

Connecticut Department of Transportation

**State Project No. 0134-0150
Federal-Aid Project No. 6134(008)
Replacement of Bridge No. 06198 – Whispering Pines Road over Still Brook
Town of Stafford**

**December 8, 2022 at 7:00 PM
Virtual Meeting via Zoom Webinar and YouTube Live**

Minutes of Public Informational Meeting

In Attendance:

There were 4 people in attendance (4 on Zoom and 0 on YouTube), not including the project team. The meeting participants included residents and representatives of the Town of Stafford, the Connecticut Department of Transportation, and CHA Consulting, Inc.

Presentation:

The virtual meeting, using Zoom Webinar and YouTube Live was started at 6:58 p.m. with an introductory slide which provided project contact and website information for attendees to view while they waited for the presentation to start. At 7:00 p.m., the formal presentation started with Transportation Supervising Engineer Marc Byrnes stating the goals for the meeting and that the purpose of this public information meeting is to present the proposed design and discuss any questions, comments, or concerns that the public or town officials may have. He provided details of how participants could interact with the project team during the meeting and then outlined the Design Managed by State (DMS) program and the subject project goals. Mr. Byrnes then turned it over to Mr. Salverio Titus, Town of Stafford First Selectman, who provided introductory remarks. Mr. Byrnes then continued by introducing the representatives of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), and CHA Consulting, Inc. (CHA), the Consultant Liaison Engineer (CLE). Mr. Byrnes then gave a general overview of bridge elements and explained how the element conditions are rated on a scale from 1-9.

Mr. Robert Bahler from CHA continued with the technical portion of the presentation. He explained the existing bridge condition, provided an overview of the project site, and described the purpose of the project. Mr. Bahler presented the proposed project plans and maintenance and protection of traffic plan to fully replace Bridge No. 06198. Mr. Bahler described the utility, environmental and right-of-way impacts associated with the project. Mr. Zachary Guarino from CTDOT Division of Rights of Way continued the presentation with an explanation of the right-of-way acquisition process. Mr. Bahler then finished the presentation with a description of the project schedule and estimated cost.

Key Points Regarding the Existing Bridge:

- The existing bridge was built in 1975 and consists of (3) asphalt coated corrugated metal pipe arches, each with a span of approx. 6-feet and a rise of 4-feet, for a total structure length of approx. 20 feet.
- The existing culverts are in serious (3) condition due to extensive section loss and perforations in the culverts resulting in a Structurally Deficient bridge classification. A

portion of the center culvert barrel is torn and heaved up at the inlet. The bridge is not currently posted for weight limit restrictions.

- The existing bridge and approach rail systems do not meet current safety standards.
- A traffic count taken in November 2021 determined the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) on the bridge to be 222 vehicles per day.
- The existing roadway width on the bridge of 24 feet meets the requirements of FHWA and CTDOT for an urban local road.
- The bridge is hydraulically inadequate; Still Brook overtops the roadway at the bridge (no freeboard) during a 100-year storm event.

Key Points Regarding the Proposed Bridge:

- The proposed replacement structure will consist of a precast concrete box culvert with a 22'-0" span and a 5'-0" rise that is topped with a 3-inch (min.) thick bituminous concrete overlay and will carry a roadway with a 24 feet curb to curb width. Cutoff walls and return walls will be included for scour protection. U-type concrete wingwalls, founded on spread footings, are proposed at all four corners of the bridge to contain the approach roadway. The proposed bridge is anticipated to provide a service life of 75 years and require minimal maintenance.
- The proposed bridge, along with a 6" raise in low chord and an 8" raise in roadway profile, will allow the 100-year storm to provide a 1' minimum free board and eliminate any roadway overtopping at the bridge.
- The proposed open bridge rail system and approach guiderails will meet current safety standards.
- Exposed concrete surfaces are proposed to have a simulated stone facing utilizing form liner concrete.
- The project will include roadway reconstruction of approximately 325 feet along Hydeville Road, starting near the intersection with Stony Lane and ending slightly before the intersection with Maple Road (private).
- The proposed maintenance and protection of traffic plan involves stage construction to maintain access to the approx. 35 residences to the north of the bridge. Whispering Pines Road is the only access to these properties. Stage construction will be implemented for the duration of construction, which is estimated to be 8 months. Stage construction will implement an alternating one-way traffic operation utilizing signals.
- Overhead and underground utilities which are located on the West side of Whispering Pines Road will be temporarily relocated to the East side of the bridge to facilitate the installation of precast box culvert units. Utilities will be permanently relocated back to their approximate existing location at the end of construction.
- Environmental permits will be required from federal, state and Town of Stafford permitting agencies for the project and best management practices will be used to minimize impacts to the wetlands and watercourse during construction.
- Temporary Construction Easements are proposed at all four properties that abut the bridge, to provide contractor access to the bridge during construction. A permanent slope easement will also be needed on the two easterly properties since the roadway toe of slope extends outside of the Town right-of-way. The two easterly properties will also require a small partial take to ensure that the proposed bridge is within the Town Right of Way. The property at the southeast corner will also require a small easement to install and maintain guiderail and an easement install a temporary sedimentation control system.

- Construction is currently anticipated to start Spring 2025 and end Fall 2025, subject to approval of environmental permits and ROW acquisitions.
- The project Design, Construction and ROW acquisition costs will be funded with 80% Federal funds and 20% State funds (0% Town Funds). The construction cost is currently estimated to be \$1.77 million.

Public Comments and Questions:

- A public representative from the Stafford Fire Department asked the following question using the Zoom Q&A chat feature:
 - During construction, the fire department will need load capacity to be 68,000 lbs. for water tenders, fire engines, and a ladder truck to be able to cross the bridge to facilitate fire protection.

Verbal Response: CHA responded that there are no load restrictions on the bridge and that the contractor will be required to maintain access through the project site at all times during construction. This includes access for emergency vehicles. The Town will keep the Emergency Services informed about the roadway closure prior to start of construction.

- A public representative from the Stafford Fire Department asked the following question using the Zoom Q&A chat feature:
 - To aid in future fire protection in the area of the project, could the installation of a fire hydrant on the downstream side of the bridge be included in the project? This would provide greater life safety and property protection in the neighborhood around the bridge. Currently there is no access to water to fight fires in the area without multiple water tenders to haul the water.

Verbal Response: CHA responded that adding a fire hydrant (dry hydrant) to the downstream side of the bridge can be included in the project.

Adjournment:

The email address, telephone number and project webpage address were provided for any additional questions or comments regarding the project following the meeting. Attendees were reminded to fill out the voluntary survey and that any additional comments can be submitted until December 22, 2022.

The presentation was well received, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:38 PM.