



# Meeting Notes

Date: Tuesday, April 11, 2023  
2:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Place: Branford Fire Headquarters  
45 North Main Street  
Branford, CT 06405

Re: CTDOT Project No.: 0175-1608  
Route 146 Corridor Management Plan  
**Corridor Working Group Meeting #3**

Project No.: 42441.08

## ATTENDEES:

### Corridor Working Group Members in Attendance:

Name	Affiliation
Patrick Zapatka	CTDOT
Rob Bell	CTDOT
Bill Sigmund	CT DEEP
Janice Plaziak	Town of Guilford Town Engineer
Harry Smith	Branford Town Planner
Brian Kent (virtual) (Alternate for Sandy Fry)	CT Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board
Laura Francis	SCRCOG
Barbara Rizzozi	Branford Resident
Bob Yaro	Guilford Resident
Kevin Ortiz (Alternate for John Hoefflerle)	Town of Branford Engineering
David Rood	Branford Historical Society
Karyl Lee Hall	Route 146 and Route 77 Scenic Roads Advisory Committee

### Corridor Working Group Members Not Able to Attend:

Name	Affiliation
Catherine Labadia	CT State Historic Preservation Office
Jaime Stein	Guilford Town Planner
Allan Dodge	CTDOT
Michael Calabrese	CTDOT
David Elder	CTDOT

### Other Attendees:

Name	Affiliation
Joe Balskus	VHB
Daniel Amstutz (virtual)	VHB
Jennifer Pacacha	CTDOT

NOTES:

- › Rob Bell briefly opened the meeting and thanked all attendees for coming.
- › Joe Balskus noted that Brian Kent is attending on behalf of the Connecticut Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board in place of Sandy Fry. Kent introduced himself and explained his role on the Board.
- › Balskus gave a brief overview of what was covered in the second Working Group meeting on March 7. This included going over the updates to existing conditions report and discussing the first public meeting, the corridor walks, and the stakeholder meetings.
- › Balskus also went over the highlights of a March 30 meeting that VHB and CTDOT had with the Friends of Historic Route 146 about the Corridor Management Plan (CMP). Members of the Friends group shared their concerns about various topics and generally supported the effort behind the CMP. Balskus noted the meeting felt comfortable and open. Bob Yaro said he and others appreciated CTDOT taking the time to meet with them and thought it was a great start to the project process.
  - A follow-up from the meeting was a request to sweep debris from the side of the road on Route 146 to make some more space for people biking and walking on the road. CTDOT was able to get this done shortly after the meeting.
  - Yaro noted that safety of people walking and biking, as well as flooding, were also brought up as important to the Friends.
  - The Corridor Working Group (CWG) members discussed signage. It was brought up that there should be better signing at the railroad underpasses on Route 146 to advise on clearance. There is also a lack of signs informing people that the road is scenic. A balance must be struck between minimizing signs and putting in signs that are necessary and are useful to travelers. Yaro suggested looking at Massachusetts guidelines for scenic and bike route signage as a good example.
  - One of the members of the Friends had asked if the project included “surveying the corridor” to find the edge of pavement. A CWG member asked why this could not be done. It was noted that this was out of the scope of the project, as this is a higher-level planning process, and that level of detailed ground survey is completed for design projects. Yaro said it would be helpful to know where the edge of pavement is to understand where there are opportunities for space to be made for people to walk and bike, and where there aren’t good opportunities. He is also interested in narrowing travel lanes. Balskus said we have good mapping that may make it easier to identify these areas without full surveying. It’s possible some areas of pavement are covered up by soil or vegetation. This level of detail or need can also be suggested in the CMP recommendations.
- › The CWG discussed who will do opening remarks at the Public Information Meeting on April 25. The goal is to have a member of the CWG speak. CTDOT will also make some remarks. Other stakeholder groups can speak during the public comment and Q&A at the end of the meeting. It was agreed that Karyl Lee Hall should make remarks for the CWG.
- › Daniel Amstutz and Joe Balskus went over the draft public information meeting presentation, which includes an opening with brief remarks, an overview of Corridor Management Plans, background on Route 146 and how we came to be doing the current CMP, an overview of public engagement and the CWG, the existing conditions update, and Q&A at the end.
  - Barbara Ricoszi recommended asking meeting participants where the CWG should visit on its corridor field walk.

- The CWG discussed the public survey. It is not planned for distribution until later in the project, after the future strategies have been developed. For this meeting, general comments will be accepted for a couple of weeks after the meeting. For the presentation, it would be good to provide more detail about public engagement that is planned for later in the year.
- Showing the list of stakeholders to be contacted and giving them a heads up would also be a good idea.
- It should be made clear up front that this meeting is mainly about existing conditions, and is just the start of the project.
- Balskus noted the meeting is in-person and not hybrid, but the meeting will be livestreamed and there will be an ability for people watched the livestream to send emails during the Q&A which can then be put into the record at the meeting.
- CWG members requested the public announcement information that has been shared with local print media.
- › Balskus noted the goal was to have a presentation not more than 30 minutes. He asked the CWG about more interactive ways to gather input, such as through different stations with boards and themes. Members discussed this and decided that having staff available for small in-person conversations after the Q&A would be better to allow people who don't feel comfortable talking in public to ask questions and build relationships on a one-on-one level.
- › Brian Kent commented that it's important the meeting does not turn into a "gripe session". Try to steer people to comment on broader themes, instead of specific locations or issues. People will want to focus on specific issues they care about.
- › Harry Smith noted that Branford Community Television could assist with the broadcasting, recording, and livestreaming of the meeting. He suggested VHB should reach out to them as soon as possible. (contact initiated)
- › The CWG discussed possible dates for the corridor field walks. CTDOT can use a CTtransit 20-person minibus for this field review – members of the CWG will be driven through the corridor in this bus and in can stop at different destinations for closer examination.
  - CWG members should plan for at least a half day for the tour.
  - The second week of May was discussed as a potential time that would work well for most. However, most CWG members do not have their calendars with them, so a poll should be sent out to get responses. Times of 9 am – 1 pm or 12 pm – 4 pm will be proposed.
- › Next steps include:
  - Finalizing presentation and details for April 25 public meeting;
  - Sending out poll to get best date for corridor field walk/bus tour;
  - Sending around summary of this meeting, along with the presentations and public meeting advertisement; and
  - If CWG has any comments about the public meeting presentation, send them to CTDOT/VHB.
- › Upcoming schedule includes the following:
  - The Existing Conditions Update should be finalized in the next couple of weeks;
  - Corridor field walks and stakeholder interviews will occur after the public meeting.
- › The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.