

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
BUREAU OF RIGHT-OF-WAY  
HIGHWAY LAYOUT COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING  
HINSDALE, NH - BRATTLEBORO, VT: X-A004(152); 12210C  
PROPOSED BRIDGE REPLACEMENTS

Public Hearing held at the Hinsdale Town Hall, 11 Main Street, Hinsdale, New Hampshire on Thursday, January 18, 2018, in accordance with RSA 230:14 and the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987 to discuss alterations to improve traffic operations and safety in the Towns of Hinsdale, New Hampshire and Brattleboro, Vermont, commencing at 7:00 p.m.

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1 PUBLIC HEARING THUS HELD BEFORE THE HIGHWAY LAYOUT  
2 COMMISSION MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR AND  
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ON JUNE 7, 2017:

3  
4 Terry Clark, Chairman

5 Chris Coates

6 Jim Tetreault

7  
8  
9  
10 NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION MEMBERS  
11 PRESENTING:

12 Don Lyord, P.E., Project Manager, NH Department of  
13 Transportation, Bureau of Highway Design

14 Trent Zanes, P.E., Preliminary Design Engineer, NH  
15 Department of Transportation, Bureau of Highway Design

16 William P. Saffian, P.E., Senior Project Engineer, NH  
17 Department of Transportation, Bureau of Bridge Design

18 Stephen LaBonte, Assistant Right-of-Way Administrator,  
19 NH Department of Transportation, Bureau of Right-of-Way

20 Jonathan Evans, Air & Noise Program Manager, NH  
21 Department of Transportation, Bureau of Environment  
22  
23

## 1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I call this meeting to  
3 order. I'm Terry Clark. I'm the Commissioner  
4 appointed by the Governor and Executive Council.

5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We can't hear you.

6 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I will --

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Start over.

8 CHAIRMAN CLARK: I will start over. I've  
9 told the Council not to move these because they're  
10 supposed to be exactly where they are. In any  
11 case, the meeting is called to order. I'm Terry  
12 Clark. I'm the Chairman of the Commission  
13 appointed by the Governor and Executive Council.  
14 This is Chris Coates from Keene and Jim Tetreault  
15 from Winchester. They're also members of the  
16 Commission.

17 Before we begin, please take note of the  
18 emergency exits here in this room, and if you  
19 could silence your cell phones, we'd appreciate  
20 it. Thank you.

21 This hearing is concerned with replacing  
22 two bridges carrying New Hampshire Route 119 over  
23 the Connecticut River with a single structure and

1 reconstructing the adjoining segment of Route 119  
2 on a new location. It's pursuant to RSA 230:14  
3 and the Surface Transportation and Uniform  
4 Relocation Assistance Act of 1987.

5 The purpose of this hearing is to  
6 determine the necessity for the location -- I mean  
7 the occasion for the layout and -- and to hear  
8 evidence of the economic and social effects of  
9 such a location and its impact on the environment  
10 and its consistency with the goals and objectives  
11 of the local planning that's been undertaken by  
12 the towns.

13 Following the hearing, the Commission  
14 will evaluate all the matters brought to our  
15 attention here tonight and make definite decisions  
16 relative to the layout. The Department will  
17 contact each owner whose property is affected and  
18 discuss individual concerns.

19 It is, therefore, important that all  
20 individuals desiring to make requests or  
21 suggestions do so tonight. I'd like to remind you  
22 that you have 10 days from the date of this  
23 hearing to submit any other materials you would

1           like to be considered by the Commission.

2                     At this time I'll ask Don Lyford on my  
3 left, he's the Project Man of the New Hampshire --  
4 Manager of the New Hampshire Department of  
5 Transportation, to present in a formal manner the  
6 layout which has been proposed, and then after  
7 this I'll open the floor to those who wish to  
8 address the Commission.

9                     I'll request that all desiring to speak  
10 signify their desire by raising their hands and  
11 going through the Chair. And speak -- when you  
12 come up to the microphone there is a -- they don't  
13 have a podium, so there's a little table in the  
14 back there. Before you come up to the microphone  
15 to speak, please fill out the form. If you could  
16 print legibly, please, and then come up to the  
17 microphone, and speak clearly your name and your  
18 address for the minute taker. All right. Okay.  
19 Don.

20                     MR. LYFORD: Thank you, Chairman, Members  
21 of the Commission. Good evening, ladies and  
22 gentlemen. First of all, I'll just mention the  
23 people who are going to be helping with tonight's

1 presentation.

2 On the far end of the table here is Steve  
3 LaBonte from the Bureau of Right-of-Way. Next to  
4 me is Jon Evans with the Bureau of Environment.  
5 And Trent Zanes is in the front row. He's gonna  
6 be describing the layout in a few minutes. And  
7 next to him is Bill Saffian from the Bureau of  
8 Bridge Design. And in the back is Chris Baker.  
9 He is here tonight representing VTrans.

10 This meeting normally is serving -- to  
11 determine the necessity of the layout for New  
12 Hampshire, but it also is a public meeting that  
13 meets the requirements of Vermont and FHWA.

14 We have a project advisory committee  
15 that's been helping us with this project working  
16 out some of the final details, and they definitely  
17 have been a lot of help. There's -- there's  
18 representatives from Vermont and New Hampshire on  
19 that committee, and we'll -- we'll keep them going  
20 until we -- we get the project ready for  
21 construction.

22 Now, in earlier phases back when this  
23 project first started, we also had other

1 committees that helped us, and they gave us ideas  
2 and helped us get through to the -- to the project  
3 we have today. So it was very helpful, and we're  
4 certainly looking for additional input tonight  
5 from -- from you or others that couldn't make it  
6 tonight and want to submit testimony.

7 So, with that, I'll introduce Trent Zanes  
8 to explain the layout.

9 COMMISSIONER COATES: Can I -- just  
10 before --

11 MR. LYFORD: Yeah.

12 COMMISSIONER COATES: Can I just? Just  
13 right before you -- you go, I just want to -- I  
14 see Senator Kahn here. I see Representative  
15 Harvey and Representative Abbott here. I don't  
16 know if there's any other Representatives. Any  
17 town officials? Oh, sorry. Oh, sorry. My bad.  
18 I just wanted to know if there was town officials  
19 here. Thank you.

20 MR. ZANES: Thank you. Okay. I want to  
21 make sure everybody can hear me this time. I had  
22 a little trouble at the public information --

23 (Microphone feedback.)

1 (A discussion is held off the record to  
2 address the problem with the sound system.)

3 MR. ZANES. Okay. So this is working.  
4 We'll try this again. Okay. So I'm gonna present  
5 to you the layout of the project, and let me start  
6 with this plan on the far right. This is an  
7 aerial plan, so looking from above. And north is  
8 straight up. You see the Connecticut River coming  
9 down the middle.

10 And Brattleboro is up to the top left of  
11 the plan. Hinsdale is on the far right and  
12 continues all the way up to the project area where  
13 the existing 119 crosses over the Connecticut  
14 River into Brattleboro.

15 So the next set of plans here, this is a  
16 top view plan. Again, looking from above.  
17 Connecticut River coming down the middle.  
18 Brattleboro would be on the left side and Hinsdale  
19 on the right side.

20 And so the existing Route 119 continues  
21 up, crosses the first bridge onto the island, and  
22 then the second bridge is just off the plan and  
23 connects into the five-way intersection in



1 Brattleboro.

2 Coming down from that intersection is  
3 Route 142. That runs along the west side of the  
4 river and just west of the active rail trail -- or  
5 rail -- railroad.

6 Excuse me. So to explain some of the  
7 colors here, this light gray will be the roadway  
8 and then the paved areas like the big -- big  
9 parking lot up here. Olive green would be trees  
10 or wooded areas. And then the red, buildings.  
11 And the blue, as you can see, is water.

12 And any lighter brown areas represent  
13 gravel drives or the dirt areas. And then finally  
14 up here on the island, this is the best example of  
15 blue diagonal lines which would represent any  
16 wetlands in the area.

17 So the -- the existing bridges today are  
18 20 feet wide, which is a problem for trucks going  
19 across because it provides only 10-foot lanes for  
20 travel each way. And, as I'm sure many of you  
21 know, when a truck comes across -- I've heard the  
22 stories where some people actually move to allow  
23 the trucks to come across, and it's a bigger

1           problem when you get closer to the Vermont side on  
2           that second bridge because there's a sharp turn  
3           right after it.

4                        So the existing alignment is a difficult  
5           one, and to add on top of that there's an active  
6           rail line that goes through. Whenever that train  
7           has to stop, you know, it stops at the  
8           intersection in Brattleboro. So those are the  
9           major reasons for relocating the alignment of 119,  
10          to replace those two bridges with a single bridge  
11          that crosses over and connects right into 142.

12                       And so let me start by giving some of the  
13          colors for the proposed design. This yellow that  
14          you see represents the travel way or from white  
15          line to white line. Those are the lanes that the  
16          vehicles are expected to travel in.

17                       Inside of that there's some orange for  
18          painted medians, and then flanking that on either  
19          side would be a darker brown, which represents  
20          shoulders which vary on this project, and I'll get  
21          into that.

22                       And then a purple line that comes from  
23          Georges Field Road along -- part of it goes up



1 bridge, once you get onto the bridge it will widen  
2 out. It will still be 12-foot lanes, but there  
3 will be eight-foot shoulders. This will be  
4 helpful if a vehicle has some trouble and needs to  
5 stop on the bridge. This will allow traffic to  
6 keep going and bypass that vehicle.

7 So the bridge will continue over the  
8 island just touching the tip of it, cross over the  
9 oil field here, and then connect into 142 with a  
10 signalized intersection. There will be a left  
11 turn lane provided and a right turn lane as well,  
12 and then coming south on 142 there will be an  
13 exclusive left turn lane. And then northbound  
14 will just be a standard multilane headed north.

15 So to accomplish this, one of the things  
16 we'll have to do is provide drainage or improve  
17 the drainage so that we're catching all of the  
18 roadway runoff and treating it in a couple areas  
19 that we're proposing here, and then it will then  
20 outlet into the Connecticut River after it's been  
21 treated.

22 On the Vermont side we have a similar  
23 case. We're collecting all the water, roadway

1 water, treating it in this area, running it down,  
2 and then jacking a pipe -- a couple of pipes  
3 underneath the -- the rail line.

4 Environmentally we know that we are  
5 impacting approximately 1.7 acres. Much of that  
6 is temporary impacts for the construction of the  
7 trestle that will be needed for building the  
8 bridge.

9 And then there are no historic properties  
10 identified within the project area, no hazardous  
11 materials identified, and there are utility issues  
12 that we're working with utility companies for.

13 Since we're shifting the road to the  
14 south or downstream, some of the poles will need  
15 to be relocated. In Hinsdale, it's primarily  
16 aerial, so it's telephone, cable, and electric.

17 On the Vermont side, there are the aerial  
18 utilities as well as some underground telephone,  
19 sewer, and water, all of which will be coordinated  
20 on the Vermont side through VTrans.

21 As far as right-of-way impacts, as I  
22 said, we're gonna be treating the drainage, and so  
23 we have to put in some new structures. There will

1 be -- we've identified approximately four parcels  
2 that we would need small, permanent easements just  
3 so that we can maintain that -- the pipe outlet or  
4 where the pipe -- the catch basin or manhole might  
5 be.

6 We are -- we will need to purchase some  
7 right-of-way on the southern side, just standard  
8 highway right-of-way that allows us to maintain  
9 the ditches, signs, anything within a certain  
10 distance of the roadway.

11 And then finally -- um -- so this project  
12 is 80 percent federal funded, 20 percent state,  
13 and we have an advertising date of September,  
14 2019. Thank you. Don.

15 MR. LYFORD: Thank you, Trent. Bill  
16 Saffian will now talk about some of the bridge  
17 aspects of the project.

18 MR. SAFFIAN: Thank you. Can you hear  
19 me? Am I coming through the mic? Yeah? Okay.  
20 Good. Thank you. Good evening. So they're gonna  
21 lower some screen here on the board, and then I'm  
22 gonna take you through a three-dimensional model  
23 that we created for the bridge and give you a

1 sense for what the bridge will look like and give  
2 you a sense for some of the views that you'll have  
3 both from the bridge and of the bridge from  
4 different points on the -- on the shore and on --  
5 and -- or in the surrounding area.

6 So this is an aerial view. You're kind  
7 of looking from south to north along the river.  
8 You could see the existing NH 119 that crosses the  
9 river onto the island and then from the island  
10 into Brattleboro, Vermont. This is the proposed  
11 bridge here.

12 The first thing I'm gonna do is I'm gonna  
13 take you on a run as if you were traveling from  
14 Vermont to New Hampshire. As Trent said, the --  
15 the bridge will carry two 12-foot wide lanes. You  
16 can see that between the yellow lines and the  
17 white lines there and eight-foot shoulders.

18 And then along the north facia of the  
19 bridge we'll be carrying the six-foot wide  
20 sidewalk. Now we proceeded over the New Hampshire  
21 side and to the approx -- where we're turning back  
22 into the existing NH 119.

23 Next I'm going to turn it around, and we

1 will run back, give you a sense of what you're  
2 seeing. Georges Field Road immediately on the  
3 right there. Crossing the new Mountain Road  
4 intersection. Crossing over now on the side  
5 channel of the Connecticut River and across the  
6 southern tip of the island. And now crossing the  
7 main channel of the Connecticut River into  
8 Vermont.

9 And this gives you a shot of the approach  
10 to the intersection with Vermont 142. If you were  
11 to be traveling on the river itself, this is a  
12 sense -- this is the underside of the structure.  
13 This gives you a sense of what the piers will look  
14 like. It's a hammerhead style pier that comes  
15 down, and we're providing some protection on the  
16 bottom for ice.

17 And if I spin around, give you a sense of  
18 what they'll look like from different directions.  
19 We're also providing an inlay, a form liner inlay  
20 that will make the -- give it a dry laid stone  
21 look, and it would also make the columns look as  
22 if they're more of a -- separated columns rather  
23 than a solid wall pier, and that was an



1 aesthetic -- we put that into the bridge as an  
2 aesthetic item that was developed through the  
3 bridge -- project advisory committee.

4 And, again, another view from -- of the  
5 pier. And this gives you a sense of what you'd  
6 see in the long term -- or along the direction  
7 along -- you see the other piers along the island.

8 One of the things we're discussing with  
9 the advisory committee is having outlooks on the  
10 bridge, and this would be potentially one of the  
11 positions. And I just want to kind of pan.

12 You can kind of see what the view would  
13 be like if you were looking from that outlook  
14 towards Brattleboro as you look upstream. This is  
15 where the existing truss bridge is there. You're  
16 looking over the island and then over on the  
17 Hinsdale side.

18 So it gives you a sense of the panoramic  
19 view. Another one of the outlooks would be closer  
20 to the island. Again, looking toward Brattleboro  
21 and then panning over the island to the Hinsdale  
22 side.

23 We're discussing -- um -- we're either

1 going to have one overlook, two or three. We're  
2 discussing that with the advisory committee to  
3 decide exactly how many there will be, but that  
4 will give you a sense for what it's -- the lookout  
5 from the bridge itself.

6 This is a view from the marina on the New  
7 Hampshire side. The new bridge will necessitate  
8 that the access to the marina will pass under the  
9 first span from New Hampshire. So what you're  
10 looking up at, the orange there, is the five-  
11 girder system that will carry the bridge and the  
12 New Hampshire abutment.

13 You're looking back along -- over the  
14 marina property and looking south towards -- along  
15 119 there. And as I pan around, you're looking  
16 northerly past the river piers and across the --  
17 across the river to Vermont.

18 If you were standing on the south end of  
19 the island looking up at the bridge, this is the  
20 view that you might see. The bridge will be eight  
21 spans. The outer spans will be 153 feet each, and  
22 the interior spans will be 246 feet each for a  
23 total length of 1,782 feet.

1                   This is looking from the bridge as it  
2 crosses by Depot Street. The existing bridge  
3 alignment right here. And then as you look south,  
4 you'll see a view of the bridge.

5                   And that's it for the presentation of the  
6 3-D model. I'll now turn it back over to Trent if  
7 there are any questions. To Don. I'm sorry.

8                   MR. LYFORD: Thank you, Bill.

9                   MR. SAFFIAN: I'll turn it back over to  
10 Don if there's any questions.

11                   MR. LYFORD: Yeah. Thanks. Steve  
12 LaBonte will next review the right-of-way process.

13                   MR. LABONTE: Thank you, Don. Members of  
14 the Commission, ladies and gentlemen, before I go  
15 into the right-of-way procedures for this project,  
16 there are a couple of things I'd like to address.

17                   If there are any members of the audience  
18 that do not wish to speak in front of the group  
19 but wish to comment, you may do so in writing.  
20 There are forms available from the Right-of-Way  
21 staff that you may submit to the Commission Chair.  
22 Your written comments will become part of the  
23 official transcript and will receive equal weight

1 to any testimony given tonight.

2 We also -- we have with us tonight a  
3 handout entitled, "Your Land and New Hampshire  
4 Highways." This is the handout right here. If  
5 you haven't got one, they're available at the back  
6 of the room on the table.

7 This handout describes the right-of-way  
8 acquisition and relocation assistance procedures  
9 that are utilized by the State. This booklet is  
10 especially useful to those property owners  
11 affected by this proposed project. These are  
12 available, again, at the back of the room.

13 After reviewing the information received  
14 tonight at this hearing, the Commission finds  
15 necessity for the -- this layout, several things  
16 will happen. First, the Layout Commission will  
17 negotiate with the owners of the property needed  
18 for the project.

19 Next, with approval to proceed with the  
20 design of this project, the Department will be  
21 preparing appraisals for each of the properties  
22 affected by the proposed construction you see on  
23 the plans.

1           Next -- next, with the approval to  
2           proceed -- I have to apologize. I'm reading this  
3           off a script. They don't let me have an original  
4           thought. A staff appraiser from our department or  
5           a fee appraiser hired from private industry will  
6           contact each owner to appraise their property.  
7           The appraisal will reflect the fair market value  
8           of the property needed for the new -- new  
9           construction.

10           Prior to starting negotiations, the  
11           appraisals are reviewed separately to see that all  
12           appraisals are accurate and have taken into  
13           account all applicable approaches to the value.  
14           The value in reviewed -- in the reviewed appraisal  
15           will be the offer of compensation used by the  
16           Layout Commission that has been appointed by the  
17           Governor and Executive Council as a basis for this  
18           negotiation.

19           This Commission will visit each property  
20           owner and discuss each acquisition separately. We  
21           urge property owners at that time to ask questions  
22           and bring up concerns they feel should be  
23           considered.

1           If the property owner is satisfied with  
2 the offer, deeds are prepared, and ownership is  
3 transferred to the State. If the owner is not  
4 happy with the purchase price the Commission  
5 offers, the matter will be filed with the New  
6 Hampshire Board of Tax and Land Appeals where the  
7 owner has the opportunity to argue for additional  
8 compensation.

9           It is important you understand that this  
10 process can be done with or without an attorney.  
11 If either the State or the owner is dissatisfied  
12 with the Board's decision, either party can appeal  
13 the Board's decision to the Superior Court.

14           Anytime after this hearing or before  
15 design approval, all information in support of  
16 this hearing is available at the Department's  
17 headquarters in Concord for your inspection and  
18 copying. There is relocation assistance  
19 available. A Right-of-Way agent will be assigned  
20 to this project as necessary.

21           That's all I have, Don. Thank you.

22           MR. LYFORD: Thank you, Steve. Jon Evans  
23 will talk about the environmental aspects.

1           MR. EVANS: Good evening, members of the  
2 Commission, ladies and gentlemen. Pursuant to the  
3 National Environmental Policy Act, the Vermont  
4 Agency of Transportation in consultation with the  
5 New Hampshire Department of Transportation and the  
6 Federal Highway Administration has evaluated  
7 alternatives to the proposed project and the  
8 potential impacts this project will have upon the  
9 surrounding social, economic, and natural  
10 environments.

11           The information gathered during this  
12 evaluation has been included in a Revised  
13 Environmental Assessment, which was prepared by  
14 the Vermont Agency of Transportation in December  
15 of 2013. Subsequent to the preparation of the  
16 Revised Environmental Assessment, the Federal  
17 Highway Administration issued a finding of no  
18 significant impact for the project on  
19 January 17th, 2014.

20           The New Hampshire Department of  
21 Transportation is currently in the process of  
22 obtaining the necessary state and federal  
23 environmental permits. Coordination with the

1 various federal, state, and local environmental  
2 agencies necessary to obtain these permits is --  
3 is ongoing and will continue as necessary  
4 throughout the project's final design and  
5 construction.

6 If anyone has any natural, cultural, or  
7 social -- socioeconomic resource concerns  
8 associated with this project, please bring them to  
9 our attention tonight or within the comment period  
10 following the public hearing. Thank you. Don.

11 MR. LYFORD: Thank you, Jon. So this  
12 project is in the Ten-Year Transportation Plan.  
13 It has about 46 million dollars shown beginning in  
14 2019. The project will also convert the existing  
15 bridges to bike/ped use once the new bridge is in  
16 place. And we have applied for some TIGER funds.  
17 TIGER is Transportation Investment Generating  
18 Economic Recovery funds, which is a competitive  
19 process through application.

20 If we get that money, we would be able to  
21 do more rehab of the existing bridges. If we  
22 don't get that money, we'd still do some rehab.  
23 It just won't be quite as much.



1           We are working with a subcommittee of the  
2 advisory group to talk about what might be best to  
3 do as far as rehabbing the existing bridges and  
4 whether or not we would try to incorporate  
5 anything on the island.

6           The overall project is funded with  
7 federal highway funds, as Trent mentioned. Also,  
8 there's state funds from New Hampshire and  
9 Vermont. Right now there's no Town of Hinsdale  
10 funds needed for the construction.

11           However, there will be Hinsdale funds  
12 required for maintenance of the new sidewalk on  
13 the new bridge and for the bike/ped uses and any  
14 lighting that gets put in.

15           If the Commission finds for the layout of  
16 this project, we will continue into final design  
17 and permitting, as Jon mentioned, and right-of-way  
18 acquisition, as Steve mentioned, and we would get  
19 the project ready to go out to contractors for bid  
20 in late 2019 with the construction continuing from  
21 there probably into -- through 2023.

22           Chairman, that concludes the Department's  
23 formal presentation of this Route 119

1 reconstruction project. I respectfully ask this  
2 Commission to find in favor of the layout of the  
3 project as presented here this evening.

4 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you, Don. Before  
5 I open it up for public comments, I wanted to ask  
6 if there are any elected officials or town  
7 officials who would like to comment first. So  
8 same rules. Please speak directly into the  
9 microphone, and identify yourself and your address  
10 for the minute taker.

11 Anyone? Senator Kahn.

12 SENATOR KAHN: Ask an elected official if  
13 they want to say something? Really? But I -- so  
14 a couple of things that I'd like to say. First, I  
15 think the Department has been pretty good about  
16 your consultation.

17 I'm a first-term Senator. You have  
18 introduced me to the project, the time lines. I'm  
19 glad to hear that you've incorporated this into  
20 the Ten-Year Plan. It's absolutely essential that  
21 it's held its place. It's been there for the last  
22 couple of iterations of the Ten-Year Plans, and  
23 that -- that's really key.

1                   And you've -- you've engaged me in  
2 helping solicit that TIGER grant. It seems like  
3 it's really a valuable pool of resources to  
4 contribute to this project, and I hope you'll keep  
5 the community and me and others who see that as  
6 really important to fulfilling some of the  
7 community's interests and the State's interests.

8                   But that is a significant amount of money  
9 that would contribute on top of the 26 million, so  
10 I think it's really important to keep people  
11 informed of the process and how that -- how we're  
12 competing for that so that we can use our  
13 Congressional Delegation and continue to -- to  
14 keep lots of people informed of how important  
15 those dollars are to this infrastructure  
16 improvement.

17                   And, finally, I'd just say that --

18                   (The court reporter asks Senator Kahn to  
19 speak louder.)

20                   SENATOR KAHN: Okay. Sorry. You know, I  
21 think the community input really is vital here, so  
22 I'm here to take notes, listen, and if there are  
23 ways that folks feel that further advocacy is

1           needed, I know that I, together with your State  
2           Representatives who are here, Cathryn Harvey and  
3           Mike Abbott, I'm sure that all of us will be very  
4           glad to convey to our legislative colleagues as  
5           well as the Department key input that comes from  
6           the -- from the community. So thank you for the  
7           opportunity to say something, Mr. Chairman.

8                         CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. Any other elected  
9           officials or town officials? Yes, Mike. Why  
10          don't you identify yourself with your last name.

11                        REPRESENTATIVE ABBOTT: Yeah. My name is  
12          Michael Abbott. I'm a State Representative for  
13          Cheshire District One, which is the Towns of  
14          Chesterfield, Hinsdale, Walpole, and Westmoreland.  
15          This project has been going on or in the works  
16          since basically 19 -- 1973, and it has been on and  
17          off the Ten-Year Plan from -- going from that time  
18          forward.

19                        I think that Smoky Smith, who served for  
20          a long time as a State Representative, was an  
21          advocate for this project, and I think that it's  
22          been thoroughly vetted and explored, and its time  
23          has come.

1                   And I think that any delay in its  
2                   implementation would have a very detrimental  
3                   effect on the economic, social, and basically the  
4                   safety concerns of the Hinsdale community and all  
5                   the other communities along Route 119. So I hope  
6                   that the Commission will see fit to continue this.

7                   And I am seeking the Legislature put a  
8                   priority on being put on the House Committee for  
9                   Public Works and Highways, and this was one of the  
10                  bigger concerns that was addressed by the D.O.T.  
11                  yesterday afternoon where I listened to their  
12                  presentation on the Ten-Year Plan. So I think  
13                  it's very important, as I said, that this go  
14                  forward.

15                  CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Excuse me.  
16                  Any other elected officials or town officials that  
17                  would like to speak? Okay. I'll open it up for  
18                  public comment. Again, in terms so we can keep a  
19                  record, if -- if you want to speak, you can do  
20                  this before or after, fill out -- fill out the  
21                  card on the table there, but come to the  
22                  microphone and identify yourself and your address.  
23                  Yes, sir.

1 DANIEL COTTER: I'm Daniel Cotter. I'm  
2 the Facilities Director for Marlboro College. We  
3 own the property at 28 Vernon Street, Route 142.  
4 Same thing. My only concern is the effect on our  
5 parking spaces. In all the conversations before,  
6 it was going to affect a couple of spots. This is  
7 the first time I've seen this drawing, and it ends  
8 up being about 25 percent of our parking.

9 If -- again, I haven't had time to look  
10 through it and lay out our parking on top of that,  
11 but it's a significant impact on our parking. So  
12 I would hope that the Commission and the designers  
13 would do everything they could to maintain as many  
14 of the spots in that lot as possible because, as  
15 you know, parking in Brattleboro is horrid, and  
16 every space is valuable.

17 Another question that I have was on this.  
18 Our property is in Vermont. Is it the same  
19 process?

20 MR. LABONTE: I would have to refer you  
21 to the Vermont side.

22 DANIEL COTTER: Okay. Then we'll talk  
23 later. Thank you.

1 MR. LABONTE: Did you want to comment?

2 CHRIS BAKER: Chris Baker with VTrans.

3 The process in Vermont is similar to what was  
4 described for the right-of-way process in New  
5 Hampshire. Within Vermont, the plans need to be  
6 developed slightly further to see the impacts and  
7 with a successful commission hearing. That will  
8 be done subsequent to this meeting.

9 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Did anyone on the panel  
10 want to speak about the parking or is that  
11 something that can be discussed individually?  
12 Okay. Is there any other questions? Yes, sir.

13 MIKE MULLIGAN: Hi. Hi. I'm Mike  
14 Mulligan. I live on Pine Road. I got -- I got  
15 two -- two -- two questions. Like if you go into  
16 the old Wal-Mart, is that -- is there going to be  
17 like a separate slow down lane? You know, you get  
18 off the high -- you get off the main road, and you  
19 have a -- you have a slow down lane. Can you make  
20 that right turn into that Wal-Mart? Is that -- is  
21 that going to be a --

22 MR. LYFORD: Yes, there will be a right  
23 turn lane there.

1                   MIKE MULLIGAN: Are there -- are there  
2 gonna be any lights?

3                   MR. LYFORD: There will be signals, yep.

4                   MIKE MULLIGAN: Could you show me how a  
5 person would get back and forth on a bike or a  
6 pedestrian might?

7                   MR. LYFORD: Trent, can you?

8                   MR. ZANES: Sure. Okay. Yes. Just like  
9 any other signalized intersection, there will be a  
10 four-foot shoulder that a bicyclist could continue  
11 on through when the light is green or they could  
12 actually get into the through lane and drive like  
13 a vehicle through the intersection.

14                   And then of course the same thing coming  
15 eastbound from Vermont. If they want to make a  
16 left-hand turn, they can get right into the left  
17 turn lane and -- and make that turn same as a  
18 vehicle.

19                   MIKE MULLIGAN: Okay. Thank you.

20                   MR. ZANES: You're welcome.

21                   MIKE MULLIGAN: I just wanted to say this  
22 is like -- this is a miracle really when you get  
23 down to it. It's unbelievable. There's been all



1           sorts of trouble and backup. People's cars backed  
2           up for miles.

3                     I spent a lot of time on the bridge.  
4           Um-hum. Here comes trouble. You know, the  
5           politicians say they did one thing, and I'll tell  
6           you that the bridge committee and essentially the  
7           local politicians for decades were negligent in  
8           not organizing themselves so that they could -- so  
9           that they could get that bridge repaired.

10                    I spent a lot of time, three years. I  
11           got arrested on that bridge for pulling up boards  
12           on the bridge. They -- they weren't nailed down.  
13           The -- I got the boards replaced, but it cost me  
14           \$1,500, so I had a process for a number of years  
15           of protesting on the bridge.

16                    Did you know that the bridge is made out  
17           of rivets? I mean, there's no modern welding or  
18           anything like that. Um -- built in 1921. You  
19           know, the Titanic and these two bridges, what they  
20           have in common are rivets that hold the bridge  
21           together.

22                    I got on my blog. I crawled all over  
23           that bridge -- lucky I didn't get arrested more

1 times -- and pictured up, and it's a disgusting  
2 bridge. I stood out on the highway, made an ass  
3 of myself.

4 One cop came up to me, and she was  
5 complaining about well, your sign. I can't read  
6 your signs. And so I just made my signs bigger so  
7 she could read 'em. And so this process went on.  
8 I was the talk of the town. I created a  
9 controversy walking back and forth.

10 I was dressed up as the bridge angel if  
11 people remember. And essentially I'd give -- I'd  
12 bless them as they went across the bridge in case  
13 the bridge collapsed. That bridge is in dire  
14 condition, and -- and this thing should have been  
15 replaced decades ago.

16 It's disgraceful how much money we spend  
17 on infrastructure in New Hampshire. The D.O.T. --  
18 the New Hampshire D.O.T. is continuously in  
19 trouble, underfunded. Everything from bridge  
20 inspections to other projects are in terrible  
21 conditions. You know, we don't like taxes. We  
22 don't like schools. We don't like --

23 (The court reporter asks Mr. Mulligan to

1 speak louder.)

2 MIKE MULLIGAN: So, you know -- so I  
3 created a scene on the bridge. I'll tell you  
4 another thing is that the majority -- at least  
5 half of the traffic is out-of-staters and all  
6 sorts of people from Connecticut, New York, of  
7 course Massachusetts. A tremendous amount of, you  
8 know, traffic to and from our communities and  
9 stuff.

10 And so essentially, not just Hinsdale but  
11 a lot of the communities around here, they -- I  
12 was notorious on greeting a lot of people at that  
13 bridge. And I just want you to know that, you  
14 know, like I said, the bridge committee for years  
15 didn't do nothing.

16 I came on the scene and made an asshole  
17 of myself, and within a few short years -- I mean,  
18 for three years essentially -- oh. The  
19 controversy in town about me and within my family  
20 and stuff like that. So, anyways, the short  
21 story, I propose -- I propose to name the bridge  
22 the Mike Mulligan Memorial Bridge. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Okay. The

1 man with the hat.

2 JOE CONROY: My name is Joe Conroy, and  
3 I'm a resident of Hinsdale, also on the budget  
4 committee in this town. As far as keeping the old  
5 bridges, I think they need to be taken down. A  
6 couple of reasons.

7 The State doesn't seem to have enough  
8 money to maintain the Chesterfield Bridge over  
9 here on Route 9. There was a nice group in  
10 Chesterfield that got together and wanted to keep  
11 that bridge up and keep things going. I  
12 personally go up that river on my boat. There is  
13 pieces of that bridge that fell off in front of me  
14 as I was going up the river, so obvious it's not  
15 in good shape.

16 The State doesn't seem to have enough  
17 money to maintain it. It was in the newspaper  
18 they don't have the money to paint it. So what's  
19 going to happen to it? It's going to fall down  
20 eventually. It's the same as these two bridges.  
21 What are we going to do with them? Let 'em rot?  
22 Fall into the river?

23 Also, presently, from reading in the

1 paper, somebody in the State said it's going to be  
2 approximately two million dollars to take these  
3 two bridges down. If we keep those bridges, 10  
4 years from now what's it going to cost to take  
5 those bridges down? 10 million dollars? Eight  
6 million dollars? The taxpayers got to pay for  
7 that. The State's gonna pay for it, but that  
8 comes out of our pocket, the people that live  
9 here.

10 So if we take 'em down now, we're going  
11 to be definitely saving money. Plus, if you take  
12 'em down, just think. Maybe somebody in one of  
13 the towns around here might get a little boat, a  
14 pontoon boat or something, and run tours to the  
15 island.

16 That's quite an historical island. As  
17 far as keeping the island open and doing something  
18 on it, if you take the time to go down there,  
19 which I have quite a few times around the island  
20 fishing, most of that island is swamp. The left  
21 side of it where this new bridge is going is all  
22 swamp. The upper river side is just about all  
23 swamp.

1                   So what are you gonna do? Let people  
2 have a picnic in the middle of the existing road  
3 that's there? Come on. I think we'd be further  
4 ahead to spend the two million or what it's gonna  
5 cost to take these bridges down now instead of  
6 waiting eight or 10 years when they're gonna be  
7 falling in the river because the State can't  
8 afford -- how many years did it take to do this?  
9 How many years is it gonna take to take them down?  
10 Another 10, 12 million dollars to take 'em down 10  
11 years from now? Let's do it now.

12                   CHAIRMAN CLARK: Would you like to speak,  
13 Mr. Lindsey?

14                   STEVE LINDSEY: Thank you, Commissioner.  
15 Whoops. A little close here. I love this hall  
16 we're in here. Isn't it beautiful? My name's  
17 Steve Lindsey from Keene, New Hampshire, and I'm a  
18 former State Rep. And I'm the one that submitted  
19 the bills for naming the two older bridges the  
20 heritage structures, that the previous speaker  
21 would like to see removed, and I come here tonight  
22 to ask the D.O.T. to stay the course and to find  
23 those funds and to preserve the bridges.

1                   And my reasoning is several-fold, and  
2 I'll try not to take too long witht them. The  
3 first is the island. It's a wonderful public  
4 space. It's a place for the public to go in  
5 nature. It's access to the river. How many other  
6 places have a beautiful river, swamp or not, where  
7 this island is there to watch birds, to get away  
8 from the hustle and bustle of downtown  
9 Brattleboro?

10                   Brattleboro doesn't really have  
11 waterfront. Not really. The railroad  
12 right-of-way pretty much negates the west bank of  
13 the river. It's a major population center, and  
14 New Hampshire owns the river up -- through a quirk  
15 of fate, up to the Vermont riverbank, so you have  
16 all these people. I think it would be the  
17 gracious thing to do for our partners on the  
18 border to open -- keep the bridges and keep the  
19 island open.

20                   Now, people may argue for removing the  
21 bridges and do what Keene, New Hampshire did with  
22 those 400-foot bicycle bridges, but that funding  
23 is not going to be there much longer, if it's not

1           there now. The idea is to maintain the two  
2           heritage bridges, to maintain something for the  
3           common good for the Commons.

4                         We're building this 1,800-foot,  
5           wonderful, splendid structure for commerce,  
6           supporting the infrastructure. Some people have  
7           called it the bridge to Wal-Mart. That's great.  
8           We should have that bridge for commerce, but we  
9           should maintain the old bridges as heritage  
10          structures, as access to a wonderful public  
11          resource for everyone to gain access to the  
12          island.

13                        Someone mentioned we could put a  
14          stairwell or an elevator down the side of the new  
15          bridge and access the island, but that has ADA  
16          problems, maintenance problems, so please consider  
17          staying the course and maintaining these two  
18          bridges.

19                        They're named, by the way, after local  
20          people. Charles Dana was the founder of the "New  
21          York Sun," the first really modern newspaper in  
22          this country, and he was born in Hinsdale. The  
23          larger of the two bridges on the Brattleboro side



1 was for social activist Anna Hunt Marsh, an early  
2 prominent woman, and we should honor these people,  
3 and we should maintain the bridges. We have a  
4 commitment to our friends in Vermont. Let's keep  
5 the public space open. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. Is there any more  
7 public comment? Hands? Smoky?

8 EDWIN SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
9 My name is Edwin Smith, and what Steve Lindsey  
10 just said, Anna Hunt Marsh in 1834 left \$10,000 to  
11 establish the Brattleboro Retreat. And her  
12 husband had died about 20 years before, so from  
13 the time he died until she died in 1834 she  
14 amassed \$10,000 which established the Brattleboro  
15 Retreat. Just a side note, but that's -- that's  
16 Anna Hunt Marsh.

17 I think we have to be careful here. If  
18 we keep the bridges and we have the island, if we  
19 don't do something with the island to make it  
20 usable for the people that would -- some of the  
21 former speakers just made reference, we're gonna  
22 have that as a derelict place. There's gonna be  
23 all kinds of stuff going on on the island that

1 nobody will want to go there.

2 So I think that we have to have some kind  
3 of a plan to do something with the island so that  
4 the ordinary citizen can go there and enjoy it  
5 because I think the island does have some very  
6 good attributes.

7 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. I just want  
8 to remind everybody that any other work is sort of  
9 out of the preview -- purview -- excuse me -- of  
10 this project, so that's something that obviously  
11 could happen in a future date if you folks want to  
12 get together and do it. Yes, sir.

13 JAY EBBIGHAUSEN: My name is Jay  
14 Ebbighausen. I live in Hinsdale. I'm on the  
15 advisory committee in various capacities over the  
16 last, you know, several years. I just wanted to  
17 refocus again on some of the needs to the  
18 Commission in that the -- you know, the safety of  
19 the railroad tracks as it is is an impediment to  
20 emergency services going from Hinsdale to  
21 Brattleboro. So that is certainly a concern, one  
22 of the major concerns.

23 Also, you know, from a -- a consumer

1           standpoint -- um -- from Putney Road. My wife got  
2           out of work at -- oh, a little after five today,  
3           and there happened to be a train. And we live in  
4           the northern end of town, and she didn't get home  
5           until 10 minutes of six, which is normally a --  
6           you know, a 15 to 20-minute commute, so that has  
7           been an impact that we've been dealing with for  
8           many years.

9                        The traffic lights in Brattleboro, I  
10           think, have improved the situation, but, again, I  
11           think the bridge is vital to -- to our economic  
12           welfare as well as the -- the consumers in town.

13                       Also, my fear is the clock is ticking on  
14           the existing bridges, and should those bridges be  
15           closed for the citizens of Hinsdale as well as  
16           the -- the business people in Brattleboro, the  
17           commute around to get to Brattleboro and Hinsdale  
18           is atrocious.

19                       You're either going through Chesterfield  
20           or you're going all the way down to Bernardston  
21           and Northfield to come up around. So there really  
22           is no easy way to get there from here. So I  
23           believe the clock is ticking on this project and

1 really needs to stick with the time frame that is  
2 outlined today. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN CLARK: All right. Anybody else  
4 wishes to speak, be heard? Yes, ma'am.

5 MARTHA MAGUIRE: Good evening. Is that  
6 loud enough? I'd like to say hello to everyone.  
7 It's nice to be with you tonight. My name is  
8 Martha Maguire. I'm a Vermont resident, and I  
9 appreciate a lot of work that's gone into this.  
10 I'm a bit of a late comer, but I have a couple of  
11 concerns.

12 Maybe it's because the Brattleboro  
13 Retreat is right in our vicinity, but has there  
14 been any review or concern to people wanting to  
15 harm themselves by jumping off the bridge? And is  
16 there a design that would address that? Now,  
17 granted, it's nowhere near as high as what we've  
18 got on 91. But has that been looked at? That's  
19 one question I have.

20 MR. LYFORD: That has not been looked at.

21 MARTHA MAGUIRE: That might be a  
22 consideration. Secondly, I use 142 for my daily  
23 commute, so I've got more questions that have to

1 do with that impact. I'm trying to get my head  
2 wrapped around this. But it's going to be coming  
3 in a little bit below where the Marlboro College  
4 is right now.

5 Um -- so we all know that the majority of  
6 what's coming off 91 to make its way down 119 is  
7 going to be coming a different route. Is that  
8 correct? I'm very interested in the traffic study  
9 and the impact of how traffic will reroute itself  
10 through the neighborhoods of Brattleboro once this  
11 is completed.

12 Because obviously you think they're gonna  
13 go down Canal Street, Route 5 and make that swing  
14 down 142 to then come over the bridge? I need  
15 some clarification here.

16 MR. LYFORD: Trent, can you talk about  
17 that?

18 MR. ZANES: Yes. We're already aware  
19 that there is a significant amount of truck  
20 traffic on 142 today, so -- and they are making  
21 that -- that turn from Canal Street down 142, so  
22 we know that that's possible. And so they're  
23 already coming through that intersection to get to

1 119. So they'll just be coming a little further  
2 south on 142 to then cross over to 119.

3 We're not expecting necessarily for  
4 trucks to change their routes because if they're  
5 already coming from the north, they're going to  
6 continue to do that. If they're coming from the  
7 south, they'll continue to do that as well.

8 MARTHA MAGUIRE: When you say you're not  
9 expecting that to change is there a study and  
10 evidence that has been done to determine the  
11 impact?

12 MR. ZANES: No, there's no study because  
13 basically the trucks are gonna find the shortest  
14 route to get across anyways.

15 MARTHA MAGUIRE: Exactly.

16 MR. ZANES: And what my point is is that  
17 we can't forecast. We can't predict the future of  
18 anything, let alone where trucks are gonna go, but  
19 I think logically it makes sense that if they're  
20 coming from the north to get to 119, they're gonna  
21 travel a little further to get on the new bridge  
22 and continue on as they do today.

23 MARTHA MAGUIRE: Are you familiar with

1 Cotton Mill Hill?

2 MR. ZANES: I am not.

3 MARTHA MAGUIRE: That would be a  
4 significant thing to get familiar with. The back  
5 closest access to 142. It goes right by the  
6 Brattleboro Middle School and High School.

7 MR. ZANES: Okay.

8 MARTHA MAGUIRE: It was slightly improved  
9 for a very easier wide turn, your massively long  
10 trucks. It's going to become the popular route.  
11 I guarantee it.

12 I bet you a lot of people here in this  
13 room know what I'm talking about. I want -- I  
14 really think that if this is going to go through,  
15 which I -- I think it should, it's beholden to all  
16 the groups, particularly VTrans, to recognize the  
17 impact on the residential neighborhoods above 142.

18 MR. ZANES: But they can make that turn  
19 today? Is that what you said? That curve has  
20 been adjusted for trucks to make that turn?

21 MARTHA MAGUIRE: The top of the hill --

22 MR. ZANES: Um-hum.

23 MARTHA MAGUIRE: -- got widened.

1 MR. ZANES: Um-hum.

2 MARTHA MAGUIRE: The bottom of the hill  
3 is a wicked sharp -- I -- I can't even tell you  
4 what the angle of that would be but tremendously  
5 sharp into a curve. It's horrific -- um -- to  
6 even see someone coming southward as you're  
7 heading off of Cotton Mill Hill south down 142.  
8 It seriously needs to be looked at. I'd just like  
9 to pose that to the -- to the folks involved.  
10 Thank you.

11 MR. ZANES: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Yes, sir, up  
13 in the back.

14 STEVE DIORIO: I was just gonna make a  
15 quick comment.

16 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Please come to the  
17 microphone. State your name and your address for  
18 the minute taker.

19 STEVE DIORIO: Hello. I'm Steve Diorio  
20 from Hinsdale. And my only quick comment was they  
21 can't make that turn now from Cotton Hill to a  
22 left on 142, so they won't. It's impossible to  
23 make that with a tractor-trailer.



1                   CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you for the  
2 clarification. Okay. Let me see. Anyone else  
3 who wants to speak? For the first time? Okay. I  
4 don't see anybody. Anyone that wants to speak for  
5 the second time? Please reidentify yourself, and  
6 make your remarks brief, please.

7                   MIKE MULLIGAN: I'm Mike Mull -- Mike  
8 Mulligan from Hinsdale, New Hampshire. So I spent  
9 a lot of time. The name of that island is Island  
10 Park, and back in the 1800s before we had the dam  
11 and our -- later on, the 20s, public works,  
12 Roosevelt. All my signs when I was up on the  
13 bridge talked about those things.

14                   And so as a way to make money -- as a way  
15 to inject income into our society, we had  
16 infrastructure projects, and we built a bunch of  
17 dam -- flood control dams and -- and -- and such  
18 upstream, and so we haven't had much flooding  
19 since those dams were put in. We still have high  
20 water, but we don't have the same flooding.

21                   Island Park was once a -- before TV, it  
22 was once a baseball field, and -- um -- they had a  
23 nice section orchestra, so a lot of the people did

1           their own entertaining and stuff like that and  
2           baseball games and softball games and stuff. And  
3           then -- um -- and then the early century -- 20th  
4           Century flooding took it out and stuff.

5                       And so I've been on the island a lot. I  
6           mean, if you kind of like cut down most of the  
7           trees, get rid of that -- that -- that -- that  
8           vegetation that really doesn't belong there, and  
9           you -- you put a little filler dirt in there, you,  
10          you know, you make it nice, the embankment and --  
11          for -- for children and picnics and, you know,  
12          walks and stuff like that and to look at the --  
13          the mountain and stuff like that. I'm just  
14          saying.

15                      Um -- another thing. How it's used today  
16          is there's encampments down there. In  
17          Brattleboro, they -- instead of -- people come in.  
18          If they don't have someplace to live, they -- they  
19          give 'em a tent to save money.

20                      And a lot of those people -- I have seen  
21          families down there, you know, drinking. We're  
22          gonna find a body down there one of these days.  
23          It's an isolated, vegetation area. And if we wipe

1 that all out and had nice grass down there, a  
2 couple of lights -- um -- and stuff like that, you  
3 know, that's a way to, you know -- um -- enrich  
4 our lives.

5 You know, people from Brattleboro walking  
6 over there, going to a restaurant, and then going  
7 out there and looking at the mountain, and -- and  
8 it would be a beautiful fishing place. It would  
9 be a beautiful place for a -- you know,  
10 societal -- societal enrichment, if you know what  
11 I mean. Just, you know, flatten it all out -- or  
12 most of it out, a little filler dirt, and it would  
13 be a wonderful place for us all to enjoy. Thank  
14 you.

15 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Okay. Is  
16 there one more? Okay. Come right up.

17 JASON COOPER: My name is Jason Cooper.  
18 I am a resident of Brattleboro. And this project  
19 offers an incredible opportunity to connect  
20 Brattleboro and Hinsdale in another way.  
21 Currently you have the Fort Hill Trail that comes  
22 up the old railroad bed to the Connecticut River  
23 and to the bridge just south of this map.

1           The Town of Brattleboro owns the property  
2           from that bridge all the way up to the gas company  
3           land. And if in the negotiations that you are  
4           doing with the landowner of the gas plant if you  
5           can negotiate a right-of-way or path across their  
6           property, which I assume you'd want anyway because  
7           you will need access to maintain and inspect the  
8           bridge, so to set that up so that it could  
9           possibly be a public access across that.

10           That is the only piece of land that is  
11           not now able to connect the center of downtown  
12           Brattleboro on down through into New Hampshire and  
13           Hinsdale. This would create a bike/pedestrian  
14           trail that would be an incredible enhancement to  
15           the community and take very little investment to  
16           make that be a possibility.

17           Right now the Fort Hill Trail is very  
18           well-used and traveled by New Hampshire residents  
19           and -- and also Vermont residents who go over  
20           there to ride that trail. And to be able to make  
21           that connection coming right into the center of  
22           downtown Brattleboro would be a wonderful  
23           opportunity, and I hope you're able to include

1 that in the project. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Thank you. Okay.

3 Senator Kahn one more time.

4 SENATOR KAHN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 I'm Jay Kahn from Keene and a State Senator for  
6 this region. I -- with some hesitancy that I -- I  
7 think there's something that I've been very  
8 consistent on, Mr. Lyford. I have appreciated the  
9 last time we saw each other in December that I was  
10 able to ask you about how do we accelerate the  
11 project. Is there any potential for that?

12 And I'm satisfied with the time line. I  
13 understand, but I want to push a question to maybe  
14 the chairman of your committee as well as the  
15 D.O.T. as regards the contingencies that you've  
16 built in, financial contingencies into the price.

17 I concur with the sentiment that has been  
18 expressed. This is vital. There can't be a  
19 hiccup in the time frame. And so in establishing  
20 the 26 million-dollar price tag -- um -- what  
21 contingencies have been built into that? And then  
22 within the entire Ten-Year Plan are there  
23 contingencies to address the fact that all right,

1 we're looking out two years almost to the bid  
2 date?

3 And I think the concerns that I've sensed  
4 most as I've talked to people is this just cannot  
5 be delayed. This is very crucial, the project,  
6 for any number of reasons, and I won't -- they  
7 don't need to be reiterated, but so that we can  
8 leave the room understanding contingencies have  
9 been built in, the time frame that exists between  
10 now and the bid date -- uh -- that -- that the  
11 Department will be able to have the agility to  
12 address price constraints down the road.

13 MR. LYFORD: Well, just a little  
14 clarification. What's in the Ten-Year Plan is 46  
15 million dollars, and we've processed a fairly  
16 recent estimate with today's dollars, and it's --  
17 it's right around 40 million dollars with today's  
18 dollars. That's just strictly what the contractor  
19 would bid on.

20 What's in the Ten-Year Plan is an  
21 inflated number out to 2023, I think it is, so  
22 that takes into account the inflation that will  
23 happen between now and when it's constructed. So

1           that -- I guess that's one contingency that we  
2           have.

3                       The other thing that's in the Ten-Year  
4           Plan is a -- it's not really a contingency, but  
5           it's a cost. It's a 10 percent indirect cost,  
6           which is really overhead for the Department.  
7           So -- so our 40 million dollars is a pretty good  
8           number in today's numbers, and we actually have  
9           broken it down into specific items and quantities,  
10          so we feel pretty comfortable with that.  
11          Obviously if construction prices go up for some  
12          reason all of a sudden, we won't capture that, but  
13          we do capture inflation.

14                      CHAIRMAN CLARK:    Senator Kahn.

15                      SENATOR KAHN:    If I can follow on that  
16          question. In that 40 million dollars, I believe  
17          there are two components. One is 26. Another is  
18          13. And the 13, isn't it revolving around the  
19          TIGER grant? Just clarify it for me. Maybe I'm  
20          confused.

21                      MR. LYFORD:    So the TIGER grant has a  
22          total -- a total construction cost of 50 million  
23          dollars. And so it's essentially 10 million

1 dollars more -- nine to 10 million dollars more  
2 than what we're carrying for the construction cost  
3 of the existing bridge -- of the new bridge, I  
4 mean.

5 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. Yes, sir.

6 DANIEL COTTER: I spoke earlier. Dan  
7 Cotter. I spoke earlier as a representative of a  
8 property owner. This is a personal -- as a  
9 recreational user of the river. That's a very big  
10 recreational area, the water itself.

11 Is the plan to maintain access up and  
12 down the river through the whole construction or  
13 you foresee, you know, doing like the bridge over  
14 91 -- on 91 where they built both ends to the  
15 middle, and potentially both sides of that could  
16 be unpassable? Just a curiosity.

17 MR. LYFORD: So we -- we do anticipate  
18 having the river available all the time. We think  
19 the contractor will build a trestle out from the  
20 New Hampshire side to be able to build these piers  
21 in the river.

22 But we're gonna recommend that the bottom  
23 of the trestle be at least as high as the bottom



1 of the existing bridges so anybody that can go  
2 through today would be able to go through during  
3 construction.

4 CHAIRMAN CLARK: Okay. Anyone else who  
5 would like to speak? I'm not seeing anyone, so  
6 I'd like to remind you all you have 10 days from  
7 tonight to present any comments that you'd like  
8 to -- to the D.O.T.

9 There should be a -- something there with  
10 an address around here somewhere. So if there's  
11 no one else who would like to comment, I'm going  
12 to adjourn the meeting.

13 (The hearing was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.)  
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ERRATA SHEET

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**C E R T I F I C A T E**

1  
2 I, Debra L. Mekula, a Licensed Court  
3 Reporter and Justice of the Peace in and for the  
4 State of New Hampshire, do hereby certify that the  
5 foregoing, to the best of my knowledge, skill and  
6 ability, is a true and accurate transcript of my  
7 stenographic notes of the New Hampshire Department  
8 of Transportation, Bureau of Right-of-Way  
9 Highway Layout Commission Public Hearing, taken at  
10 the place and under the circumstances present on  
11 the date hereinbefore set forth.

12 I further certify that I am neither attorney  
13 or counsel for, nor related to or employed by any  
14 of the parties to the action in which this public  
15 hearing was taken, and further that I am not a  
16 relative or employee of any attorney or counsel  
17 employed in this case, nor am I financially  
18 interested in this action. Signed this 8th day of  
19 February, 2018.

20  
21 ~~NOT A FORMAL PART OF THE RECORD~~  
22 Debra L. Mekula, LCR, RMR  
23 Licensed Court Reporter  
Registered Merit Reporter  
N.H. LCR No. 26 (RSA 310-A)

Jan. 18,2018

To the Hinsdale/Brattleboro Bridge Committee 2018:

It would seem appropriate to name the new bridge the "Col. Ebenezer Hinsdale Bridge" as the town of Hinsdale was incorporated in 1753 with Col. Hinsdale as its leading citizen.

Likewise, if the State is committed to keep the "Anna Hunt Marsh and the Charles Dana" bridges as walkway/bike paths, the metal dedication plates should be refurbished to honor their historical contributions to the Brattleboro/Hinsdale area.

By using bridge lighting of a historical nature, similar to the downtown lighting of Brattleboro, VT, it would be complementary aesthetically and act as a welcoming beacon to the town of Hinsdale.

Submitted by: Frances K. Boucher, Hinsdale, NH

January 18, 2018

Re: HINSDALE-BRATTLEBORO A004(152); 12210C  
PUBLIC HEARING  
HINSDALE TOWN HALL

RECEIVED  
COMMISSIONERS OFFICE

JAN 22 2018

Attention: Terry Clark, Commission Chair

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION

Dear Sir:

Due to information received during the Public Hearing process for the above-referenced project I(we) hereby make the following request of the Commission:

*see attached description and 2 maps*

I (we) understand that I (we) will be notified in writing of the Commission's decision regarding this request. I(we) also understand that this request will be included as part of the official record.

Signed: *Malcolm Moore*

Name: *Malcolm Moore*  
(Please Print)

Address: *PO Box 123*  
*Marlboro VT*  
*05344*

Phone: # *802-254-5015*

NH DOT Project Parcel # \_\_\_\_\_

To: Director of Project Development  
New Hampshire DOT  
P. O. Box 483  
Concord NH 03302-0483

Re: Hinsdale-Brattleboro bridge project A004(152); 12210C

Comment on hearing in Hinsdale NH, January 18, 2018

Friends of the West River Trail request that the Hinsdale-Brattleboro bridge project include acquisition of a public recreation easement across land of Barrows & Fisher Oil Co. in Brattleboro, so that bicycles and pedestrians can pass under the new bridge at its west end. See two attached maps with the requested easement highlighted in orange.

The Town of Brattleboro now owns (388/164) all other land in a strip between the existing railroad line and the Connecticut River, from Bridge street in Brattleboro to the un-used railroad bridge over the CT river and the Fort Hill Rail Trail. Acquiring an easement across this small remaining parcel will enable commercial and bicycle/pedestrian connection from downtown Brattleboro to 60 miles of rail trails in New Hampshire.

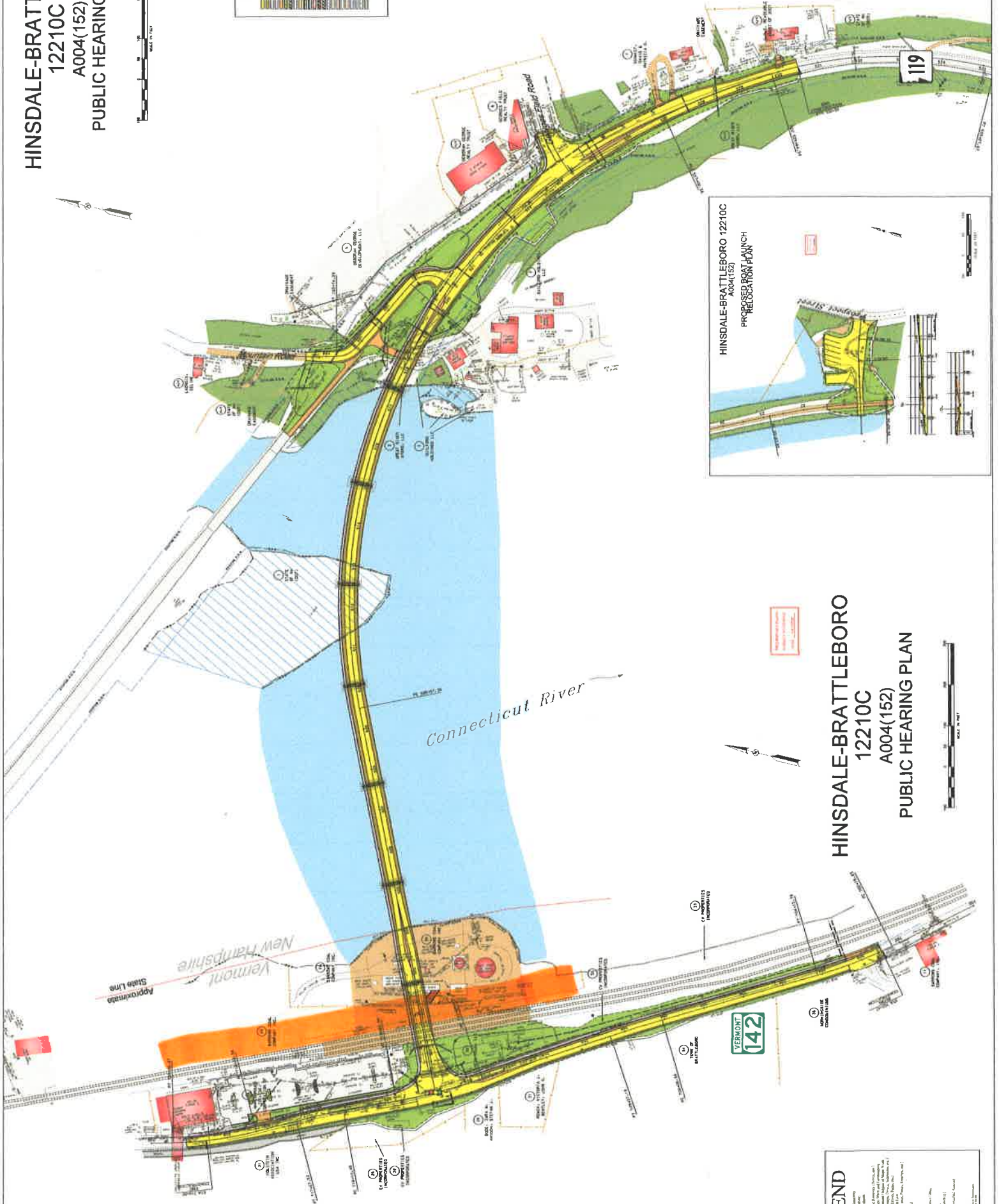
Friends of the West River Trail  
138 Elliot Street  
Brattleboro VT 05301

**HINSDALE-BRATTLEBORO  
12210C  
A004(152)  
PUBLIC HEARING PLAN**



**LEGEND**

	Proposed Project
	Right of Way
	Easements
	Wetlands
	Flood Hazard
	State Route 142
	State Route 119
	Water Bodies
	Wetland Buffer
	Flood Hazard Buffer
	Riparian Buffer
	Wetland Mitigation
	Wetland Avoidance
	Wetland Relocation
	Wetland Compensation
	Wetland Restoration
	Wetland Creation
	Wetland Enhancement
	Wetland Preservation



**LEGEND**

	Proposed Project
	Right of Way
	Easements
	Wetlands
	Flood Hazard
	State Route 142
	State Route 119
	Water Bodies
	Wetland Buffer
	Flood Hazard Buffer
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	Wetland Mitigation
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	Wetland Compensation
	Wetland Restoration
	Wetland Creation
	Wetland Enhancement
	Wetland Preservation

**HINSDALE-BRATTLEBORO  
12210C  
A004(152)  
PUBLIC HEARING PLAN**





Town

Barrows Coal

proposed bridge alignment

Town

RR station

Railroad

Rte 142

Railroad

Rte 142

Town

WWTP

Cersosimo

railroad bridge



1/24/2018

TO:

Mr. Peter E. Stamnas *PES 1/26/18*  
Director of Project Development  
New Hampshire Department of Transportation  
7 Hazen Drive, P.O. Box 483  
John O. Morton Building Concord, New Hampshire 03302-0483  
80-859-1697

RECEIVED  
COMMISSIONERS OFFICE  
JAN 26 2018  
THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION

FROM;

David and Patricia Schmidt  
54 Christopher Terrace  
West Springfield, MA 01089  
phone: 413-237-4321  
email: [david.mrsafety@gmail.com](mailto:david.mrsafety@gmail.com)

RE: The Hinsdale/Brattleboro Bridge Project as it impacts the property we own at 1332 Brattleboro Rd. Hinsdale, NH 03451

Dear Mr. Stamnas and to whomever else this may concern:

My wife and I own the property located at 1332 Brattleboro Road in Hinsdale NH. It is a large historic early 1900's three story Colonial adjacent to Georges Field on Rt 119. I believe our property has been identified in your records as PARCEL 7 or a part of it for reference purposes. It is clearly indicated on the project map as a house with several out buildings and a circular driveway. To our right is a small ranch home. We are the only two residences to the right of the Georges Field access Rd. It is a two acre parcel with approximately 400 feet of road frontage zoned Roadside Commercial by the Town of Hinsdale. We remodeled it and at great expense converted it to house three apartments. We currently live out of state and rent out the apartments upon which we depend to pay for the expense and upkeep of the property. We depend on that income and the ability to keep and maintain occupancy for that purpose.

Unfortunately we were unable to attend the meeting on January 19, 2018 at the Hinsdale Town Hall. However we reviewed the project documents and proposal and site plan maps and mock-ups provided online with the NH DOT. We are responding to the invitation by DOT for written statements and concerns to be sent to be included in the public hearing record. We respectfully submit the following, for the record, as our response and concerns:

It appears from the plans we have reviewed on the NH DOT web site that the proposed new bridge from Brattleboro Vermont to our very "doorstep", will greatly impact our property on the Hinsdale side and will forever change our view and quiet enjoyment of our property and may create a hardship for our tenants during the construction and roadway reconfiguration in front of our house, and may present a number of other issues. As far as we can see, our property and investment is the most impacted of all on the New Hampshire side of the Bridge project.

If it were a perfect world we would not wish for these changes to occur, but realizing the many needs

of the community, we see in general the benefits of and the need for the project and the replacement of the deteriorating and antiquated bridges that exist now and the further improvement of the dysfunctional intersection on the Vt side referred to as "Malfunction Junction" and the dangers inherent in that entire cluster of railroad tracks and heavy traffic from all sides which will only get worst with time.

That said... we have a number of specific concerns which we would like addressed and considered while still many details are being worked out:

1. **Roadway Height:** Where the new road merges into our driveways - Will the new height necessitate the need to add fill and regrade our driveway entrances? Will the roadway construction ensure we have a new entrance that is properly graded and integrates into our driveway so that we will not incur the cost of doing that ourselves and not present difficulty of movement in and out from the main highway? Will that grading be done by the DOT so that if the roadway is higher that water run-off from our driveway and the mountain behind us will not become dammed as to prevent its drainage into the street and not be allowed to become blocked and puddled? Would drainage be put in as to prevent this from happening if the roadway becomes higher than its present level?
2. **Septic Leech-field Encroachment:** Will what appears to be a widening of the roadway for the inclusion of full breakdown lanes not impinge upon our land and frontage parallel to and on the side of the street where our building is located?

This is significant to us because a new septic field had been installed 8 years ago to the front right side of our building. That was just barely able to meet the requirements of the state for septic setback from the roadway at that time. Our concern here is that if there is a loss due to road widening or changes on that side it may have a negative or illegal impact to our leech-field.

3. **Covert Drainage:** There is also a fairly high embankment with drainage for water runoff from the mountain behind our property. If that covert would be changed or cause the formation of a pond due to the loss of, or inadequacy of the drainage covert nearby that feeds under the highway to the other side of the road, we are concerned with standing water and the formation of a pond is possible in addition to possible impact into our leech-field. If that be the case, we would prefer any alternative for the roadway to expand on the river side of the highway or a viable remedy be made by the DOT.
4. **Snow Plowing** by the State in front of our property has long been a contention of difficulty for us because of the already widened roadway that opens to three lanes directly in front of our driveways. The Plow crews responsible for our stretch of road have, in our opinion, failed to be sensitive to that fact. As it is now, Rt 119 is a two single lane road. Typically snow plowing pushes one lane of snow off to the side along this route. As with many roads like this that require plowing, every one's driveway along such routes receive their fair share of snow berms blocking their driveways and must deal with it. That is the nature of that business.

However in our case we get an unfair amount of snow pushed into our driveway - THREE LANES of SNOW to be exact! 1. A drive lane . 2. A turning lane to direct traffic into the Georges Field access road at the end of our property. 3. A middle or central turn lane that

had been added to give easier access to our property years ago when the road was redone for the Old Walmart at Georges field. Furthermore perhaps one might consider the existing break-down lane a forth. **FOUR LANES OF SNOW PLOWED INTO OUR DRIVEWAY AND MAILBOXES.**

It is impossible to deal with this and continues to be a source of frustration and difficulty. Especially during heavy and wet snow, the snow Berms left in our driveway often harden rock-hard, and are at times so high you cannot drive through them or over them at all. I have called and requested the State Crew out of Winchester to try to pay better attention to this stretch in front of our house. The fact is that we are the very end of the run. The Plows have to slow and turn around at the entrance to Georges field. We have only asked for a final sweep of the snow from away from our driveway and mailboxes instead of leaving it there. There has got to be a better way. We are not asking for preferential treatment beyond a reasonable effort to not leave us blocked-in with excessive amounts of snow from 3-4 lanes during snow storms.

With the new bridge and the possibility of a wider roadway we fear the problem will only be exacerbated and wish to have this situation better evaluated and a reasonable solution provided. When getting to our driveways care can be easily executed to shift the plow blade away and then stop and go back and push the snow farther down the line. This is a special circumstance and needn't be a burden if a professional driver with some skill and expertise applies themselves to the task and not take the easy road of projecting a huge amount of snow into our driveway going 40 miles an hour. It can be argued; "we can't do that"... but you can if you want to and its no big deal at the end of the run. But thats just my humble opinion.

**5. Speed Limitation:** There is a huge tendency for careless and inconsiderate drivers to **NOT** adhere to speed limits along this stretch of road. The speed limit to the southeast of our property along Rt. 119 is 50 miles per hour from around the location of Old Brattleboro Rd. Hinsdale going westerly on Rt. 119 approaching our property. The speed limit then drops to 35 miles an hour with only one small sign existing just prior to reaching the small white house directly to the right of our property. No one slows down. In fact I swear they are going 60 to 70 miles per hour down that entire stretch of road as if it were the Autobahn. This is a very dangerous situation. Drivers seem to pass constantly in the breakdown lane to the right of a left turning vehicle as well. Drivers will also tailgate and beep their horns there and risk passing if another driver dares go speed limit even though it is a no-passing area there. A sad commentary of the lack of respect to speed limit laws that the average driver assumes is their right. I'm sure we are preaching to the choir here.

We would like these violations to be deterred with better signage and warnings of some sort. The installation of a series of routed or grooved lines into the roadbed across the entire lane similar to that which can be found along RT 91 separating the breakdown lane from the main roadway. This has worked as an effective tool to alert lazy drivers of a critical situation occurring. The noise created as tires cross there indentations can alert a driver to pay attention or slow down. The problem of speeding now is commonplace and My tenants fear at times just to walk out to their mailboxes. Something better and more proactive needs to be done. What about a **FLASHING WARNING LIGHT** or some sort of solar powered warning sign to indicate to **SLOW DOWN**. How about a camera monitoring system that will issue tickets to perpetrators? Better yet, is it possible to install a radar alert system that display car speed and warn to slow down?

Unfortunately there are many drivers that simply do not care and they should be fined. The police are not able to monitor this very effectively the way things are. The DOT could probably substantially subsidize some of the project with revenue from fines generated by some kind of high tech creative enforcement apparatus if it were built into the project.

6. **Neglect of Side of roadway overgrowth and maintenance:** Another area of concern along the portion of Rt. 119 directly across the street from our property is the years of neglect to the steep drop-off filled with boulders that has become overgrown with Poison Ivy, sumac, and vines and trees and bushes of various sizes. This overgrowth of invasive plant material now spoils our once magnificent view of the river. It is also a dumping ground for trash and debris. We would like to see this issue addressed so that the bridge project enhances this stretch of highway upon approach as it had at one time before its neglect. Brush control of some sort that will effectively clear up growth would be reasonable from our point of view. The electric company had utilized similar tactics to address the right of way behind our property very effectively not too many years past. We want our view back!

7. **On the issue of sidewalks:** It appears that a sidewalk will reach past our property and up to the little white house to the right of us. That appears to be a good thing especially if it ties into a walkway or bike path on our side of the road leading to the existing bridges and to Brattleboro. This is a key area of recreational activity and would join our isolated world on the Hinsdale side to Brattleboro via the Bridges by the Whetstone, and visa versa. Will the walkway be done in a manner to help protect walkers and bikers and have a safety zone from the bridge traffic? Could the traffic light at the entrance to Georges field allow marked areas in the road for pedestrian and bicycle crossings to the field, to the path to the old bridges and across the street to the bridge as well?

Would the installation of a sidewalk and widening of the roadway require a loss of our property along the road frontage that is currently fenced on the Georges field side of our property and if so will the fence be replaced?

8. **Concerning the disruption of access** by my tenants when roadway is being tied in and reconfigured: we would like to be assured that efforts will be made to transition and accommodate our needs for our driveway to remain open for business.

9. **Headlight and Noise Pollution:** It appears that by the way the roadway will curve to merge with RT.119 that *at night* there will be a spotlight affect. Every car crossing the bridge at night will illuminate the front of our home and shine into the windows and onto the porches of our building, thus becoming a nuisance and affect the privacy of our inhabitants and the enjoyment of their sitting spaces out front. Had the bridge been designed to merge just below the access road to Georges field, or more desirably merge with Rt. 119 to the south east of our property somewhere beyond the house to the right of us, the noise and glaring lights would not be at issue. The decibel level of noise now is such that when one is outside in the front of the house a conversation cannot be comfortably had. It's got to be very loud not to hear someone talk and where you have to yell to be heard or wait for the traffic to go by. In our estimation the amount of new traffic and growth of the commercial district in Hinsdale will only become worst. A chainsaw might be quieter. We feel we will be held hostage

forever more to the smell of automobile exhaust, the noise of traffic, and the blinding headlights of approaching night-time traffic on a daily basis. The affect of this in our estimation will be detrimental to a residential environment and hurt our rentals. Who wants to live at the entrance of a massive bridge with tens of thousands of cars barreling into your front yard continuously. We fear this will hurt our ability to attract and keep well paying tenants. One might as well build a train station in our front yard! What can be done? Can some sort of screen be erected to prevent the glare of headlights, either on the railing system or along the approach of the curve or the bridge to minimize this phenomena.

**\* Side Note:** When the House was first built at the turn of the century by the Shorling Family, they did not have a roadway in their front yard. As far as we know the front lawn went across the present Rt 119 to the drop-off on the other side with an unspoiled view of the river. Additionally the close proximity to Island park that once existed by the present bridges made it a beautifully unique and majestic setting to have a home. All that has been changed now and there have been many changes over the last hundred years or so that have impacted what is now known as our property. Now the proposed bridge will further change and force an environmental assault upon us and to our space. Our eyes and ears and noses we will be subjected to a new kind of pollution ... call it progress. From our perspective we see it as "Bridge Pollution".

**In conclusion** we appeal to the project managers, architects, engineers, and decision makers at DOT to find a way to slightly twist the bridge merger into 119 to the south east of our property further down a bit, or westerly to around or before the access road to Georges field westerly or somewhere in that vicinity and preserve our delightful home environment. The Georges field area parking lot and the backside of retail shops there are the predominate parallel structures along RT. 119I and are the least likely impacted by noise, and headlights and construction than our property. Sometime in the near future we had been looking forward to retiring and living on our property. Now we are having second thoughts and fear our time and investment over the last eight years will be diminished or lost and the future of our place in its residential sense will be scarred beyond repair.

Additionally, we are yet to understand how on the Vermont side there will be an improvement to the move of traffic that avoids malfunction junction and doesn't get bottlenecked there, or why there seems to be no plan of integrating traffic into Rt 91 more directly than having to go through an area where on Canal Street, the roadway has little capacity to accommodate more traffic in the future. If traffic is diverted to the Museum there would be a hairpin turn. Traffic approaching from Exit 1 of RT. 91 would encounter similar delays and congestion there - how does that not become the Achilles heal of the entire flow and ease of access to the Bridge?

... but that's another question altogether.

We have thought about these things as best as we can at this time within the last week now that the information has become available to us. The idea of a bridge had only been a postponed vision for many years now. Their was speculation it would merge just below the entrance to Georges field by the Marina there. That seemed a less innocuous prospect than the reality it has become today. We believe that the above list are legitimate concerns and not just a gripe session. The system is big, and we are little people just trying to live the American Dream the best we can. If you think about it, we all, as

human beings, want to live free. To those in New Hampshire, they would rather die if they can't be free from tyranny; we'd rather not die though and I'd like to believe that Tyranny no longer exists.

The State, and the people who work for the state work for the people. After many years, many studies have been done and much money has been spent for the DOT to comply and respond to the growing needs of society and the antiquated infrastructure of the Transportation grid in order to do their due diligence and to do the right thing and meet the needs of the environment and public safety for all. We understand it is not an easy job and is often a thankless one. Funding is always scarce or inconvenient, Timing is everything.

But the time is now... and the money is approved. All we ask is for those who are decision makers and planners and facilitators to please consider our requests as part of the scope of this new environment, if you will, and seriously consider what can be done for our situation as if you were in our shoes. We are seeking some meaningful relief that our concerns will be addressed and a reasonable effort and assurance be made to remedy them and not sweep them under the carpet or bulldoze them into oblivion.

Sincerely,

David and Patricia Schmidt

January 18, 2018

Re: HINSDALE-BRATTLEBORO A004(152); 12210C  
PUBLIC HEARING  
HINSDALE TOWN HALL

RECEIVED  
COMMISSIONERS OFFICE

JAN 26 2018

Attention: Terry Clark, Commission Chair

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION

Dear Sir:

Due to information received during the Public Hearing process for the above-referenced project I(we) hereby make the following request of the Commission:

- Have studies been made public regarding the potential impact of building and maintaining dws structure over the Barrows Oil tanks?
- When can tenants expect to hear and how much notice will be given for eviction time lines?
- Where can I find information regarding rights of tenants in cases such as this?
- Who should be my contact person in VT?

I (we) understand that I (we) will be notified in writing of the Commission's decision regarding this request. I(we) also understand that this request will be included as part of the official record.

Signed: Debra M. Theriault

Name: Debra M. Theriault  
(Please Print)

Address: 94 Vernon St, Brattleboro

Mailing address:  
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NH DOT Project Parcel # A004 (152)