



Meeting Notes

Newington Dover Spaulding Turnpike Widening 11238

Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., 6 Bedford Farms Drive, Suite 607, Bedford, NH 03110

Tel: (603) 644-0888

Attendees: NHDOT - C. Waszczuk,
K. Cota, P. Salo, C. Blackman, S.
Ireland
VHB - P. Clary
Newington residents

Date/Time: 8/19/10 – 6:30 pm

Project No.: 52012.01

Place: Newington Town Hall

Re: Public Informational Meeting

Notes taken by: VHB/NHDOT

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) held a Public Informational Meeting in Newington on August 19, 2010 to present an overall update of the entire project and the first construction contract and a roundabout alternative at the intersection of Woodbury Avenue, Arboretum Drive and the Exit 3 SB ramps. Mr. Keith Cota opened the meeting with the introduction of himself as the Chief Project Manager for the NHDOT, Chris Waszczuk as the Administrator for the Bureau of Turnpikes, Mr. Peter Salo as the Chief of Consultant Section for Highway Design, Mr. Charles Blackman as the Consultant Design Reviewer for Highway Design and Mr. Peter Clary as the Project Manager for VHB leading the Consultant design team. The materials presented included a PowerPoint presentation, graphic boards displaying various project elements and plans that were displayed within the room. It was noted that Jack O'Reilly, Selectman, Tom Morgan, Town Planner, and Beverly Hollingsworth, Executive Councilor were present at the meeting.

Mr. Cota continued the presentation with a brief explanation of the project area which begins in Newington on the Spaulding Turnpike just north of the Exit 1 interchange and continues northerly approximately 3.5 miles to the project limits just south of the Dover Toll Plaza. The project purpose is to improve safety and transportation efficiency on this highly congested roadway by consolidating, reconfiguring and reconstructing the Spaulding Turnpike and the 5 interchanges within the project limits. The project need stems from limited capacity, poor levels of service during peak travel hours, geometric deficiencies, poor local connectivity and an accident history that creates long delays.

Mr. Cota then presented the design specifics of the selected alternative which includes the expansion of the two lanes in each direction to three lanes in each direction for the entire corridor with the addition of an auxiliary fourth lane between Exits 3 and 6 to address the high volume of merging and weaving traffic. Full access interchanges are being provided at Exits 3 and 6 while the interchanges at Exits 2 and 5 are being eliminated. The interchange at Exit 4 will be reconstructed with the configuration remaining the same as exists today. The Little Bay Bridges are being rehabilitated and widened to accommodate the future traffic projections for 2025. The historic General Sullivan Bridge is also being rehabilitated for use by pedestrian, bicycle and recreational users. Soundwalls are proposed in Dover along both the NB and SB barrels from north of the Little Bay Bridges to Exit 6 and north of Exit 6, from the ramps, to approximately half a mile north of the Dover Toll Plaza.



The construction contract breakout graphic was presented that consisted of five individual construction contracts that ranged in cost from \$26.8 - \$58 million dollars. The number of construction contracts has been reduced from 8 contracts to 5 contracts over the past year based on an evaluation of construction sequencing, schedules and cost savings opportunities. The overall construction cost is estimated to be \$207.2M in 2010 dollars and \$219.5M with inflation included over the course of the project, which will start this year and conclude in 2018.

The project is primarily funded through the Turnpike Capital Program with approximately \$31M in Federal earmarks for the project. Currently, there is \$151M in Turnpike Capital Program funding in place for design, right-of-way and construction. The \$65M of funding required for the major construction in Dover and the General Sullivan Bridge is not currently in place. However, HB391 has increased authorization to \$275M for the project that provides the opportunity to generate the funding for Dover and the General Sullivan Bridge through bond revenue proceeds and increases in system wide toll increases.

There are several environmental mitigation components that are ongoing for the anticipated wetland impacts identified during the FEIS. The acquisition of the 120-acre Tuttle Farm and the 40 acre Day Property in Dover have been completed for preservation purposes. In Newington, the Department is in negotiations on the Saba and Hislop properties for additional 64 acres of preservation in the Knight Brook area. The restoration of 3,100 linear feet of Railway Brook from Arboretum Drive to the intersection with Pickering Brook is being designed for construction within Contract M. This restoration includes the construction of a curvilinear brook replacing the straight brook. This improvement provides improved floodplain storage controls and an improved environmental eco-system.

In addition to these corridor improvements, the project includes park and ride projects in Dover, Rochester and Lee, improved intercity, express and local bus service in the seacoast area, increased Downeaster service from Portland to Boston and improved transit service through COAST, Wildcat and the Seacoast TMA.

The project will require the execution of a Municipal Agreement between the NHDOT and the Town of Newington that addresses work zone control during construction and maintenance responsibilities following construction for sidewalks, roadways, drainage and other roadway elements. The Municipal Agreement needs to be executed prior to the advertisement for construction in the fall of 2011 for Contract M. The NHDOT has opened these discussions with the Town of Newington with additional discussions to follow.

Mr. Clary then presented the first construction project, Contract L. This \$50M construction contract is targeted to begin in September 2010 and constructs the new SB barrel of the Little Bay Bridges, Hilton Drive beneath the Little Bay Bridges, the pedestrian and bicycle bridge structure from Hilton Park to the General Sullivan Bridge, the roadway approaches in Newington and Dover, Exit 5 ramp reconstruction and approximately 800 feet of soundwalls along the SB barrel. The Dover approach work is primarily an interim connection into the existing turnpike just north of Exit 5.

The bridge construction is the major component of construction as it is 1,600 feet long, approximately 75' wide and has eight piers in river. The construction will consist of drilled shaft pier foundations which reduces the environmental and construction impacts as compared to the existing mass pier foundations. Construction on stone causeways and trestle type work platforms extending into the river are permitted to provide access, but the contractor will have the final decision on construction methodology. The proposed bridge is located between the existing Little Bay Bridge and the General Sullivan Bridge with clearances between 2' and 15' and in very difficult tidal river conditions.

The major traffic shifts will occur in 2013 when Hilton Drive is opened to two way traffic in May, SB traffic is shifted to the new bridge in August and the NB traffic is shifted in November. In addition to the major traffic shifts, the exit 5 ramps are anticipated to be closed in August and September 2013 to reconstruct the Exit 5 ramps. Hilton Drive between the driveways to Hilton Park on the east and west sides of the Spaulding Turnpike will also be closed from approximately September 2010 to May 2013. This is necessary to construct the pedestrian bridge, the Little Bay Bridge, Hilton Drive, General Sullivan Bridge abutment modifications and the removal of the existing General Sullivan Bridge roadway approach. This is an extremely tight area with continuous construction activity occurring. The closure reduces construction constraints and difficulties which will reduce overall construction costs and time durations.

Contract L includes an emergency access roadway for construction along Pomeroy Cove between the NB Spaulding Turnpike and the existing pathway along Pomeroy Cove. This access connects Wentworth Terrace to the Dover Point Road/Cote Drive neighborhoods and will be designed to accommodate emergency vehicles. There will be removable bollards installed at the ends for the roadway to prevent public vehicular access.

The construction of the pedestrian bridge requires the closure of pedestrian traffic to connect the pedestrian bridge to the General Sullivan Bridge. This closure will occur from November 1, 2010 to May 1, 2011. Pedestrian access to the General Sullivan Bridge will be maintained from the Newington side. The sidewalk beneath the General Sullivan and Little Bay Bridges in Dover will be closed for the entire construction contract for safety reasons.

Mr. Clary continued the presentation on the proposed roundabout alternative at the intersection of Woodbury Avenue, Arboretum Drive and the Exit 3 SB ramps. The roundabout alternative was evaluated for comparison with the proposed signalized intersection that was developed during the FEIS. The roundabout alternative improves traffic operations, reduces maintenance needs, reduces costs, improves safety and reduces the paved surface area thereby reducing stormwater treatment needs. He continued by describing the various components and their functions that constitute a roundabout as well as the features and benefits of roundabouts.

The comparison of the signalized intersection section to the roundabout results in similar ROW and wetland impacts, improved safety, traffic operations and drainage characteristics and reductions in maintenance needs and construction costs.

Mr. Cota continued the presentation by stating that communication vehicles to distribute project information include additional information meetings with the various communities, posted information on the project website, project newsletters, press releases, the use of smart work zones during construction and email blasts.

Mr. Cota concluded the presentation and opened up the meeting to questions and comments.

The following questions and answers arose after the presentation:

Question 1 – With the proposed piers being drilled shafts and not mass piers similar to the existing LBB and GSB piers, will this affect the existing water currents and flows?

Answer: The proposed drilled shaft piers are aligned with the existing piers and a hydrodynamic study was completed to analyze the final condition. The analysis indicates that the proposed pier has little to no change from the existing condition. The report will be posted on the website for viewing.

Question 2 – Will the new bridge be 20' higher than the existing bridge?

Answer: No, the bridge elevations will be the same as exists today.

Question 3 – Will the project utilize quiet pavement?

Answer: The Department is currently reviewing the study that was prepared on quiet pavement.

Question 4 – Will there be a lot of night work required for this project?

Answer: It is anticipated that the majority of the work will be completed during the day. However, there will be some construction operations that require night time operations to minimize traffic impacts.

Question 5 – What is quiet pavement?

Answer: Quiet pavement is pavement that includes a higher percentage of voids that allows tire noise to be absorbed and is typically results in higher costs of pavements and long-term maintenance.

Question 6 – Who will be responsible for maintaining the General Sullivan Bridge upon completion as there is discussion on the Portsmouth-Kittery bridges would be maintained by the municipalities?

Answer: The NHDOT through the Bureau of Turnpikes will continue to maintain the General Sullivan Bridge following the rehabilitation.

Question 7 – How will the Railway Brook restoration affect the flow of Pickering Brook downstream?

Answer: The proposed curvilinear nature of the brook and the additional floodplain that is being created will result in flows that are the same or less to Pickering Brook and is expected to result in positive flood control benefits and sediment removals. Should anyone be interested in further information, Mr. Cota offered to provide the additional information should they contact him directly.

Question 8 – What are the impacts to the Beane Farm as they didn't recall a sidewalk being proposed?

Answer: The anticipated impacts are being minimized as much as possible through the use of 11' travel lanes, 4' shoulders and minimal slope work. The sidewalk was included in the selected alternative as presented at the Public Hearing and will be pursued in the final design as long as the local community agrees to provide winter and summer maintenance of the sidewalk system. Mr. Cota offered to provide additional information by contacting him directly.

Question 9 – Is the General Sullivan Bridge safe and will it be able to remain open until the rehabilitation occurs if the funding is available?

Answer: The inspection of the bridge has been completed with the results being reviewed. The Department acknowledges that the condition of the bridge isn't ideal and will take the appropriate actions necessary to ensure safe passage over the bridge. The Department will conduct additional inspections to further evaluate the condition of the bridge since construction isn't scheduled until 2015. Underwater inspections will also be

performed to fully assess the condition and rehabilitation costs. Should the rehabilitation costs become excessive, the Department would reassess options in providing pedestrian and bicyclist access over the river. The construction schedule for the General Sullivan Bridge was established so that the pedestrian and bicyclist access over the river could continue during the rehabilitation. This requires construction be completed for the new and rehabilitation of the Little Bay Bridges to allow the use of one southbound lane for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Question 10 – Will the deck be repaired if necessary between now and when the rehabilitation is to occur?

Answer: The Department will evaluate the condition of the bridge and determine the best cost-effective approach in the goal of keeping the structure operational for pedestrians and bicycles.

Question 11 – Could the bridge be closed prior to rehabilitation?

Answer: Yes, the Department would close the bridge if the conditions warrant it.

Question 12 – Why are there noisewalls proposed in Dover only?

Answer: During the FEIS, noisewalls were evaluated in Newington also. The evaluation determined that no properties in Newington met the policy requirements for noise abatement measures.

Question 13 – By not providing noisewalls, does it decrease property values?

Answer: The Department is not aware of property depreciation by not providing noisewalls in areas that do or do not meet with policy requirements.

Question 14 – What is the affect of the project on wildlife during construction?

Answer: Wildlife impacts were assessed during the FEIS and determined that there are no adverse impacts.

Question 15 – What type of material will the noisewalls being made of?

Answer: The Department intends to utilize the timber noisewalls with ivy landscaping plantings for the majority of the project. However, in the Pomeroy Cove area a transparent plastic noisewall is being investigated.

Question 16 – Are trees and landscaping being considered between the proposed highway and the private properties?

Answer: Yes, landscaping will be considered during the final design process.

Question 17 – Statement – The Fox Point area of Newington can clearly hear the roadway noise especially during the winter months.

Question 18 – What time will construction start?

Answer: Typically, construction starts at 7:00 am.

Question 19 – Have construction staging areas been identified?

Answer: The Department has identified several potential staging areas such as the former drive-in site and the former hotel site at the intersection of Shattuck Way and Nimble Hill Road for the contractor's consideration.

Question 20 – Who controls all of the signals on state roadways?

Answer: The Department is responsible for traffic signals on state roadways.

Question 21 – Is the roundabout alternative being advanced through final design?

Answer: Yes, the roundabout design at Exit 3 is being advanced instead of the signalized intersection design based on the additional benefits the roundabout design has compared to the intersection design.

Question 22 – Will lighting be provided at the roundabout?

Answer: Yes, lighting will be provided at the roundabout to illuminate the raised median islands on the approaches.

Question 23 – Are the plow requirements for the truck apron the same as the regular roadway?

Answer: The plow requirements are the same. It is anticipated that the truck apron will be plowed to the truck apron surface during the winter maintenance operation.

Question 24 – What are the maintenance limits for Newington?

Answer: After the project is completed and along Woodbury Avenue, the Department feels the town should be responsible for this roadway segment from the NB ramps to the east. The Bureau of Turnpikes would maintain Woodbury Avenue from the NB ramps to, and including the roundabout, and the SB ramps. The Pease Development Authority would maintain Arboretum Drive and share in the responsibility for winter plowing within the roundabout.

Meeting Notes Completed
And Submitted By:

Peter A. Clary, P.E. (VHB)

Noted By: P. Salo & K. Cota

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