

Town Officials Consider Parking Situation at Noroton Heights Station as Platform Project Starts

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With the passenger platform replacement project now started at the Noroton Heights Railroad Station, town officials have taken some steps to try to minimize the parking spaces that commuters can't use during construction, and if that's not enough, they've identified some other options.

The [project to replace all the concrete platforms](#) on either side of the tracks has begun, with the western end of the south platform, roughly half of it, already marked off with yellow tape and now unusable for passengers.

Work on that quarter of the platforms was expected to continue to about mid-summer, ConnDOT said during the initial planning for the project last year. A number of parking spaces up against the platform are already out of commission.

At Monday's Board of Selectmen meeting, members of the board said they were concerned about commuters losing spaces and wanted to know if the town could help with that.

Town Administrator Kathleen Buch said she's discussed the matter with Public Works Director Ed Gentile as the state project was still being planned.

"Because they're doing it in phases, they're not going to be losing a lot of spaces each time," she said. When commuters who did not renew their parking permits recently were dropped from the rolls, Busch said, the town didn't replace all of those spots when offering spots to those on the waiting list for parking permits, she said.

"Our feeling right now is that we will be able to accommodate everybody," Buch said. If not, the Leroy West parking lot at Darien Railroad Station has available spaces, she said.

"We could [...] look into allowing people from Noroton Heights to park temporarily at Leroy West," Buch said. Another idea would be to allow Noroton Heights commuters with parking permits to use their permits at pay station spaces.

Construction workers will also need parking, Busch noted. There are spaces on Hollow Tree Ridge Road, including spaces on the bridge over Interstate 95, that are now marked for two-hour parking, she said.

"We're going to convert them [to longer allowed parking hours] so those people can park there and not disturb the permanent parking," Buch said.

SIDEBAR:

Manafort Brothers Inc. and That Manafort Who's Been in the News

The state [has announced](#) its contractor, [Manafort Brothers](#) of Plainville, won the \$6,271,000 contract for the job, which is expected to be complete by late 2018 (it will break during the coldest winter months).

If the name "Manafort" is familiar to you, it's also the last name of Paul Manafort, the political consultant who was at one time Donald Trump's campaign manager and who has been in the news lately, with [reports about investigations into his ties to Russian and Ukrainian figures](#).

And no, it's not a coincidence that the company and the consultant share the name. Manafort Brothers was founded by the consultant's grandfather, and [his father](#), the late Paul Manafort Sr., a former mayor of New

Britain (1965 to 1971) and deputy public works commissioner for the state, [later worked for the company](#) (one of four generations of Manaforts to do so). The father died in 2013.

Manafort Brothers is one of the largest construction companies in New England. It's only tie to the Manafort now in the news appears to be only a matter of family heritage.

See also [Darienite.com](https://darienite.com)'s past coverage about the station and the project:

- [Noroton Heights Train Station Platform Replacement Project Begins Monday](#) (March 25)
- [ConnDOT Official: Noroton Heights Station Project Will Replace Platforms, Not Expand Them](#) (March 17, 2016)
- [Town Officials, Consultants Considering Improvements for Noroton Heights Station](#) (Oct. 15, 2015)
- [All Noroton Heights Station Platforms to Be Replaced from March '17 to Late '18](#) (Sept. 23, 2015)
- [US Sen Murphy Visits Noroton Heights Train Station, Supports Renovations](#) (Sept. 1, 2015)
- [First Selectman's Goal for Noroton Heights Station: New Building, Bridge](#) (Sept. 27, 2015)