

**Connecticut Department of Transportation**

**State Project No. 0154-0127  
Rehabilitation of the Singing Bridge No. 00349  
US Route 1 over Patchogue River  
Westbrook**

**Thursday, May 9, 2024  
Zoom Webinar**

**Minutes of Public Informational Meeting**

**Presenters/Speakers:**

Rachelle Clark (CHA)  
Andrew Amarone (H&H)  
Alex Boyer (VN)  
Matt Geanacopoulos (CTDOT)  
John Hall (Town of Westbrook)

**CTDOT Attendees:**

Isuf Vlashi  
Francisco Fadul

**Consultant Liaison Engineer (CLE) Attendees:**

Kristen Johnson (CHA)  
Xin Yu (Yuki) Hoon (CHA)

**Design Consultant Attendees:**

Benjamin Hawthorne (H&H)  
Chris Baker (H&H)  
Robert Gomez (VN)

**Public Attendees:**

(22) via Zoom, (2) via YouTube

**Presentation:**

A virtual presentation was held through a Zoom Webinar for the project. Ms. Rachelle Clark from CHA and Mr. John Hall from Town of Westbrook started the meeting with a few words of introductions. The technical presentation was then delivered by Mr. Andrew Amarone from Hardesty & Hanover (H&H) and Mr. Alex Boyer from VN Engineers (VN).

The presentation began at approximately 7:00 p.m. Following an introduction of the project and the project design team, the following items were presented:

- The purpose and need of the project, which is to address the issues of the galvanized steel open-grid deck while considering its “singing” character and improving safety and operation needs of facility users.
- The project will replace the existing open steel grid deck and bridge rail.
- The project will provide new sidewalk east and west of the bridge to provide connectivity for pedestrians.

- The construction is estimated to take one season, and is scheduled to be a winter project to avoid impacts to the community and adhere to Time of Year environmental restrictions.
- The project will require overnight closures of the bridge with a detour.
- The estimated Construction cost is \$7,700,000 (80% Federal and 20% State Funds)

**Public Comments and Questions:**

Question 1: How long will the project last?

*Answer: The project will last from November 2026 to April 2028, taking approximately 17 months.*

Question 2: Will the bridge still open during construction?

*Answer: The bridge will be open during construction except for over-night closures. Pedestrians will always be allowed to cross, even during overnight closures.*

Question 3: When will construction begin?

*Answer: Construction will begin in November 2026.*

Question 4: The Town had plans (and capital) to put a sidewalk in from Hammock Rd S to the East side of the Singing Bride this Spring (2024). Now that the Bridge is going to get some work done, the State told the Town that if Town installs the sidewalk, they will rip it up and replace it. This is a safety issue. The shoulder is so narrow, anyone walking on the side is in serious danger of getting hit, especially since there is a curve on Route 1 heading East. So my question is, why can't the State give the Town the specs they would need to do the sidewalk? Why would they rip it up? I understand that the sidewalk on the Bridge would be directly impacted, but why not let the Town put in a sidewalk by Hammock Rd S on the curve without the fear of getting ripped up?

*Answer: The project team has been working with the Town to coordinate this work. Where there is overlap between the two projects, the intent is for the State to perform the sidewalk installation in lieu of the Town performing that work.*

Question 4: Will boats still be able to pass under the bridge?

*Answer: From November 1, 2027 to March 15, 2028 there will be a work platform hanging from the bridge, which will reduce clearance. That will take place during winter months to lessen the effect to the boating community.*

Question 5: Why are there two detour routes?

*Answer: The standard route uses I-95. The alternate route is for bicycles, scooters, and small motor bikes that are not allowed on the interstate.*

Question 6: Will we be able to move boats across the bridge during construction?

*Answer: Boats on trailers will be able to cross over the bridge during construction. The roadway width will be reduced during MPT Phase B1, and we recommend you take the detour route. The only time boats on trailers will not be able to cross the bridge is during the overnight closures, which will take place during winter months.*

Question 7: What happens to bus service during the bridge closure?

*Answer: Buses will use the detour route.*

Question 8: Will there be construction during summer or only during winter?

*Answer: Construction will primarily take place during winter months due to environmental time of year restrictions. Some activities, like sidewalk installation, may happen during the summer months.*

Question 9: Have you taken wildlife into consideration and how this will disrupt their nesting?

*Answer: From March 15 until the end of August construction activities are limited by Time of Year restrictions – no noise generating activity, bright lights on water, etc. These are activities that can affect wildlife/bird/ fish migration. These are considered, and the project team is building these restrictions into the contract plans and schedule.*

Question 10: Do you plan on an in-person meeting with the directly affected property owners?

*Answer: Yes, ROW will meet with the person directly affected once there is a better understanding of the property needs, and these meetings take place after notice has been sent out.*

Question 11: Are you adding sidewalk on the north side of the road?

*Answer: No sidewalk is proposed for the north side of the road. There will be concrete sidewalks at the bus stops on the north sides of the road.*

Question 12: Will trucks towing boats be able to pass through the one-way alternating?

*Answer: Yes, trucks towing boats will be able to pass through. Stage 1 provides almost 12 feet of lane width and stage 2 provides 14 feet of lane width.*

Question 13: Will this bridge need repair again in 20 years?

*Answer: The goal of this project is to bring the bridge to a State of Good Repair and reduce maintenance work needed in the future.*

Question 14: Will the overhead clearance be reduced?

*Answer: There will be no reduction in overhead clearance.*

Question 15: Please review detours again. Any concerns for emergency vehicles?

*Answer: The project team will review the detour again to confirm that there are no issues for emergency vehicles.*

Question 16: Will closure and construction be 7 days a week?

*Answer: Construction is anticipated five days a week. The Contractor would require special permission from CTDOT and the Town to do work on the weekends. There will be overnight closures from 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.*

**The following additional questions were received during the two-week comment period following the virtual public information meeting:**

Question 17: Any concern for emergency vehicle response time due to detours?

*Answer: The Westbrook Fire Station on Main Street would be impacted by overnight closures/detours of the bridge when responding to calls west of the Singing Bridge. However, the Clinton Fire Station is located three miles west of the Singing Bridge and would be able to respond to calls without being impacted by the detour. Also please note that we will talk with the Town of Westbrook and recommend coordination for mutual aid during those overnight closures/detours.*

Question 18: Can you go over detours again and how many days a week plan on working? Weekend too?

*Answer: Attach is our detour plan. It is anticipated that the State's Contractor will work five days a week, Monday through Friday. Weekend work would require special approval. The number of overnight closures has not yet been determined and will depend on the Contractor's means and methods.*

**One additional piece of correspondence was received during the two-week comment period that did not contain a question. However, a request was made to meet with one of the adjacent property owners. It is the Department's intent to meet with the property owner when the property needs are fully developed and the Rights-Of-Way process has been initiated.**

**Adjournment:** The project was generally well received by those attending the meeting. The live virtual presentation was closed at approximately 7:45 pm.