

REPORT OF MEETING

SUBJECT: Public Information Meeting – Town of Washington

DATE OF MEETING: March 2, 2016

BRIDGE:

<u>Bridge No.</u>	<u>Project No.</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Route</u>	<u>Location</u>
06786	150-131	Washington	Route 109	Mallory Brook

LOCATION OF MEETING: Bryan Memorial Town Hall – 2 Bryan Plaza, Washington, CT

IN ATTENDANCE:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>REPRESENTING</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
Mark Lyon	First Selectman	selectmen@washingtonct.org
Theodore Nezames	CTDOT – Bridge Design	theodore.nezames@ct.gov
Rabih Barakat	CTDOT – Bridge Design	rabih.barakat@ct.gov
Louis Bacho	CTDOT – Bridge Design	louis.bacho@ct.gov
Susan Morneault	CTDOT – Bridge Design	susan.morneaul@ct.gov
Michelle Miller	CTDOT – Rights of Way	michelle.miller@ct.gov
John Dunham	CTDOT – District 4 Construction	john.s.dunham@ct.gov
David Neelands	CTDOT – District 4 Construction	david.neelands@ct.gov
Keegan Elder	WMC – Design Consultant	kelder@wmcengineers.com
Nicholas Giardina	BL Companies - Liaison Engineer	ngiardina@blcompanies.com
Justine Ziobron	BL Companies - Liaison Engineer	jziobron@blcompanies.com

Approximately 10 Washington residents were also in attendance.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project was presented using Microsoft PowerPoint and key project plans were on display. Handouts of the general project information were also available to the attendees. After the presentation, the meeting was opened to additional questions and comments. The following is a summary of the presentation and comments.

Replacement of Bridge No. 06786 – State Project No. 150-131

Bridge No. 06786 supports Route 109 (Blackville Road) over Mallory Brook in the town of Washington, and is located west of the intersection of Sabbaday Lane #2 and Route 109. The existing structure consists of two 72-inch asphalt-coated corrugated metal pipes (culverts) with stone masonry wingwalls and headwalls. The existing lane configuration of Route 109 over the bridge consists of two 10-foot travel lanes and two 1-foot shoulders for a total curb-to-curb width of 22-feet.

The purpose and need for the project is to address the structural deficiencies and functional obsolescence of Bridge No. 06786. The culverts are structurally deficient due to the serious condition of the corrugated metal pipes and the roadway carried by the culverts is functionally obsolete due to inadequate roadway geometry (substandard roadway width). The existing pipes are also considered hydraulically inadequate based on the 100-year design storm event.

The project was originally presented to the public on November 18, 2014, while the project was in the preliminary design phase. Throughout the course of design, the public has voiced several concerns relating to the proposed roadway reconstruction, right-of-way impacts, historical significance and travel speeds associated with the project, among other things. In recognition of these concerns, the Department sought Design Exceptions to reduce the design criteria and minimize the footprint of the project while still improving safety along the travel way. The design has since progressed to a final design level and has been revised to take into consideration the public's concerns.

The recommended course of action involves replacing the structure with a single precast concrete box culvert. The subject project will involve a slight shift of the horizontal alignment of Route 109 in order to improve intersection sight distance from Sabbaday Lane #2 to the west. The proposed vertical alignment will match existing. The culvert replacement will require approximately 350-feet of roadway construction along Route 109, as well as reconstruction of the intersection with Sabbaday Lane #2. The proposed roadway will generally consist of two 10-foot travel lanes and two 2-foot shoulders. The eastbound shoulder will transition to 4-feet over the proposed culvert and the westbound lane will have a 14-foot 3-inch grass shelf beyond the 2-foot shoulder.

It is anticipated that the proposed culvert replacement will require Route 109 to be closed to vehicular traffic for up to 17 days. Route 109 will be closed between the existing structure and Sabbaday Lane #2. During this time, thru traffic will be detoured via Route 47 to U.S. Route 202 to Route 209. After the short duration closure of Route 109, two lanes of traffic will be restored while construction is completed. Temporary lane/shoulder closures may be implemented during off-peak hours, as required.

Existing utility poles, owned by Frontier Communications, are located along the northern side of Route 109 in the vicinity of the project. The poles beyond either project limit are located on the southern side of Route 109. Eversource Energy owned utility poles are also located along Sabbaday Lane #2. The Department has since received design exceptions to reduce the lane width and turning radius such that the existing utility poles are no longer in conflict with the proposed edge of road. As such, the project proposes to maintain the existing utility poles and overhead wires in their current location, and instead, de-energize the wires during critical construction activities.

Impacts to private property include two full property acquisitions, two partial acquisitions, and various temporary and permanent easements/rights in order to accommodate construction and future maintenance of the new bridge.

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection will require an Inland Wetlands General Permit and CT Addendum, and the Army Corps of Engineers will require a General Permit (Category 2) in order for this project to be constructed.

The estimated construction cost for the replacement of Bridge No. 06786 is between \$1.5 – \$2 Million and the project is anticipated to be funded using Federal (80 percent) and State (20 percent) capital.

Work under State Project No. 150-131 is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2017. The schedule should be considered preliminary and is predicated upon the availability of funding, the issuance of the requested environmental permits and the resolution of all property and utility impacts.

TRANSACTIONS AND DETERMINATIONS:

A resident asked what the Department intends on doing with the yellow barn on 102 Blackville Road and the grey house on 104 Blackville Road. *A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design responded that the Department is acquiring both properties and demolishing both the barn and the house.*

A resident noted that the yellow barn serves as a traffic calming device and fears that removal of this structure will warrant higher travel speeds. The resident believes their safety concern with speed is counterproductive to the Department's reasoning that removal of the barn will improve sight line and make the road safer. Although they prefer to keep the structure in place due to the rural and historic charm it adds to the roadway, the residents would like to know what the Department intends on doing to mitigate speed once the structure is removed. *A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design responded that removal of the yellow barn is necessary in part because of sight line, but also because the structure is partially built within the State's Right-of-Way. The representative further noted that the proposed roadway is not being designed to meet higher design speeds and will match the current conditions. Once the property is acquired by the State, no additional trees, plantings, fence, etc. will be installed in the barns place due to sight line restrictions.*

A resident asked why the yellow barn has to be removed, if sight line is the sole reason for removing it and requested that the Department provide more information on how the barn effects sight line. *A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design presented a sight line plan to the residents showing both the existing and proposed conditions from Sabbaday Lane #2 and the two driveways to the south (103 and 109 Blackville Road). Although the proposed design does improve sight distance, the residents did not feel that the sight distance achieved from removing the barn was that much greater than if we were to keep the barn. The residents further noted that there have been few recorded accidents along this stretch of Route 109, and the barn itself has never been hit since its existence. A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design reminded the residents that aside from improving sight line, the barn is also located within the State's Right-of-Way and presents a liability to the Department. A representative of CTDOT – District 4 Construction added that they travel this portion of Route 109 on a daily basis and has witnessed several accidents at this bridge, noting that the guiderail in this location is continuously damaged from being hit. He suggested the documented accidents are very few compared to how*

many actually occur. It is the Department's main priority to improve safety and implement good design practices.

Recognizing that the yellow barn is partially within the State's Right-of-Way, a resident asked if the bridge project didn't exist, would the State still acquire and demolish the yellow barn. A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design noted that if it was brought to their attention, then possibly, since they are liable for any damage or accidents that may result, even if there is no accident history involving the barn.

A resident asked what the recourse is if the Department and the locals can't come to an agreement. A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design noted the residents can direct their concerns to the Chief Engineer and/or the Commissioner. Another representative added that this project is a context sensitive design, meaning the Department understands their concerns and they have sought design exceptions to reduce the criteria as much as possible, but they can't disregard safety for the 1,900 or so vehicles that travel this roadway on a daily basis.

Residents continued to express concern regarding increased speeds as a result of the proposed roadway improvements, including sight line and removal of the yellow barn, and asked if there is anything that can be done to mitigate this. A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design acknowledged that the yellow barn may serve as a "natural" traffic calming object, but clarified it is not designed to function as one. The Department cannot willfully leave the structure because it deters cars from traveling faster. Should the residents chose to explore other options, there are alternative traffic calming devices that can be designed that do not pose a safety hazard to the traveling public. A representative of CTDOT – District 4 Construction added that the residents' concerns regarding traffic speed should be addressed and enforced by the First Selectmen's Office.

The Department has previously stated that the project is partially funded with Federal capital and that certain design criteria must be met to maintain this funding. A resident asked if sight line is the only design criteria that qualifies the project for federal funding. A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design replied that sight line is not the only determining factor for federal funding.

A resident expressed concern with why and where his picket fence is being relocated and how it will affect the sight line from his driveway. A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design replied that the fence needs to be relocated due to the new design features, including the new wingwall, foundations, and guide-rail which impact the existing location of the picket fence. A representative of BL Companies added that the fence will be offset slightly from its current location to fall outside of the partial acquisition area. As for sight line, CTDOT – Bridge Design noted that the property owner's sight line is currently restricted by a large oak tree within their property, so the relocation of the fence will not worsen their current condition. Should the property owner chose to clear all obstructions within their sightline, CTDOT – Bridge Design illustrated the improved distance they could achieve.

A resident noted they were recently contacted by Eversource and informed of a new stub pole and guy wire that will be installed on their property in place of a broken guy wire. The resident believes the installation of the pole may further reduce his sight line and asked if this work is

associated with the bridge and what the Department intends on doing to assist with his concerns. *A representative of BL Companies responded that they have been in contact with Eversource and confirmed that the proposed work is independent of the bridge replacement project. Eversource informed BL Companies that this work will be completed prior to the bridge project. Based on their structural analysis of the pole, a new guy wire is required to support the dead end tap of Pole #1392. Any delay in this repair is a structural hazard to the circuit. To minimize impact during construction, Eversource intends on removing and replacing the guy wire to avoid conflict with staging and equipment. As far as the resident's concern with sight line, the Department agrees coordination is required to ensure their efforts for improving sight line are not decreased by Eversource's proposed stub pole and guy wire. While the resident may take up concerns directly with Eversource since this is independent work, the Department is willing to facilitate a meeting between the resident and the utility company.*

A resident asked who is in charge of selecting the type of pattern and staining used for the decorative treatment on the new bridge (formliner). *A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design responded that the Town would be able to select the color and pattern. A representative of BL Companies added that a few mock ups will be presented to the town during construction.*

A resident asked if riprap would be placed along the slopes of the new bridge. *A representative of BL Companies responded that riprap and existing channel bottom material would be used at the inlet and outlet of the new bridge.*

A resident asked about the allowable working hours and if the Department still intends on installing temporary traffic signals at the intersection. *A representative of BL Companies responded that the Contractor will be working 8 hour days +/- for approximately 17 days +/- while traffic is detoured (not around the clock). Following the detour, two lanes of traffic will be restored. By eliminating the alternating one-way traffic scheme in stage 2, temporary signals are no longer required. A representative of BL Companies further clarified that although the total project duration is approximately 4 months, the majority of the work is anticipated to be complete during the detour period.*

Residents asked for clarification on the proposed detour route and where the road will be blocked off. *A representative of BL Companies reviewed the detour plan with the residents and illustrated that the signed detour will direct thru traffic to state roads, vs local roads, utilizing Route 47, Route 202 and Route 209. Route 109 will be closed on either side of the bridge, including the intersection of Route 109 and Sabbaday Lane #2. Sabbaday Lane #1 will remain open and locals will be free to use alternative routes other than the posted detour to navigate through this area. Policemen will be available to help direct traffic during the detour period.*

A resident questioned if the yellow barn has any historical significance, and if so if there is a way to salvage or relocate the structure. *A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design noted that the Department's Office of Environmental Planning, in conjunction with the State Historic Preservation Office has done an in-depth investigation of the project area, including the yellow barn, and determined that the structure is of no historical significance and removal of this structure poses no adverse effects.*

A resident asked when he will be contacted regarding salvaging his plants and compensation for the property impacts associated with this project. *A representative of CTDOT – Rights of Way noted that the property owner will be contacted by an agent to review the information and evaluate the impacts (likely in the spring).*

The residents asked for verification that project construction is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2017. *A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design confirmed that construction is anticipated to begin in spring of 2017.*

A resident asked why the project increased from \$1 - \$1.5 Million (presented at the 2014 public information meeting) to \$1.5 - \$2 Million and what the cost increase is attributed to. *A representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design noted that during the 2014 public information meeting, the project was still preliminary and the parameters of the project were less defined. As the project advances, and we begin permit coordination, utility coordination, right-of-way coordination, etc. we are able to produce a more refined and accurate estimate. As an example, a representative of CTDOT – Bridge Design shared how we recently received comments from Fisheries which require us to increase the size of the box to provide 2-feet of natural stream bed material within the channel for fish passage. Such changes can result in increased costs, but the benefits to the natural environment are considered greater than the slightly higher cost of the structure. A representative of BL Companies further added that we are implementing accelerated construction techniques, including the use of mostly precast elements, which can drive up the project cost, but greatly reduce the overall duration of the project and corresponding impacts to the abutting properties.*

A resident asked about alternative uses of the 4-foot shoulder along the eastbound lane at the bridge and methods to potentially create a narrow effect and slow traffic, including a sidewalk or grassed area in lieu of pavement. *A representative of CTDOT – Bridge noted that a grassed area is not feasible as it would become a maintenance issue and a sidewalk must be a minimum of 5-foot wide and be ADA compliant. The best option is to keep this shoulder paved.*

A resident asked about possible locations for the field office and porta-potties during construction, noting they do not want to be impacted by the temporary bathroom facilities. *A representative of CTDOT – District 4 Construction responded that it will be the Contractor's responsibility to locate his field office and associated facilities, but noted that the house on 104 Blackville may be a suitable location. CTDOT – District 4 Construction will coordinate with the residents and address their concerns as the Contractor mobilizes.*

Any questions or comments regarding this project or minutes should be directed to the Connecticut Department of Transportation, Attention: Theodore Nezames, 2800 Berlin Turnpike, Newington, CT 06111.

Submitted by: _____
Justine E. Ziobron

Date: _____

Approved by: _____

Date: _____