Department of Transportation
Project No. 026-120
Replacement of Bridge No. 02937
Main Street over Pattaconk Brook
Town of Chester
Public Information Meeting

Thursday, February 16, 2012, 7:00 p.m.
Chester Meeting House
4 Liberty Street
Chester, Connecticut

Minutes

Present:

Mr. David Cutler – Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT)
Mr. Andy Fesenmeyer – CTDOT
Mr. John Trovato – CTDOT
Ms. Michelle Lynch – CTDOT
Mr. Douglas Hummel – CTDOT (Rights of Way)
Mr. Joseph Grasso – CTDOT
Mr. Tim Wilson – CTDOT
Mr. Carl Nelson – CTDOT (District Engineer)
Mr. Dave Stahnke – TranSystems
Mr. Hoan Bui - TranSystems
Mr. Ed Meehan – First Selectman, Town of Chester

Presentation:

Mr. Cutler provided a brief introduction to the project including administrative aspects as well as overview of the project need:

Purpose of Meeting

- To inform public of the proposed project and allow interested parties to view proposed plans and ask questions regarding the project.

Reason for Project

- Bridge No. 02937 has a poor rating and is structurally deficient and was recommended for full replacement in a prepared Bridge Rehabilitation Study Report.

Project Goals

- Replace Bridge No. 02937
- Maintain safety of the traveling public
- Minimize impacts of construction on nearby business and traffic
- Minimize construction duration
- Effectively use of funds

Mr. Fesenmeyer provided a summary of the meetings between CTDOT and the Town of Chester, and a summary of concerns expressed at these various meetings as follows:

- Impact of project on Town, business and residents
- Maintain pedestrian access during construction
- Minimize construction duration
- Limit road closure to "slower business" time of the year (January – May)
- Proximity of buildings to the bridge
- Desire for wider sidewalks on new bridge
- Tie buildings on the Route 148 side of bridge into the Main Street "Streetscape"
- Aesthetics
- Keep Existing stone wall abutments under the bridge
- Detour route
- No night work
- Coordinate with Town's proposed Main Street project

Mr. Stahnke provided an overview of the proposed construction and technical details of the project by way of PowerPoint presentation. Significant information included within this presentation is as follows:

Existing Bridge

- Single span structure built in 1921
- Overall length = 22 ft
- Over width = 65 ft
- Roadway width = 45 ft
- Carries on lane of traffic in each direction
- Estimated Average Daily Traffic (ADT) = 3,605 vehicle (2010)
- Superstructure consists of reinforced concrete deck supported by steel multi-girders
- Substructure consists of dry stacked stone masonry abutments

Proposed Bridge

- Single span bridge
- Overall length = 32 ft
- Overall width varies from 65 ft to 100 ft
- Roadway width = 45 ft
- Superstructure consists of 8.5" thick reinforced concrete deck supported by galvanized steel beams.
- Substructure consists of reinforced concrete abutments found on drilled piles.
- Improve approach roadways and sidewalks

Construction

- Bridge to be closed to traffic during major construction (January – May)
- Pedestrian access to businesses on Main Street will be maintained by providing temporary pedestrian bridge
- Use accelerated construction techniques to minimize construction duration.
- Provide detour route

Aesthetic

- Open bridge rail similar to existing bridge
- Widened bridge at north end to blend in with adjacent buildings
- Wider sidewalk may be utilized for future benches, planter, etc...
- Salvage and re-use of existing granite stone curbing

Utility Impacts

- Relocated utility pole and overhead wires
- Relocated 12" diameter water main to new bridge
- Keep existing 8" diameter sewer main in place

Environmental Permits

- Flood Management Certification
- Coastal Consistency Review Form
- Inland Wetland
- Office of Long Island Sound Program
- Stormwater Discharge
- US Army Corps of Engineers

Rights-of-Way

- Impacts to private property consisting of permanent or temporary acquisitions and temporary construction easements are anticipated.

Project Cost

- Estimated construction cost is $2,500,000
- Bridge replacement with 100% state funds

Project Schedule

- Construction is anticipated to begin in the Fall 2014 with roadway closure in Winter 2015.
- Total project duration is approximate 8 months.
- Bridge will be closed to vehicular traffic for maximum of 5 months.
- Schedule is predicated upon the availability of funding, environmental permits, utility relocations, and the receipt of all required property acquisitions

Mr. Hummel gave a brief overview of the Rights-of-Way process with regard to easements and acquisitions. Mr. Hummel stated that any acquisitions will be made by negotiation with impacted property owners.

Public Comments and Questions:

After the PowerPoint presentation was complete, the following comments and questions were raised:

- A resident suggested:
  - Provide netting under bridge to keep pigeons off of beams under the bridge because of concern with pigeons roosting under the bridge which may increase corrosion to steel beams and worsen water quality of the brook.

- Mr. Ed Meehan, First Selectman, Chester, asked:
  - Can DOT add liquidated damages and incentives to contract documents to avoid construction delay and to encourage the contractor to finish work early?

    Response: Liquidated damages is usually included in the contract documents, however, sometimes it is hard to enforce because of reasons out of the Contractor's control. DOT will look into adding incentives to the contract specifications.

- A resident asked:
  - Is the 5 months proposed bridge closure the worst case scenario?

    Response: Yes. The 5 month bridge closure is considered a conservative estimate. Bridge closure less than 5 months is considered very possible with the use of accelerated construction techniques. The DOT will look into the use of incentives to speed up the construction closure.

- A resident asked:
  - Does the bridge need to be replaced?

    Response: Yes. The bridge abutments are in bad shape (bulging) and there is also a scour issue with the exposure of timber cribbing in the brook at the footings of the stone abutments.

  - How long is the new bridge expected to last?

    Response: The life span of new bridges is approximately estimated to be 85-100 years.

- A resident commented:
  - We do not recommend widening the roadway curbline out at the intersection of Route 148. This may encourage people to go faster.

  - How far back on south side of bridge is needed for the work area? 20 ft or 100 ft?

  Response: This will be studied and determined based on the proposed method of construction and needed work area. We would expect more than 20 feet will be required but hopefully less than 100 feet.

  - Is the utility relocation permanent?

  Response: Yes, the utility pole relocation is permanent.

  - How does the DOT guarantee the performance of the subcontractor and making sure the project will not be delayed due to the incapability of the subcontractor to perform? It was mentioned that the Route 154 Bridge got delayed because the subcontractor could not provide the precast concrete beams on time.

  Response: The prefabricated elements of this bridge will be required at site prior to closing the roadway; therefore, this will eliminate any fabrication delay issues.

- A resident asked:
  - Please defined night work? Is it sleeping time or dinner time?

  Response: It is dependent on what the residents want. Work hours can be limited to prior to dinner time or sleeping time.

  - Residents do not want to be effected during sleeping hours however are alright with construction activities during dinner time. They will trade 12 hour construction work days to have the project finish by May 15th.

- A resident asked:
  - Why not use pre-stressed concrete beams for such a short span length? Concrete beams have a longer life span?

  Response: These will be evaluated further during design development.

  - It was suggested to provide sleeves for future utilities on new bridge.

Response: DOT will look into adding sleeves on new bridge for future utilities.

- A resident asked:
  - Which utility pole is being relocated?

    Response: The utility pole on Southeast corner of the bridge will be relocated to the Southwest corner.

  - What is the material for the proposed sidewalk?

    Response: The proposed sidewalk will be concrete as the existing. However, the DOT will coordinate with the Main Street Project and will be looking to the Town for suggestions regarding the sidewalk material.

- A resident asked:
  - The intersection of Main Street and Route 148 is not pedestrian friendly due to its large area. Can the DOT look into improving the whole intersection instead of just focus on the bridge?

    Response: This project is under the bridge program and will be funded as a bridge improvement project. Improvements to the adjacent intersection would be under a different funding source and would have to be under a different project and/or by separate funding. However the DOT will consider minor improvements, such as providing better crosswalks at the intersection, under this current bridge project.

- A resident suggested:
  - Was there an economic impact study done for this project?

    Response: No.

  - Commented: There should be funding provided from liquidation damages to pay for businesses that will be effected by construction delays.

  - Who is responsible for if there is a construction cost overrun due to environmental issues during construction?

    Response: The DOT will be responsible if there is a construction cost overrun.

  - Who is responsible for incorporation of comments and suggestions? Who will make the final decisions for this project?

Response: There will not be a single person who makes final decisions on this project. Everyone is involved and has input on this project. The DOT will work together with your Town Officials to get the overall consensus and direction on project decisions as they have been doing right along.

- A resident asked:
  - Are there any issues with DEP which can delay the construction?

Response: DOT will coordinate with all agencies and get permits approved prior to the start of construction.

- A resident commented:
  - Will be OK with night work in order for the construction to be done in a shorter period of time. Do not want construction stretching out.

- A resident commented:
  - There were a lot of issues with the Route 154 Bridge project and the construction got delayed because of those issues. They do not want that to happen again on this project.

Response: We will try our best to expedite the construction and we do not anticipate having these similar issues with this bridge project.

- A resident asked:
  - Can you explain what caused the bulging on the abutment?

Response: Bulging on the abutment might be due to the installation of the sewer main which caused the stone masonry to fail locally.

  - Is the bridge safe or not?

Response: This bridge is stable for now and is on a 6 month inspection schedule to ensure the safety of the traveling public.

- A resident asked:
  - What happens if there is a fire or an emergency during road closure?

Response: We will coordinate with the Town's fire and emergency personnel to plan alternative emergency routes.

- A resident asked:
  - Is there any integrity change to the bridge abutment since the last inspection?

Response: No, there isn't any significant change to the bridge abutment.

- If there is no change to the bridge abutment, does this bridge really need to be replaced? Is the project set in stone?

Response: It is cheaper to replace the bridge now rather than do a short term solution of rehabilitation to the existing bridge and then the bridge will need to be replaced in the near future.

- Is $2,500,000 the total construction cost? Who is responsible if the construction cost goes over the budget?

Response: Yes, $2,500,000 is the total estimated construction cost. The cost for designing of the bridge is under different funding and already obligated. If the construction costs go over the budget, the DOT will be responsible to come up with the additional money.

- A resident asked:
  - How long has this bridge being rated as a "4"?

Response: This bridge received a "4" rating in 2004.

- Are there any public safety issues? If there is no public safety issue, then does this bridge really need to be replaced?

Response: There is no public safety issue with this bridge for the time being. However, it is better to replace this bridge now before it was found to have a significant change in condition. This could involve a load limit placed on the bridge and then require significant detour for all truck traffic until it was replaced.

- Mr. Ed Meehan, First Selectman, Chester, suggestion:
  - Please look into adding incentive and liquidation damages to the contract documents to deter any delay in construction.

- A resident asked:
  - Will the proposed granite curbing be taken from the existing stone abutments?

Response: No. The existing curbing will be salvaged and re-used on the new bridge from the existing curb lines along the street.

- Will the existing abutments/retaining walls look the same from viewing from the bridge?

Response: Yes, the proposed abutments will be constructed behind the existing stone abutments. The existing abutment/walls will remain in place.

- A resident asked:
  - Is there any risk that historical items will be found at the site which can cause a delay to the construction?

Response: We have been and will continue to coordinate with the state historical preservation office prior to construction to avoid any construction delays.

- A resident asked:
  - What are micro piles?

Response: Micro piles are small diameter drilled in steel pipe piles that are filled with concrete and steel reinforcing bars. They can be installed with small drilling rigs and will have minimal impact on adjacent structures.

  - How far behind the existing abutments is needed for the new abutments?

Response: We will try to keep the new abutments as close as possible to the existing abutments to minimize the span length and impacts on adjacent building foundations.

DOT commented: The PowerPoint presentation and meeting minutes will be posted on the CTDOT web site within 7 business days.

Adjournment:
The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

COMMENT FORM

Project No. 26-120

Public Informational Meeting

February 16, 2012

Name: RICHARD HARRALL

Address: 27 MAPLE ST.
CHESTER CT 06412

Telephone: 860-526-5920

Date: 2/20/12

Comment(s):

AS I STATED AT THE MEETING, THIS PROJECT SHOULD BE MODIFIED TO INCLUDE A RE-DESIGN OF THE RTE 148 AND MAIN ST. INTERSECTION. IN IT'S CURRENT CONFIGURATION IT IS CONFUSING + UNSAFE FOR BOTH VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS. FURTHERMORE THIS IS THE PRIMARY ENTRANCE TO CHESTER VILLAGE. IF WE ARE GOING THROUGH THE DISRUPTION CAUSED BY CONSTRUCTION WE SHOULD ACHIEVE BOTH REPAIR OF THE BRIDGE AND A VISABLE / SAFETY IMPOVEMENT FOR THE PUBLIC.

THE TOWN HAS SOME STEAP FUNDS ON HOLD FOR MAIN ST. STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS. THESE FUNDS SHOULD BE COMBINED WITH PROJECT 26-120 FUNDS FOR A COORDINATED/COMPREHENSIVE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION. I REMEMBER WHEN CONNDOT WAS ADVOCATING "CONTEXTURAL DESIGN" THIS IS THE PERFECT TIME + PROJECT FOR SUCH AN APPROACH.

PLEASE RETURN WRITTEN COMMENTS BY MARCH 7, 2012