



# Meeting Notes

Date: Tuesday, June 20, 2023  
10:30 am – 2:00 pm

Place: Norwich City Hall  
Room 335  
100 Broadway  
Norwich, CT 06360

Re: SCCOG Chelsea Harbor/Downtown Mobility Study  
CTDOT Project No.: DOT01030281PL  
**Project Kick-Off Meeting and Walking Tour**

Project No.: 43283.00

## ATTENDEES:

Name	Affiliation
Amanda Kennedy	SCCOG
Jim Butler	SCCOG
Nicole Haggerty	SCCOG
Kate Rattan	SCCOG
Patrick McLaughlin	City of Norwich
Deanna Rhodes	City of Norwich
Dan Daniska	City of Norwich
Brian Long	City of Norwich
Marlon Pena	CTDOT
Fred Kulakowski	CTDOT
Edward Sabourin	CTDOT
Jake Fusco	CTDOT
Joe Balskus	VHB
Daniel Amstutz	VHB
Will Britnell	VHB
Will Kresic	VHB (Remotely Attended)
Eric Tang	VHB (Remotely Attended)
Charlie Baker	VHB (Remotely Attended)
Bridget Moriarty	VN Engineers

## NOTES:

### Welcome and Introductions

- › Jim Butler opened the meeting with a brief history of the project. Representatives from SCCOG, the City of Norwich, CTDOT, and the Consultant Team introduced themselves. Butler noted the importance of collaborating with CTDOT on this project so that the outcome is more likely to be implemented and not a study that sits on a shelf.

## Project Overview

- › City staff noted the need to make downtown Norwich more pedestrian-friendly and multi-modal. Pedestrian access is a high priority. Better connecting the park & marina to downtown is key. There is potential for the marina to be redeveloped.
- › Plans to review for the project go back to 1962. The City received state/federal funding mid-20<sup>th</sup> century to change the circulation downtown, which focused on car traffic. Circulation was not beneficial it was determined later. A lot of ideas over the years have been shared that should be evaluated through this new study.

## Downtown Happenings

- › City staff noted a number of redevelopment projects and relevant changes in the downtown area:
  - 77-91 Main Street – 42 housing units with mixed-use on the first floor is planned.
  - Reed & Hughes Institute building – 20 housing units are planned.
  - YMCA on Main Street is being reconstructed and may include a brewery and other retail.
  - Across the street from the YMCA a boutique hotel in an old Elks Lodge will have 20 hotel rooms.
  - 16 Cedar Street – old jail site – there is the potential for 26-36 units of housing, but the developer needs more density to make it work and include affordable units.
  - The Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) is being updated and must be adopted by August 15. A draft can be shared, though it will change between now and when it gets adopted. The plan has a lot of discussion of downtown, including transit-oriented development (TOD), housing, etc. The plan also references this study and to implement what comes out of the recommendations.
  - The Shoreline East Study was noted.
  - The Marina is up for redevelopment. Housing is not likely because it is in a flood hazard zone.
  - 115 Forest Street – a cannabis manufacturing facility is moving in here.
  - An RFP is out for an art installation in the downtown roundabout.
  - Hollyhock Island – the sewage plant here will be redeveloped.
  - Route 82 – this project has some overlap with the CTDOT project to reconstruct this corridor.
  - A parking study of downtown was produced before COVID and can be provided by staff. There are over 3,000 parking spaces downtown but many of them are dedicated to specific agencies or organizations and not open to the public.
- › VHB to provide a map to the City so they can note all these locations and provide to VHB to include to be helpful for keeping track of them.

### **Project Presentation, Scope, Schedule**

- › VHB Team then went through a presentation about the project scope, schedule, initial crash data, public engagement, the concept diagrams produced for the proposal, and data needs from the City, SCCOG and CTDOT.
- › The group discussed stakeholders and outreach strategies for the project. Additional stakeholders to include are:
  - Police and Fire Departments
  - Social service agencies
  - Local state representative
  - List of stakeholders from the Route 82 project list
  - Public transit (Southeast Area Transit District, Windham Region Transit District)
  - Castle Church on Broadway
  - Waste Management companies
  - Parking Authority/Finance (City of Norwich)
  - Norwich Community Development Corporation (NCDC)
- › Additional events to target for outreach events include:
  - Rock the Docks concerts on Wednesdays during the summer in downtown
  - Rose Arts Festival
  - Diversity Festival (3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in September)
  - Events put on by the Chamber of Commerce or [Norwichevents.org](http://Norwichevents.org)
- › Public outreach in the downtown itself is important. If possible, doing outreach during the summer is recommended.

### **Discussion**

- › The makeup of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was discussed. Besides the people attending the kick-off meeting today from SCCOG, the City, and CTDOT, the TAC should also include:
  - Fire Chief
  - Local Traffic Authority
  - Local transit authorities (WRTD, SEAT)
  - Invite the City Manager to TAC meetings
- › Stakeholders to include, but not necessarily to be on the TAC, include waste management operators and event organizations (as noted above in the stakeholder discussion).
- › Members agreed that the project website address, if available (confirmed as available by VHB webmaster), shall be: [www.downtownnorwichmobilitystudy.com](http://www.downtownnorwichmobilitystudy.com)

### Next Steps

- › The second TAC meeting will be scheduled for September 12, 2023, at 10:30 am in the SCCOG offices.
- › Monthly check-in meetings will be scheduled with the Consultant Team.
- › A list of TAC members will be circulated so additional member contact information can be filled in.

### Lunch – 11:45 am – 12:15 pm

### 1230pm Project Study Area Walking Tour

- › Attendees participated into a walking tour of downtown Norwich to view transportation and circulation conditions in the study area. Attendees were able to visit the following points of interest and discussed general observations:
  - Courthouse Square
    - Concerns raised with the pedestrian crossings in front of City Hall amidst the channelized islands and traffic flows and need to address them in the study
  - Broadway
    - City providing a concept for reconfiguring on street parking and providing single lane
    - Broadway intersection with Main Street needs to be reviewed for concept plan by City and changes to the signalization and intersection markings and islands
  - Main Street
    - Narrowness of roadway was reviewed, concerns for emergency vehicle access were discussed, changing flow was not expected, existing parking garage was noted as vastly underutilized
  - Washington St/Water St/Main St/Chelsea Harbor Drive (Washington Square)
    - Development on northeast corner expected to be considered soon by City, concerns with traffic speeds through intersection, pedestrian crossings, and connections
  - Chelsea Harbor Drive & Brown Memorial Park
    - Converting the three lane one way roadway to single lane was agreed upon as a needed improvement as well as improving connection to park
  - Chelsea Harbor Drive at Water Street/Courthouse Square
    - Vehicle queueing is constant for the southbound Water Street traffic turning left onto Viaduct Street during all times of the day, particularly significant backups in the afternoon peak hours
    - Converting the intersection to a simple T type intersection is advantageous
    - City suggested looking at traffic control for Water Street at Market Street intersection
- › The meeting adjourned in the field at approximately 2:00 pm.