

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2012



FROM THE COMMISSIONER

It is the start of an exciting period for the NHHS Rail Program. Publication of the EA/EIE is scheduled for May 8th. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the EA/EIE at Public Hearings, which are planned for June, and on the NHHS Rail Program website at www.NHHSrail.com.

This issue of the NHHS newsletter provides an overview of work to advance planning and engineering tasks that will provide the foundation for the new passenger rail service.

As work proceeds on key engineering tasks, CTDOT continues to plan for integrating the NHHS rail service within corridor communities. A new initiative that CTDOT will launch in 2012 is “Rail 101”, a public education program focused on safety. Please check the program website in the coming months for the schedule and plan to attend a Rail 101 session in your community.

There are many challenges ahead, but I am confident that the NHHS Rail Program will deliver long-term benefits not only to individual communities, but to the entire region. Faster, more frequent and more reliable transportation alternatives will allow our region to compete for jobs, business opportunities and development while helping to decrease congestion and reduce our dependence on oil.

James P. Redeker

Commissioner,
CT Department of Transportation



EA Schedule	2
Gearing up for Transit-Oriented Development	2
Engineering News	3
Rail is on the Move	3
Public Outreach	4
Get Involved & Stay Informed	4

Upcoming Milestones for 2012

Critical planning and design work is advancing to bring improved passenger rail service to the NHHS corridor in 2016:

» Complete the Environmental Assessment and Secure Phase 2 Funding

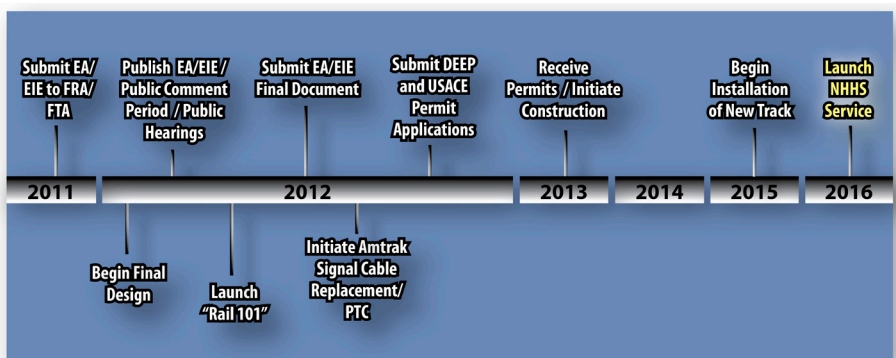
An Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation (EA/EIE) is being published on May 8, 2012. The EA/EIE describes the benefits and impacts resulting from implementation of the NHHS Rail Program and identifies mitigation that CTDOT will have to undertake to address adverse impacts resulting from the construction work and new service. CTDOT will respond to all comments and submit a final document to the FRA by the end of June for consideration and approval by the FRA. Approval of the EA/EIE is a precondition to FRA’s obligation of the \$121 million in Federal funding awarded in 2010 for the program.

» Begin Final Design

The CTDOT team is completing Preliminary Engineering on all improvements between New Haven and Windsor and has advanced to Final Design on the segment between Meriden and Berlin. All engineering work is expected to be completed by the summer of 2013.

» Initiate Detailed Service Planning

Planning for all components of the rail service, from trains to fare vending machines,



Upcoming Milestones for 2012 (continued from page 1)...

... continued on page 2

will begin in earnest in 2012. The new and improved passenger rail service on the NHHS Rail corridor will consist of three complementary operations: Amtrak trains shuttling between NHHS stations; Amtrak Northeast Regional service to/from Vermont, Massachusetts and the Northeast Corridor; and a new Connecticut-operated regional service shuttling between NHHS stations. Infrastructure improvements, including double-tracking, improving at-grade crossings, and high-level platforms at stations, will improve reliability, safety, and provide capacity to increase service from 6 to 17 round-trip trains daily at service launch (in 2016) with future improvements beyond 2016 that have the potential to reach 25 round-trip trains daily.

» Start the Work

CTDOT and Amtrak intend to break ground on the NHHS Rail Program late this summer with the installation of new signal, communications and power cables along the NHHS rail corridor. The new fiber optic backbone will support the communications and signaling needs of the proposed improvements, including train control, new at-grade crossing equipment and communications at stations.

» Create an Awareness of Safety

Public safety is a primary consideration in all aspects of the design, including the design of grade crossings. Grade crossings will be designed with “Quad gates” or medians, where required, to enhance public safety while allowing communities to request “Quiet Zone” designation. To promote public awareness of safety, CTDOT plans to launch “Rail 101” later this year. The “Rail 101” program will emphasize public safety and will be presented in schools and at community group meetings.

Gearing Up for Transit-Oriented Development

In October, Governor Malloy announced the award of \$5 million in funding for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) projects to 11 communities around the State, including five communities in the NHHS Rail corridor. Hartford, New Haven, Meriden, Windsor and Windsor Locks will each receive funding to support economic development initiatives around station areas.

At the 2012 National Association of Railroad Passengers’ (NARP) Region 1 Annual Membership Meeting in New London on March 30th, John Bernick, CTDOT Project Manager, and Tim Doherty of MASSDOT, gave project updates on the Connecticut and Massachusetts portions of the NHHS Rail program, highlighting the regional benefits of expanded rail service. NARP is the nation’s largest national membership advocacy organization for train and rail transit passengers.

Some communities are already moving forward with plans for TOD. Meriden is developing plans for an Intermodal Transportation Center (ITC), which will become a new focal point for revitalization of the downtown and a new TOD district. The City’s plans also include redevelopment of the adjacent 14-acre HUB Shopping Center site, also within the TOD district, into a park and its future use for mixed-use development. Pedestrian linkages to transit are planned to enhance the development potential of the HUB site and adjoining properties. As part of the rail corridor upgrade program, CTDOT will construct new high-level platforms and an overhead pedestrian walkway at the station, as well as provide additional parking for rail travelers. There have been many related news articles in the press; see the NHHS web site (www.NHHSrail.com) for news briefs and links to articles.

EA SCHEDULE

The EA/EIE is scheduled to be published on May 8th. The public will have the opportunity to comment on the EA/EIE for a 45 day period beginning May 8th. Public hearings, planned for June, will provide a forum for public comment on the EA/EIE. Copies of the EA/EIE will be available at local town halls and libraries of communities along the corridor and can be accessed on-line at the project website: www.NHHSrail.com. All public comments, whether submitted by letter, email, at a public hearing or on the website, will be addressed in the EA/EIE final document.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

NEW BRITAIN

Torp Theatre, Davidson Hall
Central Connecticut State University
1615 Stanley Street
New Britain, CT

Time: 7:00 PM
Date: June 7, 2012

ENFIELD

Asnuntuck Community College
170 Elm Street
Enfield, CT

Time: 7:00 PM
Date: June 13, 2012

NORTH HAVEN

North Haven High School
221 Elm Street
North Haven, CT

Time: 7:00 PM
Date: June 14, 2012

Engineering News: Upgrading Historic Bridges/Culverts

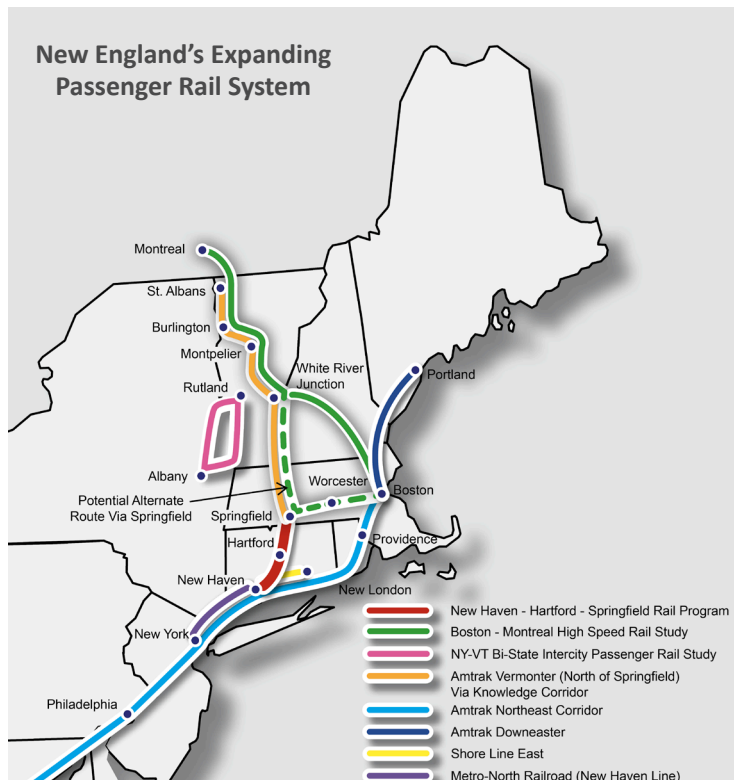
There are 176 bridges and culverts in the 62-mile New Haven – Hartford – Springfield Rail corridor, and all need to be assessed for condition and functionality as part of the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail Program. The inventory of bridges and culverts completed in the summer of 2011 assessed the condition and functionality of these structures and identified those that need to be upgraded or replaced to allow for the double tracking that will occur in parts of the corridor. As many as 40 bridges and culverts may be affected by the proposed rail improvements.

Some of the impacted structures are historic and are therefore subject to additional consideration as required by the Historic Preservation Act of 1966. A historic bridge or culvert is defined as one that is listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Historical significance impacts the decision to either upgrade or replace a structure. If it is feasible to improve a historic bridge or culvert without adversely affecting what it is that makes it historic, then it is likely a viable candidate for rehabilitation.

The determination of historic significance and how to address the needed improvement of these structures through either rehabilitation or replacement will continue to be part of the NHHS project team’s engineering focus.



Members of the Project Team conducted an inspection of the NHHS Rail Line on October 19, 2011 and stopped to examine the stone arch bridge over the Mattabasset River in Berlin.



Rail is on the Move: New England’s Expanding Passenger Rail System

The NHHS Rail Program will provide a direct, efficient rail link to central Connecticut and Massachusetts and will serve as a crucial backbone to related initiatives to expand, improve and connect rail throughout New England. These initiatives include the Boston to Montreal High Speed Rail Study, the Knowledge Corridor – Restore Vermonter Project, and the New York-Vermont Bi-State Intercity Passenger Rail Study.

The Boston to Montreal High Speed Rail Study is exploring high speed rail options between Boston and Montreal via Springfield, Massachusetts. Funds for the study were committed by the Federal Railroad Administration, Massachusetts, and Vermont, and build on recent rail investment along the Knowledge Corridor.

...continued on page 4

Rail is on the Move: New England’s Expanding Passenger Rail System (continued from page 3)...

The Knowledge Corridor – Restore Vermonter Project has been awarded \$70 million in ARRA funding for final design and construction of the Knowledge Corridor along the Connecticut River rail line in western Massachusetts. This project will relocate this segment of the Amtrak Vermonter service from its current route on the New England Central Railroad back to its original and more direct route on the Pan Am Southern Railroad, providing considerable savings in travel time and improving access to densely populated areas along the Connecticut River.

Finally, Vermont Agency of Transportation and New York State Department of Transportation are studying alternatives for passenger rail between Albany, New York and Rutland, Vermont. The New York-Vermont Bi-State Intercity Passenger Rail Study is evaluating initial alternatives for expanding existing commuter rail service between underserved areas in Vermont’s western corridor and parts of east central New York.

Linked together, these projects create a true inter-city and regional rail program for New England. The new and improved services will connect suburban and rural communities with employment and commercial centers such as New Haven, Hartford, Worcester, and Springfield, and provide faster travel to Montreal, Boston, New York and the entire eastern seaboard.

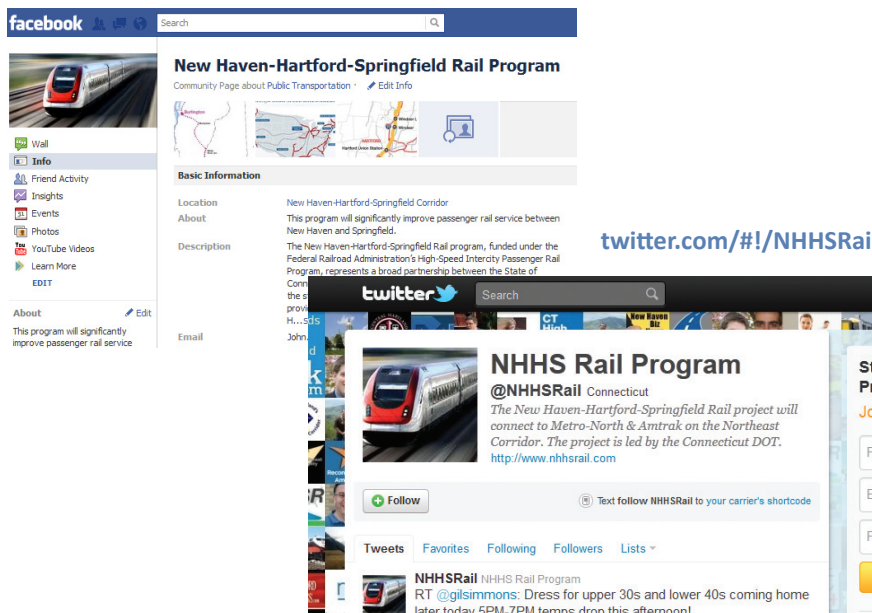
Public Outreach



NHHS now on Facebook & Twitter

Follow the latest New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail Program news on Facebook and Twitter:

www.facebook.com/NHHSRail



www.NHHSrail.com

GET INVOLVED & STAY INFORMED

NHHS Contact List

More than 1,200 residents, businesses, local groups and public agencies have already subscribed to the NHHS contact list! Subscribing to the contact list on the www.NHHSrail.com website takes only a few minutes and ensures that you will receive:

- E-alerts with program updates
- Notices of upcoming public meetings
- Future issues of the program newsletter

subscribe >

Questions & Comments

The program website www.NHHSrail.com provides an easy way to ask questions or provide comments to the program team and receive a response via email.

Watch for: Interactive Map on www.NHHSrail.com

Soon you will be able to learn more about the proposed New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail Program train stations through the Interactive Map on our program website. The map will provide station details, existing conditions photos and proposed station concept plans. We will send an email alert when we launch the Interactive Map.