

**Connecticut Riverwalk & Bikeway
Public Meeting
February 18, 2016**

- ❖ Top of the levee needs to be ‘fixed’ regardless of whether or not the bike path is constructed.
 - The City does not currently prohibit pedestrian access along the levee system.
- ❖ What is the official name of the project?
- ❖ Is this a four season facility?
 - No, it is a seasonal facility.
- ❖ Will the police be able to monitor throughout the entire year?
 - If the City is not going to plow in the winter months, how will the police get up there to patrol? If the City does not patrol then we will not be able to keep out gangs.
 - Currently there are no patrols in this area from police at all.
 - There is crime in the area already.
- ❖ There is a petition with 315 signatures from residents who are against building the bike path.
- ❖ It is a burden on nearby business and there are fears that the bike path may put people out of business.
- ❖ There are already drugs and drug paraphernalia in the area, which could increase with the bike path and traffic.
- ❖ There is a burden on people living near the sewage treatment plant as it is.
- ❖ Residents are worried about maintenance on top of the levee.
- ❖ Residents are also worried about erosion.
- ❖ There were recently two shootings by the “bike gang” in Chicopee Center.
- ❖ The bike path could become a ‘highway’ for drugs and gang activities/crime.
- ❖ Springfield parks seem to have high rates for homeless camps.
- ❖ Funding came from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
 - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding
 - Residents do not think this will reduce vehicle trips in the City and question the use of this funding source.
 - MassDOT reviewed the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) through Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) and the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) before they approved projects for particular funding sources. City staff confirmed that the project has already been approved for CMAQ funding.
- ❖ There are elderly residents who have been walking the riverfront their whole life.
 - They would love an even surface to ride bikes and walk.
 - Some residents love to walk and are always looking for new venues.
 - Many have to leave the City to find these venues, and would rather not have to do that.
- ❖ People are concerned about structural integrity of the levee.
 - Would like to see bike path as long as the levee is safe.
- ❖ Columbia Greenway
 - Had similar comments/concerns in Westfield.
 - Need to promote healthy and active lifestyles.
 - Community connectivity.
 - Crime happens everywhere.

- ❖ Residents are worried that the bike path may have a negative impact on business, and want to know how the City can just kick businesses out.
- ❖ What about maintenance on the bike path?
- ❖ What is the process of approval? Is this meeting just a courtesy?
 - No, MassDOT is waiting for direction from the City.
- ❖ What about abutting residents' yards? People want privacy.
- ❖ Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE) has been a part of the design process to date and the City will have to complete a Section 408 permit application prior to the beginning of construction.