Connecticut Department of Transportation

State Project No. 158-218
Federal-Aid Project No. 6158(012)PE
Replacement of Bridge No. 04971 – Old Road No. 2 (Wakeman Lane) Over Sasco Brook
Towns of Westport & Fairfield

September 20, 2021 at 7:00 PM
Virtual Meeting via MS Teams Live Event and YouTube Live

Minutes of Public Informational Meeting

In Attendance: There were 7 people in attendance (4 on MS Teams and 3 on YouTube). The meeting participants included residents and representatives of the Towns of Westport and Fairfield, the Connecticut Department of Transportation, and CHA Consulting, Inc.

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 stating the goals for the meeting and that 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. She provided details of how participants could interact with the project team during the meeting and then outlined the Design Managed by State (DMS) program and the subject project goals. Ms. Bhardwaj then turned it over to Mr. Keith Wilberg, Westport Town Engineer, and Mr. Bill Hurley, Fairfield Engineering Manager, who provided introductory remarks. Ms. Bhardwaj then continued by introducing the representatives of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), and CHA Consulting, Inc. (CHA), the Consultant Liaison Engineer (CLE). She then explained the role of the Department and the role of CHA as the CLE. Ms. Bhardwaj then gave a general overview of bridge elements and explained the Departments method of condition rating.

Mr. Robert Bahler from CHA continued with the technical portion of the presentation. He explained the existing bridge condition, provided an overview of the project site, and described the purpose of the project. Mr. Bahler presented the proposed project plans and maintenance and protection of traffic plan to fully replace Bridge No. 04971. Mr. Bahler described the utility, environmental and right-of-way impacts associated with the project. Mr. Dennis McDonald from CTDOT Division of Rights of Way finished the presentation with an explanation of the right-of-way acquisition process.

Key points of the presentation were:

- The existing superstructure is in poor condition due to the deterioration of floor beams and girders resulting in a Structurally Deficient bridge classification. The bridge is currently posted for a 10 Ton weight limit.
- The existing bridge type, two-girder through structure, is considered fracture critical.
- The existing bridge and approach rail system do not meet current safety standards.
- A traffic count taken in March 2021 determined the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) on the bridge to be 309 vehicles per day which may have been skewed due to the pandemic. It is likely that the ADT on the bridge is between 400 and 1000 vehicles per day.

- The existing roadway width on the bridge of 16 feet 8 inches does not meet the minimum width requirement of 22 feet and 24 feet required by FHWA and CTDOT for an urban local road, respectively, resulting in the bridge to be classified as functionally obsolete. In addition, the roadway width also does not meet the 26 feet and 24 feet minimum requirements for the Towns of Westport and Fairfield, respectively.
- A 25-year storm event cannot pass under the existing bridge.
- There are scour concerns at this site and the bridge is rated to be Scour Critical.
- There is poor horizontal and vertical alignment of the existing roadway.
- The new structure will consist of precast concrete three-sided rigid frame units that are topped with a 3-inch (min.) thick bituminous concrete overlay and will carry a roadway with a 24 feet curb to curb width. The structure will be founded on micropiles drilled to bedrock. U-type concrete wingwalls will be constructed at all four corners of the bridge. The proposed bridge will provide a service life of 75 years.
- The low chord and the roadway over the proposed bridge will be raised by approximately 15 inches and 6 inches, respectively, which will result in the 100-year design storm to pass under the bridge and there will be no overtopping of the approach roadways in the vicinity of the bridge.
- The proposed open bridge rail system and approach timber guiderails will meet current safety standards and have the aesthetic details that the Town requested.
- 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 8 months. The proposed detour route is approximately 1.9 miles long and uses Hulls Highway, US Route 1 (Post Road East) and North Bulkley Avenue.
- Overhead utilities poles on the north side of Old Road No. 2 and Wakeman Lane will be relocated to facilitate the placement of precast bridge units. The watermain on the south side of the bridge, running through the stream channel will also be relocated.
- Environmental permits will be required from federal, state and Town of Westport and Fairfield permitting agencies for the project and best management practices will be used to minimize impacts to wetlands and watercourse during construction.
- Temporary Construction Easements are proposed at all four properties that abut the bridge to provide access to the bridge during construction. A permanent slope easement will likely be needed on one property since the roadway toe of slope extends outside of the Town right-of-way. A right to grade will be needed to reconstruct a portion of the driveway for the property at the northeast corner of the bridge and the property at the southwest corner of the intersection of Old Road No. 2 with Grist Mill Lane.
- Construction is currently anticipated to start Spring 2023 and end Fall 2023 subject to approval of environmental permits and ROW acquisitions.
- The project construction and ROW acquisition costs will be funded with 80% Federal funds and 20% Town funds (10% Westport and 10% Fairfield). The estimated construction cost is currently $2.57 million.

Public Comments and Questions:

- A public representative asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:
    - Where will the contractor place his equipment?

  Verbal Response: CHA said that the Contractor can place his equipment at the approaches to the bridge since the roadway will be closed during construction and traffic

detoured. CHA mentioned that the Contractor would likely use the space along the sides of the road, within the Town R.O.W. to store supplies and equipment. However, it was mentioned that access would remain open to Grist Mill Lane and all driveways throughout construction.

- A public representative asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:
    - How long will construction take? Can it be expedited?

  Verbal Response: CHA said that construction is anticipated to start in Spring 2023, and it is likely that the detour will be in place for 8 months. The use of a road closure will be the best method to complete construction the quickest because the contractor will have complete access to the work site. CHA also mentioned that the type of bridge structure being utilized results in a faster installation because bridge elements will be prefabricated in the shop and set in place on site.

- A public representative asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:
    - How will Fire/EMS/Mail and Bus Routes be impacted?

  Verbal Response: CHA stated that even though the bridge would be closed, the availability of a short 1.9-mile detour route will have minimal impacts to emergency services and bus routes. Coordination meetings will be held during the course of the design phase for the entities to adequately plan for the bridge closure. Because the bridge spans the town line, both Towns will still have access to their side of the bridge.

- A public representative asked the following question using the MS Teams chat feature:
    - What color will the Bridge Rail be?

  Verbal Response: CHA said that the bridge rail will be metalized to a color choice of the Towns of Westport and Fairfield and that the public can provide input to their respective town official, Keith Wilberg, Westport Engineering Department or Bill Hurley, Fairfield Engineering Department. The Town of Westport said that the majority of input received so far was for the bridge rail color to be black.

- A public representative asked the following question using the phone call-in line:
    - I had a question on the appearance of the poured cement. Is it trying to simulate stonework or is it smooth? It's hard to see from the diagrams.

  Phone Response: The exposed concrete surfaces of the bridge will be faced with a simulated stone form liner. The texture, pattern and color of the simulated stone is a decision that the Town's will make. Any input can be provided to Keith Wilberg, Westport Engineering Department or Bill Hurley, Fairfield Engineering Department.

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 to fill out the survey and that any additional comments can be submitted until October 4, 2021.

The presentation was well received, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.