

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

Date: February 7, 2023

Project Name: Rehabilitation of Bridge 00793A – Route 15 Northbound Over Quinnipiac River
State Project Number: 148-213

Municipality: Wallingford

Staff Contact: Kevin Fleming

This assessment is being conducted in conformance to the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s Environmental Classification Document (ECD) to determine Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) obligations.

Project Description:

On July 19, 2022, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) published a Notice of Scoping in the *Environmental Monitor* for the Rehabilitation of Bridge 00793A – Route 15 Northbound Over Quinnipiac River in the Town of Wallingford. The purpose of the project is to rehabilitate the existing bridge. Constructed in 1946, the existing structure is comprised of two simply supported spans with a reinforced concrete deck supported by 5 rolled steel beams resting on reinforced concrete abutments and a reinforced concrete pier wall. The existing substructure is founded on timber piles. The existing structure has a maximum span of 51 feet and has a 31-foot curb-to-curb width and a bituminous concrete overlay with woven glass fabric waterproofing membrane. The existing structure length is 107 feet. The average daily traffic (ADT) is approximately 29,600 vehicles per day (2020). The concrete deck deterioration shows deep spalls with exposed rusted rebar and section loss.

The project is currently in the preliminary design phase. Since the deck was previously patched under a rehabilitation project and due to the extent of deterioration of the deck, a superstructure replacement is anticipated. The current proposed construction method is to demolish the existing bridge superstructure and replace the bridge. Based on the existing condition of the substructure and the fact that the substructure it is founded on piles, the existing substructure shall remain and be repaired as required. On the bridge, an existing historic open bridge rail resides on either side of the bridge. The bridge has been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as part of a potential Wilbur Cross Parkway Linear Historic District. As such, the proposed project will result in an Adverse Effect to historic properties due to the proposed replacement of the superstructure, including one of the character-defining features of the structure, the metal bridge railings.

The proposed action is non-site specific, or encompasses multiple sites;

Current site ownership: N/A, State; Municipal, Private, Other: Please Explain.

Anticipated ownership upon project completion: N/A, State; Municipal, Private, Other: Please Explain.

Locational Guide Map Criteria:

<http://ctmaps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ba47efccdb304e02893b7b8e8cff556a>

Priority Funding Area factors:

- Designated as a Priority Funding Area, including Balanced, or Village PFA;
- Urban Area or Urban Cluster, as designated by the most recent US Census Data;
- Public Transit, defined as being within a ½ mile buffer surrounding existing or planned mass transit;
- Existing or planned sewer service from an adopted Wastewater Facility Plan;
- Existing or planned water service from an adopted Public Drinking Water Supply Plan;
- Existing local bus service provided 7 days a week.

Conservation Area factors:

- Core Forest Area(s), defined as greater than 250 acres based on the 2006 Land Cover Dataset;
- Existing or potential drinking water supply watershed(s);
- Aquifer Protection Area(s);
- Wetland Soils greater than 25 acres;
- Undeveloped Prime, Statewide Important and/or locally important agricultural soils greater than 25 acres;
- Storm Surge Inundation Zone(s);
- 100 year Flood Zone(s);
- Critical Habitat;
- Locally Important Conservation Area(s),
- Protected Land (list type): Enter text.
- Local, State, or National Historic District(s).

Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) Section 22a-1a-3 Determination of Environmental Significance (Direct/Indirect)

1. Impact on water quality, including surface water and groundwater

Water Quality – No negative impacts are anticipated. All CTDOT projects must conform to the CTDOT Standard Specifications for Roads, Bridges, Facilities, and Incidental Construction Form 818. Section 1.10.03, Environmental Compliance, specifically deals with water pollution control and Best Management Practices (BMP). A Water Quality Certificate from CTDEEP pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act will be obtained if needed.

Surface Water – No negative impacts are anticipated. Coordination with CTDEEP will continue as needed.

Stormwater - No negative impacts are anticipated as Best Management Practices will be employed regarding stormwater management. Registration under CTDEEP's *General Permit for Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters Associated with Construction Activities* will be completed if required. Any CTDOT project that changes impervious area, stormwater drainage or drainage patterns pre to post construction shall meet the requirements of the CTDEEP's General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater from Department of Transportation Separate Storm Sewer Systems (DOT MS4 Permit) and submit a CTDOT MS4 Designer Worksheet.

Groundwater – No negative impacts are anticipated. All CTDOT projects conform to the CTDOT Standards Specifications for Roads, Bridges, Facilities and Incidental Construction Form 818. Section 1.10.03, Environmental Compliance, specifically deals with water pollution control and Best Management Practices. As design progresses, a testing plan will be developed to assess soil and groundwater in any moderate- to high-risk areas within which intrusive construction activities are proposed. Remediation measures will be put in place to mitigate potential impacts if contaminated soils or groundwater is confirmed by the testing.

2. Effect on a public water supply system - No negative impacts are anticipated. The project is not located within a source of public drinking water.

3. Effect on flooding, in-stream flows, erosion or sedimentation:

Flooding – Although the project is located within a FEMA-mapped flood zone, no negative impacts are anticipated. Flood Management Certification will be obtained.

In-stream flows – No negative impacts are anticipated. Coordination with CTDEEP will continue.

Erosion or Sedimentation – No negative impacts are anticipated. All work will be consistent with the 2002 Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control.

4. Disruption or alteration of an historic, archaeological, cultural, or recreational building, object, district, site or its surroundings – On August 25, 2022, the CTSHPO concurred with CTDOT's recommendation that the proposed project will have an Adverse Effect to Historic Properties. The bridge being rehabilitated is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as

part of the potentially eligible Wilbur Cross Parkway Linear Historic District. As a result, CTDOT, CTSHP, and the Federal Highway Administration executed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to outline the stipulations required for mitigation for the Adverse Effect to the bridge. The following three (3) measures must be carried out within five (5) years of the date on which the MOA was executed (September 20, 2022):

- Prior to construction, CTDOT shall make a record of the bridge to the professional standards of Level II documentation of the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), as defined by the National Park Service. Documentation shall consist of original design drawings, measured drawings of the existing structure, narrative text, large-format negative photographs and/or digital images, an index to photographs, and a photographic site plan. CTDOT shall provide two copies of the final documentation to the CTSHP for permanent archiving and public accessibility.
- Prior to construction, CTDOT will submit final design drawings of repairs to the CTSHP for review and approval. These will include a context-sensitive design for the rehabilitated superstructure and preservation or replication of the existing design details on the bridge abutments.
- Prior to the expiration of the MOA, CTDOT will compile an inventory of all of the bridges located on the Wilbur Cross Parkway. The inventory will include the build date and location of each structure, and will also identify whether they would contribute to the overall historic character of the potential Wilbur Cross Parkway linear historic district. The documentation will be provided to CTSHP in an Excel spreadsheet and will also include a .kml file identifying the location of each structure.

5. Effect on natural communities and upon critical species of animal or plant and their habitat; interference with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species – No negative impacts are anticipated. The CT DEEP Fisheries Division reviewed the early stages of this project in December 2021. CT DOT will continue to work with the Fisheries Division during the design stage. The bridge is between two fishways on the Quinnipiac River, approximately 1.5 miles downstream is the Haakonsen fishway at the Wallace Dam in the center of Wallingford. Upstream is the Hanover Pond fishway in Meriden. This stretch of the Quinnipiac River is an important migratory corridor and spawning area for American shad, alewife, blueback herring (state listed species of special concern), and sea lamprey. The Fisheries Division wants to ensure that this migratory corridor is open to fish passage and recommends the following restrictions:

1. To protect migratory fish, no unconfined in-water work should occur from April 1 to June 30, inclusive. This prohibition includes the installation and removal of cofferdams. During this period at least one barrel of the bridge should remain open for fish passage.
2. During the spring migration period from April 1 to June 30, if artificial lighting is needed for construction, provisions must be made to limit the amount of artificial lighting over the water. These provisions include installing debris shields composed of dark closed weave fabric that does not readily transmit light, lowering the lighting closer to the deck surface to limit the diffusion of light, and installing shields or backboards on lights to reduce the amount of light directed over the water.

3. Loud construction activities, like jack hammering, may also interfere with fish migrations and shall not be exceed 90 dB, as measured at the surface of the water at a point closest to the source of the noise, from sunset to sunrise between April 1 to June 30, inclusive.

The project is located within a Natural Diversity Database (NDDDB) area. CTDOT will continue to work with CTDEEP as the project progresses.

6. **Use of pesticides, toxic or hazardous materials or any other substance in such quantities as to create extensive detrimental environmental impact** – No negative impacts are anticipated. Should there be sites with known contamination issues in vicinity of the project, additional study will be performed within the project area and/or adjacent right-of-way. As design progresses, a testing plan will be developed to assess soil and groundwater in any moderate- to high-risk areas within which intrusive construction activities are proposed. Remediation measures will be put in place to mitigate potential impacts if contaminated soils or groundwater is confirmed by the testing. If needed, registration under the CT DEEP's *General Permit for Contaminated Soil and/or Sediment Management* (Staging & Transfer) will be obtained, and soil management will be conducted in accordance with the General Permit.
7. **Substantial aesthetic or visual effects** – No negative impacts are anticipated. CTDOT will be coordinating with the CTSHPO to ensure approval of the final design plans.
8. **Inconsistency with (a) the policies of the State Plan of Conservation and Development developed in accordance with Section 16a-30 of the CT General Statutes, (b) other relevant state agency plans, and (c) applicable regional or municipal land use plans** – This project is consistent with the Statewide Plan of Conservation and Development. CTDOT has adopted a programmatic approach for meeting the requirements of CGS Chapter 297 Section 16a-31(a) and Chapter 297 Section 16a-35(c) and 16a-35(d) for determining consistency of proposed actions with the Statewide Plan of Conservation and Development, as indicated in a memo from CTDOT to OPM. As indicated in that memo, CTDOT has characterized this project type under the category "Renovations for Safety with No Significant Capacity Improvement". It is CTDOT's interpretation that this category of activities is consistent with the Plan through Growth Management Principle (GMP) #1 (Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure), and GMP #5 (Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety), specifically the State policy "Ensure the safety and integrity of existing infrastructure over its useful life through the timely budgeting for maintenance, repairs and necessary upgrades".
9. **Disruption or division of an established community or inconsistency with adopted municipal and regional plans, including impacts on existing housing where sections 22a-1b(c) and 8-37t of the CGS require additional analysis** – No negative impacts are anticipated. This project is not in conflict with any municipal or regional plans. Furthermore, the project will not result in community division.
10. **Displacement or addition of substantial numbers of people** – No negative impacts are anticipated. This project does not involve the displacement or addition of people.

- 11. Substantial increase in congestion (traffic, recreational, other)** – No negative impacts are anticipated. Temporary impacts may result due to construction activities, however, these will be minimized to the greatest extent possible. If needed, CT DOT will coordinate with the Municipality as the project progresses regarding any potential detours during construction.
- 12. A substantial increase in the type or rate of energy use as a direct or indirect result of this action** – No negative impacts are anticipated. No new construction of any buildings is proposed. The project is not anticipated to result in any change to land use or traffic conditions that would impact energy use.
- 13. The creation of a hazard to human health or safety** – No negative impacts are anticipated. The project will be reviewed for the potential of having lead, asbestos, or other hazardous material constituents in existing infrastructure components. Testing will be performed on any suspect materials. Should the presence of hazardous materials be confirmed through the testing, specifications to properly handle and dispose the hazardous materials will be incorporated into the design to mitigate potential impacts to human health or safety. Therefore, impacts associated with hazardous materials or waste sites are not anticipated.
- 14. Effect on air quality** - No negative impacts are anticipated. The project is located within the boundaries of the portion of the state that has been classified as attainment for carbon monoxide (CO), attainment maintenance for PM 2.5, non-attainment for Ozone, and attainment for PM 10. A project level Air Quality Conformity Determination is not required, nor is an analysis or discussion of Mobile Source Air Toxics, as this project is exempt under the Clean Air Act. Any potential temporary impacts during construction can be avoided or limited by proper operation of construction equipment and adherence to regulations limiting idling of engines.
- 15. Effect on ambient noise levels** - No negative impacts are anticipated. The project was reviewed by CT DOT's Office of Environmental Planning, and it was determined that no Noise Study would be required. Any noise impacts during construction will be temporary and will be minimized to the best extent practicable by compliance with CT DOT Standard Specifications for Roads, Bridges, Facilities and Incidental Construction Form 818 regarding construction noise pollution:
- “1.10.05 – Noise Pollution: The contractor shall take measures to control noise intensity caused by his construction operations and equipment, including but not limited to equipment used for drilling, pile driving, blasting, and excavating or hauling. All methods and devices employed to minimize noise shall be subject to continuing approval of the Engineer. The maximum allowable level of noise at the nearest residence or occupied building shall be 90 decibels on the “A” weighted scale (dB(A)). Any operation that exceeds this standard will cease until a different construction methodology is developed to allow work to proceed within the 90-dB(A) limit.”*
- 16. Effect on existing land resources and landscapes, including coastal and inland wetlands** –The project does involve minor impacts to wetlands and will require a CTDEEP Pre-Construction Notification Concurrence of Eligibility, CTDEEP Inland Wetland General Permit, an Individual Flood Management Certificate, and United States Army Corps. of Engineers (USACE) Section 404

Permit Pre-Construction Notification. Coordination with CTDEEP and USACE will ensure no more than minimal impacts to wetlands will result as a result of the proposed project.

- 17. Effect on agricultural resources** – No impacts.
- 18. Adequacy of existing or proposed utilities and infrastructure** – No negative impacts are anticipated.
- 19. Effect on greenhouse gas emissions as a direct or indirect result of the action** – No negative impacts are anticipated. Construction phase impacts on greenhouse gas emissions will be limited. Any potential temporary impacts during construction can be avoided or limited by adherence to regulations limiting idling of engines.
- 20. Effect of a changing climate on the action, including any resiliency measures incorporated into the action** – No negative impact is anticipated.
- 21. Any other substantial effect on natural, cultural, recreational, or scenic resources-** No other substantial effects are anticipated.
- 22. Cumulative effects** – This project does not involve any cumulative effects that have the potential for significant effects on the environment.

Anticipated Permits

USACOE Section 404 Permit – Pre-Construction Notification
CTDEEP 401 Water Quality Certificate
CTDEEP Pre-Construction Notification Concurrence of Eligibility
CTDEEP Inland Wetland General Permit
Individual Flood Management Certificate

Conclusion:

After examining any potential environmental impacts and reviewing all comments received, CTDOT has concluded that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) will not be required for: Rehabilitation of Bridge 00793A – Route 15 Northbound Over Quinnipiac River. Publication of this document to the Environmental Monitor shall satisfy the agency's responsibilities under Section 22a-1a-7 of the RCSA.

During the scoping period, CTDOT received comments from one State agency – the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP), which are included below. These comments are addressed and incorporated in the appropriate sections of the above Environmental Checklist. No additional public comments were received during the scoping period. Additionally, prior to the CEPA scoping process, a Virtual Public Information Meeting was held on May 12, 2022. A report of that meeting including public comments received and CT DOT's responses are also included below.

To: Kevin Fleming, Transportation Planner, Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike, Newington CT

From: Linda Brunza- Environmental Analyst

Telephone: 860-424-3739

Date: 8/16/2022

Email: Linda.Brunza@ct.gov

Subject: Rehabilitation of Bridge 00793A-Route 15 Northbound over Quinnipiac River

Staff at the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) reviewed the scoping notice for the rehabilitation of Bridge No. 00793A on Route 15 Northbound over the Quinnipiac River in Wallingford. The superstructure of the bridge may be fully demolished and replaced while the substructure, on pilings, may remain in place and repaired made where needed.

Natural Diversity Database

This project is in a Natural Diversity Database Area. The applicant must submit a *Request for Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDDB) State Listed Species Review Form* (DEEP-APP-007) and all required attachments, including maps, to the NDDDB for further review. The Natural Diversity Database is a record of state or federal listed species maintained by the Wildlife Division that may be found in the project area. Please submit a formal application to the Wildlife Division prior to submitting permit applications for a detailed review of the species that may occur in this area. Additional information concerning NDDDB reviews, and the request form may be found on-line at [NDDDB Requests](#).

Fisheries Division

The Fisheries Division reviewed the early stages of this project in December 2021. The Department of Transportation (DOT) will continue to work with the Fisheries Division during the design stage. The bridge is between two fishways on the Quinnipiac River, approximately 1.5 miles downstream is the Haakonsen fishway at the Wallace Dam in the center of Wallingford. Upstream is the Hanover Pond fishway in Meriden. This stretch of the Quinnipiac River is an important migratory corridor and spawning area for American shad, alewife, blueback herring (state listed species of special concern), and sea lamprey. The Fisheries Division wants to ensure that this migratory corridor is open to fish passage and recommends the following restrictions:

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Land and Water Resources Division

Any activity within federally regulated wetland areas or watercourses at the site may require a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Further information is available on-line at [Army Corps of Engineers, New England District](#) or by calling the Corps Regulatory Branch in Concord, Massachusetts at 978-318-8338. If a permit is required from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a Water Quality Certificate will also be required from DEEP pursuant to section 401 of the Clean Water Act. Staff from the Land and Water Resources Division will be able to clarify the level of permitting needed at DOT's Project Management Meetings. For further information, contact the Land and Water Resources Division at 860-424-3019. A fact sheet regarding 401 Water Quality Certification is available online at [401 Certification](#).

Stormwater General Permit

The General Permit for [Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters from Construction Activities](#) may be applicable depending on the size of the disturbance regardless of phasing. The construction stormwater general permit dictates separate compliance procedures for Locally Exempt projects (projects primarily conducted by government authorities) and Locally Approvable projects (projects primarily by private developers).

This general permit applies to discharges of stormwater and dewatering wastewater from construction activities where the activity disturbs more than an acre. The requirements of the current general permit include registration to obtain permit coverage and development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Control Plan (SWPCP). The SWPCP contains requirements for the permittee to describe and manage their construction activity, including implementing erosion and sediment control measures as well as other control measures to reduce or eliminate the potential for the discharge of stormwater runoff pollutants (suspended solids and floatables such as oil and grease, trash, etc.) both during and after construction. A goal of 80 percent removal of the annual sediment load from the stormwater discharge shall be used in designing and installing post-construction stormwater management measures. Stormwater treatment systems must be designed to comply with the post-construction stormwater management performance requirements of the permit. These include post-construction performance standards requiring retention and/or infiltration of the runoff from the first inch of rain (the water quality volume or WQV) and incorporating control measures for runoff reduction and low impact development practices.

Projects that are exempt from local permitting (such as DOT) that disturb over one acre must submit a registration form and Stormwater Pollution Control Plan (SWPCP) to the Department at least 60 or 90 days, as identified in the permit, prior to the initiation of construction. In addition to measures such as erosion and sediment controls and post-construction stormwater management, the SWPCP must include a schedule for plan implementation and routine inspections. For further information, contact the division at 860-424-3025 or DEEP.StormwaterStaff@ct.gov. The construction stormwater general permit registrations must be filed electronically through DEEP's e-Filing system known as ezFile. Additional information can be found on-line at: [Construction Stormwater GP](#).

Solid Waste Disposal

DEEP performed a high-level review and found that there are no hazardous waste concerns for this project.

Demolition waste that is not contaminated with asbestos, PCBs, or other materials that require special handling is subject to Connecticut's [solid waste statutes and regulations](#), and must be reused, recycled, or disposed of accordingly. Construction and demolition debris should be segregated on-site and reused or recycled to the greatest extent possible. Waste management plans for construction, renovation or demolition projects are encouraged to help meet the State's reuse and recycling goals. Connecticut's [Comprehensive Materials Management Strategy](#) outlines a goal of 60% recovery rate for municipal solid waste by the year 2024. Part of this effort includes increasing the amount of construction and demolition materials recovered for reuse and recycling in Connecticut. It is recommended that contracts be awarded only to those companies who present a sufficiently detailed construction/demolition waste management plan for reuse/recycling. Additional information concerning construction and demolition material management and waste management plans can be found on the DEEP's [C&D Material Management](#) and [C&D Waste Management Plan](#) web pages

One way that certain types of construction and demolition waste can be reused is as clean fill. Clean fill is defined in section 22a-209-1 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) and includes only natural soil, rock, brick, ceramics, concrete and asphalt paving fragments. Clean fill can be used on site or at appropriate off-site locations. Clean fill does not include uncured asphalt, demolition waste containing other than brick or rubble, contaminated demolition wastes (e.g. contaminated with oil or lead paint), tree stumps, or any kind of contaminated soils. Land-clearing debris and waste other than clean fill resulting from demolition activities is considered bulky waste, also defined in section 22a-209-1 of the RCSA. Bulky waste is classified as special waste and must be disposed of at a permitted landfill or other solid waste processing facility pursuant to section 22a-208c of the Connecticut General Statutes and section 22a-209-2 of the RCSA. A fact sheet regarding disposal of special wastes and the authorization application form may be obtained at: [Special Waste Fact Sheet](#).

Air Management

DEEP Bureau of Air Management typically recommends the use of newer off-road construction equipment that meets the latest EPA or California Air Resources Board (CARB) standards. If newer equipment cannot be used, equipment with the best available controls on diesel emissions including retrofitting with diesel oxidation catalysts or particulate filters in addition to the use of ultra-low sulfur fuel would be the second choice that can be effective in reducing exhaust emissions. The use of newer equipment that meets EPA standards would obviate the need for retrofits.

DEEP also recommends the use of newer on-road vehicles that meet either the latest EPA or California Air Resources Board (CARB) standards for construction projects. These on-road vehicles include dump trucks, fuel delivery trucks and other vehicles typically found at construction sites. On-road vehicles older than the 2007-model year typically should be retrofitting with diesel oxidation catalysts or diesel particulate filters for projects. Again, the use of newer vehicles that meet EPA standards would eliminate the need for retrofits.

Additionally, Section 22a-174-18(b)(3)(C) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) limits the idling of mobile sources to 3 minutes. This regulation applies to most vehicles such as trucks and other diesel engine-powered vehicles commonly used on construction sites. Adhering to the regulation will reduce unnecessary idling at truck staging zones, delivery or truck dumping areas and further reduce on-road and construction equipment emissions. Use of posted signs indicating the three-minute idling limit is recommended. It should be noted that only DEEP can enforce Section 22a-174-18(b)(3)(C) of the RCSA. Therefore, it is recommended that the project sponsor include language similar to the anti-idling regulations in the contract specifications for construction to allow them to enforce idling restrictions at the project site without the involvement of DEEP.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project. Please note there were no concerns with the potential of hazardous or solid waste with this project, and the project is not in an Aquifer Protection area.

These comments are based on the reviews provided by relevant staff and offices within DEEP during the designated comment period. They may not represent all applicable programs within DEEP. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions concerning these comments.

cc: Camille Fontanella

Connecticut Department of Transportation

State Project No. 0148-0213

Federal-Aid Project No. 0015(140)

Rehabilitation of Bridge 00793A – Route 15 Northbound Over Quinnipiac River

Town of Wallingford

May 12, 2022, at 7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting via MS Teams Live Event and YouTube Live

Minutes of Virtual Public Informational Meeting

Present:

~7 Attendees viewing via MS Teams Live Event Stream

~7 Attendees viewing via YouTube Live Stream

Team Presenting from the Connecticut Department of Transportation:

Andy Cardinali, Principal Engineer, Bridge Design

Kevin Blasi, Project Manager, Bridge Design

Nicholas Martin, Project Engineer, Bridge Design

Anthony Bui, Project Designer, Bridge Design

Matthew Geanacopoulos, Office of Rights of Way

Scott Adkins, District 3 Construction

Presentation:

Kevin Blasi opened the meeting promptly at 7:00 pm with a brief welcome and introduced the project design team.

Mr. Blasi offered information to the attendees on how to contact the design team during the live Question and Answer session following the formal presentation. The following means of contact were provided:

Project email: DOTProject148-213@ct.gov

Project Q&A phone: (860) 944-1111

MS Teams Chat (available during the live stream event only, for those accessing the meeting via MS Teams)

The period to provide comments and questions to the project team extends through May 26, 2022.

Anthony Bui began the formal presentation of the project. The following are the key points of the formal presentation:

- The existing structure was built in 1946 and was previously repaired under a 1984 rehabilitation project. The bridge consists of two simply supported spans with 5 rolled steel beams.
- Bridge 00793A is located on Route 15 Northbound and carries 2 lanes of traffic with an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 29,600 vehicles per day.
- Based on the 2020 bridge inspection report, the deck is rated a 4 (poor condition), superstructure a 6 (satisfactory), scour a 3 (serious).
- The purpose for the project is to bring the existing superstructure to good standing, rated a 7.
- Construction of access roads will be necessary to facilitate both superstructure and substructure project work.
- Substructure and scour concerns will be addressed during the first construction season of the two-season project.
- During the second construction season, Route 15 Northbound traffic will be shifted to Route 15 Southbound through the use of a crossover which will be in place during 4 separate weekend closures of Route 15 Northbound at the project location. During the crossover, Route 15 Southbound will accommodate one lane of southbound traffic and one lane of northbound traffic.
- Prefabricated Bridge Units, or “PBUs”, will be installed as a replacement superstructure. PBUs are concrete deck and steel beams components that are manufactured off-site, then shipped to the project location and installed by crane. The use of PBUs shortens the time required for the installation of the superstructure, which benefits the travelling public.
- The Quinnipiac River Linear Trail will remain open and active throughout construction. Construction fencing will be in place for the protection of the public. Construction vehicles will occasionally have to cross the trail at which time trail users will be safely stopped for brief periods to enable such crossings.
- Permits anticipated for this project are as follow:
 - Individual Flood Management Certificate;
 - United States Army Corps of Engineers Pre-Construction Notification;
 - Department of Energy & Environmental Protection Pre-Construction Notification Concurrence of Eligibility;
 - Department of Energy & Environmental Protection Inland Wetland General Permit.
- Rights-of-way impacts to 2 properties will require construction easements. Town of Wallingford and Wallingford Group LLC (parcel occupied by United Concrete).
- Matt Geanacopoulos presented an overview of the Rights of Way process and relevant laws and CT DOT procedures pertaining to property acquisition.

Following the presentation of the project scope, the project schedule, estimated cost, funding sources, and a summary of anticipated environmental permits was presented.

- Estimated Construction Cost: \$6,500,000 (80% Federal, 20% State)
- Project Schedule:
 - Start of Construction: April 2024
 - 2 construction seasons

The presentation ended with Kevin Blasi reminding attendees how to contact the design team with questions and comments. The presentation was opened for questions and comments.

Public Comments and Questions During the Live Q&A that followed the presentation:

- **A question transmitted via email:** What will the access roads be used for?

Response: Access roads will be used primarily during the first construction season when access to the Quinnipiac River will be needed. Construction equipment and materials needed for the river bottom re-grading and placement of rip rap, as well as for the rehabilitation of the abutments and pier.

- **A question transmitted via email:** Are access roads permanent?

Response: The Southwest access road is temporary and will be restored upon construction completion by retuning the area to the pre-existing grade and by placing plantings to address the areas that were cleared as needed for the construction of the temporary road.

The Northeast access road shown within this presentation will make use of an existing road and therefore will require minimal alterations to that road for the necessary access. This existing dirt road will remain at construction completion.

- **A question transmitted via email:** It looks like there is a direct conflict with the proposed access road location with the Quinnipiac River Linear Trail, yet it was mentioned that the trail would stay open. Could you please clarify?

Response: The Northeast access road will cross the QLRT. Flaggers will be in place to protect the users of the trail. The work area will be fenced off to separate the trail from the construction area.

- **A question transmitted via email:** You mentioned the bridge is in poor condition. Is it safe to drive on?

Response: Yes, the bridge is safe to drive on and handle all legal and permit loads.

- **A question transmitted via email:** How do you ensure that two lanes will be back open in NB and SB direction on Monday morning after weekend work? What if there is a delay on the weekend when installing the Bridge Units?

Response: Within the Contract, the Department will include what are called “liquidated damages” which would heavily penalize a Contractor by way of monetary fines for every hour that any potential delay would impact the bridge to reopen during those weekday hours. The Department will also review the Contractor’s proposal for the closure beforehand.

- **A question transmitted via email:** Why does the project cost so much?

Response: About 15 percent of the overall cost is contributed to Maintenance and Protection of Traffic throughout the construction phase, site prep at the beginning of the project and closeout of the project once construction has completed. This is a complex project involving prefabricated bridge units. Precast components require large cranes and construction equipment which come at a high cost. A thorough investigation has been performed to obtain a balance of minimizing the impact to the traveling public and to keep the project cost as low as possible. In this case, minimizing the impact to travelers of Route 15 is worth the extra cost associated with the proposal.

This 30% cost estimate may decrease as the design progresses.

- **A question transmitted via voicemail:** Why are we replacing the northbound bridge and not the southbound bridge as well?

Response: The northbound bridge deck was rehabilitated under a separate project in 1990. Current inspection reports show that the northbound bridge is in a state of good repair and does not currently require major rehabilitation.

- **A question transmitted via email:** How long is a construction season going to last?

Response: Typically, a construction season spans from April 1st to November 31st.

- **A question transmitted via email:** Will the linear trail need to be closed either in the northbound direction or the southbound direction? If so, how many days or hours? Is the trail surface likely to be harmed or broken by heavy equipment?

Response: During construction, the linear trail will stay open. Flaggers will navigate trail users while construction vehicles are actively crossing. Any damage that may occur due to vehicles crossing would be repaired, at a minimum, to the original condition.

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 May 26, 2022.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.