Connecticut à la Modes

Planes, Trains & Automobiles, or how some of Connecticut’s towns and cities are planning for and encouraging multi-modal transportation
Topics

- Transit Context: What's Moving and Where?
- Transit and Communities: Motivations
- Transit-Oriented Development and Connectivity
- Case Studies
  - Norwalk
  - Stratford
  - New London
- Observations and Discussion
Regional Rail and BRT Systems

Existing Amtrak Service
Existing MTA North Service
Proposed Springfield-New Haven High Speed Line
New Britain – Hartford BRT
Proposed Inland High Speed Line
Proposed South Coast Rail
Amtrak Service

Bridgeport
Hartford
Kensington
Ledyard
Meriden
Mystic
New Haven
New London
Old Saybrook
Stamford
Wallingford
Windsor
Windsor Locks
MTA North Services

Waterbury
Naugatuck
Beacon Falls
Seymour
Ansonia
 Derby-Shelton
New Haven
Milford
Stratford
Bridgeport
Fairfield
Southport
Green’s Farms
Westport
East Norwalk
South Norwalk
Danbury
Bethel
Redding

Branchville
Cannondale
Wilton
Merritt 7
Rowayton
Darien
Noroton Height
New Canaan
Talmadge Hill
Springdale
Glenbrook
Stamford
Old Greenwich
Riverside
Old Greenwich
Riverside
Cos Cob
Greenwich

Connecticut à la Modes: Presentation to WTSCVC
The Cecil Group
Proposed Springfield-New Haven High Speed Line

Intercity:
- Windsor Locks (Bradley Airport)
- Hartford
- Meriden
- New Haven

Commuter Rail:
- Enfield (new)
- Windsor
- West Hartford (new)
- Newington (new)
- Berlin
- Wallingford
- North Haven (new)
Proposed Springfield New Haven High Speed Line

- Part of Federal High Speed & Intercity Passenger Rail initiative (HSIPR)
- Successful application for initial funding
- Commuter rail not eligible except for “common improvements”
- Additional applications and funding pending
- Prospective services: intercity trains every hour (through NYC)
- Commuter service every 30 minutes (through New Haven)
New Britain/Hartford BRT

Downtown New Britain
East Main Street
East Street
Elmwood
Kane Street
New Britain
Newington Junction
Parkville
Sigourney
Union Station

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New Britain/Hartford BRT

- Dedicated Right-of-Way
- First BRT in Connecticut
- Final design in process
- Operation in 2013
Transit and Communities: Motivations

- Automobile congestion reduction
- Amenity and value for existing residents/businesses/institutions
- Smart Growth and sustainability policies and programs
- Leveraging infrastructure funding (Stimulus and other sources)
- Inviting and supporting Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
Transit and Communities: Motivations

- Automobile congestion reduction
  - The dilemma of relocated congestion to improved station areas and expanded service
- Amenity and value for existing residents/businesses/institutions
  - The dilemma of increasing use by “outsiders”
- Smart Growth and sustainability policies and programs
  - The dilemma of increased local impacts vs. reduced regional impacts
- Leveraging infrastructure funding (Stimulus and other sources)
  - The challenge of competing for - and stretching - dollars
Transit and Communities: Motivations

- Inviting and supporting Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

  The potential community and impact issues with new development
Case Study: South Norwalk

- Connectivity Study: South Norwalk Rail Station: West Avenue and SONO Districts
- South Norwalk Railroad Station Neighborhood Transit Oriented Development Plan

Norwalk Redevelopment Agency

The Cecil Group
TR Advisors
Milone & MacBroom
Language Link Consortium
Transit Oriented Development

**TOD Characteristics**

- Uses that are **advantaged** in the market by convenient access to regional transit stations
  - Pedestrian access
  - Bicycle access
  - Shuttle access

- **Advantaged** in the market:
  - Residential convenience for commuters
  - Employees
  - Clients (education, medical)
Neighborhood Development
*Neighborhood Characteristics*

- Area has been a focus of major, ongoing “upscale redevelopment” – SONO
- Neighborhood that was subjected to destructive urban renewal actions decades ago
- Population concentration of low income, ethnic, and relatively unemployed residents
- Major intermodal transportation center
Transit Oriented Development

**TOD Boundary Methodology**

- One-half mile radius around the transit station
- One-half mile walking distance around the transit station
- Stakeholder and City staff input
- Connections to transportation corridors and existing attractions and institutions
Transit Oriented Development
TOD Boundary Final

- Primary focus is on the areas where direct interaction between development and land use occurs due to pedestrian linkages.

- Major transit, bicycle and pedestrians corridors that connect the train station to the other areas of Norwalk will have a special emphasis.
# Existing Conditions Analysis

## Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Norwalk 2000</th>
<th>Norwalk 2006-08</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>82,951</td>
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<td>82,937</td>
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<td>Households</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worked at Home</td>
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- Data is provided by 2000 Census, the American Community Survey 2006-2008 and Claritas.
## Existing Conditions Analysis

### Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Area</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>Study Area</th>
<th>2009**</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
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<td>Population</td>
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<tr>
<td>Households</td>
<td>4,704</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income*</td>
<td>$36,784</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$46,711</td>
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<td>Transportation to Work</td>
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<td>Drive Alone</td>
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<td>Bike</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carpool</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3.2%</td>
<td>Worked at Home</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data is provided by 2000 Census, the American Community Survey 2006-2008 and Claritas.

*Average of median for census tracts 440, 441 and 445.*

**From Claritas report.
Case Study: South Norwalk

Process

Economics
- Economic evaluation of market influence of transit
- Parcel-by-parcel susceptibility to change analysis
- Site specific and prototypical pro formas

Community
- Stakeholder interaction and public outreach
- Parallel public agency working sessions
Case Study: South Norwalk

Challenges and Observations

- Rail station areas have often been “the other side of the tracks” – sometimes with established populations
- Norwalk has a commitment to diversity, which TOD gentrification can destroy
- The process is bringing Norwalk face-to-face with its own notion of “community”
- It is far more that “how” to connect to the rail station: it is a question of “who” to connect
- There are new ways to moderate change and provide affordability that Norwalk is poised to explore
Case Study: Stratford TCD Feasibility

Goal and Participants

Goal: To establish the community and economic feasibility of enhancing transportation oriented development through a model program of planning

Sponsor: Town of Stratford

Funding: Tri-State Transportation Campaign and One Regions Funders' Group

Project Team

The Cecil Group

TR Advisors

Milone & MacBroom

Stratford Transit Centered Development

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

JOIN US in examining the potential of development around Stratford's train station at the upcoming

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

Thursday February 11, 2010 at 7PM
Baldwin Center, 1000 West Broad Street
Stratford Planning Area

- Half-mile radius
- Reasonable walking distance for transit-centered development
- Conducive to housing
- Possible but more limited for office/commercial/institutional uses
Stratford Planning Area

- Low scale residential community
- Economically challenged town center and Route 1 strip
- Environmentally damaged land
Stratford Planning Area

Area Views

- Main Street near Stratford Avenue
- Rail Underpass at Main Street
- Academy Hill Historic District
- View of Downtown/Station Area from the South
- Main Street Looking South
- Main Street From the Station Access Walk

Stratford: Feasibility Study for Transit Centered Development Report (Draft for Review and Comment)
Use Patterns
Use Patterns
Use Patterns
Use Patterns
Parking

Available Parking

<table>
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<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>PARKING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Station Lots 1, 2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>294</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broadbridge Avenue</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linden Avenue</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church Street</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Parking</td>
<td>413</td>
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Required Parking Estimate

Ridership = 1,320 weekday boardings*

Parking rate = 0.9 spaces per passenger boarding**

Parking demand = 1,200 spaces

Six year parking permit waiting list

*MTA Metro-North Railroad Passenger Counts from 2007
**Based on New Haven/Springfield line estimates
Parking: Preceding Expansion Proposal

- Footprint on existing north lot
- Four level structure
- Parking Spaces = 693
- Net Increase = 399
- Expandable to six level structure

Town Center cannot be adequately served if the commuter parking is not relocated from "bootleg" spaces
Visual Preference Survey Results

- Buildings and Architecture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very desirable</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>Not OK</th>
<th>Objectionable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Visual Preference Survey: Preferred Elements

- Building Type
  - Buildings with commercial components, single family homes and townhouses were preferred to planned developments, mid-rise and multifamily buildings

- Building Height
  - Building preferences consistently increased with lower building heights
    (2 Story: 2.1, 3 Story: 2.9, 4 Story: 3.5, 5 Story: 3.7, 6+ Story: 4.3)
Visual Preference Survey: Preferred Elements

- Architectural Style - Traditional architectural styles were strongly preferred to contemporary architectural styles
- Building Use - Retail and mixed use buildings were strongly preferred to residential only buildings
- Building Setbacks - Limited building setbacks (0’ - 20’) were preferred to significant setbacks (greater than 20’)

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The Cecil Group
Four Most Preferred Images
Four Least Preferred Images
Station Area Revelation

Phase 1 Station Area Re-organization
Station Area Revelation

Future Station Area Redevelopment

Connecticut à la Modes: Presentation to WTSCVC
The Cecil Group
Station Area Revelation

Existing Highway and Circulation Patterns

Exit 32
Most convenient access

Exit 33
Partial service, inconvenient I-95 access

Key:
- I-95 and ramps
- Regional traffic
- Local traffic
- Commuter parking

Connecticut à la Modes: Presentation to WTSCVC
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Station Area Revelation

Proposed Highway and Circulation Patterns…
Stratford Observations…

- Highway and transit access can be combined under exactly the right circumstances, and are a powerful economic pair.
- Separating traffic circulation from pedestrian access to TOD can be achieved – under exactly the right circumstances.
- Communities can use Connecticut zoning mechanisms and public ownership to direct and control development to meet their self-image – including design review using Village Commercial District zoning.
Case Study: New London Revitalization

Goal and Participants

- Goal: To create an Action Plan to unlock economically sustainable development and historic preservation in a downtown district
- Sponsor: City of New London
- Funding: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation
- Project Team

  The Cecil Group
  Milone & MacBroom
  Durkee Brown Veveiros & Werenfels
  FXM Associates
New London

Location and Transit
New London

Location and Transit

Rail Station

Bank Street historic neighborhood district
New London

District Character

Connecticut à la Modes: Presentation to WTSCVC

The Cecil Group
New London Observations

- Is there a future in big urban to small urban lifestyle connections (NYC to New London)? Is there a market for rail-oriented weekend and retirement housing?
- Will there be a commuter draw to Providence from Eastern Connecticut?
- How can TOD be aligned with Main Street revitalization and Connecticut historic preservation initiatives?
Other Cities, Towns and Initiatives

- Stamford
- Bridgeport
- Meriden
Final Thoughts

- Participatory processes work
- The car doesn’t go away, so plan carefully for it
- Density and economic feasibility become a tight-rope in traditionally-scaled communities
- Planning for transit centers is community planning