

**From:** Taryn Bolotin  
**Sent:** Monday, June 06, 2016 12:31 PM  
**To:** Bhardwaj, Priti S.  
**Subject:** State Project No.158-212 Saugatuck Bridge  
**Attachments:** unknown

June 6, 2016

Ms. Bhardwaj,

My name is Taryn Bolotin. My husband, Robbie Guimond and I live on the Saugatuck River at . We own Bridgebrook Marina, a small marina just north of the Saugatuck bridge. While we are not the only family affected by the bridge, we are one of the only families whose livelihood is affected by the bridge. We have a vested interest, past the obvious safety concerns, in the outcome of the bridge restoration/replacement. We want the bridge to be safe and we want the bridge to allow boat access to flow under the bridge. At the end of the day, it is a bridge over navigable water, and I think that point is being dangerously overlooked.

We see the bridge from our house. We see the traffic and the congestion and we can also see under the bridge, all of the deterioration. We are also aware of the historical significance but what ends up being an aesthetic pleasantry to some, is no longer beneficial to our growing and changing community. And it is painfully short sighted to think about the bridge aesthetics, and not what the bridge could be doing/creating/allowing for our community.

As a family who uses the bridge for commuting as well as boat traffic, we would love to see a swinging bridge that is safe, allows for safe passage for pedestrians, and also has a higher clearance for boat traffic underneath. We have, on average, 8 ft tide swings. This makes getting under the bridge impossible for most people on the average Long Island Sound boat to get under that bridge anywhere close to high tide. Not only does this impede recreational use of the river, but it becomes a huge safety issue when the marine police don't have access to that part of the river. With the addition of the massive Gault project, and the upcoming Railroad place development, we will be seeing an influx of traffic and hopefully boat traffic to our water community. Robbie suggested a water taxi bringing people from the train and surrounding Saugatuck area to downtown Westport shopping area including the Levitt Pavilion, Library and surrounding shops. Which would not only help boost the local economy but also alleviate some of the car traffic, especially in the busy summer months.

The idea of more activity on the river made us realize the Westport Marine police won't have access all the way up to the Route 1 bridge. Norwalk Fire Dept has a marine boat that can get all the way up to the corporate buildings to assist with fires via the water, but not with the Saugatuck bridge height now. We already have more activity on the water with the new popularity of paddle boarding as well as the rowing club. I haven't ever heard a whisper of concern for the safety of these people who are out on the water in cold temperatures and in early morning hours or after dusk. Mere minutes could

make the difference in saving lives when you're on the water. We would love to see the bridge clearance height raised to meet the clearance of the railroad bridge. We live in a water community we need to understand and appreciate the treasure we have here. I hope the town will not have tunnel vision and will be able to see the big picture, allowing the community to grow and thrive. Thank you for your time and consideration with this matter.

Taryn Bolotin & Robbie Guimond

p.s. I have attached a photo to show the clearance of the bridge. Its not always like this, but you can see the issues this creates.