Connecticut Department of Transportation

State Project No. 89-129
80% Federal Funded 20% State Funded
Rehabilitation of Bridge No. 05002, Ponus Ridge Road over Collins Pond
Town of New Canaan

March 3, 2021 7:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via MS Team Live Event and YouTube Live

Minutes of Public Informational Meeting

In Attendance: There were 14 people in attendance (11 on MS Teams and 3 on YouTube). The meeting participants included residents and representatives of the Town of New Canaan, the Connecticut Department of Transportation, and BL Companies.

Presentation: The virtual meeting, using MS Teams Live Event and YouTube Live, was started at 6:45 p.m. with an introductory slide which provided project contact and website information for attendees to view while they waited for the presentation to start. At 7:00 p.m., the formal presentation started with Transportation Supervising Engineer Priti Bhardwaj introducing the representatives of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), and BL Companies (BLC), the Consultant Liaison Engineer. Ms. Bhardwaj then stated the role of the Department and the role of BLC as liaison engineers and continued with a summary of the Design Managed by the State (DMS) program and subject project goals. Ms. Bhardwaj turned it over to Mr. Joe Zagarenski, Town of New Canaan (Town) Senior Engineer, who explained the Town of New Canaan's involvement in the project. Ms. Bhardwaj followed, stating the purpose of this public information meeting is to present the proposed design and discuss any questions, comments, or concerns that the public or Town officials may have.

Mr. Sean Laudati from BLC continued with the technical portion of the presentation. He explained the existing bridge condition, and the purpose of the project. Mr. Laudati presented the proposed project plans, maintenance and protection of traffic plan, proposed detour plan, and construction methods to rehabilitate Bridge No. 05002. Mr. Laudati described the utility, environmental, and right-of-way impacts associated with the project. Mr. Dennis McDonald from CTDOT Division of Rights of Way presented an explanation of the right-of-way acquisition process. Mr. Laudati finished the presentation with a summary of the project cost and schedule.

Key points of the presentation were:

- The existing deck is in good condition while the superstructure and substructure are in satisfactory condition. The existing bridge is weight restricted due to the strength of the reinforced concrete slab. The weight restriction prevents some of the Town's fire vehicles from using the bridge.
- The existing bridge is classified as functionally obsolete due to the narrow curb-to-curb width.
- The proposed rehabilitation alternative consists of replacing the existing superstructure with precast concrete deck units with slight modifications at the existing abutment seats to accept the new superstructure. The substructure will remain in place and be repaired where required. All substructure work is anticipated to be outside of the water. The bridge span will match the existing span of 32.5 feet.

- The bridge will be widened to accommodate a ten foot travel lane and a two foot shoulder in each direction. The shoulder will not be striped to match the existing roadway.
- Across the bridge, 3 tube curb mounted open metal bridge rail will be flanked by stone cladded concrete end blocks. Beyond the end blocks, timber guide rail will extend from the bridge along the approaches.
- The aerial utilities along the southern face of the bridge will be temporarily relocated to the north to allow for the bridge rehabilitation. The utilities will be moved back to their original locations after construction is completed.
- The proposed maintenance and protection of traffic plan involves a closure of the bridge and detour of traffic for the duration of construction, which is estimated to be 6 months. The proposed detour route is approximately 4.5 miles long and uses Greenley Road, West Road, and Dans Highway.
- Permanent partial property acquisitions are proposed at all four corners, so the entire bridge footprint is within the Town right-of-way. Temporary construction easements to the north will be needed to temporarily shift the aerial utilities.
- Environmental permits will be required from state and Town's permitting agencies for the project.
- Construction is currently anticipated to start Spring 2023 and end Fall 2023.
- The Project construction is funded with 80% Federal funds and 20% Town funds. The estimated construction cost is currently $1.55 million.

Public Comments and Questions: Following the formal presentation, a live Question and Answer session was opened to the attendees. The questions and comments below were provided via voicemail, email, and MS Teams Live Event chat:

- A representative of the public asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:

    - Was full replacement of the bridge investigated?

    Verbal Response: BLC stated that several options were considered during the preliminary engineering phase including a full bridge replacement option. Since the substructure was in satisfactory condition and can be reused, the full replacement option did not seem warranted. BLC also noted the full bridge replacement would cost more money, have a longer construction duration and require more right of way and environmental impacts.

- A representative of the public asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:

    - Are you aware that the dam of Collins Pond is planned to be rehabilitated or replace? And are you incorporating this issue into the bridge project?

    Verbal Response: BLC stated that they were aware of rehabilitation plans for the dam through their coordination with the Town. However, from their understanding, any improvements to the dam are in a very preliminary phase. BLC added that this project accounts for the existing dam in both the hydraulic calculations and in construction considerations. BLC added that the dam will be monitored during construction to ensure no impacts. BLC said that the bridge rehabilitation contract documents will

require the contractor to coordinate with the dam project. if any improvements are proposed to be constructed during the same period.

- A representative of the public asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:

    - When is construction anticipated to start? How long will the detour be in place?

    Verbal Response: BLC stated construction is anticipated to start in the spring of 2023 and have a 6 month duration.

- A representative of the public asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:

    - Will mail delivery be impacted? How will EMS be coordinated?

    Verbal Response: BLC stated the post office and emergency services will be notified of the detour, construction schedule and proposed route so they can plan accordingly prior to start of construction and the detour.

    A representative of the Town of New Canaan added the Department of Public Works has weekly meetings with EMS and they will be kept informed of any impacts. Also note that message signs will be put in place to keep the public informed.

- A representative of the public asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:

    - Can you share your hydro report with the residents?

    Verbal Response: BLC stated the hydraulic and hydrologic reports are currently preliminary and are working with the Department to finalize these Documents. BLC added once these reports are finalized, they can be shared with the Town and residents will be able to review them.

    A representative of the Department added the project is very early in the design phase so it would be premature to share now but as we progress further into final design, these documents can certainly be shared.

- A representative of the public asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:

    - Where will the contractor place his equipment?

    Verbal Response: BLC stated the contractor can place his equipment at the approaches to the bridge since the roadway will be closed during construction and traffic will be detour. BLC added that a crane to lift and place the concrete deck units can be setup on the eastern approach. BLC added that any areas that are disturbed by the contractor during construction and beyond what is anticipated during design will be restored.

- A representative of the public asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:

    - Can stage construction be used instead?

    Verbal Response: BLC stated that stage construction was reviewed during the preliminary engineering phase for this bridge, but due to the narrow width of the existing bridge, it was decided to proceed with a detour. A staged construction approach would have required a temporary widening of the bridge to accommodate the traffic, which would have resulted in additional costs, rights-of-way impacts, and environmental impacts.

- A representative of the public asked the following question by voicemail:

    - Is the design team for the bridge aware that the Dam upstream of bridge is structurally unsound and has been designated as in poor condition by CTDEEP and is in need of urgent repair? Is this booked into design of bridge?

    Verbal Response: BLC stated the design team is not aware of the condition of the dam and any rehabilitation of the dam will not be part of this project. BLC added that if any improvements are proposed, the contract documents will require the contractor to coordinate with the dam project. BLC also added that the dam will be monitored during the construction of the bridge to ensure there is no impact. BLC noted that BLC will be working closely with the Town during design and will coordinate this project with the dam project as it develops.

- A representative of the public asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:

    - As this is the first time, we have seen the plans for this project, is a print version available? Very hard to see on a screen

    Verbal Response: BLC stated the presentation will be uploaded to the project website and the display documents are posted to the website and are available to download and print. BLC added larger print documents can be made available for the Town for residents to view.

- A representative of the public asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:

    - Will contractor be required to restore conditions to match the existing conditions and materials prior to disturbance?

    Verbal Response: BLC stated the contractor will be responsible to restore any disturbed areas to existing condition. BLC added this will be coordinated with the Town and homeowner during the design process as well as the right-of-way process.

- A representative of the public asked the following question by email:

- Is the Design Team aware that there is a residence on an island immediately downstream from the bridge?

  Verbal Response: BLC stated the design team is aware and the preliminary design was per CTDOT drainage manual requirements. BLC noted the bridge was designed to a 100-year design storm and checked for a 500-year design storm. BLC added there was a very minimal increase of water surface elevation of 0.01 ft and a decrease in velocity of 0.01 ft/s at the bridge as a result of the project.

Adjournment: The email address, telephone number and project webpage address were provided for any additional questions or comments regarding the project following the meeting. Attendees were reminded that any additional comments will be received until March 18, 2021.

The presentation was well received, and the meeting was adjourned around 7:40 p.m.