

Connecticut Department of Transportation

State Project No. 0024-0091

Federal-Aid Project No. 6024(013)

**Replacement of Bridge 04603 – England Road over Natchaug River
Town of Chaplin**

March 30, 2022 at 7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting via MS Teams Live Event and YouTube Live

Minutes of Public Informational Meeting

In Attendance: There were 15 people in attendance, 8 in person, 6 via Zoom and one by other means. The meeting participants included residents and representatives of the Town of Chaplin, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), and Close, Jensen and Miller, P.C. (CJM).

Presentation: The Virtual Public Information Meeting, using MS teams Live Event and YouTube Live was started at 6:45 p.m. with an introductory slide which provided project contact and website information for attendees to view while they waited for the presentation to begin. At 7:00 p.m., the presentation began with Project Manager, Priti Bhardwaj, introducing the project and gave a summary of the Design Managed by State (DMS) program and the goals for the night's meeting. Ms. Bhardwaj then explained the role of CJM as Consultant Liaison Engineer and introduced Mr. Juan Roman III, Town of Chaplin, First Selectman. Mr. Roman then welcomed everyone to the meeting. Ms. Bhardwaj then introduced the various representatives from CTDOT and CJM and turned the presentation over to Mr. Chris Zibbideo from CJM to discuss the technical portion of the project.

Mr. Zibbideo explained the existing bridge conditions and the purpose of the project. Mr. Zibbideo introduced the proposed project plans and the proposed detour necessary to replace Bridge No. 04603. Mr. Zibbideo described the utility and rights-of-way impacts associated with the project. Mr. Dennis McDonald from CTDOT Division of Rights-of-Way finished the presentation by explaining the rights-of-way acquisition process.

Key points of the presentation were:

- The structure is located in a rural residential neighborhood and has an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 390 vehicles per day.
- The existing structure was built in 1900, rehabilitated in 1971. It consists of a single span, reinforced concrete box beam structure founded on masonry abutments.
- The utilities are overhead on a pole line crossing the river on the south (downstream) side. There are no utilities underground or supported by the bridge. There is a drainage pipe outlet located in the northwest area of the bridge.
- The existing bridge deck is in satisfactory condition with areas of typical cracking.
- The existing superstructure is also in satisfactory condition. The underside of the concrete box beams have spalls with exposed rebar as well as areas of scaling. There is evidence of leakage with efflorescence along the joints and the joints have some vertical misalignment between the segments.
- The existing substructure is in satisfactory condition. The stone masonry abutments are missing grout and some stones. The footings are also exposed and exhibit scaling along the waterline.

- The existing structure is noted as scour critical. The upstream channel has moderate undercutting with heavy vegetation growth on the channel embankments. There is moderate scour along the east footing.
- The proposed project will consist of replacing the existing structure with a steel truss bridge and reinforced concrete deck superstructure on pile supported integral abutments. The structure will have a 104-foot clear span and a 28-foot curb-to-curb width composed of two 12-foot travel lanes and two 2-foot shoulders. The deck will be a 6-inch minimum cast-in-place shear slab topped with waterproofing membrane and 3-inches of bituminous wearing surface.
- The roadway profile will be maintained to minimize environmental, permitting and hydraulic impacts while the additional bridge span will improve hydraulic function allowing the 100-year flood to pass beneath.
- The drainage pipe located in the northwest area will be replaced in-kind to a point determined in final design.
- The proposed detour measures 3 miles and is approximately 7 minutes in length. The detour will utilize England Road, Route 198 (Phoenixville Road), Cross Road, South Bear Hill Road and Canada Lane.
- Permits anticipated for this project are; Local Inland Wetland, Army Corps of Engineers – type to be determined in final design, and Flood Management Certification.
- Proposed rights-of-way will consist of a construction easement to accommodate construction activities and two small takes to accommodate the wing walls outside of the existing right of way.
- Construction is currently anticipated to start in the Spring of 2024 and end in the Fall of 2024.
- The project is funded with 80% Federal funds and 20% Town funds. The estimated construction cost is currently \$3.92 million.

Public Comments and Questions:

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:
 - Can stage construction be used instead?

Verbal Response: CJM responded by stating that although stage construction was possible it was not practical at this site due to the proposed structure type. In order to keep traffic moving through the area while the new structure is being built would require a temporary bridge. This would ultimately increase the cost of the overall project, increase the total environmental impacts and would ultimately take two or possibly three construction seasons to complete.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:
 - What color will the bridge rail be?

Verbal Response: CJM responded by stating that in discussion with the Town, it was agreed that the bridge would be finished a natural color to blend into the surrounding scenery.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- Will mail delivery be impacted? How will EMS be coordinated?

Verbal Response: CJM responded by stating that mail will not be impacted; no driveways will be closed. EMS as well as school bus routes will be coordinated with the appropriate town staff.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- Has the Town funded our portion of the project cost?

Verbal Response: CJM responded with an explanation of the estimating and cost development aspect of the project. The First Selectman responded that he and the Board of Finance were working with the Capital Improvement Committee to fund the project and that it was expected to be fully funded by the construction start date.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- How many properties do you anticipate to be affected?

Verbal Response: CJM responded by stating that the four immediate abutters would be affected by construction easements and two small takes for bridge elements outside of the existing street line, particularly the Ridgeway property to the south west and the Town parcel in the north east, possibly the Houle property to the north east.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- When is construction anticipated to start? How long will construction take?

Verbal Response: CJM responded by stating that construction was anticipated for a spring 2024 start date and a 6-to-8-month construction duration.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- What properties are subject to the right of way?

Verbal Response: CJM responded by stating that four immediate abutters would be affected by construction easements and two small takes for bridge elements outside of the existing street line, particularly the Ridgeway property to the south west and the Town parcel in the north east, possibly the Houle property to the north east, and that if this wasn't what the question was about to please rephrase and resubmit. DOT further explained the difference between the construction easements and their temporary nature vs. the two small takes that will be permanent due to the parts of the structure that will remain on them.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- Why can't we use precast beams and no steel skeleton?

Verbal Response: CJM responded with a detailed explanation of how the truss design was selected due to the thinner cross section required to maintain the existing profile while being strong enough to span the wider hydraulic opening touching on all the constraints that have to be met.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- Will there be a sidewalk on the downriver side?

Verbal Response: CJM responded that we had a conversation with the Town and that there were no plans for sidewalks in the area per the Plan of Conservation and Development, it was decided to forgo sidewalks, however as the proposed bridge will be substantially wider to match the roadway width pedestrian safety would be improved.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- Will there still be access to the river for kayaking, fishing, etc.?

Verbal Response: CJM responded by stating yes, absolutely.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- What class bridge is this, class 40 or greater?

Verbal Response: DOT requested clarification of the question from the person asking the question, refer to the question after the next one.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- When does the Town need to have the funds by?

Verbal Response: CJM responded by explaining the bid process in general and the proposed project schedule and that this project is expected to begin in the spring of 2024. At this time the contractor will have begun ordering materials and will begin submitting invoices which is when the funds will be needed.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- What is the weight classification (clarification of question above previous question)?

Verbal Response: CJM responded by stating the bridge would comply with the HL 93 load rating and would be able to handle all normal vehicles including fire trucks, oil delivery trucks and would be able to handle permit loads.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- Is the proposed span between wingwalls increasing as much as the deck span is increasing?

Verbal Response: CJM responded by stating that the 104' clear span is measured from face of abutment to face of abutment and that the structure itself was somewhat longer, and that the goal was to be able to obtain a certain hydraulic opening. There was a request to state how many tons the HL-93 could carry, CJM stated we could look that up and get back to the Town with that information.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- What unexpected things could occur to delay construction?

Verbal Response: CJM responded with an explanation of how the schedule sets up the bid process so that an award can be made in the fall so a contractor can coordinate his material orders, get his submittals approved and permits in hand to start on time with an April 1st start date, but that there are things we watch for that could cause a delay such as an unusually wet season that would cause changes in water handling or material delays like with steel components, but as we are still two years out we believe there is enough time to deal with these issues.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- Will the new construction address rain runoff from the hill?

Verbal Response: CJM responded by stating that the project was less about improving the runoff and more about improving the bridge, but that the reconstructed roadway, approaches and bridge would be built with a crown and profile that would eliminate any ponding, snow melt conditions and draining of the roadway during storm events.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:

- Will there be any penalties for construction overtime?

Verbal Response: CJM responded that the contract will include a liquidated damages clause and that the contractor will have a calendar day chart he has to meet, should he not meet the schedule these penalties will be applied.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:
 - Where will the building materials be stockpiled?

Verbal Response: CJM responded that we expect the bulk of the stock piling and laydown area to be on the west side because there is more room before reaching a driveway. The east side will be used for minor items and a crane pad for moving the truss into position, mostly because there is a driveway on the east side in close proximity to the work area.

- The following question was asked by the public and stakeholders using the MS Teams chat feature:
 - If the bridge already has precast beam why can't this be used?

Verbal Response: CJM responded by expanding on the earlier response as to how a precast box beam that spans more than 100' would need to be 2 feet thicker, raising the profile, adding fill in the flood plain that would likely delay the project while we pursue a more rigorous permitting effort.

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 survey and that any additional comments can be submitted until April 13, 2022.

The presentation was well received, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.