



**State of Connecticut**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
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**MEMBER**  
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COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Good morning Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero and members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Representative Theresa Conroy of the 105<sup>th</sup> district, where I represent Seymour, Beacon Falls and Derby.

I am here today to ask for your support for proposed HB 6035.

In 2007, the CTDOT worked with a consulting team led by Parsons Transportation Group to begin the Waterbury and New Canaan Branch Lines Needs and Feasibility Study. A summary of findings was given by the Department of Transportation in September 2012.

The Waterbury branch line of Metro North Railroad consists of 27 miles of a single track line that runs from Waterbury to Bridgeport. Six stations are currently connected to this line, including one in each of the towns that I represent. The study addressed the lack of a signal system, the limits of the train service by the restriction of only a single track and limited parking at the train stations. Attached to my testimony is an overview of the study with recommendations.

Some of the goals of the study were to identify ways to help alleviate congestion on Route 8 and other roads, improve the transit service in the corridor, provide more frequent service, attract new riders and maintain freight rail service. At a local level, improving the rail line will help towns along the line with transit oriented development. The current train line is perfectly positioned as it goes through downtowns and many areas have land available to work with developers to establish these districts. The state has recently invested in this region towards improving and furthering manufacturing industry, as noted by both Naugatuck Valley and Housatonic Community Colleges new Advanced Manufacturing Centers.

I encourage the Transportation Committee to review the next steps highlighted by DOT to improve this train line. In addition to the identification of funding sources, DOT recommends making minor improvements to station parking, obtaining a "categorical exclusion" from environments assessments for the construction of sidings and the signal system, and to build a new train station in Devon.

DOT has estimated that with the signalization and sidings added to Derby and Beacon Falls, ridership will increase from about 1,000 to 1,756 daily. This improvement will help significantly to reduce the already overburdened use of Route 8 as the main commuter modality for residents.

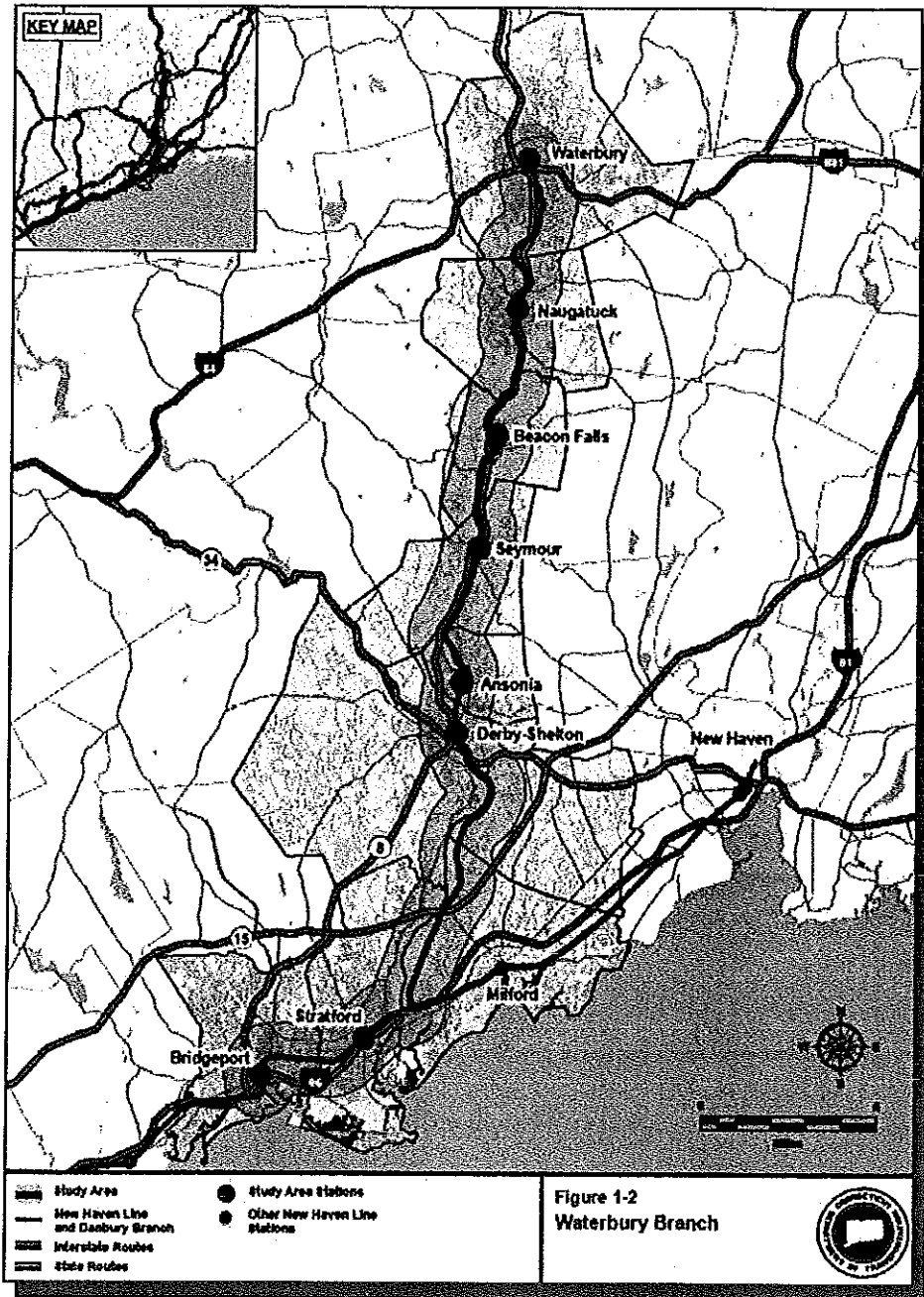
The projected cost of these improvements is estimated at \$290 million. Investing in our infrastructure is an investment in our community's ability to remain economically sound. Tough economic times do not dictate that we remain static. Like a ball game, we don't just quit, we need to keep the ball moving, even if it's just in place. I implore you not to let this important project lose momentum.



## Waterbury Branch Improvement Program

### Branch Overview

- Single track with limited Capacity
- The Waterbury Branch line is a 27 miles long single track line, passing through 8 Towns, beginning in Waterbury and ending in Milford where it connects to the New Haven Line
- Currently there are 6 branch stations
- The Waterbury Branch line serves approximately 1,000 rides a day. On weekdays there are 8 southbound trains to Bridgeport and 7 northbound trains. One early morning southbound train continues through to Stamford.
- The branch accommodates both passenger and freight service
- The branch offers limited passenger train service due to the single track and no signal system
- The line is operated with diesel trains only.
- The freight service is operated by P&W and Pan Am

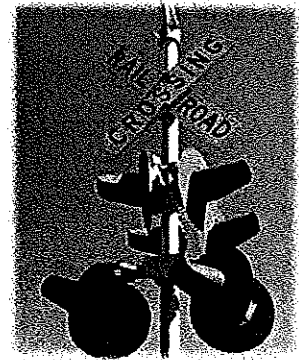


### Points of Interest to be addressed.

- Single track with no signal system allowing only limited train service and maximum speed of 59 mph
- Short low level platforms and lack of amenities at stations
- Review train Schedule to enhance service where possible

### 3. Waterbury and Milford Siding

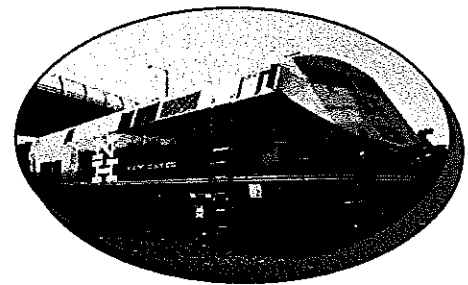
- Ensures service reliability when delays are incurred
- Allows increase of Waterbury Branch train service level (15 trains) to be comparable to Danbury Branch service level (22 trains)
- Benefit : Provides greater operational opportunities by allowing a train to be in the siding if there was an incident on the line, while allowing the operators to maintain and keep their schedules
- Cost : \$40 Million (based on 2008 dollars)



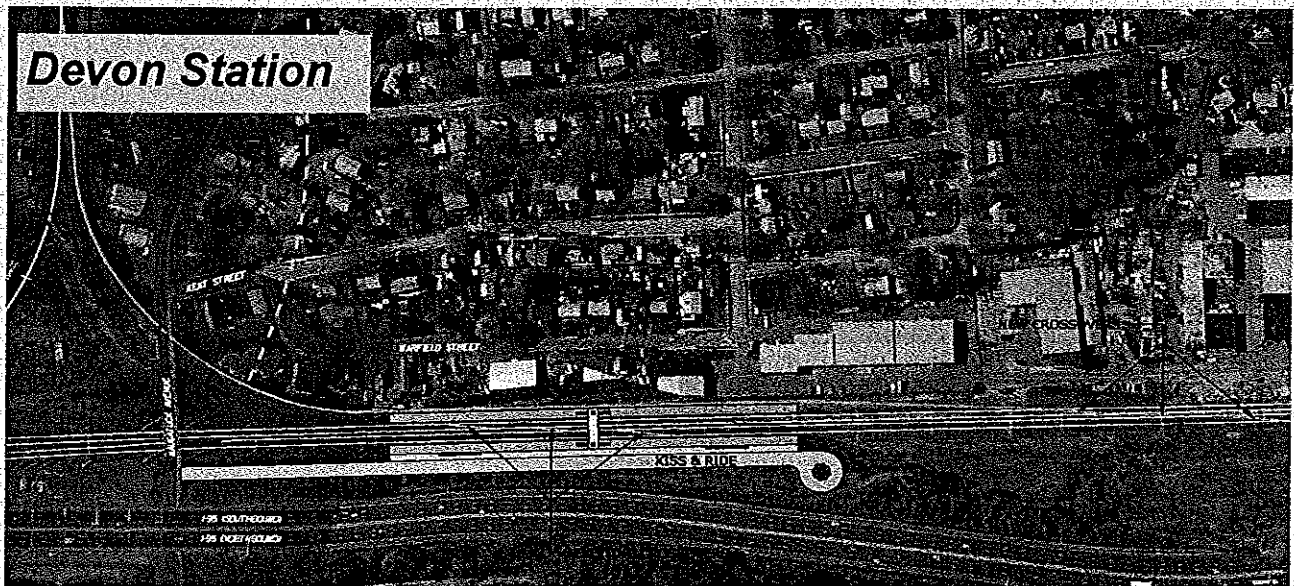
#### Long Term Recommendations

All of the Improvements listed below should be incorporated into one Environmental Assessment document with an estimated cost of \$2.5 Million.

1. A New Station at the Devon Wye in Milford (direct connection to NHL)
2. Derby– Shelton Station Multi-Modal Improvements
3. Waterbury Station Multi-Modal Improvements
4. Relocated Seymour Station
5. Beacon Falls Station and Parking
6. Waterbury Storage Yard



#### Devon Station



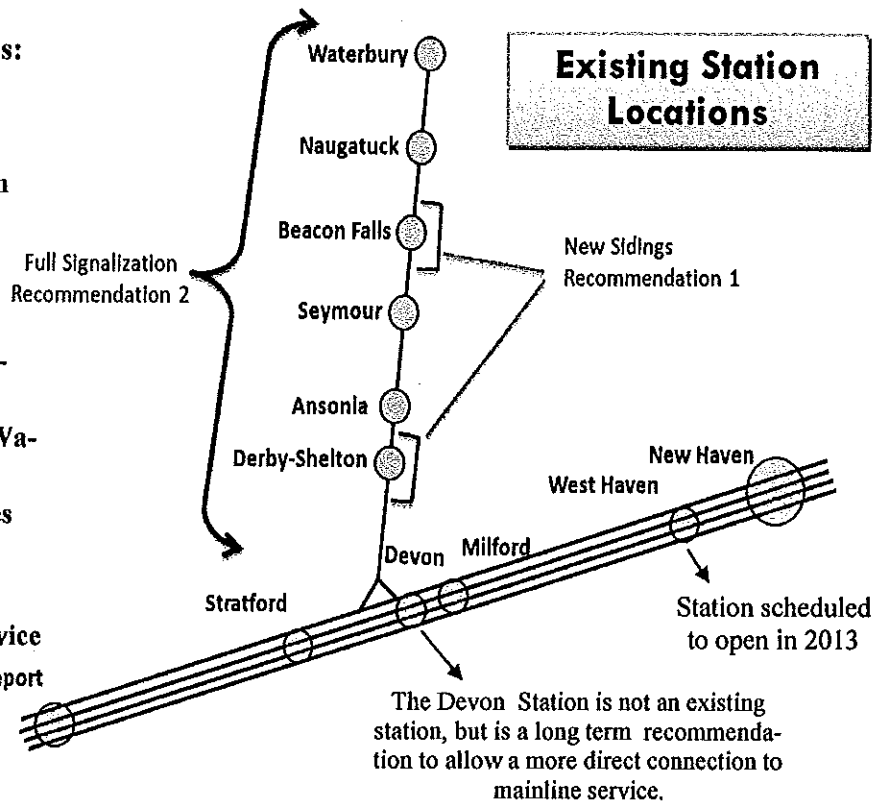
**Branch Line Deficiencies and Needs:**

**Deficiencies:**

- Single Track
- "Dark Territory"- No signalization
- Limited Parking
- Maximum speed 50 mph

**Needs:**

- Improvements to stations and platforms
- Additional train storage space in Waterbury
- Additional locomotives and coaches will be needed
- Additional parking
- Signals to allow more frequent service
- Passing sidings



**Short Term Recommendations**

The improvements below would qualify for a Categorical Exclusion.

**1. Beacon Falls and Derby Sidings**

- Allow for bi-directional service to run along the branch
- Benefit: Increase the number of runs that would be made along the branch
- Cost : \$40 Million (based on 2008 dollars)

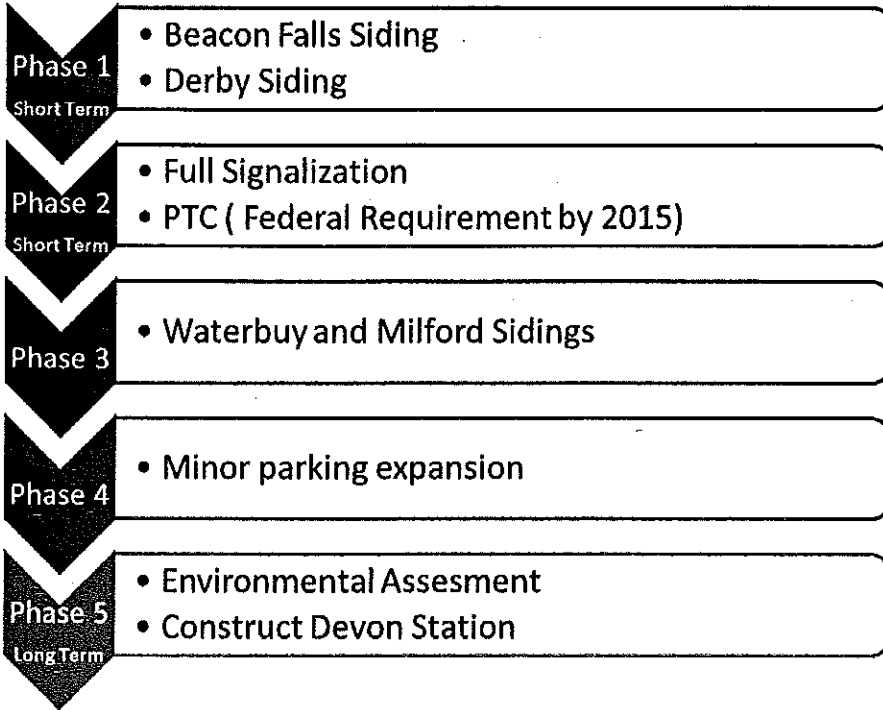
By completing recommendations 1 and 2 and with increased service ridership on the Branch Line is forecasted to increase to approximately 1,756 daily rides, as compared to the 1,000 rides that are on the branch today.

To complete improvement recommendations 1 and 2 will be approximately \$290 million plus an additional \$10 million dollars for the supplemental bus service.

**2. Full Signalization**

- Allow for fleeting of trains south in the a.m. and north in the p.m. along the corridor.
- Positive Train Control (PTC) system required by the Federal Railroad Administration to be completed by 2015. A partial PTC system with a Derby siding is planned to meet this requirement for existing train service.
- A complete PTC system would be incorporated during the full signalization
- Benefit: This would allow for more than one train to be active on the line at a time, which increase the number of trains available during peak periods
- Additional new equipment with will be needed
- Cost: \$ 250 Million (based on 2008 dollars)
  - \$130 Million for Infrastructure
  - \$120 Million for new equipment

**Phased Implementation**



During the phased approach a bus system would be implemented while improvements are under construction. This would cost approximately \$10 million dollars for capital and operating expenses

**Next Steps!**

- Determine Funding
  - Legislative Support
- } ~ \$ 330 Million
- Minor parking improvements at the stations
  - Produce a Categorical Exclusion document for signals and sidings
  - Construct the Devon Station, adding this station would provide additional half hour peak service and hourly off peak shuttles between Waterbury and Devon . An Environmental Assessment would be necessary to construct the station

