BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT
CONFERENCE REPORT

SUBJECT: Monthly SHPO-FHWA-ACOE-NHDOT Cultural Resources Meeting
DATE OF CONFERENCES: January 14, 2021
LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: Zoom Meeting

ATTENDED BY:

NHDOT
Joe Adams
Maggie Baldwin
Sheila Charles
Ron Crickard
Mike Dugas
Jill Edelmann
Jonathan Hebert
Bob Juliano
Sarah Large
Marc Laurin
Don Lyford
Rebecca Martin
Dan Prehemo
Tobey Reynolds
John Sargent
David Scott
Jason Tremblay
Tony Weatherbee
Hans Weber

NHDHR/NHDNCR
Laura Black
David Trubey

FHWA
Jamie Sikora

City of Franklin
Dick Lewis

Friends of the Northern Rail Trail
George Heaton

GM2
Tom Levins
Jenn Riordan

Hardesty & Hanover
Kimberly Smith

HTA
Steve Haas
Aaron Lachance
Paul Lovely
Kimberly Peace
Ed Weingartner

McFarland-Johnson
Brian Colburn
Ron Joy
Christine Perron

Preservation Company
Lynne Monroe

TRC
Vicki Chase

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

Woodstock 27713, R & C 10622 (no federal number)
Participants: Vicki Chase, TRC; Kimberly Smith, Hardesty & Hanover; Joe Adams, Bob Juliano, Sarah Large, NHDOT

This is the Second Consultation for the rehabilitation of Bridge No. 177/148 carrying NH 175 over the Pemigewasset River in Woodstock, NH. The purpose of the meeting is to review the elements of the bridge that are character defining and discuss the proposed rehabilitation of those elements.

In a meeting on August 20, 2020, Kim Smith provided a presentation on the elements of the bridge that were deficient and needed replacement. Laura Black requested at that meeting that elements of the bridge that were important because they were character-defining elements that made the bridge eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NR eligible) be identified and presented at the next meeting, with how those elements were proposed to be affected. K. Smith presented a power point presentation that depicted each element of the bridge that was proposed to be replaced or rehabilitated. The bridge is a 175' single span steel through tied-arch bridge built in 1939 and was found eligible for the NR on November 13, 2019. The Determination of Eligibility stated "*The bridge is eligible under Criterion A for its association with the state-wide trend of federal-aid-funded bridge construction in the 1930s. The bridge reflects the accelerated construction of new bridges in New Hampshire in the late 1930s to replace those destroyed by the Flood of 1936 and Hurricane of 1938. It is also eligible under Criterion C as a well-preserved example of a steel through arch bridge with a tied-arch design. It is one of four steel through arch bridges in NH and one of two utilizing tied-arch design. It reflects the engineering advances and aesthetics of the 1930s, a period when American highways and bridges were undergoing a remarkable transformation."* The elements of the bridge that represented the engineering advances and aesthetic of the 1930's were presented as "significant" while those that did not represent those advances were represented as "not significant."

Bridge Element	**Condition**	**Recommendation**	**Significance of Design Feature**
Stringers	Heavy corrosion, not adequate for legal loads.	Replacement	Not Significant
Floorbeams	Heavy corrosion and section loss – not adequate for legal loading .	Replacement in kind	Not Significant
Deck	Open grid deck is in poor condition. Offers no protection to the floor system below it.	Replacement with exodermic deck which will minimize weight on the structure and will match the existing face of rail. A slight adjustment to the face of curb will be required as the existing bridge has safety walks.	Not Significant
Steel Arch	Overall condition is good.	Arch will need strengthening of cover plates due to increased loads from the new deck, and painting.	Significant
Cable Tie	Inadequate, non-redundant. Inadequate for legal loads, broken wires.	Replacement at same location with temporary ties above existing location.	Significant
Vertical Hangers and Pins	Vertical hangers are adequate for legal loading, pins are not.	Replace the hanger pins with higher grade steel, clean and paint the hangers.	Significant
Bridge Railing and Curb	Existing rail and steel curb are substandard and in poor condition.	Replacement with steel rail and concrete curb.	Not Significant
Concrete Parapets	Minor cracking and spalling.	Reconstruct to match the face of new curb.	Not Significant

Bridge Element	Condition	Recommendation	Significance of Design Feature
Abutments	In fair condition, spalled concrete.	Patching and coating only.	Not Significant

The rehabilitation study report is being finalized based in part upon input from DHR, then the project will go to a public information meeting in spring 2021, and to construction in 2023.

Discussion:
L. Black asked if the features noted as "significant" were character-defining. K. Smith stated that in their review they had looked at which features were unique for their time, that represented engineering advances of the 1930's. L. Black noted that character-defining features could be those that are standard for the bridge type as well as unique or represent advances. L. Black asked if the DHR historic bridge inventory had been used for this review. Kim was not sure but thought not. J. Edelmann said that she believed she had shared it with the historic subconsultant, Lisa Mausolf, but would doublecheck. L. Black noted that some features that were not identified as significant might be good examples of their time, i.e. might be character-defining. L. Black reviewed the DHR Historic Bridge Inventory and found that some features that were not identified as significant were identified in the Historic Bridge Inventory report as character defining. Those features were: Original railings, original substructure, and aesthetic details. Aesthetic details are the end posts, three of which have already been replaced in-kind, but they are character-defining. K. Smith stated that the goal of the design was to mimic what was already there, with some exceptions such as the deck which will not be an open grate deck. L. Black said she wasn't sure about the floor beam placement, that they were also perhaps character-defining, as well as the open grate deck (she realizes the open grate deck is not practical to replace in kind).
L. Black also said that public coordination is important.
D. Trubey asked if a staging area has been identified and noted that the area around the river may be sensitive for archaeology. K. Smith stated that since the bridge will be closed the road approaches will be used for staging. D. Trubey stated that in that case there would be no concerns with archaeology.
L. Black stated that it might be helpful to consider what changes are proposed and how they will affect the bridge in an effect table. V. Chase noted that the project was state-funded, although it has a federal number. Therefore, there will be no Section 4(f) compliance needed as there is no FHWA involvement. J. Edelmann asked if there would be a wetland permit. V. Chase stated that it is unknown at this time, but conservatively that will be the assumption. If there is a wetland permit required, the USACE will be the federal nexus for Section 106.
L. Black noted that the effects to the Meadowlark Motor Court (unlikely any effect) and the Route 3 Cultural Landscape also needed to be considered. Effect tables should be drawn up for each of these as well.
J. Sikora suggested keeping 4(f) on the table in case federal funding comes back to the project

Nottingham 40612, R & C 10862 (no federal number)
Participants: Jennifer Riordan, Tom Levins, GM2; Ron Crickard, Sarah Large, Rebecca Martin, David Scott, Jason Tremblay, Tony Weatherbee, NHDOT

Jenn Riordan (GM2) presented the project. The project is state funded so the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) is the lead federal agency, not FHWA. This is an initial meeting to introduce the project, review the completed cultural resource investigations, and discuss the need for historic resource inventory of an adjacent parcel. An Individual Inventory form was completed for the bridge and it was determined Not Eligible. A Phase IA/IB archaeological survey was completed and no further survey was recommended.

The area adjacent to the bridge is mostly wetland. Powerlines are located to the north. A house and daycare are located southeast of the bridge and Nottingham Elementary School is located further south. A recently constructed residence is located to the northeast.

The existing bridge is a reinforced concrete jack-arch, single span structure. It was constructed in 1925 and rebuilt in 1970. It has stone and concrete abutments and wingwalls and is currently on the State's Red List.

The Preferred Alternative involves replacement of the bridge with a 30-foot span structure. Rehabilitation of the bridge is not a viable option since the substructure has deteriorated to a point where it can't be repaired. The existing hydraulic opening is also a concern. The entire bridge needs to be replaced. The project will also involve 400 feet of roadway widening (200 feet on each side of the bridge). There are several traffic control options. The Preferred Alternative would involve closing the bridge during construction and detouring traffic. The detour is about 20 miles on state roads and 12 miles on local roads. The bridge would be closed for 28 days. Construction would take one season. This traffic control option would have the least amount of impact to environmental resources. Another alternative would involve phased construction, which would maintain one lane of traffic in each direction. This would require additional widening of the proposed structure. Construction would take two seasons. The third traffic control alternative would involve construction of an offline temporary bridge that would allow the road to remain open during construction but would result in additional wetland impacts. Construction would take two seasons.

Design of the project is ongoing. A Public Officials Meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2021. GM2 contacted the Nottingham Historical Society but did not receive a response. The advertisement date is currently in 2024.

A RPR was submitted in 2019. The response indicated that the project area is archaeologically sensitive and a survey was necessary. Phase IA & IB surveys were completed and no further survey was recommended. Inventory of the existing bridge was recommended. This was completed and it was determined that the bridge is Not Eligible. The RPR response also indicated that inventory of 251 Stage Road may be necessary if the property is impacted. Continued consultation was recommended.

The results of the Phase IA/IB archaeological survey were discussed. IAC completed the study in 2019. DHR concurred with the finding that no further survey is required.

An Individual Inventory Form for the bridge was completed by Historic Documentation Company. The bridge was determined Not Eligible since it was altered in 1970 and does not retain integrity.

There are two potentially historic properties located southeast of the bridge (251 and 249 Stage Road). 251 Stage Road is a residence that was constructed around 1910. 249 Stage Road is currently a daycare and was constructed around 1947. For the preferred alternative, impacts near the two properties would be located within the NHDOT right-of-way. Any tree clearing would be located closer to the bridge. There are a few large trees near the road just north of #251 but it is not anticipated that these trees would need to be cleared for the preferred alternative. There are some stones along the road in front of #251 but no stone walls were found. Other traffic control options (phased construction or temporary bridge) could require a wider footprint. The DHR RPR response said that inventory of 251 Stage Road might be necessary if bridge replacement required impacts.

Laura Black (DHR) stated that an inventory form for 251 Stage Road is not required if there are no impacts to the property. Jill Edelmann (DOT) mentioned that if project plans change and a different alternative is preferred, then consultation would need to be continued and inventory of the property may be necessary. Jill stated that a No Historic Properties Affected finding would be appropriate for the project as currently proposed. GM2 is tasked with preparing the Section 106 memo. Jill will provide a template to GM2.

Conway 42522, X-A004(891)
Participants: Kimberly Peace, Steve Haas, HTA; Mike Dugas, Rebecca Martin, Trent Zanes, NHDOT

Discussion of the US 302/East Conway Road intersection safety improvement project and the status of archaeological and architectural survey updates.

Stephen Haas began the meeting and presented an overview of the project including location of Area of Potential Effect (APE), purpose and need and alternatives.

The purpose of the project is to improve traffic operation and safety at the intersection of US 302 (Eastman Road) and East Conway Road, which often ranks near the top of New Hampshire's high crash locations and has resulted in several fatalities at or near the intersection in recent years. Alternatives include installation of a traffic signal with minor roadway pavement widening; installation of a roundabout with reconstruction of the roadway approaches; and minor improvements (i.e., sight distance, signage, lighting, etc.).

Kimberly Peace presented the work done to date regarding cultural resources. A review of EMMIT identified three properties in the APE: the Cutts/Eastman Farm, NR eligible property- potential to impact the north-western edge of this 245-acre property with roundabout; Maine Central Railroad Mountain Division District- no potential to affect this district; Meeting House Hill Cemetery Marker, erected 1917 (CNW0443)- determined not eligible. Ms. Peace explained that when Route 302 was constructed in 1965 several feet of fill was placed in the area near the cemetery to reduce chances of impacts. Because of the known history of the Cemetery marker, which identifies the site of the earliest Town cemetery that was later moved, a Phase IA/IB archaeological survey was proposed to be completed. NHDHR concurred with the need for the survey, which was completed by Independent Archaeological Consulting, LLC (IAC) in December 2020. Their preliminary End of Field (EOF) report noted the site was archeological sensitive for two Euromerican sites: Conway Meeting House and Burying Ground. The Phase IB included a Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey and 101 shovel test pits with 20 transects. No evidence of pre-contact Native American cultural deposits was identified, with incidental deposit of post-contact artifacts, and no evidence of burials or other cultural features. The IAC EOF Report recommended no further archaeological surveys and construction phase monitoring in the intersection footprint.

NHDHR also responded to the RPR with a request for a survey update for CNW0421Cutts/Eastman Farm and possible inventories of 461 E Conway Road and 511 Eastman Road. Ms. Peace presented photos of the two potential inventory sites, discussed current conditions and site use and informed the attendees that no roadway widening will occur in these areas; only minimal slope impacts within the right-of-way are anticipated in front of these two properties.

Laura Black stated that an update to the Cutts/Eastman Farm should be considered to not repeat work previously done but to look at what has changed since the form was originally completed in 1992 and indicated the consultant should review the Survey Policy on the NHDHR website to determine if such an update is necessary. She noted that the farm is an important resource to the community and has the potential to be a 4(f) property. It was agreed that the site should be avoided if possible. It was also agreed that the boundary listed on the form should be more closely examined, does it cross the DOT ROW and go to the edge of pavement? If necessary, an improved boundary survey could be completed to ensure avoidance of impact.

Ms. Black also stated that for the two sites in question regarding the need for inventories, 461 E Conway Road and 511 Eastman Road, DOT should look at the use of the property as well as physical impacts proposed and that a discussion should be held with the property owners regarding their use of the space adjacent to the road. As long as the project would not have physical impacts on the parcel or impede the owners current use, an Individual Inventory Form (IIF) may not be needed.

Ms. Black also requested that the EOF report from IAC be submitted for NHDHR review; Jill Edelmann and Sheila Charles echoed this comment for the DOT CR staff. Ms. Peace stated that it had just been received the week prior and would forward the EOF if IAC could not produce the final report within a few weeks and would check with them regarding their progress.

Ms. Black stated that the Cemetery Marker, despite its status of not eligible for listing, should be viewed as a historic object and that it should not be impacted if possible. If it cannot be avoided, it may need additional review regarding its status. Mr. Haas stated that the Town owns the parcel on which the marker is located and that should the marker need to be moved slightly, there appears to be room to do so while still providing parking and access form the Police Station for citizens to safely walk to and read the marker. Ms. Black noted that this should be coordinated with the community. Jamie Sikora commented that the area around the Marker should be reviewed to ensure it is not currently designated as a park regarding potential 4(f) use or impacts.

Peterborough 27712, X-A003(595)
Participants: Kimberly Peace, Aaron Lachance, Edward Weingartner, HTA; Maggie Baldwin, Rebecca Martin, Tobey Reynolds, Paul Lovely, Don Lyford, John Sargent, NHDOT

Consultation on the rehabilitation or replacement of Bridge (108/116) carrying US RT 202 & NH RT 123 over the Contoocook River. The status of the project review of cultural resources and plan alternatives will be provided to assist the discussion of the next steps in the process.

Kimberly Peace began the meeting and presented an overview of the project including location of Area of Potential Effect (APE). Ed Weingartner followed with a discussion of existing bridge conditions and potential alternatives. The US Route 202/NH Route 123 over the Contoocook River was constructed in 1942 and widened in 1974 and consists of a 176' long two span steel I-Beam bridge with a reinforced concrete deck, reinforced concrete abutments and pier on spread footings.
The existing roadway width is 44'-0" with a 5'-0" sidewalk on the upstream side. Per the National Bridge Inspection Standard Condition Ratings, the overall bridge condition is rated 4 (Poor) and the deck condition is rated 4 (Poor).

Alternatives being evaluated include bridge rehabilitation and replacement. Bridge rehabilitation is unlikely due to the following: the extent of rehabilitation required; the bridge is scour critical; the service life would be less than bridge replacement; and long-term maintenance and future replacement costs will likely exceed immediate replacement costs. Bridge replacement alternatives include an upstream relocation that would result in significant impacts to North Village Dam and potential impacts to the Wilder Thermometer remediation site, and a downstream relocation that could result in potential impact to Town sewer line and to the NH Route 136 intersection. Replacement in the existing location would require either phased construction or a downstream temporary bridge and is also being considered.

Kimberly Peace presented the work done to date regarding cultural resources. A review of EMMIT identified no currently National Register listed or eligible properties within the APE, including the bridge, which has been evaluated for potential listing. Existing knowledge of the site history, including the surface remnants of a Late 18th to 20th century mill complex in northwest quadrant of the APE, along with the documented history of the Wilder Thermometer site in operation from 1860 to 1903, and proximity to the North Village Dam constructed around 1836, resulted in a proposed Phase IA/IB archaeological survey. NHDHR concurred with the need for the survey, which was completed by Independent Archaeological Consulting, LLC (IAC) in August 2020. Their Final Report listed the following recommendations: evaluate North Village area & mill site as potential historic district; project design and plans avoiding impacts to Historic Mill Complex in NW quadrant; avoidance of canal features in NE quadrant, and archaeological monitoring and recording in SE quadrant during construction. NHDHR

concurred with these findings and noted the potential for Individual Inventory Forms for other potential historic properties within the APE as noted in the RPR.

John Sargent, NHDOT, stated that the project as originally envisioned included phased construction and some slight overwidening upstream, however coordination with the NHDES Dam Bureau has resulted in the need to avoid impacting the Dam as much as possible. A temporary bridge would allow replacement in the existing footprint while allowing for continual access, including pedestrian, which is important to the community, and would allow for reduced impacts to the NW quadrant, but would include some potential impacts to the NE quadrant where the historic canal is located. John Sargent commented that the team does not want to present an option to the Town that is infeasible due to resource impacts.

David Trubey asked if the temporary bridge concept was included in the survey area for the archaeological survey- Ms. Peace responded affirmative. Ms. Peace also commented that the project team had not been expecting to learn of contamination on the quadrant opposite of the Wilder Thermometer site where the IAC team found broken thermometers.

Shelia Charles noted that there is a park, Rotary Park, that occupies the western section of the Wilder Thermometer site parcel: the parcel (U008-04) is currently owned by the Town of Peterborough. Kimberly Peace noted that preliminary plans do not show impacts to the park site and complete avoidance of the park is anticipated.

Laura Black stated that she had not seen the archaeological survey report so could only provide preliminary comments at this time – no above-ground reports or forms have been completed yet. She also stated that the number of properties and selection of those properties requiring an inventory would be determined by the impacts and should be refined as much as possible as design progresses but would be necessary to identify the potential effect on such properties. The potential for the area to be evaluated as a District is based on the existence of multi-disciplinary, overlapping potential resources, and suggested that an archaeologist and architectural historian should look at the District collectively. Mr. Trubey added that Historic District designations have been discussed more frequently by NHDHR and archaeological firms as a coordinated effort between resources aboveground and belowground.

Ms. Black also stated that the Town of Peterborough has a public that is very interested in its historic past. While no response from the local organizations (the Historical Society and the Heritage Commission) has been received as yet, DHR is looking for some type of local coordination efforts. Ms. Black stated that DHR would not be able to provide concurrence on an effect determination without input from the Heritage Commission, even if the response is to say no comment.

Mr. Sargent asked about the scope of the District Evaluation and the goal of such a determination. Ms. Black noted that the intent is to identify all historic or cultural resources within the project APE in their entirety before an estimate of resource impacts could be developed, and that impacts are not limited to physical disturbance but could also stem from visual changes or noise. Ms. Black explained that the APE is intended to be a broad area around any of the space where the project might have physical, visual, or atmospheric impacts. David Trubey commented that he would share the archeology report with Ms. Black.

Ms. Charles suggested a field trip would be beneficial to involved parties, including herself, Ms. Edelmann, Ms. Black and Mr. Trubey to determine the need for a district evaluation. Ms. Edelmann asked who should be invited, while keeping the group small per current COVID restrictions. Ms. Peace stated she would like to attend. Ms. Black stated that if DOT can avoid impacting any potential historic properties then a list should be developed and provided to NHDHR prior to the site visit.

Danbury 16303, X-A001(230)
Participants: Jonathan Hebert, Marc Laurin, Dan Prehemo, David Scott, Jason Tremblay, NHDOT; George Heaton, Friends of the Northern Rail Trail; Edwin Hiller, Linda Wilson, Interested Parties

Continued consultation and update on the design change for the replacement of the US Route 4 bridge over the Northern Rail Trail (Northern Railroad Historic District) from a fill over precast concrete arch to an I-Beam with a concrete deck. While no additional impacts to cultural resources are to occur with this design change, the MOA Stipulation B will need to be discussed. Formerly, NHDOT was to ensure the contractor stamped "Northern Railroad" above the new trail underpass. The discussion will include how best to modify the stipulation for the new proposed bridge type.

Jon Hebert presented the project and discussed the proposed design changes for the bridge replacement. Due to funding shortfalls, associated with the excessive length (150 feet) required by the skew and costs of the previously proposed pre-cast arch over the Northern Rail Trail, DOT is proposing a design change for the new bridge consisting of an I-beam concrete deck. This design change results in comparable impacts as in the previous design. The I-beam bridge would be more open and more of the trail would be visible, similar to the existing crossing. There would be no need for lighting of the trail under this bridge.

Jon reviewed the MOA stipulations and noted that the stipulations would still be able to be achieved. The bridge will be marketed as required by FHWA and the panels will still be able to be installed. George Heaton inquired as to the style of the panels. Jill Edelmann replied that they will be in compliance with National Park standards. The panels are usually in a black frame set at a 45-degree angle. A kiosk with roof could be done if necessary. DOT will discuss the details in consultation with NHDHR and the FNRT. An historic consultant will be hired and will work with a graphic design firm. Drafts of the design will be provided for review. George agreed with this process.

Jon discussed the MOA stipulation regarding stamping Northern Railroad on the coping of the concrete arch, as the proposed bridge is an I-beam this designation could be cast on the deck or as a plaque mounted on the girder. He showed sketches of four options, which were provided to FNRT prior to the meeting, and noted that due to the skew of the bridge the lettering on the deck may be a bit distorted when viewed from the trail; the plaques could be angled to provide a more direct view. George stated that FNRT disliked the plaque concepts and prefers stamping on the concrete deck as depicted in concept #2. He asked if in-painting of the lettering would be appropriate. David Scott stated that it would not be as the paint would wear out and over time not be aesthetically pleasing.

Jon stated that the impacted tell-tale will still be relocated to the same distance from the new bridge as the existing. George expressed concerns about potential damage to the tell-tale. Jon replied that the contractor will be made aware in their contract of the significance of the structure and will be responsible to ensure that the relocation is done in a careful manner.

George stated that residents of Danbury have expressed concerns with the US Route 4 traffic speeds through the bridge and asked how this realignment for the new bridge would affect the speeds. Jon replied that the vertical alignment (the "hump") over the bridge will remain, however the profile will be improved to the eye and the guardrails will still designate a tightness to the approach and bridge. The 35 MPH speed limit designation on US Route 4 starting south of the bridge still remain. Spear Hill Road will be reconfigured improving the sight distance and safety of the intersection.

The project is scheduled to advertise in August 2021 with construction in 2022 and completing in 2023.

Jill stated that in discussion with DHR and FHWA will acknowledge the changes in an amendment to the MOA consisting of the change in bridge type and stamping of the Northern Railroad on the concrete deck. Laura Black agreed that a duration of 5 years from the date of the signed MOA amendment would be appropriate. Laura asked if there is a new template applicable for the MOA; Jamie will check with FHWA's guidance.

Franklin 42531, X-A004(886), TAP Project, Winnipesaukee River Pedestrian Crossing
Participants: Dick Lewis, City of Franklin; Christine Perron, Brian Colburn, Ron Joy, McFarland Johnson; Lynne Monroe, Preservation Company; Ron Crickard, Tom Jameson, NHDOT

The City of Franklin is seeking to provide a new pedestrian crossing across the Winnipesaukee River to connect the existing Winnipesaukee River Trail, located along the south side of the river, to the Mill City Park that will be located on the north side of the river. The project is located in Downtown Franklin just east of the existing vehicular bridge that carries Central Street (US Route 3/NH Route 11) over the Winnipesaukee River.

The goal of the project is to improve accessibility and circulation through Mill City Park, the future whitewater rafting park, and to allow for an additional pedestrian route to access Downtown Franklin from the northern side of the river. The City's vision for Mill City Park is to create the northeast's first whitewater and outdoor adventure park at Franklin Falls, revitalizing downtown Franklin while retaining and celebrating historical elements from its industrial past. In keeping with this vision, the purpose of this pedestrian crossing project is to create an iconic pedestrian bridge that helps draw people to the downtown and Mill City Park while honoring the City's history.

The project has received Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funds, an FHWA funding program that is administered by the NHDOT Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance. Because of the funding source, the project will follow the NHDOT's Local Public Agency process, beginning with an Engineering Study and then progressing through Preliminary Design, Final Design, and Construction phases. The first phase of the project, the Engineering Study, is just getting underway and will consist of gathering information on existing conditions and resources, developing alternatives, and seeking public input. At the end of this phase, an Engineering Report will be provided to NHDOT, which is currently anticipated to occur in May 2021.

A Public Listening Session was held on November 17, 2020. Following the development of alternatives, a public alternatives workshop will be held, followed by a presentation to the City Council.

Design alternatives currently consist of 1) repurposing the existing trestle to serve as a pedestrian bridge, and 2) constructing a new pedestrian bridge upstream of the existing trestle. A third alternative was originally envisioned, consisting of widening the Central Street bridge to add sidewalks. However, this alternative was not supported by the City or the public and will not be pursued. The trestle is an iconic feature of Franklin and there is a strong public desire to reuse it in some way. The proposed whitewater park will be unique to the region and the trestle is a component of the park since it is a feature that kayakers will be going under as they travel down the river. In addition, Trestle View Park is located on the other side of Central Street. These community assets make it clear that the trestle is woven into the community.

An overview of existing resources was provided. The Franklin & Tilton Railroad line was established in the 1890s and trains continued to use the line into the early 1970s. Track sheets date the trestle to 1921-1922. The trestle is 15 spans, with an overall length of 356 feet. The trestle is located within the National Register listed Franklin Falls Historic District and is a contributing element to the district. The trestle is comprised of three types of spans: standard spans (spans 1-6 and 15), A-frame (spans 8-13), and inverted king post (spans 7 and 14). The inverted king post spans are a unique detail that may have been included to maximize the vertical clearance.

A thorough inspection of the trestle was completed in November 2020. Resistance microdrilling was used to assess the condition of the timber by using measurements of resistance to determine the level of deterioration. Once the rail line was abandoned in the 1970s, there has been no maintenance of the trestle, so deterioration has continued to advance in the last 40 to 50 years. The span that goes over the Winnipesaukee River Trail has experienced active crushing in the last 10-15 years. Following the inspection, it was recommended that the City close the path under this span due to safety concerns.

Condition summary tables and photos were reviewed for the bents, stringers, A-frames, and trusses. Overall, the results of the inspection indicate that approximately 26% of the bridge elements were in good enough condition to retain, 35% of the elements require replacement, and 39% would require some level of repair and possibly ultimately replacement.

The next step in the alternatives analysis is to start evaluating the rehabilitation alternative.

Tom Jameson asked if the foundations were checked as part of the inspection. Brian Colburn replied that the foundations were reviewed. There did not seem to be any settling, but some repair work would be needed.

David Trubey asked how viable the upstream bridge option was and what would happen to the trestle under this alternative. B. Colburn noted that building a new bridge upstream of the trestle would likely be the less expensive alternative, but the City and public prefer to reuse the trestle. Building a new bridge upstream would require doing something to the trestle to ensure that there would be no safety concerns with active recreation occurring below it.

D. Trubey noted that the archaeological survey completed for Mill City Park did not entail a full Phase IB survey. Therefore, any upstream excavation required for the pedestrian bridge project would require additional archaeological survey.

Laura Black asked what is known about the trestle's individual eligibility and the integrity of the rail line, noting that the first step in Section 106 is to identify the resources. She further noted that updating the existing district form (Franklin Falls Historic District) was probably not warranted. Lynne Monroe replied that the trestle is iconic and has a significant visual presence in the downtown. Its individual eligibility has not been determined. The rail line would need to be surveyed to assess its integrity. L. Black agreed and noted that NH is losing its wooden railroad trestles.

Jill Edelmann commented that, since we already know we're in a historic district, perhaps the individual inventory form for the bridge could address the rail line instead of doing a separate form. L. Monroe noted that this is a short rail line so the effort would not be extensive. L. Black added that the inventory form for the bridge would not look at all of the resources on the line, which can be problematic. She suggested that a first step could be completing some initial research to assess integrity of the rail line to help inform the scope of a survey form.

T. Jameson asked if there was any value in rebuilding the trestle with new timber, in other words, replicating the trestle. L. Black replied that this would not be considered rehabilitation. It would be reconstruction, which would still be considered a loss of the historic resource and would be an adverse effect. If the alternatives analysis leads to a determination that it's not possible to save the resource, and the community then chooses to replicate the trestle, then there would need to be a discussion about the effect of that alternative on the historic district.

T. Jameson asked who currently owns the trestle. B. Colburn said that the City of Franklin is the owner.

L. Black commented that building a new bridge upstream and leaving the trestle to deteriorate would be considered an adverse effect – demolition by neglect.

Christine Perron asked if the rehabilitation alternative could still result in an adverse effect. L. Black said that was possible. The Secretary's Standards need to be followed on how to approach a true rehab.

D. Trubey asked if the Sulfite Bridge located upstream of the proposed park would be or could be utilized. B. Colburn explained that the City would like to eventually create a loop trail that would include the Sulfite Bridge. However, that bridge is in even worse condition than the trestle and there is currently no project and no funding to address it.

T. Jameson asked if rehabilitation of the trestle, and even replication of the trestle, would require specialty contractors. B. Colburn replied that contractors who specialize in timber bridges would be necessary. T. Jameson noted that the TAP funding of $510,000 was low when considering the use of specialty contractors and the need for foundation work. B. Colburn acknowledged that the rehab alternative exceeds the current construction budget. The City is exploring grants for additional funding. However, the cost of the rehab needs to be determined in order to identify a goal for fundraising.

Dick Lewis stated that the trestle is very significant to downtown Franklin and the whitewater park. The City is beginning to understand that additional funding will be needed to keep the trestle. There is a strong desire to keep the trestle active and integrated into the proposed park.

J. Edelmann recommended using the covered bridge guidelines to help inform the alternatives analysis.