



City of Norwalk, Connecticut

# State of the Harbor 2017

## Walk Bridge, High Towers, and Eversource Electric Lines

By Geoff Steadman, NHMC Planning Consultant

The Norwalk Harbor Management Commission (NHMC) continues to review the Connecticut DOT's complex plans to replace the Norwalk River Railroad Bridge (Walk Bridge).

One aspect of the Walk Bridge project that hasn't received much public attention is the need to relocate the high voltage electric transmission lines that now follow the rail corridor and are carried high over the bridge by two steel-lattice towers. The towers will conflict with the DOT's planned vertical lift bridge and new track alignments so they must be removed. Therefore, the two 115,000 volt (115kV) transmission lines owned by Eversource Energy must be relocated. Then the towers—Norwalk landmarks since they were built in 1912—will be demolished.

Eversource is responsible for relocating the transmission lines so the Walk Bridge can be replaced. As with the Walk Bridge project, this work isn't subject to Norwalk's planning and zoning authorities. However,



to relocate the transmission lines under the harbor, Eversource needs coastal permits from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In addition, approval from the Connecticut Siting Council is needed. To the extent it affects the harbor, the project also is subject to review by the NHMC for consistency with the Norwalk Harbor Management Plan.

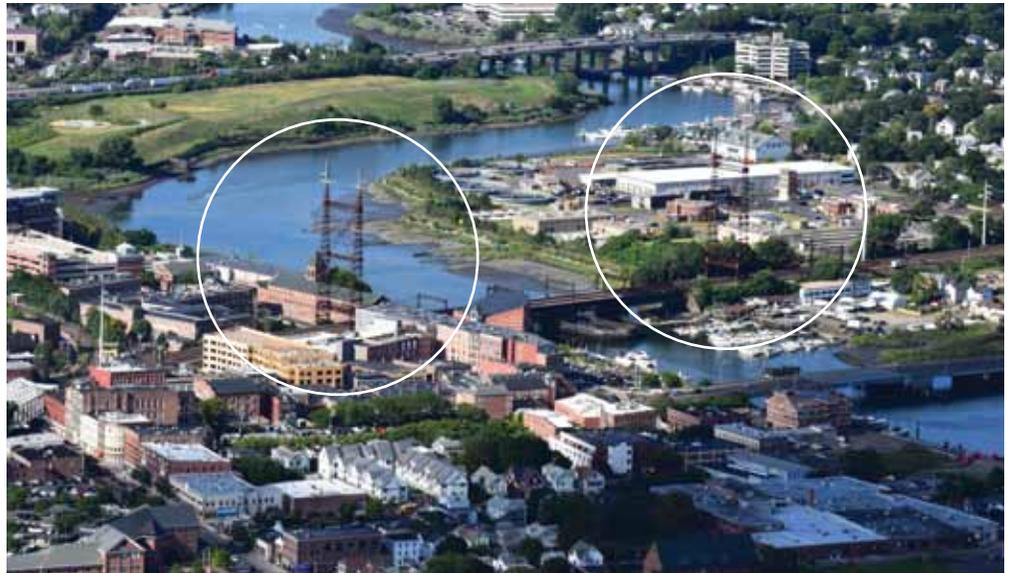
(continued on next page)

*The mission of the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission is to evaluate issues, make recommendations, and provide support to the City of Norwalk in preserving and enhancing the use, vitality, and quality of life associated with the Norwalk Harbor and Long Island Sound.*

# Walk Bridge, High Towers, and Eversource Electric Lines

(continued)

Eversource representatives have been meeting in a cooperative manner with the NHMC to discuss their plans. They've told the NHMC that an agreement has been reached with the DOT and Mayor's Office regarding the desired relocation route. New transmission lines will be directed away from the rail corridor at a point west of the Walk Bridge in South Norwalk. The new lines will be buried ten feet below the road surface in a trench to be excavated from the police station parking lot, along the length of Elizabeth Street, and then across Water Street to the harbor. When the lines reach the west side of the harbor, opposite Veteran's Park, Eversource will drill conduits for the lines 30 feet under the bottom of the harbor. When the lines reach the park's shoreline north of the new boat launching ramps, they will be buried in another trench to be dug across the parking lot and along Fort Point Street to the rail line east of Liberty Square. At that point, Eversource will again elevate the lines, connecting them back on towers following the rail corridor eastward. Then the DOT will remove the de-energized transmission lines



*Replacing the Walk Bridge requires relocation of the high voltage electric lines now carried over the bridge by two high towers built in 1912. The towers will be demolished.*

over the Walk Bridge and demolish the two high towers.

The NHMC will review the Eversource project plans when they are submitted to DEEP and the Siting Council and provide appropriate comments and recommendations as necessary to reduce the project's adverse impacts on the harbor and waterfront.

Interested persons can contact the NHMC at any time with questions and concerns about the Walk Bridge and Eversource projects and their effects on the harbor. The NHMC meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month in City Hall at 7:30 p.m. The public is always invited

## The Walk Bridge Replacement

The Connecticut Department of Transportation initiated the Walk Bridge Program to replace the 121-year old deteriorating railroad bridge that crosses the Norwalk River in Norwalk, CT. The existing four-track swing bridge opens to provide access for commercial and private maritime users along the Norwalk River. When closed, the Walk Bridge connects the rail line that passes through the heart of historic South Norwalk on the west side of the river to East Norwalk on the east side.

The Walk Bridge is a critical transportation link between Washington, D.C., New York City and Boston, the area commonly referred to as the Northeast Corridor. The Northeast Corridor is the most frequented rail line in America in both ridership and service frequency.

The Walk Bridge carries Metro-North's New Haven Line, which services approximately 125,000 passengers daily, Amtrak and freight services.

The Replacement of the Walk Bridge, currently in preliminary design, will provide safe and reliable rail transportation services, while improving navigational capacity and dependability for waterway users. The new bridge will be redundant with two independent moveable spans. This allows one span, or two-tracks, to remain in use when the other needs to be serviced. The resilient and sustainable structure will be able to withstand extreme weather events such as storm surges and high winds.

The Walk Bridge Program includes two advance projects, the CP243 Inter-



locking and Danbury Branch Dockyard Projects, which began construction in Fall 2017. These projects are independent of the Walk Bridge Replacement Project and will improve the dependability of operations on the mainline and shorten the distance of two-track operations for passenger services during the construction.

For more information please go to:  
[www.walkbridgect.com](http://www.walkbridgect.com)



# Paul Saviano Posthumously Awarded the David S. Dunavan Stewardship Award

By John Thomas Pinto, Norwalk Harbor Management Commission

At the Annual State of the Harbor meeting, the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission (NHMC) announced that Paul Saviano posthumously was the recipient of the David S. Dunavan Stewardship Award. Saviano, a great advocate and supporter of the harbor and waterfront, died September 23, just months after being named Deputy Harbor Master.

The David S. Dunavan award is a vehicle by which the Commission recognizes significant contributions to Norwalk Harbor through environmental conservation, by the addition of knowledge, by the design or invention of useful ideas and means to improving Harbor management, or by outstanding service to public or private organizations devoted to conservation of Norwalk Harbor, its River and Watershed.

The award honors the contributions of Dave Dunavan who was

a former Commissioner and twice chairman of the NHMC. Dunavan was regarded as an “elder statesman in harbor management” with respect to his wisdom and guidance in improving accommodations for recreational and commercial boating and the quality of life within Norwalk Harbor and ultimately within Long Island Sound.

Dunavan helped “lead the charge” for statewide reforms in dredging and defining duties of our state harbormasters. He helped write and revise the Commission’s State and City approved Norwalk Harbor Management Plan. He helped develop goals set forth by the Norwalk River Watershed Initiative and brought to fruition accomplishments of its Water Quality Committee that provided brochures for maintaining streamside buffer zones along Norwalk River, restoring fish and wildlife habitats on the River,



monitoring Water Quality and finally, completing studies of Septic Systems within the Norwalk River Watershed Area. Dunavan’s stewardship was truly dedicated to maintaining a sustainable environment and ecological quality of Norwalk Harbor.

## Eight Bells for Paul Saviano

1954 - 2017

Norwalk mourns the loss of Paul G. Saviano, Deputy Harbor Master of Norwalk, who passed away September 23rd at the age of 63. Saviano died of complications following heart surgery in early June.

Saviano had been appointed as Deputy Harbor Master in April by Governor Daniel Malloy, a position in which he was committed to helping ensure the safety and respect for all those who use the harbor. He was a lifelong Norwalk resident and an avid boater. He was a member of the South Norwalk Boat Club and held a U.S. Coast Guard Captains license. With great dedication to the city and the waterfront, Saviano was a former member of the Norwalk

Harbor Management Commission and former Chairman of the Mayor’s Water Quality Committee. Saviano had a 26-year career at Perkin-Elmer, where he was an engineer. He was an avid inventor and held several U.S. patents.

He served as a judge at the Connecticut Invention Convention for young inventors as well as the Norwalk Public Schools Annual Science Fair. He volunteered with a number of community organizations, and held officer positions for several of them. Norwalk loses a great leader and advocate for the boating community. Saviano will be missed.



# Harbor Watch is a water quality research program



By Pete Fraboni, Harbor Watch

Harbor Watch is a water quality research program based out of Earthplace in Westport, CT. Its mission is to provide the people of Connecticut with data, knowledge, and field expertise necessary to safeguard our waterways, to educate our communities about watershed issues, and to train volunteers and student interns through hands-on research.



(Left to Right) Theresa Armijo (Norwalk Intern) Celine Orabi and Stephen Fleitas (volunteer interns) and Sydney Adams (Norwalk Intern) on a monitoring run for juvenile benthic fish in Norwalk Harbor

Norwalk Harbor Management Commission (NHMC) helps support the water monitoring program with funding for summer interns. Since 1995 NHMC, the Norwalk Health Department, and Harbor Watch have partnered to offer internship experiences for two college undergraduate students, who seek opportunities to apply knowledge learned in the classroom to practical applications. During this past summer Theresa Armijo, a senior majoring in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences at the University of Connecticut, and Sydney Adams, a sophomore studying at the Maine Maritime Academy and majoring in Marine Biology, were chosen to participate as interns.

They assist the Norwalk Health Department with monitoring the water quality conditions of beaches in Norwalk. The bacteria testing that they conducted weekly provided the necessary information the Health Department needed to determine whether or not Norwalk beaches could be used safely by the beach-going public.

They also participate in the Harbor Watch Program with monitoring projects, gathering field data and collecting water samples for bacterial analysis. Because of their help,

Harbor Watch was able to conduct its largest scope of monitoring research to date: testing 16 rivers in 18 towns throughout Fairfield County. The 110 page Fairfield County River Report is available for download at our website ([www.harborwatch.org](http://www.harborwatch.org)).

The interns also helped with monitoring the effluent streams flowing from several storm drain outflows in Norwalk. Harbor Watch was able to identify four major sources of pollution that were entering the Norwalk River and the Harbor/Estuary. Working closely with Norwalk Public Works and The Norwalk WPCA, these sources were eliminated. The end result was the amelioration of pollution inputs and the improvement in the water quality of the receiving waters.

They also work aboard the RV Annie, Harbor Watch's research platform, sampling juvenile benthic (bottom-dwelling) fish populations, which can be used as an indicator of harbor health and its functionality as a refuge and nursery.

For over 22 years the internship partnership has proved to be a mutually beneficial program for both the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission and Harbor Watch. It has become a model for collaboration that other municipalities could follow. For information on the 2018 summer internship program go to [www.harborwatch.org](http://www.harborwatch.org).



Theresa (foreground) and Sydney distribute NA-MUG media into petri dishes in the Harbor Watch Laboratory at Earthplace



**Norwalk Harbor Management Commission**



## COMMISSIONERS

Anthony Aitoro  
John Crespo  
William T Gardella, JR.  
Anthony T. Mobilia (Chair)  
Joseph A. Perella  
John Pinto  
John Romano  
Dennis Santella  
Jan Schaefer  
Gregg Scully Harbor Master  
Steven Kleppin / Frank Strauch Planning & Zoning  
Geoff Steadman Planning Consultant

## COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Tony Aitoro, Finance  
John Pinto, Application Review  
Jan Schaefer, Plans & Recommendations  
Dennis Santella, Mooring & Harbor Safety  
John Pinto, Dredging  
Jan Schaefer, Newsletter & Web Page  
TBD, Mayor's Water Quality  
Tony Mobilia Bridge Committee

The Commission meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:30PM in P & Z Conference Room located in Norwalk City Hall.

Norwalk City Hall  
125 East Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06851

To contact the Norwalk Harbor Management Commission, call 203.854.7780 or visit us at: [www.norwalkct.org](http://www.norwalkct.org)

For state information: [www.ctharbormanagement.org](http://www.ctharbormanagement.org)

