



ROUTE 15 INTERCHANGE 46 IMPROVEMENTS PUBLIC INFORMATION/CEPA SCOPING REPORT OF MEETING

State Project No.: 0092-0689
Federal Aid Project No.: 0015 (149)
Project Name: Route 15 Interchange 46 Improvements
City/Town: New Haven/Woodbridge
Date of Meeting: February 3, 2026
Location of Meeting: New Haven Fire Academy, 230 Ella T. Grasso Boulevard, New Haven

Attendees:

Seven (7) members of the public attended the meeting in person. An additional 20 people joined the meeting via zoom. The following individuals from CTDOT and the consultant team were present at the meeting.

Sebastian Cannamela	CTDOT
Jeffrey Pfaffinger	CTDOT
Sergey Nikulin	CTDOT
Kevin Fleming	CTDOT
Zachary Guarino	CTDOT
Bill Anderson	VHB
Charles Baker	VHB
Aidan Cleaves	VHB
Ahsan Saghir	Lochner
Kevin McDyer	Lochner
Robert Gomez	VN Engineers

A handout containing project information was provided to individuals who attended the meeting in person.

Presentation

The formal presentation was accessible to attendees both in person and through Zoom. Closed captioning was provided for virtual participants, and the CTDOT Project Manager, Jeff Pfaffinger, gave detailed instructions on how to activate this feature.

The key elements of the presentation are summarized below:

Meeting access and Virtual Participation

J. Pfaffinger reviewed the meeting access options and the available accessibility features. He invited all attendees to complete the voluntary post-meeting survey. He noted that the meeting will be posted on CTDOT's YouTube channel with closed captioning. He also reviewed Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, which

prohibits discrimination. In addition, he explained how to submit questions after the presentation and noted that the comment period is open through February 17, 2026.

Introduction

J. Pfaffinger introduced the project team, which included members from CTDOT and the design team.

Meeting Purpose

J. Pfaffinger stated that the purpose of the meeting is to provide a project overview and status, obtain public input, and respond to public questions and comments.

Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) Process

Kevin Fleming, CTDOT Transportation Supervising Planner, presented an overview of CEPA and explained the purpose and objectives of the CEPA scoping process, which includes obtaining public input.

Project Overview

J. Pfaffinger provided a project overview including a description of the project location, project purpose and need, and existing conditions.

Proposed Improvements

Bill Anderson, VHB Project Manager, described the proposed improvements, which include providing acceleration and deceleration lanes, adding a new loop ramp, reconstructing bridges, and making improvements to the local road network.

Impact on Traffic During Construction

B. Anderson explained how construction will impact traffic, including what to expect in terms of lane closures.

Right-of-Way Process

B. Anderson and Zachary Guarino, CTDOT Right-of-Way Project Coordinator, described the right-of-way impacts and the acquisition process.

Environmental Permitting, Project Cost and Schedule

J. Pfaffinger reviewed the potential environmental impacts, preliminary project cost and schedule.

Question & Answer (Q&A) Session

After the presentation, J. Pfaffinger opened the Q&A session. Virtual attendees were able to interact with the project team using the Zoom Q&A tool. In total, 13 questions and comments were submitted which were read aloud by J. Pfaffinger. A summary of the questions received, and the responses provided are presented below, edited for clarity. To view the full recording of the virtual public information meeting, please visit the CTDOT public meeting archives on YouTube at

<https://youtu.be/FWckrioMIH0>.

In-person Question:

- a. Will the project restrict the ability to construct a trail that is in the planning phase, which will run from New Haven to the water authority land in Bethany?
- b. How will you address stormwater in this project?
- c. Has a bike lane been considered on Route 69? Currently, there is no effective way for a bicyclist to commute from Woodbridge to New Haven.

Response:

- a. J. Pfaffinger stated that CTDOT had previously discussed this with the City of New Haven. Our project will not change the existing width under the Route 15 bridge over Route 69, and nothing we are doing as part of this project will preclude the placement of a trail in this area in the future.
- b. J. Pfaffinger stated that we are still working on the drainage design and are considering best management practices to better handle stormwater in this area. We are aware of flooding concerns and will look to pretreat the water before it outfalls into the West River.
- c. J. Pfaffinger stated that the Town of Woodbridge is considering a bike path along Route 63 that will be funded by CTDOT and administered by the Town. The trail will end at Route 15 southbound on-ramp. This project will replace the Route 15 bridge over Route 63, and we are providing enough space under the new structure to accommodate any future extension of that path. We did not consider a path along Route 69 as part of this project. Space is constrained along Route 69 in Woodbridge, limiting the ability to extend the trail there.

In-person Question:

- a. A meeting attendee presented a plan showing a planned bike path running on Route 69 under the Route 15 bridge and inquired if this project will impact the existing width under the bridge.
- b. Concern was raised about the stormwater runoff along Route 15 out of the Heroes tunnel and resulting flooding to adjacent properties in Woodbridge.

Response:

- a. J. Pfaffinger reiterated that this project will not preclude that path. CTDOT was informed by the City of New Haven that the bike path project is being developed.
- b. J. Pfaffinger stated that the drainage on Route 15 will be evaluated as part of this project, including an investigation of best management practices to address the drainage discharging from the highway. This effort will continue through final design as the drainage design progresses.

Online question: How will this project overlap with the Heroes Tunnel project?

Response: J. Pfaffinger stated that we are coordinating very closely with the Heroes Tunnel project but are not yet sure how the two projects will overlap. We will not be able to construct both projects simultaneously without conflicts, so coordination between the two projects is ongoing.

Online Question: How will the need to expand Route 15 to enable acceleration and deceleration lanes affect adjacent property owners as well as environmental consideration?

Response: J. Pfaffinger stated that the acceleration and deceleration lanes will be built entirely in the CTDOT right of way. There are some impacts related to south of the bridge

over Route 63 which includes reestablishing existing drainage channels. Most of the environmental impacts are on Route 69.

Online Question: As the West River is a state-designated Greenway, it needs to be very closely scrutinized under any CEPA scoping analysis in terms of access.

Response: J. Pfaffinger concurred that it needs to be closely scrutinized under CEPA in terms of access. K. Fleming added that the CEPA public comment period is still ongoing, and any comments received will be scrutinized through the normal process.

Online Question: Could you comment on how the construction timing will interact or be phased with the Heroes Tunnel project?

Response: J. Pfaffinger stated that CTDOT is aware of the two ongoing projects and that there is a significant amount of coordination underway. He noted that it will be necessary to determine the best way to sequence the two projects and whether it is possible to combine them into a single construction project to limit the number of contractors.

Online Question: Route 69 traffic currently has 3 lanes before the Route 69 bridge and 2 lanes under and after the bridge. You indicated only 1 lane will remain open during construction. This is significant, particularly during rush hour, and can result in significant delays. Have you considered any other options?

Response: J. Pfaffinger explained that when we mention that one lane will remain open during construction, that applies to the through lanes. He added that turn lanes are also taken into consideration. As we work through the construction sequencing, we will need to consider the closure of specific lanes. We have considered other options as we continue to work through the maintenance and protection of traffic plans.

Online Question: Since the bike lane has come up twice, and you've said the plans do not change the clearance under the bridge, why not consider making the bike lane safe and spacious enough for safety part of the plan?

Response: J. Pfaffinger noted that we are not changing the horizontal clearance under the bridge. The curb line of Route 69 underneath the bridge is not changing. The work that is part of this project involves only widening the top side and changing the horizontal clearance above, which should leave enough space underneath to add the trail at a future date.

Online Question: There are many individuals using the bridges and adjacent areas for building tents and taking shelter. Is the CTDOT considering to create such designs to minimize building such tents?

Response: J. Pfaffinger stated that, although this is a construction project, eliminating space used by people sheltering under the bridges is not necessarily the goal of the project. Prior to construction, CTDOT will provide alternative housing or relocate individuals who would conflict with the construction activities. There will be clearing of brush related to the relocation of the curb lines on Route 69 and the widening of the bridge that carries Route 15 over Route 69.

In-person Question: There was an inquiry about an event on January 14, 2026, when people were removed from living around the bridge. Who ordered the sweep? Workers placed giant boulders; who ordered the boulder placement? How does this align with CTDOT's

policy on conducting sweeps? Will the voices of unhoused people be considered in the CEPA process?

Response: J. Pfaffinger stated that he has no prior knowledge of this matter, including who within CTDOT made that decision or how it was carried out. Our team is responsible for designing an interchange project and is not involved in that decision or its implementation. There are other offices within CTDOT that would be better suited to respond to those questions. Questions should be submitted to the CTDOT Customer Care Center, which will distribute them to the appropriate units. Contact information can be found on the CTDOT website. The goal of this project is to ensure that the contractor has safe space in which to work. Accordingly, CTDOT will act in advance of our project to identify alternative places for affected individuals to stay. The CEPA scoping process will take all public input into consideration. The public is encouraged to submit comments related to socio-economic concerns.

On-line Question: In addition to the Heroes Tunnel project, there is also a LOTCIP project along Route 63 (involving the bike paths being referenced). Will you also consider that project as you determine overall scheduling of all these projects?

Response: J. Pfaffinger replied that we will. He attended the Heroes Tunnel public information meeting a few weeks ago and had a conversation with the First Selectman of the Town of Woodbridge about all three projects having similar schedules. He told him that he would coordinate further to determine the best way to sequence all three projects and to ensure there are no conflicts among the contractors.

On-line Question: Will the timing of the light at the head of Pond Lily be changed due to less New Haven bound traffic turning left to go northbound on Route 15?

Response: J. Pfaffinger stated yes, all signals in the corridor will be retimed based on traffic pattern changes anticipated under this project.

On-line Question: How long is the acceleration lane at the southbound entrance?

Response: J. Pfaffinger stated that the distance is approximately 1,700 feet, determined in accordance with CTDOT guidance, which takes into account the ramp speed, highway speed, and the uphill grade.

The meeting ended at approximately 7:45 P.M.

Submitted By: Anderson, Bill A.
Bill Anderson

Digitally signed by Anderson, Bill A.
DN: CN="Anderson, Bill A."
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Date: 2026.02.10 13:58:41-05'00'

Reviewed By: 
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cc: All Attendees