

STAMFORD TRANSPORTATION CENTER

PARKING GARAGE

ENTRANCE/EXIT NUMBER	STATUS OF ENTRY / EXIT FROM JANUARY 19, TO FEBRUARY 29,	STATUS OF ENTRY / EXIT BEGINNING MARCH 1,
1	CLOSED	<u>OPEN</u> - STAFFED 24/7 FOR MONTHLY AND DAILY PARKING FOR <u>ENTRY AND EXIT</u>
2	CLOSED	<u>OPEN</u> - 5 AM TO 12 NOON DAILY FOR MONTHLY <u>ENTRANCE ONLY</u>
3	<u>OPEN</u> - 24/7 FOR MONTHLY PARKING FOR EXIT ONLY, STAFFED 4PM TO 11 PM FOR DAILY PARKING FOR <u>EXIT ONLY</u>	<u>OPEN</u> - 24/7 FOR MONTHLY PARKING FOR EXIT ONLY, STAFFED 4PM TO 11 PM FOR DAILY PARKING FOR <u>EXIT ONLY</u>
4	<u>OPEN</u> - STAFFED 24/7 FOR MONTHLY AND DAILY PARKING FOR <u>ENTRY AND EXIT</u>	<u>OPEN</u> - 5 AM TO 12 MIDNIGHT FOR MONTHLY, STAFFED 3 PM TO 11 PM SUNDAY THROUGH FRIDAY FOR DAILY PARKING, CLOSED 12 MIDNIGHT TO 5 AM DAILY FOR <u>ENTRY AND EXIT</u>
5	<u>OPEN</u> - 4 PM TO 10 PM FOR MONTHLY <u>EXIT ONLY</u>	<u>CLOSED</u> - ENTRY AS NEEDED FOR HIGH TOP HANDICAP VAN ENTRANCE ONLY. FOR ON-CALL SYSTEM. EMERGENCY EXIT AS NEEDED.
PEDESTRIAN DOOR NUMBER	STATUS OF DOOR FROM JANUARY 19 TO JANUARY 29	STATUS OF DOOR BEGINNING MARCH 1
6	LOCKED AT ALL TIMES	<u>OPEN</u> - 24 HOURS A DAY 7 DAYS A WEEK FOR <u>ENTRY AND EXIT</u>
7	LOCKED AT ALL TIMES	<u>OPEN</u> - 4 PM TO 10 PM FOR <u>ENTRY AND EXIT</u> , 7 DAYS A WEEK
8	UNLOCKED AT ALL TIMES	<u>OPEN</u> - 4 PM TO 10 PM FOR <u>ENTRY AND EXIT</u> , 7 DAYS A WEEK
9	<u>EXIT</u> ONLY AT ALL TIMES	<u>EXIT</u> ONLY AT ALL TIMES
10	<u>EXIT</u> ONLY AT ALL TIMES	<u>EXIT</u> ONLY AT ALL TIMES
11	<u>EXIT</u> ONLY AT ALL TIMES	<u>EXIT</u> ONLY AT ALL TIMES

Noroton Heights Railroad Station

Frequently Asked Questions

by Jim Cameron, CT Metro-North Rail Commuter Council

Who owns the Noroton Hts. railroad station?

Like most of the stations on the New Haven line, this one is owned by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CDOT), but leased to the Town of Darien along with the parking lots.

Who owns the parking at the station?

The parking lots are also owned by CDOT and are leased to the Town of Darien which sets the rates and administers the parking, both daily vouchers (\$2.50) and annual permits (\$235).

Why are non-residents of Darien allowed to park there?

Because the lot is owned by the state, Darien residents cannot be given any special preference. At present the waiting list for annual permits is about four years long. But the Town is updating the list to see if those on the list are still interested or if they've moved out of the region.

How many permits are sold?

There are 439 spaces in the annual permit lot, but 777 permits are sold, about a 76% over-sell. Because permits are relatively inexpensive (\$235 at Noroton Hts vs \$600 per year in Norwalk), those who've waited on the list and received their permits tend to keep them, even if they don't use them regularly. The lot is rarely full, so one suggestion to expand parking might be to sell more permits.

Are there other ways to expand parking?

Yes. There are 100 daily voucher parking spaces next to Post 53 on the south side of the tracks across from The Depot (Teen Center). The Commuter Council has suggested for years now that signs be placed near the Depot alerting would-be parkers to these additional unused spaces.

Where does the money from parking permits go?

Under the Town's contract with CDOT, 20% of the revenues go directly to CDOT. Where the balance of the money (approx. \$260,000 per year for Noroton Hts. alone) ends up is something of a mystery because, until now, the Town has never kept station revenue and expenses as a line item in its budget.

In November 2002, at the time of the last rate hike for daily parking, the Commuter Council made a formal request of then First Selectman Bob Harrell for an accounting of parking revenue and expenses. Eight months later he delivered his best guesstimate showing that much of the money went to pay for salaries of workers at Town Hall.

Why is the station in such bad shape?

According to the Town's contract with CDOT, parking revenue is first to be spent on the maintenance and repair of the station and parking lots. Only after those expenses can the Town use parking money for "General Fund" purposes. In recent years the Town has done just the opposite, pouring parking money into the General Fund and spending little or nothing on station upkeep, with no accounting of those expenses.

Why is security so poor in the parking lot and there are so many break-ins?

Though patrolled by Darien Police and Darien Public Works staffers, the lot is quiet most of the day making it an attractive target for thieves. Despite many requests for the installation of security cameras, Town officials have refused such suggestions.

Why doesn't CDOT enforce its contract and require the Town to fix things?

CDOT is now doing this. In November 2002 they hired a consultant, Urbitran Assoc., to look at all of the rail stations and examine their condition. Noroton Hts was ranked "worst" on the line by commuters. The consultants' engineers identified \$538,000 in necessary repairs. To view the 62-page report, see <http://www.ctrailgovernance.com/reports/Noroton%20Heights.pdf>

In January 2004, CDOT appeared before the Darien Board of Selectman and reminded the Town of its contractual obligation to fix the station, citing the Urbitran study which had been given last year to then-First Selectman Harrell. The Town must now find the money to complete the repairs.

Does CDOT want to "take over" the station?

CDOT already owns the station. It is offering to assume operational control of the station as it has done with the railroad stations in New Haven, Bridgeport, Fairfield and Stamford, several of which were also in bad shape, neglected by their Towns.

What does CDOT want in return for "taking over" the Noroton Hts. station?

CDOT is interested in offering expanded parking at stations along the New Haven line to get commuters out of their cars and onto the trains. In return for assuming operational control of the station and waving the Town's liability for the \$538,000 in repairs, CDOT wants to build and operate additional parking at the station.

