

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

City of Stamford

Stamford Government Center
888 Washington Boulevard
Senior Center Auditorium, 2nd Floor

Thursday March 22, 2012
5:30 pm

Connecticut Department of Transportation Personnel

William Britnell
Principal Engineer
William.Britnell@ct.gov
860.594.3274

Susan Fiedler
Landscape Architect

Michael Calabrese
Project Engineer

Marissa Washburn
Transportation Engineer

David Head
Transportation
Supervising Planner

Serge Nikulin
Transportation
Engineer

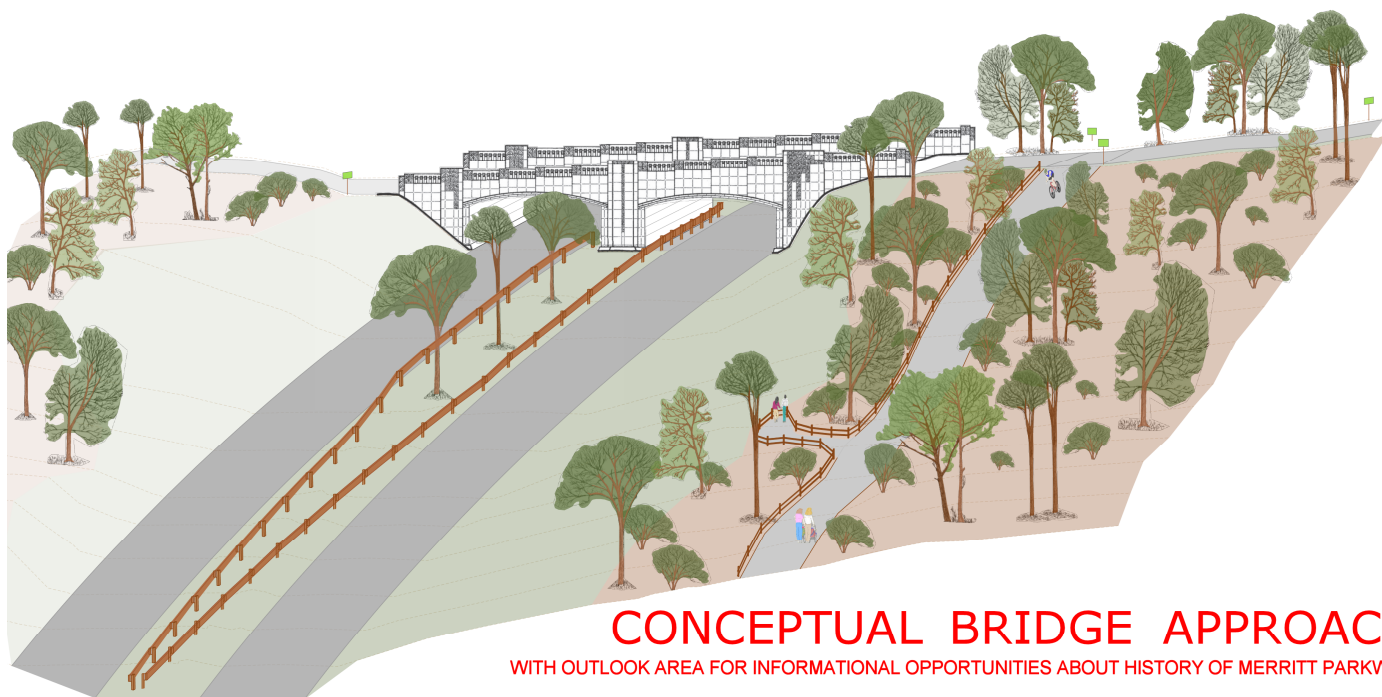
Merritt Parkway Multi-Use Trail Feasibility Study

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.

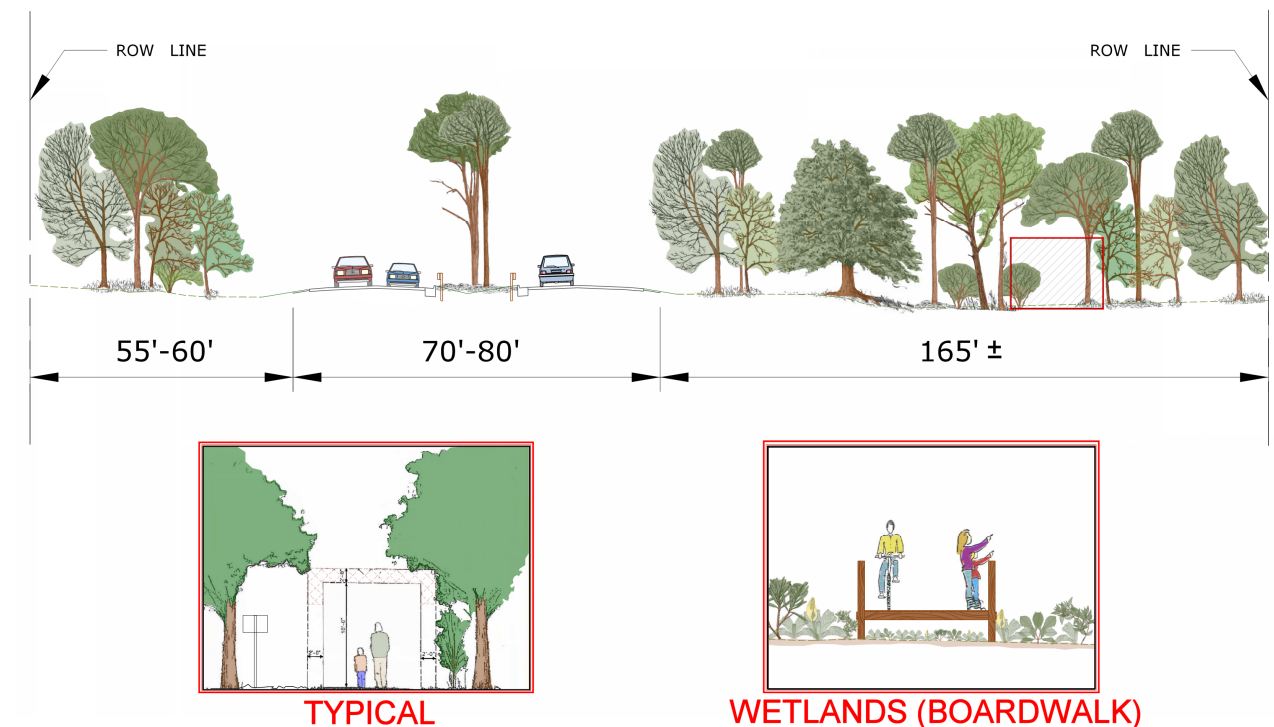


CONCEPTUAL BRIDGE APPROACH

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 Stamford, 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

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

REPORT OF MEETING

Date of Meeting: March 22, 2012

Time: 5:30pm

Location of Meeting: Government Center (888 Washington Blvd), 2ND Floor, City of Stamford

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 Stamford 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 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 Stamford. 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 Stamford. 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. Crossings
2. Access
3. Security
4. Cost
5. User conflict
6. Surface material
7. Lack of existing bikeway (few bike-friendly roadways)
8. Environmental issues
9. Maintenance
10. Other Bike/Ped Priorities—using money for other bike paths instead of Merritt
11. ADA preventing trail
12. Fencing
13. Public trans access
14. A person attempting to cross the Parkway
15. Visual impact/Blending in
16. Emergency Access
17. Parking
18. Trespassing
19. Congestion at crossings, both vehicles and trail users
20. Preservation of bridges
21. Vehicle crashed impacting trail safety
22. High Ridge Road (high vehicle volumes, safety, etc)
23. Restrooms
24. Health concerns
25. Ability to use (even able-bodied)
26. Privacy
27. Horses
28. Wildlife
29. Regulatory requirements

Opportunities:

1. Mianus Park, Merriebrook Lane and Cognewaugh Rd
2. Waveny Park, South Avenue and Lapham Rd, New Canaan
3. Creation of Jobs
4. Commuter and Retail Parking
5. ADA Opportunities
6. Tourism
7. Quality of Life
8. Emergency Access to Parkway
9. East Coast Greenway
10. Benches
11. Sterling Farms Golf Course, 1349 Newfield Avenue
12. Cross Country Skiing
13. Tennis Clubs – Roxbury Swimming and Tennis Club, 240 Roxbury Rd
 - i. Newfield Swim & Tennis Club, Red Bird Rd
 - ii. Wire Mill Racquet Club, 578 Wire Mill Rd
14. Schools - Northeast School, 82 Scofieldtown Rd
 - iii. King Low Heywood Thomas, 1450 Newfield Ave
 - iv. Turn of River Middle School, 117 Vine Road
15. Italian Center of Stamford, 1620 Newfield Avenue
16. Transit Connectivity

17. Young People –Activity, Transportation, Health Benefits
18. Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens, 151 Brookdale Rd,
19. Stamford Museum and Nature Center, 39 Scofieldtown Rd, Stamford
20. Office Parks
21. Bike Friendly Neighborhood Initiative
22. Economic Opportunities
23. Family Friendly
24. Experience Nature
25. Mill River
26. Increase abutting property value

Suggestions:

1. GPS mapping
2. Use low volume roads for access instead of existing higher volume roads
3. Involve local bike shops (possible sponsorship too)
4. Side street facilities
5. Clearly define access points and parking
6. Use Taconic and North County trails as examples
7. Use a hard, permeable surface
8. Include lookouts
9. Should the trail go forward, market it so that people are aware it exists
10. Look to other state agencies with trails to see how some challenges were overcome
11. Corporate Sponsorship
12. Mitigate loss of vegetation – (also, trail could be used to remove invasive species)
13. Coordinate with other future DOT projects to ensure future infrastructure trail friendly
14. Economic opportunities
15. Incrimination
16. Coalitions
17. Schools
18. Hiking groups
19. Utilize pedestrian crossings (signalized)
20. Define logical start/stop locations and destinations
21. Fencing
22. Dual surface to accommodate all users
23. Signs/pavement markings
24. Education for crossings