From Intersection To Connection

Chapel and State Street Intersection and Bridge  |  Community Engagement Summary 2019
Town Green District would like to sponsor revitalization efforts at the intersection of State and Chapel Street in order to promote walk appeal and connectivity between two key New Haven neighborhoods.

The project goals include repainting of bridge railings, landscaping enhancements, and a sculptural gateway over Chapel Street. The gateway is envisioned as a piece of public art, developed by local studio Atelier Cue, in close partnership with community and stakeholder groups in both Ninth and Wooster Squares.

The final design of the gateway, as well as the naming of the project, will be realized through a collaborative visioning process led by Atelier Cue.
From Intersection to Connection
Chapel and State Street Intersection and Bridge
Community Engagement Phase Summary

Contents:

1. Initial Research and Historic Information
2. Community Engagement Events - Images and Notes
   3. Interview Excerpts
4. Summary
5. Survey Data
Section 1
Research and History
Section 1: Research & History

Project Location:
Adjacent to State Street Train Station and between New Haven Green & Wooster Square Park
A Key Crosspoint Between Wooster and Ninth Squares

Key Entry Point from State Street Station
Chapel Street is a main artery of New Haven, running from the Quinnipiac River on the east of the city to Forest Road in Westville. Passing through Fair Haven, Wooster Square, Downtown, Dwight, and Edgewood districts, Chapel Street is the main commercial artery of the downtown and of the Chapel Street Commercial Historic District, which represents “the evolution of New Haven commerce, the growth of its cultural life […] and the development of urban residential styles of architecture.” In its middle, it borders the south of the New Haven Green, which “since the 17th c has played a major role in the social, educational, religious, political and commercial life of the city.”

State Street is major road at the eastern border of the Downtown district, running along the railroad tracks as U.S. route 5 which crosses New England from New Haven to Derby Line in Vermont, continuing into Quebec, Canada.
Section 1: Research & History

Excellent Transit

This location has excellent transit which means transit is convenient for most trips. Car sharing is available from Zipcar and RelayRides.

EXCELLENT WALKABILITY.

HOW ABOUT WALK APPEAL?

https://www.walkscore.com/score/state-and-chapel-new-haven-ct
Chapel and State Street intersection is at the north-east corner of New Haven’s 9th Square, which is part of the oldest section of the city and one of its best preserved historic areas.
The Chapel Street ‘700s’ block is comprised of well preserved 19th and early 20th century buildings, three to five stories high, of various architectural styles yet joined together to form a continuous façade. The north block is occupied by 360 State Street, a newly build residential tower with a multi-story garage base and Elm City Market at the street level. The old and new buildings are richly detailed and preserve a commercial ground floor clad in stone or cast stone, while the upper floors are predominantly brick and, in the case of the new garage, concrete and ornamental metal.
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The built environment:

The Chapel Street ‘700s’ block is comprised of well preserved 19th and early 20th century buildings, three to five stories high, of various architectural styles yet joined together to form a continuous façade. The north block is occupied by 360 State Street, a newly build residential tower with a multi-story garage base and Elm City Market at the street level. The old and new buildings are richly detailed and preserve a commercial ground floor clad in stone or cast stone, while the upper floors are predominantly brick and, in the case of the new garage, concrete and ornamental metal.
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Site Photos:

View: Chapel Street looking towards the bridge, with stores on both sides and people at the bus stop
Section 1: Research & History

Site Photos:

View from State Street Station. Corner of Chapel St. entering into Ninth Square where proposed archway will be installed

Crossing over from Wooster Square into Downtown
Section 1: Research & History

Site Photos:

Currently, the Chapel St. bridge favors the car

Natural overgrowth at the bridge endpoint on Union St.

Natural overgrowth at the bridge endpoint on State St.
Section 1: Research & History

Site Photos:

Urban resource Initiative Tree Inventory
Section 1: Research & History

Site Photos:

View of Bridge from Train Station Pedestrian bridge
Section 1: Research & History

Site Photos:

Views of bridge railing
Section 1: Research & History

Urban fabric past and present – UConn Parking Study:

Off-street parking in New Haven, 1951

McCahill, Blanc, and Garrick – University of Connecticut, Civil & Environmental Engineering

– courtesy of Urban Design League
Section 1: Research & History

Urban fabric past and present – UConn Parking Study:

Off-street parking in New Haven, 2008: A citywide increase of more than 200 percent

Mc Cahill, Blanc, and Garrick – University of Connecticut, Civil & Environmental Engineering

– courtesy of Urban Design League
Section 1: Research & History

State Street
(Look at that dense urban corridor!)

Urban fabric past and present - Aerial Photo, 1954:
Section 1: Research & History

Historical images:

Urban Renewal: Area between Church, Grove, State and Court Streets
– courtesy of Urban Design League
Section 1: Research & History

Historical images:

Corner of Court and State c. 1951 shows the scale and use prior to Urban Renewal – courtesy of Urban Design League
Section 1: Research & History

Plans and Proposals for Future:

Wooster Square/ State Street Planning Study
Utile Design for City of New Haven

Takeaway for the planning team:

“Ensure safe and accessible connections from Wooster Square to Downtown”
Section 1: Research & History
Proposal Graphics from Utile Planning Study:
Wooster Square/ State Street Planning Study
Utile Design for City of New Haven

Master Planning includes narrowing of State Street from the East Side and development of parcel along train tracks
Section 1: Research & History

Plans and proposals for the future:

State Street median removal and lane reconfiguration
(place-holder illustrations from Wooster Square Study)

“Chapel Street Diet” – submitted by N. Olinski, workshop participant
Section 2
Community Engagement Events
Community Engagement Timeline:

March 12
Town Green
Intro

March 13
Alderman
Hours with
Abby Roth

March 19
Community
Management
Team Mtg

March 26
Town Green
Board
Meeting

April 3
9th Square
Merchants

April 4
BrewOn9
Survey
stand

April 6
Farmers
Market

April 8
Downtown
Alliance
Meeting

April 13
Community
Workshop

May 17
Night
Market

July 17
Community
Feedback
on Concepts

<< ------------------------ Research Site & History ------------------------ >>
<< ---------------- Outreach & Distribution of Fliers ------------------- >>
<<---------------- Interviews With Pedestrians and Businesses ----------- >>
<<---------------- Review and Analysis --------------------- >>
<<------------ Early Concept Explorations------------ >>
Snap-shots of Community Engagement Events

Brew on 9

Ninth Square Merchants

Community Workshop

Town Green District Board

Night Market
Community Workshop (April 13):

What do you find most exciting about a design intervention at the Chapel/State Intersection and Bridge?

- adding density
- pride in the railroad
- color
- art as guidance
- light
- a new future
- visible entrance to Wooster Square from downtown
- recreation
- iconic
- landmark
- migration of downtown to the east
- energy!
- reintroduce streetcar?

What are your concerns?

- 4 season
- surviving winter
- traffic
- creating appeal at large and small scale
- maintenance
- removing trees
- upkeep
- Maintaining vehicular functionality
Section 3
Interview Excerpts
“Many people cross diagonally through the intersection when walking from the train station to downtown because it is the fastest route. However, the south west corner of the intersection is one of the most unpleasant locations in downtown. Also, vehicular traffic often speeds through the intersection, making it feel unsafe for pedestrians waiting to cross.”
- Katelyn Chapin, State Street station commuter

“There is not enough space for people to walk around when they come out of the train station and they are unsure where to go. People come in the lobby to ask me for directions multiple times a day.
- Rhea Gorhum, 360 State Street Apartment Building Concierge
“There is nothing there. A lot of people come by the garage and ask for directions – they are unsure how to get to the green or to the train stations. And the bus stop on the corner is not a good spot – people cross the street to avoid it.”
- Nebiyat Desta, Orange Street Parking Garage Attendant

“The intersection itself seems standard, but as a transition between Wooster Square and Downtown – the connection is non-existent. When I think about accessing the train station from downtown, the path to State Street station seems longer than it actually is, and hostile.”
- Eoin Burke, Professor of Art at Gateway Community College

“There is nothing happening at the intersection. The parking lots along State Street should be replaced with buildings to make the street more pleasant. When I think of the bridge, I don’t think of it as an access point to Wooster Square.”
- Eddie Jabbour, Owner, Orange Street Market
Section 4
Summary
Summary of Community Input

**Whom did we reach?**
The vast majority of our engagement efforts have reached individuals who live or work in downtown New Haven. Of those, we were able to converse with a cross-section of residents including local merchants, building owners, parking lot attendants, artists, architects, developers, traffic engineers, police officers, and local government officials.

**How do they interact with the intersection?**
Most participants interact with the intersection as pedestrians, with good representation from drivers, and modest representation from those traveling by bicycle, bus, or train.

**What are the primary impressions of the intersection and bridge now?**
While many respondents indicate negative impressions of the bridge, a significant majority of interviewees express indifference toward the bridge and intersection. “There’s nothing there,” is a common response. When prompted, respondents did not associate the bridge with a connection to Wooster Square.

**Why are people interested in this project?**
Responses center around the opportunity to connect neighborhoods and to improve the aesthetics, safety, and functionality of this highly trafficked transfer point.

**What are the concerns?**
The primary concern is funding. Secondary concerns relate to coordination with City, State, DOT, and Amtrak.

**How do people define success? What are the aspirations?**
Community respondents indicate a strong desire to express their New Haven pride. The intervention should be welcoming and memorable for visitors to the city. (It should be Instagrammable!) Another recurring theme is improving safety for pedestrians and bikes so that more people will want to walk from downtown to Wooster Square and vice versa.
Section 5
Survey Data
Short Form Survey Graphic Tally:

**EVENT/LOCATION:**

**NAME:**

**EMAIL ADDRESS:**

**HOW DO YOU INTERACT WITH THE CHAPEL ST/STATE ST INTERSECTION AND/OR CHAPEL ST BRIDGE?**

- PEDESTRIAN
- CAR
- BICYCLE
- BUS

**RATE YOUR EXPERIENCE PASSING THROUGH THE INTERSECTION**

- POSITIVE
- INDIFFERENT
- NEGATIVE

**WHY?**

**RATE YOUR EXPERIENCE CROSSING THE BRIDGE**

- POSITIVE
- INDIFFERENT
- NEGATIVE

**WHY?**

**WHAT WOULD MOST IMPROVE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THE INTERSECTION AND BRIDGE?**

- IMPROVED STREET LIGHTING
- PLANTINGS
- VEHICULAR SEPARATION
- ICONIC ELEMENT FOR DOWNTOWN
- ARTISTIC ELEMENTS
- REDUCED VEHICLE SPEED
- LINK BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS
- PEDESTRIAN LEVEL LIGHTING

**EXAMPLES:**

**OTHER:** (continue on back if desired)
Long Form Survey Graphic Tally and Notes:

**CHAPEL/STATE INTERSECTION AND BRIDGE WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE**
April 13, 2019 | HOSTED BY TOWN GREEN DISTRICT AND ATELIER CUE

**WHICH DESIGN ASPIRATIONS FOR THE INTERSECTION ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?**
(CIRCLE AS MANY AS YOU FEEL ARE IMPORTANT)
- Slow Vehicular Traffic
- Improve Aesthetics
- Improve Safety for Pedestrians and Cyclists
- Link Adjacent Neighborhoods
- Create Iconic Element For New Haven

Other Goals To Consider:
- Memorable, Instagrammable

**WHICH DESIGN INTERVENTIONS FOR THE INTERSECTION WOULD MOST IMPROVE YOUR EXPERIENCE?**
(CIRCLE AS MANY AS YOU FEEL ARE IMPORTANT)
- Plantings
- Iconic Elements
- Artwork
- Decorative Paving
- Pedestrian Level Lighting
- Street Lighting

Other Interventions To Consider:
- Transparency of the railing

**HOW DO YOU CURRENTLY INTERACT WITH THE CHAPEL/STATE INTERSECTION AND BRIDGE?**
(YOU MAY CIRCLE MORE THAN ONE)
- Pedestrian
- Car
- Bicycle
- Bus
- Train

**WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOUR CONNECTION TO THIS AREA OF NEW HAVEN?**
(YOU MAY CIRCLE MORE THAN ONE)
- Visitor
- Resident
- Merchant
- Property Owner
- Worker/Professional

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THE CHAPEL/STATE INTERSECTION TODAY?**
- Daunting to cross, Dirty, Scary
- Designed for cars not pedestrians, Too wide-open
- Boring but functional, Unremarkable, No-man’s land

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THE CHAPEL STREET BRIDGE TODAY?**
- Dangerous, isolated, uncomfortable
- Ugly but functional, Dirty, gloomy, not fun
- Divider rather than connector

**WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT NEW HAVEN?**
- People, diversity, architecture, scale, culture

**WHAT ASPECT(S) OF NEW HAVEN HISTORY OR CULTURE WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO SEE COMMEMORATED IN THIS LOCATION?**
- People, elm, trains, nature, chronology, past, heritage, culture of art
- None - let’s look forward, new, place to be
Atelier Cue, LLC
Ioana Barac & Marissa Dionne Mead
*Place-Making, Ornamentation, & Architectural Art*