

Public Outreach / Public Information Meeting

NHDOT Project 29486

South Bennington Road over Russell Brook (Bridge No. 099/080)

Bennington, NH

Date/Time: January 30, 2019 / 7:00 PM

Place: Pierce Elementary School
19 Main St.
Bennington, NH

Next Meeting: N/A

Attendees: See Sign-In Sheet

Absentees: N/A

Distribution: NHDOT

A Public Outreach / Public Information Meeting for the South Bennington Rd. bridge over Russell Brook rehabilitation / replacement project was held in the Pierce Elementary School Multipurpose Room on January 30, 2019. David Scott, Meli Dube, and Jason Tremblay of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) presented the project to inform the public and to gather input and feedback regarding the proposed work.

David Scott opened the meeting at 7 PM by introducing NHDOT representatives and John Stockton of Stantec Consulting Services, the engineering design consultant for the project. Mr. Scott explained the purpose of this meeting was to present the project to interested parties, to answer questions about the proposed work, and gather information regarding local preferences, experiences, and knowledge of the project area. Of particular interest is local insight that will not be readily apparent to those unfamiliar with the project area.

Mr. Scott noted that this project is in the early stages and that rehabilitation and replacement options are still under consideration, but preliminary indications are that the existing structure will be replaced.

Meli Dube explained that the NHDOT is required to adhere to the National Environmental Policy Act and other applicable State and Federal environmental regulations for all projects. NHDOT is responsible for investigating the project impacts to the surrounding natural, cultural and social environment, including compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Department is aware of several structures within the project area, including the bridge itself, which are potentially historically significant and is in the process of consulting with the NH Division of Historical Resources. Ms. Dube encouraged those who have a directed interest in historical resources to become involved in the project develop process in an advisory role as a "Consulting Party" to contact the Federal Highway Administration. Ms. Dube noted that a wetlands permit would be required by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and that impacts to wetlands will be evaluated and minimized

throughout the permitting process. The Town of Bennington is encouraged to notify the Department of any stream crossings or other wetland related work that may be considered as suitable mitigation for wetland impacts associated with the proposed project. The Department is in the process of consulting with the US Fish and Wildlife Service regarding potential impacts to the federally threatened northern long-eared bat and is coordinating with the NH Natural Heritage Bureau regarding other protected species and their habitats. Finally, the Department is aware of the project proximity to the designated Contoocook River and associated floodplain, however, no impacts to base flood elevations or flood storage capacity is anticipated.

Jason Tremblay provided an overview of the project, summarizing the existing culvert structure and the proposed structure alternatives, and solicited comments from those in attendance.

According to NHDOT records, the existing structure is a four-sided, cast-in-place concrete box culvert that was originally constructed in 1925 and widened in the 1990s. It has a clear span of 10 feet and has a roadway width of approximately 26 feet. Deterioration of the concrete wall and top slab has progressed to the point where the structure has been placed on the NHDOT Red List of Deficient Structures, and the condition of the structure must be addressed.

Traffic will be impacted by the proposed construction, so two traffic maintenance options have been evaluated: a temporary road closure and detour; and maintaining a single lane of alternating one-way traffic.

The complete road closure will be limited to the time required to remove and replace the structure. Local traffic would be detoured to Old Bennington Road and Forest Road in Greenfield, and U.S. Route 202. At other times, traffic through the work zone will be controlled by flaggers.

Maintaining a single lane of alternating two-way traffic would require a temporary roadway and bridge structure to be constructed on the east side of South Bennington Road. Local traffic would be maintained on this temporary roadway while the west end of the bridge is removed and replaced. Once the west end is complete, local traffic would be diverted over the west end of the new bridge while the east end is removed and replaced. This single lane would likely be controlled by a temporary traffic signal at each end.

Mr. Tremblay explained that a longer structure is necessary to meet current environmental stream-crossing guidelines, and three replacement structure alternatives have been developed. Each alternative has a clear waterway opening of 22 feet, and each alternative matches the 26-ft roadway width of the existing bridge.

Alternative 1 consists of a four-sided concrete box, similar to the current structure. This structure will be deeper than the existing box culvert so that a layer of natural streambed material may be placed inside to simulate the upstream and downstream environment. This alternative has an estimated construction duration of eight weeks for the road closure option, including a two-week road closure and detour. The overall construction duration for

the single-lane option is anticipated to be ten weeks, with a four-week period of single-lane traffic.

Alternatives 2 and 3 consist of a three-sided concrete rigid frame structure. The frame is supported at each end and allows a natural bottom streambed. Alternative 2 represents the use of spread footings on soil to support the concrete frame. Since soil borings and foundation recommendations have not yet been developed, Alternative 3 incorporates a pile-supported foundation in the event the existing soil is found to be inadequate for spread footings. These alternatives have an estimated construction duration of ten weeks for the road closure option, including a four-week road closure and detour. The overall construction duration for the single-lane option is anticipated to be fourteen weeks, with an eight-week period of single lane traffic.

This project is scheduled for advertisement in 2023, but may occur sooner if funds become available.

Mr. Tremblay concluded the project presentation and opened the discussion for questions and comments. During the course of the meeting, the comments below were noted.

Mr. Tremblay noted NHDOT mailed postcards to the addresses on South Bennington Road as a more direct way to solicit public involvement. Two people responded they attended because of the postcards. It was also revealed that these direct mailings should also include addresses on roads that branch off South Bennington Road, such as Paradise Dr. This is especially important when the side roads do not have another outlet.

Mr. Scott inquired whether the Town has any interest in assuming ownership of the bridge. This question will be referred to the Town of Bennington Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Scott asked whether the Town of Bennington requires a police presence at work zones and noted that NHDOT will be seeking a Municipal Work Zone Agreement with the Town.

South Bennington Rd. is a school bus route. Desire was expressed to complete the construction in the summer to avoid impacting school bus routes.

There were no concerns expressed from the Town of Greenfield.

NHDOT confirmed that comments were received from the Contoocook and North Branch Rivers Local Advisory Committee (CNBRLAC). The CNBRLAC will continue to be consulted during the design process and will have the opportunity to review the wetland permit application package and provide comments to NHDES at the time of submission.

Old Bennington Rd. in Greenfield is a gravel road and generally becomes impassable for most vehicles in the spring, lending more support for summer construction.

There is some history of South Bennington Rd. flooding (twice in 40 years, per one resident's recollection, and generally farther south near Paradise Dr.).

There appears to be some bicycle and pedestrian use of South Bennington Rd. in the vicinity of the bridge.

No safety concerns were expressed regarding the existing site conditions.

A local resident member of the NHDOT Bureau of Bridge Maintenance expressed no concerns with the proposed structure or roadway width.

There are no town events that use South Bennington Rd.

There is a 2" water line located west of the bridge, likely passing below the brook. It continues several hundred feet south of the nearby fire hydrant north of the bridge.

Monadnock Paper Mills use South Bennington Rd. two to four times each day. The road closure detour would increase their travel time from 4 – 5 minutes to 17 minutes, but this was not a concern for a two- to four-week time period.

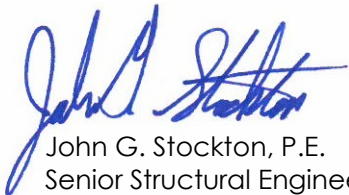
The Town of Bennington will inquire about mutual aid assistance from the Greenfield emergency services.

No objections were expressed to the temporary roadway closure and detour. Most in attendance agreed that the shorter construction duration afforded by the closure and detour was more desirable than the longer duration required by maintaining the single lane of traffic.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

The foregoing is considered to be a true and accurate summary of all items discussed. If any discrepancies or inconsistencies are noted, please contact the author immediately.

Stantec Consulting Services Inc.



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MEETING SIGN-UP SHEET

PROJECT Bennington
LOCATION S Bennington Rd over Russell Brook
PROJECT NO. 29486
Federal State

Name	Agency	Comments
MARK MALKESY	Selectman	
Dave Beck	Water/Sewer Comm.	- 2" Water L. 20
Bob McDonald	VP of Manufacturing Monadnock Paper Mills	Thank you for the project information!
JAMES CLEAR	Selectman	
David Hardwick	selectman	
Dan Pickering	NH House Rep	
Jon Manley	River Advisory Committee	
David Parker	Resident	
ROGER LESSARD	CNBR LAC	WILL CONTACT GREENFIELD EMS TO CONFER W/ BENNINGTON RE. MUTUAL AID
Karen Belcher	resident	
Thomas Belcher	resident	concern of timeframe (spring) after Old Bennington Rd is extremely muddy
JOHN STOCKTON	STANTEC	