

**Department of Transportation**  
**Project No. 138-245**  
**Replacement of Bridge No. 00326**  
**U.S. Route 1 (Barnum Avenue Cutoff) over Metro North Railroad**  
**Stratford**

**Thursday December 17, 2015 at 7:00 PM**  
**Stratford Town Hall Council Chamber**  
**2725 Main Street**  
**Stratford, Connecticut**

**Meeting Minutes**

**In Attendance:**

Theodore H. Nezames	ConnDOT – Bridges
Rabih M. Barakat	ConnDOT – CE Bridge
Andrew J. Cardinali	ConnDOT – CE Bridge
Dobieslaw A. Kania	ConnDOT – CE Bridge
Michael L. Marzi	ConnDOT – Rights-of-Way
Mark J. McMillan	ConnDOT – Office of Environmental Planning
Denise A. Young	ConnDOT – Environmental Compliance
Elona Coppola	ConnDOT – District 3 Construction
Susan K. Bakulski	CME Associates
Public and Individual Stakeholders	

**Presentation:**

Ms. Kania opened the meeting with a brief introduction of the Department of Transportation (Department) and the Consultant Liaison Engineer, CME Associates (CME), personnel. She then stated the role of the Department and the role of CME as liaison engineers and continued with an introduction of the subject project and its goals. Ms. Kania stated that the purpose of this public information meeting is to present the proposed design and discuss any questions, comments, or concerns the public or town officials may have.

Ms. Bakulski followed with the technical portion of the presentation for Bridge No. 00326 and the recommended sidewalk installation on U.S. Route 1. She explained the bridge's current deficiencies, proposed replacement measures, proposed maintenance and protection of traffic, funds, project schedule, utility, railroad, drainage and environmental considerations. Mr. Marzi explained the rights-of-way process and impacts.

**Comments and Questions:**

1. There is an existing steep slope of the embankment in front of the Speedway racing property. Will you be able to maintain access to the business after widening and raising the road?
  - o Yes, access to the racing property will be maintained. A retaining wall is proposed as necessary at the base of slope to maintain access in front of the racing property and the substation.

2. The current crossing is too narrow and the lack of sidewalks makes this a dangerous area for people to walk or to bike. Can you provide a gap between the road and the sidewalk? Is the proposed widening to 54 feet wide enough?
  - One of the benefits of the project is to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. The 54 foot width was selected by meeting the current design standards and improving the deck geometry of the bridge crossing. In this already developed urban area, further widening of the road or providing a larger gap between the road and the sidewalk would lead to additional right-of-way impacts and potentially the need to close adjacent businesses. The existing site constraints, while meeting design standards, dictated the proposed width.
3. There will be additional traffic because of the Exit 33 project. There may be wider trucks or heavier loads on Route 1 as a result of this project.
  - A traffic analysis will be completed within the Exit 33 project scope. The projects will need to be coordinated.
4. The Route 1 bridge and the Longbrook Avenue bridge over the railroad are two of the main crossings that connect north and south Stratford. There is also a railroad underpass, but this can flood in storms. Your project should coordinate with the replacement of the Bridgeport dam/flood gates.
  - We agree that we want to improve this crossing, however the Bridgeport dam is beyond the scope included in a structurally deficient list bridge program and funds.
5. When you drive across this bridge, it is difficult to see when the sun is blinding or when it is dark out.
  - Comment noted.
6. You should look for opportunities to combine engineering disciplines to save money and be innovative. This can include teaming with the energy power plant, incorporation of tidal energy, or energy produced from the railroad.
  - Comment noted.
7. How much higher will the roadway be?
  - Route 1 is proposed to be raised up to two feet on the approaches of the bridge and up to one foot on the bridge.
8. Is there a way to speed up the design process, in order to start construction sooner than fall of 2017?
  - The design schedule for this project is controlled by the large amount of coordination and processes requiring pre-determined durations. This includes coordination for right-of-way, utility, railroad, historic designation, and soil investigations.
9. How long will there be a reduction to two lanes, one in either direction?
  - The bridge replacement is expected to be completed in one construction season, which typically means from April through November, or eight months. Therefore the reduction to two lanes is proposed for eight months or less.
10. Is Stratford contributing to the funding of this project?

- No, the project is currently planned to be funded by 80% Federal and 20% State funds under the “National Highway Performance Program” for construction.
11. Are you going to replace the Longbrook Avenue bridge to the north of the subject bridge? What is the condition of this bridge?
- No, we do not plan to replace the Longbrook Avenue bridge. This structure is considered an ‘orphan bridge,’ which is a term used to describe a bridge on a Town road that spans over a railroad. Therefore, this structure is inspected in the Department’s bridge inspections that are typically scheduled for two year cycles. We will evaluate the condition of the Longbrook Avenue bridge.
  - *Subsequent to the meeting, the inspection reports for Bridge No. 03751 over Metro North Railroad were assessed. The structure was originally built in 1901 and was reconstructed in 1994. The condition ratings from the inspection report dated December 15, 2014 rate the Deck as a “7” or Good, the Superstructure as a “7” or Good, the Substructure as a “6” or Satisfactory, and the overall Structure Evaluation as a “6” or Satisfactory. Bridge No. 03751 is not classified as Structurally Deficient.*
12. What is the change in profile at Longbrook Avenue?
- The increase in grade is approximately one foot at the intersection with Longbrook Avenue.
13. Did you consider modular bridges? Or are there any pre-used modular bridges available from the U.S. Army?
- Yes, we considered Accelerated Bridge Construction, and the use of prefabricated superstructure elements. The proximity to high voltage overhead lines and catenary wires for the railroad make this a site that is not favorable for larger prefabricated components and the larger cranes that would be required. This replacement is a long span, skewed structure. Site specific design is required for this crossing.
14. Is this structure a historic landmark?
- The bridge has been determined as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The determination means that demolition of the bridge would be an adverse effect and based on the use of Federal funding for the replacement project, mitigation measures will be identified and required. It is anticipated that the mitigation measures include full documentation of the existing structure and the reuse of historic components such as the ornamental cast iron posts on the existing parapets. Any interested parties can contact to get involved in the Memorandum of Understanding.
15. Why is the bridge so narrow?
- The bridge was likely designed for one lane in either direction having large shoulders. As traffic volumes increased it was striped for two lanes in either direction with no shoulders.
16. Has the EPA been involved or made aware of this project?

- The initial contact with DEEP has been made. The coordination and contact will progress along with the design. A soil investigation will be conducted for this project.
17. There is a sign west of the bridge that says "When Flashing Stop Ahead." This is for the vehicles on Route 1 travelling west to the intersection with Longbrook Avenue. The sign and flashing light was in use for decades, but has not been working for a while now. Especially with the raising of the bridge, can you get the flashing warning light to function again?
- Thank you for pointing this out. We will bring the current function of the warning sign to the attention of the Traffic group and get their input on the future use of a similar warning sign.
18. Have the property owners who have right-of-way impacts anticipated been contacted?
- For the purpose of the Public Information, all property owners in the vicinity were sent abutter letters regardless of whether they have right-of-way impact anticipated. In the near future and as we get into more detailed design, the property maps and quantified impacts will be sent to the specific properties with impact.
19. What vertical clearance is required over the railroad?
- The vertical clearance will be increased from the existing 20 ft.-7 in. to meet the standard over electrified rail of 22 ft.-6 in.
20. The Contracting Plating plant remediation project is moving forward. Will you have issues with raising grades?
- The roadway grade adjustments will be complete prior to the plating plant site. What stage is this project in?

The remediation will be ready to begin in 6 to 12 months.

21. What are you doing to improve communication and notify people of the project? Do you have a website like the Moses Wheeler project?
- The DOT has a Calendar of Events section that posts all Public Information Meetings that are scheduled, including this one. The information was provided to the Town of Stratford and was posted on the Town's website. A standalone website is typically used for larger projects, such as the Moses Wheeler. However the Office of Construction and District Construction will post updates and travel impacts through the construction phase.

### **Adjournment:**

The recommended plans provide a design which will eliminate the structural deficiencies and functional obsolescence of the existing bridge while minimizing the need for future maintenance and improving the geometry of the crossing. Accordingly, the Department intends to seek design approval for the proposed plan. The Department will continue to keep the Town informed of any changes that may occur as the design is being completed and will notify the Town as the project transitions into the construction phase.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.