

**Connecticut Public Transportation Commission**  
Minutes of February 4, 2010

ConnDOT Headquarters, 2800 Berlin Turnpike, Conference Room B  
Newington

**Attendance: Members:** Kevin Maloney, Richard Schreiner, Yvonne Loteczka, Morton Katz, Richard Sunderhauf, Alan Sylvestre, Russ St. John, Edward McAnaney, Gail Lavielle. **Ex-officio members:** Frederick Riese (DEP). **DOT Staff:** Dennis King, Sherry Osterling. **Guests:** Stephen Troster.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Maloney at 1:37 pm. The minutes of the meeting of January 7, 2010 were approved with the correction that the technical advisory committee Rick Schreiner is participating on concerns the Route 7 Transportation and Land Use Study. The January minutes had referred to the study as the Route 7 Corridor Study.

**Comments from the Public**

None.

**Reports from Operating Entities**

Rick Schreiner informed the Commission that a public hearing on the Route 7 Transportation and Land Use Study will be held on February 25 at Wilton High School at 7 pm. Rick mentioned that transit-oriented development opportunities are one element that will be evaluated by the study.

Fred Riese mentioned that the next meeting of the Waterbury and New Canaan Branch Lines Study advisory committee will be held February 23 at Bridgeport City Hall Annex. Three public hearings for this study, which is evaluating options for improvements to the infrastructure and service on these two branch lines of Metro-North, will be held on March 8 in New Canaan, March 10 in Waterbury and March 11 in Derby.

Fred then discussed recent developments concerning the proposed Waterbury Transportation Center multi-modal hub and the role that the Commission's Annual Report has had in changing the direction of the project. The lead-off recommendation of the 2009 Annual Report highlighted the Commission's concern that the Waterbury Transportation Center (WTC) proposal as constituted, which included the mandatory relocation of the pulse point for the Waterbury fixed route bus system from the Waterbury Green to the new WTC, would seriously disrupt the bus system and reduce its efficiency. As a result of the Waterbury Mayor Jarjura reading of this recommendation and further evaluation of the WTC plans by his staff, there has been a new agreement between the City, Northeast Transportation, and the Council of Governments to scale back the size of the WTC and to keep the pulse point of the Waterbury bus system on the Green. Current thinking is calling for the WTC to offer improved parking and amenities for train riders, some facilities for taxicabs, perhaps two bays for buses, and improved

lighting and security, along with the removal of the derelict building at the WTC site. This dialogue should have occurred in the initial phases of the study, Fred expressed. The downside in this development is that the entire \$2,000,000 of planning funds for the WTC has now been expended, so new funds must be found to develop a design for the smaller facility.

Richard Sunderhauf outlined changes to the Connecticut Transit Hartford Division bus schedule and routes which will go into effect on March 7. To eliminate confusion on North Main Street buses, Routes 42N and 42B will become Routes 40 and 42, respectively. Added service to Buckland Hills Target, Lowe's and the Shops at Evergreen Walk will be added on Route 82. Four new buses were added to the Century Hills area in Rocky Hill on January 25 to accommodate increased ridership there. The Route 69 bus will also be extended from the Veteran's Hospital in Newington to Central Connecticut State University. Rich also mentioned that the website for NOVA buses mentioned that 30 new articulated buses have been purchased by ConnDOT. He does not know where the new buses will be used.

### **Chairman's Report**

Chairman Maloney has contacted Commissioner Marie's office to request a meeting with the Commissioner. The call was only made recently and Kevin has not yet received a response.

### **Discussion of the Commission's Future Operations, Areas of Focus, and Increasing its Visibility**

Chairman Maloney led a discussion of several areas impacting the future operations of the Commission. These areas included filling roster vacancies and replacing non-attending members, updating the Commission's webpage, developing a mission statement, procuring relevant speakers for future meetings, and determining future meeting locations.

The Commission has two existing vacancies on its membership roster and three appointed members who have not attended for six months or more. Kevin proposes to contact the non-attending members to ascertain their intent for future participation and then to contact the appointing authorities for these members and for the vacant positions. There was discussion about how best to communicate to the appointing authorities our desire for members who will participate and contribute.

The discussion next moved on to the Commission's webpage. The materials developed by Linda Blair several years ago are still posted on a separate site to which Google search users are often directed. This material is now very dated and largely useless, and should be taken down. The official CPTC web site should be enhanced to include a listing of current members and their contact information, a mission statement, and some opportunity for viewers to leave comments or opinions. Toward this end, the membership information for the Commission needs to be updated and distributed. Dennis and Gail will collaborate on updating the webpage with a goal of accomplishing this within 30 days.

Chairman Maloney moved through several more items on his list of Commission needs with a mixture of appointments and volunteer solicitations for several functions. Kevin appointed Gail Lavielle to be responsible for public relations for the Commission, especially for public notice of the hearings and for press releases. Chris Adams will monitor legislative activity for the Commission. A committee of Rich Schreiner, Dick Carpenter and Fred Riese will assemble a list of potential speakers for the monthly meetings. Ed McAnaney will be responsible for crafting a mission statement, with the assistance of Alan Sylvestre, Gail Lavielle and Fred Riese.

A discussion of potential topics of interest and speakers to address them considered options for the next several months. Topics of interest included the draft State Rail Plan, safety regulation of buses in the wake of several recent incidents, and the legislative agenda for transit. A tentative schedule for the March through June meetings was developed.

### **Discussion of Legislative Briefing**

A lengthy discussion concerning the legislative briefing tentatively scheduled for February 24 ensued. A lack of availability of either a hearing room or other suitable space has complicated the planning for this event. On the advice of Dennis King, it was decided to schedule this briefing to follow the legislative session, thus shooting for a date in May.

### **Old Business**

Dick Carpenter mentioned that New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg has taken a position in support of the Cross-Harbor Tunnel Project to construct a dedicated rail freight tunnel across the lower Hudson River from New Jersey into the city. Dick also mentioned that Norfolk Southern was beginning a new freight service from Chicago to Ayer, Mass. which can take advantage of improvements along the Patriot Corridor from Albany to Boston to improve service speeds.

Russ St. John attended a ceremony marking the award of \$40 million in high speed rail initiative grant funding for improvements to the Springfield Line that have independent utility but which will also aid in the proposed commuter service. Russ also mentioned the award of \$45 million of Federal funds to the New Britain Busway project.

### **New Business**

Rick Schreiner announced that the Connecticut Association for Community Transportation legislative breakfast at the Capitol will occur on February 24 at 8:30 am.

Chairman Maloney presented Mort Katz with an airborne insignia tie in recognition and thanks for his eight years of service as vice chairman of the Commission.

Kevin then closed the meeting at 3:53 pm.