

DANBURY AND NEW FAIRFIELD

CORRIDOR STUDY



NOTES

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting November 18, 2020 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

**Attendees: Todd Fontanella, Kristin Hadjstylianos (Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG))
Khris Hall (Town of New Fairfield)
Tom Altermatt, Jennifer Emminger, Abdul Mohamed (City of Danbury)
Marcy Miller, Rory Fitzgerald, and Parker Sorenson, Dan Hageman (Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.)
Anna Bergeron, Kathryn Faraci, Peter Brazaitis, Fred Kulakowski, Marlon Pena, Edward Sabourin, Santosh Patel (Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT))
Alex Dashev (HARTransit)**

1. Welcome and Overview of Agenda

Marcy Miller welcomed everyone and reviewed the project objectives and deliverables. She went over the meeting agenda which included:

1. Welcome and Speaker Introduction
2. Overview of Study Purpose, Schedule, and Goals
3. Draft Traffic Recommendations
4. Site Visit Recap
5. Potential Trail Recommendations
6. Next Steps
7. Discussion

2. Presentation

Parker Sorenson presented the Project Team's draft transportation recommendations. These included signal retimings at intersections, dedicated left and right turn lanes at specific intersections, a center two-way left turn lane between Golden Hill Road and Jeanette Street,

and pedestrian amenities such as additional sidewalks and crosswalks at locations along the Route 37 corridor.

Dan Hageman next discussed the Project Team's findings from the Margerie Lake Reservoir site visit, which occurred on October 7, 2020. The Project Team walked the reservoir property, observing environmental conditions such as wetlands, slopes, and intermittent streams. The Project Team also walked along Route 37 in this location, observing physical conditions along the roadway right-of-way. D. Hageman discussed the findings, along with potential permitting requirements that would be necessary, should a sidepath or path along the reservoir be pursued and constructed.

Rory Fitzgerald provided an overview of three concepts that the Project Team explored. These included a trail within the reservoir property as close to the lake as possible, a sidepath within the Route 37 right-of-way, and a hybrid concept that combined the two previous concepts avoiding wetlands and steep slopes wherever possible. M. Miller concluded the presentation, discussing the next steps for the study.

3. Discussion

The following provides an overview of discussions that took place during the TAC meeting:

- Fred Kulakowski discussed the traffic signal upgrades at the intersection of Routes 37 and 39. He stated that the State's project has gone out to bid, and construction is expected for next year. As far as the Project Team's potential lane addition recommendation for the west side of Route 37, CTDOT will make their staff aware of this. If there is an opportunity to move intersection equipment, CTDOT will consider it. P. Sorenson will send CTDOT detailed information and CAD files about the concept. M. Miller asked the group that if construction starts in six months, should the additional turning lanes go into the plan? Khris Hall said that it does make sense to review and see if it should be accommodated. K. Hall said that she would like to review this with the New Fairfield First Selectperson.
- K. Hall questioned why a stop sign was not recommended at Route 37 and Saw Mill Road. P. Sorenson answered that the Project Team is considering gateway treatments to reduce speeds in this area (e.g. the approach to New Fairfield Center). K. Hall said that a rezoning is in the early stages for the large empty lot at this location. If rezoned, the parcel may be developed more densely as senior housing instead of as single family residences. This may require other improvements at the Route 37/Saw Mill Road intersection, which would be something to address as part of the permitting for that development.
- M. Miller asked how the TAC generally felt about the signal retiming and coordination suggestions. The group generally agreed that these were good suggestions.

- Abdul Mohamed said that he does not think the sidewalks should be limited to fit within the existing right-of-way. They can go further beyond that. P. Sorenson said that some of the land uses along the Route 37 corridor go right up to the roadway. A. Mohamed asked about bike lanes. P. Sorenson said that a widening would need to happen to get a shoulder between Saw Mill Road and Peck Road. Between Peck Road and Barnum Road, there is already a five-foot shoulder. From Barnum Road to Padanaram Road, the shoulder would also have to be expanded to five feet. M. Miller added that there would not be an exclusive bike lane in this area; it would be a widened shoulder. K. Hall said a lot of people use the shoulder to get around left turning traffic onto Barnum Road, this will pose some safety issues. P. Sorenson said that the Project Team wants to make logical connections to the trail.
- A. Mohamed said that he does not think there is enough pedestrian demand to make painted crosswalks exclusive at Padanaram Road. P. Sorenson said that the Project Team could consider concurrent signals here. Concurrent signals have been provided at Stacey Road to cross Route 37; it might make sense to continue with the same signal types.
- F. Kulakowski said that he saw the recommendation for a pedestrian crossing across Route 37 to connect to a trail. He said that CTDOT has a table of pedestrian safety countermeasures that is used to determine what type of control is best to get pedestrians across the street. P. Sorenson said that the Project Team will look at the guidance, as the Project Team generally does not favor mid-block crossings. A. Mohamed said that he does not see a large demand for crosswalks between Barnum Road and Stacey Road. M. Miller responded that the Project Team might consider short-term vs long-term recommendations.
- A. Mohamed said that he thinks the hybrid trail is something that can be explored more and seems to be the most realistic option.
- K. Hall said she likes the hybrid concept. She added that it seems like the most feasible approach and incorporates the best possibilities. She added that the meeting was tremendously helpful in putting us on a path for moving this forward.
- A. Mohamed said that he thinks the Project Team should just present Concept 3 for the trail alignment to the public. M. Miller said that the Project Team could provide a brief overview on the work that went into creating Concepts 1 and 2, but really emphasize Concept 3. Anna Bergeron of CTDOT commented that both communities need to be sure that whatever is presented to the public, it is an option that they will support and stand behind.

4. Next Steps

M. Miller stated that the Project Team will continue to refine the corridor recommendations and hybrid trail concept. A public meeting will take place in January 2021, with the purpose of

presenting recommendations and study findings to the public. The TAC will meet in February 2021 to review the Draft Recommendations Report. The Danbury and New Fairfield Corridor Study is expected to conclude in March 2021.