



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Determination of Effect on Historic Properties

Author: C. Scott Speal **Date:** May 15, 2020

Project: State No.: 171-441
F.A.P. No.:
Project Title: Installation of Traffic Control Signals
Town: District 1

Finding of Effect: No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties

Project Description:

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), with funding support from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), proposes replacement of traffic control signal equipment at 10 locations in State Maintenance District 1—the central part of the State. This project involves installation of new traffic signal equipment, which may include span poles, mast arms, signal heads, span wires, conduits, fiber interconnect, loops, pedestrian countdown heads, signing and pavement markings, to meet current department standards. Installation of traffic control signals will require excavation of existing equipment as well as excavation for new foundations (span pole, mast arm, pedestal, controller cabinet, etc.) and trenching (i.e. conduit, fiber interconnect) as required. In addition to excavation for traffic signal equipment, excavation will be required for sidewalk ramps that will be installed or reconstructed to meet current ADA standards. In areas of an excavation where there is existing signal equipment, excavation will take place in areas that have undergone extensive ground disturbance in the past. In areas of an intersection where there is no existing signal equipment, excavation may be in areas where there may not have been extensive ground disturbance in the past. There is significantly less than one acre of disturbance for each location.

All intersections below consist of new signal equipment being installed at presently signalized locations:

1. Berlin - Route 9 NB On-Ramp at Christian Lane (Int. No. 007-235)
2. Cheshire - Route 10 at East/West Johnson Avenue (Int. No. 025-205)

3. Cheshire - Route 68 at Mountain Road (Int. No. 025-209)
4. Cheshire - Route 70 at Marion Road (Int. No. 025-210)
5. Cheshire - Route 10 at I-691 WB Ramps (Int. No. 025-227)
6. Cheshire - Route 10 at I-691 EB Ramps (Int. No. 025-228)
7. Cheshire - Route 10 at Fieldstone Court (Int. No. 025-234)
8. Ellington - Route 83 at Route 140 (Int. No. 047-210)
9. Ellington - Route 83 at Mountain Road (Int. No. 047-213)
10. Wethersfield - Route 175 at Ridge Road (Int. No. 159-218)

Fiber interconnect will need to be mounted along Bridge 05323 (Route 10 over I-691) to connect Intersections 25-227 and 25-228 in Cheshire.

Under the provisions of the Programmatic Agreement executed between CTDOT, FHWA, the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer (CT SHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regarding compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) for minor transportation projects¹, the Office of Environmental Planning (OEP) intends to make a determination of effect on historic properties for the described undertaking.

Sources Consulted for Identification Effort:

The NPGallery digital asset management database maintained by the National Park Service was consulted for the purpose of locating any historic properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in the project vicinity. A series of historic maps and aerial photographs obtained from the University of Connecticut Map and Geographical Information Center were examined to assess the potential for previously unidentified historic properties to be located within the project area of potential effect (APE).

Digital site records on file with CT SHPO and the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA), as well as OEP's own internally maintained cultural resource geodatabase, were consulted for the purpose of identifying any previously documented archaeological sites within the APE. Soil classification maps developed by the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service were examined in conjunction with predictive models in common use within the State of Connecticut to assess the potential of the project area to contain as yet undocumented archaeological resources. Recent roadside and aerial photographs were consulted to assess the present state of ground disturbance within areas likely to be affected and potential for impacts to otherwise undocumented structures that may potentially be NRHP-eligible.

¹ *Programmatic Agreement among the Federal Highway Administration, the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding Implementation of Minor Transportation Projects*, signed October 26, 2012 and revised May 4th, 2018. Accessible online at: www.ct.gov/culturalresources

Resources Potentially Affected:

The single story wood frame structure on the southwest corner of ***Intersection 7-235 in Berlin*** along Ripple Court appears to have been a former schoolhouse dating to the mid-19th Century, but the building has been so thoroughly modified through vinyl siding and external additions to be unrecognizable as such today—and is therefore unlikely to be considered eligible for the NRHP. Other buildings from the same time period also once stood at this location according to the 1855 Woodford Map of Hartford County but have since been removed, most likely as a result of construction of Route 9. OEP therefore sees no historic property impacts at this location.

State Archaeological Site Number 25-3 was once situated somewhere to the southeast of ***Intersection 25-228 in Cheshire***. This archaeological resource, formerly referred to as the Judd Site, represented an Archaic Period encampment reportedly destroyed by a ‘truck farm’ according to the 1979 OSA site form. The location appears to have been further impacted by the construction of I-691 at a subsequent date. Moreover, the affected intersection is situated atop a large artificial fill deposit constructed for the approach to Bridge 5323 carrying Route 10 over the Interstate. The probability of encountering intact archaeological deposits at this location in association with the present undertaking is therefore virtually nil, and OEP sees no impacts to historic properties at this location.

The Colonial-style structure on the east side of Route 83 at 287 Somers Road at ***Intersection 47-210 in Ellington*** dates to the mid-19th century and is most likely NRHP-eligible based upon its architectural style and integrity of form. The C. Pease House was built in 1827 according to town property records and a plaque on the front of the building, and appears on the 1857 Eaton Map of Tolland County. This property and all associated corners (southeast of Crystal Lake Road and northeast of Cider Mill Road) has therefore been avoided for purposes of placing large new signal apparatus.

Intersection 47-213 in Ellington is also situated between several 19th Century domestic structures—211 or 212 West Street—reflected on the 1857 Eaton Map. Though over 100 years in age, these structures have seen substantial modifications from their original form, and OEP’s qualified architectural staff therefore does not see them as eligible for the NRHP based upon their diminished state of integrity.

Determination of Effect:

Section 106-mandated consultation was initiated with Federally-recognized Native American Tribal authorities with ancestral ties to the State of Connecticut for this undertaking in March of this year. Though none of the Tribes engaged have expressed concerns with the undertaking, this may be due to Covid-19

related workplace disruptions. It is therefore understood that comments from Tribal stakeholders may yet be forthcoming.

Given the presence of a potentially NRHP-eligible structural resource at one location, albeit without any anticipated impacts that might diminish the qualities potentially rendering that resource so eligible, OEP hereby determines that there will be *no adverse effect to historic properties* in association with the present undertaking. With this determination, FHWA, through OEP, has concluded its responsibility to consider the potential effects of the described project on cultural resources under Section 106 of the NHPA via the provisions of the Programmatic Agreement referenced above.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Speal', with a horizontal line underneath it.

C. Scott Speal
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Office of Environmental Planning
Connecticut Department of Transportation