

Route 7 Transportation and Land Use Study

**Focus Area Workshop
Wilton Center Area
Tuesday, May 11, 2010
6:30 – 8:30 PM**

Wilton Public Library – Brubeck Room
Wilton, CT

Attendance

Advisory Committee Members and Public who signed in: 10 in attendance

South Western Regional Planning Agency
Craig Lader Study Manager

Connecticut Department of Transportation Staff:
David Head Transportation Planning

Consultant Team:

Susan VanBenschoten Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Carol Gould Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Sam Eisenbeiser Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Francisco Gomes Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.

Welcome Activity:

As participants entered the workshop, they were asked to answer three questions. Below is a summary of questions and responses:

What do you value most about Wilton Center?

- Walkability
- Library property
- Cluster of retail and entertainment
- Pedestrian elements
- Tree cover
- Variety of design
- Friendly scale and streetscape

What would you most like to see change in Wilton Center in the future?

- Linking trains with local business
- Build a pedestrian bridge/connection between Wilton Center and the train station
- Improved intermodal connections
- Redevelopment focused on the beauty of the Norwalk River

- More bike friendly; pedestrian bicyclist should get priority then cars
- How about a Center Map?
- Development of a river walk with trail through the center
- Connections to the rest of town and communities
- Better connections to Merwin Meadows Park

List the top 2 reasons you come to or go through Wilton Center?

- Shop locally
- Work
- Restaurants
- Institutional uses like library and post office
- Meet friends – coffee shop

Presentation

Susan VanBenschoten welcomed the audience to the geographic focus area workshop looking at the Wilton Center area for the Route 7 Transportation and Land Use Study. She explained the purpose of the study and emphasized that this study will focus on Route 7 within Danbury, Ridgefield, Redding, and Wilton. *The study will not evaluate the need for an expressway from Danbury to Norwalk, but will instead investigate ways to maximize the efficiency and safety of all modes of the existing transportation system.*

Ms. VanBenschoten then presented existing conditions in the corridor as well as the 2030 Corridor Vision developed by the project team and the Advisory Committee. She explained the purpose of the geographic focus area workshops being held for the areas around Route 7/Route 35 Intersection, Branchville, and Wilton Center. She acknowledged the previous work done for Wilton Center through the Plan of Conservation and Development update process. She emphasized that this workshop is to gather input to better understand public issues and ideas or vision for transportation system connections in and to and from Wilton Center.

Ms. VanBenschoten reviewed preliminary Wilton Center focus area transportation system goals for audience comment.

The remainder of the workshop was devoted to small group exercises discussing these goals as well as identifying issues and opportunities for the focus area.

Public Question and Comment Period:

- The Town Planner noted that he has been at Orem’s Diner and seen people trying to wave down the bus.
- One attendee indicated that she felt that Wilton Center is what it is and that it is appropriate as it is.
- There was discussion about the need for bus service. One attendee indicated that the Route 7 Link is for people coming to Wilton and that intra-town service would be too expensive given low demand. She indicated that this is a low density community and that people just use their cars.
- There was a discussion of pedestrian access from the train station to the Portofino Site.
- One attendee indicated that the sidewalk on Route 7 does not turn into the train station. He noted that there could be a stairway up from under the underpass. There was a question whether ADA regulations would preclude that.

- FHI (Susan) indicated that a parking deck to the Route 7 level might allow for ADA regulations to be met.
- There was general discussion that the roof of the parking deck would not serve as a suitable visual gateway.
- There was a question regarding ridership projections.
- The Town Planner indicated that there is a need for the station to be open for tickets, food, shelter, although a food service is operationally difficult because it serves only riders.
- A need for a bike rack at the entrance to Wilton Center was indicated because bikes are not allowed in the interior.
- There was discussion that there is no public parking in Wilton, but that the existing parking serves as de facto shared parking.

The following is a summary of the small group exercise findings.

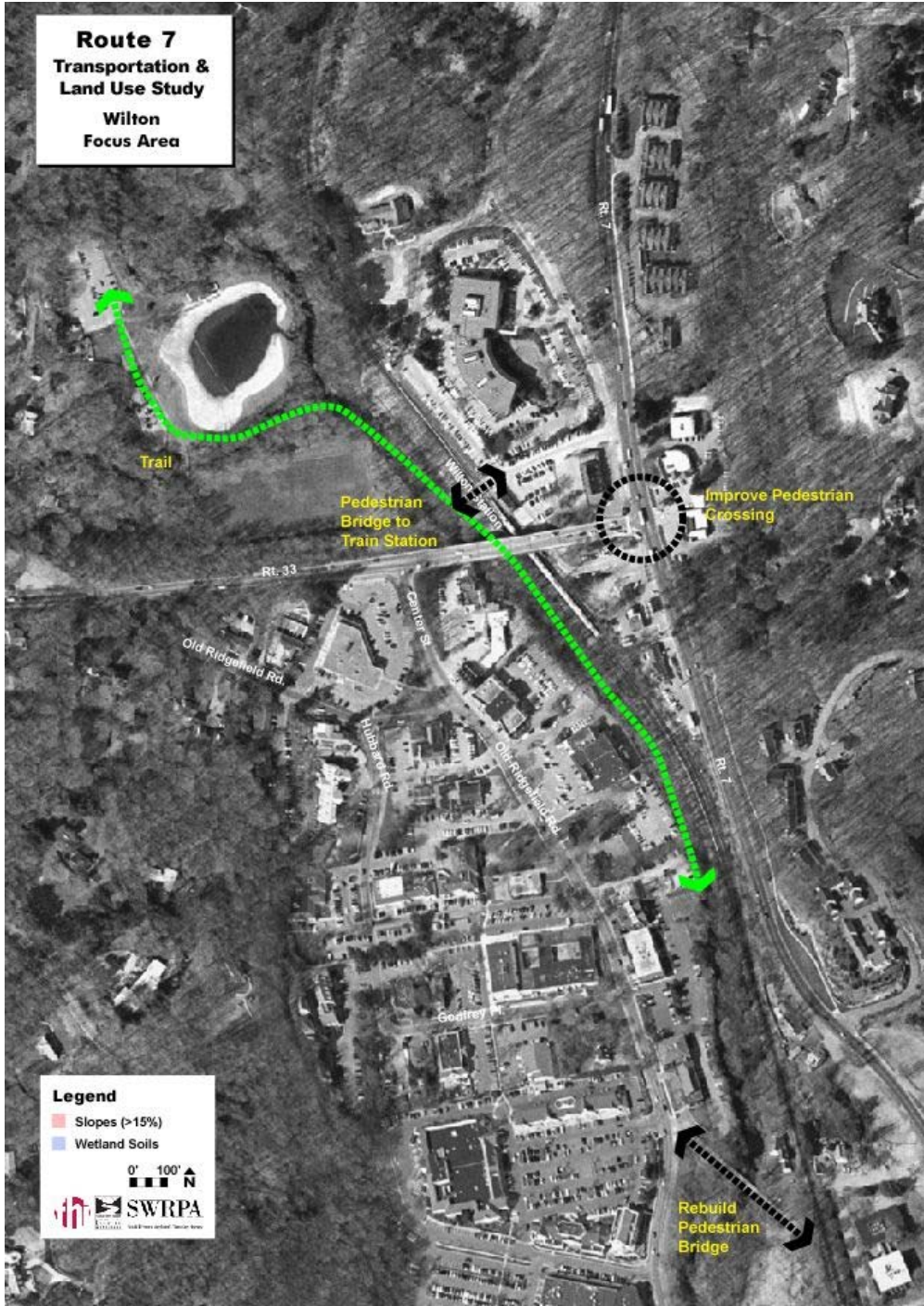
FOCUS AREA WORKSHOP- Small Group Exercise #1

OBJECTIVE:

PLANNER FOR AN EVENING!

Imagine.....you are King or Queen of the realm, and also Chief Architect and Planner....you can wave your scepter and make it happenWhat would you envision for this special area for the future? Work with your planning team at your table and record your findings as we go along.....

The following map summarizes the single group responses.



Please view [Wilton Focus Area Results 5-11-2010](#) for further summary of attendee's responses to focus area goals.

The workshop adjourned at 8:30 p.m.