

From: [Travers, James](#)
To: [Rosenson, Valerie](#)
Subject: for the Board of Reps
Date: Monday, August 06, 2018 5:23:01 PM
Attachments: [Pros and Cons of a West Main Street Vehicular Bridge.docx](#)

Dear Honorable Members of the Board of Representatives,

I understand that issues have been raised about the ultimate use of the West Main Street bridge. Attached are some observations in terms of the pro's and con's. It should be noted that there are a fair amount of unknowns that I have highlighted as well.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thanks - Jim

Jim Travers

Bureau Chief
Transportation, Traffic and Parking
City of Stamford
888 Washington Bl
Stamford, CT 06901

Pros and Cons of a West Main Street Vehicular Bridge

Pros

- Potential for vehicular access from downtown to Stillwater, and from Stillwater to downtown
- Can provide an opportunity to change the character of the Stillwater neighborhoods
- Community belief that an increase in vehicular traffic could result in more business / customers for Stillwater merchants
- Business assumption that it will make it more attractive for new businesses and increase business revenue (city tax revenue)
- Business assumption that it could help grow small business jobs on Stillwater
- Vehicular bridge serves as an incentive for property owners to improve housing and incentivize building of new properties
- Belief from community members that it will make the Westside more desirable for developers and attract new residents (like south-end)

Cons

- Increase in time to walk from Westside to downtown (Opening bridge will create a complex, 5-way auto intersection)
- Increase traffic and congestion on Smith Street, Stillwater and feeder streets
- Increase conflicts between pedestrian and automobiles
- Increase in auto emissions due to increased traffic.
- Increase traffic noise, idling, cut-thru traffic.
- The Bridge will eliminate the longest section of uninterrupted pedestrian trail in downtown; and dramatically change the character of the Mill River Park by creating two sections of the park.
- A new playground / splash pad to be installed adjacent to the bridge will put children at unnecessary risk.
- Places low income housing at risk as car access to Westside become more attractive to speculators
- Increases long-term infrastructure and maintenance costs

Unknown:

- *Plans for a new vehicular bridge must be approved by the Urban Redevelopment Commission, Army Corps of Engineers, DEEP, CDOT and federal agencies (if federal funds are secured)*
- *Timeline to construct a new vehicular bridge is unknown (it is anticipated that the approval of new bridge plans could take 3 – 6 years)*
- *Currently city has No funding designated for a new vehicular bridge. Federal, state and local funding must be requested, approved, then appropriated*
- *Impact on Smith Street; very narrow and not conducive to two-way traffic*
- *5-way intersection (West Av, Mill River, Smith, Greenwood) could require signalization; estimated cost \$600,000*
- *Additional bridge construction funding would impact the city's capital budget*
- *With a delay in constructing the pedestrian bridge, the Mill River Collaborative can request OPM (by NLT August) to repurpose the current bond funding to construct the Mill River Greenway South*
- *Growth in Westside property values and tax revenue*
- *City may be unable to save the historic character of the current bridge originally built in 1888*
- *Encourages an increase in car ownership; currently the Westside has one of the lowest rates of ownership*
- *Impact on safety, crime, affordable housing and possible displacement of low income renters*
- *Impact on air quality of the affected neighborhood*
- *Physical and Psychological impact pedestrian, bikers and individuals with disabilities*