

Breakout 4C – “From Copenhagen to Bridgeport: Livable Cities”

Case studies of “sustainable” infrastructure illustrated the conditions in two very different cities. Both Copenhagen in Denmark, and Bridgeport, Connecticut in America, are important Atlantic Ocean seaports. There the similarity ends.

Copenhagen is a thriving community with a predominantly wealthy population. Traffic problems are minimal due to the proximity of housing to the work places and bicycling is popularly accepted. The emphasis is on the requirements of pedestrians rather than of automobiles, and an effective Mass Transit system is in place. “Quality of Good Living” has long been a priority of the municipal regulations. Demographically, the younger population is increasing. High-tech and Bio-tech industries are thriving. The governing process is very “transparent”.

Bridgeport is a community faced with economic decline following World War II. Traffic problems are historical, and commence with the I-95 highway. The harbor, economically important, has not been dredged since 1964. Access to the waterfront is described as inadequate. Recognized environmental conditions remain as a legacy of the former heavy military industry. Employment is centered on healthcare, intermodal transport and on the construction of infrastructure improvements (both present and future through 2020). The sustainability of Bridgeport is dependent on cleaning up the environmental contamination, solving the traffic gridlock and improved coastal ferry service. Dredging is planned for development as a deep water port. Private financing is expected to underwrite the harbor related improvement.