

Public Meeting Wednesday on Improving Noroton Heights Railroad Station

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The state Department of Transportation will present its plans to replace all or part of the platform at the Noroton Heights Railroad Station at a public meeting tonight, but town officials have more ambitious plans for a bigger overhaul of the station.

The "public informational meeting" as announced by the DOT takes place in Room 206 of Darien Town Hall. The meeting starts at 7:30 p.m., but people are encouraged to come by at 7 p.m. to see plans for the project. The public can discuss the matter, bring up concerns and have questions answered at the meeting.

First Selectman Jayme Stevenson says the run-down station needs much more than just a replacement of the concrete and metal platform. The stationhouse, a plastic and metal shed, should be replaced with a larger

structure that's compliant with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

Stevenson said at a recent Board of Selectman meeting that the walkway over the tracks at the station is also not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (for one thing, it has only stairs, no elevators) and it leaks when it rains, so water can puddle inside.

Stevenson and the town Department of Public Works have come up with plans for a replacement stationhouse. She says the town could contribute to the financing of a rebuilt station, with federal and state financing, and with redevelopment projects proposed for nearly all of the Noroton Heights business district, most of which is across Heights Road from the station, now is a good time to plan for a reconstructed train station.

U.S. Sen. Chris Murphy, state Sen. Bob Duff and state Rep. Terry Wood have toured the station with Stevenson and said they agree the station is in poor shape.

