

BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE REPORT

SUBJECT: Monthly SHPO-FHWA-ACOE-NHDOT Cultural Resources Meeting

DATE OF CONFERENCES: January 13, 2022

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: John O. Morton Building

Due to the Covid 19 Event, this meeting was a scheduled Zoom Meeting

ATTENDED BY:

NHDOT

Sheila Charles

Mike Dugas

Jill Edelman

Jon Evans

Tom Jameson

Marc Laurin

Tobey Reynolds

Trent Zanes

FHWA

Jamie Sikora

NHDHR/NHDNCR

Laura Black

David Trubey

Greenman-Pedersen

Mark Debowski

Tim Whitney

Manchester, City of

Mark Gomez

Owen Friend-Gray

Manchester Heritage

Commission

Aurore Eaton

Stan Garrity

McFarland Johnson

Steve Hoffman

Christine Perron

VHB

Hannah Beato

Frank Koczalka

Bob Landry

Quinn Stuart

Peter Walker

PROJECTS/PRESENTATIONS REVIEWED THIS MONTH:

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Manchester 29811, X-A004(311)

Participants: Quinn Stuart, Frank Koczalka, Peter Walker, VHB; Mark Gomez, Owen Friend-Gray, City of Manchester; Aurore Eaton, Stan Garrity, Manchester Heritage Commission; Jon Evans, Tom Jameson, NHDOT

Continued consultation on the South Manchester Rail Trail Project (SMRT) to discuss the interpretive panel topic options. As part of the project a memorandum of agreement was executed stipulating the production and installation of interpretive signs/panels along the route of the trail.

The South Manchester Rail Trail Project plans to construct a multi-use trail along the former Manchester-Lawrence Railroad (M&LRR) corridor between Perimeter Road and Gold Street in

Manchester. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss Stipulation 2 of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which was executed on August 20, 2020. Stipulation 2 pertains to interpretive signs/panels about the historic railroad and its resources to be installed along the trail route.

Quinn Stuart (VHB) provided an overview of the Project, focusing the discussion on the two resources with adverse effects – the 1932 Cohas Brook Trestle Bridge and the 1849 Stone Box Culvert over an unnamed stream. The Project consists of the construction of a paved trail, which would involve the removal of existing rails and ties that remain, vegetative clearing, and site work to grade and pave the trail to meet required conditions, rehabilitation of the Cohas Brook Trestle Bridge, and partial reconstruction of the Stone Box Culvert.

Stipulation 2 of the MOA is as follows:

2. *The City will commission three outside interpretive signs/panels about the historic railroad and its resources to be installed along the trail route. The cost of this interpretive program shall not exceed \$30,000 for the cost of development, fabrication, and installation. Development of the panels will be overseen by a 36 CFR 61 qualified Architectural Historian. NHDOT, NHDHR and the Manchester Heritage Commission will each be provided 30 days to review and comment on the draft text of each panel.*
 - a. *One text-only sign will be installed alongside reused granite blocks at the southern trail entrance at Perimeter Road, explaining that they were formerly part of the Cohas Brook Trestle Bridge.*
 - b. *Two interpretive panels incorporating text and images will be installed proximate to the multi-use path at the Cohas Brook Trestle Bridge. NHDHR and the City will be consulted on the final locations for the two interpretive panels.*

The interpretive panels are anticipated to examine one or more of the following themes:

- *Manchester & Lawrence Railroad History (M&LRR): Interpretation may include a history of the railroad line with a map of the route, with subtopics including major businesses that benefited from the railroad, former stations, railroad cars that used to operate along the route, or photographs from the construction of the railroad (if extant).*
- *Trestle Bridge Design: Topics on such a sign may include a graphic showing the parts of a wood trestle bridge (above and below the water), where the bridge type is most useful, and a closeup of a member joint to show how bents are fitted together.*
- *Rehabilitation of the Cohas Brook Trestle Bridge: A panel would be developed to highlight the work that the City is doing at the site, with information about the rehabilitation efforts of the bridge accompanied by a diagram showing where pieces were repaired or replaced.*
- *Hand Construction of Railroads: Part of the M&LRR's historic significance derives from its achievement as a particularly impressive engineering undertaking that largely utilized hand tools. Information about the tools and techniques used in mid-nineteenth century railroad construction, illustrated by images of the tools, would be depicted on the panel. Local/regional railroad repositories and enthusiast groups, as well as the Society for Industrial Archaeology's New England North Chapter, may be helpful in developing content for this topic.*

Quinn continued the discussion, stating that there will be three (3) outdoor interpretive panels in total, one of which will include only text. The text-only panel will be installed near the granite

blocks along the trail. The remaining two interpretive panels will include text as well as images. There are four (4) potential topics to select from for these two panels (see MOA Stipulation 2, above).

Laura Black (NHDHR) asked if NHDOT and VHB have thought about which topics would be most informative and interesting in relation to the adverse effects. Quinn responded that there are two topic “buckets” - history based and construction based. Both are focused on engineering and construction-based resources. VHB thinks rehabilitation or construction would be appropriate, and that the history and construction of the M&LRR would be comprehensive of the full trail, not just this project. The topics would appeal to different audiences.

Laura asked that attention be given to engineering elements. One panel could cover both the culvert and trestle as examples of engineering feats of the M&LRR. This panel could also incorporate the topic(s) of hand construction, including the design, construction methods, and who accomplished the work. The second panel could cover a larger topic.

Laura asked whether the City plans to install other interpretive panels [not pertaining to this Project] along the trail to cover the history of M&LRR.

Mark Gomez (City of Manchester) agreed that the panels should focus on the Cohas Brook Trestle Bridge. In response to Laura’s question, Mark shared that there is no signage at the moment along the trail, it is something the City would like to see as a celebration of history and space. The City could look into developing panels regarding the history of the M&LRR at a subsequent date.

Laura asked VHB and NHDOT to look into putting engineering and infrastructure topics onto one panel, if possible. Given the physical space constraints of one interpretive panel, this may be too much information to include on one panel. If so, both panels could cover the topics. The City could then cover broader topics on other interpretive panels [not pertaining to this Project] along the trail.

Stanley Garrity (Manchester Heritage Commission) asked if there has been any mention of the panel topics covering the transformation from river to railroad transportation. Quinn responded that content for the M&LRR history panel has not been developed yet, but that pre-railroad chronology could be covered.

Aurore Eaton (Manchester Heritage Commission) asked about plans to extent the rail trail through airport property. Owen Friend-Gray (City of Manchester) responded that the plan is for the trail to go around the [Manchester-Boston Regional Airport] and connect to the Londonderry Rail Trail.

Aurore shared that the M&LRR was important in the development of the former WWII US Airforce Base, Grenier Field (now the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport) for the transportation of construction material. This vital transportation route could be good to mention. Aurore also suggested looking into west of Permitter Road, Pine Island Park/Pond. In the early 1900s the facility was an amusement park. Aurore was not certain whether there was an old

station or stop on the M&LRR. Stanley showed a framed drawing of Pine Island Park, confirming there was a train station. Aurore also mentioned the Elms Resort, which could also have been a stop.

Pete Walker (VHB) pointed out that there is a word count associated with the panels and there needs to be a balance of images with the text. The challenge is we may not be able to go deeply into additional background. Pete asked about definitive word counts, to which Quinn responded that word counts vary and depends on the focus (e.g., context with history of the M&LRR). The panels may incorporate a timeline, maps, and all of this takes up space on a panel. The trestle bridge design should be heavy on graphics. The topic of construction of the M&LRR may have more text than images and could use examples within the region.

Pete noted that NHDOT and VHB are aiming to complete the interpretive panel work by April 2022.

Quinn pointed out that placement of panels could influence the topics.

Laura suggested that NHDOT and VHB coordinate with City, focus on mitigation and cover engineering, infrastructure, hand construction - how engineering of the M&LRR is critical to history of M&LRR. Laura also suggested that as the panel content is being developed for this project, NHDOT and VHB could see what other topics are out there and coordinate with the City. These other topics could be supplemental panels along the trail that the City could develop.

Stanley suggested contacting the Manchester Historic Association. Quinn confirmed that the historic association and other local repositories and groups will be consulted during the research and development of the panels.

Action Items

Panel topics to proceed with include: one panel to cover the M&LRR more generally (e.g., context and history), and one panel to cover the engineering, design, and hand construction of the M&LRR trestle and culvert.

- › Manchester Heritage Commission to email helpful materials and information to NHDOT and VHB.
- › NHDOT and VHB to contact the Manchester Historic Association for content to support the panel development.

Hampton-Portsmouth 26485, X-A003(355)

Participants: Christine Perron, Steve Hoffmann, McFarland Johnson; Mark Debowski, Tucker Lavigne, Tim Whitney, Greenman-Pedersen Inc; Mike Dugas, Jon Evans NHDOT

Continued consultation on proposed improvements to a rail trail project funded under the Federal CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement) Program. The project consists of approximately 9.8 miles of the Hampton Branch Rail Corridor, recently purchased by NHDOT from Pan Am Railways. The corridor begins at the southern terminus about 1,000 feet north of Drakeside Road in Hampton and continues north-northeast to the northern terminus at Barberry Lane in Portsmouth.

Christine Perron introduced the project, which involves improvements to a rail trail and is funded under the Federal CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality) Improvement Program. The project consists of approximately 9.6 miles of the Hampton Branch Rail Corridor, recently purchased by NHDOT from Pan Am Railways, beginning at the southern terminus about 1,000 feet north of Drakeside Road in Hampton and continuing north-northeast to the northern terminus at Barberry Lane in Portsmouth. The Request for Project Review was submitted in 2020. The purpose of today's meeting is to provide more information on proposed improvements and existing resources and to get input on the need for additional coordination or survey. The project is being designed by Greenman-Pedersen Inc (GPI) and McFarland Johnson Inc (MJ) is completing the environmental review.

The purpose of the project is to improve the condition of the trail to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians. This segment of the rail corridor was purchased by NHDOT for the purpose of create a recreational trail. The intent is for the trail to become part of the NH Seacoast Greenway, a proposed 17-mile trail connecting NH's eight coastal communities. This greenway would then become part of the East Coast Greenway, a 2900-mile effort to connect Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida via a multimodal trail. Improvements to the 9.6-mile corridor that will be addressed under this project are needed because the existing condition of the trail is not conducive to recreational use and parts of the trail have drainage and flooding concerns that need to be addressed.

Improvements to the trail will entail the following: removal of any remaining rail ties, resurfacing of the trail, clearing vegetation, drainage upgrades and improvements, including closed drainage system replacement work in Hampton, surface drainage regrading, roadway crossing modifications, trail reconstruction in some locations, bridge rehabilitation, and two cross culvert replacements.

Since submitting the RPR, the design team completed further review of drainage issues in Hampton and determined that addressing these issues would slow the progress of the overall project. For this reason, it was decided to split the corridor into two separate projects. In coordinating with FHWA, it was agreed that separate projects would have independent utility as long as the corridor was split in a way that allowed access to each segment of the trail. A logical split would be located at a DOT-owned property in Hampton that provides good trail access and has been suggested as a potential future trailhead. Splitting the corridor here would create one project for the southern segment located in Hampton, which would be 1.5 miles, and a second project for the northern segment, which would be 8.1 miles.

Additional details were reviewed for the Hampton segment of the trail. This segment has drainage and flooding concerns where an approximately 0.5-mile existing closed drainage system under the railroad bed sees significant flooding during even moderate rain events. The existing system has an 18-inch clay pipe trunkline and improvised manholes and catch basins. It has been determined that the existing 18-inch pipe is vastly undersized. The proposed concept is to use drainage swales from the Hannaford detention basin southerly to Exeter Road. There the water will enter a new and properly sized closed drainage system and outlet at the same location and elevation that it does today. A detention basin may be necessary at the outlet to slow the water as it exits the system. An underground chamber system is also being investigated. This area of the corridor has a narrow right-of-way and an easement would likely be needed for a detention basin.

In addition to the drainage work, there are two railroad bridges in this southern segment that will require rehabilitation. These are referred to as Old 59 and Old 60 on the valuation map. Both bridges require decks to accommodate the trail. More details on the work proposed in the southern segment will be provided at a later date.

The earth disturbing work proposed along the northern segment of the trail consists of drainage upgrades, including two culvert replacements, reconstruction of approximately 2.56 miles of trail, and removal of Japanese knotweed where it is encroaching into the trail. All proposed work along the northern segment is located within the existing ROW.

Areas of reconstruction will consist of clearing, grubbing, removing the rail ties, removing 12 inches or so of soggy material, then placing 12 to 36 inches of gravel (depending on how much the trail needs to be raised), then 4 inches crushed gravel, then a geotextile fabric for weed control, then 4 inches of stone dust. The stone dust trail will be 12' wide. Gravel shoulders will be 6:1 at 2 feet wide. Side slopes will be 3:1 and will have loam and seed. The areas of knotweed that are encroaching on the trail will be excavated down to 6 feet below the surface, and the material will be transported offsite and buried under at least 6 feet of clean material in a location yet to be determined. The excavation limits will be anything between outside of trailside ditch to outside of trailside ditch. Aerial views showing the locations of reconstruction and knotweed were reviewed.

Two cross culverts were reviewed, both of which are located in Portsmouth. One is a granite clapper box structure located within an extensive wetland system. The structure is shown on 1914 valuation maps. The location has beaver activity, with evidence of some amateur maintenance work at the culvert to alleviate flooding, which has resulted in disturbance of some of the granite blocks. The second culvert is located under Barberry Lane and carries runoff from existing ditches. The culvert is buried so the structure type is unknown; however, since it is located under Barberry Lane, it is assumed that this is a modern culvert.

The at-grade road crossings along the trail will require signage, pavement markings, detectable warning devices in concrete, and lighting, as well as bollards or pipe gates to deter motorized vehicles. Three crossings (Breakfast Hill Road, Ocean Road, and Banfield Road) will require Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons. Two crossings (Breakfast Hill Road and Ocean Road) may also require a refuge median island (subsequent to the meeting, it was determined that adding refuge islands would not be necessary). Resources in the vicinity of each at-grade crossing were reviewed. Many of the crossings are adjacent to properties with homes constructed more than 50 years ago. The Barberry Lane crossing is adjacent to the Islington-Melbourne Historic District, which was determined eligible for the National Register in 2007.

Public involvement efforts to date were summarized. Municipal agreements have been executed with each municipality. Public Officials Meetings are scheduled for January-February 2022, and a Public Informational Meeting will be scheduled for this spring. Initial contact letters will be sent to local officials to seek input on potential resource concerns. Overall, there is wide support for the proposed project and the existing corridor is already being used informally for recreation when conditions allow.

Laura Black provided the following comments:

- The rail line is the former Eastern Railroad, which is a linear historic district that is eligible for listing on the National Register. The 2002 survey form did not identify contributing and noncontributing elements of the district. She recommended that someone review the valuation sheets for the rail line to identify historic elements that are still present along the corridor and flag those elements in the field so that they are not impacted during construction.
- The rail bed itself should be considered a contributing feature of the district. She recommended getting a better understanding of how the surface elevations of the trail would be impacted.
- Rehabilitation of the stone culvert is preferred over replacement. If the culvert is undersized, could a supplemental culvert be installed to address hydraulic capacity concerns?
- At the at-grade crossings, the bigger concern with proposed work would be realignment of the trail, which is not proposed.
- Privacy concerns with abutters should be considered.
- The effect determination will consider how ‘light on the landscape’ the project will be.
- Based on work as proposed, inventory of additional properties is not necessary.

Jill Edelmann asked if effect sheets were recommended for the project. Laura replied that they would be helpful.

Sheila Charles commented that she would discuss the project with David Trubey to determine the need for a Phase IA archaeological survey. Subsequent to the meeting, it was decided that a Phase IA survey would be completed.

Jaffrey 16307, X-A001(234)

Participants: Hannah Beato, Bob Landry, Peter Walker, Quinn Stewart, VHB; Tobey Reynolds, Marc Laurin, Trent Zanes, NHDOT

Continued consultation, including PowerPoint presentation and discussion of requests by property owners to be fully acquired.

The Project’s Adverse Effect Memo was executed on September 19, 2019, and the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was executed on August 20, 2020. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss that two property owners have approached NHDOT about changing from a partial to full acquisitions. NHDOT, NHDHR, and FHWA need to discuss the changes from a Section 106 perspective and to the Section 4(f) Evaluation.

Two property owners (Parcels 7 (Langoren) and 8 (Omu), or 19 and 21 River Street, respectively), have expressed interest in full acquisitions. The owner of Parcel 7 requested the

price difference between a full and partial acquisition and asked about the ROW process. Tobey Reynolds (NHDOT) noted that the driveway location(s) of Parcels 7 and 8 are not desirable (inside of the 3-legged roundabout) and create roadway conflicts with the movement and safety of traffic inside of the 3-legged roundabout. The current design, while not preferred, would retain the properties; however, the property owners of Parcels 7 and 8 have since changed their minds. This change in acquisition preference would be beneficial from a roadway safety standpoint. NHDOT is conducting appraisals to work towards this new goal.

Jill Edelman (NHDOT) shared that Parcel 7 was determined not individually eligible for listing in the National Register; however, the property does contribute to the Jaffrey Downtown Historic District. Parcel 8 has not been individually inventoried due to lack of integrity; however, this property also contributes to the Historic District. Due to potential changes in acquisition plans and potential for demolition to occur to these contributing resources, the project will likely need an updated Adverse Effect Memo, new effect table sheets, and potentially an amended MOA. Jill brought up whether the current mitigation measures cover demolition of these new buildings, and whether the proposed project could be re-aligned in such a way for NHDOT to construct a safer driveway(s) and for NHDOT to purchase the two buildings with the intent to sell them.

Laura Black (NHDHR) stated that NHDOT would need to determine 1) whether the buildings on Parcels 7 and 8 will be demolished (in which case two additional buildings contributing to the Historic District would be lost) or, 2) whether the driveway(s) could be realigned, and the properties re-sold (thereby resulting in no difference to the Jaffrey Downtown Historic District, only a change in ownership). These are two different scenarios with different outcomes.

Laura noted that in looking at mitigation measures, it will be important for NHDOT to receive feedback from the Town of Jaffrey on the potential loss of two additional buildings within the Historic District. Laura also asked what NHDOT's plan for the landscape (Parcels 7 and 8) would be if the buildings are demolished (e.g., empty lot or a small park).

Jamie Sikora (FHWA) agreed with Laura, noting that additional ROW and engineering information is needed. The Team will need to know whether there will be a full acquisition(s) and what the justifications would be to alter the original project plans. Jamie asked whether there is a reasonable expectation on trying to preserve the buildings on the properties. He postulated if the Town would consider this an opportunity to relocate the Bissell Alderman Park and features (by Rite Aid), which are being impacted by the project, to this location. The acquisitions would increase the use of Section 4(f) properties; therefore, would need to redo the Individual Section 4(f) Evaluation. Most of the previous Section 4(f) Evaluation content could be used in the update. The Section 106 process outcomes would influence the Section 4(f) reevaluation.

Tobey clarified that it would be difficult to save the building on Parcel 8, but NHDOT could investigate the feasibility of saving the building on Parcel 7 and providing a driveway outside of the roundabout. A driveway for Parcel 7 could be constructed adjacent to Parcel 6, and the proposed concrete island could be shortened to provide access to the driveway (the user may need to use the roundabout to go south versus taking a left-hand turn out of the driveway when exiting the property.). The challenge will be to provide safe access. The existing property line of Parcel 7 extends into the center of the roundabout and the impacts to Parcel 7 are substantial. The

Parcel 7 property owner is concerned with what they are losing regarding decreased buffers around the house. NHDOT understands the property owner's concerns.

Pete Walker (VHB) asked Jamie to clarify the point made about increasing the Section 4(f) use even if the buildings are not demolished. Jamie responded that if the parcel is fully acquired, there would be an increase in use under Section 4(f). Jamie shared of an example in Roxbury - a property owner requested full acquisition, the Section 106 MOA was updated, and the acquired property was to be sold with no change in use. Jamie will further look into the citation [23 CFR 774.9(c)(3)] regarding Section 4(f) approval requirements that he recently emailed to NHDOT and VHB. In his email, Jamie stated that "Per 23 CFR 774.9(c)(3), a separate Section 4(f) approval would be required if the properties are to be fully acquired and/or demolished."

Jill shared that once NHDOT figures out the plan for Parcels 7 and 8, the effects sheets will need to be updated, and consultation will be needed with the Town and Consulting Parties. The Team will then be able to determine whether updates are needed to the existing mitigation measures. Laura agreed with this approach. A decision for Parcel 7 is expected by April of 2022 based on the full appraisal of the property being completed by February of 2022.

Laura asked whether additional archaeological survey(s) would be needed if the buildings were to be demolished. NHDOT and VHB will review IAC's findings in the Phase IB Intensive Archaeology Investigation (March 29, 2019, IAC Report No. 1407). David Trubey (NHDHR) agreed that IAC's report will need to be reviewed, noting that the areas [Parcels 7 and 8] seem to have a high level of disturbance already, based on current aerial imagery. Pete shared that there used to be a stormwater feature proposed near Parcel 8 and the parcels may have been reviewed for sensitivity. David added that the demolition plan and extent of in-ground disturbance will need to be determined, taking the building(s) down and filling the basements with minimal ground disturbance, would not be a concern. David noted that construction of a pocket park would likely result in greater levels of disturbance and need further review.

Action Items

- NHDOT to continue coordination with the property owner of Parcel 7 to determine acquisition details.
- If Parcel 7 is to be fully acquired, NHDOT will need to determine final disposition of the building on Parcel 7.
- Parcel 8 has requested and received approval of a change to full acquisition. Given the layout of Parcel 8 and its limited ROW boundary, a relocated driveway to US 202 outside of the roundabout is not possible; therefore, the demolition of the building is likely given its limited access.
- NHDOT recognizes that demolition of either or both structures would require updates to Section 106 documentation, NEPA documentation, the Section 4(f) Evaluation, and would require further coordination with the Town and Consulting Parties.
- Jamie Sikora to look further into the applicable Section 4(f) approval requirements.
- NHDOT and VHB to review the Phase IB Intensive Archaeology Investigation (March 29, 2019, IAC Report No. 1407).

- Quinn Stuart (VHB) confirmed that IAC's Phase IB report covers the River Street roundabout locations; fieldwork was conducted at portions of 15 River Street, 19-21 River Street, and the Jaffrey War Memorial Park.
- Marc Laurin (NHDOT) and Sheila Charles (NHDOT) also confirmed that not all the areas that would be further impacted by the demolition of the houses were tested by IAC and concluded that further investigations may need to be conducted depending on proposed development of the site.