

# BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE REPORT

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

**DATE OF CONFERENCES:** November 8, 2018

**LOCATION OF CONFERENCE:** John O. Morton Building

**ATTENDED BY:**

**NHDOT**

Sheila Charles  
Ron Crickard  
Jill Edelmann  
(via phone)  
Phil Miles  
Russ St. Pierre

**NHDHR**  
Laura Black  
David Trubey

**FHWA**  
Jamie Sikora

**MJ**

Brian Colburn  
Christine Perron

**Preservation Co.**  
Lynne Monroe  
Reagan Ruedig

**Town of Nashua**  
Tim Cummings

**PROJECTS/PRESENTATIONS REVIEWED THIS MONTH:**

*(minutes on subsequent pages)*

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**Shelburne Rest Area 42104 (no federal number)**

Participants: Russ St.Pierre, Phil Miles, Dave Rodrigue, NHDOT

Discussion of cultural resources effects pertaining to the proposed property surplus.

Jill began by noting the Request for Project Review had been submitted and wanting to make sure DHR had all the information they needed.

Laura noted that the proposed national register boundary for the parcel needs to be revised as it does not currently include all of the contributing transportation-related resources on the rest area property. Jill will have Lisa update the form.

With regard to the property, Laura explained that one of the key characteristics that make it eligible for the National Register in the context of automobile tourism is the relationship of the building to the highway. Therefore, the driveways and parking substantially contribute to the parcel's eligibility. Consequently, the Department's proposed surplus parcel configuration (excluding the parking area and access points) would significantly change the building's relationship to the road, and sale of the property without these elements would most likely result in a cumulative adverse effect on the resource to the extent that the property would no longer be eligible.

Under this scenario, the only way to avoid the cumulative adverse impact would be if the Department and the future surplus land owner agreed on a use easement whereby the Department's retained portion would remain essentially as it is and available to the Department of Safety, and the owner of the remainder would also preserve that portion while adapting it to their needs. Such a scenario seems unlikely given the divergent anticipated uses.

Jamie commented that it was his understanding the Department intended to transfer the whole rest area. In response, it was noted that the proposed surplus parcel configuration has remained

unchanged from the beginning, thought there was probably a misunderstanding of what was intended to be transferred.

Jamie also had a question on the grant received by the Bureau of Economic Affairs from the Northern Border Regional Commission for the rest areas. It was noted that the grant was made specifically with regard to redevelopment of the Rumney rest area, and that the funds might be available to support some of the cultural resource investigations. It was also noted that the Rumney Historical Society has one of the signs that had been at the Rumney Rest Area. Finally, it was his opinion that the Department should consider developing a Memorandum of Agreement for all of the surveyed properties rather than a MOA for each individual property.

The Phase IA archaeological investigation for the other rest areas is underway. Phase II, if needed, will wait until the spring of 2019 and consider further decisions about surplusings the properties.

Follow up: The Department needs to conduct an alternatives analysis to investigate methods of disposing of the property without it resulting in a cumulative adverse effect.

### **Nashua, 16314, X-A001(236), R&C# 10133**

Participants: Christine Perron, Brian Colburn, McFarland Johnson: Ron Crickard, Jennifer Reczek, NHDOT; Lynne Monroe, Preservation Company; Tim Cummings, City of Nashua

Continued consultation on the East Hollis Street Intersection Improvements, as recommended by DHR's response to the recent RPR.

Christine Perron introduced the project. This is a federally-funded LPA project managed by the City of Nashua. The project involves intersection improvements at the intersections of East Hollis Street and Bridge Street. The purpose of the project is to improve mobility and access for all modes of transportation and also to provide an aesthetically pleasing gateway into the City of Nashua. The project is in its first phase, which has included extensive public involvement and will culminate in an engineering study that identifies a locally preferred alternative and the resources and concerns to be addressed as the project moves forward. The next phase of the project will involve preliminary design, NEPA, and continued Section 106 consultation. The goal of this meeting is to get a better understanding of the surveys that will be needed as the project moves forward.

Brian Colburn described the efforts completed to date. There have been five meetings with the project Steering Committee, which consists of local businesses and City officials. In addition, three public informational meetings have been held, along with meetings with the Mayor's office and other City committees. There is also a project website. Through these meetings, key concerns and the project's purpose and need were identified, and a locally preferred alternative was selected. Key concerns include the lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, access issues with current and future redevelopment projects, traffic flow, community amenities, and aesthetics.

Three design alternatives have been reviewed, and a locally preferred alternative was selected following extensive public input. The project is expected to be primarily within existing right-of-way, with some minor impacts to property frontage possible. No impacts to structures are anticipated. The locally preferred alternative provides full access to current redevelopment projects, and will accommodate future access to future redevelopment of Crown Street. In

addition, the alternative expands green space, provides a walking trail to the river, and includes bike lanes and improved pedestrian connections.

C. Perron stated that Preservation Company reviewed and summarized aboveground resources for the Request for Project Review. The only previously surveyed eligible resource in the area is the Nashua & Lowell Railroad, located to the west of the project. The majority of the buildings in the APE are residential and date between 1890 and 1920. The two Merrimack River bridges to the east of the project were constructed in 1970, which was also when the current roadway configuration was constructed. The area has been substantially disturbed over the years by bridge and roadway construction, as well as extensive underground utilities. A plan was reviewed to show the location of existing underground utilities.

David Trubey noted that this was considered an extremely archaeologically sensitive area due to its proximity to the river. There are known Native American sites to the north and south along the river. These tend to be deep sites, up to 1 meter deep, but it is still possible for resources to be closer to the surface. B. Colburn commented that impacts from the project are expected to be 2 feet deep at most. Sheila Charles said that she would be concerned with not doing at least a Phase IA survey in this area. Reagan Ruedig noted that the residential neighborhood once extended closer to the river, so there was potential for 19<sup>th</sup> century resources as well. After further discussion, it was determined that it would make sense to do a combined Phase IA/IB survey. The archaeologists should be given copy of the utility plan to help inform the scope of the survey.

Laura Black commented that ideally the public involvement process would happen concurrently with the Section 106 process so that the public is informed of historic resource concerns when considering design alternatives. C. Perron noted that there would be additional opportunity for public input in the next phase of the project.

There was discussion of the potential for a historic district. Lynne and Reagan commented that the boundary of a potential district would exceed the project limits and the integrity of a potential district did not seem high based on their initial review. L. Black recommended a District Area Form, noting that even if the project would not be impacting any buildings, important elements of a district could also include infrastructure and spatial relationships. A form was needed in order to assess eligibility and impacts. Individual properties where impacts are possible should also be considered to determine the need for Individual Inventory Forms.

Submitted by: Sheila Charles and Jill Edelman, Cultural Resources

# New Hampshire Department of Transportation Cultural Resources Agency Coordination Meeting

Date November 8, 2018

Please initial next to your name.      Guests: Please use reverse side to sign in.

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