

**Department of Transportation
Project No. 94-235
Rehabilitation of Bridge No. 03819
City of New London & Groton**

**November 10, 2015 at 7:00 P.M.
Winthrop STEM Elementary Magnet School
74 Grove St
New London, CT.**

Minutes

Present:

From CTDOT (Department): Theodore D. Nezames, Timothy D. Fields, Priti S.Bhardwaj, Francisco T.Fadul, Michelle A. Miller, Kenneth E. Fagnoli, Eileen M. Ego, Keith B. Schoppe.

From CJM (CLE): Tom Ryan, Sal Cugno.

From Prime AE Group (Designer): Russell J. Moresi, Balaji Mahalingam, Ryan P. Mitchell

From VN Engineers (DBE-Traffic): Michael Dion

From CME (representing Project 94-252 design team): Ricky Mears

Presentation:

1. Project Handouts and attendance sheet were provided at the entrance for all those attending. There were approximately 25 people attending including local officials and the public. The presentation was started around 7:00 PM by Ms. Priti Bhardwaj with a welcoming statement and an introduction of CTDOT, CLE, Designer and DBE (Traffic) staff involved with this project. Tammy Daugherty, Director of Office of Development & Planning, City of New London, was thanked for organizing the Public Information Meeting.
2. Ms. Priti Bhardwaj followed with a brief history of the bridge and the current poor condition rating of the deck and superstructure. The reasons for the rehabilitation of this bridge and the roles of CTDOT, CLE & Designer involved with this project was mentioned. The project goals and the location of the bridge in an aerial view were presented. She then invited Mr. Russell Moresi, Project Manager for Prime AE Group to provide technical briefing of the project.
3. Mr. Moresi continued the presentation with a brief description of the bridge and bridge components and typical underside photos showing the Girder-Floorbeam-Stringer and Truss-Floorbeam-Stringer superstructure systems. The average daily truck traffic (ADT) of 55,600 vehicles per day and Peak hourly volume of 4,900 vehicles per hour on this bridge was noted. Photos showing the existing deterioration of the deck, superstructure

and bridge bearings were noted. Proposed construction was discussed as was the limits of girder and truss member strengthening.

4. Maintenance and Protection of Traffic (M&PT) schemes and travel lane layouts for peak/off peak hour traffic for each stage were presented. The use of movable barrier during the peak/off peak hours to vary available travel lanes in response to traffic demands was explained. It was noted that a minimum of 3 travel lanes with 4 lanes available during the peak hours would be provided during construction. The use of concrete filled steel grid deck panels to reduce the time of on-site construction was cited.
5. The anticipated required environmental permits to perform the construction in the wetlands, flood plains, in and over the channel were noted. Anticipated use of temporary barges carrying materials to accomplish rehabilitation work over and within the watercourse was cited. Mr. Moresi noted work would include spot painting of areas prone to corrosion, which would require abrasive blast cleaning of these areas. Debris shields and a full containment system is proposed to contain associated dust and debris and avoid potential adverse impacts. It was noted the 1992 rehabilitation project involved the abrasive blast cleaning of the lead paint system existing at that time, and a non-lead paint system currently exists.
6. Mr. Moresi noted construction work is anticipated to include day and night shifts without a winter shutdown period, to minimize the duration of on-site construction. Construction noise would be monitored to stay within the acceptable limits. Temporary impacts to the properties on the underside of the bridge and within 40' offset from either side of the bridge were noted. Entities which own the properties impacted from the construction work were cited. Temporary impacts to the boat launch area in the New London and Groton side were mentioned along with efforts to minimize the impacts.
7. The presentation was then handed over to Ms. Michelle Miller, CTDOT Right-of-Way (ROW) unit. She continued ROW discussions and functions, types of impacts and acquisition process. Statutory references from the State and from Federal were cited. Timing for acquisition for this project was noted. Ms. Miller handed over the presentation back to Ms. Bhardwaj.
8. Ms. Bhardwaj continued with the Project schedules and noted the construction is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2017 and be completed in the fall of 2021. She also noted the first year of construction involved bridge strengthening from underside with no anticipated impact to the traffic on this bridge. Estimated cost of the project of \$200 million was noted with 80% Federal and 20% State funding.
9. Ms. Bhardwaj opened the floor for questions and answers period.

Public Comments and Questions: The questions were as follows:

- A resident asked about the condition rating of the bridge two years before and in two years from now.

Response: Department noted that the condition rating of the bridge was poor two years ago similar to what it is now. The condition rating in couple of

years from now is unpredictable; however it has been determined that the deck and superstructure warrant the proposed rehabilitation included in this project

- A resident inquired about the staging areas of trucks during construction.
Response: Designer noted that the construction vehicles during deck replacement will be located within the work zones of each stage construction. Staging areas and the temporary material storage will be identified by the contractor.
- A resident asked about the construction vehicles under the bridge deteriorating the existing local roads and generating dust.
Response: Designer noted that on the underside of the bridge there are locations of unpaved areas for which construction/tracking mats will be provided to mitigate the dust and debris from the construction vehicles.
- A resident asked whether the replacement deck would be Cast-In-Place or Prefabricated.
Response: Designer noted that the concrete filled steel grid deck will be prefabricated from the shop and will be laid out in units to reduce the time of construction. The joints between the deck units after it has been laid out will be poured with concrete in the field.
- A resident expressed that there is a Historic Old Mill building near the bridge and asked if there would be any impacts to the building.
Response: Department noted that an architectural historian was involved during the early stages of the project and the building was identified in the project environmental reviews. Also noted that there are no anticipated impacts to the building as it is located beyond the project limits.
- A resident asked if there are any ramp closures involved with this project.
Response: Department noted that ramp closures are not anticipated.
- A resident asked about impacts to the local streets under the bridge and if there would be any temporary closures involved.
Response: Designer stated temporary closures of local streets would be expected for limited durations during hoisting of steel plates needed for strengthening. Coordination with local communities and the respective municipality will be performed to mitigate temporary impacts to local streets.
- A resident asked about the overlap of the SB project with the NB project and its impacts to the traffic.
Response: Department noted that the NB project has an anticipated advertising of mid 2017 with the construction beginning from fall of 2017. Ricky Mears, a liaison engineer from CME involved with Project 94-252 on the SB bridge, noted that the SB bridge rehabilitation project is to be advertised in summer of 2016 and for construction in spring of 2017. Department stated the overlap between two projects will probably happen during the

fall of 2017 and most of 2018. Also cited that NB project involves bridge strengthening from the underside of the bridge during the first year of construction with no anticipated traffic impacts

- A resident inquired whether boxing method will be involved with truss strengthening.
Response: Designer noted that the trusses will be reinforced by the addition of steel plates without altering the aesthetics of the existing truss configuration.
- A resident asked which end of the bridge construction is anticipated to start from
Response: Department noted that has not been decided yet due to the early stages of the project. However the presence of Peregrine Falcon, which nests on the SB Bridge near the New London side, may well dictate the project sequence. It was noted that there's a time of year restriction on work that can be done during its nesting season (typically April 1 to July 30) within a 600 ft. radius of the nest.
- Various residents expressed concerns about the noise involved with this type of construction work, whether the work be done day or night, and how much noise is to be expected during the deck replacement.
Response: Department noted that this will be addressed as plans are laid out and we have a better picture of the construction sequence. The proposed steel grid concrete filled deck system will allow for ease of constructability and allow for faster construction. We are keen to minimize traffic disruption, and to that end we intend to work 24/7 without winter shutdown. In terms of noise, we must recognize that it is an unavoidable consequence of the work being proposed. But every effort will be made to minimize the noise produced, stay within the mandated allowable noise levels, and make adjustments whenever possible in response to complaints from local residents. Also, we feel confident the noise levels will not be such a big issue. Mr. Kenneth Fagnoli, from the Department's Office of Construction noted that on a similar project recently completed on the Arrigoni Bridge in Middletown, there were no major noise impacts to the nearby residential areas due to the noise controls used.
- A resident inquired if jack hammering be used in this project for the deck replacement.
Response: Department noted that the use of jack hammers will be limited on this bridge since the existing deck consists of steel grid except on the main spans over the river which consist of reinforced concrete deck. Saw cutting of the welds to dismantle the steel grid deck will be involved.
- A resident asked about the contact person for complaints about the noise during construction.
Response: Mr. Kenneth Fagnoli, from the Department's Office of Construction will be the point of contact and can be reached at 860-823-3204.
- A resident questioned if there are backups expected when the number of travel lanes are reduced to 4 or 3 and how access for emergency response services during the construction staging of the deck be handled.

Response: DBE Traffic noted the summer time traffic volumes are the highest in a normal year. The traffic analysis showed that there are no backups anticipated with 3 travel lanes during the off-peak hours, but with 4 travel lanes during the peak hours, there is an anticipated $\frac{3}{4}$ mile backup expected on Friday afternoons.

Also noted that accidents and emergency situation near the construction area will be the biggest concern. This will be mitigated with the presence of police within the construction site, as well as having wreckers on standby for fast route clearing.

- A resident asked if the reduced number of lanes won't cause the merging of the on-ramp traffic onto the bridge travel lanes to pose a safety issue and cause backups.

Response: DBE Traffic noted that the Huntington Street on-ramp will have its own dedicated lane leading to the bridge to prevent backups and accidents due to merging of on-ramp and through-traffic lanes.

- Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) of Groton expressed concerns regarding reducing travel lanes to 3 or 4 as they already face backups with 5 travel lanes. What measures could be done to better inform EMT compared to the recent project on the Gold Star Bridge?

Response: Department noted that coordination with both municipalities will be done to work with emergency services through construction. This will include advance notification of ramp work that may cause temporary shutdowns.

- A resident enquired if there would be another public information meeting before the design is finalized. This was followed several people requesting a second meeting be held.

Response: Department noted another meeting will be held as requested and will follow a similar procedure and format as this meeting. Personnel from the SB bridge project and the Department's Office of Construction would be present again to answer any questions.

- A resident asked if a temporary off-ramp on the east will be constructed during the stage construction as per the presentation. Will the entrance ramps also have similar work?

Response: Department noted that any redesign or work that limits the capacity of the ramps will be coordinated with the municipal emergency services. The Department will also consider scheduling monthly meetings with those services during the construction phase to address any concerns. It was also noted that an informational website regarding the project will be developed.

- A resident expressed concern regarding the Eminent Domain and Acquisitions in the ROW process briefing. Are there any such anticipated ROW impacts?

Response: Department noted there is no anticipated acquisition of the private or municipal property. Only temporary access easements and rights for the duration of the construction phase are anticipated under this project.

- A resident asked what the acceptable noise levels mentioned in the presentation are.

Response: Department noted the acceptable noise level as mandated by State Statute is 90dB. Also noted that this is still loud but it is the limiting guidance that is followed on all State projects for noise control.

- A resident asked are the concrete spalls on the edges of the bridge going to be take care of in this project?

Response: Department noted that the parapet and deck will be replaced and that the proposed steel grid deck system should solve the spalling problem.

- A resident asked where the concrete waste as a result of the removal be transported to.

Response: Department noted that it is too early to provide a definitive answer and that will be determined before beginning of the construction phase.

- A resident asked if there would be a similar public informational meeting be held for the SB project.

Response: Department noted the SB bridge project's public informational meeting was held already. And due to the questions still arising regarding the SB versus NB projects, we intend to present information regarding both projects in one website during construction. Tammy Daugherty, New London's Director of the Office of Development and Planning noted a link to any such website will be placed in the City of New London's Website.

- A resident asked which end of the bridge the SB project is anticipated to start from

Response: Ricky Mears from CME noted that this has not been determined yet and similar to NB bridge project, the SB bridge project is also influenced by restrictions discussed earlier regarding the Peregrine Falcon.

- A resident commented that in 1992 there was a major rehabilitation project conducted on the Gold star bridge. Did you identify any traffic issues that happened during construction from that previous project and ways to avoid it in this project?

Response: Department noted that the 1992 project was involved mainly with bridge painting. However the issues were centered on traffic, which is certainly a major concern taken into account in this project.

- A resident asked what the condition rating of the bridge would be after the completion of this project.

Response: Department noted that the intent of this project is to improve the bridge's physical condition into a state of good repair. The expected overall bridge condition rating would move up to a range between 5 and 7. However, 6 is the most probable and most reasonably expected. But the biggest advantage is that this project will upgrade the bridge to withstand permit vehicle loads. This is an important point because, currently, permit vehicles have to be diverted to the Route 2A River crossing in Montville.

- A resident asked what would be the expected lifespan of the bridge after construction is complete.

Response: Department noted that it is anticipated that the bridge would not require major strengthening work for the next twenty-five years.

- A resident asked after this project when would be the next major investment for this bridge expected

Response: Department noted the next major investment would be the repainting project necessary in twenty years with the usual smaller projects like pavement preservation and bridge joint rehabilitation in the meantime.

- Mr. Keith Schoppe from the Office of Construction also added that the traffic staging would be a good idea in contrast to unpredictable traffic patterns employed in previous projects. Since each stage construction lasts for considerable period of time, the public would be more familiar with the traffic pattern rather than the varying traffic schemes.
- Department also added that the intent is to follow the two-stage construction laid out in the presentation, which will consistently keep a minimum of 3 lanes of traffic flowing the entire time. 4 lanes will be achieved in peak hours in both stages, but it is also anticipated 4 lanes will be made available for the entirety of the second stage. Also, using the moveable barrier system will alleviate traffic disruption during the transition. The movable barrier has been successfully used in previous projects, which many local residents may be familiar with.
- A resident commented that Electric Boat currently have a big parking problem, leading them to shuttle their employees back and forth across the river. Will they be contacted to prevent issues?

Response: Department noted that Electric Boat have not been contacted yet but, seeing as they are an affected stakeholder, they will be added to the list of contacts for the project.

- A resident asked will there be barges in navigable waters?

Response: Department noted there will be no barges in the navigable portions of the river.

- A resident asked will there be closures of the pedestrian walkway for this project and will there be prior notification given?

Response: Department noted that the NB Bridge does not have a pedestrian walkway but the SB Bridge does. Ricky Mears from CME noted the SB Bridge project anticipates some pedestrian walkway closures. However, the public will be notified of any closures and signs will be posted to warn pedestrians. Department added that the closures information will be posted on the project's website and will notify the municipalities.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45 PM.

Report of 11-10-15 Public Meeting is submitted for approval by PRIME AE Group, Inc.