsor in October. These hearings, a requirement of C.G.S. section 13b-11a(b), provide information which is then used both in the formulation of the Annual Report, and also to resolve conflicts, issues and questions raised at the hearings, either by providing the information at the hearing or by facilitating the contacts necessary to achieve a resolution.

Several issues were raised at multiple public hearings. Good news about substantial ridership gains on local transit systems was imparted at the first four of these hearings. The need for bus storage and maintenance facilities for the local bus and paratransit fleets was discussed at the Waterbury, Storrs and Winsted hearings, while the importance of the State Matching Grant program implemented under Connecticut General Statutes sect. 13b-38bb and the effect of last year's budget cuts on the local services operated under this program were discussed in Waterbury, Storrs and Winsted. Other topics raised at the hearings were more related to purely local issues.

Major topics at the Commission's Waterbury hearing included the success of the evening bus service instituted last year, the demolition of the abandoned SNET building and other improvements at the Waterbury train station, the benefits and drawbacks of the bus system pulse point at The Green, and the reduction in Dial-a-Ride service due to the cuts in the State Matching Grant program.

Issues raised in Bridgeport included the substantial increase experienced in bus ridership, the need for specific new routes to access employment areas, problems at train

stations with the lack of warning about track changes and with smoking on the platforms, bicycle routes and a bicycle sharing program, and transit funding volatility. The Storrs hearing featured extensive testimony on the new Storrs intermodal center, on the plans for the new bus facility for the Windham Region Transit District, and on ridership growth and overcrowding on the District's system.

The need for a bus facility for the Northwestern Connecticut Transit District (NWCTD) dominated the Winsted public hearing, with strong ridership on the District's Jobs Access runs and the desire to formalize and sign the bus stops on the NWCTD system being other salient topics. Lastly, at Windsor the main issues were the desire of the Town of Windsor Locks to have the train station sited at the historic downtown train station rather than at the existing station location south of town. Other issues were the upcoming institution of local bus service in Enfield, the need for better suburb-to-suburb bus routes which are not routed via downtown Hartford, better bus service within Manchester, and fostering more transit-friendly development patterns.

More detailed discussion of these issues and other testimony can be found on pages 17-39 of this Annual Report.

PROJECTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT ADEQUATE FUNDING LEVELS FOR EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICES BE MAINTAINED. RIDERSHIP ON RAIL AND BUS SERVICES IS REBOUNDED FROM LOWS AFTER THE SEVERE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN. MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING SERVICE IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR JOBS ACCESS ENHANCEMENTS INSTITUTED BEGINNING IN THE LATE 1990s THAT HAVE HELPED PROVIDE A MEANS TO EMPLOYMENT FOR THOUSANDS OF CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS.

Public transportation serves several very important roles in Connecticut's economy and way of life. Transit as access to employment is a key factor in the state's economy. Statistics show that some 60% of transit trips are employment-related. According to the Connecticut Department of Labor, access to transportation is the number one barrier preventing individuals from obtaining employment. ConnDOT has developed a nationally recognized model to improve jobs access in the state with highly successful services including expanded transit routes, evening bus services, employer-based transportation, car repairs and guaranteed ride programs.

Urban planners have noted that young people in particular are gravitating to cities served by public transit because they are often saddled with high college loan debt and cannot afford to purchase a car, or in many cases they just prefer not to drive. Connecticut is struggling to hold on to this key demographic; according to the Partnership for Strong Communities, Connecticut saw a 28 percent drop in its 25 to 34 year-old population from 1990 to 2010.

The demand for transit services is particularly strong presently. This year, the New Haven Line became the most heavily used rail line in the US, further, the greatest percentage of increase on the line is occurring on trips within the state. Ridership on local bus services is increasing as well. Greater Bridgeport Transit, for example, experienced an increase of 6% in ridership and is carrying its highest numbers in 10 years. Many trips are at or near capacity. Other districts are reporting similar ridership gains.

Beyond the actual provision of service, numerous studies have demonstrated the economic benefits of transit. The America Public Transportation Association (APTA) has demonstrated that households likely to use public transit save over \$9800 annually when compared to those with no access to transit. There are other well recognized benefits to public transit beyond the access it affords including reduced accidents, congestion relief and reduced emissions. Multiple studies have demonstrated that investment in transit services has a multiplier effect on the economy.

Connecticut has a winning formula of rail, urban fixed route bus and jobs access services that is integral to the economic success of the state. While funding constraints make the current possibilities for expansion difficult, it is in the best interest of all residents for Connecticut to maintain the transit services it currently possesses.

2. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THE NEW PASSENGER RAILROAD STATION FOR WINDSOR LOCKS, TO BE CONSTRUCTED AS AN ELEMENT OF ENHANCED PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE ON THE SPRINGFIELD LINE, BE LOCATED IN DOWNTOWN WINDSOR LOCKS AT THE HISTORIC WINDSOR LOCKS TRAIN STATION RATHER THAN AT THE LOCATION OF THE CURRENT WINDSOR LOCKS STATION SOUTH OF TOWN.

A downtown passenger railroad station in Windsor Locks would be an important element of the fabric of that town's center and would offer opportunities for transit-oriented development that the current station location does not offer. There have already been expressions of interest in several downtown properties in anticipation of the enhanced Springfield Line passenger service, including several purchases of property near the historic station site.

In addition, the Town and the Capitol Region Council of Governments have made planning and infrastructure investments to pro-actively prepare for a rail station downtown. The Town has received a \$225,000 Main Street grant to fund the planning for and restoration of the historic downtown train station. With funding from CRCOG, a study of the transit-oriented development potential in downtown Windsor Locks is just getting underway now. The Town has also recently completed a \$230,000 project to rebuild sidewalks downtown. Further, the Town has been engaged in talks with Amtrak to acquire the historic downtown train station and those talks have been progressing toward a favorable conclusion. It is clear that the Town of Windsor Locks is putting its resources behind the effort to locate the rail station downtown.

In contrast, the location of the existing train station, south of downtown and in an area remote from proximal commercial or residential development, offers no opportunities for transit-oriented development or downtown enhancement. It does offer parking and convenient highway access, but the downtown location also offers opportunities for significant parking, and is within walking distance for many residents to access the station.

3. THE COMMISSION NOTES THE CRITICAL ROLE THAT EFFECTIVE MARKETING OF EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICE PLAYS IN MAXIMIZING BOTH RIDERSHIP AND THE PUBLIC VALUE RECEIVED FROM EACH TRANSIT DOLLAR SPENT.

The need for more effective dissemination of information about new and existing transit services has not only been a recurring theme at the Commission's hearings across the state but this so-called "information gap" was identified as the top unmet need in the 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. 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.

To the latter end, the Commission commends a recent example of a targeted, small budget marketing effort funded by the Department, namely the provision of \$5,000 in New Freedom funding to the Northwestern Connecticut Transit District to publicize the District's Dial-a-Ride service for Winsted residents. Though this is a small, local project with minimal funding, it is an example of addressing the gap in transit information that has been expressed to the Commission year after year and in every corner of Connecticut.

In the case of the Winsted Dial-a-Ride publicity, which was a mass mailing that went out on October 11, the residents of Winsted were informed not only about the existing Dial-a-Ride service offered by the transit district but also of the extension of hours of operation with three extra hours of service being run on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons for a full 9 am to 6 pm schedule as well as adding Sunday service from 9 am to 3 pm. Though this information has only been available to the public for a short time, the District has been seeing a trend of increasing ridership during the three hours of extended operations each afternoon as well as for Sunday trips. Over the years, the Commission has heard countless times from both transit operators and members of the public that information on the availability of many transit services is not sufficiently widespread to inform all would-be riders. Additional marketing and publicity, such as this small example from the NWCTD, can be a very cost effective way to increase the effective amount of service available without having to fund any additional operating costs. The Department is encouraged to look for other opportunities to better inform the public of transit services it operates or funds.

One 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.

4. THE COMMISSION REITERATES ITS SUPPORT FOR THE RESTORATION OF FUNDING TO THE 13b-38bb STATE MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAM FOR FY 2014. FUNDING FOR THE PROGRAM, WHICH SUPPORTS DIAL-A-RIDE TRANSPORTATION OF SENIORS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES STATEWIDE, WAS REDUCED DURING THE BUDGET PROCESS FROM \$4 MILLION TO \$3 MILLION. THE MAJORITY OF TOWNS AND CITIES IN THE STATE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS PROGRAM AND THOSE IN RURAL AREAS WITH THE LEAST SERVICE AVAILABLE WERE DISPROPORTIONATELY AFFECTED BY THIS FUNDING CUT.

In its 2011 annual report, the CPTC expressed its concern about the loss of funds to the 13b-38bb Municipal Grant Program. This program is not a significant outlay for the state, but has a far reaching positive impact to some of Connecticut's most at-risk residents. Approximately 130-135 municipalities apply for program funding annually and receive an apportionment based on the square mileage of the municipality and the senior population.

As a result of the funding reduction, support to each municipality was reduced by 25%, in some cases to levels where the remaining service became totally ineffective. In Roxbury, for example, its one day per week wheelchair accessible service was reduced to roughly 3.5 hours each Wednesday. In this small community, there are no regularly scheduled bus or rail services.

Even in larger cities, access for seniors and the disabled has suffered. North East Transportation of Waterbury cut 32 hours of service and could no longer offer rides on Monday and Saturday. Estuary Transit District eliminated Saturday Dial-a-Ride service and cut its Monday hours. Manchester reduced its level of service by one hour per day. These are only representative examples of cuts made in other cities and towns.

According to AARP, "public transportation is essential to help older people get around in their communities, and this is increasingly important as our oldest age segments grow. By 2030, it is projected that 8.7 million Americans will be age 85 and over, and a substantial portion of them will no longer drive." The cost of aging at home is far less than the average monthly cost of nursing homes; nursing care costs nearly four times as much as home health care and assisted living.

Services such as those provided through the Municipal Grant Program are key to residents being able to age in place, as driving becomes more difficult for them.

5. THE COMMISSION RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF THE VERY AMBITIOUS NEC FUTURE PLANNING STUDY THAT THE FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION (FRA) IS UNDERTAKING TO ASSESS AND ADDRESS CAPACITY, SPEED AND SERVICE NEEDS ON AMTRAK'S NORTHEAST CORRIDOR (NEC). THIS 38-MONTH STUDY WILL EVALUATE BOTH IMPROVEMENTS ALONG THE EXISTING NORTHEAST CORRIDOR ALIGNMENT, INCLUDING ITS BRANCHES, TO MEET IDENTIFIED NEEDS, AND ALSO A POTENTIAL SEPARATE NEW ALIGNMENT DEDICATED FOR HIGH-SPEED RAIL SERVICE. THE COMMISSION COMMENDS FRA FOR UNDERTAKING THIS COMPREHENSIVE, PRO-ACTIVE LOOK AT THE NEEDS OF THE CORRIDOR AND HOPES THAT, AT A MINIMUM, IT SIGNALS INCREASING INVESTMENT IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS OF THIS HEAVILY USED RAIL LIFELINE.

Both elements of the NEC Future study, namely defining, evaluating and prioritizing investments in the existing Northeast Corridor and planning for a potential future dedicated, high-speed line, are of critical value to Connecticut in addressing our transportation needs between now and the planning horizon of 2040. The close involvement of Connecticut, particularly through ConnDOT, is called for to advocate for Connecticut's needs. Unlike other NEC states, Connecticut is the owner of a major segment of the Corridor within its borders which gives this state a unique interest in the study which other states do not share. Connecticut's ownership of the Greenwich to New Haven segment of the NEC has also historically put our state at a disadvantage in obtaining Federal investment in the corridor. Regardless of the eventual outcome of any decision on a new, high-speed corridor, the continued investment in the existing NEC alignment and infrastructure is essential, and the role of this study effort to best identify and prioritize needs is an important one. In performing this study, it is imperative that the FRA recognize and plan for the needs of other users of the corridor, namely commuter services and freight providers.

The longer range, and more speculative, element of the NEC Future study is the identification, construction and operation of a dedicated high-speed passenger rail corridor, which may involve a totally new alignment between New York City and Boston. Any new alignment crossing Connecticut must be carefully coordinated with multiple State agencies and must be convincingly justified in terms of projected ridership, economic benefits, environmental acceptability and compatibility with other transit services.

Note: The current stage of the NEC Future study involves information gathering on population and employment trends in the corridor, on the capacity of other transportation modes in the corridor, on infrastructure condition and constraints, and on environmental resources. As such, no specific options for evaluation have been developed yet.

6. THE COMMISSION CONTINUES TO FOLLOW WITH GREAT INTEREST THE PROPOSAL BY THE HOUSATONIC RAILROAD FOR THE OPERATION OF UNSUBSIDIZED PASSENGER SERVICE OVER ITS 90 MILE CORRIDOR FROM DANBURY, CONNECTICUT AND PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS. SHOULD THIS PROPOSAL ULTIMATELY APPEAR TO BE OPERATIONALLY FEASIBLE AND FISCALLY VIABLE, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT CONNDOT PROVIDE APPROPRIATE ASSISTANCE IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION.

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. Since last year's Annual Report, several developments have occurred relative to this proposal. The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission received a \$240,000 planning grant to evaluate station locations and related infrastructure needs in Berkshire County and is about to commence this study. Also, Housatonic has made a proposal to ConnDOT for the initial extension of passenger rail service from Danbury to New Milford. This proposal would involve Housatonic borrowing funds to upgrade the 14 miles of track and construct two new stations, with Metro-North running the service. It is Housatonic's belief that there is sufficient availability of equipment and crew time and sufficient flexibility in the Danbury Branch schedule to accommodate this service extension to New Milford without adding significant operating cost for Metro-North. The proposal would involve ConnDOT covering the payments on Housatonic's loan with the incremental revenues received by Metro-North as a result of the additional new ridership on the Danbury Branch, which Housatonic believes would sufficiently reduce ConnDOT's required subsidy payments to Metro-North to cover the loan payments. While the Commission cannot comment on the accuracy of Housatonic's ridership and revenue assumptions, this plan for an initial expansion of passenger rail service on the Berkshire Line at least puts forward some creative thinking. We look forward to ConnDOT's analysis of this proposal. It may be that an incremental approach to restoring passenger rail service on the Berkshire Line is in order and, if so, this proposal could be the first step.

Beyond this proposal for a phase 1 service to New Milford, the more ambitious proposal for passenger rail service to Pittsfield would also benefit Metro-North revenues as well since the bulk of the new ridership would come from the New York City area and would use Metro-North service to access the Housatonic passenger trains. 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, divert some Harlem Line riders to Connecticut, augment Danbury Branch revenues,

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.

7. THE COMMISSION COMMENDS CONNDOT FOR SPONSORING THE BOND REQUEST FOR FUNDING TO DEMOLISH THE ABANDONED PROPERTY AT 333 MEADOW STREET AT THE WATERBURY TRAIN STATION AND RELATED IMPROVEMENTS AT THE STATION.

Many potential users of the Waterbury train station are discouraged from using the site by the unsafe appearance and feeling of poor security at that facility, which in large degree stem from the presence of the derelict Southern New England Telephone Company (SNET) building located between the parking lot and Meadow Street. In addition to being an eyesore, this building, which is now owned by ConnDOT, blocks the parking area from view from Meadow Street, impeding law enforcement surveillance and creating a feeling that the parking area may not be safe. Even those who do park at this site complain of the same feeling.

The first step in improving both the public perception of the Waterbury train station and the amenities at the station is the demolition of the SNET building. Many public officials and other speakers at the Commission's September 7, 2010 public hearing in Waterbury called for the removal of this structure as a necessary first step in improving the appearance and usage of the station.

Finally, this important step appears to be imminent. ConnDOT has been supportive of efforts to remove the SNET building and has sponsored a bond request for \$1,700,000 to accomplish the demolition and make related improvements at the station. The State Bond Commission approved this funding at its December 10 meeting. In addition, the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) has supported station improvements by reprogramming other funds from related projects in the train station area. Current plans call for the bonding to fund asbestos abatement at the SNET building, demolition of the building, the construction of a paved parking lot of approximately 50 spaces on the site, renovation of the train station baggage room into a public waiting area, and the addition of public rest rooms. Design plans for this work have been completed and it is anticipated that the demolition contract will be put out to bid immediately as soon as the approved funding becomes available. Work could begin as soon as late February 2013. If this start date is made, it is anticipated that improvements will be complete by September 2013

8. THE COMMISSION COMMENDS THE DEPARTMENT ON THE SUBSTANTIAL RECENT PROGRESS TOWARD THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW VEHICLE STORAGE AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY FOR THE WINDHAM REGION TRANSIT DISTRICT AND ENCOURAGES THAT THIS PROJECT MOVE FORWARD AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. IDEALLY, IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE IF ON-SITE FUELING CAPACITY FOR THE DISTRICT'S VEHICLES COULD BE INCORPORATED INTO THE NEW FACILITY, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF A LONG-CONSIDERED MOVE OF THE TOWN GARAGE, AT WHICH THE DISTRICT'S VEHICLES ARE CURRENTLY FUELED, TO A SITE WHICH MAY BE SIGNIFICANTLY LESS CONVENIENT TO THE DISTRICT'S NEW FACILITY THAN IS THE CURRENT TOWN GARAGE.

The Commission is encouraged by the recent progress to address the longstanding need for a bus storage and maintenance facility for the Windham Region Transit District to replace the current outdoor parking lot at which the District's 26 vehicles are stored. The District also does not have any capability to perform maintenance or repair work on its vehicles, but must have this work done at a local garage at a rate of \$95.00 per hour. A site on South Frontage Road in Windham, just south of U.S. Route 6 has been identified to host the new bus facility, and design work for the facility has now been completed.

The proposed facility will represent a huge improvement in fostering more efficient transit operations, vehicle security, protection from inclement weather, and especially in providing maintenance capability for the District which must currently contract out repairs as simple as replacing a headlight. In the longer term, planning for the ability to fuel the District's vehicles on-site or, failing this, at least at a proximally convenient location, should begin. While at present, on-site fueling would offer a relatively small time savings compared to driving to the Windham town garage, should the latter facility be moved to a potential site in South Windham, this would add a highly problematic 30 to 45 minute round trip to fuel each vehicle.

While the Commission recognizes that there are similar pressing needs for bus garage facilities for the Northwestern Connecticut Transit District in Torrington and for North East Transportation in Waterbury, the WRTD facility is moving along on a time track which is well ahead of the other facilities and therefore is the facility focused on in this report. The Commission does, however, note the recently released schedule for the North East Transportation garage calling for bid advertisement by the end of 2013 and commencement of construction in mid-2014.

9. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPGRADE THE COMMISSION'S WEBSITE TO ALLOW POSTING OF COMMENTS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC ABOUT THE COMMISSION'S MEETINGS AND HEARINGS AS WELL ALLOWING REQUESTS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC FOR THE CPTC TO HOLD A HEARING IN THEIR COMMUNITY. SECONDLY, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT AN "ABOUT US" TAB BE ADDED TO THE WEBSITE EXPLAINING THE MISSION OF THE COMMISSION. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMISSION'S ACTIVITIES IS NOW FOUND ON THE SITE UNDER "MEMBERSHIP", HOWEVER THIS INFORMATION SHOULD BE MORE PROMINENT AND MORE EASILY FOUND ON THE SITE.

The Commission has also received numerous comments at its various public hearings about the perceived lack of information about public transportation, and in particular, bus schedules. Indeed, many citizens have offered testimony to the Commission requesting specific service only to find that service already existed in one fashion or another. The Commission proposes to encourage the appropriate regional transit provider to present a brief outline of its network capabilities at any CPTC public hearing held within its service area in the hope that the informational session will promote greater attendance and result in a more informed public.

Lastly, the Commission would welcome direction from Commissioner Redeker and his staff with regard to scheduling Commission public hearings in locations where the Department is seeking direction or comment on a specific issue or project.

OTHER TRANSIT ISSUES ARISING FROM COMMISSION HEARINGS

The following four issues have been raised at one or more of the Commission's 2012 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.

Smoking on New Haven Line train platforms: One speaker at our September 12 Bridgeport hearing noted a lack of enforcement of smoking prohibitions on the platforms at Stamford and Bridgeport. Since she did not note any signage prohibiting smoking on the platforms or see any visible enforcement of a no smoking policy, she asked if smoking was allowed or prohibited on the platforms. When told it was not allowed, she said that Bridgeport and Stamford in particular seem to have this problem. She did not see smoking on the platforms at New Rochelle, Stratford or New Haven, the other stations she regularly uses.

While it would not be realistic to have personnel on every platform for every train to enforce a smoking ban, at a minimum signage at each platform should inform riders of this policy so that there would not be any ambiguity concerning the smoking policy on platforms. Spot enforcement by Metro-North and/or local police at problem stations would also go a long way toward discouraging violations of the no smoking policy.

Announcements concerning train arrivals on alternate tracks: The same speaker who voiced the questions about smoking policy also discussed a problem she has experienced at the Bridgeport train 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. She suggested that better signage or announcements would be a help to direct passengers when track changes occur. 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 and it suspects that this issue has a much broader applicability than what was experienced by this one speaker in Bridgeport.

Lack of rest rooms at transit stations and hubs: The very basic need for rest room facilities and the results of the lack thereof were raised at two hearings (Waterbury and Bridgeport) in connection with both rail and bus services. A downtown Waterbury merchant complained of the lack of rest rooms at the Green in Waterbury which functions as the transfer point for 2,000-2,500 bus riders each day. This lack of facilities puts a strain on downtown businesses which may be called upon to make up for this deficiency. This was strongly hinted to be the issue

behind much of the push by some downtown interests to move the bus transfer point off the Green. A similar issue was raised concerning the use of a stairwell at the Bridgeport train station for bodily functions. For the bus hubs, the rest room facilities would also be of significant value to the bus drivers who are in many locales finding it increasingly difficult to access private rest rooms. While it would be difficult , if not impossible, to provide rest room facilities at all significant transit hubs, these two observations speak to a need to elevate rest facilities to a higher priority in assessing transit facility needs.

Consideration of transit accessibility in siting decisions: Lastly, the desire for improved transit access to serve multiple commercial and employment sites was voiced at several hearings this year, and has historically been raised at multiple Commission hearings each year. While in some cases, funding from the Job Access and Reverse Commute program, from the former Transportation Strategy Board or from other sources has been used to extend transit routes to serve commercial arteries, malls, government facilities and other sites, there seems to be a recurrent trend to overlook the availability (or lack thereof) of transit services when siting and development decisions are made by both private and public entities. This is often followed by an after-the-fact request for transit routes to be extended to a new facility so that workers, clients, customers, patients or others can reach this destination. While private development decisions in particular are made largely independent of public agencies, it appears that more direction, or at least more encouragement, could be provided by local planning and zoning agencies and town planners to direct facilities and developments which are likely to attract or depend on transit users to more strongly consider sites on, or within walking distance of, existing transit lines rather than allowing the developments to occur in non-transit served locations and then expecting transit operators to be able to fund and operate the additional services necessary to reach them.

2012 PUBLIC HEARINGS

SCHEDULE AND SUMMARIES

2012 Public Hearings

SCHEDULE AND SUMMARIES

In accordance with C.G.S. Section 13b-11a(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 five public hearings, as listed below, during the spring and fall of 2012.

<u>TOWN</u>	<u>MODERATOR</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
Waterbury	Frederick Riese	May 11	Waterbury City Hall
Bridgeport	Richard Schreiner	September 12	Bridgeport City Hall
Storrs	Frederick Riese	September 27	Mansfield Town Hall
Winsted	Frederick Riese	October 10	Winsted Town Hall
Windsor	Morton Katz	October 16	Windsor Town Hall

**Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Public Hearing**

Waterbury City Hall,
235 Grand Street
Waterbury, Connecticut
Tuesday, May 11, 2012

CPTC VOTING MEMBERS

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

CPTC EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Fred Riese

CONNDOT

Dennis King

INTRODUCTION:

Hearing moderator Frederick Riese opened the hearing at 7:34 PM. Mr. Riese welcomed the attendees and gave a brief description of the purpose of the hearing and the function of the Commission. He then introduced the Commission members and ConnDOT staff in attendance.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Phyllis Catuccio said she loves the evening bus service which was instituted last October. She also commended improvements made at the railroad station. Since all her relatives live out of town, she travels often.

After highlighting these two positive developments, she mentioned several areas of need. When she recently attempted to get to New Haven by 10:30 am on a Saturday, she found there was no bus to New Haven that day. She had to take the train from Waterbury to Bridgeport and then take Amtrak to New Haven. She could have just caught the Amtrak train from Hartford to New Haven if there was a way to get from Waterbury to Hartford, but the Peter Pan bus to Hartford costs \$20. On the following day she took Metro-North back from New York City to New Haven, took Amtrak to Meriden and then had to get a taxi ride to Waterbury.

Catuccio also suggested a downtown shuttle bus service connecting the Brass Mill Mall and downtown would be very useful. Such a service was proposed when the mall was initially built but it never materialized. Such a circulator should also stop at the train station and the library. Lastly, she noted that benches at the bus shelters would be very welcome.

Dominic Rinaldi suggested that rather than expanding Interstate 84 to three lanes in each direction, as is currently proposed through Waterbury, the highway should be four lanes in each direction. He also suggested that monorail service should be build along Interstates 91, 84, and 95 and along Routes 2 and 15. Moderator Riese explained that currently the only operational

monorail systems operate within discrete facilities such as airports and theme parks but there are no monorail systems anywhere of the lengths he is suggesting. Also, ConnDOT does not believe in constructing redundant transportation systems in the same corridor. In the cases of Interstates 91 and 95, there is already passenger train service operating in addition to the highway in those corridors.

Richard Hupprich observed that the Connecticut Transit J bus between Waterbury and New Haven works really well, especially in conjunction with other transit services available in New Haven, and with the new Waterbury evening bus service. He finds the Waterbury bus service is always on time and the drivers are very good. He hopes the proposed new bus facility for North East Transportation happens in short order. Hupprich would like to see bus service extended up Thomaston Avenue to the DMV office there and more service to Watertown, but in general he can't say enough about the great job North East Transportation is doing. The staff is also very good at providing information.

Hupprich does think there is too much traffic downtown but that moving the bus service pulse point to the train station would strand elderly and handicapped riders. He suggested a shuttle system be run between The Green and the train station. His final observations were that a bus fare increase is a counterproductive idea, that the panhandlers, etc. on The Green are not bus riders, and that better transit connections are needed from Waterbury to other cities.

Reginald Beamon, a former State representative from Waterbury and a longtime transit proponent, thanked the Commission for its work. He also thanked the public attendees of the hearing and thanked Barbara Kalosky and North East Transportation for the evening bus service. Beamon said the Commission's Annual Reports were always greatly used by the General Assembly and others in Hartford. He praised the new buses operating in Waterbury and the new routes being operated. Beamon notes a recent advertisement for 400 summer jobs at Lake Quassapaug Amusement Park but noted that for young people without cars these jobs are not accessible. He believes public transportation is a civil right. Unless people advocate for public transportation, it will always be cut from the budget. Beamon closed by saying the Commission has been very impactful for public transportation during its tenure.

Sam Gold, senior planner at the Central Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, has been with the COG for 8 years. He commended the CPTC for its service, and noted that over his tenure at the COG, the Commission provided valuable assistance on a number of projects including obtaining funding for evening bus service and new bus stop signs in the Waterbury area. He also thanked the Commission for its reasoned advice on the Waterbury intermodal transportation center.

Gold expressed concern about a potential restriction of access to the western portion of Naugatuck State Forest arising from a gate and fence across Cold Spring Road. ConnDOT is planning to install the gate and fence in connection with the work to replace the Waterbury Branch railroad bridge over Spruce Brook in the State Forest. The fence would also sever an important link in the proposed Naugatuck River Greenway. It is unclear what ConnDOT's long-term plans for this gate are following the construction work. Gold noted that last week the COG had voted to ask ConnDOT to maintain access to the State Forest from Beacon Falls and to

minimize the impact on public access during construction. The bridge replacement project itself should only take one month to complete.

Gold mentioned that positive train control (PTC) will be installed on the Waterbury Branch service and that an environmental impact evaluation on Waterbury Branch improvements is moving forward. Other improvements from the Branch Line Study, which was completed last year, include passing sidings, signalization and the operation of supplemental bus service between Bridgeport and Waterbury, principally in the evening.

The COG is very pleased with the recently announced plans to demolish the abandoned SNET building in front of the train station. This will provide a safer, more attractive and more usable facility. Plans have also been announced to consider opening up the former railroad station baggage office in the Republican-American building for use as a passenger waiting area with rest rooms. These developments are in conformity with both the Central Naugatuck Valley Regional Transportation Plan and the ConnDOT Long Range Transportation Plan.

Gold said the plans for a new bus storage and maintenance facility in Watertown should allow for public access to the Naugatuck River Greenway so that such improvements can be added at minimal cost at a later date. Gold further mentioned that the U.S. Department of the Interior has designated the Naugatuck River Greenway as one of the nation's top 101 outdoor projects in President Obama's America's Great Outdoors initiative. The COG had voted to fund a portion of the Greenway in Waterbury with its allocation of future federal transportation enhancement funds.

The evening bus service in Waterbury, which began operation last October 24th, has been very helpful despite the skeletal route system being operated. Among other benefits, the service allows Naugatuck Valley Community College students to attend classes they could not otherwise attend.

Lastly, Gold stressed the importance of maintaining current levels of service of public transportation. The current high fuel prices disproportionately affect low income and working class families who therefore need alternatives to driving.

Barbara Kalosky of North East Transportation opened her remarks by describing the widespread calls for evening bus service in Waterbury that were voiced at the Commission's September 7, 2010 public hearing. Now that service is a reality. Begun last October 24th, North East is operating six buses covering the heaviest ridership areas of its 15 routes. The service is averaging 730 passengers per evening, approximately 50 of whom are Naugatuck Valley Community College UPASS users. Evening service operates until 12:30 am, with the most heavily used routes being East Main Street/Hitchcock Lake, Wolcott Street/Brass Mill Center and Fairmont/Hill Street. Ridership on the evening runs is still growing.

Jobs Access services to the Straits Turnpike area of Watertown, the Murtha Industrial Park in Beacon Falls and to Southbury are doing well and have sufficient funding to continue.

The Dial-a-Ride program for the elderly and disabled is unfortunately another story. North East Transportation serves eight member towns of the Greater Waterbury Transit District. When service began in July 2006, there was enough funding to operate three vehicles, 120 hours per week over six days. Due to increased operating costs and the recent 25% cut in funding, these services have been reduced to two vehicles operating four days per week and providing 64 hours of service. This program does not have adequate funding available.

The proposed bus storage and maintenance facility in Watertown is making progress. The facility has been reduced in size by 50,000 square feet. New plans are close to progressing to the 75% design phase. The revised plans have eliminated the need for costly fill by moving some parking to underneath the storage facility.

Kalosky closed her remarks by thanking the Commission for its input and assistance on Waterbury area projects including the bus stop sign project, Sunday service, the proposed intermodal transportation center and others. The Commission will be very much missed should the governor eliminate it as proposed.

In response to a question about the potential for a shuttle connecting downtown and the Brass Mill Mall, as an earlier speaker suggested, Kalosky said she had noted that comment and would look into the possibility.

Dr. Yvonne Smith-Isaac, Chairman of the Greater Waterbury Transit District, thanked the Commission for its past help. She said she also enjoys reading the meeting minutes which she finds very informative. She has always found the Commission to be an impartial forum and she hopes it can continue.

The State Matching Grant Program under Sect. 13b-38bb of the General Statutes has seen its funding cut by 25% this year. The effects of this funding cut are really going to be manifested in 2013 and beyond. She would like to the Matching Grant program restored to its traditional funding level of \$5,000,000 per year.

Smith-Isaac would also like to see a safe and accessible train station in Waterbury. To that end, she is very happy to hear that the SNET building will be coming down soon. This is the first step to make the station accessible and safe.

She noted that Waterbury does not have any handicapped-accessible taxicabs. She feels there should be a law to require that at least some taxis in each city be accessible and be available for same-day service.

Several of the pedestrian crossing signals in Waterbury do not work and no one seems to take responsibility for getting them fixed. The signal at Meriden Road and East Main Street has not been working for many years. East Main, Meriden Road and Thomaston Avenue are all difficult streets to cross.

Yvonne Smith-Isaac lamented the lack of direct bus service between Waterbury and Naugatuck. There is service to Cheshire, Wolcott and Watertown but not to Naugatuck. She believes the

obligation to run complementary ADA service is what is preventing the operation of service to Naugatuck, but there is a strong need for such service to access the Waterbury hospitals and employment sites.

The North East Transportation web site is very helpful and provides much useful information on the bus schedules.

Lastly, Smith-Isaac stressed the importance of the transit district's paratransit service to Southbury which allows for access to many doctors. The service to Gaylord Hospital in Wallingford is also important.

Maribeth Morales-Dow lives in Bunker Hill. She sees the bus stopping just before Carrington School and people getting off there to walk into Watertown to Straits Turnpike. Why can't this bus continue on to Straits Turnpike and save these people the walk down and back up the big hill from Straits Turnpike? Barbara Kalosky said she will look into that but it would be difficult to fit into the schedule. There is no cushion built into the bus schedules. There is very little time that could be taken out of this run to make up for the extra time needed to go down the hill to Straits Turnpike.

Robert Petro is a transit driver for North East Transportation. He drives for the Dial-a-Ride service. A lot of elderly and handicapped people really depend on this service. Service cuts really hurt them. North East was running this service six days a week but has had to cut back to four days.

Richard Rivera thanked the Commission for coming to Waterbury. Transportation in Waterbury certainly has improved in recent years. Mr. Rivera owns a business downtown. He referred to a tsunami of people getting off the buses to make transfers downtown. Maybe it would be good to have these transfers made somewhere else. He also feels that the bus traffic scares potential events away from The Green. And he stressed that restrooms are needed on or near The Green. Transportation Enhancement funds were used for shelters, bike racks and trash cans but not for restrooms. Barbara Kalosky gave a figure of 2,000-2,500 daily transfers occurring at The Green.

Bernadette Teele lives in the Brooklyn section of Waterbury. She complained that when the bus is late and she has called North East Transportation, the people she talked to have been rude. Her daughter **Reshika Smith** lives on Willow Street and if Reshika's bus is late, the drivers will not hold the other buses to allow for transfers. Reshika works at Target and relies on the bus to get to work.

Ryan Mulcahy is a Waterbury alderman and a member of the Waterbury Democratic Caucus. He stressed the importance of transportation, especially for the Naugatuck Valley Community College students. He noted there is no bus serving the area of Montero's grocery store in the Town Plot section. This is the one area of Waterbury where there is no bus service to the local grocery store.

Mr. Riese closed the public hearing at 9:05 PM.

**Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Public Hearing**

Bridgeport City Hall
Council Chambers, First Floor
45 Lyon Terrace
Bridgeport, CT 06604
Wednesday, September 12, 2012

CPTC VOTING MEMBERS

Kevin Maloney
Robert Rodman
Richard Schreiner

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 giving a brief description of the Commission and of the purpose of tonight's hearing. He then introduced Commission members and ConnDOT staff.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Patricia Ginoni is a Bridgeport resident and a member of the Greater Bridgeport Transit (GBT) Passenger Ambassador program. She has been riding the bus system since 1998. She stressed that funding must keep pace with the needs of transit systems. Statistics show that the use of public buses among teens and young people has grown substantially. The same is true for elderly people and working families. Her experience as someone who rides the buses every day is that the buses in Bridgeport are packed and sometimes standing room only, not only on weekdays but also on weekends. The number of ons and offs is so great that the system can fall behind schedule. More investment is essential to keep the bus system affordable and convenient for users.

Ginoni feels that investment in our public bus service is a central part of our investment in Connecticut's infrastructure and in the vitality and growth of our economy, commerce and social life. If our state is to thrive, we must ensure the public transportation is affordable, dependable, convenient and commensurate with the growing transportation demands of our people.

The Passenger Ambassador program was set up in 2000, and she applied for this volunteer position. The group meets every other month to help the Authority solve problems and help improve the system. She thinks the cell phone app technology is not having a major impact on local bus riders, since many don't have the technology to access it at this point.

Steve Hladun is a Bridgeport resident and an employee of the City Parks and Recreation Department. He sees a great opportunity to expand multi-modalism here, with the availability of bus, bicycle, pedestrian, rail and ferry options all connecting downtown. There is an opportunity to improve on the transit system for future users and to proactively develop a plan for

improvements. He participated in the discussions on downtown intermodal opportunities and on improved wayfinding downtown. He is now working on a project of streetscape improvements at the downtown intermodal center. On this topic, he mentioned a meeting on September 18 at the Arcade Building that is focused on downtown streetscape improvements.

The Mayor's office is coordinating a CMAQ-funded bicycle sharing program and a bicycle network that will be modeled on those in Montreal and NYC. The project will also look at ways to facilitate sharing the road by bicycles and other vehicles and use of the Housatonic Rail Trail. The Greater Bridgeport Regional Council helped define where the bicycle trails and lanes should go.

Mr. Hladun said that the resident population downtown has increased dramatically as downtown apartments have come on line and he noted a trend of young people moving into Bridgeport. Hladun sees more restaurants and deli establishments opening up downtown as the residential population there grows. The new Metro-North train station in Fairfield has also spawned some commercial development and amenities in the adjacent Black Rock section of Bridgeport.

Kim Bianca Williams is a recent transplant to the city from Savannah, Georgia. She lives on Golden Hill and sold her car on her move to Connecticut with the intention of using public transit. She uses the train twice a week, buses a little less frequently than that.

Williams discussed a problem she has experienced at the Bridgeport Metro-North 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. She suggested that better signage or announcements would be a help to direct passengers when track changes occur. She also noted a strong urine odor in the stairwell on the New Haven-bound side of the station. On the positive side, she said the new M-8 cars are a lot more comfortable than the older cars. If she is riding on an older train, she will avoid sitting near the bathroom.

She noted a lack of enforcement of smoking prohibitions on the platforms at Stamford and Bridgeport. Since she did not note any signage prohibiting smoking on the platforms or see any visible enforcement of a no-smoking policy, she asked if smoking was allowed or prohibited on the platforms. When told it is not allowed, she said that Bridgeport and Stamford in particular seem to have this problem. She does not see smoking on the platforms at New Rochelle, Stratford or New Haven, other stations she regularly uses.

Lastly, she said it can be challenging to cross Golden Hill Street near the bus terminal because there is no crosswalk in front of the terminal on the Golden Hill side. She has seen near misses here between vehicles and pedestrians.

Douglas Holcomb is CEO of Greater Bridgeport Transit. He has been in the public transportation field since 1991. He commented on three areas:

- Growing demand for public transportation
- The need to expand to new markets
- Services for seniors and riders with disabilities

GBT has seen year over year ridership growth in 11 of the last 12 months. For the fiscal year ending June 2012, GBT had 5,555,000 boardings, which was an increase of 317,000 over the previous year and the highest annual ridership in the past ten years. August 2012 saw 513,000 boardings, the second highest ridership in the past two years. Many of the main routes are crowded for long periods of the day. The Main Street Route 8 buses are crowded every day of the week, and the Sunday morning Coastal Link service needs a second bus.

Regarding new markets, Holcomb said that all the new services started with Jobs Access or Transportation Strategy Board funding have worked out well. GBT's Route 15 service from downtown Bridgeport to the Shelton Office Park and on to Derby Station began in August 2003 and provided 10,069 boardings that month. Last month (August 2012), ridership was 22,602. Similarly, the Route 19 express service to Trumbull and Monroe has grown from an initial ridership of 200-300 boardings per month to 1,159 last month on this peak hour only service. The Route 23 service to Stratford and Derby was introduced in 2007 and provided 6,361 trips last month. Begun as pilot programs to provide access to job locations, these services are now part of the regional overall mobility network.

Expanding bus service to locations offering employment is seen as most critical in the Route 25 corridor from Bridgeport up to Monroe and then on to Danbury. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding was available to offer such service but the local match couldn't be arranged. In the interim until such service can be offered, GBT is working toward establishing a very minimal, peak hour only service to Monroe businesses along Route 25.

GBT has also been working with ConnDOT, through its CTrides program, and with a major employer in the Trumbull Corporate Park who is adding jobs there, to craft a new shuttle service to allow access to many jobs there to which there is currently no transit available.

GBT has a comparatively small paratransit operation but does provide 36,000 ADA trips annually. This service is often the only way for disabled citizens to get to a job or to school, or to make trips for other purposes. Holcomb mentioned that GBT has had great cooperation from ConnDOT in running this service, but that more support is needed. In addition to the ADA service, GBT provided 13,466 trips for seniors in Bridgeport, Fairfield and Trumbull through the State Matching Grant Program last year. Although GBT makes every effort to make its fixed route services accessible to all riders, some riders do require the special services offered through the ADA and State Matching Grant programs.

Holcomb noted a number of 'progress items' or recent accomplishments and improvements including:

- 15 new replacement buses
- 2 new hybrid buses
- 24 new paratransit buses
- A fleet review for replacement of 70% of the fleet in 2015-2016
- 80 new bus shelters
- A new bus hub at Trumbull Mall
- Expansion of GBT's maintenance facility

Holcomb summarized the state of the Bridgeport area transit situation by listing these four needs:

- A steady, predictable investment in transit services
- Expanded investment to accommodate current growth trends in order to keep existing riders and attract new ones
- Investment for new markets, noting that where this has been done in the past, it has paid off
- Continued, predictable investment in the State Matching Grant Program and in service for riders with disabilities through ADA paratransit program.

The two hybrid buses have been in service since May of this year. The operators love them. The buses are very quiet. Holcomb noted good cooperation from ConnDOT in maintenance training for the hybrid buses.

In response to questions, Holcomb said there are still remaining problems with uncertainty about the level of ConnDOT funding which will be available in each year's budget but noted that the state has always come through. The DSS funding is more volatile and can be cut even after the service is already being provided. DSS's contribution of \$164,000 toward the Coastal Link is vital for that Jobs Access service. Holcomb said this is not a criticism of DSS but just a note that awareness of the problem is necessary.

When asked about the causes of the increases in ridership, Holcomb said the GBT board is asking this too. Fuel prices which make driving expensive, and the availability of new entry level jobs definitely contribute to the ridership growth.

When asked if the crowding on Coastal Link buses could mean that some would-be riders are denied access, Holcomb said it is possible that a full bus could pass riders by and not stop. He didn't think this was common.

Richard Schreiner closed the hearing at 8:38 pm.

**Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Public Hearing**

Mansfield Town Hall
4 South Eagleville Road
Storrs, Connecticut
Thursday, September 27, 2012 - 7:30 PM

CPTC VOTING MEMBERS

Robert Rodman
Yvonne Loteczka
Russell St. John

CPTC EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Fred Riese

CONNDOT

Dennis King

INTRODUCTION:

Hearing moderator Frederick Riese opened the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Mr. Riese welcomed the attendees, gave a brief description of the purpose of the hearing and the function of the CPTC and then introduced the Commission members and ConnDOT staff in attendance.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Lon Hultgren, Mansfield Town Engineer and Director of Public Works, spoke about the Storrs Intermodal Transportation Center which is a component of the Storrs Center development. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) contributed \$6.7 million toward the \$8.3 million cost of the transportation center including funding toward the entrance and exit roadways. The transportation center will be located at the north end of the new 660-space parking garage, which is now complete except for punch list items.

The transportation center will be a 2-story appendage to the parking garage and will include a bus waiting area and an information area on the west side and bicycle storage, rental and repair areas on the east side. A bus ticketing kiosk will be supplied and maintained by Peter Pan. Rest rooms will be provided in the transportation center, and shower and locker facilities will be located on the second floor of the center. An ITS system will track buses using the facility and announce arriving buses.

The transportation center will also use part of the parking garage for several of its services including secure bicycle storage, parking for handicapped accessible vehicles and for carpools and vanpools, and for a Hertz car sharing service (a *Zipcar* style short term rental service) which will offer three vehicles including one electric vehicle. The garage will include an electric vehicle charging station.

Hultgren said the contract for the transportation center access roads will be advertised on October 8, while the building contract will be advertised on October 30. In response to a question on the number of bicycles that will be accommodated at the new transportation center, Hultgren said it will handle approximately 30 bicycles in its covered storage area, another 20 or so at its outside rack, 20 bicycles in the locked storage area, and several more in the valet area of

the garage. The Town is also looking into a bicycle sharing program to see how and if that can be done. In a reply to a question on the overall Storrs Center project, Hultgren said buildings 1 and 2 are now fully leased, including 127 apartments. Leasing on building 3 will begin next month.

Roger Roberge, a Mansfield resident, opposes the intermodal transportation center. He feels that town taxpayers will ultimately have to pay for the project if it does not cover its costs. He feels that security will also be a problem at the transit center and noted that Mansfield does not have a police department. He is concerned about the potential of the transit center to attract loiterers and drug dealers, as well as the potential for weapons or explosives to be brought into the center.

Melinda Perkins, Executive Director of the Windham Region Transit District, presented a report on encouraging developments at the District. Ridership on the fixed route service is way up. Ridership has increased 81% from the 103,073 riders carried in FY 2007 to 187,300 in fiscal year 2012. Ridership is up again in the first two months of FY 2013 compared to last year. Many of the buses are operating full. In fact, four times per week, the District is running a 20-passenger Dial-a-Ride vehicle directly behind the Storrs-Willimantic bus during peak periods to meet the demand on that route. Perkins said all runs of the Storrs-Willimantic bus are at or near capacity.

Perkins reported that WRTD has received ten new paratransit vehicles since last year, with the last four replacement vehicles due to be received next month. A 26-passenger bus which can accommodate standees will also be added to the WRTD fleet.

Perkins said there is a need for more operating funds to run more service. At present, only four trips per day serve Eastern Connecticut State University; this route needs more service. Many other routes cannot accommodate any ridership growth. Also, the District's Danielson flex route service, which was originally planned to operate four trips per day, only received 50% of the planned funding and only operates two trips per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. This schedule is really only useful to visitors to the Danielson courthouse, but doesn't serve students or work trip needs well. A full 4-trip per day schedule is needed to make this route work.

Regarding Dial-a-Ride service, Perkins mentioned that two grants used to support some of this service have been lost. The Department of Developmental Services is no longer directly funding Dial-a-Ride services to rest homes for their clients. A Department of Social Services grant to fund trips for convalescent home residents was not renewed, although the District is receiving some funding from the rest homes themselves.

Ridership is up on WRTD's Route 32 service from Willimantic to Norwich and Foxwoods due in large part to the demise of the Peter Pan/Arrow employee shuttle to Foxwoods.

Perkins pointed to the lack of any bus service between Willimantic and Hartford/ Manchester as a large unmet need. Peter Pan/Bonanza service no longer stops in Willimantic or Danielson, depriving the area of much of the very meager bus service it formerly had to Manchester and

Hartford. Peter Pan/Arrow express bus service does still operate peak hour AM and PM service to Hartford.

Perkins then discussed the status of the new bus storage and maintenance facility being planned for WRTD. The District is working with ConnDOT on the development of the plans for this facility, which are now at the 60% design stage. It will include a 3-bay maintenance garage and indoor storage for the WRTD vehicle fleet.

The facility design does not include a bus wash or vehicle fueling capacity. Regarding the latter, the District has a good relationship with the Town of Windham, whose garage is close to the site of the new bus facility. However, the town garage may soon be relocated and some of the locations being considered are not convenient to the WRTD facility site. The scale of the WRTD garage area and the multi-use area were reduced to fit within the project budget.

Perkins concluded with an update on the Town of Mansfield/UConn prepaid fare program ridership. For the year ending June 30, 87,773 riders were carried under the prepaid fare program. This is more than double the 41,560 riders carried in FY 2007. The program continues to work very well. She also mentioned that ConnDOT may have some surplus 35' Gillig buses that could be used by WRTD.

In response to a question about the number of disabled riders carried by the District, Perkins replied that the District's fixed route service carries relatively few disabled riders but that a significant percentage of the Dial-a-Ride service users have disabilities. She noted that the handicapped ramps on the new vehicles are much quicker to deploy than those on the older vehicles.

Kevin Grunwald, Director of Human Services for the Town of Mansfield, said there are still some unmet travel needs in the town. The 25% cut in the State Matching Grant program meant a cut from \$32,000 to \$24,000 for Mansfield. This funding is used chiefly for medical appointment trips for Mansfield residents to sites outside of the Dial-a-Ride service area. The \$32,000 funding level met the local needs but the \$24,000 does not.

Grunwald complimented WRTD as doing a great job. But he noted that their main service corridor, along Route 195, is a narrow service area and that not a lot of people live along that corridor. Nor does the route provide access to many public buildings like the library, schools or even playgrounds. Also, the limited schedule of service does not accommodate trips for shopping very well, the gaps between trips are just too long. The 3/4 mile ADA corridor width along the route does not serve many disabled citizens in the community.

On the plus side, Grunwald said that the Mansfield/UConn prepaid fare program works very well and provides a valuable service. He is also excited about the development of the new intermodal transportation center at Storrs Center.

Don Johnson, Town Planner of Putnam, asked about the status of the rail service proposal study done pursuant to Public Act 06-136. The act called for a study of the potential for passenger rail service to be operated between New London and Worcester. Johnson said there are a couple of

references to such service in the new State Rail Plan. Fred Riese responded that he was aware of the legislative requirement for this study but was not aware of any active planning for such service. He mentioned that the expansion of Shore Line East service and the implementation of the ConnDOT-sponsored passenger service on the Springfield Line to complement Amtrak's Springfield Line service were the current ConnDOT priorities to expand passenger rail service. Enhancements of the Danbury Branch rail service are also being evaluated and planned. Therefore, he did not believe any new service on the New London to Worcester corridor was in the works.

Jana Butts, Land Use Planner at the Windham Regional Council of Governments, reiterated the need for sufficient funding to support existing and expanded transit operations in the region. She then passed out photos of the location of the proposed new WRTD bus garage on South Frontage Road in Windham. She mentioned that the site benefits from the location of a commuter parking lot to the east of the site and of Eastbrook Mall being located nearby.

Butts stressed that it is important that the facility is attractive and projects a good image for the area. Five thousand cars per day pass this location on South Frontage Road. Butts mentioned that ConnDOT has a salt storage facility just across Route 6 from the WRTD site and a maintenance shed to the west of the salt facility. Both of these ConnDOT facilities are well screened by forest vegetation preserved around the property boundaries. She hopes the same can be done for the WRTD facility.

Two other points mentioned by Butts are that Windham is pursuing a TOD grant focused on enhancing walking access to bus stops, and that she had recently ridden the CT Transit express bus to Hartford and found it was very comfortable and a pleasure to ride.

Lida Bilokur, a resident of Mansfield, moved to town before there were any buses in town. "We need transportation to get to transportation", she said. People who come here or live here and do not have a car are stuck. She mentioned that the volunteer drivers program for seniors works very well.

Moderator Riese closed the public hearing at 9:05 pm.

**Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Public Hearing**

Winsted Town Hall
338 Main Street
Winsted, Connecticut

Wednesday, October 10, 2012 – 7:30 PM

CPTC VOTING MEMBERS

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

CPTC EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS CDOT STAFF

Fred Riese

Dennis King

INTRODUCTION:

Hearing moderator Fred Riese opened the hearing at 7:33 PM welcoming the attendees and giving a brief description of the function of the Commission and the purpose of this evening's hearing.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Carol Deane, Executive Director of the Northwestern Connecticut Transit District (NWCTD) reported that the former Stone Container Company (formerly Hendey Machine Company) facility at 200 Litchfield Street in Torrington is now the preferred site for the development of a bus storage and maintenance facility for the District. Deane mentioned that the District has four new buses on order and no room at the present site to put these buses. The District must also continue to rely on private parties for the maintenance of its vehicles. Deane said two private entities are currently using small portions of the Stone Container facility. These two entities do not represent a conflict with NWCTD's future use of the Stone Container property and she anticipates a peaceful co-existence with them.

Communications from ConnDOT on the project continue to be few and far between. An e-mail from Torrington Mayor Ryan Bingham to ConnDOT last week generated the first communication from ConnDOT in 6-8 months.

Fred Riese said it was his understanding that the District has received \$5,000 in New Freedom funding from ConnDOT to be used for the marketing of its services. Deane said that, as we speak, there is a mass mailing about the District's services and schedule ready to go out to everyone in Winsted as a result of these funds. Previously, the same thing had been done in the Canaan area.

Evening bus service is a major need in Torrington, Deane said. There is currently no public transportation after 5:00 pm. The District currently has a waiting list of people asking for evening and Sunday bus service.

In response to a question on Jobs Access transportation, Deane said NWCTD is currently operating two 18-passenger buses from Torrington to Winsted and Canaan for all three shifts, serving ITW, Bicon and Becton-Dickinson. The buses are packed and have a waiting list of riders.

Deane said the District is attempting to move operations of the Candystriper deviated fixed route service in house. This service runs in Torrington, Winsted and Litchfield. The current contractor is in Chapter 11 bankruptcy which provides some legal protection for him but complicates the District's efforts to gain control over its services. She has received multiple complaints about the operation of transit service by the current contractor.

In response to a question about whether fueling capability is planned at the new bus facility, Deane said it is not. The District currently gets its fuel through the City of Torrington but can only access their fueling facility from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. The City charges the District a 25c/gallon surcharge on the fuel it buys. Currently the price to the District is \$3.43/gallon for diesel fuel plus the 25c/gallon surcharge.

Heather Cappabianca is Director of the Connecticut State Office of Rural Health. Her foremost concern is getting people to medical appointments and other health care sites. She sees a need to have more consistency in pick-up and drop-off procedures and in handling doctor and hospital trips. To that end, she looks forward to meeting with Carol Deane to discuss these matters as they relate to her clients in the NWCTD service region.

Richard Lynn, Planning Director for the Litchfield Hills Council of Elected Officials (LHCEO) said that the new bus storage and maintenance facility for the Northwestern Connecticut Transit District is the #1 priority identified in the Regional Transportation Plan prepared by the LHCEO for the 11-town planning region. ConnDOT's 2010 *Connecticut Statewide Bus System Study (2000)* similarly identified the need for a bus facility as the most critical issue in the region. ConnDOT's 2010 *Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan* provided \$1,107,000 for design and site acquisition for a new bus facility. When the State Bond Commission approved the funding for the State's 20% match, there was much optimism that the project would be moving forward. In early 2012, there was a very productive meeting in Torrington Mayor Ryan Bingham's office and a preferred site was identified. However, ConnDOT's project manager Bob Messena says it will likely be five years before construction of the facility commences. The next steps from here are historic and environmental assessments of the preferred site.

The Locally-Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (LOCHSTP) for the Litchfield Hills Planning Region identified service gaps and potential solutions to address these gaps. The identified needs are an expansion of transit service in Torrington and Winsted, implementation of a marketing campaign to promote public awareness of the available transit services, and capital and operating funds to implement a Rural Independent Transportation System (RITS) using wheelchair-accessible mini-vans. New Freedom funding for the RITS in the Litchfield Hills Region was allocated in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 but the funds were never received nor the service implemented. The lack of a local (i.e. State) match appears to be the issue in getting the service started.

Lastly, the Regional Transportation Plan projects continued growth in population and employment in the Litchfield Hills Region, and thus continued growth in the demand for public transportation. This growth, combined with the projected aging of the population in the region, calls out the need for stable and reliable funding for transportation services in the Litchfield Hills Region.

Lynn mentioned the need to identify designated bus stop locations in the region has become apparent. The old model of hailing the bus is no longer sufficient. Bus stop signs are needed. He asked the Commission for guidance in going about this. Fred Riese suggested that Lynn contact Sam Gold of the Central Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments who has overseen the bus stop sign installation in Waterbury and Francis Pickering of the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency who has mentioned the same need for his region at a Commission hearing two years ago. Rick Schreiner said that HART gets bus stop sign funding through the Section 5307 program. An estimate from just last week placed the cost of installation of a bus stop sign at \$86 plus the cost of the sign itself. Schreiner said some signs are often lost in winter due to storm and plowing damage.

Jay Case is a candidate for the 63rd House District representing Winchester, Colebrook and sections of Goshen and Torrington. His wife only recently left a long-time position at the DATTCO bus company so he has a personal connection to public transportation issues. He found it eye-opening to learn how long a project such as the NWCTD bus facility can take to build. Case worked on a project for All-Star Transportation in New Milford to construct a fueling station for them. He is a big advocate for having fueling capacity at the NWCTD garage so that the District has independent fueling capability.

Moderator Riese closed the Hearing at 8:37 PM

**Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Public Hearing**

Windsor Town Hall

Ludlow Room

Windsor, Connecticut

Tuesday, October 16, 2012 – 7:30 PM

CPTC VOTING MEMBERS

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

CPTC EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS CDOT STAFF

Fred Riese

Dennis King

INTRODUCTION:

Hearing moderator Morton Katz opened the hearing at 7:30 PM, welcoming the attendees and giving a brief description of the functions of the Commission and the purpose of tonight's hearing. Commission members and ConnDOT staff present introduced themselves.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Peter Souza, Town Manager of Windsor, said the community was excited about commuter rail service coming online between Hartford and Springfield by 2016. Souza feels it was important that consideration be given to the last mile to and from the station as the rail service is developed. There are over 20,000 jobs in the Day Hill corridor in Windsor and much traffic coming into town. The rail service can provide some congestion relief as well as helping employees reach job sites, but the connection from the rail station to the employment sites is essential.

Souza also stressed the need for adequate passenger amenities such as shelters and sidewalks. Funding for these types of items is not consistently available to municipalities. The Town is looking toward public/private partnerships to meet these needs.

Souza also stressed the need for improved suburb to suburb bus service without the need to go into downtown Hartford to make connections. An analysis from CRCOG looked at this. There is some interest from the corporate community in participating in providing improved transit service.

In response to a question about the proposal from CRCOG's Northwest Corridor Study for a transit mini-hub at Day Hill Road, Souza said this idea was largely still in the planning stage. He also answered a question about transit access into the recently approved Dollar General distribution center, saying that a bus can get into the facility but it is a circuitous routing.

Sandra Fry, transportation planner at the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), first mentioned that she had been in a town of 200,000 on the Atlantic coast of Spain this summer. Though we might not consider that to be a large city, it was very well served by public transportation, which was made possible by the high density of development in that city. She also observed that most of the parking there was underground, which both added to the density of development and significantly changed the appearance of the town from the typical American city of that size with large swatches of land consumed by parking lots.

Sandy mentioned that CRCOG had undertaken three studies of municipalities in its region using a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant, and working in partnership with the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission in Massachusetts. The first study looked at the need for local bus service in Enfield, a city which has no bus service other than commuter express service to Hartford. At 50,000 residents, Enfield is the largest municipality in Connecticut without bus service. Connecticut Transit has modified its express bus route to the town so that at least some local streets are served but this provides very limited service. Previously, the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) ran bus service down from Springfield to the Thompsonville section of Enfield, but because transit is funded differently in Massachusetts than it is in Connecticut, Enfield had to provide a local match to PVTA. In the early 2000s, Enfield stopped giving its local match and the PVTA bus service was terminated.

CRCOG's Locally-Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan had shown a substantial need for local bus service in Enfield, especially in Thompsonville which has a large transit-dependent population. So CRCOG undertook a study to design a local shuttle service, including doing a survey from which over 1,000 responses were received. The study recommended a Monday through Friday service with a lesser level of service on Saturday. Enfield applied for and received a New Freedom grant to begin operation of a local, fixed route bus service. Fry noted that Enfield is commercially tied more closely to Springfield than it is to Hartford. Perhaps in the long-term, service toward Springfield using PVTA can be restored with the town paying its 20% local match. Fry mentioned the example of Waterbury which did provide a local contribution when bus service was expanded into evening hours a year ago.

The second planning study undertaken by CRCOG looked at Windsor and found a need for improved suburb to suburb service. Specific routes mentioned were Vernon and Manchester to the Poquonock commuter lot, Enfield to the Poquonock lot, and Granby to the Poquonock lot, all with continuing service to Windsor Center. This is not the type of service that Connecticut Transit is well-equipped to operate. An employer shuttle model would work better for this service. A transit hub could be created at the Poquonock lot if employers were willing to invest in a transit management organization to run shuttles from this hub to their sites. But currently employers don't see a need to do this as they are able to get sufficient employees without funding bus service. She mentioned the Route 128 shuttle service outside Boston which

connects from the end of the Red Line to Route 128 work sites as an example of this model. Fry suggested that a step wise program of low cost/ no cost options first would keep employers engaged in the concept and might later be built upon with more substantial measures.

Manchester was the third municipality to be evaluated in a CROG study. Manchester has a lot of transit service, principally because it is crossed by multiple routes connecting to Hartford. However, Manchester has few intra-town routes. Locals need service connecting downtown, Manchester Community College and Buckland Hills. Establishment of a mini-hub at the Buckland Hills park-and-ride lot and a shuttle service into the mall with a circulator route to other locations would help provide local connections. Perhaps another hub near Manchester Community College or just off Interstate 384 could facilitate connections from suburban locations into Manchester.

CROG is also working on a study of transit-oriented development potential in the region, principally along the New Britain Busway and the Springfield Line. In the current real estate market, Fry said a frank assessment is that developers just don't see rental rates as sufficient to cover their costs. Developers are looking for some kind of bonus or zoning credit for developing new units at transit hubs if they are to make these work in this market.

Fry observed that recent development patterns as employers moved from Hartford to the suburbs have discouraged transit usage. When ING moved to Day Hill Road, fewer of the employees who were transit users could continue to do so. She noted that millenials really value living in higher density areas that are well served by transit, as opposed to the more dispersed development patterns we typically see when companies move.

Moving back to the subject of Manchester transit service, Alan Sylvestre inquired where the Greater Hartford Transit District might be better positioned to operate the proposed circulator and shuttle services than is Connecticut Transit. Sandy said that was an interesting question but she did not know the answer.

Fred Riese asked if the Manchester transit study showed any indication of demand to reach Manchester from Storrs or Willimantic. The Commission has heard repeated calls from those areas for bus service to Manchester and Hartford. Sandy said there were indications of demand to get out of Manchester to locations other than downtown Hartford but not a concentration of requests for any one area.

Dan Warren thanked the Commission for holding this hearing. He is 29 years old and grew up in Andover before living in New York City for four years. During his time in NYC, he got used to public transportation. Now he is back in Andover and commuting to Day Hill Road every day. He concurred that transit service from a mini-hub at Silver Lane/Spencer Street off I-384 to Day Hill Road would be a big help to him and other commuters.

Warren dislikes driving so he uses public transportation to get to work despite the inconvenient connections he has to make from Andover to Hartford to Windsor in the morning, requiring 90 minutes, and the reverse trip in the afternoon. He noted how difficult it is to implement public transportation solutions for development patterns that fly in the face of public transit service such

as the developments along Day Hill Road and Blue Hills Avenue in Windsor with their long driveways that can't be served by buses. Development patterns need to accommodate public transportation, not treat it as an afterthought. He concurred with Sandy Fry that as employment sites move to the suburbs, they can't easily be served by public transportation. He noted current development patterns mimic the out-of-control urban sprawl that his 1960s vintage land use textbooks warn about. In fact, he gets a visceral feeling about the transit-averse development patterns he sees being implemented today.

Warren said a light rail system from downtown Hartford to the Griffin area of Windsor would be a terrific asset, as would be a light rail connection for downtown Hartford to the start of the Hop River Trail in Manchester. He rode the Providence and Worcester excursion train last week from Willimantic to Worcester and found it was a great trip with a lot of public interest. He feels this is an indication of the level of interest in train service.

Lastly Warren observed a poor coordination between bus schedules and the Amtrak schedule such that bus connections from train stations are not convenient.

Steven Wawruck, Jr., First Selectman of Windsor Locks and **Patrick McMahon**, Economic Development Consultant for the town spoke concerning the Town's preference for a downtown location for the Windsor Locks train station as opposed to the current location south of downtown in an isolated area with no surrounding development. Years ago, the rail station stop was relocated from the center of the town to the current location. In light of the upcoming enhanced Springfield Line rail service, the station location needs to return downtown to energize the central business district. Town officials have met with Governor Malloy, Commission Redeker, and other ConnDOT officials concerning their desire to see the train station returned to downtown. There is also strong community support for this move. The Town has done a \$225,000 Main Street Study to look at the restoration of the downtown train station. A related \$250,000 study of transit-oriented development potential in downtown Windsor Locks is just beginning now with funding from CRCOG and Wawruck noted that \$235,000 was spent to redo sidewalks downtown. The Town has seen the turnover of several downtown properties in anticipation of the rail service and several knockdowns of existing structures. Patrick McMahon said there is interest in the former Montgomery Mill building and other downtown properties as well. In contrast, the existing station site offers no possibility for any transit-oriented development.

One facet of the concept plans for the downtown station site is the replacement of the signalized intersection immediately across the Route 140 bridge in East Windsor with a roundabout. The need for this change is a result of limiting egress from the new station to right hand turns only. Thus, exiting traffic bound for Windsor Locks or other points west of the river will need a quick way to reverse direction; hence the roundabout at the opposite end of the bridge.

The historic train station in downtown Windsor Locks is owned by Amtrak but not currently used by them. The Town is hoping to acquire and use this station in some fashion as part of the downtown station development. Amtrak has appraised the historic station at \$50,000 but the Town is hoping to acquire it for \$1.00. The proposed platform location would be immediately

north of the historic station. A retail strip mall proximal to the downtown station site has ample parking that could assist with the parking needs of the station.

The potential for some traffic impacts on Route 159 was noted, however, Wawruck said the public is highly supportive of the downtown station location, which would make it accessible to many residents. Many residents live within walking distance of the downtown station location. Since the Town met with Governor Malloy about this issue, ConnDOT has been highly cooperative with the Town in pursuing this idea.

Wawruck said there is room for an up-and-over pedestrian crossing at the downtown station site, where 80-85' of width are available at this location versus only 55' at the current train station location.

In response to a question as to who the advocates for the south end station location are, Wawruck said that at a recent public hearing on the subject, only two of the roughly 100 attendees at that hearing voiced support for the existing, south end site whereas there was strong support for the downtown location.

Moderator Mort Katz closed the public hearing at 9:08 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 fifteen 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 a Special Public Defender 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.

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.

Edward G. McAnaney

Mr. McAnaney was elected as First Selectman of Suffield in 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.

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.

Kiernan Ryan

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 thirty 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 board chairman and client of the Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind.

John Zelinsky

Mr. Zelinsky is a member of the Stamford Board of Representatives, on which he has served for 30 years. He serves as chairman of the Operations Committee and is a member of the Legislative and Rules, Public Safety and Health, Transportation, and Steering Committees. Mr. Zelinsky is a past commissioner and chairman of the Stamford Human Rights Commission, and he serves on numerous local civic, political, and charitable organizations. He is an Independent Insurance Agent and a real estate broker.

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

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 and the Governor (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 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to transportation, on or before January first, annually, and all members of the General Assembly on or before February 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.”