

# Norwalk development projects on display for CT senator

By [Kelly Kultys](#) 4:48 pm EDT, Monday, April 15, 2019

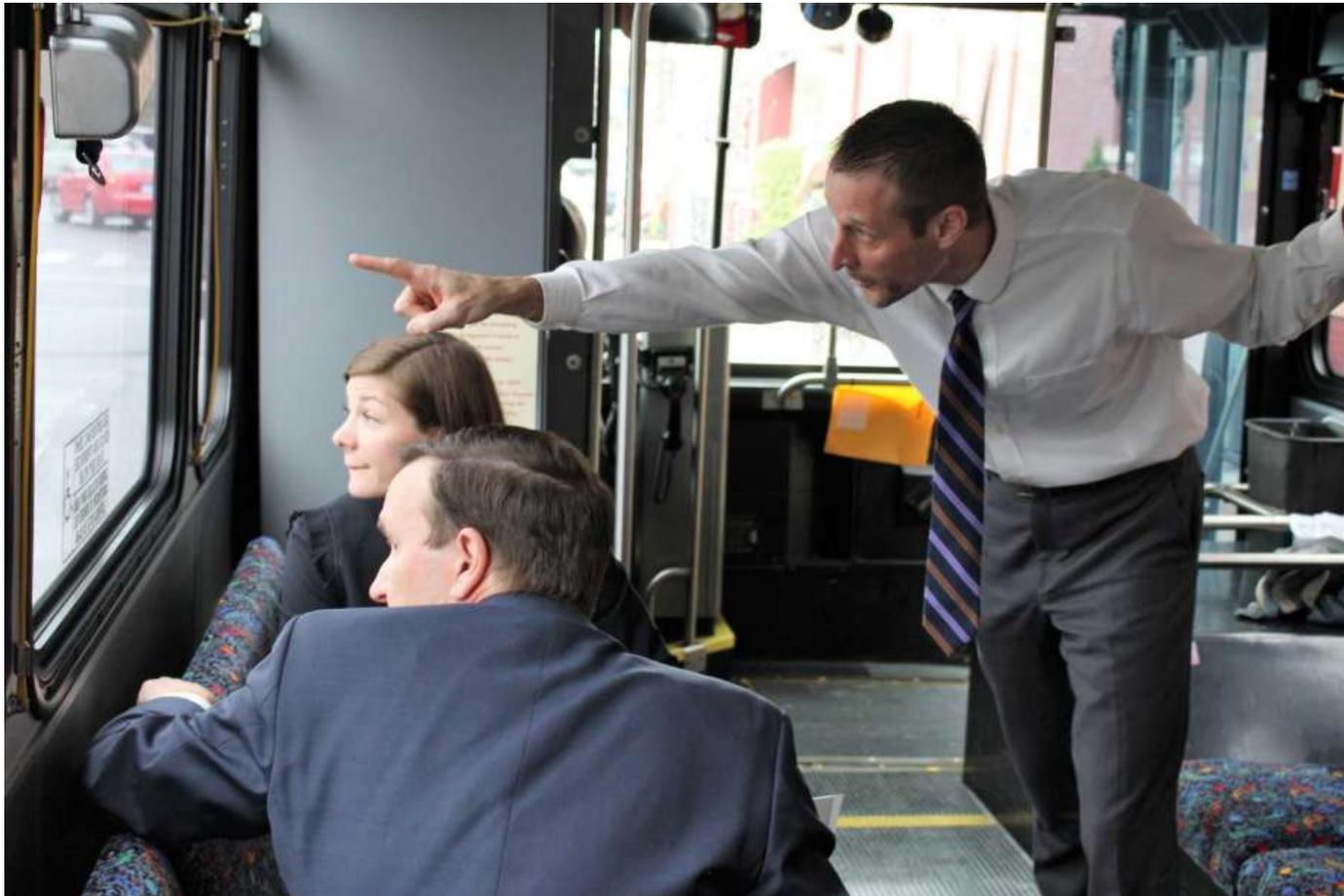


Photo: Kelly Kultys / Hearst Connecticut Media

**Image 1 of 15**

Steve Kleppin, the director of planning and zoning for Norwalk, shows Sen. Chris Murphy a development site during a tour on Monday, April 15, 2019.

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**NORWALK** — From the Walk Bridge to the SoNo Collection Mall to the construction at Washington Village, Sen. Chris Murphy received a “bird’s-eye view” of a variety of projects happening in the city.

“In this job, you need to make sure you know all the local opportunities so that if some money shows up at the federal level, you know where it best fits,” Murphy said.

Mayor Harry Rilling, along with Tim Sheehan, executive director of the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, Jessica Casey, chief of economic and community development, and Steve Kleppin, director of planning and zoning, took Murphy on a bus tour through the city to show off current construction and potential future sites.

The tour featured a look at development on Wall Street and West Avenue, the SoNo Collection mall, [transit-oriented development projects](#) around the South and East Norwalk train stations and the Washington Village replacement projects.

Murphy praised the construction near the train station, including the Spinnaker Real Estate Partners' projects — in South Norwalk on [Chestnut and Monroe streets](#) and the 230 East Avenue [mixed-use project in East Norwalk](#).

“The transit-oriented development project here is amazing, it's transformational and we should be able to sell Washington on being able to make some additional investments in that given how much private money is already teed up,” the Democratic senator said.

Murphy also spent time on the hour-long bus ride through the city asking questions about the impacts of some of these developments, including how the mall would affect local businesses and the Walk Bridge project.

Along the way, staff members and the mayor highlighted other areas, including the growth of local businesses near the Head of the Harbor project on Wall Street and the need for a community services office in the city.

Some of the areas were a return visit for Murphy, including the former Washington Village public housing project, which received most of its funding through the federal Choice Neighborhood Initiative Grant. All 136 public housing units of the former Washington Village will be replaced and 67 workforce housing units and 70 market-rate units will be added, collectively known as Soundview Landing.

All of the former Washington Village residents are guaranteed a spot in the new development, if they'd like to return.

“The mayor and I have done deeper dives on these projects before,” Murphy said. “We were over before at the East Norwalk train station a year or so ago, I've been over to the choice neighborhood but it's good especially as we're heading into the appropriations process to get an overview of what's happening in the city so that I can see if we have any opportunities in Washington (D.C.)”

Rilling said he appreciated Murphy's willingness to see what is happening throughout the city.

“I'm impressed because of how much he was impressed by what's happening in town,” Rilling said. “He was looking at the TOD areas, looking at the development taking place, looking at choice neighborhoods, looking at what's happening with our train station — he was just really incredibly impressed about the forward movement, the momentum in Norwalk.”

Rilling said it was interesting to see the tour of the city through Murphy's eyes and it helps strengthen Norwalk's relationship with the senator.

“The senator has always been really available to us and been a partner in Norwalk in the past and whenever there's an opportunity to try to find federal funds, we reach out to him, he reaches out to us,” Rilling said.

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