BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT
CONFERENCE REPORT

SUBJECT: Monthly SHPO-FHWA-ACOE-NHDOT Cultural Resources Meeting
DATE OF CONFERENCES: February 13, 2020
LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: John O. Morton Building
ATTENDED BY:

NHDOT	Russell St Pierre	**ACOE**
Timothy Boodey	Shelley Winters	Richard Kristoff
Sheila Charles		
Ron Crickard	**FHWA**	**GM2**
Meli Dube	Jamie Sikora (via phone)	Seth Hill
Jill Edelmann		
Steve Johnson	**NHDHR**	**MJ**
Kathy Corliss	Laura Black	Jennifer Zorn
Marc Laurin	David Trubey	
Arin Mills		

PROJECTS/PRESENTATIONS REVIEWED THIS MONTH:
(minutes on subsequent pages)

Plaistow-Kingston 10044E, X-A000(378)
Participants: Jennifer Zorn, MJ; Darren Blood, Seth Hill, GM2; Marc Laurin, Kathy Corliss, NHDOT

The goal of this meeting is to review the project as a whole in relation to the previous Effect Memo and MOA for the Plaistow-Kingston 10044B project and discuss the revised design for this final 1.8-mile section of NH Route 125. Cultural resources considerations and eligible property impacts will be reviewed.

J. Zorn provided a brief overview of the project history. The overall project was 6 miles in length and previously designed, as well as been vetted through the NEPA process and Public Hearing process in 2004/2005. Most of the project has been construction, with the exception of Contract E, the project at-hand. Contract E is 1.8 miles in length. A redesign of the last section has been done due to the decrease in actual projected traffic volumes. This current design calls for a reduction in footprint from the previously proposed 5-lane roadway. The current design calls for a 3 lane roadway, which has been supported by the towns, the public, and project Working Group.

J. Zorn then identified the areas of interest from a cultural resource perspective. Two locations of interest are present. One location is known as “Area 6” which is an archaeologically sensitive area located near the Diamond Oaks Boulevard/NH Route 125 intersection. The other location is the property and cottage located at 56 NH Route 125, which is eligible for the National Register.
J. Zorn stated that there would be slope impacts to Area 6, and the IAC would complete an Expanded Phase 2 starting spring of 2020.

J. Zorn stated that no impacts were proposed on the #56 property, but tree clearing and grading activities would likely occur on the adjacent NHDOT owned property to expand the existing water quality treatment facility. The question was asked whether this clearing would be considered an impact, but further design would be needed to provide and accurate answer.

cemetery, Happy Hollow Cemetery, on parcel 286 was also discussed. The current design avoid impacts to the cemetery, but it was stated that any excavation within 25' of the cemetery would require monitoring during construction activities. The current design does include excavation within 25' of the cemetery.

L. Black indicated that an Impact Table should be created to the #56 property and that the design team should attend another meeting once additional design information/impacts are known.
The Heath property and barn were discussed as being previously demolished by others. The CRA staff shall investigate this property and its location relative to the project site.

M. Laurin brought the historic district along Newton Junction Road to the attention of the attendees and stated that it may be beneficial to show this on future figures. This led to a discussion of where an APE was created for the project. J. Zorn and S. Hill were not sure and would have to check with Preservation Company regarding the APE. M. Laurin stated that because the project originated 20 years ago, an APE probably wasn't originally created as that is a newer policy.

J. Zorn closed with a brief overview of the project schedule, starting with a draft NEPA submission to NHDOT in the spring of 2020 and a public hearing most likely in the fall of 2020.

Walpole 41624A (no federal number)
Participants: Meli Dube, Timothy Boodey, Steve Johnson, Shelley Winters, NHDOT

The proposed project addresses deteriorating granite stone work and concrete on an existing double barrel stone arch culvert carrying the abandoned Cheshire Branch Railroad over Great Brook. The goal of the meeting was to discuss the Request for Project Review comments, including specific concerns about using concrete as the stabilization treatment for installing a new floor in the north barrel of the culvert and a cap over the front of the outlet of the structure.

Meli Dube, NHDOT Bureau of Environment, introduced the project and provided a summary of the location, current condition, previous damage and repair efforts and the proposed stabilization project. The proposed work would involve proactive stabilization of the 150' long double stone arch culvert carrying the Cheshire Rail Road over Great Brook in the Town of Walpole. Each barrel is approximately 15' wide and 15' tall. The current condition of the outlet is extremely perched with an approximately 5' deep pool, it is believed the culvert was constructed in this condition. Portions of the original granite block invert have washed out approximately 28' into the northern barrel, which has destabilized the stone walls and concrete subfloor. There is a large degree of undermining of the stone walls, which was first identified in 2011 at which time emergency repairs were made to stabilize the walls by installing a concrete toe wall. Unfortunately, undermining continues and additional stabilization is required. Steve Johnson, NHDOT Bureau of Bridge Maintenance, summarized the proposed preferred alternative which involves installing a 12" thick concrete slab floor approximately 28' long by 11' wide on top of the original concrete sub floor to tie into the elevation of the original granite block invert in the north barrel. The concrete slab will wrap around approximately 4' of the front edge of the outlet and extend 24' across the length of the outlet to cover the granite blocks in front of both the north and south barrels. New 2' thick 28' long toe walls will be installed on top of the new concrete slab floor to further stabilize the stone walls. Finally, concrete will be used to patch and stabilize gaps in the southwest wingwall where stones have shifted due to tree growth. S. Johnson stated that this alternative for stabilizing the wingwall is preferred over excavating to reposition shifted stones due to the risk of further destabilizing the structure.

NH Division of Historic Resources indicated that it would be preferred to fix the perched condition. M. Dube clarified that this project is not receiving federal funding and that the US Army Corps of Engineers is the primary federal agency. Both USACOE and NH Department of Environmental Services Wetlands Bureau have reviewed the proposed work and agreed that it is infeasible to address the perch at this location. S. Johnson added that constructing the necessary staging and access to accommodate the equipment necessary for this work is beyond the scope of the project, and the alterations to the stream bed are infeasible given the limited funding source and increased impacts to natural resources. Laura Black, NHDHR, expressed concern with the use of concrete and noted that if the stones were previously dry laid then repair efforts should mimic this technique. She added that concrete can cause additional problems in the future if used irresponsibly. M. Dube stated that it is believed this is dry laid but this is not confirmed. S. Johnson stated that the concrete is not intended to be used as mortar and that chinked stone and mortar will be used appropriately during the stabilization efforts. For example, repairs to the southwest wingwall will involve clearing debris, adding concrete where needed to fill large voids below the granite blocks and then rechinking stone and adding mortar where necessary between the blocks. He also stated that use of concrete in the floor should not have a negative effect on the stones because concrete will be used to overlay the area where the floor washed out but will not be used in between stones. Tim Boodey, NHDOT Bureau of Bridge Maintenance, confirmed that the Department will follow the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Pointing and Mortaring and the National Park Service's Technical Briefs. S. Johnson clarified that some clearing will occur around the culvert to prevent future destabilization from roots.

A general discussion about the kinds of adverse effects that the proposed work would have occurred. David Trubey, NHDHR, raised the question of previous repairs now being considered part of the historic value of the culvert, especially those reflecting the "railroad repair mentality" of the era during which the railroad was constructed and used as a major industry. A discussion about the pins placed in the stone blocks at the outlet occurred, and it seems likely that these were used to hold wooden planking in place at some point. S. Johnson confirmed that the new concrete cap would cover these pins and L. Black responded that they should be adequately documented prior to the work.

M. Dube reiterated that the State has obtained Capitol Funds for this work, which are very limited and are being shared with the Westmoreland 41624 project so options for using these funds for mitigation purposes is limited, however, the Department is still vested in creating a mitigation plan that is realistic and appropriate. A management plan is not considered feasible because there is no certain funding at this time to complete work on a predetermined schedule. Instead, the project team proposed a monitoring plan that would involve inventorying all of the stone structures on the Cheshire Line (approximately 12 structures) for both structural and cultural integrity on a regular interval, which would provide the ability to have a prioritized work plan in place should additional funding become available and to continuously check for damage that may require emergency repairs from large storm events. Inventory efforts would include photos and a written report. An initial inventory to be completed during the Summer of 2020 at which point an appropriate interval for continued monitoring will be determined. This mitigation strategy will be for both this project and the Westmoreland 41624 project located at the crossing of the Cheshire Railroad over White Bridge Brook in the Town of Westmoreland. At this time, an Effect Memo will be completed this spring to further the wetland permitting process and a Memorandum of Understanding will completed later in the Summer of 2020 once the mitigation plan is finalized.

Westmoreland 41624 (no federal number)
Participants: Meli Dube, Timothy Boodey, Steve Johnson, Shelley Winters, NHDOT

The goal of the meeting is to discuss previous protocol for the project Section 106 documentation, revisions of the former Adverse Effect Memo, and compilation of the MOA.

Meli Dube, NHDOT Bureau of Environment, introduced the project and provided a summary of the location, current condition, previous damage and repair efforts and the proposed stabilization project. The proposed work would involve proactive stabilization of the originally 176' long 14'6"x13' stone arch culvert carrying the Cheshire Rail Road over White Bridge Brook (sometimes referred to as Mill Brook) at railroad marker 100.06 in the Town of Westmoreland. This project was most recently previously discussed at the May 10, 2018 Cultural Resource Agency Meeting, at which time at a detailed discussion of previous damage and repair efforts occurred, which date back to 2003. A detailed alternatives analysis discussion also occurred at that time, and M. Dube stated that the proposed preferred alternative has not changed and the purpose of this meeting is follow-up on previously requested information, solicit guidance for the next steps necessary to complete the Section 106 review process for this project and to discuss mitigation for the anticipated adverse effect. Steve Johnson, NHDOT Bureau of Bridge Maintenance, summarized the proposed preferred alternative which involves installing a 2' thick x 15' wide x 45' long concrete slab extending from the existing slab to the wingwall remnants downstream with 16" thick x 8' high x 45' long concrete walls on either side connecting to and supporting the remaining stone arch blocks and wingwall remnants. The proposed work will also install a new headwall around the existing outlet. S. Johnson noted that a change from the scope discussed at the previously meeting is that the approximately 8" thick x 33' wide x 14' long pad between the remaining wingwall remnants will be constructed out of stone instead of concrete. This alternative will not restore the approximately 41' of stonewall that has collapsed over time, but it will serve to stabilize and save the remaining features of the original culvert, including the arch itself and the wingwall remnants without further eroding the stream channel and undermining the structure. M. Dube reiterated that this work is considered Phase 2 of the restoration efforts for this culvert, as noted in the 2011 Adverse Effect Memo for Phase 1 of the project.

M. Dube noted that DHR has previously requested information about the previous impacts to the railroad bed, and stated that it was lowered approximately 12' and shifted to the north approximately 24'. Laura Black, NH Division of Historical Resources, commented that in this situation, the use of concrete is appropriate in order to fill in the voids from the collapsed portions of the culvert. L. Black also confirmed that the proposed work will require a new Adverse Effect Memo which should detail the effects based on the proposed work. David Trubey, NH Division of Historical Resources, asked if the pipe being undersized has been a contributor to the deterioration and if an increase in large storm events due to climate change will be a continuing concern. S. Johnson stated the culvert is inlet controlled and it is likely that deforestation of the surrounding landscape upstream was a large contributor to the increased flow levels during large storm events beginning 2003 and therefore causing more damage than previous large storm events since the culvert was constructed. M. Dube stated that this culvert serves as a control for many crossing downstream, which would experience significant damage and flooding should this culvert be removed.

M. Dube reiterated that the State has obtained Capitol Funds for this work, which are very limited and are being shared with the Walpole 41624A project so options for using these funds for mitigation purposes is limited, however, the Department is still vested in creating a mitigation plan that is realistic and appropriate. A management plan is not considered feasible because there is no certain funding at this time to complete work on a predetermined schedule. Instead, the project team proposed a monitoring plan that would involve inventorying all of the stone structures on the Cheshire Line (approximately 12 structures) for both structural and cultural integrity on a regular interval, which would provide the ability to have a prioritized work plan in place should additional funding become available and to continuously check for damage that may require emergency repairs from large storm events. Inventory efforts would include photos and a written report. An initial inventory to be completed during the Summer of 2020 at which point an appropriate interval for continued monitoring will be determined. This mitigation strategy will be for both this project and the Walpole 41624A project located at the crossing of the Cheshire Railroad over Great Brook in the Town of Walpole. At this time, an Effect Memo will be completed this spring to further the wetland permitting process and a Memorandum of Understanding will be completed later in the Summer of 2020 once the mitigation plan is finalized.

Statewide (Rest Areas) 41238/42744 (no federal number)
Participants: Russ St. Pierre, NHDOT

The goal of the meeting is to discuss the status of the Antrim, Epsom and Shelburne rest areas. These three are proposed for surplus. Russ St. Pierre led the introductory discussions of each of the project areas. Russ St. Pierre also indicated the Bureau of Environment is waiting from feedback from the front office.

The Antrim Rest Area, situated on the northeast side of NH RT 9 and comprised of 19 acres, includes a 1966 building that is eligible for the National Resister under Criteria A & C. The building was altered in 2004. There are several proposals, including one to dispose of 3.5 acres bounded by the North Branch of the Contoocook River. An Archaeological Phase IA/IB was completed, and no archaeological sites or deposits were identified. The property was bought with state funds, so there are no requirements for FHWA approval. Jamie Sikora agrees.

The discussion for the steps needed for consideration of disposing/selling the parcel should include:

- Asking other state agencies if they have concerns
- Determining what DOT will wish to retain, such as access points
- Identifying if there will be any easements

Potential mitigation for the adverse effect to the property might include:

- Marketing – discussion of length of time, methods, advertising venues, etc
- Consideration of the character defining features identified in the architectural report
- Selling with covenants to protect the character defining features. The covenant should include goals and needs.

Russ St. Pierre noted there has been one inquiry to sell, and it would be ideal to sell as is.

The Epsom Rest Area is situated on the south side of US RTs 202 and 4, and bounded by the Little Suncook River and Bixby Pond (formed when the Little Suncook River was dammed). The property includes a structure that is eligible for the National Resister under Criteria A & C. An Archaeological Phase IA/IB was completed, and no archaeological sites or deposits were identified. The parcel, purchased in 1966, was bought with federal and state funds. Jamie Sikora noted if federal funds were involved, FHWA would still defer to the State ROW procedures.

The process for disposal of the parcel and mitigation includes the same issues as previously presented for the Antrim Rest Area.

Russ St. Pierre noted originally the Town was interested, but there have been no firm actions undertaken for this possible transfer.

The Shelburne Rest Area parcel includes a structure that was determined eligible for the National Register under Criterion A. Laura Black noted the bounds on the individual inventory form are incorrect and need to be corrected. Former State Archaeologist Dick Boisvert conducted a walkover and evaluation of the archaeological sensitivity of the parcel and determined that portions of the parcel were impacted by the rest area facility construction and landscaping, while other undisturbed areas had low archaeological sensitivity for both Pre-Contact and Post-Contact periods. The parcel was purchased with federal and state funds. NHDOT will still need to retain access to and from the highway.

The parcel is located near the Timberland Campground and this abutter had originally been interested in acquiring the property. However, following some discussions, the Timberland Campground owners are no longer interested.

Some discussion followed of the status and issues with other State Rest Areas, including the Rumney Rest Area which contains a structure that is not eligible for the National Register. An Archaeological Phase IA/IB was completed, and no archaeological sites or deposits were identified. The location contains a State Historic

Marker that is currently considered out of date, due to massacre and scalp bounty references. Russ St. Pierre noted that the NH Fish & Game Department had expressed interest in the parcel.

Submitted by: Sheila Charles and Jill Edelmann, Cultural Resources