

**CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Division of Highway Design**

MEETING MINUTES

Project No.: 151-TBD
 Project Name: Realignment of Route 8 Southbound Exit 34 Off-Ramp at Watertown Avenue and Robbins Street (the Project)
 Date of Meeting: Wednesday November 15, 2023, at 6:00 PM
 Location of Meeting: Chase Park House, 150 Sunnyside Avenue, Waterbury, CT 06708
 Subject of Meeting: Realignment of Route 8 Southbound Exit 34 Off-Ramp at Watertown Avenue and Robbins Street Conceptual Public Information and CEPA Scoping Meeting.

Attendees:

Public Members:	
Please see Attachment A for list of attendees that signed the sign-in form.	
Project Team	
Name	Organization
Michael Calabrese	Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT)
Jonathan Dean	CTDOT
Joe Belrose	CTDOT
Kevin Fleming	CTDOT
Shannon Burnham	CTDOT
David Ferraro	CTDOT
David Simpson	City of Waterbury
Roy Cavanaugh	City of Waterbury
Robert Nerney	City of Waterbury
Consultant Team	
David Schweitzer	HNTB
Rudy Franciamore	HNTB
David Giel	HNTB
Cole Ernst	HNTB
Ben Cadwell	Mintz+Hoke
KaLyn McCullough	Mintz+Hoke
Caitlyn Wells	Mintz+Hoke
Alba Peguero	Integrate Language Services

1. Meeting Format and Attendance

The Conceptual Public Information and CEPA Scoping Meeting took place in person. One meeting time was offered, occurring at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 15th.

The meeting was live streamed on Waterbury Government Access and on the New Mix YouTube page. The video recording of the meeting will also be shown periodically on both Waterbury Government Access and Waterbury Community Access.

Real-time translation in Spanish was provided for the meeting.

At 6:00 p.m., there was a 30-minute open-house period where attendees were able to view roll plans with Project information and speak one-on-one with the Project Team. At 6:30 p.m., the presentation began and was followed by a question-and-answer session.

Please see Attachment A for a list of meeting attendees.

2. Presentation: Realignment of Route 8 Southbound Exit 34 Off-Ramp at Watertown Avenue and Robbins Street

A. Title VI: Civil Rights

- a. Overview of the Title VI Civil Rights that will be adhered to during the development of the Project.

B. The Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) Overview

- a. What is CEPA? Why is the CEPA process occurring?
- b. What is Scoping under CEPA? What is the public scoping process?

C. The New Mix: Overview and Breakout Projects

- a. An overview of the New Mix project and the progress at this time.
- b. Overview of the different types of breakout projects and the nature of the anticipated schedule for the Early Action, Near-Term, and Long-Term Projects.

D. Project Location

- a. A map of the Project location and the project limits was presented.

E. Project Need

- a. An overview of the current Project needs related to congestion at West Main Street and Watertown Avenue.
- b. Several deficiencies of the local roadway network in the Project area were presented.

F. Project Goals

- a. The Project goals include improving safety on West Main Street between Highland Avenue and Riverside Street / Watertown Avenue, improve traffic operations on West Main Street, and improve air quality by reducing the number of idling cars.

G. Proposed Design

- a. The proposed conceptual design of the Project, including the realignment of the Exit 34 off-ramp, the Exit 35 on-ramp, the redesign of Watertown Avenue to be a bi-directional street between Robbins Street and West Main Street, and proposed intersection improvements at Robbins Street/Watertown Avenue and Highland Avenue/West Main Street were presented.
- b. The anticipated benefits of the conceptual design, including easier access to the hospital from the north, improved turning movements, and reduction of conflict points were presented.

H. Project Cost and Timeline

- a. An overview of the project timeline, including stakeholder outreach, preliminary design, public outreach, design completion, and construction.
- b. A high-level overview of the costs associated with the project.

I. Next Steps and How to Stay Involved

- a. The attendees were reminded of the 30-day CEPA scoping period that ends on the close of business on November 30, 2023. In addition, they were informed of the various ways to provide comments and stay informed about the project.
- b. Methods of staying involved with the project: online at newmixwaterbury.com, emailing TheNewMixWaterbury@gmail.com, by phone at 203-805-8018, or by U.S. postal service to 2800 Berlin Turnpike, PO Box 317546, Newington, CT 06131-7546.

3. Post-Meeting Question & Answer (Q&A) Sessions

The following is a summary of the questions asked at the public meeting along with the answers that were provided. It has been edited for clarity. Please visit the New Mix website to view the recording of the entire public meeting. The video may be found at: <https://www.newmixwaterbury.com/public-involvement/public-meetings>

Q. What would the difference be between the proposed and existing conditions when travelling toward Waterbury Hospital from West Main Street since the northbound portion of Watertown Avenue would be removed?

A. In the proposed conditions, a driver on West Main Street would proceed under Route 8 and would turn right onto the relocated northbound Watertown Avenue. The driver would then proceed north on Watertown Avenue to a new traffic signal where they would turn left onto Robbins Street.

Q. In the summer, Watertown Avenue can become flooded due to excess stormwater coming from Robbins Street. How will the insufficient drainage on Robbins Street be addressed to fix this issue?

A. Due to the conceptual level of design, drainage has not been evaluated at this time. As the design progresses, drainage options will be investigated. Thank you for the additional information, as it is beneficial to have as we progress the design.

Q. Currently there is poor alignment of the lanes when traveling eastbound on West Main Street, will this be addressed?

A. Yes, while the alignment still has challenges, this will be addressed as best as possible using the appropriate taper angles needed for the design speed. In the proposed condition, the lanes would align much better than in the existing conditions.

Q. How will you be infilling the portion of Watertown Avenue that is proposed to be removed?

A. At this point because the design is conceptual, the details of filling this space have not been decided. We will be looking at multiple alternatives for the infill of the removed portion of Northbound Watertown Avenue bridge that crosses under the Route 8 mainlines. This concern will not go unaddressed.

At this point in the meeting, there were no further questions or comments from meeting participants. Jonathan Dean, CTDOT Project Manager, then stated that if something comes to mind after the meeting, individuals can always submit comments and/or questions on the New Mix website NewMixWaterbury.com. In addition, individuals can sign up for Project-related information on both the website and at thenewmixwaterbury@gmail.com.

Meeting was adjourned at **7:10 P.M**



Attachment A

Meeting Attendees that signed in, Realignment of Route 8 Southbound Exit 34 Off-Ramp at Watertown Avenue and Robbins Street Project Conceptual Public Preliminary Design Meeting, November 15, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. This list does not include the attendees that did not sign in on the sign-in form. The total number of attendees is estimated to be 4 people.

Meeting Attendees
Maria Vaccarelli
Luis Martinez