

## **Route 7 Transportation and Land Use Study**

### **Public Open House: Draft Plan**

**Thursday November 18, 2010**

**6:30 – 8:30 PM**

Farmingville Elementary School - Cafeteria  
324 Farmingville Road  
Ridgefield, CT

### **Attendance**

**Advisory Committee Members and Public who signed in: 20 in attendance**

#### **South Western Regional Planning Agency**

Craig Lader                      Study Manager

#### **Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials**

Jonathan Chew                Executive Director

David Hannon                Deputy Director

#### **Consultant Team:**

Susan VanBenschoten      Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.

Carol Gould                  Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.

Francisco Gomes            Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.

Sam Eisenbeiser            Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.

### **Meeting Summary**

An open house session was held from 6:30-7:30 PM where attendees could view a variety of boards set up around the room related to the study itself (purpose and schedule), the corridor vision, and elements of the draft recommendations. A total of 20 presentation boards were on display including the land use recommendations, focus area enhancement plans, and transportation recommendations for roadway, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians. A summary table (11x17) of all recommendations was provided as a handout. A copy of the presentation boards are available for downloading/viewing on the project website: [www.Route7Study.org](http://www.Route7Study.org).

### **Presentation**

A brief presentation was given at 7:30 PM which summarized the study purpose, corridor vision, and the major elements of the recommended plan. A copy of the presentation is available for downloading/viewing on the project website: [www.Route7Study.org](http://www.Route7Study.org). Following the presentation, a few comments/questions were discussed as follows:

- Please show the Norwalk River on the study area map. Please keep in mind the welfare of the Norwalk River in all recommendations – noting that the thermal impacts of development can warm the waters and impact habitat. FHI noted that the overall land use plan called for less overall development along the corridor, yet concentrated development in more dense clusters (or villages). Low impact development practices and storm water management best practices are recommended as part of the land use plan.
- Does the CTDOT have plans to widen Route 7 south of Route 35? There are no current plans to widen Route 7 south of Route 35. This plan recommends maintaining the existing 2-lane cross section from Route 35 to the existing 4-lane cross section in Wilton north of Cannon Road.

- The owners of the Precision Brake Shop in Branchville voiced their opposition to both Options 1 and 2 of the Branchville enhancement plans. FHI explained that Option 1 (which proposed better defining driveways to the site and a center median on Route 7) was only conceptual in nature and the location of median and/or curb cuts would be modified during design phases to work with the operations of the parcel. FHI noted that the large curb cut in front of the parcel (essentially the entire length of the parcel), posed safety concerns and did not follow good access management principles and that Option 1 aimed to improve safety and aesthetics without displacing the business. FHI also explained that Option 2, which proposes a reuse of the site for a Mobility Hub, showed the potential for that site to serve as a transportation hub for the entire village, and that it was the consultant's obligation to illustrate the overall concept for the village.
- Two bicycle advocates commented that the plan did a good job addressing biking needs. Concerns about safe bike accommodations near the Danbury Airport were raised.

The formal presentation adjourned at about 7:50 p.m. to permit the public to continue to view display boards and/or talk one on one with the study team.

Three written comments were received at the sign in desk and are summarized below:

- 1) Please acknowledge the Norwalk River in maps; encourage use of pervious services and native landscaping to preserve the health of the River; add large trees along the River to prevent an increase in the thermal temperature of the River.
- 2) Owners of property @ 32 Ethan Allen Highway – disagree with concepts for property and do not approve of the “vision”.
- 3) Extremely positive plan where quality of life will be changed for the better. Hope that plan will be completed without excessive delays.