

August 27, 2018

To the Members of the Stamford Planning Board,

I write this letter in support of the effort to keep the Main Street Bridge as a pedestrian bridge, and also support the initiative that would renovate and beautify the bridge for expanded use.

First, it is clear that the bridge is in serious disrepair. It is my understanding that there are funds earmarked for the renovation of the bridge as a pedestrian bridge, and so one of the major hurdles of any project—funding—has already been overcome.

Second, with the remarkable enhancement of Mill River Park, the bridge would add to the vitality and continued improvement of the downtown for all Stamford citizens, and visitors, to enjoy. As with any major urban city, outdoor pedestrian spaces are being developed to encourage and promote healthy lifestyles while also bringing together neighborhoods and communities.

Look no further than the High Line in New York City and its incredible success, or the many walkable paths and neighborhoods found in Boston and other urban centers. If anything, more vehicular paths across the country are being converted to pedestrian only space. As a growing city hoping to position itself for long-term success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a pedestrian bridge such as the Main Street Bridge may serve as a catalyst for promising things in the future.

Finally, as the lead administrator for UConn's campus in Stamford, I can say with confidence that such a pedestrian space would be attractive to UConn students, faculty, and staff. Our residential population is now over 430 students (approximately 20% of our undergraduate population), the majority of whom live at 900 Washington Blvd. These students would certainly enjoy such an amenity to their urban landscape. Further, the campus's profile and popularity is only going to continue to grow. Potential students are drawn to 21<sup>st</sup> century lifestyles, and when they come to a city like Stamford, they have an economic impact. I would argue that doing all we can to attract such students with these kinds of amenities is a positive thing for Stamford and the region.

Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you for your time.

  
Terrance Change  
Campus Director