

GLENBROOK TRAIN STATION  
VISUAL INSPECTION REPORT



January 2007



Prepared by the Bureau of Public Transportation  
Connecticut Department of Transportation

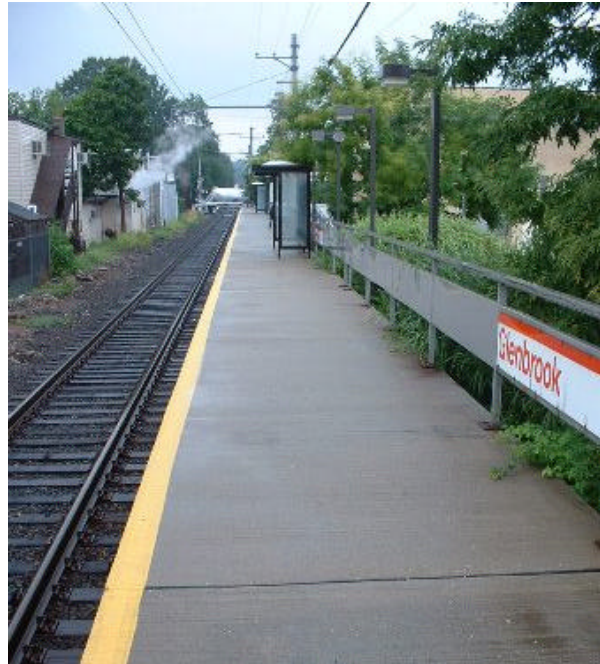
**Overview:**

The Glenbrook Train Station is located in the Glenbrook section of Stamford. The Glenbrook platforms have been placed between two rail crossings, which do not allow for expansion. Landscaping softens the station's urban setting, but the platforms face the less maintained rear facades of commercial buildings on the other side of the track.

A visitor to the area can easily be missed station. Crossing gates may indicate the presence of the railroad, but there are no station signs.

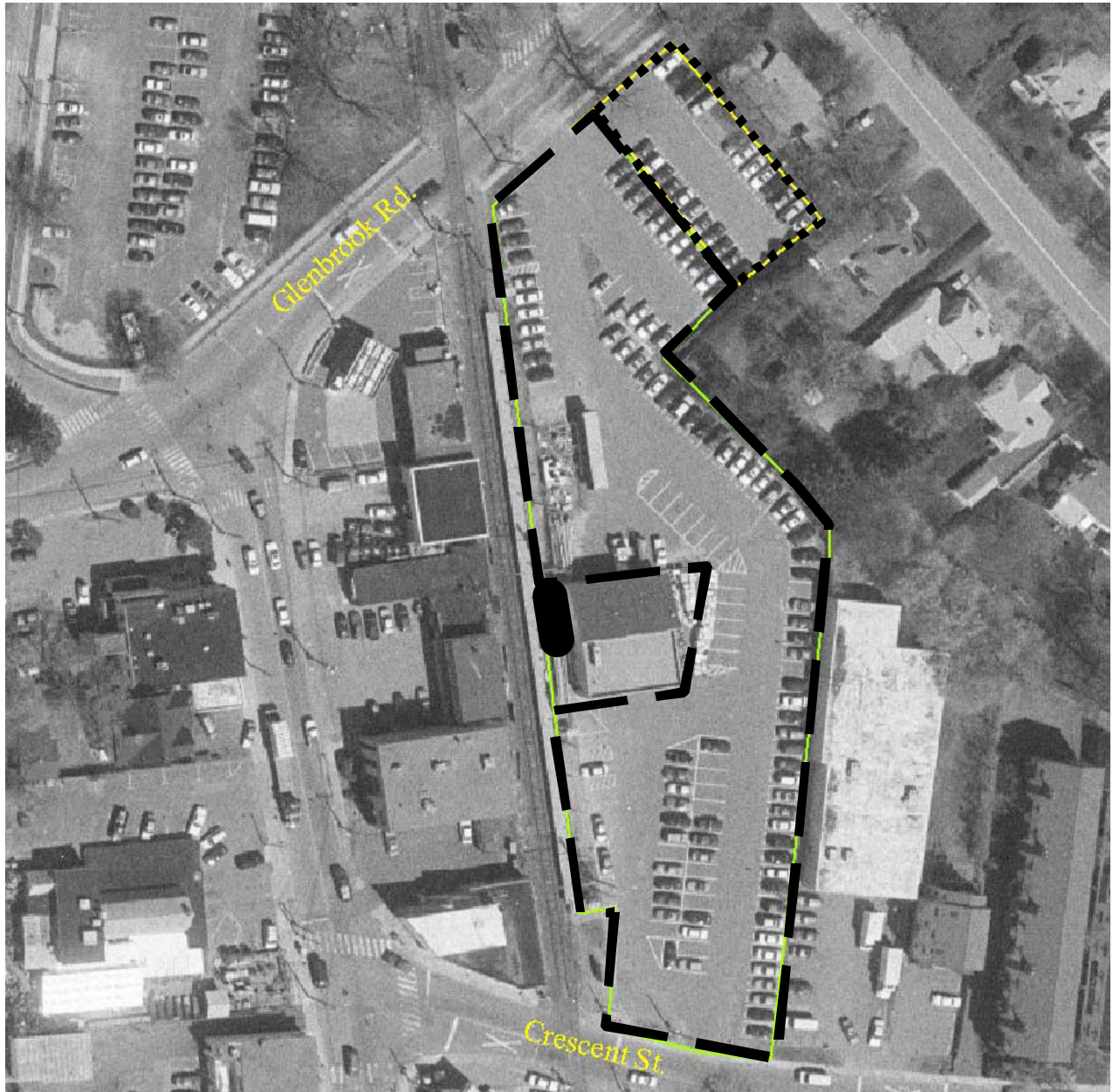
Parking is limited to the immediate station area. That area is further restricted by the City's Traffic Department building.

Being a small station in an urban setting with a small parking lot, patrons of Glenbrook Station likely to arrive by foot, by bus or to be dropped off. This is not likely to change without investing greatly into right of way acquisitions and capital improvements.

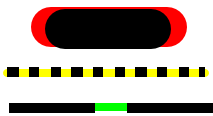
**Maintenance Responsibilities:**

Owner:	CDOT
Operator:	CDOT
Platform Lights:	Metro-North
Trash:	Metro-North
Snow Removal:	Metro-North
Shelter Glazing:	Metro-North
Platform Canopy:	--
Platform Structure:	Metro-North
Parking:	Town

**Station Layout:**



*Aerial Photo by Aero-Metric, Inc. – Graphics by Urbitran as part of the Rail Governance Study*



Station Building  
State-Owned Parking Area  
Municipality-Owned Parking Area

### **Train Station Visual Inspection Parameters:**

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (Department) recently inspected all 36 New Haven Line train stations to assess their appearance, safety, means of access and overall condition. Observations have been noted in an inspection report prepared for each station. The findings of these individual reports will be used to develop a Station Improvement Program. Initially, maintenance issues will be passed along to responsible parties for resolution. Soon after, a series of improvement projects will be recommended, followed by a long-term program of maintenance repairs and capital improvements.

The following station components were reviewed as part of the visual inspection process:

- **Highway Access** – While traveling to each station, inspectors observed the placement of trailblazing signage. In addition, they assessed the ease of locating appropriate station parking and drop-off areas. Typically, a green highway sign has been placed in advance of the proper exit for a particular train station. This sign notes the name of the station and commuter service operator. However, trailblazing signage at ramp termini or on secondary routes is typically missing or indistinguishable amid the clutter of other signs. Primary routes from the major roadways to each station need to be established and prominently identified. Conversely, trailblazing the return route is also required.
- **Parking** – This station reports cover signage, illumination and pavement condition issues within station parking areas. The Department and municipalities will address parking capacity and demand matters separate from this report.
- **Platforms** – Each station report details observations related to the general condition of the platforms, stairs, ramps, handrails and railings. The reports also incorporate the comments and recommendations of the Department's Connecticut Rail Station Governance Study - May 2005 (Governance Study) and High Level Platform Visual Inspection & Inventory. The latter inspection effort addresses only main line stations. The Department will inspect branch line platforms and canopies in the second phase of the high-level platform inspection program and incorporate the findings into future improvement projects
- **Canopies** – Each station report details observations relative to the general condition of any canopies located at the station. As noted under the Platform heading above, other studies have been referenced in presenting the findings for this component of the station.
- **Illumination** – The observations noted in each station report do not include a specific heading for illumination. Field visits occurred during daylight hours, thus inspectors could not assess the effectiveness of illumination in parking areas, along paths or on the platforms. Comments have been included in other headings relative to the number of fixtures, location and assumed coverage. This station report incorporates the comments of the Governance Study, where appropriate. However, the reports generally recommend that any first phase of station improvement include an evaluation of illumination levels in all areas of the stations and upgrade light fixtures, as necessary.

- **Painting** – As with illumination, the station inspection reports address painting issues under the appropriate headings.
- **Walks and Paths** – This station inspection report makes note of paved paths between parking areas, streets and station platforms. Where appropriate, general observations of the condition of the paths, vegetation, lighting, signage and stairways along the paths have been included.
- **Ticket Vending Machine (TVM)** – Metro-North has placed TVM's at most high volume stations. Where appropriate, this station report notes current locations. The Department and Metro-North plan to install at least one full service TVM at all main line and branch line stations. They will accomplish each of these installations based on ridership demands and funding availability.
- **Shelter** – Many platforms have shelters in lieu of adjacent waiting areas in station buildings. Typical Plexiglas or glass shelters protect waiting commuters from the elements. Many of these structures are similar to curbside shelters found along local bus routes. If appropriate, this report notes the location and general condition of platform shelters. It also addressed the need for new or additional protective structures.
- **Station Building** – The typical New Haven Line station building is a historic structure with a waiting room, rest room, and ticket office. Some have a coffee shop and/or newsstand. Where appropriate, observations have been incorporated into the station reports. Where station buildings were closed at the time of site visit, applicable findings of the Governance Study have been included in the report.
- **Taxi Stands and Bus Stops** – Taxis can physically access most station areas with the exception of parking garages and gated lots. Several stations have designated taxi stands. However, roadway geometry may limit bus access to most train stations. Stations with narrow parking aisles, tight turns or dead ends can accommodate bus patrons by placing bus stops on nearby streets. This report notes general taxi and bus accessibility issues.
- **Variable Message Sign (VMS)** – Every New Haven Line station has an audio PA system consisting of the typical “steel can” speaker or horn. The inspectors did not assess the regularity, audio levels or content of public announcements. These matters will continue to be addressed by the Department and station operators. Variable message signs or VMS provide a visual backup to audio announcements. These signs not only assist the hearing challenged. They also provide necessary train information over the din of large stations, nearby construction activities or noisy rail equipment. Currently, Metro-North is installing VMS at the designated “key” stations listed in the ADA section below. The Department and Metro-North intend to address visual messaging needs at all stations based on ridership demands and funding availability.

- **Signage** – This heading includes general observations of signs placed on platforms, along paths and in other areas of the station. Inspectors attempted to look at the signage as a first time or infrequent user. Their observations are noted in this report. In addition to observations noted within this topic, signage issues are addressed under the Highway Access and Parking headings.
- **Fence** – Nearly every station uses metal fencing beyond the platform ends to restrict unauthorized access to the tracks. Fencing has also been installed to secure parking areas, demarcate private property or cordon off potentially hazardous areas. Most locations employ a chain link fence, although occasional ornamental steel, cast iron or wood fences can be found. The condition of station fencing has been noted in this report.
- **Litter** – Litter may be the most conspicuous distraction at train stations. Patrons appreciate a well-maintained facility. For this report, inspectors have noted the general appearance of the station including areas under and behind platforms, along paths, around station buildings and in parking lots. It should be noted that these comments are depict the station condition only for the day of the site visit. It is assumed that station operators and Metro-North will continue to maintain the train stations to the high standards of the rail commuters.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Access:** The New Haven Line has its origins in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, so many of the stations do not conform to the current ADA standards. Due to funding limitations, the Department cannot upgrade all New Haven Line stations at this time. Therefore, State and federal agencies have incorporated a “key station” upgrade program for twelve of the stations (Greenwich, Stamford, Darien, South Norwalk, Westport, Bridgeport, Milford, New Haven, New Canaan, Danbury, Waterbury, and the proposed Fairfield Metro Station). The remaining facilities will be upgraded over time. Meanwhile, the Department will continue to incorporate code compliant materials and practices into all of its current and planned station upgrades and improvements.
- **Amenities** –This inspection report addresses the inspectors’ observations of amenities placed around the stations. These may include items such as benches, trash cans, platform and stair railings, entrance signs, kiosks, vending areas, bike racks, station color schemes, clocks and light fixtures.
- **General Remarks** – General comments may be included at the conclusion of each observation report to address those matters that do not fall within the criteria of the above list of headings.

**Observations – August 25, 2006:**

**Highway Access** – Glenbrook Station is located near Route 106 between Glenbrook Road and Crescent Street. There are no obvious trailblazing signs guiding motorists to the station. Being an urban area, such signage could get easily lost amid the normal roadside clutter of businesses, advertisements and posters. There is no station entrance sign.

**Parking** – The parking lot is accessible from both ends of the station. The City's Traffic Department occupies an area in the middle of the lot behind the platform. Entering and exiting the station lot can be difficult at either end of the station due to high traffic volumes, the proximity of the railroad crossing and nearby signalized intersections.

**Platforms** – The platform is in satisfactory condition, although the Governance Study notes some issues with the footings. The edge is painted with a narrow yellow stripe. The railing base plates are rusted. The stairs at either end of the platform are set back from the outside edge of the platform. The gap between the platform edge and handrail appears to be excessive. One could easily exit the ramp on the wrong side of the handrail.

**Canopy** – There is no canopy at this station.

**Walks/Paths** – Street sidewalks and the parking lot aisles provide primary access to the platform. Uneven and cracked bituminous surfaces are common.

**Ticket Vending Machine (TVM)** – There is no TVM at this location.

**Shelter** – The platform has three shelters. The largest shelter located in the middle of the platform sits at the top of the ramp. It has several benches, electrical boxes and scratched glazing. Two other shelters are located at either end of the platform. There are several ground level shelters housing parking kiosks. These shelters have scratched and graffiti covered glazing.

**Station Building** – There is no station building at this location

**Taxi Stands and Bus Stops** – Taxis can access the parking area. There is a bus stop on Crescent Street next to the parking lot entrance.

**Signage** – There is some parking related signage throughout the lot.

**Fences** – The chain link fence at the north end of the platform is in good condition.

**Litter** – There is some track level trash across from the platform. The other areas of the station are relatively clean, except for some infrequent graffiti tags.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Access** – With some effort, a disabled person can get to the railcar from the parking lot. However, there are too many code shortcomings to consider this station to be ADA compliant.

**Amenities** (See Appendix A Photos)

- Kiosk: None
- Exterior Paint Theme: None
- Vending: Newspaper boxes have been placed along the platform.
- Benches: There are two aluminum benches in the main shelter and two on the platform.
- Railings: Aluminum railing with rusted bases.
- Light Fixtures: Illumination appears to be sufficient. However, several fixture lenses may have to be replaced due to evidence of gasket failure.
- Trash: One blue recycling bin on platform. Trash cans in shelters housing parking kiosks.
- Bicycle Rack: A bike rack is located at south end of platform.
- Platform Clock: None

**General Remarks** – The Glenbrook Train Station is convenient to commuters residing on the east side of Stamford. However, its urban location may make expansion difficult.

**Recommended Repairs, Upgrades and Improvements:**

At the urging of the Governor, the Department is establishing a program of repairs, upgrades and improvements to better the appearance, safety, and functionality of all 36 New Haven Line Stations. As a first step, the Department will continue to pass along all maintenance concerns to station operators for their immediate attention. The next step will be to have the Department and station operators upgrade station amenities. These might include benches, kiosks, railing, light fixtures, trash cans, bike racks, clocks and other common station elements. When funding becomes available, the Department will initiate a project to commence the upgrade of amenities at the stations.

With the cooperation of municipalities and Metro-North, the Department will review, categorize, and prioritize the findings listed under the Station Governance heading below. In addition, the recommendations of the High Level Platform Visual Inspection Report and the Connecticut Rail Governance Study will be considered. The resulting priority listing will include a number of projects to accomplish the repairs, upgrades and improvements needed to bring the New Haven Line Commuter Rail Service up to the commuters' expectations.

Finally, the Department anticipates that a number of major capital improvements may result from a comprehensive review of the findings of these station inspection reports. These might include the installation or extension of high-level platforms and canopies, the replacement or addition of shelters, and major ADA improvements. As noted earlier, the Department and individual municipalities will address parking issues separate from this report. However, these too may demand major capital investments. Finally, the recently completed Danbury Branch Feasibility Study and similar reports planned for the New Canaan and Waterbury Branches could lead to other capital improvements at some of the branch line stations.

The findings of this Visual Inspection Report and recommended solutions for station repairs, upgrades and improvements are listed below:



**Maintenance Repairs:**

- Add station trailblazing signs to Route 106 and other streets in the area.
- Clean track level litter.
- Maintain landscaped areas around platform. Trim tree branches at the north end of the platform.
- Replace scratched shelter glazing.
- Remove vending machines from platforms, ramps and primary walkways.
- Replace platform light fixture gaskets and/or lenses.

**Amenity Upgrades:**

- Add a kiosk with a clock.
- Add station entrance signs at both ends of the station.
- Replace aluminum benches with contoured mesh seats.
- Build a shelter for vending machines and newspaper boxes off the platform and away from paths.
- Install a TVM.
- Add several trash cans to platform entry points.

**Governance Improvements:**

- Replace aluminum platform railing with a black railing.
- Protect the opening on the track side of the stairs at the ends of the platform.
- Evaluate lighting levels around station area.
- Evaluate station signage and supplement, as necessary.
- Replace bituminous walks with concrete sidewalk.
- Place black railing between the new concrete sidewalk and the tracks at the south end of the station. Replace the chain link fence with a black railing at the north end of the station.
- Install post mounted lights along the new walkways.
- Install a tactile warning strip along the edge of the platform.

**Major Capital Improvements:**

- Add a canopy to the platform
- Replace platform shelters. Consider the West Redding template.
- Consider acquiring the City Traffic Department building to provide additional parking or investigate a land trade.

----- **END OF REPORT NARRATIVE** -----

**APPENDIX A**

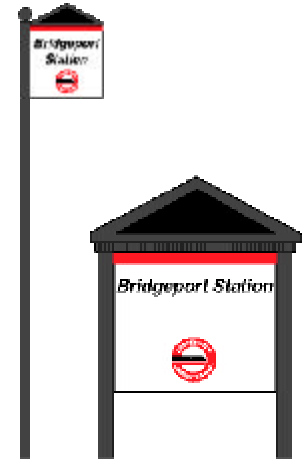
**Examples of Amenities**



**Pole Mounted Lights**



**Kiosk (Historic)**



**Signs (Contemporary)**



**Bench (Contemporary) and Railing**



**Vending Shelter**



**Trash Can (Black preferred)**



**Typical Trailblazing Sign**



**Fence, Walk and Post Mounted Light Next to Track**



**Glenbrook - Gap between Platform Edge and Stair Handrail**



**Glenbrook Station Platforms from South**



**Stamford Traffic Division Building**