

Regional Transportation Plan



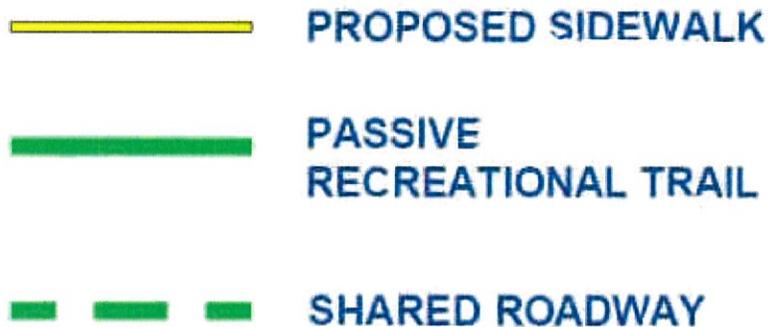
CENTRAL NEW MILFORD PEDESTRIAN LOOP CONCEPT PLAN

Draft of 5/2009

INTRODUCTION

This research was prepared for the HVCEO by the Stantec Corporation of Hamden and Hartford, CT. The mapping of the potential Pedestrian Loop is conceptual only, as discussions as to easements with potentially affected property owners have not yet been undertaken.

Rather, this report is to be the guide for those future discussions. As a conceptual planning report this document is entirely preliminary and is not a standard, specification or regulation. Nor may it be used as a base for an unwelcome public intrusion into private property rights.



Proceed to Map of Pedestrian Loop (8.4 MB)

In addition, the exact property and utility impact of the proposed pedestrian loop can only be determined during the preliminary engineering phase when more accurate survey and property boundary information becomes available

As for the origins of the research, in 2007 the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO) and the Town of New Milford, Connecticut, identified the need for sidewalk and greenway improvements in the center of the Town. The goal is to promote walking for both recreational and travel purposes and to establish a pedestrian-friendly environment.

This concept report documents possible routing and estimated improvement costs in pursuit of these goals.

Combined with existing sidewalks and recently completed sidewalk elements associated with both Route 7 and Grove Street improvement projects, the improvements outlined in this report form a pedestrian loop on both sides of the Housatonic River between Bridge Street (Route 67 and 202) in the north and Lanesville Road on the south.

A segment of the proposed greenway then also extends north from Bridge Street along the Housatonic River and west of Youngs Field Road.

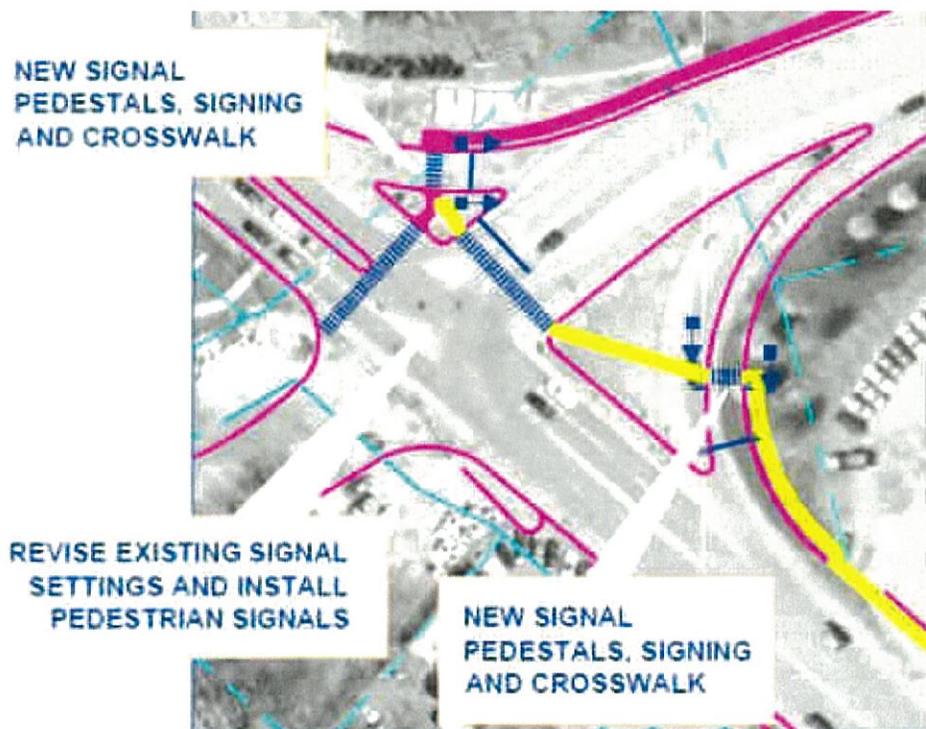
On the southern end, the greenway will connect to the proposed Still River Greenway near the Harrybrooke Park.

PROPOSED SIDEWALK LINKING TOWN CENTER TO PICKETT DISTRICT ROAD

--- **EXISTING CONDITIONS.** The section of Danbury Road (Route 7) between Bridge Street and Pickett District Road is primarily commercial with multiple curb cuts and was recently reconstructed by Conn DOT. In a separate report for HVCEO prepared by Stantec **curb cut and access management measures for Route 7** were proposed to limit the potential for driveway-related accidents.

Aside from the sidewalks included in the Conn DOT project, there are currently limited pedestrian amenities on this stretch of Route 7. Because of the lack of distinctly delineated sidewalks, pedestrian movement across the many commercial driveways is dangerous as drivers traveling in and out of driveways tend not be aware of pedestrians walking along the road.

--- **SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS.** In order to eliminate the need for pedestrian crossings at the busy "T" intersections of Route 7 with Sunny Valley Road and Pickett District Road, sidewalks are proposed on the east side of Route 7 and north side of Pickett District Road. As **presented in Figure A**, the proposed sidewalks will match those constructed under the Conn DOT Route 7 project.



Proceed to full Map of Pedestrian Loop (8.4 MB)

At the intersection of Route 7 and Bridge Street, a critical link on the proposed pedestrian loop, pedestrian crossing is difficult because of the complex geometric configuration and high vehicular volumes at the intersection. Currently there is no crosswalk or exclusive pedestrian signal phase.

Under the existing signal control scheme, when the pedestrian buttons are pushed, the vehicle phase for westbound Bridge Street is activated to permit the concurrent pedestrian movement across Route 7 north of the intersection. Stantec recommends the following changes to the intersection to improve pedestrian safety at this location:

--- Add new crosswalks, sidewalks, pedestrian signals, pedestal-mounted vehicular signals and associated pavement markings and signing as show in **Detail 1 of Figure A**.

--- Stop vehicular traffic from westbound Bridge Street to northbound Route 7 in phase 2 of the existing signal operation; in phase 2, allow pedestrian movement across Bridge Street and across the bypass lane connecting westbound Bridge Street and northbound Route 7.

--- In phase 4, allow pedestrian movement across Route 7 north of the intersection.

--- Stop vehicular traffic turning from northbound Route 7 to eastbound Bridge Street during phase 7; in phase 7, allow pedestrian movement across the bypass lane connecting northbound Route 7 and eastbound Bridge Street.

With these improvements, the safety condition for pedestrians crossing Bridge Street and Route 7 can be improved to facilitate increased pedestrian movements between the proposed Route 7 sidewalk and the existing sidewalk on the north side of Bridge Street.

If these improvements are to be implemented, during the preliminary design phase two additional issues need to be examined:

--- *The adequacy of sight distances of approaching drivers toward the proposed crosswalks across bypass lanes.*

--- *The adequacy of the queue storage length for the northbound right-turn movement of Route 7.*

To provide a safe separation between the vehicular traffic and sidewalks along Route 7, Stantec recommends a 4' landscape or brick paver buffer between the roadway and sidewalks where the right-of-way widths are sufficient. At places where the widths of right-of-way are limited and sidewalks have to be located next to travel lanes, guide rails separating the pedestrian and vehicular traffic are recommended.

For the most part, the proposed sidewalks along Route 7 and Pickett District Road can be located within the existing right-of-way. In limited cases, easements from adjacent properties may be required to accommodate the sidewalks. The other potential obstacles for the sidewalks are existing roadside utility poles and equipment.

The exact property and utility impact of the proposed sidewalks can only be determined during the preliminary engineering phase when more accurate survey and property boundary information becomes available; adjustments to the layout of the sidewalk may be warranted at that time.

--- **BENEFITS FROM SIDEWALKS.** The proposed sidewalks along Route 7 and Pickett District Road are an important link in the pedestrian loop proposed by this report. These sidewalks will not only encourage additional recreational walkers in New Milford, but also help eliminate some of the short vehicle trips among retail uses that are located within walking distances in the Route 7 corridor.

From the standpoint of economic development, the sidewalks enhance the attractiveness of the nearby retail properties and provide impetus for new pedestrian-friendly developments in the area.

--- **CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE FOR SIDEWALK.** Stantec's preliminary opinion of construction cost for the proposed sidewalks on Route 7 and Pickett District Road is about \$1,120,000.

GREENWAY COMPONENT OF PEDESTRIAN LOOP

The proposed greenway will start at the terminus of the planned Still River Greenway on Lanesville Road and provide connections to New Milford Center from both sides of the Housatonic River. It will take the form of sidewalks, shared roadways and exclusive off-road trails.

Combined with the proposed sidewalk on Route 7 and Pickett District Road, the greenway will fill gaps in the existing local sidewalk network to link Town recreational facilities, the New Milford Center, commercial developments on Route 7, residential neighborhoods, and the planned regional Still River Greenway.

--- **SIDEWALK COMPONENT OF GREENWAY.** The proposed sidewalk component of the greenway will include Still River Road, Grove Street, South Avenue and West Street.

Figure B shows a stretch of the sidewalk between the intersection of Still River Road and Frank's Place and the intersection of Still River Road and an existing access road to the Lovers Leap State Park.

The future sidewalk on the east side of Grove Street will proceed north from the intersection of Grove Street and Don's Terrace to a proposed crosswalk at Addis Park, and continue north until it switches to the west side of Grove Street at its intersection with Fordyce Road, where it will meet the existing sidewalk on the west side of Grove Street.

On South Avenue and West Street, the proposed sidewalks will fill the gaps in the existing pedestrian network and provide connection to the Town property at the southern end of West Street.

Sidewalk easements may be required from some adjacent properties along the greenway.

--- **SHARED ROADWAY COMPONENT OF GREENWAY.** The shared roadway portion of the greenway comprises two short roadway segments where the greenway will be located in pavement next to vehicular traffic. The first segment of the shared roadways is Frank's Place between Lanesville Road and Still River Road.

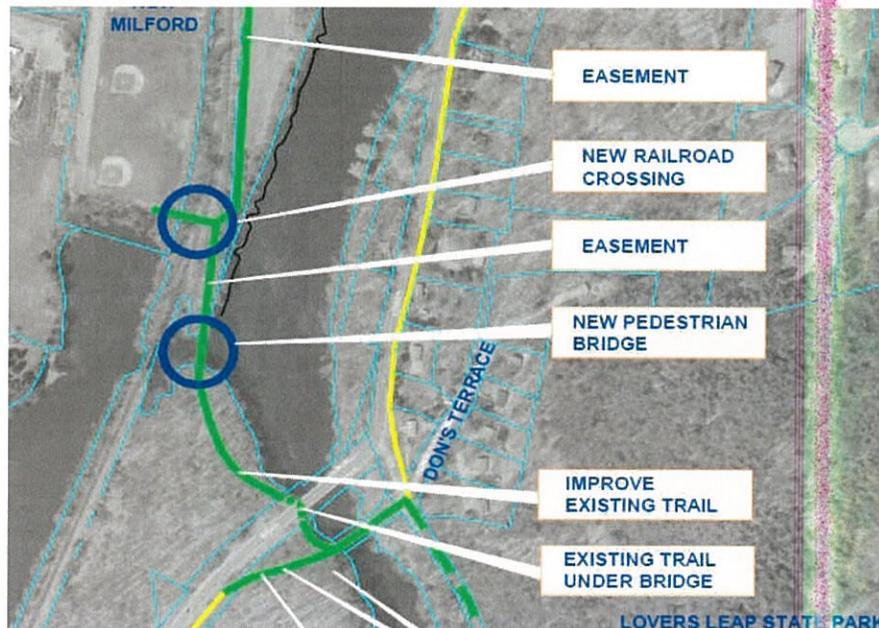
This segment will connect Harrybrooke Park with the future sidewalk on Still River Road. There are existing parking spaces on the east side of Frank's Place for visitors to the park; the need to separate the greenway pedestrians with vehicles maneuvering in and out the parking spaces should be considered during the preliminary engineering phase of the design.

The second segment of the shared roadway is an existing roadway within the Lovers Leap State Park. Because of the limited vehicular traffic on this road, greenway and pedestrian signs may be adequate in informing drivers of this shared roadway.

Additional signing and lane striping may be warranted to clearly delineate the greenway on these roadways. Since the shared roadways are in public right-of-way or state park, no major property impact is expected.

--- **OFF ROAD TRAIL COMPONENT OF GREENWAY.** The off-road trail will form the main part of the proposed greenway. There will be three sections of the off-road trail.

The first section, mainly running west of the Housatonic River, will begin in the Lovers Leap State Park, go under the Still River Road bridge and proceed north to a future pedestrian bridge. North of the pedestrian bridge, the trail will provide a spur across the railroad to allow access to the Town ball fields.



Proceed to full Map of Pedestrian Loop (8.4 MB)

Continuing north along the railroad on the property of the Nature Conservancy of Connecticut, the trail will enter the Kimberly Clark property and eventually connect with a proposed sidewalk on Pickett District Road.

The second section of the off-road trail will extend from the southern end of West Street near the Town sewer plant, winding through a Town owned peninsula jutting into the Housatonic River.

The third section of the off-road trail will extend north from Bridge Street along the east banks of the Housatonic River and eventually intersect with Youngs Field Road. Part of this section along the river may be constructed in the form of boardwalks within existing wetlands.

These off-road trails will require easements from a number of properties along the route to ensure continuity. The owner of the railroad will need to be consulted on the new railroad crossings and the part of the trail located next to active railroad tracks.

--- **IMPROVEMENT BENEFITS FROM THIS GREENWAY.** The proposed greenway will formalize and improve many trails along the Housatonic River and form a closed loop of pedestrian paths connecting different land uses and neighborhoods.

This will encourage walking in the Town of Milford for both recreational and access purposes and may reduce the need for short vehicle trips between closed-by properties, such as those among businesses on Route 7.

The greenway can also become a desirable amenity for adjacent property owners and improve pedestrian safety in the Town.

--- **CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE FOR GREENWAY**. Stantec's preliminary opinion of **construction cost for the proposed greenway portion of the project is about \$3,400,000**.