

Connecticut Department of Transportation

State Project No. 0053-0189

Federal-Aid Project No. 0017(123)

Removal of Bridge Nos. 00388 and 00389 and Route 17 SB Off-Ramp 007 in Glastonbury

Monday June 13, 2022 at 7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting via MS Teams Live Event and YouTube Live

Minutes of Public Informational Meeting

In Attendance: There were eighteen people in attendance (ten on MS Teams and eight on YouTube Live). The meeting participants included residents of Glastonbury, the Connecticut Department of Transportation, WSP USA, Inc., and CHA Consulting, Inc.

Presentation: The virtual meeting, using MS Teams Live Event and YouTube Live was started at 6:45 p.m. with introductory slides 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 Project Engineer Jonathan W. Kang (of CTDOT) introducing the representatives of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), CHA Consulting, Inc. (CHA), the Consultant Liaison Engineer, and WSP USA, Inc., the Engineering Designer of Record. Mr. Kang then stated the role of the Department, the role of CHA as liaison engineers, and the role of WSP as the Engineer of Record. Mr. Kang continued with a summary of the presentation goals. Mr. Kang stated that the purpose of this public information meeting was to present the proposed design and discuss any questions, comments, or concerns that the public or town officials may have.

Mr. Kevin Flemming (of CTDOT) continued the presentation with an explanation of Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA).

Mr. Steve George (of WSP) presented the technical portion of the presentation. He explained the existing bridge condition, and the purpose of the project. Mr. George presented the existing site and bridge conditions, proposed project plans, and maintenance and protection of traffic methods needed to remove Bridge Nos. 00388 and 00389 and Route 17 SB Off-Ramp 007. Mr. George described the construction of a new roundabout at the off ramp to New London Turnpike and the reconfiguration of the intersection at New London Turnpike with Oak and Williams Streets. Mr. Chris Van Zanten (of WSP) continued the presentation with an explanation of the reasons a roundabout was chosen rather than a conventional signalized intersection. Mr. George carried on the technical presentation by discussing utility, environmental and right-of-way impacts associated with the project. Mr. George then closed the technical portion of the presentation with a summary of the current project schedule and estimated construction cost.

Mr. Aaron Foster (of CHA) closed the formal presentation by providing the attendees with the project website and project email address for submission of comments and questions until June 27th, 2022.

Key points of the presentation were:

- Bridge Nos. 00388 and 00389 and the off-ramp (Ramp 007) from Rt-17 SB to the Oak Street/New London Turnpike/William Street intersection will be removed and the off-ramp from Rt-17 SB to New London Turnpike (right ramp 005) will be modified.

- The structure was originally constructed in 1952.
- The bridge is currently posted for a low minimum vertical clearance of 14'-3".
- The Average Daily Traffic (ADT) for these bridges is approximately 5,554 vehicles per day with 5% truck traffic as listed in the 2016 Inspection Report.
- The purpose and need of the project are to address items identified in the 2016 inspection report. Based on field inspections, engineering analysis, and review of CTDOT's Bridge Inspection Report, Bridge No. 00388 was found to be in poor condition (rated '4' on a scale of 0 to 9) noting significant deck deterioration.
- Construction work will entail a full removal option consisting of the following:
 - Round-a-bout construction at the revised right lane off-ramp on Rt-17 SB.
 - Removal of left exit ramp-007 and bridges 00388 and 00389.
 - Conversion of a lane on Rt-17 NB between William Street and the off-ramp to New London Turnpike to on-ramp/off-ramp auxiliary lanes.
 - Shoulder and turning bay widening on New London Turnpike.
 - Revisions to the Oak Street/New London Turnpike/William Street intersection.
- Round-a-bout construction at the revised right lane off-ramp on Rt-17 SB.
- Significant improvement of the Oak Street/New London Turnpike/William Street level of service (traffic).
- Traffic studies comparing 2023 and 2043 no-build, build, AM and PM for round-a-bout and signalized intersection options
- One lane of traffic in each direction will be maintained on New London Turnpike during roundabout construction
- Route 17 and New London Turnpike will have temporary closures and detours during bridge removal. The required permits for the project include:
 - CTDEEP Flood Management Coordination – MOU
 - Construction Stormwater General
- The estimated Construction cost is \$6.3 Million using 80% Federal Funds and 20% State Funds.
- Construction is anticipated to take two (2) seasons, starting in Spring 2024 and ending in the Fall 2025.

Public Comments and Questions:

- A meeting attendee made the following statement:
 - I believe the bridge should be left as is, and no roundabout added on New London Turnpike near Douglas Road. Leave well enough alone.

Verbal Response: The Department thanked the attendee for their comment and noted that all comments are appreciated.

- A meeting attendee asked the following question:
 - Will the state install sewer between the bridge 53-189 and the bridge closer to Glastonbury center within this project?

Verbal Response: It was noted that sewers were under the jurisdiction of the Town and MDC in this region and the individual should reach out about that item.

- A meeting attendee asked the following question:
 - Just outside of the project window, 17-N widens from one lane to two. Would it not be more efficient to just keep 17-N as one lane and not widen it to two?

Verbal Response: It was noted that there are a series of on ramps that add temporary lanes that continue to merge further up 17-N. It was also noted that the on-ramp from Williams St E safety would be improved because the dedicated on-ramp instead of having to immediately merging.

- A meeting attendee asked the following question:
 - The Town of Glastonbury has indicated that it wishes to align Douglas Road and Sycamore Street into one intersection. Was this considered in the project design?

Verbal Response: The State and the Town met and discussed that potential project and it was ultimately decided to not include that alignment as part of this project.

- A meeting attendee asked the following question:
 - There is a small stream between New London Turnpike and the current east bound exit ramp. Will that be impacted? Second, what will happen to the current raised grades for these ramps?

Verbal Response: It was noted that the small stream would not be impacted. The changes in grades above the stream would be maintained.

- A meeting attendee asked the following question:
 - Lastly what will happen to the "left over" land? Will that be retained by the State or turned over to the Town?

Verbal Response: The State noted the land would be seeded and some of it could potentially be turned over to the Town.

- A meeting attendee asked the following question:
 - Represents Bike Walk in Glastonbury and owns a business in the One Stop Plaza adjacent to the project site. What are the specific plans for bike and pedestrian safety?

Verbal Response: A sidewalk was added on the north side of the round-a-bout, pedestrian warning lights will be investigated and incorporated. Shorter pedestrian cross-walks will improve safety.

- A meeting attendee asked the following question:
 - Would you address the anticipated closure durations for New London Turnpike and other abutting Glastonbury roadways?

Verbal Response: There will be some closures for temporary detours but those should only last a week or a weekend and the local businesses should be able to be accessed with the detours during those closures.

- A meeting attendee asked the following question:
 - Follow up question on adding sewer between the bridges: there should be there is no sewer between the bridges. who is in charge of this?

Verbal Response: It was noted that either the Town Engineer or MDC were in charge of sewers in this region.

- A meeting attendee made the following comment:
 - I understand potential safety benefits of roundabouts and have personally experienced some at the New London / Hebron Avenue roundabout. Specifically, I am concerned about the widening of New London Turnpike that is intended to encourage cars to pass turning cars. This seems counter to me from traffic calming safety measures. Secondly, will there be a plan for bicyclists to pass through this area without going through the roundabout. I am personally comfortable, but many cyclists are not. For example, at the previous roundabout mentioned, there is a ramp before the roundabout that allows cyclists to dismount and enter the sidewalk. Regarding pedestrian crossings – we ask that you consider all possible safety measures, including but not limited to appropriate distance from the roundabout exits, safe sightlines not obstructed by trees or other large obstacles, and signal lights such as those in effect near Flanagan on New London Turnpike. Currently, it is rather uncommon for vehicles to stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk near Sycamore Street, so I hope that this project increases the likelihood that vehicles will stop. The good news is that there is a tremendous amount of room for improvement.

Verbal Response: A second sidewalk was added to the northern side of the round-a-bout to accommodate both walking and dismounted cyclists' pedestrians. Additional pedestrian warning lights will be investigated and included in the project.

- A meeting attendee asked the following question:
 - When removing the bridge that crosses New London Turnpike will the raised ramp constructions on either side be removed? Also, the town shows a stream there.

Verbal Response: The raised ramps will be brought down to grade or remain in place. The stream will remain in its current location.

- A meeting attendee asked the following question:
 - Finally, while this proposal has numerous safety improvements, how else does this benefit the road users? Many of us are used to the current setup and new traffic patterns are always a shock to adjust to. People still do not fully seem to understand the rotaries in the town center despite being constructed 5 years ago.

Additionally, have other, cheaper safety measures been considered, such as the installation of a protected left turn signal for drivers on Oak Street?

Verbal Response: The benefits to the road users are as follows: Oak St/William St E intersection is currently a five-legged intersection and has very low LOS and is anticipated to continue to decrease in LOS. By converting it to a four-legged intersection it will significantly improve the LOS. Additionally, there are roadway widenings on NLT to allow for a slight by-pass lane for stopped vehicles. Other options have been considered including a light which only has a small advantage in the PM future peak traffic, but the round-a-bout has significant advantages during the remaining times throughout the day.

- A meeting attendee asked the following question:
 - Is there are replanting plan for the areas left?

Verbal Response: All areas will be re-seeded and native plans will be planted in some of those areas.

- A meeting attendee made the following comment:
 - Need to identify the speeds across the crosswalks on the roundabout bypass roadways. They appear to be very fast. Not entry speeds. At the bypass crosswalk. Cross walks on the bypass approaches look very high. Not being addressed with responses. On ramp cross walk will see higher than 25 mph potentially

Verbal Response: The round-a-bout is designed to have lower speeds through the round-a-bout and to allow pedestrians to see the oncoming traffic. Additional pedestrian warning signals will be investigated for this project.

- A meeting attendee asked the following question:
 - The advantages of the current setup has been that is has helped tractor trailer drivers turn better. Will tractor trailers be able to handle this roundabout well enough to keep traffic moving at a reasonable rate? Also, there is still significant traffic on NLT at the "off peak" hour of 6 PM, and a road closure at that time would likely significantly disturb traffic. Would it be possible for the closure times to be changed to accommodate this?

Verbal Response: Tractor trailers were incorporated into the design of the round-a-bout and their turning movements studied. They will be able to move through the round-a-bout with ease. Closure times for construction will be later in the evening to prevent any back-up during the daytime including later 'off-peak' hours.

- A meeting attendee made the following comment:
 - Overall I must say this proposal seems more competent than a previous iteration presented many years prior. While I personally hate to see these bridges go, I am glad to see that at least some thought was put into this in this iteration. I hope this project is refined a bit and is truly thought through if and/or when it is implemented.

Verbal Response: The commenter was thanked for their input.

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 June 27th, 2022. Following the meeting, no additional comments via phone voicemails, or email comments were received.

The presentation and project were well received, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.