

**Department of Transportation  
Project No. 40-135  
Route 82 over Succor Brook  
Town of East Haddam**

**Thursday, November 12, 2009  
Grange Hall**

**Minutes**

**Present:**

Connecticut Department of Transportation

Julie F. Georges  
Bartholomew P. Sweeney  
Steve Deagan  
Derrick Ireland

Close, Jensen and Miller, P.C.

Ajit S. Gokhale

Town of East Haddam

Mark B. Walter, First Selectman

**Presentation:**

A presentation for the proposed replacement of Bridge No. 02502, the sidewalk extension, and the retaining wall south of Bridge No. 02501, was delivered by Bart Sweeney Project Manager for the Department of Transportation, Steve Deagan Property Agent for the Department of Transportation, and Ajit Gokhale Sr. Project Engineer for Close, Jensen and Miller, P.C.

The Public Information Meeting was scheduled to afford local residents and business owners the opportunity to view preliminary plans and express comments or concerns related to the proposed project. Block advertisements and notices of the Public Information Meeting were published in both the Hartford Courant and the Middletown Press on two separate occasions and letters were sent to abutting property owners.

The meeting began with the Town of East Haddam's, First Selectman Mark B. Walter's welcome address to the audience that consisted of community residents and local business owners. Approximately 40 people attended the Public Information Meeting.

**Public Comments and Questions:**

The following is a summary of the comments, questions and concerns raised at the meeting.

- Question: Why is the project schedule stated in the press release not the same as that presented in the slides?

Response: CTDOT responded that it was an oversight in the press release. Construction is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2012 and end in the fall of 2012. Construction would be complete in one season.

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- Question: Will the construction of Bridges 02501, 02502, the sidewalk and the retaining wall be completed prior to 2013, so that there would be no hindrance to the Swing Bridge Anniversary Celebration anticipated for the summer of 2013?

Response: CTDOT responded that the projects will be completed by winter of 2012, in one construction season. The Department would partner with the celebration of the Swing Bridge and ensure that construction activities would not impact the celebration day.

- Comment/Question: The project in Chester was delayed and such a delay to projects in East Haddam would not be acceptable. Also, why can't the project be staged as the detour is long and inconvenient?

Response: CTDOT responded that the structure type, particularly at Bridge No. 02501 was such that it did not lend itself to staged construction. Additionally, staged construction would add to the construction time and extend the project to two years, with a possibility of a third year of construction.

- Comment/Question: Bridge No. 02501 was located in the Historic district. Why was the local area Historic Commission not engaged in the review of the aesthetics of the proposed bridges?

Response: CTDOT responded that a Historical/Archeological review was to be done and the local Historic commission would be engaged in the review of the aesthetics through the Town Office.

- Question: Why is Bridge No. 02502 proposed to be widened? (Resident expressed concern that the widening of the bridge was unacceptable, as it would make drivers go faster than acceptable speed through the area. Also the widening the existing roadway would shift the roadway and the bridge as a whole closer to his property which was unacceptable).

Response: CTDOT responded that the widening of Bridge No. 02502 was required to eliminate the functional obsolescence of the existing structure and to bring the width to meet current design standard.

- Question: Why is there no sidewalk proposed at Bridge No. 02502? A sidewalk is desired at this location and the curb to curb distance should be reduced to the minimum necessary.

Response: CTDOT responded that a sidewalk will be considered in the proposed design of Bridge No. 02502 and the curb-to-curb distance will be revisited.

- Question: Why is the proposed bridge a frame type structure? The arch design is preferred.

Response: CTDOT responded that the frame design was selected to match with the elevation of Bridge No. 02501. However, this was only conceptual and arch design could be reviewed further.

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- Question: How much worse will Route 149 traffic become once it was made part of the proposed detour route? (There are many hidden driveways along this road. The main street section was especially of concern. The addition of more vehicles (ADT 6100) would make the route worse than existing.)

Response: CTDOT responded that a Detour Checklist will be completed. The completion of the Detour Checklist would ascertain the feasibility of the detour route. This process is on-going. The existing conditions along the route will be reviewed along with the accident data history before the route is finalized. It was not the Department's intent to worsen existing conditions. At the same time, state routes have to be used for detour routes as far as possible.

- Question: Can alternate detour routes be used? The local population will use alternate local roads to go around the project area.

Response: CTDOT responded that the official signed detour routes will be along state routes, but we recognize that local traffic may likely use local routes around the site.

- Question: The Jones Hill Road bridge project constructed in East Haddam was delayed during construction and took a long time for completion. This was not an encouraging feeling to the community. What measures will CTDOT take to ensure that the bridge projects are not delayed and can be completed in one construction season?

Response: CTDOT responded that a contractor prequalification specification will be added to the construction contract and incentives will be added to the contract for early completion of detour dependent work, as well as penalties for delays will be used as instruments for contract management, to ensure that the projects are not delayed.

- Question: Why will both bridges be closed at the same time? Can you not close one at a time and complete the project with less disruption to traffic?

Response: CTDOT responded that closing one bridge at a time would not allow performing all the in-water work at both bridges at the same time. This would push the in-water work into another construction season; therefore extending the construction duration, and the projects would not be completed in one construction season.

- Question: Will pedestrians be accommodated at Bridge No. 02501?

Response: CTDOT responded that a temporary pedestrian bridge at Bridge No. 02501 is proposed.

- Question: Will the area just south of Bridge No. 02501 along the west side be available for parking during the construction of Bridge No. 02501 and the sidewalk?

Response: CTDOT responded that this would have to be reviewed. It appeared that the highway line was very close to the proposed parapet and the parking area was likely on private property. The usage of the space for parking would have to be discussed with the private property owner. The contractor will require areas for staging near the bridge so access to this parking may be difficult or possibly prohibited.

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- Question: Where exactly or at what location will the bridges be blocked off/closed?

Response: CTDOT responded that traffic barriers will be located at each end of the bridge. Local traffic will be allowed. Ray Hill Road will serve access between the two bridge project locations.

- Question: Why can't CTDOT maintain one-way alternating traffic and perform construction?

Response: CTDOT responded that this would lengthen the construction period and could take up to three years to complete both bridges and the sidewalk.

- Question: Will the presence of any endangered species delay the project?

Response: Initial reports did not identify any species in the immediate area. Environmental review will be performed to accurately determine the presence of endangered species. It is not expected that the project will be delayed due to the presence of endangered species.

- Question: Can all the utility work be done before the construction so that the project is not delayed?

Response: CTDOT responded that utility work will be performed well in advance and before the in-water work period. This will eliminate the possibility of project delays due to the presence of utilities.

- Question: Ray Hill Road is a difficult route for emergency vehicles to get through to access facilities between the two bridge projects and was not desirable as an emergency route. What other route can be used in case there is an emergency or an event, e.g. fire?

Response: CTDOT responded that a separate meeting with the fire department to discuss options for emergency vehicles would be arranged in the near future.

- Question: If federal funding is not available, how will the project be funded or does that mean that the projects will not be done?

Response: CTDOT responded that presently the majority of the Bridge specific federal funds are being utilized for larger projects like the Q-Bridge project. In case the federal funds are insufficient or are not available when the design phase is complete then the projects would possibly be funded with 100% State funds.

- Question: Is there a possibility of using the ferry service to get people across the river, especially those residents who live in the southeastern part of East Haddam, in lieu of using the detour route or an alternative to the detour route?

Response: CTDOT responded that the Bureau of Engineering & Construction does not have jurisdiction over the ferry service but the Department would contact the unit that operates the ferry service and explore possibilities.

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- Question: Can the PIM presentation of the bridge projects be made available online?

Response: CTDOT responded that the presentation could be emailed to the Town to be uploaded onto the Town's website.

- Question: Why can't rapid reconstruction techniques be used at the project site to complete the bridge projects in a shorter timeframe?

Response: CTDOT responded that the Department was evaluating accelerated construction techniques for this project in order to complete the construction as quickly as possible.

- Question: When will CTDOT hold the next Public Information Meeting for these projects?

Response: CTDOT responded that typically CTDOT does not hold another Public Information Meeting (PIM) after the initial PIM at the conceptual design phase. However, there will be contact and communication with the Town throughout the project development and the bidding phase.

- Question: What is the design speed for Route 82 along the bridges? Traffic calming measures should be adopted and vehicles should not exceed 25 mph speed. Also, three-way stop signs were needed at Ray Hill Road. The Route 82 curve at Ray Hill Road should be improved and possibly the intersection should be redesigned.

Response: CTDOT responded that the roadway classification was based on the Highway Design Manual, and the design speed would be in the range of 45 to 50 mph according to the design standards. Posted speed can be different and is not the design speed. Traffic calming measures will be reviewed. However the projects are initiated to address the bridge deficiencies. Improving highway deficiencies was beyond the intended scope of these projects. Roadway geometry will be reviewed and potential roadway geometry improvements within the limits of the projects would be evaluated.

CTDOT expressed the Department's appreciation that these early coordination efforts are beneficial to the successful outcome of the project. It is the Department's position that the proposed bridge replacement projects are necessary due to the condition of the structures, and the proposed scopes represent viable and needed transportation improvement. The recommended plans provide a design for correcting the structural deficiencies of the existing bridge and minimizing the need for future maintenance. The Department intends to seek design approval for the proposed Bridge No. 02502.