

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Determination of Effect on Historic Properties

Author:	C. Scott Speal	Date:	January 24, 2023
Project:	State No.:	174-448	
	F.A.P. No.:	000T(260)	
	Project Title:	Traffic Control Signal Replacement	
	Town:	Various – District 4	
Finding of Effect:	No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties		

Project Description:

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), with funding support from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), proposes replacement of traffic control signal equipment at fourteen (14) locations in State Maintenance District 4—the western part of the state. This project involves installation of new traffic control signal equipment, which may include span poles, mast arms, pedestals, signal heads, span wires, conduits, vehicle detectors, signing and pavement markings. It will entail upgrade of pedestrian control features, which may include pedestrian countdown heads, sidewalk ramps and sidewalk extensions, to meet current department standards. Existing control equipment will be removed as needed at each intersection. Installation of new signal equipment will require excavation for removal of existing equipment as well as excavation for new foundations (span pole, mast arm, pedestal, controller cabinet, etc.) and trenching (i.e. conduit) as required. In addition to excavation for traffic signal equipment, excavation will be required for sidewalk ramps that will be installed or reconstructed to meet current ADA standards. In areas of an intersection where there is existing signal equipment, excavation will take place in areas that have undergone extensive ground disturbance in the past. In areas of an intersection where there is no existing signal equipment, excavation may be in areas where there may not have been extensive ground disturbance in the past. Rights-of-way (ROW) easements may be needed for signal equipment and/or sidewalk ramps.

Work will take place at the following locations:

Bethel (009-217) US Route 6 at Garella Road
East Granby (039-213) Route 187 at SR 540 and Seymour Road
Farmington (051-261) US Route 6 at Waterside Drive
New Hartford (091-203) US Route 44 at Central Avenue, Church Street
& Bridge Street
New Hartford (091-204) US Route 44 at Route 219
New Hartford (091-206) US Route 202 at Route 219 and Old Route 25
Seymour (124-222) Route 67 at Cogwheel Lane
Simsbury (128-233) Route 189 at Route 315 and Mountain Avenue
Thomaston (140-205) Route 254 at Route 8 SB and SR 810
Thomaston (140-206) SR 807 at Elm Street and Meadow Street
Thomaston (140-207) SR 807 at Clay Street and Union Street
Thomaston (140-208) SR 807 at Route 222
Watertown (153-203) US Route 6 at Route 262 and Fern Hill Road
Winchester (162-218) Route 8 at Holabird Lane

Under the provisions of the Programmatic Agreement executed between CTDOT, FHWA, the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer (CT SHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regarding compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) for minor transportation projects¹, the Office of Environmental Planning (OEP) intends to make a determination of effect on historic properties for the described undertaking.

Sources Consulted:

The NPGallery digital asset management database maintained by the National Park Service was consulted for the purpose of locating any historic properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in the project vicinity. In some cases, historic maps and aerial photographs obtained from the University of Connecticut Map and Geographical Information Center were examined to assess the potential for previously unidentified historic properties to be located within the project area of potential effect (APE).

Digital site records maintained by the Office of the State Archaeologist, as well as OEP's own internally maintained cultural resource geodatabase, were consulted for the purpose of identifying any previously known archaeological sites within the APE. A predictive site model developed internally by OEP based upon U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service soil classifications was also consulted to assess the potential of the project area to contain as yet undocumented archaeological resources.

¹ *Programmatic Agreement among the Federal Highway Administration, the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding Implementation of Minor Transportation Projects*, signed October 26, 2012 and revised May 4th, 2018. Accessible online at: www.ct.gov/culturalresources

Recent roadside and aerial photographs were consulted to assess the present state of ground disturbance within areas likely to be affected and proximity to structures that may potentially be NRHP-eligible.

Resources Potentially Affected:

Intersection 39-213 in East Granby falls in part upon soils predicted to be high in archaeological potential. Visual review using recent roadside and aerial photography, however, reveals extensive disturbance from artificial embankments for the modern highways, major storm drainage improvements, and the existing signal infrastructure. OEP therefore sees minimal potential for archaeological impacts at this location.

Intersection 91-203 in New Hartford is surrounded by 19th Century architecture that could be considered eligible for the NRHP. Of particular concern are the ***Immaculate Conception Church*** on the north side of the intersection at 3 Church Street, and the 2-story brick Federal style structure at ***2 Central Avenue***. Placement of large new signal apparatus in front of either of these two properties has therefore been avoided in the course of design.

Intersection 124-222 in Seymour lies upon soils predicted to be moderate to high in archaeological potential. Visual review, however, indicates extensive disturbance from suburban landscaping, subsurface storm drainage, the existing traffic signal infrastructure, and an artificial embankment to support Route 67. OEP therefore does not see the predicted potential borne out under scrutiny.

Intersection 128-233 in Simsbury falls within the **Tariffville NRHP Historic District**. The Tariffville Historic District is significant architecturally because it retains the mill housing and street layout of an early 19th-century mill village as well as the Greek Revival and Gothic Revival structures of later 19th-century development. No architecture stands in immediate proximity to the intersection, however, and OEP therefore sees no adverse effect to the District from adjustments to signal equipment at a presently signalized intersection.

Intersection 140-207 in Thomaston lies immediately adjacent to the ***Thomaston Opera House***—an independently resource on the NRHP standing at the west side of the intersection. Placement of any large new signal apparatus on the west corner has therefore been avoided in the course of design in order to avoid any potential adverse visual effects.

Most of the architecture along the west side of *Intersection 140-208 in Thomaston* is old enough to be considered for the NRHP. None of it predates the middle of the 19th Century, however, and most is not of particularly remarkable design or integrity aside from the **Morse Block Building at 64-70 Main Street**—constructed in 1876 according to a plaque infixed to the face of the building. No large new equipment is to be placed in front of 64-70 Main Street in association

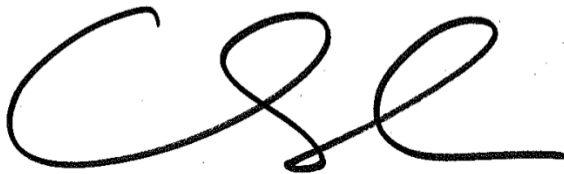
with the present undertaking, however, and OEP therefore sees no substantive effect to the resource.

Intersection 162-418 in Winchester falls within the **Winsted Green NRHP Historic District**. Contributing architecture occurs on all four corners of the intersection except the southeast according to the NRHP nomination form, though visual review reveals that all contributing buildings are set well back from the road margins. OEP therefore sees no adverse effect to the resource in replacing signal equipment at an already signalized intersection.

Determination of Effect:

Consultation was initiated with Federally-recognized Native American Tribal authorities with ancestral ties to the State of Connecticut for this undertaking in September of 2022. None of the solicited Tribes responded to the invitation to consult within the allotted time frame.

Given the involvement NRHP-listed and potentially NRHP-eligible resources at no fewer than four locations, albeit without any anticipated project-related impacts that might compromise the integrity of the qualities that render those resources significant, OEP hereby determines that there will be *no adverse effect to historic properties* in association with the present undertaking. With this determination, FHWA, through OEP, has concluded its responsibility to consider the potential effects of the described project on cultural resources under Section 106 of the NHPA via the provisions of the Programmatic Agreement referenced above.



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