



Connecticut Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike, P.O. Box 317546
Newington, CT 06111



Report of Meeting

STATE PROJECT NOS: 0079-0245: I-691 Eastbound to I-91 Northbound Interchange Improvements
DATE/TIME OF MEETING: August 5, 2021
LOCATION OF MEETING: Virtual Meeting
SUBJECT OF MEETING: Public Informational Meeting

IN ATTENDANCE

Name	Company	Email
Susan Libatique	CTDOT	Susan.Libatique@ct.gov
Sebastian Cannamela	CTDOT	Sebastian.Cannamela@ct.gov
Pinith Mar	CTDOT	Pinith.Mar@ct.gov
Donald Ward	CTDOT	Donald.Ward@ct.gov
James Vincenzo	CTDOT	James.Vincenzo@ct.gov
Robert Moore	CTDOT	Robert.Moore@ct.gov
Sajjad Alam	Parsons	Sajjad.Alam@parsons.com
Keith Hall	Parsons	Keith.Hall@parsons.com
Tony Margiotta	GM2	Tony.Margiotta@gm2inc.com
Colleen Jost	GM2	Colleen.Jost@gm2inc.com
Ryan Allard	GM2	Ryan.Allard@gm2inc.com
18 Attendees Via YouTube	Public	
23 Attendees Via Teams	Public	

Public Informational Meeting Format:

The project team delivered a presentation of the proposed interchange improvements on I-691 Eastbound to I-91 Northbound in the cities of Meriden and Middletown to the public and stakeholders on August 5th 2021 at 7:00pm. This presentation is included with this report of meeting as an attachment. Attendees had the option of attending the meeting via YouTube or Microsoft Teams live streams, or by calling in and listening by phone.

Following the presentation, a live question and answer session was held. Members of the public and stakeholders submitted questions via email, phone, and through the MS Teams Live Event Q&A window. The project team and Department addressed all comments and questions verbally or via Teams chat.

It was noted and reiterated throughout the live Q&A session that Project information and plans can be found on the Project website, and that questions can also be sent by calling the phone number or email address below. Attendees were also encouraged to fill out a survey. Attendees were notified that comments are welcome until August 20th, 2021.

Project Website: https://portal.ct.gov/DOTMeriden79-245
Email: DOTProject79-245@ct.gov
Phone: (860) 944-1111
Survey: www.surveymonkey.com/r/79245

Questions and Answers Session:

Stakeholders submitted questions via e-mail, telephone, or live through the Teams Q&A window and the comments were addressed verbally using the presentation slides and Google Earth as visual aids. The following are the questions and comments submitted by the public and stakeholders, along with their respective responses, organized into subject matter categories for ease of review.

Neighboring Projects:

Anonymous Question: Will this project overlap with the work Manafort is about to begin on I-691?

Response: At this time, there is no anticipated overlap with the construction of Project No. 79-245 and the Manafort project.

Question from Rep. Michael Quinn: Of the 3 future projects, this one seems the least critical as the 91S/691W/15S interchange is far more congested, and the same for 15N/91N. Why was it decided to do this one first?

Response: Project No. 79-245 was selected as the first project because it had the potential to be delivered as a design-build which will have a faster schedule that will increase the safety and operations of the corridor downstream from the future projects mentioned in the presentation.

Anonymous Question: The congested area begins at the exit entering from East Main Street where people are not allowed to merge in the lane heading to I-91 Northbound. You aren't fixing that area where all the accidents are?

Response: The area in question falls within the limits of Project No. 79-246 which covers I-91 Northbound, 15 Northbound, and I-691 Westbound. Operational and safety improvements are being designed and will be presented at a future public informational meeting specific to that project.

Anonymous Question: Are there simulations for the other 2 projects?

Response: The other two projects are currently under design. The simulations for those projects will be included in their respective public informational meetings.

Funding/Financial:

Question from Mary Ellen Godin of the Record Journal: Do you anticipate proposed federal infrastructure spending to move the rest of the project forward quicker?

Response: At this time Project No. 79-245 is fully state funded however the Department will take any future funding sources into consideration as the design and construction phases progress.

Question from Mary Ellen Godin of the Record Journal: Are the other two components of the project also state funded?

Response: Funding for the other projects will be determined on a case-by-case basis as designs progress, however, federal and state funds are anticipated for those projects.

Anonymous Question: Will this project have PLA attached to it?

Response: A feasibility study for a Project Labor Agreement is being conducted and one is planned to be in place once this project goes into construction.

Design/Construction/Updates:

Anonymous Question: Will this affect Exit 12 to Preston Ave?

Response: I-691 EB Exit 12 to Preston Avenue is included in the limits of this project, and there are upstream operational and safety improvements being proposed, however, no changes are currently planned to the exit itself.

Anonymous Question: Will you be seeking personal property too?

Response: This project will not permanently impact any private property.

Anonymous Question: How long will traffic be a problem for Preston/Baldwin Avenue and Bee St? Many of us need easy access to I-691 to commute to work and this will be a huge problem for those who live in the immediate neighborhood.

Response: With respect to the proposed designs, the three projects (79-240/79-245/79-246) will improve the operations of the interchange and relieve congestion to local roads. During construction, the focus will be on minimizing impacts to the travelling public as much as possible. Any potential lane closures and detours will occur during off-peak night time periods. All lanes and ramps will be operational for the public to use during peak periods such as the morning and early-evening commute times.

Voicemail question: How will I be notified of any updates on the projects?

Response: Members of the public may contact the Connecticut Department of Transportation to speak with the project manager, Sebastian Cannamela, for updates.

Question from Rep. Michael Quinn: Is the current 691EB Exit 11 being modified/expanded, or are you building an all-new Exit 11? It was tough to tell from the graphic, but it looks like it is being expanded and having the sharp curve lessened, correct? If so, will it still be useable during construction, or will it be shut down while work is being done. How many months is this project expected to take?

Response: A live view of the design in Google Earth was displayed to describe the proposed improvements. Exit 11 is remaining in its current location, however, Bridge No. 01837 is being relocated to the east of its original location in order to increase the radius of the curve and a second lane is added to improve safety and operations. This location is favorable in that it can be nearly all constructed off-line while traffic is still using the existing ramp. Tie-in construction will require short term detours during off-peak hours. At this time the construction duration is expected to take slightly more than 2 years.

Email question: How many acres of wetlands will be affected?

Response: No permanent impacts are proposed for any watercourses or wetlands, however there will be temporary impacts to 2,500sf of the 100-year flood plain of Spoon Shop Brook.

Anonymous Question: Will cameras be installed as well as traffic information signs along this corridor?

Response: The IMS system in the corridor has recently been upgraded and the proposed design will maintain this equipment. Any impacts to the IMS system will be replaced in kind.

Email question: Will there be follow-up public meetings on this project?

Response: This will be the only public informational meeting for this project, however, members of the public may contact the Connecticut Department of Transportation to speak with the project manager for updates.

Anonymous Question: Will the speed limits be reduced in the area of the Exit 11 to I-91 Northbound from I-691 Eastbound to the Middletown line?

Response: The ramp from I-691EB to I-91NB is being realigned to improve safety and operations that will address the pattern of crashes seen in the area, however, there are no plans to reduce the speed limit of any portion of the interchange.

Anonymous Question: Will this slide show be made available after tonight's presentation?

Response: The recording of this meeting, including the slide show, will be posted at the Department's website: www.portal.ct.gov/dot/general/CTDOT-VPIM-Library for viewing after the meeting.

Email question: Will there be any lane closures during construction?

Response: There will need to be closures of lanes for construction and concrete pavement repairs, however, these closures will be short-term and during off-peak (night time) periods and all lanes will be open by the next morning.

Schedule:

Anonymous Question: When is this project starting construction?

Response: The design-build construction phase for this project is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2022.

Anonymous Question: What is the approximate timeline for this entire project?

Response: A request for design-build proposals for this project is scheduled in December of this year and the procurement process for a design-builder is anticipated to be completed by the fall of 2022. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2022 and the construction duration is anticipated to be slightly more than 2 years.

Anonymous Question: Is this two to three years project estimate for the first phase or all phases?

Response: Project 79-245 alone is scheduled to last 2+ years, the remaining portions of the interchange will begin after this.

Noise:

Anonymous Question: When will the noise barrier study be completed?

Response: The completion of the noise study is anticipated by the Fall of 2021.

Question Via Email: We are seriously concerned about the noise impact during and after the completion of this project. We were told a few years ago that the only time sound barriers were to be installed was if a highway is retrofitted. With the increase of traffic over the last twenty years I assume that there would be an additional increase over the next decade. How can you address this future noise if sound barriers are not included now?

Response: The noise study that is currently underway will determine the noise abatement requirements. This study will take all three projects into account (79-240/79-245/79-246) when determining the limits of any required noisewalls. This study uses the current and proposed conditions, peak hours of noise and traffic volumes, as well as projected levels of noise using assumed traffic growth.

Anonymous Question: Will there be barrier walls put in place before construction starts along I-91 southbound between exit 19 and 18 for Meriden residents?

Response: The noise study that is currently underway will determine the noise abatement requirements. This study will take all three projects into account (79-240/79-245/79-246) when determining the limits of any required noisewalls. The I-91 Southbound area is currently within the limits of Project No. 79-240.

Anonymous Question: Will we receive additional communications when the sound study is complete?

Response: Members of the public may contact the Connecticut Department of Transportation to speak with the project manager for updates regarding the noise study. At this time, the study is anticipated to be completed in the fall of 2021.

Anonymous Question: Noise barriers are more like visual barriers. What improvements for "noise" barriers actually reduce the noise?

Response: The noise study that is currently underway will determine the noise abatement requirements. A model is currently being analyzed to determine the benefit a wall will provide in terms of noise reduction. This study will take all three projects into account (79-240/79-245/79-246) when determining the limits of any required noisewalls. This study uses the current and proposed conditions, peak hours of noise and traffic volumes, as well as projected levels of noise using assumed traffic growth.

Anonymous Question: You recently cut down trees along I-91 southbound between exit 19 and 18 and construction will just be another annoyance. Will you consider barrier walls for us Eastside residents living alongside the highway?

Response: The noise study that is currently underway will determine the noise abatement requirements. This study will take all three projects into account (79-240/79-245/79-246) when determining the limits of any required noisewalls. The I-91 Southbound area is currently within the limits of Project No. 79-240.

Anonymous Question: Will sound barriers be installed and what effect will they have on land owners?

Response: The noise study that is currently underway will determine the noise abatement requirements. This study will take all three projects into account (79-240/79-245/79-246) when determining the limits of any required noisewalls. There will be no permanent impacts to private property in any of the areas being studied.

Submitted by: _____



Ryan Allard, PE
Civil Engineer – GM2

Date: August 17, 2021

Recommended by: _____



Sajjad Alam, PE
Project Manager - Parsons

Date: August 17, 2021

Attachments:

- Presentation