



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Determination of Effect on Historic Properties

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Project: State No.: 156-183
F.A.P. No.: 0001(362)
Project Title: Traffic Signal Upgrade
Town: West Haven

Finding of Effect: No Historic Properties Affected

Project Description:

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), with funding support from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), proposes upgrades to traffic signal infrastructure at the intersection of U.S. Route 1 and Fairfax Street in the town of West Haven. This undertaking involves installation of new traffic control signal equipment, which may include mast arms, span poles, pedestals, signal heads, span wires, conduits, vehicle detectors, signing and pavement markings and will upgrade pedestrian control features, which may include pedestrian countdown heads, sidewalk ramps and sidewalk extensions, to meet current department standards and will remove existing equipment, as needed, at the intersection. Installation of traffic control signal equipment will require excavation 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 may 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. Under State Project Number 156-183, traffic signal equipment to be replaced at the presently signalized intersection of U.S. Route 1 and Fairfax Street in the Town of West Haven. Pedestrian facilities will also be upgraded at the intersection.

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 issue a determination of effect on historic properties for the described undertaking.

Resources Potentially Affected:

Above Ground Architectural

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. No NRHP-listed properties were found to exist in the immediate area. The nearest is the West Haven VA Hospital NRHP Historic District, located about a half-mile to the southeast. The present undertaking will have no foreseeable effect on that resource.

A series of 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). The 1930 Griswold-Spiess Map of reconstructed Native settlement in Connecticut circa 1625 depicts no concentrations of indigenous population in the project vicinity during the period of European Contact, though a prominent footpath did course through the area. The 1811 Warren Map of Connecticut likewise presents no concentrations of post-Contact settlement in the area during the Federal Period aside from the Boston Post Road proceeding more or less along the course of modern Route 1. No development is depicted in the immediate area in the 1852 Whiteford Map of New Haven County aside from the Post Road and some accompanying settlement—including a toll house—along the Cove River a short distance to the southwest.

Fairchild Series aerial photos from 1934 reveal the Boston Post Road (Route 1) on its modern alignment with Fairfax Avenue also in place by this time. The southern side of Route 1 is fairly well developed by this time with extensive disturbance of some sort on the northwest corner. Visual review using recent roadside and aerial photography revealed no architecture around the target

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

intersection reading of particular age or potential significance that might be considered eligible for the NRHP.



Fairchild Series aerial photo from 1934, with approximate project area superimposed.

Below Ground Archaeological

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. No documented archeological resources were found to exist within the project area. The nearest is State Site Number 156-5 plotted over a half-mile to the northwest along the Cove River. The present undertaking will have no foreseeable impact on that resource.

Soil classification maps obtained from the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service were examined in conjunction with predictive models developed internally at OEP to assess the sensitivity of the project area for previously unknown pre-European Contact indigenous resources. The entire project APE falls upon soils classified as Urban Land, generally considered of poor quality for retention of intact archaeological deposits.

Recent roadside and aerial photographs were also consulted to assess the present state of ground disturbance within areas likely to be affected by the project. The margins of the target intersection are heavily affected by paved sidewalks, parking lots, sub-surface electrical and the existing traffic signal infrastructure, thus confirming the predicted lack of archaeological potential based upon soil classifications. OEP therefore sees minimal potential for archaeological impacts.

Determination of Effect:

Consultation was carried out with Federally-recognized Native American Tribal authorities with ancestral ties to the State of Connecticut for this undertaking in January of this year. None of the solicited Tribes expressed any concerns with the project.

Given the heavily disturbed suburban environment and lack of architecture of significant age found to exist within the project APE, OEP hereby determines that there will be *no historic properties affected* 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Speal', written in a cursive style.

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Office of Environmental Planning
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