

# BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE REPORT

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

**DATE OF CONFERENCES:** October 8 & 14, 2020

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

**ATTENDED BY:**

**NHDOT**

Sheila Charles  
Ron Crickard  
Jill Edelmann  
Bob Juliano  
Marc Laurin  
Heidi Lemay  
Don Lyford  
Rebecca Martin  
Dan Prehemo  
Jennifer Reczek  
Hans Weber

**NHDHR/NHDNCR**

Laura Black  
Nadine Miller  
David Trubey  
Johanna Lyons

**FHWA**

Jamie Sikora

**USACE**

Rick Kristoff

**City of Dover**

Christopher Parker

**VHB**

Hannah Beato  
Nicole Benjamin-Ma  
Pete Walker

**FHI**

Susan Bemis  
Stephanie Dyer-Carroll

**HDR**

Nick Caron  
Roch Larochelle  
John Stockton

**Pease Dev. Authority  
Port Advisory Council**

Roger Groux  
Geno Marconia

**Consulting &  
Interested Parties**

Kate Bashline  
Jim Cerny  
Nathan Holth  
Esther Kennedy  
Betty Moore  
Kate Murray  
Steve Skoglund  
Sen. David Watters

**PROJECTS/PRESENTATIONS REVIEWED THIS MONTH:**

*(minutes on subsequent pages)*

**October 8 and October 14, 2020 - Due to the Covid 19 Event, these meetings were scheduled Zoom Meetings**

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October 8, 2020

**Newton 29617, X-A004(206)**

Participants: Rebecca Martin, Don Lyford, Dan Prehemo, Hans Weber and Heidi Lemay, NHDOT

Initial consultation to discuss the proposed improvements to Rowe’s Corner, the intersection of NH Route 108, Maple Avenue & Amesbury Road. Hans Weber provided an introduction to the project. He explained that the project proposes improvements to the NH Route 108, Amesbury Road, and Maple Avenue intersection in Newton, NH. This intersection is known as Rowe’s Corner. H. Weber provided a Google street view drive through the intersection to orient the meeting attendees to the area. He described the project schedule including the public informational meeting that was held in August 2020 and a proposed public hearing in spring 2021. H. Weber

explained the project is needed to address the uncertainty that currently exists at the intersection. Currently NH Route 108 does not stop at the intersection, but Maple Avenue and Amesbury Road have stop signs. There is a flashing beacon in the intersection. Since Route 108 takes a distinct curve through the intersection and there are multiple slip ramps, the intersection can be confusing for drivers. An accident history study reported that there have been 15 crashes at the intersection in recent years.

H. Weber explained that two alternatives were being considered for the intersection, a four way stop with elimination of the slip ramps and a roundabout. H. Weber described that the Newton Select Board had indicated that the four-way stop is the preferred alternative, so the NHDOT is planning to pursue the four way stop as the preferred alternative. The four way stop alternative has fewer impacts in the intersection and would result in an overall reduction in the amount of pavement through the intersection.

H. Weber showed a preliminary plan for each alternative, concentrating on the four way stop (preferred) alternative. He explained that the green line represents cuts and fills. H. Weber also explained that there is a culvert on Amesbury Road of unknown age that might be addressed as part of the project. H. Weber explained that an EMMIT search for the project area was completed and there are no known cultural resources in the intersection. H. Weber showed photos of large trees in the intersection that would potentially be impacted by the project. He also described impacts anticipated in each of the quadrants of the intersection proposed for the preferred alternative (four way stop).

In the north east quadrant of the intersection the road will be moved away from the house since a slip ramp will be removed. The house was built in 1900 and no impacts are proposed to the house. Slope impacts into the yard are anticipated. A well for the property is located on the opposite (south) side of Maple Avenue, but the well would not be impacted.

In the north west quadrant of the intersection the house was built in 1901 and no impacts are proposed to the building. The road would be moved away from the house. Slope impacts are anticipated and some trees on the property could be impacted by the project. A truck apron is proposed for this quadrant.

In the south west quadrant of the intersection the slip ramp would be removed. The house on this property is further away from the intersection and was built in 1998. Slope impacts are proposed. South of the Rowe's Corner intersection on Amesbury Road there is an intersection with Gould's Hill Road. The property on the corner is from 1739. No impacts are currently proposed on the property, but if the culvert were to be rehabilitated or replaced as part of the project, impacts might be needed. The Amesbury Road culvert seems to have been extended with multiple materials. The date of construction and the original materials are unknown.

In the south east corner of the intersection there are not any buildings. In this corner there is a wetland. A storm water treatment feature is planned for this quadrant. There has been dumping of trash in this quadrant of the intersection over time.

Jamie Sikora inquired if the consulting party process had been described during the summer public information meeting. Rebecca Martin explained that her memory was that it had been. H. Weber explained the meeting was a Zoom meeting and it was recorded and posted.

David Trubey asked about whether the landscape in the south east quadrant appeared to be terraced above the wetland. He explained that if it is steep, it is less likely to be archaeologically sensitive. The area above the wetland is drier and relatively flat. Additional photos of the just the south east quadrant will be compiled and submitted to DHR as an RPR amendment.

Laura Black explained that she reviewed the meeting minutes from the summer public informational meeting and that the questions of the citizens pertain to the cultural resource review even if the citizens asking the

questions were not thinking in that context. She said that impacts to wells should be clarified and the age and type of culvert should be determined.

The discussion moved to whether there was potential for a historic district in the intersection since the intersection is named (Rowe's Corner). L. Black commented that individual inventory forms might be needed for the 1739 property on Gould's Hill Road and the property in the north west quadrant. L. Black explained that someone needed a better understanding of the potential for a historic district and where the impacts would extend to for the preferred alternative.

Jill Edelmann and R. Martin agreed to discuss the project's cultural resources review following the meeting to determine the next steps.

\*\*\*Following the October Cultural Resources Meeting J. Edelmann and R. Martin discussed the project and suggested to L. Black that a Historic District Area Form tailored to the project area should be prepared. L. Black agreed to this approach. J. Edelmann will task a consultant to complete the form.

\*\*\*An amendment to the RPR which included additional photos and details of impacts in the south east quadrant was submitted to NHDHR on 11/3/2020. The amendment included an aerial with plans overlaid to show all proposed impacts in the project area.

\*\*\*Following the October Cultural Resources Meeting it was agreed that the Amesbury Road culvert will most likely be addressed as part of the project. The hydraulics team is expected to review the crossing and provide options in the winter of 2020-2021.

#### **Newington-Dover 11238S, NHS-02719(037)**

Participants: Peter Walker, Nicole Benjamin-Ma, Hannah Beato, VHB; Jennifer Reczek, Ron Crickard, Bob Juliano, Marc Laurin, NHDOT; Christopher Parker, City of Dover; Consulting Parties; Nathan Holth, [historicbrides.org](http://historicbrides.org); Senator David Watters, District 4

Jennifer Reczek introduced herself as the new NHDOT PM (Keith Cota retired in August). Jill Edelmann, acknowledging that months had elapsed since the last project meeting, explained some reasons for the delay, which included management transitions within NHDOT, COVID-19, as well as finalizing a new contract with VHB.

After the Adverse Effects Memo was signed on January 2, 2020, there were two cultural resources interagency meetings among NHDOT, NHDHR, FHWA, ACOE, and the Consulting/Interested Parties that focused exclusively on developing mitigation for adverse effects resulting from the project. These meetings were held on January 9 and 24, 2020. This October 8, 2020 meeting continued the discussion regarding potential mitigation for the loss of the General Sullivan Bridge (GSB). Specifically, the meeting sought final comments on the stipulations to be included in the Draft SEIS and a Draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The basis for the discussion was a document entitled "GSB Section 106 Mitigation Stipulations – Draft 2020-09-21" distributed by Jill Edelmann on October 1. It was acknowledged that additional research and public input may be required to develop the final MOA stipulations following the release of the Draft SEIS for public comment. The immediate goal for the meeting, therefore, is not to have the final MOA language, but rather to take a step towards finalizing the public draft for comment.

#### **Discussion of Draft Stipulations**

Following the introductory remarks, the group reviewed the draft stipulations as follows:

### Stipulation A - Marketing the GSB

No comments were provided on this FHWA requirement. No action items or stipulation revisions were suggested. It was discussed that it is very unlikely that a buyer will be found, but this is an FHWA requirement.

### Stipulation B - Documentation of the GSB

- NH Historic Property Documentation was already completed for the GSB abutments. NHDHR recommended that NHDOT contact NPS to discuss the procedures required to include all components of the bridge holistically into the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER).<sup>1</sup>
- NHDHR requested being provided with a copy of the HAER materials: photos, maps, narrative, high-quality photocopies of the photos to eliminate inefficiencies with pulling out individual large prints and negatives.
- Attendees concurred with electronic copy distributions to local libraries, town halls, and local historic commissions.
- *Action Items and Stipulation Revision - NHDOT to contact NPS to discuss incorporating the GSB approaches into the HAER documentation. Project team to contact local repositories (e.g., libraries, town halls, local historic commissions, etc.) to assess interest in acquiring electronic copies of the HAER documentation for the GSB prior to finalizing stipulation language. NHDHR suggested when scoping this task later, additional time should be included in the schedule and budget than is typical for revision coordination with NHDHR and NPS, as recent NPS comments on HAER submittals have been very detailed.*

### Stipulation C - NHDOT Bridge Inventory and Bridge Management Plan – Promotion and Accessibility

- There are several procedural questions to be worked out, including how bridges determined not eligible will be uploaded into EMMIT.
- S. Charles noted 120 bridges remain to be photographed and included in the NHDOT Bridge Inventory.
- NHDHR commented that integrating the bridge inventory into EMMIT will be a manual process that is not straightforward; S. Charles responded that this MOA stipulation is a good opportunity to tie up the procedural “loose ends” with the bridge inventory.
- Access: N. Holth voiced that the inventory documents should be made free for the public to view and expressed concern that EMMIT requires a subscription. J. Sikora concurred and added that because Federal funds would be used, the documentation should be free to the public for use. N. Miller and J. Edelmann stated that the historic bridge inventory information and mapping will be available on the NHDOT website as well, which does not require a subscription or payment. This will be made clear in the finalized stipulation language.
- N. Miller expressed that the list of how and where to promote the final inventory and bridge management plan is great, and encouraged NHDOT to reach out to listed groups and finalize the list prior to the final stipulation language.
- *Action Items and Stipulation Revisions – Set up coordination meeting NHDOT/NHDHR/VHB to spell out the scope for stipulation C.i., EMMIT and Bridge Inventory integration, in detail. NHDOT to narrow down list in C.ii. to be more finite. MOA stipulation to state that NHDOT will also provide the Bridge Inventory online and free to access by the public, since EMMIT is a paid subscription.*

### Stipulation D - Interpretive Program

- Cape Cod Bridges
  - J. Edelmann brought to attention that the Cape Cod Canal bridges – the Bourne and Sagamore bridges - are planned to be removed.
  - L. Black suggested coordination with MassDOT and the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MA SHPO) to discuss mitigation overlap for the loss of the Cape Cod bridges.

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<sup>1</sup> Information on HAER documentation is provided by the NPS online at <https://www.nps.gov/hdp/haer/index.htm>.

- J. Reczek pointed out the difference in project timeline and that the Cape Cod project is still in early planning stages. Mitigation coordination would require waiting for the Cape Cod project to progress, which would further hold up the efforts to advance mitigation for the GSB project.
- Relationship between adverse effects and interpretive program
  - L. Black reminded attendees of the main adverse effects that are to be mitigated, to which the interpretive program should emphasize and focus on. The interpretive program should include language about the bridge loss and regional transportation network - connect and reference all three of the adverse effects' components.
  - N. Miller requested that the effects components be included into the “Whereas” clauses of the MOA, so that the mitigation measures may point back to the adverse effects.
- Materials and design
  - NDHR requested input on panel placement, themes, content and images, as well as review of the final on-site interpretive panel designs.
  - N. Miller suggested two inclusions for the MOA stipulation to tighten up the language: the Consulting Parties be afforded a set period of time to comment on the panel content draft(s), and requiring use of a trained graphic designer to create the panel designs and layouts as well as a qualified architectural historian to develop content.
  - N. Holth recommended using vertical, salvaged materials from the GSB as potential mounting structures for the panels. N. Benjamin-Ma added that this concept is common and agreed with the creative material re-use idea.
- Traveling display
  - J. Reczek reported that NHDOT wants to finalize ownership, management, and ongoing maintenance of the exhibit. There is a concern that after an outlay of effort to create the exhibit, it will end up being put into storage. This concern was echoed by NHDHR.
  - N. Miller talked about an exhibit on the cable houses being developed as mitigation for the Seacoast Reliability study, which will be on display in Newington Town Hall for three years; after three years, the Town has to option of taking ownership of it, or it will transfer to Eversource.
  - Both NHDOT and NHDHR stated there is no space appropriate for the display at their buildings. C. Parker recommended speaking with the Woodman Institute, a museum in Dover. Other recommended entities to contact included UNH Engineering Department, the Portsmouth Historical Society or Athenaeum, and local municipalities. N. Holth confirmed that there is no national bridge museum.
  - L. Black suggested finalizing who might take ownership, and that if it seems no one can take ownership, then the traveling exhibit might be removed from the stipulations.
- Additional interpretive elements
  - NHDHR requested that stipulation D.ii. (i.e., book of photos, crowd-sourced photo project, and film documentary) be narrowed down to the most feasible option(s). Several of these ideas are “aspirational” and may divert resources from more feasible approaches.
  - C. Parker noted that the Dover Heritage Commission strongly supported a crowd-sourced photo initiative, and the benefits of using a platform that has an online component. L. Black cited this as an example of what factors should be considered when choosing which stipulation elements to include in the final MOA.
  - J. Edelmann reminded attendees that Lulu Pickering (Consulting Party on behalf of Newington Historical Commission) wanted a tangible, in-person element as well. N. Benjamin-Ma noted that UMass Boston is finalizing a “Scanning Day” guidebook for local entities looking to host local events. N. Miller asked for more information on the UMass effort. C. Parker commented that the photos would be a way for the public to participate and document memories.
- *Stipulation Revisions:*
  - *A professional graphic designer should be involved in the development of the on-site interpretive panels to enhance the quality.*

- *NHDHR is to be afforded the opportunity to be involved in the development of the panels, including reviewing and commenting on the preliminary content and final mockups of the whole panel design(s).*
- *Consulting parties are also to be provided with an opportunity to comment on the panels, but with a specified due date to progress the mitigation in a timely manner.*
- *The adverse effects should be included into the “Whereas” clauses of the MOA, so that the mitigation measures point back to the adverse effects.*
- *Stipulation D.ii. to be scaled back to one or two items.*
- *Action items:*
  - *Consider how small elements or portions of the GSB structure could be salvaged and creatively re-used as a mounting structure(s) for the interpretive panels.*
  - *NHDOT to confirm groups with committed interest in taking ownership of the portable traveling display, such as local museums or universities.*
  - *NHDOT to refine and narrow down stipulation D.ii. (i.e., book of photos, crowd-sourced photo project, and film documentary) to most feasible option(s).*
  - *VHB to provide more information to NHDHR on the UMass photo project efforts.*

#### Stipulation E - Rehabilitation of the Newington Railroad Depot and Toll House and State-Owned Land on Bloody Point

- J. Edelmann explained that the ownership history of the Depot means it doesn't fall into NHDOT's usual surplus category, and more time is needed for NHDOT to understand the ownership rights and deaccession responsibilities. J. Reczek added that if the Depot is considered an asset in the turnpike system, it may be required to be sold at fair market value. J. Edelmann noted that a private entity has expressed interest in purchasing the property.
  - J. Reczek reported that NHDOT front office suggested that the MOA identify a reasonable NHDOT contribution to rehabilitate the Depot property. L. Black suggested developing language for the MOA that does not include money towards rehabilitation but instead includes a documented assessment which would be useful for any entity to understand the next 10 years of responsibility.
  - N. Miller added that a property transfer may not be appropriate for this MOA, and instead supported a stipulation requiring a conditions assessment. The NH Preservation Alliance has a report template format that has proven successful. An assessment is usually a reasonable amount of money (less than \$15,000) and wouldn't need a defined cap in the stipulation language. A land use assessment should be added as well.
1. J. Reczek mentioned that the 2008 ROD included consideration of property transfer of the Depot to the Town of Newington: *“NHDOT will continue to work with the Town of Newington to develop an agreement to transfer the historic former railroad station on Bloody Point and the land immediately surrounding the building to the Town.” (Page 22, L. Cultural Resources, Historical Structures, Line 8.)*
  2. J. Sikora stated that the Supplemental ROD can evaluate and address this project commitment.
    - P. Walker added that Lulu Pickering on behalf of the Town has been vocal that this is a priority to the Town – eliminating the property transfer may not be supported by the community.
    - *Action Items and Stipulation Revisions – NHDOT will work internally to understand the ownership of the property and any commitments that are required resulting from the ownership. NHDOT will also meet with the Newington Board of Selectman to discuss details regarding the potential purchase and ongoing maintenance of the Depot property. J. Reczek suggested developing a proposal from NHDOT to the Town of Newington to consider.*

#### Stipulation F - Dover Recreational Trail

- Senator D. Watters expressed strong support for the trail expansion.
- C. Parker noted that the community trail follows the old rail bed of the Newington-Dover branch RR line. Connecting this to the GSB recreational bridge crossing would give people safe access to walk/bike to the crossing, making it a local and regional benefit, and it would tie into the transportation history of

the crossing. C. Parker reported that NHDOT provided input on the plan for the Spur Road trail section (addition of a bike path and stormwater treatment); it hasn't been constructed yet because they do not own the ROW. C. Parker suggested that NHDOT commit to funding a feasibility study for the trail expansion.

- J. Reczek said that NHDOT is supportive of allowing use of the ROW, if a physical separation between non-motorized and vehicular traffic were incorporated. C. Parker said Dover would look for grant funding to support the trail efforts. The feasibility study could include a historic component on incorporating panels or other interpretation to the transportation links, and how they can be best maintained (for example, snow plowing needs on the shoulder).
- L. Black suggested that perhaps interpretive panels discussing the historic transportation links could be added to the railbed in the near-term, before completion of the trail link? C. Parker said that committing to siting would be a challenge right now, but that Dover would support the creation of interpretive materials to be installed when appropriate.
- J. Edelmann suggested incorporating the panels along the trail, with careful consideration of placement, and they could be included as digital files on Dover web site in the interim. C. Parker noted there were four rail stations along the Spur Railroad area, and that markers could be at those points to explain stations.
- J. Sikora commented that if more appropriate, the trail could be used as a mitigation measure for other impacts and documented in the FSEIS and SROD, instead of within the MOA.

### Next Steps

- VHB and NHDOT - Further coordinate with other entities as needed to solidify stipulation commitments, including:
  - NPS and local libraries for HAER Documentation.
  - City of Dover, Town of Newington, City of Portsmouth, Woodman Institute, Portsmouth Historical Society, UNH, and others for interest in "hosting" a portable traveling display.
  - Newington Board of Selectmen and Lulu Pickering for discussion of the Depot.
- VHB - Set up coordination meeting with NHDOT/NHDHR/VHB to spell out the scope for stipulation C.i., EMMIT and Bridge Inventory integration, in detail.
- VHB - Revise mitigation stipulations after outreach to necessary internal and external entities and provide revised version to NHDOT for incorporation into the Draft SEIS.
- VHB, NHDOT, and FHWA – Develop plans for a winter 2020 NEPA Public Hearing.
- NHDOT/VHB - Update the GSB Project website as progress is made and a more concrete timeline is established for the Public Hearing.

October 14, 2020

### **New Castle-Rye 16127, X-A001(146) & Seabrook-Hampton 15904, X-A001(026)**

Participants: Roch Larochelle, John Stockton, Nick Caron, HDR; Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, Susan Bemis, FHI; Jennifer Reczek, Ron Crickard, Marc Laurin, NHDOT; Kate Bashline, Jim Cerny, Esther Kennedy, Betty Moore, Steve Skoglund, Kate Murray, Consulting Parties; Roger Groux, Geno Marconi, Pease Development Authority Port Advisory Council

The first joint Cultural Resources Coordination Meeting with New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (NHDHR) and Consulting Parties on the New Castle-Rye Bridge and Seabrook-Hampton Bridge projects was held on October 14, 2020 via Zoom video call. It was the ninth Cultural Resources Coordination Meeting for the New Castle-Rye Bridge project and the fourth Cultural Resources Coordination Meeting for the Seabrook-Hampton Bridge project. Jennifer Reczek, the NHDOT Project Manager for both projects, opened the meeting with introductions. She said the purpose of the meeting was to continue the Section 106 consultation and jointly

discuss potential mitigation measures for each individual bridge, as well as for the potential loss of the bascule bridge type in New Hampshire. She noted that she understood the Port had additional comments and items they would like to discuss, and that she would be reaching out to set up a separate meeting.

Ms. Reczek then provided a short summary of the New Castle-Rye Bridge project. She said the project was initiated in 2012 because, while safe, the bridge is structurally deficient and functionally obsolete. The project would maintain safe and efficient access between New Castle and Rye along NH 1B, improve bicycle and pedestrian safety in the vicinity of the bridge, and meet current safety and load requirements. The project team considered a range of alternatives, including both Replacement with a Fixed Bridge and Replacement with a Bascule Bridge. A Benefit-Cost Analysis completed in 2015 concluded that the Replacement with a Fixed Bridge would result in a life-cycle cost savings of \$10M over the Replacement with a Bascule Bridge. Between the Spring of 2015 and the Spring of 2016, the Fixed Bridge was identified as the Preferred Alternative and the US Coast Guard (USCG) provided the Preliminary Determination for the fixed structure. The Adverse Effect memo was signed in February 2018. Through the Section 106 consultation, NHDOT determined that the New Castle-Rye Bridge project and the Seabrook-Hampton Bridge project should be assessed together due to their interrelation in the 1994 Scammell Bridge Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The New Castle-Rye project was therefore paused in Summer 2018 so that the Seabrook-Hampton project could reach the same level of development and the projects could be assessed together. Ms. Reczek explained that the proposed design being advanced for the New Castle-Rye Bridge is a two-span fixed structure with a sidewalk on the east side of the bridge. The design also includes a scenic overlook and would allow utilities to be carried on the bridge in the future. It would raise the roadway approach grades to accommodate the slightly higher clearance as per the USCG.

Ms. Reczek then provided a summary of the Seabrook-Hampton Bridge project. The current bridge, while safe, is structurally deficient and functionally obsolete. The project would provide a safe, reliable, and structurally sound crossing over the Hampton Harbor and improve mobility, particularly for non-motorized users. In its present condition, there are limited shoulders and pedestrian facilities. The project team studied a range of alternatives, including Replacement with a Fixed Bridge, Replacement with a Bascule Bridge, and two Rehabilitation alternatives. In Spring 2020, a Type, Size and Location Study (TS&L) was completed which identified Replacement with a Fixed Bridge as the Preferred Alternative. The Adverse Effect memo was signed in March 2020. The proposed bridge design would increase vertical clearance for navigation and widen the navigational channel to 150'. The design includes two lanes of traffic, shoulders for cyclists on either side of the roadway, a 6' sidewalks on either side, and scenic overlooks.

Stephanie Dyer-Carroll with FHI then turned the conversation to coordination with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the MOA process, and the adverse effects findings. She noted that NHDHR and FHWA consulted with ACHP in 2014 regarding the Scammell Bridge MOA. ACHP said that given the passage of time, FHWA could proceed with new consultation, and that the new MOA should clarify the connection to the Scammell Bridge MOA and its commitments. The Scammell Bridge MOA committed NHDOT to long-term maintenance and preservation of the New Castle-Rye and Seabrook-Hampton Bridges with removal only under extraordinary circumstances. The adverse effects for the two projects included the removal and replacement of New Castle-Rye Bridge, the removal and replacement of Seabrook-Hampton Bridge, and the loss of bascule bridge type in the state.

Ms. Dyer-Carroll then led a discussion with NHDHR and Consulting Parties regarding potential mitigation measures, noting that the group has talked about many different measures over the last several years. She explained that the measures under consideration have some overlap and the goal was to hear from NHDHR and Consulting Parties which measures would be the most effective and have the broadest reach. She reviewed the list of potential mitigation measures for the replacement of the New Castle-Rye Bridge, including archival documentation of the bridge; marketing of the bridge; interpretive signage focused on the history and significance of the bridge; archaeological monitoring near the abutments; portable panels for educational use;



and a website on the history of bridge. Ms. Dyer-Carroll noted that the portable panels were suggested by the New Castle Historical Society several years ago as a potential mitigation measure.

Esther Kennedy, a Consulting Party, stated that the Port Advisory Council and others had expressed concerns about a fixed bridge in the past. She asked if anyone had taken this into consideration. Ms. Reczek explained that the NHDOT consultation with the USCG occurred in 2016. At that time, the USCG agreed a fixed structure was acceptable and provided preliminary approval of particular clearances for this structure. As they are the permitting agency, NHDOT has been moving forward with a fixed structure based on that determination. When the project resumed over the summer, the USCG requested additional information which NHDOT is preparing. She explained that NHDOT received the Port Advisory Council's letter and they would be reaching out to set up a separate meeting as the intent of the Cultural Resources Coordination Meeting was to discuss mitigation. She noted that the bridge would be replaced regardless of the type and therefore the loss of structure would require mitigation measures. Esther Kennedy followed up noting that she believed the commercial issues she raised were cultural resource issues too. She noted that it was also a question of considering the benefits to residents and citizens, and that there were companies that needed to continue to have a working waterfront.

Laura Black with NHDHR explained that it is critical the group be on the same page as to what the adverse effects are that are being mitigated. Within the Section 106 documentation, there are three basic findings, but there may be mitigation for several layers of effects. She provided examples of what the adverse effect of bridge removal could mean regarding types of loss: an engineering perspective and example of engineering; bridge type; Scammell Bridge mitigation that was not carried through; the World War II context and history that is a part of the New Castle-Rye Bridge; and maritime heritage and historic uses of surrounding waterways. She explained that NHDHR felt it was reasonable to sign the adverse effect memo, but that they also stated it would be critical to address the layers of adverse effect in the mitigation.

Ms. Kennedy said that this project had been underway for a long time, but that she felt the residents and in particular the commercial entities haven't been heard. She noted that a couple of tour boats and a marine construction company would like it to remain a bascule to run their businesses. She reiterated that the project should not affect waterfront businesses. Ms. Reczek explained that there had been a rather extensive public outreach process for this project, with a number of public information meetings and Public Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings. The Benefit-Cost Analysis also looked into existing development, planning and zoning, and the potential for future development. In addition, there was an initial look into bridge openings in preparation for the USCG package. She explained that NHDOT is looking at refreshing that right now. She said they understood there could be potential future uses in the Back Channel, but that in looking at actual openings, the use of the bascule is very limited. She said NHDOT needed to consider the \$10M differential and how it affects resources around the state. She reminded the group that the focus of this meeting was on cultural resources.

Ms. Black said that NHDHR appreciated all of the outreach done to-date and noted that on this particular project, NHDHR and Consulting Parties have not always been in agreement with DOT/FHWA on the outcome of the previous conversations and reports. She noted that while a bascule bridge is preferred, NHDHR recognized the new structure would likely be a fixed bridge. The question was how the mitigation could address the maritime heritage. She said NHDHR sees it as a continuation of an economic and recreational use pattern through time that could be interrupted here and that it is important to get input on how this could be mitigated. She said she would like to hear some creative ideas to continue that heritage in the area. She noted that this particular element of the adverse effect hadn't been encountered in NH and asked if had happened elsewhere on the Seacoast or in the country. Jennifer Reczek echoed the request for any ideas to be shared.

Jamie Sikora with FHWA explained that the USCG held a public hearing process and that there was a lot of information collected about navigational concerns. He stated that it would be good to share that information. Jennifer Reczek checked the NHDOT website and confirmed the USCG information and comments were on the site and available.

Jim Cerny with the New Castle Historical Society stated that it was important to differentiate between functional and historic. He also stated the group should keep in mind what historic timeframe was being referenced given the 400-year history of the area. He also stated that he had previously proposed a model as mitigation and hadn't considered a video before the August PAC meeting. He now thinks the video is a better idea and noted that it could be edited for different audiences. He explained that the Historical Society had a lack of wall and floor space, so a video could help with those needs as well. He also noted that the bridge is only raised about four times a year.

Roger Groux with the Pease Development Authority stated that he participated in several meetings attended by commercial users and fisherman and that he did not think it was right to characterize the fixed bridge as a done deal. It still requires final approval. He stated that the USCG wants the bridge to be raised another 1.5 feet and that there is NH state legislation that says critical infrastructure should be raised to account for sea level rise. He said that the Port Advisory Council feels it should be a bascule bridge to allow for the dredging of Sagamore Creek and the Back Channel and for continued maritime uses. He said he thinks people aren't being asked and the project is devaluing their property. He also noted that the cost of dredging would far exceed the \$10M savings with the fixed bridge.

Ms. Reczek noted that in addition to the concerns voiced by the Port, others have voiced different concerns including the length of construction and inability to run utilities on the bridge with a bascule. She said it is a challenging location and there are people on both sides with good points and strong options. Typically, at this point in a project when there is a USCG determination, the project considers mitigation. She explained that if the project pauses again, it would impact the project schedule. She recognized that it was difficult to discuss historic mitigation while also moving forward with the renewed USCG coordination, but she said that NHDOT was trying to run these processes in parallel until there was signoff from FHWA. She said NHDOT understood there were concerns and that they would reach out to the Port Authority for a separate meeting.

Steve Skoglund, a Consulting Party, explained that he had lived next to the bridge for 20 years and that it was correct to say it was only raised a few times a year, and that it was mostly lifted due to maintenance. He also said that he recognized it was getting to a point where the bridge needed to be replaced. He said that he had an issue with the Back Channel discussion because unless a lot of money was spent on dredging, it was too shallow to be commercially viable. He stated that he did not have a preference for a fixed or a lift bridge and noted the fixed bridge would have an impact at his property due to the required elevation change.

Nadine Miller with NHDHR stated that the issues raised were all important and tangentially linked to historic preservation actions. She said they can also be included in the environmental review process. Regarding Section 106 mitigation and the MOA, she said she liked the idea of smaller or medium sized mitigation measures for each bridge, in conjunction with overall mitigation measures to address the historic bridge type. She said she thought the video was a good idea that hadn't been completed in New Hampshire. Such a video would need to be professionally prepared with a realistic amount of money invested, and should be available to the public, such as on PBS.

Ms. Dyer-Carroll then introduced the mitigation measures for the Seabrook-Hampton Bridge Project and noted that many are similar to those discussed for New Castle-Rye. The potential mitigation measures included: archival documentation of the bridge; marketing of the bridge; interpretive signage focused on the history and significance of the bridge; portable panels for educational use; a website on the history of the bridge; and a short video (5-10 minutes) on the bridge history.

Ms. Dyer-Carroll also reviewed the mitigation that had been previously discussed and dismissed. For the New Castle-Rye Bridge, these measures included: the preparation of a World War II context; educational materials for use in elementary schools; and a model of the bridge. She explained that for the World War II context, the

team connected with the Portsmouth Athenaeum and the Portsmouth Navy Yard in 2014 to see what materials they had. It appeared materials were very limited. The team also reached out to elementary schools regarding educational materials, but they were not interested. Ms. Dyer-Carroll explained that the video was a better fit than a model of the bridge for communication purposes due to space constraints and the ability to reach more people. For Seabrook-Hampton, the measures dismissed included a model of the bridge and an exhibit of the bridge's mechanical components. She said production of the model of the bridge with a university partner would be challenging due to COVID and an electronic means of dissemination would be more effective. The exhibit of the bridge's mechanical components in isolation would not show how the bridge operates as effectively as a video.

Ms. Dyer-Carroll then introduced the mitigation measures for the loss of bridge type and explained that the mitigation package should consider the types of adverse effects and the package should not be redundant. Potential mitigation measures included: a website or pages on the NHDOT Cultural Resources page devoted to bascule bridges in NH; a website devoted to movable bridges in NH; a short video (5-10 minutes) about bascule bridges in the state (public orientation); a short video (5-10 minutes) about bascule bridges in the state (technical focus); a popular history booklet on bascule bridges in the state; and a popular history booklet on movable bridges in the state.

Ms. Miller said that she is currently working with the City of Portsmouth on a social history in the post-World War II era and there is available data. She commented that the video could be an overview of at least 30 minutes with historical images, people talking about their experiences, and information on historical recreational and maritime use. She referenced a Ken Burns-type production. The video could go in many directions, but she said she would like to see it encompass a broader perspective that appeals to a lot of people.

Mr. Skoglund said he liked the idea of interpretive panels on the bumpouts. He asked how the mitigation could communicate the bridge history to vehicular traffic.

Ms. Reczek reviewed the questions and answers on the chat function of the Zoom meeting to ensure the group saw the dialogue and the group discussed them further. Johanna Lyons with NH State Parks asked what "marketing of the bridge" meant as mitigation. Ms. Black responded over the Zoom chat that it was required by FHWA, and therefore must be in the MOA. She noted that sometimes there was a commitment that a bridge be reused elsewhere. Most of the time, however, reuse wasn't successful. She said it was critical to make sure the mitigation package as a whole was appropriate aside from marketing. Jill Edelmann, NHDOT's Cultural Resources Manager, provided additional clarification in the conversation, explaining that USDOT law requires agencies to advertise the bridge to see if anyone wants to take the bridge and reuse it somewhere else. She said there were a few successful examples in NH, but that it doesn't happen very often. Truss bridges are often the bridge type that is easier to reuse.

Kate Bashline, a Consulting Party, asked how Consulting Parties would know that they had been heard.

Ms. Reczek responded that Consulting Parties had been invited to all meetings with NHDHR, as well as other project meetings. Ms. Lyons asked where the website and videos would be hosted. Ms. Reczek responded via the Zoom chat that NHDOT was still determining hosting. She explained that with the State websites, there were often restrictions on what can be posted, but that NHDOT wanted to make sure it was a site that could be maintained into the future once project funding was no longer available.

Ms. Reczek explained in the conversation that NHDOT was looking for other options to host the website. A third-party site could host for a period of time, but there would be license renewal issues when the contract was no longer in place to pay the fees. A video could potentially be stored differently. She requested that Consulting Parties share any ideas they had on storage and web hosting. Ms. Lyons responded in the Zoom chat function that it was also her experience, especially when there was a website redesign, that things get lost or dropped.

Ms. Bashline asked if a local historical society could house the videos. Ms. Lyons said she thought a statewide

or national organization could host, such as the NH Preservation Alliance or an engineering society. Then local historical societies could link to the sites.

Ms. Reczek brought the conversation back to Seabrook-Hampton mitigation measures and asked for additional input. Betty Moore with the Hampton Historical Society stated that she agreed it would be better to do something on the bridge bumpouts than at a historical society. She explained that in Hampton, visitors to the beach don't go to the historical society. Therefore, somewhere near the beach would be better in order to have the most people see the information. She also noted that she agrees the video could work well and last quite a while. She said that she would need to think more about ideas for the focus of a video. Representative Kate Murray, a Consulting Party, noted that she was there to listen and recognized that while there wasn't consensus, she thought it was moving forward on a good path. Ms. Bashline said that it was an opportunity for education and to generate interest. She said that originally there was a mile-long bridge, then the electric trolley, then the Neil Underwood Bridge, and now there would be something new. Ms. Reczek noted that there had been discussion about installing something at the State Park and she asked Ms. Lyons if she had input about a potential location. Ms. Lyons responded that it was something that could be discussed and noted that, like anything placed in the landscape, it would need a maintenance agreement.

Ms. Edelmann explained that a website devoted to moveable bridges in New Hampshire could be based on information that had already been documented in the movable bridge context. The website could include a GIS map with points to select for more information on the history. She also noted that NHDOT had an example of a video completed for the Ossipee Bridges Project that is about 7-8 minutes long and narrated by a former DOT employee. NHDOT also completed one for Memorial Bridge, but it was not online. Ms. Edelmann said that she would work on getting it online. The video featured an interview with a bridge operator. She explained that a lot of state DOTs are using YouTube channels to promote videos and a variety of information. She said that NHDOT welcomed comments to make these the best publications possible.

Sheila Charles with NHDOT provided an update on archaeology, explaining that both projects had completed the archaeological reviews including Phase 1A documentation, Phase 1B testing where needed, and mapping. The last step was monitoring resources. She noted that good research was completed and NHDOT felt comfortable with the steps ahead. Monitoring would be included in the MOAs to be sure the resources were considered and dealt with. Ms. Miller and Ms. Black said that they would take a week to review the measures and provide additional thoughts before the team progresses with these measures. Laura Black notes responses were provided on October 21, 2020.

Ms. Dyer-Carroll then reviewed the next steps in the NEPA and Section 106 processes, including: reaching consensus on mitigation for both projects; drafting MOAs; preparing the Seabrook-Hampton Environmental Assessment (EA); and updating the Preliminary Draft New Castle-Rye EA. Jennifer Reczek said that there had been some good progress on mitigation in the meeting and that NHDOT looked forward to NHDHR's comments and additional input. She said that once each project's EA was released, there would be separate public meetings to receive comments on each document. The documents would be finalized after these meetings and FWHM would be asked for their concurrence. NHDOT was hoping the public meetings could be held in the first half of next year.

Mr. Skoglund asked about construction timelines and which bridge would begin first. Ms. Reczek responded that the timing for the New Castle-Rye project was more uncertain, but that assuming it remained a fixed structure, NHDOT was hoping to advertise in early 2022. Construction would occur in the winter months of 2023 to allow for the bridge closure. For the Seabrook-Hampton Bridge, there was less uncertainty and NHDOT planned to advertise in the fall of 2023, with construction potentially occurring in 2024-2025, however she said the construction schedule was still being refined.

Geno Marconi with the Pease Development Authority stated that he had had recent conversations with the USCG Bridge Division, and he understood they were asking for a revised navigation study and a formal reapplication of the bridge project. He said that he thinks the navigational issues are still an open conversation. Ms. Reczek noted that NHDOT would coordinate schedules to get a meeting set with the Port Advisory Council. Ms. Kennedy asked if it would be a public meeting. Ms. Reczek replied that the first meeting would be an internal coordination meeting. There would be another public meeting for the EA. It is possible that the USCG may open another comment period. Ms. Reczek and Ms. Dyer-Carroll closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their time and input.