Determination of Effect on Historic Properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author:</th>
<th>C. Scott Speal</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>March 17, 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project:</td>
<td>State No.: 134-148</td>
<td>F.A.P. No.: 1134(105)</td>
<td>Project Title: Rotary Upgrade to a Modern Roundabout -- Route 190 at Route 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town:</td>
<td>Stafford</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 upgrade of a traffic rotary to a modern roundabout at the intersection of Route 190 (Main Street) and Route 32 (River Road) in the Town of Stafford. CTDOT proposes to upgrade the existing intersection by installing a modern roundabout with splitter islands and a concrete truck apron. A raised, mountable island will be installed in the vicinity of the police station. Revisions to the Town Hall parking lot will be incorporated as well, with the northern driveway closed and the southern driveway reconfigured for two-way traffic.

Pedestrian improvements will also be incorporated into the project. A new sidewalk will be installed on the eastern side of River Road, connecting the intersection to the existing gas station parking lot just south of the intersection. Curb extensions (bump-outs) will be installed at the existing crossing locations on Main Street. Sidewalk on the west side of Bridge 00940 carrying Route 32 over the Middle River will be repaired and new sidewalk will be installed along the east side of the structure, requiring minor resetting of the bridge rail. A decorative fountain presently situated in the center of the intersection will remain in its existing location, slightly offset from the middle of the central island. No impact to the fountain is anticipated.
Small sliver acquisitions will be required for sidewalks. A Drainage Right of Way may be needed to ensure adequate drainage. Additionally, construction easements and rights-to-grade from both Town-owned and private property will be required in order to accomplish construction.

This project was originally reviewed for cultural resource impacts under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) in 2017, with a finding of No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties issued on October 16th of that year. The undertaking is being re-evaluated at this time due to minor scope changes and time expired since the original review. Under the provisions of the Programmatic Agreement concluded in October of 2012 among CTDOT, FHWA, the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer (CT SHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regarding compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA for minor transportation projects¹, the Office of Environmental Planning (OEP) intends to make a new determination of effect on historic properties for the described undertaking.

**Resources Potentially Affected:**

Online digital resources maintained by the National Park Service were consulted for the purpose of locating any historic properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in the project vicinity. No NRHP listed resources were found to exist within a mile of the project limits.

State Bridge Number 00940 carrying Route 32 over the Middle River was originally constructed in 1952 and renovated in 1992. In the course of recent research pursuing update of CTDOT’s Historic Bridge Inventory, this structure was recommended exempt from NRHP consideration as a common Post-WWII bridge type under ACHP Program Comment. OEP’s internal qualified cultural resource staff concurs with this recommendation.

A series of historic maps 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). The 1930 Griswold-Spieris Map of reconstructed Native settlement in Connecticut circa 1625 depicts no concentrations of population in the project vicinity. The 1811 Warren Map of Connecticut presents the forebear of Tolland Avenue / Route 190 already coursing through the area on more or less its present alignment, but with no development depicted within the present project APE. By 1857, however, the Eaton Map of Tolland County presents the town of

---

Stafford Springs in full development with local streets laid out on more or less their present configuration and lined with residential and commercial settlement. One of the buildings still standing from that period appears to be the railroad freight house that now serves as the Town police station, which became the primary depot building by 1893. The Congregational Church on the north side of the intersection is also clearly called out on this map. Many other structures lining Main Street within the APE also likely date to this time period. The freight house was still standing in 1934 as evidenced by Fairchild Series aerial photos from that year, and the present Town Hall structure is also visible in those photos along with the fountain in the middle of the intersection. OEP expects that the former railroad depot (present police station), the Town Hall building, the Stafford Congregational Church, and the Charles Holt Memorial fountain in the middle of the intersection, at minimum, are eligible for the NRHP as part of a downtown group resource on the basis of their association with significant events at the local level. Physical impacts to these structures have therefore been minimized in the course of project design in order to reach a finding of no adverse effect for the undertaking. CTDOT does expect, however, that the former railroad depot property will be affected by an easement for highway purposes, the Town Hall will be affected by right to construct sidewalk and rights to grade, and the Congregational Church will be affected by right to construct sidewalk.

Digital site records maintained by the Office of the State Archaeologist were consulted for the purpose of identifying any previously known archaeological sites within the APE. No previously documented archaeological resources were found to exist in immediate proximity to the project limits. The nearest recorded resource is State Site Number 134-13, a heavily pot-hunted pre-European Contact encampment plotted over 700 feet south of the southernmost project limit. The present undertaking will have no foreseeable effect on this resource.

Soil classification maps developed by the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) were examined in conjunction with predictive models in common use within the State of Connecticut to assess the sensitivity of the project area for previously unknown archaeological resources. The preponderance of the project APE falls upon terrain classified as Urban Land by the NRCS, generally considered to be of poor quality for retention of intact archaeological deposits. The remainder occurs upon Charlton-Urban Land Complex soils at moderate slopes of generally low archaeological potential. Visual review of the APE using recent roadside and aerial photography confirms that virtually all terrain within the project limits has been extensively disturbed by well over a century of urban development. OEP anticipates no archaeological impacts in association with the present undertaking.

**Determination of Effect:**

Consultation was carried out with Federally-recognized Native American Tribal authorities with ancestral ties to the State of Connecticut for this undertaking in
September of 2017. The Mohegan Nation expressed no concerns with the project, and none of the other Tribes responded to the invitation to consult.

Given the presence of potentially NRHP-eligible architectural resources within the project APE, albeit without any proposed structural modifications that might compromise the qualities that render them 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 Section 106 Programmatic Agreement referenced above.

C. Scott Speal  
National Register Specialist  
Office of Environmental Planning  
Connecticut Department of Transportation