

### Merritt Parkway Multi-use Trail Frequently Asked Questions

What would be the surface material of the trail?

The material is not known at this time. More than likely, it would be a combination of hard and soft at different areas depending on terrain.

Would there be lighting along the trail?

The Merritt Parkway is not illuminated. In keeping with the existing character, a trail would not be lit. However, the use of small lights or reflectors may be considered for safety reasons to delineate the edges of the trail.

Where would parking for the trail be located?

It is expected that the existing Park and Ride lots, whose peaks are normally during the week and not on weekends (when a trail would likely be most heavily used), would be utilized for a trail. It is possible that additional parking may be provided by nearby businesses that may have surplus spaces. The possibility of building new surface lots will also be discussed during the study process.



# Public Workshop

## MERRITT PARKWAY MULTI-USE TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY

STATE PROJECT 173-410

### Town of Fairfield

Osborn Elementary School  
All Purpose Room  
760 Stillson Road

Tuesday April 10, 2012  
6:00 pm

#### Connecticut Department of Transportation Personnel

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Department of Energy and  
Environmental Protection

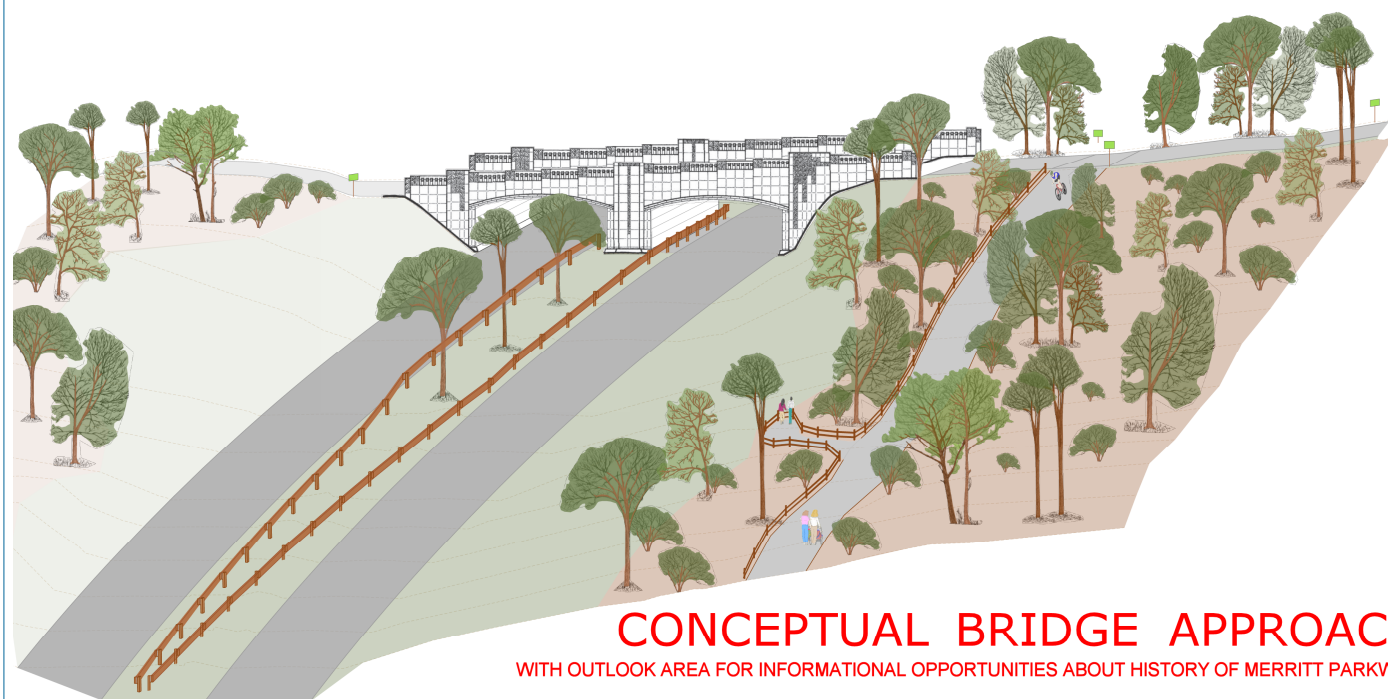
## Merritt Parkway Multi-Use Trail Feasibility Study

**The purpose of the study** is to determine whether a multi-use trail is feasible through the Merritt Parkway corridor. By documenting and analyzing many factors, including any effect on the scenic and historic character of the Parkway, and by soliciting stakeholder input, an informed decision can be made as to whether a multi-use trail is appropriate.

**In 2010**, the Department submitted a grant application to the National Scenic Byways Program for the purpose of exploring the feasibility of a multi-use trail along the Merritt Parkway. The grant was awarded to the Department and funds became available in October 2011 to begin the feasibility study process.

**One of the most historic roadways** in the United States, the Merritt Parkway (built during the Great Depression) is famous for its 66 unique bridges which settle into the surrounding topography and landscape. Unlike most other Parkways in America, the Merritt Parkway was conceived as a commuter corridor for the purpose of alleviating traffic on the already crowded Route 1.

The Parkway is not only a State Scenic Road and a National Scenic Byway, but it is also on the National Register of Historic Places. Its significance as a historic property is found in the bridges, the aesthetics of the alignment, and the landscape, the combination of which is truly unique.

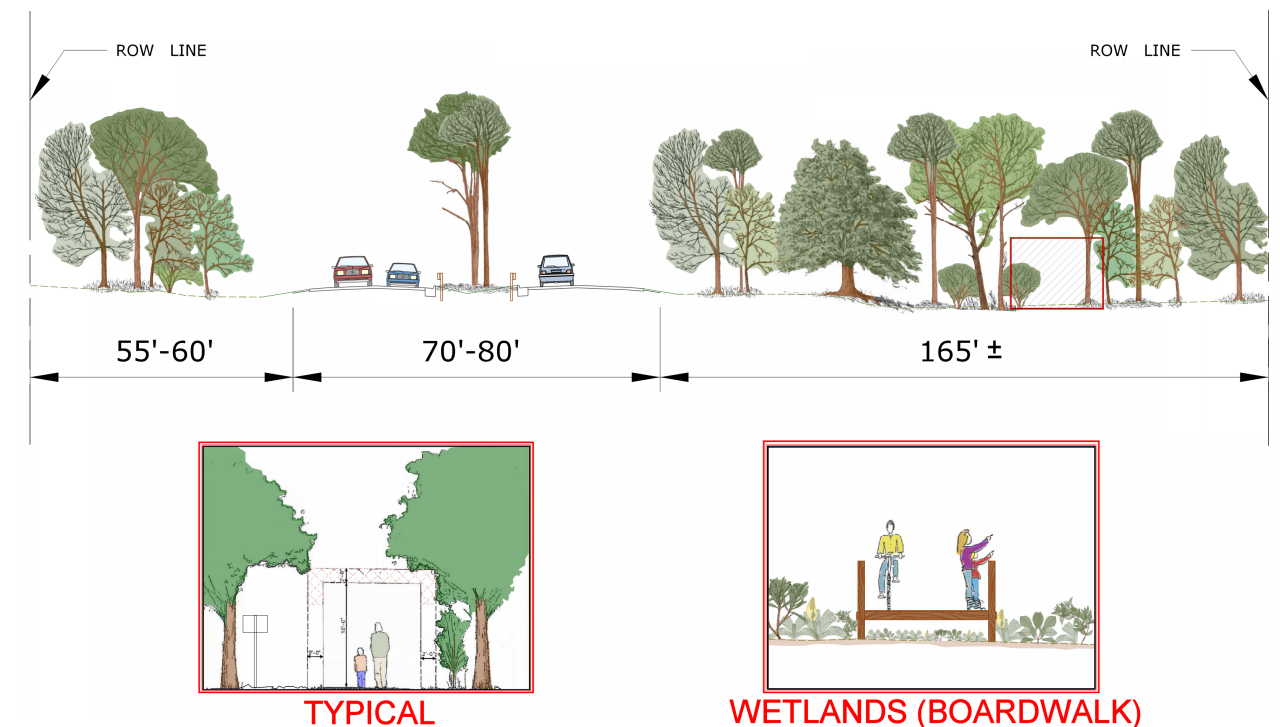


### CONCEPTUAL BRIDGE APPROACH

WITH OUTLOOK AREA FOR INFORMATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ABOUT HISTORY OF MERRITT PARKWAY

NOTE: ACTUAL CONDITIONS AND DIMENSIONS MAY VARY

## TYPICAL CONCEPTUAL CROSS-SECTION



### POSSIBLE TRAIL TREATMENTS THROUGH VARYING TERRAIN

**An extensive public outreach program** is being conducted as part of this study. In addition to meetings held with the elected officials of each City or Town along the Parkway, two public meetings will be conducted in each municipality.

**The purpose of this meeting**, the first of the two, is to collect information from local residents and to identify and prioritize community challenges and opportunities. With a focus on Fairfield, this meeting is designed to meet stakeholders and understand their individual concerns.

Once all pertinent information has been collected and a conceptual design for the trail has been established, the second meeting, a Town Information Meeting, will be held to present the conceptual design and gather any additional feedback. Currently, that meeting is expected to be held in Fall/Winter of 2012.

The information, ideas, and concerns raised by this process are critical to the success of the study. We invite you to share input and provide us with the local knowledge that is essential for this study to best serve the community.

[www.CT.gov/DOT/MerrittTrailStudy](http://www.CT.gov/DOT/MerrittTrailStudy)

**MERRITT PARKWAY MULTI-USE TRAIL  
PUBLIC WORKSHOP**

**REPORT OF MEETING**

**Date of Meeting:** April 10, 2012

**Time:** 6:00 pm

**Location of Meeting:** Osborn Elementary School, All Purpose Room, 760 Stillson Avenue, Town of Fairfield

**Subject:** Merritt Parkway Multi-use Trail Public Workshop

Mr. William Britnell of the Department of Transportation's Division of Highway Design opened by outlining the purpose/goals of the multi-use trail study with a presentation to the workshop attendees. He noted that this is a feasibility study and it will eventually lead to decision as to whether a trail should be constructed. He explained the meeting is a working meeting and that DOT representatives are looking for input specific to Fairfield as there will be a similar meeting held in each municipality along the Merritt Parkway.

Following the presentation, attendees were broken into small groups, each headed by a DOT or DEEP representative. Attendees were given the task of identifying concerns they may have about a potential trail. They were asked to focus their discussion specifically on Fairfield. After approximately 15 minutes of discussion within the groups, the group leaders reported to the rest of the room. The concerns were recorded on flipcharts as they were being reported. When all groups had been heard, attendees were asked to vote on their greatest concerns using stickers that had been distributed to each person. During the time attendees were voting, DOT staff was available for questions and concerns. Specifically, Ms. Sue Fiedler of the Department's Landscape Design unit talked with citizens whose properties directly abut the Merritt right-of-way. She took note of where their homes were by marking survey plans and listened to their specific concerns.

Once voting had been completed, the groups were reformed and given the task of brainstorming local opportunities that a trail could create within Fairfield. Following another 15 minutes of discussion, group leaders again reported out to the rest of the room. The discussed opportunities were recorded on flip charts.

Finally, attendees were asked to provide suggestions for the trail. It was noted that the as the groups had already discussed concerns, the suggestions provided during the session might focus on potential resolutions to those concerns. Following 15 minutes of discussion, group leaders reported their group's recommendations, which were again recorded on a flip chart.

Will Britnell thanked the attendees for coming and the workshop was officially ended. Numerous residents and attendees remained behind to talk with DOT personal.

Following the workshop, the information collected on the flip charts was compiled below. The concerns are ranked according to the number votes they received during the workshop, whereas the opportunities and suggestions are simply listed as they were recorded.

#### Concerns:

1. Safety/Privacy
2. Trespassing
3. Cost (construction and maintenance)
4. No existing bike facilities on the surrounding local roads
5. Crossings
6. Tree removal/environmental concerns
7. Property depreciation
8. Crime
9. Number of stops
10. Maintenance cost to the Town
11. Accessibility from side roads
12. Design (reliability/durability)
13. Conflicts between users
14. Black Road/Congress/Easton Tpke
15. Preservation of existing equestrian facilities
16. Screening
17. ADA compliance
18. Will restrooms be added?
19. Cross Highway, Redding
20. Liability
21. Lack of parking to access trail
22. Topography
23. Inconsistent maintenance
24. Will it be used?
25. Tax Dollar priorities
26. Supervision of children
27. Walking near traffic
28. Crossing Mill River
29. Emergency Access
30. Noise from Pkwy to trail users
31. Impact of switchbacks (to overall width of impacted area)
32. Be used as a party area
33. ATVs on trail
34. Litter
35. Impact to historic landscape
36. Horses' reaction to traffic noise
37. Stakeholders who don't abut trail
38. Wetlands at Cross Highway
39. Acquisition of private property
40. Illegal stopping on the Parkway/dropping people off
41. Existing encroachments
42. Landscaping added
43. Distraction to drivers

#### Opportunities:

1. The bar at the Hi-Ho Motel
2. An attraction for Ffld county
3. Get bikes off the roads
4. Open space
5. Tie into Sacred Heart University
6. G.E. abuts
7. Dwight Elementary School

8. Annual Dogwood Festival
9. Tie into Town Bike and Pedestrian Plan
10. Cross country skiing in winter
11. Develop bike trail
12. Improve recreational facilities
13. Linkage to Fairfield University
14. Charge fees
15. Tourism
16. Connect to mall (Trumbull)
17. Mass transit access
18. Economic development (aesthetic concerns)
19. Park and ride lots
20. Protect historic value
21. Appreciate Parkway while not driving
22. Travel time improvements
23. Safe route to school for children
24. D'Aggio
25. Mohegan Lake/Park
26. Physical Activity
27. Commute between towns off-road
28. Audubon society
29. Notre Dame High School
30. Service Plazas on the Parkway
31. Public Golf Courses
32. Farmers markets along trail
33. Federation of CT Garden Club
34. East Coast Greenway Link
35. Aquarian Water Company
36. Increase property values
37. Hot dog stand
38. Education for children
39. Improved walking facilities
40. Alternative emergency access for Parkway
41. Commute to work
42. Fairchild Wheeler golf course pizza
43. Bike friendliness
44. Unique designs
45. Accentuate the Park effect of the Parkway
46. Benefit/Cost
47. Installation of a trail would prevent future expansion of the Parkway
48. Peaceful
49. Farmington Canal Example
50. Travel Season extended for bikers
51. Local sponsorship of trail
52. Connect to Wilbur Cross (future trail)
53. North/South connector

Suggestions:

1. Keep study within the budget
2. Develop neighborhood watch
3. Bike patrol between local and state forces
4. Look to comparable communities for property value changes
5. Avoid insensitive architecture
6. Save 'concerns' section for the end of the meeting
7. Develop pilot project segments
8. Use recycled materials to keep cost down
9. Sound proof the Merritt
10. Use volunteer efforts

11. Community gardens
12. B/C examples to provide to residents
13. Meetings specifically with abutters
14. East of Black Rock has fewer property owners
15. Stop the study all together
16. Use grade separated crossings
17. Location markers
18. Include picnic areas and overlooks
19. Bike racks along trail and throughout town
20. Separate user groups
21. Use proper width for trail
22. Construction would provide opportunity to remove invasive species
23. Look to free bike programs started in Simsbury and Groton
24. Sign-in for Kids – location beacons
25. Insure funding ability
26. Separate equestrian trail
27. Clarify final approval
28. Post hours of use
29. Penalties/Fines for misuse
30. Least law
31. Grants/private funding
32. Insure multi-use design (not just for bikers)
33. Provide detailed information/educational material (pros and cons)
34. Sponsorship (families/buisnesses/etc)
35. Involve service clubs/volunteers
36. Landscaping to avoid trespassing
37. Safety education program
38. Vegetation and fencing
39. Provide hard and soft surfaces for different users
40. Emergency push boxes
41. Use environmentally friendly materials
42. Survey usage
43. Signage conformity
44. Work with each Town to meet their specific needs
45. Permeable surface
46. Education program for users and non-users (drivers)
47. Traffic calming on side streets
48. Limit ADA areas