

## **New Canaan to Seek Funds for Sidewalk at Talmadge Hill RR Station**

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Commuters who walk on the south side of Talmadge Hill Railroad Station should get a new, longer sidewalk, say New Canaan officials, who are applying for state funds to replace the current one.

The project, estimated to cost \$350,000, would see a new, five-foot-wide concrete sidewalk and granite curb run along the northern edge of Talmadge Hill Road from Route 106 up to and past the highest parking tier above the heavily used railroad station, according to New Canaan Public Works Director Tiger Man.

Talmadge Hill Road runs along the New Canaan-Darien border east of the station but turns north a bit and is entirely within New Canaan just south of the station. Some Darien residents commute from there and walk back and forth from the station.

Some Darien residents have asked Darien town government to install sidewalks along Hoyt Street (Route 106) approaching the station, but the town hasn't installed them. In the past, New Canaan officials have said they didn't expect to install sidewalks on the New Canaan part of Route 106 as it approaches the station.

The project would replace and extend what's there now, a blacktop sidewalk with a blacktop curb, Mann told members of the New Canaan Board of Selectmen at their regular meeting Wednesday.

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“This has been an area that people have asked for for a number of years,” Mann said at the meeting, held in Town Hall.

Before and after work, scores of rail commuters make their way to and from the platform at Talmadge Hill, between cars parked in the lots as well as idling cars that pull over on the narrow road to drop off or pick up riders.

New Canaan is seeking the funds through the Connecticut Department of Transportation-administered [Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program](#).

The board — First Selectman Rob Mallozzi and Selectmen Beth Jones and Nick Williams — voted 3-0 to green-light an application for funds.

Mallozzi said he's “reasonably positive we will get it,” as New Canaan originally had a \$2 million request for funds to support a plan to deck the Locust Avenue parking lot — scuttled, at least for now — which did not come through.

According to Mallozzi, the [Western Connecticut Council of Governments](#) (WestCOG) “was cognizant of the effort that we put into making a good case and said, ‘Listen you’re not going to get the \$2 million but put in for something else and we will stand behind the town of New Canaan at the state level and try to get you funding for something.’ ”

“And Tiger really worked this hard, and this was something I have been talking about for six years,” Mallozzi said.

He added: “It will be a nice addition over there for the Talmadge Hill commuters.”

Williams asked whether the \$350,000 would cover the entire project (yes) and what the timing was (hopefully next spring).

Jones said she visited the Talmadge Hill train station and was “so surprised how people are constantly crossing the tracks there instead of using the sidewalk.”

Mann said Metro-North Railroad also is concerned about that practice and sometimes stations its officers there “because we have people cutting there under the barricades as the gate is closed, still running underneath the gate.”

Jones said that at some point, perhaps Talmadge Hill could get a platform on the east side of the tracks, as well.