



April 1, 2021

Mr. Mark McMillan
Office of Environmental Planning
Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike
P.O. Box 317546
Newington, CT 06131-7546

Subject: Project No. 30-97, Hop River State Park Trail
Kings Road to Willimantic River
Coventry and Columbia, Connecticut
ENV-21-0513

Dear Mr. McMillan,

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is in receipt of your request for our comments concerning the referenced project. SHPO understands that the Department of Transportation (DOT) plans to construct a multi-use trail with a 10-foot wide stone dust surface, from the current terminus of the trail at Kings Road in Coventry, to the western bank of the Willimantic River, a distance of approximately 4,400 feet. The proposed project is to be completed using a combination of state and federal funds. The Office of Environmental Planning (OEP) at DOT has completed a review of the potential project effects to historic properties in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and has provided SHPO with their professional recommendations.

As previously expressed in a letter dated November 24, 2020, this office concurs with OEP that the proposed undertaking constitutes an adverse effect to historic properties; specifically, the replacement of Bridge No. 2.53.

Finding no prudent and feasible alternative to demolition of Bridge No. 2.53, this office proposes the following mitigation measures in order to resolve the adverse effect:

- DOT, at its expense, shall document Bridge No. 2.53 prior to demolition. Documentation shall meet the state-level standards of SHPO and, at a minimum, include indexed high-quality photographs, a site plan, and narrative text. Final documentation shall be provided to SHPO for permanent archiving and public



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accessibility. A copy is also to be made available to the Coventry Historical Society and the Columbia Historical Society. Documentation shall be submitted and accepted by SHPO prior to any demolition or construction.

- DOT shall retain existing bridge elements to the extent possible and incorporate these elements, including existing stone, into the new bridge abutments at the discretion of OEP's Qualified Cultural Resource Staff/National Register Specialists.

SHPO formally requests that this be included as a requirement for project approval.

This office appreciates the opportunity to review and comment upon this project. We look forward to additional consultation to discuss mitigation measures and an agreement document, as warranted. For additional information, please contact Marena Wisniewski, Environmental Reviewer, at (860) 500-2357 or marena.wisniewski@ct.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Kinney". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Jonathan Kinney
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

State Historic Preservation Office

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