

Appendix M Response to Comments Received on the DSEIS

Federal Agency Comments



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION I
5 POST OFFICE SQUARE SUITE 100
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02109-3912**

June 7, 2021

Jennifer Reczek
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
7 Hazen Drive
PO Box 483
Concord, New Hampshire 03302-0483

RE: Draft Supplemental Impact Statement for the Newington-Dover 11238 General Sullivan Bridge, CEQ #20210042

Dear Ms. Reczek:

USEPA-1

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reviewed the Draft Supplemental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for the General Sullivan Bridge project in Newington and Dover, New Hampshire pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and our NEPA review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The DSEIS describes work by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NH DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to evaluate alternatives for the rehabilitation or replacement of the historic General Sullivan Bridge in Newington and Dover, New Hampshire to improve pedestrian and recreational access. Based on our review we have no comments to offer at this time.

USEPA-2

EPA appreciates the opportunity to review the DSEIS and generally supports the recreational access and connectivity goals of the project. Please contact me at 617-918-1025 with any questions.

Sincerely,

**TIMOTHY
TIMMERMANN**

Digitally signed by TIMOTHY
TIMMERMANN
Date: 2021.06.07 13:47:10
-04'00'

Timothy Timmermann
Director, Office of Environmental Review

From: [Lazinsky, Diane](#)
To: [Sikora, Jamie \(FHWA\)](#); [Raddant, Andrew](#)
Subject: DSEIS General Sullivan Bridge Spaulding Turnpike
Date: Monday, June 7, 2021 3:47:51 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon Jamie,

USDOT-1

The U.S. Department of the Interior has no comment on the following project: FHWA-NH-EIS-06-01-DS Newington-Dover General Sullivan Bridge Spaulding Turnpike Improvements Strafford and Rockingham Counties, New Hampshire. Thank you and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Hope you have a great summer!

Best regards,
Diane

Diane Lazinsky
Regional Environmental Protection Specialist
U.S. Department of the Interior
Region I North Atlantic - Appalachian
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
5 Post Office Square, Suite 18011
Boston, MA 02109
Office: 617 223-8565 Cell: 617 686-1780
diane_lazinsky@ios.doi.gov

Federal Agency Responses

Comment ID	Name
USEPA	Timothy Timmermann, US Environmental Protection Agency
USDOJ	Diane Lazinsky, US Department of the Interior

**Response to Comments Made by
Timothy Timmermann, Director
US Environmental Protection Agency
Region 1, Office of Environmental Review
Letter dated June 7, 2021**

USEPA-1. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reviewed the Draft Supplemental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for the General Sullivan Bridge project in Newington and Dover, New Hampshire pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and our NEPA review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. The DSEIS describes work by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to evaluate alternatives for the rehabilitation or replacement of the historic General Sullivan Bridge in Newington and Dover, New Hampshire to improve pedestrian and recreational access. Based on our review we have no comments to offer at this time.

Response: Thank you for your time in reviewing the document.

USEPA-2. EPA appreciates the opportunity to review the DSEIS and generally supports the recreational access and connectivity goals of the project. Please contact me at 617-918-1025 with any questions.

Response: Thank you for your comment. NHDOT and FHWA agree that pedestrian and bicycle connectivity across Little Bay is an important piece of the regional transportation network, and further recognize the recreational value of the project.

**Response to Comments Made by
Diane Lazinksy, Regional Environmental Protection Specialist
US Department of the Interior
Region I North Atlantic – Appalachian
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
Email dated June 7, 2021**

USDOI-1. The US Department of the Interior has no comment on the following project: FHWA-NH-EIS-06-01-DS Newington-Dover General Sullivan Bridge Spaulding Turnpike Improvements Strafford and Rockingham Counties, New Hampshire.

Response: Thank you for your time in reviewing the document.

State Agency Comments

**NEW HAMPSHIRE DIVISION
OF
HISTORICAL RESOURCES**

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Jill Edelmann (NH DOT), Jamie Sikora (FHWA)
FROM: Laura Black and David Trubey
SUBJECT: Newington-Dover; General Sullivan Bridge Project DSEIS; FHWA-NH-EIS-06-01-DS, 11238, RPR 1853
DATE: June 3, 2021
CC:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement dated April 2021. The following are comments specific to Sections 3.10 and 4, and draft mitigation stipulations dated March 31, 2021 located in Appendix I.

- NHDHR-1: Chapter 3, Section 3.10.1
 - Line 6, please change “prehistoric” and “historic” to “pre-contact” and “post-contact.”
- NHDHR-2: Chapter 3, Section 3.10.2.2
 - Note that the inventory code assigned in EMMIT for the project area form is ZMT-SPTP. NWN-DOV does not appear in EMMIT.
- NHDHR-3:
 - Suggest “. . . historic contexts in the APE and provide recommendations for further survey work.”
 - Please clarify in the narrative what the result of consultation was for the Axel Johnson Conference Center, Sprague Energy Area Form (referenced in DSEIS as NWN-SP, but coded in EMMIT as NWN-0SEA). The finding was left as More Information Needed in 2005 and the resource was recommended for further study by the consultant and the DOE committee in 2018. Suggest that actions that deviate from the recommendations referenced in attachments included in the report be explained so that the reader understands why information remains incomplete. Recognizing that the bulleted information was copied directly from the Determination of Effect memo, DHR acknowledges that these sections could probably have been made clearer in that document initially, but recommends that the text be cleaned up for the DSEIS.
- NHDHR-4:
- NHDHR-5: Chapter 3, Section 3.10.2.3
 - Line 6, please change “part human” to “past human.”
- NHDHR-6:
 - Revise last sentence to address involvement of a single or plural marine specialist(s).
- NHDHR-7: Table 3.10.1
 - The title of this table is inaccurate, per the content of the table. Not all properties in the table have been surveyed. See comments below before determining the best title for this table.
 - The purpose of this table isn’t clear. It seems to take random pieces of the Property Matrix from the 2018 project area form that don’t appear to reveal a clear or complete message on their own. Including numerous properties with blank or “N/A” data is also questionable, especially without explanation. What is the purpose of including these this way?
- NHDHR-8:

NHDHR-9:

Recommend revising the table depending on its intent. If the table is meant to depict surveyed properties inclusive of results of the project area form recommendations, then the content of the table must be fact-checked as at least two resources are not accurately referenced (Hilton Park Roadside Safety Rest Area/DOV0150/Not Eligible, 137 Beane Ln/NWN0246/Not Eligible). The DHR would be open to consultation on how to best present the intended information.

NHDHR-10:

Section 3.10.3.1

- Ira F. Pinkham House/Wentworth Summer Residence (DOV0093). Confirm whether the barn was relocated from the property or demolished.

NHDHR-11:

Section 3.10.4.2

- Always use care with the generalized argument that noise (or other atmospheric) increases wouldn’t adversely impact a property because they “would not diminish the qualities that make this property eligible for the National Register.” Noise or other similar impacts could in fact impact long term property use or ability to sell real estate, causing potential adverse deterioration. More particular arguments are recommended regarding noise levels etc., without relying exclusively on National Register characteristics. Under current definitions, these arguments fit under the Indirect Impacts discussion.

NHDHR-12:

Section 3.10.5

- The project team, DHR, and the consulting parties have been working very hard on developing a comprehensive draft mitigation package for the General Sullivan Bridge replacement project and we anticipate a successful final mitigation package. DHR notes that off-site mitigation (whether an exhibit at the Woodman Museum, work related to the Newington Depot, or for the Dover Trail) should be proportional to the adverse effect aspects they are mitigating and should not detract from mitigation to address the engineering loss of the nationally significant bridge.

NHDHR-13:

Chapter 4, Section 4.3

- Note that the reference to potential “indirect” effects reflects the earlier interpretation of direct vs. indirect effects. Suggest making this section consistent with Section 3, perhaps replacing “indirect” with “non-physical.”

NHDHR-14:

Section 4.3.1.1

- It may be useful to note that the 1934 Hilton Park is only a Section 4(f) resource as a park and not as a historic site as well, having been determined to be not eligible for listing in the National Register.

NHDHR-15:

Section 4.3.2.3

- Confirm whether the barn was relocated from the property or demolished.

NHDHR-16:

Section 4.7

- Should New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, Dover, and Newington be italicized?

NHDHR-17:

Appendix I:

- Confirm that DOE (green sheets) and other correspondence are consistently included for all resources and steps in the Section 106 process.

Draft Mitigation Stipulations (March 31, 2021)

- NHDHR-18 • This version of the mitigation stipulations incorporate many good details that give clarity to the implementation of any of these options.
- NHDHR-19 • B.vi: Note the type of copy that will be submitted to NPS.
- NHDHR-20 • B.vii: Revise the end of the first sentence.
- NHDHR-21 • C.ii: DHR assumes that the 3 outreach sessions are specifically tied to this MOA, and that DOT anticipates there will be more sessions and opportunities for outreach tied to the HBI initiative directly. True?
- NHDHR-22 • D.i: Recommend that the two panels *Bringing Continuous Trusses to the American Highway* and *GSB as a Textbook Example* be fabricated in duplicate and placed in multiple locations. This would increase the amount of mitigation that specifically shares with the public information regarding the engineering significance of the GSB (which is currently minimal compared to other topics), and potentially shares this information with a larger number of people who might miss it otherwise.
- NHDHR-23 • E. Suggest removing “Rehabilitation of the” from the title, as the efforts are not to complete rehabilitation but are in support of future rehabilitation opportunities.
- NHDHR-24 • E.i.a. Suggest adding language “Engage a consultant team to prepare a building assessment and feasibility study . . .”
- NHDHR-25 • E.ii.: Suggest revising language “. . . requiring rehabilitation by the future owner meet the *Secretary’s* . . .” Note that an easement does not require work other than what is necessary to retain the existing condition, however if and when the owner decides to do rehabilitation, that work must follow the Standards.
- NHDHR-26 • F.ii.a: Potentially 3 interpretive panels along this railroad corridor seems like a lot for a section of mitigation that is less directly related to the adverse effects of the project on the GSB, particularly in relation to the 4 allocated at the bridge and only 2 specific to the engineering context.
- NHDHR-27 DHR looks forward to reviewing the public’s comments and suggestions, and working with the project team to finalize a complete mitigation package.



CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
GOVERNOR

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
107 Pleasant Street, Johnson Hall
Concord, NH 03301-3834
Telephone: (603) 271-2155
Fax: (603) 271-2615

DIVISION OF PLANNING
DIVISION OF ENERGY
www.nh.gov/osi

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E., Project Manager, NH DOT
FROM: Samara Ebinger, Principal Planner
State National Flood Insurance Program, Assistant Coordinator
DATE: May 26, 2021
SUBJECT: Newington-Dover 1123S

I am writing in reference to your April 23, 2021, email regarding the availability of a draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the above-referenced project which involves the proposed rehabilitation or replacement of the General Sullivan Bridge in the Town of Newington and City of Dover. I have reviewed the information provided in Section 3.3 "Floodplain and Hydrodynamics" in the Environmental Impact Statement report and the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and Flood Insurance Study (FIS) reports for the area. I am providing comments below related to National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requirements.

NHOSI-1 Please note that the FIRMs and FIS reports for both Strafford County and Rockingham County have been updated. The current FIRMs and FIS report for Strafford County, including the City of Dover, are effective as of September 30, 2015. The current FIRMs and FIS report for Rockingham County, including the Town of Newington, are effective as of January 29, 2021. Both communities have adopted the latest versions of the maps and reports into their floodplain regulations.

NHOSI-2 As indicated in Section 3.3.1 of the Environmental Impact Statement report for the project, it appears that a portion of the project area is located within Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) designated as Zone AE on the FIRM. There are no areas nearby within a regulatory floodway.

NHOSI-3 Regarding the flood hazard information in the vicinity of the project area, the extent of the Zone AE floodplain has shifted in some locations when compared to the previous versions of the maps. Also, note that the Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) on the current FIRMs are now referenced to the North American Vertical Datum of 1988, rather than the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929. As a result of this change, there are some differences in BFE values in some places on the maps when compared to the information presented in the Environmental Impact Statement report. I have enclosed a screen capture that shows the current FIRM information. Be aware that the Summary of Stillwater Elevations tables in each FIS report will provide more precise BFE values. The latest maps, FIS reports, and corresponding GIS data can be accessed at msc.fema.gov.

NHOSI-4 Since the Town of Newington and City of Dover are participating communities of the NFIP, any development occurring in an SFHA in the community should meet the NFIP requirements

NHOSI-4 contained in the community's floodplain management ordinance. Development is defined under the NFIP as "any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations or storage of equipment or materials."

NHOSI-5 For areas located in the SFHA, the applicable requirements that would apply in the communities' floodplain management regulations for the types of development proposed would be the requirement for a local permit and assurance that all other applicable Federal and State permits have been obtained. Additionally, communities may have chosen to adopt other requirements into their regulations that are more restrictive than NFIP minimum standards.

NHOSI-6 Additionally, please note that any temporary development activities within the SFHA that will remain in place longer than six months will also be subject to the requirements of the communities' floodplain management regulations.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at 603-271-1755 or samara.m.ebinger@osi.nh.gov.



State Agency Responses

Comment ID	Name
NHDHR	Laura Black and David Trubey, New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources
NHOSI	Samara Ebinger, New Hampshire Office of Strategic Initiatives

**Response to Comments Made by
Laura Black, Preservation Compliance Specialist and Easement Program Coordinator
and
David Trubey, Review and Compliance Coordinator
New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources
Memorandum dated June 3, 2021**

- NHDHR-1. Chapter 3, Section 3.10.1
Line 6, please change "prehistoric" and "historic" to "pre-contact" and "post-contact."
Response: Thank you for your comment. We have revised the text accordingly.
- NHDHR-2. Chapter 3, Section 3.10.2.2
Note that the inventory code assigned in EMMIT for the project area form is ZMT-SPTP. NWN-DOV does not appear in EMMIT.
Response: Thank you for your comment. We have revised the text accordingly.
- NHDHR-3. Chapter 3, Section 3.10.2.2
Suggest ". . . historic contexts in the APE and provide recommendations for further survey work.
Response: Thank you for your comment. We have revised the text accordingly.
- NHDHR-4. Chapter 3, Section 3.10.2.2
Please clarify in the narrative what the result of consultation was for the Axel Johnson Conference Center, Sprague Energy Area Form (referenced in DSEIS as NWN-SP, but coded in EMMIT as NWN-OSEA). The finding was left as More Information Needed in 2005 and the resource was recommended for further study by the consultant and the DOE committee in 2018. Suggest that actions that deviate from the recommendations referenced in attachments included in the report be explained so that the reader understands why information remains incomplete. Recognizing that the bulleted information was copied directly from the Determination of Effect memo, DHR acknowledges that these sections could probably have been made clearer in that document initially, but recommends that the text be cleaned up for the DSEIS.
Response: Thank you for your comment. We have revised the text accordingly. We have also included the provided EMMIT code when this property is referenced in the chapter.
- NHDHR-5. Chapter 3, Section 3.10.2.3

- Line 6, please change "part human" to "past human."
Response: Thank you for your comment. We have revised the text accordingly.
- NHDHR-6. Chapter 3, Section 3.10.2.3
Revise last sentence to address involvement of a single or plural marine specialist(s).
Response: Thank you for your comment, the text has been revised for accuracy. Confirmed that more than one marine specialist contributed to collecting underwater data for development of the 2005 Phase I-A Preliminary Archeological Reconnaissance. "Research was completed in collaboration with other scientists at the University of New Hampshire Jackson Marine Laboratory and the Center for Coastal and Oceanic Mapping who provided assistance in collecting underwater data."
- NHDHR-7. Table 3.10.1
The title of this table is inaccurate, per the content of the table. Not all properties in the table have been surveyed. See comments below before determining the best title for this table.
Response: The table has been refined and modified to focus on the properties identified for further survey and evaluation as a result of the 2018 PAF update.
- NHDHR-8. Table 3.10.1
The purpose of this table isn't clear. It seems to take random pieces of the Property Matrix from the 2018 project area form that don't appear to reveal a clear or complete message on their own. Including numerous properties with blank or "N/A" data is also questionable, especially without explanation. What is the purpose of including these this way?
Response: The table has been refined and modified to focus on the properties identified for further survey and evaluation as a result of the 2018 PAF update.
- NHDHR-9. Table 3.10.1
Recommend revising the table depending on its intent. If the table is meant to depict surveyed properties inclusive of results of the project area form recommendations, then the content of the table must be fact-checked as at least two resources are not accurately referenced (Hilton Park Roadside Safety Rest Area/DOV0150/Not Eligible, 137 Beane Ln/NWN0246/Not Eligible). The DHR would be open to consultation on how to best present the intended information.
Response: The table has been refined and modified to focus on the properties identified for further survey and evaluation as a result of the 2018 PAF update.

NHDHR-10. Section 3.10.3.1

Ira F. Pinkham House/Wentworth Summer Residence (DOV0093). Confirm whether the barn was relocated from the property or demolished.

Response: The Ira F. Pinkham/Wentworth Summer Residence parcel was acquired by the Department during right-of-way negotiations for Contract L. The marketing of the barn for sale found no buyer and it was subsequently demolished in 2012 as part of the Contract L phase of the project. Documentation of the house and barn has been completed and accepted by NHDHR (NH State Property Documentation No. 626, RPR1853).

NHDHR-11. Section 3.10.4.2

Always use care with the generalized argument that noise (or other atmospheric) increases wouldn't adversely impact a property because they "would not diminish the qualities that make this property eligible for the National Register." Noise or other similar impacts could in fact impact long term property use or ability to sell real estate, causing potential adverse deterioration. More particular arguments are recommended regarding noise levels etc., without relying exclusively on National Register characteristics. Under current definitions, these arguments fit under the Indirect Impacts discussion.

Response: Thank you for your comment. We have revised the text accordingly.

NHDHR-12. Section 3.10.5

The project team, DHR, and the consulting parties have been working very hard on developing a comprehensive draft mitigation package for the General Sullivan Bridge replacement project and we anticipate a successful final mitigation package. DHR notes that off-site mitigation (whether an exhibit at the Woodman Museum, work related to the Newington Depot, or for the Dover Trail) should be proportional to the adverse effect aspects they are mitigating and should not detract from mitigation to address the engineering loss of the nationally significant bridge.

Response: Thank you for your comment. NHDOT will continue to coordinate with FHWA, NESHPO and the consulting parties to determine appropriate mitigation.

NHDHR-13. Chapter 4, Section 4.3

Note that the reference to potential "indirect" effects reflects the earlier interpretation of direct vs. indirect effects. Suggest making this section consistent with Section 3, perhaps replacing "indirect" with "non-physical."

Response: Section 4.3 has been updated, as suggested, to reflect the latest ACHP guidance on effects to historic resources.

NHDHR-14. Section 4.3.1.1

It may be useful to note that the 1934 Hilton Park is only a Section 4(f) resource as a park and not as a historic site as well, having been determined to be not eligible for listing in the National Register.

Response: Section 4.3.1.1 has been revised to note that Hilton Park qualifies as a Section 4(f) resource solely as a public park and not as an historic site.

NHDHR-15. Section 4.3.2.3

Confirm whether the barn was relocated from the property or demolished.

Response: The Ira F. Pinkham/Wentworth Summer Residence parcel was acquired by the Department during right-of-way negotiations for Contract L. The marketing of the barn for sale found no buyer and it was subsequently demolished in 2012 as part of the Contract L phase of the project. Documentation of the house and barn has been completed and accepted by NHDHR (NH State Property Documentation No. 626, RPR1853).

NHDHR-16. Section 4.7

Should New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, Dover, and Newington be italicized?

Response: Italicized text in this section is used to designate "Participating Agencies" for the NEPA SEIS process. As part of the SEIS initiation, invitation letters were sent to NHDHR, the Town of Newington, and the City of Dover on December 22, 2017. To be designated as a participating agency, a written response was requested. NHDOT has no record of receiving a written response from NHDHR, the Town of Newington, or the City of Dover. So, while NHDHR, the Town of Newington and the City of Dover all have important roles in the Section 106 consultation (including as Consulting Parties), these entities were not identified as Participating Agencies in the NEPA process.

NHDHR-17. Appendix I

Confirm that DOE (green sheets) and other correspondence are consistently included for all resources and steps in the Section 106 process.

Response: Confirmed that the Determinations of Eligibility for inventory forms completed for this Project are included in Appendix I. The DOE forms in Appendix I include: 2018 PAF - NWN-DOV (update to 2005 PAF); Hilton Park (DOV0150) DOE; GSB (DOV0158) DOE; 137 Beane Lane (NWN0246) DOE; and the Bloody Point Area (NWN-BLP) DOE.

NHDHR Draft Mitigation Stipulations (March 31, 2021) Comments¹

NHDHR-18. This version of the mitigation stipulations incorporate many good details that give clarity to the implementation of any of these options.

Response: Thank you for your comment. As you know, NHDOT and FHWA worked diligently with you and the Consulting Parties to develop a comprehensive and effective mitigation program as reflected in the MOA stipulations.

NHDHR-19. B.vi: Note the type of copy that will be submitted to NPS.

Response: In consultation with NPS, it has been determined to submit the outline format for engineering structures. We have revised the text accordingly.

NHDHR-20. B.vii: Revise the end of the first sentence.

Response: Thank you for your comment. We have revised the text as suggested.

NHDHR-21. C.ii: DHR assumes that the 3 outreach sessions are specifically tied to this MOA, and that DOT anticipates there will be more sessions and opportunities for outreach tied to the HBI initiative directly. True?

Response: NHDOT is committing to three outreach sessions as part of this project. NHDOT will continue to work with NHSPO on the promotion of the HBI (Historic Bridge Inventory) and its use in the Cultural Resources program; however, the HBI scope of work did not require additional public outreach by NHDOT or the Consultant and therefore these additional sessions are valid mitigation.

NHDHR-22. D.i: Recommend that the two panels Bringing Continuous Trusses to the American Highway and GSB as a Textbook Example be fabricated in duplicate and placed in multiple locations. This would increase the amount of mitigation that specifically shares with the public information regarding the engineering significance of the GSB (which is currently minimal compared to other topics), and potentially shares this information with a larger number of people who might miss it otherwise.

Response: Thank you for your comment. We have revised the text accordingly to include the following: Two panels, "Bringing Continuous Trusses to the American Highway" and "GSB as a Textbook Example" will be fabricated in duplicate and placed in multiple

locations to increase the amount of mitigation that specifically shares with the public information regarding the engineering significance of the GSB.

NHDHR-23. E. Suggest removing "Rehabilitation of the" from the title, as the efforts are not to complete rehabilitation but are in support of future rehabilitation opportunities.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project. Text has been revised to clarify the support being offered as part of this mitigation measure.

NHDHR-24. E.i.a. Suggest adding language "Engage a consultant team to prepare a building assessment and feasibility study . . ."

Response: Thank you for your comment. Stipulation E.i.a. has been revised as suggested.

NHDHR-25. E.ii.: Suggest revising language ". . . requiring rehabilitation by the future owner meet the Secretary's . . ." Note that an easement does not require work other than what is necessary to retain the existing condition, however if and when the owner decides to do rehabilitation, that work must follow the Standards.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project. We have revised the text accordingly.

NHDHR-26. F.ii.a: Potentially 3 interpretive panels along this railroad corridor seems like a lot for a section of mitigation that is less directly related to the adverse effects of the project on the GSB, particularly in relation to the 4 allocated at the bridge and only 2 specific to the engineering context.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project. Text has been revised to clarify the support being offered as part of this mitigation measure.

NHDHR-27. DHR looks forward to reviewing the public's comments and suggestions, and working with the project team to finalize a complete mitigation package.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project.

¹ Following the March 31, 2021 version of the Draft Mitigation Stipulations, other iterations and reviews of the MOA were circulated for review and comment. The final, executed MOA reflects all comments provided by NHDHR.

**Response to Comments Made by
Samara Ebinger, Principle Planner
State National Flood Insurance Program, Assistant Coordinator
New Hampshire Office of Strategic Initiatives
Division of Planning, Division of Energy
Memorandum dated May 26, 2021**

NHOSI-1. Please note that the FIRMs and FIS reports for both Strafford County and Rockingham County have been updated. The current FIRMs and FIS report for Strafford County, including the City of Dover, are effective as of September 30, 2015. The current FIRMs and FIS report for Rockingham County, including the Town of Newington, are effective as of January 29, 2021. Both communities have adopted the latest versions of the maps and reports into their floodplain regulations.

Response: Thank you for this comment. The Rockingham County map update was issued just as the Draft SEIS was being finalized. For the FSEIS, we have updated the Floodplains and Hydrodynamics discussions to reflect the Strafford County September 30, 2015 effective FIS and FIRM and the Rockingham County January 29, 2021 effective FIS and FIRM.

NHOSI-2. As indicated in Section 3.3.1 of the Environmental Impact Statement report for the project, it appears that a portion of the project area is located within Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) designated as Zone AE on the FIRM. There are no areas nearby within a regulatory floodway.

Response: So noted.

NHOSI-3. Regarding the flood hazard information in the vicinity of the project area, the extent of the Zone AE floodplain has shifted in some locations when compared to the previous versions of the maps. Also, note that the Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) on the current FIRMs are now referenced to the North American Vertical Datum of 1988, rather than the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929. As a result of this change, there are some differences in BFE values in some places on the maps when compared to the information presented in the Environmental Impact Statement report. I have enclosed a screen capture that shows the current FIRM information. Be aware that the Summary of Stillwater Elevations tables in each FIS report will provide more precise BFE values. The latest maps, FIS reports, and corresponding GIS data can be accessed at msc.fema.gov.

Response: The FSEIS discussion and mapping has been updated to reflect the latest BFE data, as indicated in this comment.

NHOSI-4. Since the Town of Newington and City of Dover are participating communities of the NFIP, any development occurring in an SFHA in the community should meet the NFIP requirements contained in the community's floodplain management

ordinance. Development is defined under the NFIP as "any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations or storage of equipment or materials."

Response: The General Sullivan Bridge Spaulding Turnpike Improvements is a federally-funded, state-sponsored project. It is therefore not required to apply for local permits or reviews, including those related to floodplain management regulations. However, as discussed in the DSEIS, the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 9) would not require permanent impacts below the base flood elevation, so the project would not result in direct floodplain impacts.

NHOSI-5. For areas located in the SFHA, the applicable requirements that would apply in the communities' floodplain management regulations for the types of development proposed would be the requirement for a local permit and assurance that all other applicable Federal and State permits have been obtained. Additionally, communities may have chosen to adopt other requirements into their regulations that are more restrictive than NFIP minimum standards.

Response: Please see the response to Comment NHOSI-4.

NHOSI-6. Additionally, please note that any temporary development activities within the SFHA that will remain in place longer than six months will also be subject to the requirements of the communities' floodplain management regulations.

Response: Please see the response to Comment NHOSI-4.

Local Government Comments

From: [Reczek, Jennifer](#)
To: [Martha Roy](#)
Cc: [Peter Walker](#); [Hannah Beato](#)
Subject: [External] RE: Newington-Dover 11238 - Bloody Point Depot
Date: Friday, June 18, 2021 5:15:46 PM

Hi Martha,

Thank you for sending this along. I will be back in touch as we have additional information regarding the Section 106 memorandum and more information about the logistics of a property transfer.

Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E.
Bridge Consultant Design Chief
603-271-3401
Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov

From: Martha Roy <mroy@townofnewingtonnh.com>
Sent: Friday, June 18, 2021 4:48 PM
To: Reczek, Jennifer <Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>
Cc: Peter Walker <PWalker@VHB.com>; Hannah Beato <hbeato@VHB.com>
Subject: RE: Newington-Dover 11238 - Bloody Point Depot

EXTERNAL: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hi Jennifer,

Thanks for reaching out. Here is the response from the Selectmen:

Dear Ms. Reczek,

It does not appear that the Town and NH DOT can agree on the funds necessary to transfer the Bloody Point property to Newington. The income from the sale of Bloody Point Park and Train Depot- your current estimate is \$470,000 to \$520,000 - (although it is believed in this housing market it can be sold for triple that price) should go to the Town for use to rehabilitate another historic resource in Newington.

Because NH DOT will be saving millions of dollars by not renovating the General Sullivan Bridge and will be making over one million dollars by selling one of the oldest and most historic parts of New Hampshire and eliminating public access to Bloody Point that has existed for almost 400 years it is only just that these funds should be returned to the town that will suffer due to this change.

NWN BOS-1

Thank you for your consideration, Newington Board of Selectmen

From: Reczek, Jennifer <Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 16, 2021 2:40 PM
To: Martha Roy <mroy@townofnewingtonnh.com>
Cc: Peter Walker <PWalker@VHB.com>; Hannah Beato <hbeato@VHB.com>
Subject: RE: Newington-Dover 11238 - Bloody Point Depot

Hi Martha,

We are wrapping up our responses to the comments received on the EIS. I wanted to follow up to confirm that the Town will not be providing comments. If you do have comments and can do so by the end of Friday, that would be much appreciated.

Thank you,
Jennifer

Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E.
Bridge Consultant Design Chief
603-271-3401
Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov

From: Reczek, Jennifer
Sent: Tuesday, June 08, 2021 10:11 AM
To: Martha Roy <mroy@townofnewingtonnh.com>
Subject: RE: Newington-Dover 11238 - Bloody Point Depot

Hi Martha,

There is not necessarily anything that the Town needs to do at this time. The comment period for the Draft SEIS closed yesterday, although if the Town has comments on the document, and can send them this week, we may still be able to include them in our official response.

Otherwise, the next conversations with the Town will be this summer as we develop the Section 106 MOA documenting the cultural resources mitigation package. Ideally, since there are items in the mitigation package that involve the Town, we would like you to be a signatory on the MOA. If the Town has concerns with that, then we can discuss with FHWA how to proceed.

Regards,

Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E.
Bridge Consultant Design Chief
603-271-3401

Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov

From: Martha Roy <mroy@townofnewingtonnh.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 08, 2021 9:54 AM
To: Reczek, Jennifer <Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>
Subject: FW: Newington-Dover 11238 - Bloody Point Depot

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Hi Jennifer

Does Newington owe you anything further at this time? I thought there was a deadline looming but I can't put my fingers on anything...

Thanks for your guidance, Martha

From: Reczek, Jennifer [<mailto:Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 4:30 PM
To: Martha Roy
Cc: Ted Connors; 'Lulu Pickering'; Walker, Peter; Edelmann, Jillian
Subject: RE: Newington-Dover 11238 - Bloody Point Depot

Hi Martha,

The Department has received the Heritage District Commission's letter citing additional requests from the Town. Can you please confirm for me that these items are being requested by the Select Board, or if the Heritage District Commission has been authorized to speak on the Town's behalf.

As mentioned on Monday, we have initiated discussions with the AG's office regarding the procedures that must be followed to transfer the property, and will ask that our determination of surplus property include a review of all Department owned land adjacent to the parcel for which the valuation was prepared. I do want to emphasize that it is highly unlikely that expanded mitigation measures, as indicated in this letter, can be supported under the Section 106 process.

Once we have a better understanding of the transfer procedure, I will provide you with an update for the Select Board.

Regards,
Jennifer

Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E.
NHDOT Project Manager
603-271-3401

Jennifer.Reczek@dot.nh.gov

From: Lulu Pickering <pickering@informagen.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 20, 2021 3:48 PM
To: Reczek, Jennifer <Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>; Walker, Peter <PWalker@VHB.com>; Edelmann, Jillian <Jillian.L.Edelmann@dot.nh.gov>
Cc: Martha Roy <mroy@townofnewingtonnh.com>; Ted Connors <tjtedc@comcast.net>
Subject: Newington-Dover 11238 - Bloody Point Depot

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Hi everyone,

Thanks for all the discussion yesterday about the transfer of the Railroad Depot property to Newington.

I have attached a document as a follow-up from our discussions.

I think we can do this, but we are not there yet.

I am happy to discuss any of the comments if that would be helpful.

Thanks,

lulu

On Apr 7, 2021, at 4:32 PM, Reczek, Jennifer <Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov> wrote:

Hi Martha,

The team is available to meet you on the 19th. We can prepare a few slides if that would be helpful, or is keeping this as more of a discussion better?

I would propose the following agenda:

- Brief project background,
- General information about the Section 106 process,
- Review of Section 106 coordination relative to the General Sullivan Bridge
- Discussion of proposed mitigation stipulations/Bloody Point property transfer

Please let us know if there are any other topics that the Board would like to discuss.

Thank you,
Jennifer

Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E.
NHDOT Project Manager
603-271-3401
Jennifer.Reczek@dot.nh.gov

From: Martha Roy <mroy@townofnewingtonnh.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 31, 2021 3:53 PM
To: Reczek, Jennifer <Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>
Cc: Laurin, Marc <marc.g.laurin@dot.nh.gov>; 'Walker, Peter' <PWalker@VHB.com>; Benjamin-Ma, Nicole <NBenjamin-Ma@VHB.com>; pickering@informagen.com
Subject: RE: Newington-Dover 11238 - Response to Selectmen's Letter Bloody Point Depot

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Thanks Jennifer

The Selectmen and Historic District are good to meet on April the 19th at 4pm, in person, if that can work? We can meet in our Town Hall auditorium masked and spaced.

Look forward to it, Martha

Martha S. Roy
Town Administrator
Town of Newington
205 Nimble Hill Road
Newington, N.H. 03801
Phone: 603-436-7640 ext 210
mroy@townofnewingtonnh.com

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From: Reczek, Jennifer [<mailto:Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, March 24, 2021 5:45 PM
To: Martha Roy
Cc: Laurin, Marc; 'Walker, Peter'; Benjamin-Ma, Nicole; pickering@informagen.com
Subject: RE: Newington-Dover 11238 - Response to Selectmen's Letter Bloody Point Depot

Hi Martha,

The team and I would be happy to meet with the Board of Selectmen and the Historic District Commission, either virtually or in person. Looking at your past BOS meeting dates, it appears that the day of the week is not necessarily consistent. Does the Board typically meet on Mondays? If so, we could attend on the evenings of April 12 or 19.

Please let us know if either of those days will work, or if the Board had something else in mind.

Thank you,

Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E.
NHDOT Project Manager
603-271-3401
Jennifer.Reczek@dot.nh.gov

From: Martha Roy
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 4:49 PM
To: Reczek, Jennifer
Cc: LaBonte, Stephen ; Laurin, Marc ; Sikora, Jamie (FHWA) ; 'Walker, Peter' ; Goodrich, Gregory (GGoodrich@VHB.com) ; dennis.malloy@leg.state.nh.us ; pickering@informagen.com
Subject: RE: Newington-Dover 11238 - Response to Selectmen's Letter Bloody Point Depot

EXTERNAL: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Jennifer,

The Selectmen and Historic District Commission would like to meet with you as soon as possible about the referenced matter. Could you forward dates that could work for you to come to Newington?

Thanks for your consideration, Martha

Martha S. Roy
Town Administrator
Town of Newington
205 Nimble Hill Road
Newington, N.H. 03801
Phone: 603-436-7640 ext 210
mroy@townofnewingtonnh.com

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From: Reczek, Jennifer [<mailto:Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 5:30 PM
To: Martha Roy
Cc: LaBonte, Stephen; Laurin, Marc; Sikora, Jamie (FHWA); 'Walker, Peter'; Goodrich, Gregory (GGoodrich@VHB.com); dennis.malloy@leg.state.nh.us; pickering@informagen.com
Subject: Newington-Dover 11238 - Response to Selectmen's Letter

Dear Ms. Roy,

Attached please find a response regarding the Newington Board of Selectmen's December letter requesting transfer of Newington Tax Map 7 Lot 25.

A hard copy to follow.

Sincerely,
Jennifer

Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E.
Project Manager
NH Department of Transportation
7 Hazen Drive, P.O. Box 483
Concord, NH 03301-0483
603-271-3401
Jennifer.Reczek@dot.nh.gov

Local Government Responses

Comment ID	Name
NWN BOS	Board of Selectmen, Town of Newington, New Hampshire

**Response to Comments Made by
Board of Selectmen
Newington, New Hampshire
Email dated June 18, 2021**

NWN BOS-1. It does not appear that the Town and NH DOT can agree on the funds necessary to transfer the Bloody Point property to Newington. The income from the sale of Bloody Point Park and Train Depot– your current estimate is \$470,000 to \$520,000 – (although it is believed in this housing market it can be sold for triple that price) should go to the Town for use to rehabilitate another historic resource in Newington.

Because NH DOT will be saving millions of dollars by not renovating the General Sullivan Bridge and will be making over one million dollars by selling one of the oldest and most historic parts of New Hampshire and eliminating public access to Bloody Point that has existed for almost 400 years it is only just that these funds should be returned to the town that will suffer due to this change.

Response: The NHDOT has the responsibility to develop and maintain infrastructure across the State. This responsibility is particularly challenging when the State's infrastructure needs outpace the revenue available to undertake the tasks. The first priority for the NHDOT is safe and efficient, intermodal use on the State highway system. Therefore, the Department works to find the least environmentally impacting, most cost effective solution that meets a project's purpose and need. The funds programmed for this project are well below the cost of the rehabilitation option. NHDOT uses the difference between the programed funding and the actual project cost to invest in other transportation needs to improve the movement of people and goods for the communities of New Hampshire.

These funds are also used to pay for projects which eventually cost more than their initial programed amount (such as other parts of the Newington-Dover Spaulding Turnpike expansion). The cost of the defined transportation needs for the State of New Hampshire outweigh the availability of state and federal transportation dollars to meet those needs.

It is also important to recognize that the mitigation requirements of Section 106, as addressed in the MOA stipulations, are developed to mitigate for the project's impacts on the General Sullivan Bridge and associated transportation resources; they are not intended to support unrelated endeavors.

Additionally, NH Revised Statutes Annotated (RSA) 4:39-c states that the proceeds of an approved sale be credited to the fund from which the original purchase was made.

Based on the reasons described above and other factors, NHDOT and FHWA cannot recommend providing funds to the Town of Newington to address

other undefined historic resources. The mitigation being discussed is specific to the project's effect on historic and archeological resources.

NHDOT intends to transfer the property to the Town of Newington pursuant to a final executed Section 106 MOA. NHDOT is working through the logistics of being able to transfer the Newington Depot building and land to the Town at no cost. The Department will continue to leave open the option for the Town of Newington to acquire the Newington Depot property, and hope that we can come to a satisfactory resolution with the Town. If the Town of Newington declines to accept ownership, then the property would become available for sale with the appropriate historic covenants in place. The language in the Section 106 MOA Stipulation I. E. ii clarifies that another public entity could receive that property and that the Town can partner with a third party, such as the Newington Historical Society to oversee the rehabilitation and reuse.

Organization Comments



June 2, 2021

voice – 603.436.5299
fax – 603.436.9834

Jennifer Reczek, Project Manager
NH Department of Transportation
7 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03301

RECEIVED

JUN 4 2021

NHDOT
Highway Design

RE: General Sullivan Bridge Replacement

Dear Ms. Reczek:

GBM-1 Great Bay Marine writes this letter in extreme support for the proposed replacement project of the General Sullivan Bridge just downriver from us here at the entrance to Little Bay.

GBM-2 As we have previously mentioned, navigation of this area is extremely dangerous during peak current times for most any sailing vessels. Great Bay Marine has 128 slips and 78 moorings and these vessels transit the river and use this bridge on a daily basis throughout the boating season. The proposed superstructure replacement, providing for a wider height clearance for vessels, is a much-needed solution to a currently hazardous situation.

GBM-3 Please consider our operating season when scheduling the dismantling and construction of the replacement bridge. In addition to the 128 slips and 78 moorings we store on land about 300 other vessels that need to get down river in the spring and up here in the fall for hauling out. From mid-September to early October, we are busy hauling vessels and from May 1 – June 15 we are busy launching vessels that need to transit the bridge. We would be happy to meet and discuss the proposed schedule of this project at any time.

GBM-4 We are eager to see this bridge replacement occur as the bridge is no longer safe for pedestrians and bicyclists and really unsafe for vessels passing under it each and every day.

Regards

Sean McKenna, GM

61 Beane Lane / Newington, New Hampshire 03801

cs@greatbaymarine.com

Appendix M - 35



555 Market Street, Suite 1 Portsmouth, NH 03801

June 2, 2021

Jennifer Reczek, Project Manager
NH Department of Transportation
7 Hazen Dr.
Concord, NH 03301

RE: General Sullivan Bridge Replacement

Dear Ms. Reczek,

PIPH-1 This letter is in STRONG support for the proposed project to replace the General Sullivan Bridge located at the entrance of Little Bay from the Piscataqua River.

PIPH-2 The proposed superstructure replacement for the General Sullivan Bridge will improve navigational clearances from those currently provided by the existing General Sullivan Bridge.

PIPH-3 The proposed superstructure replacement for the General Sullivan Bridge will improve safety of the marine travel as they pass under the existing General Sullivan Bridge by addressing the deteriorated condition of the existing bridge.

PIPH-4 The best time for any extended navigation channel closure for the dismantling the existing bridge and erecting of the proposed replacement structure should be done during the period of reduced vessel traffic. Great Bay Marina is the largest marina to which all their vessels must transit the proposed construction site. The period of time between getting boats ready for storage (Labor Day to Columbus Day) and getting ready for the boating season (April 1st to Memorial Day) for use by companies such as Great Bay Marine would be optimal.

PIPH-5 Continued discussions with the Division of Ports and Harbors, and the marine users of the waterway, during design as construction details become more known would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Geno J. Marconi
Port Director

Cc: USCG Bridge Division
Sector Northern New England

○○○○ TAKING YOU THERE

ph: 603-436-8500 fax: 603-436-2790 www.peaseintl.com

Appendix M - 36

Organization Responses

Comment ID	Name
GBM	Sean McKenna, Great Bay Marine, Inc.
PIPH	Geno J. Marconi, Pease International Ports and Harbors

**Response to Comments Made by
Sean McKenna, General Manager
Great Bay Marine, Inc.
Newington, New Hampshire
Letter dated June 2, 2021**

GBM-1. Great Bay Marine writes this letter in extreme support for the proposed replacement project of the General Sullivan Bridge just downriver from us here at the entrance to Little Bay

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project.

GBM-2. As we have previously mentioned, navigation in this area is extremely dangerous during peak current times for most any sailing vessels. Great Bay Marine has 128 slips and 78 moorings and these vessels transit the river and use this bridge on a daily basis throughout the boating season. The proposed superstructure replacement, providing for a wider height clearance for vessels, is a much-needed solution to a currently hazardous situation.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project.

GBM-3. Please consider our operating season when scheduling the dismantling and construction of the replacement bridge. In addition to the 128 slips and 78 moorings we store on land about 300 other vessels that need to get down river in the spring and up here in the fall for hauling out. From mid-September to early October, we are busy hauling vessels and from May 1 - June 15 we are busy launching the vessels that need to transit the bridge. We would be happy to meet and discuss the proposed schedule of this project at any time.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project. NHDOT will gladly work with the NH Port Authority, Pease Development Authority Division of Ports and Harbors, US Coast Guard, marine businesses, and marine users to discuss the proposed construction schedule focusing on the best timeframe for the removal of the existing superstructure and the erection of the new superstructure over the navigational channel (span 5).

GBM-4. We are eager to see this bridge replacement occur as the bridge is no longer safe for pedestrians and bicyclists and really unsafe for vessels passing under it each and every day.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project.

**Response to Comments Made by
Geno J. Marconi, Port Director
Pease International, Division of Ports and Harbors
Portsmouth, New Hampshire
Letter dated June 2, 2021**

PIPH-1. This letter is in STRONG support for the proposed project to replace the General Sullivan Bridge located at the entrance of the Little Bay from the Piscataqua River.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project.

PIPH-2. The proposed superstructure replacement for the General Sullivan Bridge will improve navigational clearances from those currently provided by the existing General Sullivan Bridge.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project.

PIPH-3. The proposed superstructure replacement for the General Sullivan Bridge will improve safety of marine travel as they pass under the existing General Sullivan Bridge by addressing the deteriorated condition of the existing bridge.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project.

PIPH-4. The best time for any extended navigation channel closure for the dismantling the existing bridge and erecting of the proposed replacement structure should be done during the period of reduced vessel traffic. Great Bay Marina is the largest marina to which all their vessels must transit the proposed construction site. The period of time between getting boats ready for storage (Labor Day to Columbus Day) and getting ready for the boating season (April 1st to Memorial Day) for use by companies such as Great Bay Marine would be optimal.

Response: Thank you for your comment. NHDOT and FHWA will gladly work with the NH Port Authority, Pease Development Authority Division of Ports and Harbors, US Coast Guard, marine businesses, and marine users to discuss the proposed construction schedule focusing on the best timeframe for the removal of the existing superstructure and the erection of the new superstructure over the navigational channel (span 5).

PIPH-5. Continued discussions with the Division of Ports and Harbors, and the marine users of the waterway, during design as construction details become more known would be appreciated.

Response: Thank you for your comment. NHDOT and FHWA will gladly continue discussions with the NH Port Authority, Pease Development Authority Division of Ports and Harbors, US Coast Guard, marine businesses, and marine users during design as construction details are developed.

Public Comments

Hannah Beato

From: Brian Fruh <bfruh@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 10, 2021 3:33 PM
To: Reczek, Jennifer
Cc: Peter Walker; Hannah Beato
Subject: [External] RE: General Sullivan Pedestrian Bridge

Hi Jennifer,

Thanks for the quick reply and for helping to bring exposure to the topic.

All best,

-Brian

From: Reczek, Jennifer <Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 10, 2021 3:07 PM
To: Brian Fruh <bfruh@hotmail.com>
Cc: Walker, Peter <PWalker@VHB.com>; Beato, Hannah <hbeato@VHB.com>
Subject: RE: General Sullivan Pedestrian Bridge

Hi Brian,

Thank you for your comment regarding potential bump-outs on the bicycle/pedestrian bridge. I will forward this to the design team to be considered during final design and addressed in the Final SEIS document.

Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E.
NHDOT Project Manager
603-271-3401
Jennifer.Reczek@dot.nh.gov

From: Brian Fruh <bfruh@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 10, 2021 1:35 PM
To: Reczek, Jennifer <Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>
Subject: General Sullivan Pedestrian Bridge

EXTERNAL: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hi Jennifer,

Your email was listed on a news article that ran in Foster's Daily Democrat and SeacoastOnline about the General Sullivan Bridge bike path project. I am writing to ask that small bump outs be considered on the bridge that would allow for one to stop and lookout from the bridge without being in the lane of travel. The sunsets over the river at that spot are amongst the best in our area and before pedestrian access to the existing bridge was cut off a surprising number of people would often show up to watch the sunset. It was a nice slice of life and one worth preserving if possible. It is fair to say that there isn't so much traffic on the bridge as to not be able to go around someone stopped, but it would save someone from being run down by a bicycle as otherwise feel too uncomfortable to set up some chairs for fear of being in the middle of a bike lane.

Both the Portsmouth Memorial bridge project and the recent Whittier 95 bridge between Amesbury and Newburyport have this so people can look down and take advantage of being above the middle of the river without having to stop block any traffic.

Thanks for reading and taking it into consideration.

-Brian Fruh
Bicyclist across river
Dover, NH





Download preview Save to lightbox Add to cart Share



Hannah Beato

From: Reczek, Jennifer <Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 10, 2021 3:36 PM
To: Stephen
Cc: Colin Lentz; Scott Bogle; Peter Walker; Hannah Beato
Subject: [External] RE: Comment on Little Bay Bridge /General Sullivan Bridge Replacement

Hi Stephen,

Thank you for your comments regarding the importance of the bicycle and pedestrian crossing of Little Bay. It is our intent to maintain the temporary crossing until the replacement or rehabilitated structure is open.

I will forward the comments to the design team to be included in the project record and addressed in the Final SEIS.

Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E.
NHDOT Project Manager
603-271-3401
Jennifer.Reczek@dot.nh.gov

From: Stephen <stevepesci@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 10, 2021 1:43 PM
To: Reczek, Jennifer <Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>
Cc: Colin Lentz <clentz@strafford.org>; Scott Bogle <sbogle@rpc-nh.org>
Subject: Comment on Little Bay Bridge /General Sullivan Bridge Replacement

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I am writing in strong support of the recommended Alternative 9 - replacement of the General Sullivan Bridge with a sped-bike structure as presented in the current draft EIS.

The recommended alternative meets the critical intent of providing a permanent pedestrian and bike crossing of the Little Bay and does so in a long-term cost effective manner. The new structure (and its lattice supports) will pay homage to the GSB, remove the worsening environmental and structural liabilities of the structure and provide a modern interpretation of the bay crossing for the 21st century.

SP-1: The seacoast community has been united in the importance of maintaining this critical ped/bike link across the bay.

I applaud the Department's creative and dedicated efforts to do so with both the temporary bike lane on the NB LBB and this planning effort.

I would encourage the DOT to keep the temporary lane in place until the ribbon is cut on the GSB replacement. I also encourage the Department and Newington to provide interpretive markers that document the history of the GSB and its predecessor rail linkages across the Little Bay - all critical evolutionary elements in the transportation development of the Seacoast.

SP-3: This project is an important investment and I hope that the Department can proceed quickly - possibly with newly available infrastructure funding - to complete this critical component of the overall Little Bay Bridges project...

Stephen Pesci
200 Thornton St
Portsmouth NH

From: [Reczek, Jennifer](#)
To: [Dave Bovee, C&T](#)
Cc: [Peter Walker](#); [Hannah Beato](#)
Subject: [External] RE: General Sullivan Bridge Comments
Date: Thursday, May 13, 2021 6:43:12 PM

Hi Dave,

Thank you for your comment. I will pass this along to the design team to be included in the project record.

Regards,
Jennifer

Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E.
NHDOT Project Manager
603-271-3401
Jennifer.Reczek@dot.nh.gov

From: Dave Bovee, C&T <dbovee@chadwickreamers.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 9:44 AM
To: Reczek, Jennifer <Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov>
Subject: General Sullivan Bridge Comments

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DB-1

Bridge access for pedestrians and bicycles is clearly needed. I don't have a strong preference for one proposed alternative over another. It would be nice to restore and preserve the original bridge, but I also recognize that it is probably prohibitively expensive at this point.

Dave Bovee
75 Littleworth Road
Dover NH 03820

From: [craig lawrance](#)
To: [Reczek, Jennifer](#)
Subject: General Sullivan Bridge Comments
Date: Saturday, June 5, 2021 11:08:11 AM

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CL-1

As a frequent user of the GSB bike lane I think that proposal #9 is the best solution as it keeps walkers and bikers totally separated from vehicular lanes. Some of the big trucks cause quite the passing air disturbance with the present set up and feels unsafe. Thank you for your consideration on this subject.

From: [JOSEPH ULLMAN](#)
To: [Reczek, Jennifer](#)
Subject: Sullivan
Date: Monday, June 7, 2021 9:53:08 AM

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JU-1 My wife and I live in Durham about a mile and a half from the bridge. We moved here when it was still passable. One of the reasons we moved here was because of the bridge as we like to walk and bike and especially like to walk and bike into Newington for shops and entertainment. So we're in favor of something to re-open the bridge.

JU-2 Although we're fine with the existing plans we've been half jokingly suggesting to our neighbors for a year that there be some way of allowing businesses on the bridge. We think this would be a revenue producer if it was wide enough to allow for small cafés bars other venues and shops. I would not dismiss this out of hand. The most famous bridges in Europe in Florence and Venice are packed with shops and it's part of their allure. Another alternative would be food trucks. If there were at least kick outs on the side for benches it would be a plus for people who would like to sit and watch the boat traffic or sunsets but if there was a way to consider including retail space it would offset the cost and become a revenue generator.

JU-3

Joe ullman

Durham

Culture war always begins with words. It always ends with swords - Alexander Macris

From: bridgetstearns@comcast.net
To: [Reczek, Jennifer](#)
Subject: General Sullivan Bridge Comments
Date: Monday, June 7, 2021 12:45:36 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

EXTERNAL: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello Jennifer;

Passing along my comments regarding the General Sullivan Bridge rebuild as a pedestrian / bike path.

BS-1 I am an avid cyclist and huge supporter of this project. This rebuild of the GSB will not only provide access to and from Dover for many, many people but it will likely have a very positive impact on our economy and environment. The increase in outdoor activity over the past year has been significant. The number of people I see using the bike paths in my area of Dover and Portsmouth has been great to see and the electric assist bike movement has also given so many people an opportunity to ride a bike where they previously would have been less inclined on a conventional bike.

BS-2 These are all great things for our health, environment and even our economy. I am in support of any design that provides access for people to move back and forth over the river, either by walking or biking and the amazing view from that bridge will make this particular trail / path a “must do” in terms of tourism in the seacoast area.

BS-3 I would also like to send my thanks to the DOT for the temporary bike line they put in on the northbound side of the Rowe bridge. Thank you, thank you, thank you!!

Sharing this amazing pic I took from the old bridge one night on a bike ride home to Dover (before it was closed).



Sincerely,

Bridget Stearns

From: [Andy G](#)
To: [Reczek, Jennifer](#)
Subject: Comments regarding the General Sullivan Bridge
Date: Monday, June 7, 2021 10:51:42 PM
Attachments: [Rowe path 2019.jpg](#)
[General Sullivan 2018.jpg](#)

EXTERNAL: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

My name is Andy Goodell. I am a Dover resident, and work in Portsmouth, so I commute by bike often. In the couple of years I had this commute before the bridge closed, I had crossed the bridge by bike about 450 times.

From the DSEIS, the stated purpose of the General Sullivan Bridge project is: "to provide recreational access and connectivity between Newington and Dover, across Little Bay, for pedestrian and non-motorized use."

AG-1 However, a significant issue inconsistent with this statement is the lack of winter maintenance on the former General Sullivan Bridge and the temporary Rowe bike path. The bridge was frequently unusable, because without winter maintenance, this windy corridor sees up to 3 foot deep snow drifts (see attached picture). When it does warm during the day and freeze at night, the deck turns into a sheet of ice. Depending on the conditions, this snow or ice often stays on the decks for days or weeks.

AG-2 An additional problem seen with the Capt. Rowe temporary path currently available is that being adjacent to the highway has meant that plowed snow is pushed directly into the path. Even with a minor few inches of snow, the 6 lanes on each span being forced to one side results in a significant unpassable ice pile in the path. (see attached picture)

AG-3 This half mile section of snow or ice doesn't make for reasonable access between Dover and Newington. Despite spending \$30M on a bridge for non-motorized use, it's baffling to leave it unusable for much of the season, against the Purpose and Needs of the project. It seems like a very minor task to put minimal effort into clearing the bridge to keep it open.

AG-4 Please use Alternative 9 to keep the bridge farther from the highway traffic, and make sure that the ongoing maintenance budget includes snow plowing and ice management. Please make sure that there is a plan for water runoff management so it doesn't pool on the bridge and refreeze.

Thank you,

Andy



Public Responses

Comment ID	Name
BF	Brian Fruh
SP	Stephen Pesci
DB	Dave Bovee
CL	Craig Lawrence
JU	Joseph Ullman
BS	Bridget Stearns
AG	Andy Goodell

**Response to Comments Made by
Brian Fruh
Dover, New Hampshire
Email dated May 10, 2021**

BF-1. I am writing to ask that small bump outs be considered on the bridge that would allow for one to stop and lookout from the bridge without being in the lane of travel.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Recognizing that the deck is already 16 feet wide, which is more than the recommended multi-use path width of 12 feet, the Department will consider bump-outs at the pier locations on the west side of the bridge during final design.

BF-2. Both the Portsmouth Memorial bridge project and the recent Whittier 95 bridge between Amesbury and Newburyport have this so people can look down and take advantage of being above the middle of the river without having to stop block any traffic.

Response: No bump-outs will be located adjacent to the navigational channel (span 5).

**Response to Comments Made by
Stephen Pesci
Portsmouth, New Hampshire
Email dated May 10, 2021**

SP-1. I am writing in strong support of the recommended Alternative 9 - replacement of the General Sullivan Bridge with a sped-bike structure as presented in the current draft EIS. The recommended alternative meets the critical intent of providing a permanent pedestrian and bike crossing of the Little Bay and does so in a long-term cost effective manner. The new structure (and its lattice supports) will pay homage to the GSB, remove the worsening environmental and structural liabilities of the structure and provide a modern interpretation of the bay crossing for the 21st century. The seacoast community has been united in the importance of maintaining this critical ped/bike link across the bay. I applaud the Department's creative and dedicated efforts to do so with both the temporary bike lane on the NB LBB and this planning effort. I would encourage the DOT to keep the temporary lane in place until the ribbon is cut on the GSB replacement.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project. NHDOT fully intends to keep the temporary crossing in place until the replacement structure is open.

SP-2. I also encourage the Department and Newington to provide interpretive markers that document the history of the GSB and its predecessor rail linkages across the

Little Bay - all critical evolutionary elements in the transportation development of the Seacoast.

Response: The Section 106 MOA incorporates a stipulation on development of interpretive panels centered around the historic significance of the GSB. The panel topics will include transportation across the Little Bay over the centuries. More specifically, MOA Stipulation D.i. states that NHDOT shall fund and oversee four (4) interpretive panels located at or near the bridge crossing, including locations at, but not limited to: Bloody Point in Newington, Hilton Park in Dover, and/or the bridge. The MOA defines panel topics, including the history of the GSB and its predecessor rail linkages across Little Bay.

SP-3. This project is an important investment and I hope that the Department can proceed quickly - possibly with newly available infrastructure funning [sic] - to complete this critical component of the overall Little Bay Bridges project...

Response: This project is scheduled to Advertise for construction in 2023 with funding programmed in the Turnpike Capital model based on the current project estimate. Changes to Turnpike revenues could affect the exact timing of construction, however it remains a priority of the Department to complete this last contract of the Newington-Dover expansion project.

**Response to Comments Made by
Dave Bovee
Dover, New Hampshire
Email dated May 13, 2021**

DB-1. Bridge access for pedestrians and bicycles is clearly needed. I don't have a strong preference for one proposed alternative over another. It would be nice to restore and preserve the original bridge, but I also recognize that it is probably prohibitively expensive at this point.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project. NHDOT and FHWA agree that pedestrian and bicycle connectivity across Little Bay is an important piece of the regional transportation network.

**Response to Comments Made by
Craig Lawrence
Email dated June 5, 2021**

CL-1. As a frequent user of the GSB bike lane I think that proposal #9 is the best solution as it keeps walkers and bikers totally separated from vehicular lanes. Some of the big trucks cause quite the passing air disturbance with the present set up and feels unsafe. Thank you for your consideration on this subject.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project.

**Response to Comments Made by
Joseph Ullman
Durham, New Hampshire
Email dated June 7, 2021**

JU-1. My wife and I live in Durham about a mile and a half from the bridge. We moved here when it was still passable. One of the reasons we moved here was because of the bridge as we like to walk and bike and especially like to walk and bike into Newington for shops and entertainment. So we're in favor of something to re-open the bridge.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project.

JU-2. Although we're fine with the existing plans we've been half jokingly suggesting to our neighbors for a year that there be some way of allowing businesses on the bridge. We think this would be a revenue producer if it was wide enough to allow for small cafés bars other venues and shops. I would not dismiss this out of hand. The most famous bridges in Europe in Florence and Venice are packed with shops and it's part of their allure.

Response: Thank you for your comment. Retail opportunities on the new bridge are not identified in the Purpose and Need of the project, were not evaluated as part of the NEPA process and are problematic. As described in the DSEIS, the replacement bridge would have a 16-foot wide multiuse path. In addition to this physical constraint, adding retail space and the amenities needed on the bridge is something that would cost additional funds; funding sources for such are unavailable. State and federal laws and regulations restrict utilizing public transportation funds that would benefit private individuals or groups, or that are not used for transportation purposes. There is also the issue of liability with allowing businesses on the bridge, as well as state law limiting transfer of land based activities over public submerged lands.

JU-3. Another alternative would be food trucks. If there were at least kick outs on the side for benches it would be a plus for people who would like to sit and watch the boat traffic or sunsets but if there was a way to consider including retail space it would offset the cost and become a revenue generator.

Response: Thank you for your comment. As described in the DSEIS, the replacement bridge would have a 16-foot wide multiuse path. In addition to this physical constraint, adding retail space and the amenities needed on the bridge is something that would cost additional funds, and funding sources for such are unavailable. There is also the issue of liability with allowing a food truck(s) on the bridge due to the narrow width and potential conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists, and the project Purpose has been identified for the non-motorized crossing of Little Bay. The bridge is to be designed to accommodate emergency vehicle access from Newington and introducing a food truck on the deck would have the potential for conflicts with

their access. The Department is considering space (bump-outs) for people to sit and enjoy the views similar to the bump-outs provided on the Memorial Bridge in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

**Response to Comments Made by
Bridget Stearns
Email dated June 7, 2021**

BS-1. I am an avid cyclist and huge supporter of this project. This rebuild of the GSB will not only provide access to and from Dover for many, many people but it will likely have a very positive impact on our economy and environment. The increase in outdoor activity over the past year has been significant. The number of people I see using the bike paths in my area of Dover and Portsmouth has been great to see and the electric assist bike movement has also given so many people an opportunity to ride a bike where they previously would have been less inclined on a conventional bike.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project.

BS-2. These are all great things for our health, environment and even our economy. I am in support of any design that provides access for people to move back and forth over the river, either by walking or biking and the amazing view from that bridge will make this particular trail/path a "must do" in terms of tourism in the seacoast area.

Response: Thank you for your comment and support of the project.

BS-3. I would also like to send my thanks to the DOT for the temporary bike line they put in on the northbound side of the Rowe bridge. Thank you, thank you, thank you!!

Response: You are welcome, and thank you for your comment.

**Response to Comments Made by
Andy Goodell
Dover, New Hampshire
Email dated June 7, 2021**

AG-1. From the DSEIS, the stated purpose of the General Sullivan Bridge project is: "to provide recreational access and connectivity between Newington and Dover, across Little Bay, for pedestrian and non-motorized use." However, a significant issue inconsistent with this statement is the lack of winter maintenance on the former General Sullivan Bridge and the temporary Rowe bike path. The bridge was frequently unusable, because without winter maintenance, this windy corridor sees up to 3 foot deep snow drifts (see attached picture). When it does warm during the

day and freeze at night, the deck turns into a sheet of ice. Depending on the conditions, this snow or ice often stays on the decks for days or weeks.

Response: The NHDOT and FHWA acknowledge that winter maintenance responsibility of the proposed replacement bridge deck needs to be determined. Based on State RSA 231:92 and in accordance with NHDOT's accepted policies and practices, winter maintenance responsibility for a pedestrian/bicycle facility such as the GSB is the responsibility of the Towns and Cities which the facility serves, and that maintenance would be performed under a maintenance agreement with NHDOT. Any such maintenance agreement would be entered into at the discretion of the City of Dover and/or the Town of Newington.

AG-2. An additional problem seen with the Capt. Rowe temporary path currently available is that being adjacent to the highway has meant that plowed snow is pushed directly into the path. Even with a minor few inches of snow, the 6 lanes on each span being forced to one side results in a significant unpassable ice pile in the path. (see attached picture)

Response: NHDOT and FHWA acknowledge the concerns of winter maintenance on the temporary path. As with other bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the state, winter maintenance is the responsibility of the community which the facility serves.

AG-3. This half mile section of snow or ice doesn't make for reasonable access between Dover and Newington. Despite spending \$30M on a bridge for non-motorized use, it's baffling to leave it unusable for much of the season, against the Purpose and Needs of the project. It seems like a very minor task to put minimal effort into clearing the bridge to keep it open.

Response: Please see the response to Comment AG-1.

AG-4. Please use Alternative 9 to keep the bridge farther from the highway traffic, and make sure that the ongoing maintenance budget includes snow plowing and ice management. Please make sure that there is a plan for water runoff management, so it doesn't pool on the bridge and refreeze.

Response: The existing GSB is about 15 feet west of the southbound Little Bay Bridge (LBB) and about 29 feet from the southbound travel lane. The new bridge will be constructed approximately 22.5 feet west of the LBB and the multi-use path will be about 36 feet from the southbound travel lane. This separation is an improvement over the existing conditions and will reduce the effects of the high speed traffic on users of the new bridge.

Please see the response to Comment AG-1 regarding snow and ice management. The proposed replacement bridge would be suitably designed to discharge stormwater so as to mitigate the pooling of water runoff.

May 13, 2021 Public Hearing

1 evening regarding the General Sullivan Bridge.

2 And I'll next open this hearing for testimony.
3 I'm noting that we have approximately 22 attendees in our
4 Zoom room this evening. And before we begin hearing
5 comments, concerns, or questions from the public, I'd
6 like to know if we have any elected officials with us
7 today who would like to be heard? And so if you would
8 like to be heard, if you could please raise your hand?

9 I see Senator Watters has raised his hand, and
10 so if we could unmute him?

11 **SENATOR WATTERS:** Thank you very much. This is
12 Senator David Watters, District 4, and I live in Dover.
13 I wanted to thank the DOT for this very thorough, open,
14 and transparent process. And, in particular, I wanted to
15 thank DOT for the care it has taken with Section 106 and
16 4(f) and involving the partners at every step in the
17 process. I do want to express my -- a preference for the
18 preferred Alternative 9. I think that, for several
19 reasons, it's the best way to go. One of the -- and
20 perhaps first and foremost is cost, not only for the cost
21 of construction, but also for life cycle maintenance of
22 it.

23 One of the reasons that Senator Stiles and I

1 called for the 2014 study and a reopening of the 2007
2 determination was our great concern of the escalating
3 cost due to the deterioration of the bridge. I think
4 this is a very good alternative in terms of helping the
5 taxpayers save their dollars.

6 Secondly, I think that it does a very good job
7 at mitigation in terms of -- you know, in the sense, the
8 irreplaceable General Sullivan Bridge, in terms of a
9 design. But this is an excellent design. It evokes the
10 previous bridge, and I think that this aspect of it is a
11 real plus as well.

12 Other factors of the mitigation here I think
13 are reasonable, thorough, and provide an opportunity for
14 many ways to mitigate the impacts of the loss of the
15 General Sullivan Bridge, and also the construction of the
16 new one.

17 Thirdly, I want to do -- I do also want to
18 mention the issue of design here. Since we are facing
19 potentially three feet or more of sea level rise during
20 the lifespan of this new structure, I think that it is
21 really important that you have the kind of clearance that
22 is here, and increased clearance on the outside spans as
23 well. I think that will help in terms of Coast Guard

1 issues for required clearance, and then also for others
2 who want to use the structure decades into the future.

3 So, again, I just want to thank DOT. This has
4 been extraordinary. And all the folks who have
5 participated in it and interested parties. And that's my
6 comment.

7 MS. MEANEY: Thank you, Senator Watters. I
8 also wanted to ask if there are any representatives from
9 Senator Shaheen, Senator Hassan, or Representative
10 Juster's offices that would like to speak? And, if so,
11 if you could please raise your hand?

12 Okay. Seeing none, next up if there are any
13 state officials that would like to speak and be heard
14 this evening?

15 Okay. I'm not seeing any. Any town or city
16 officials that would like to make comment or speak this
17 evening?

18 I see a hand. It looks -- Christopher Parker,
19 if you could unmute yourself?

20 MR. PARKER: Thank you. This is Christopher
21 Parker. I'm the assistant city manager in Dover, and I
22 want to echo the senator's comments about the process and
23 about the preferred alternative. I think it does a good

1 job of keeping the pedestrian need, the bicyclist's needs
2 in mind, and also replicating the design. And I also
3 echo the efforts of support for recognizing climate
4 adaptation and sea level rise.

5 I will put some comments in writing. I do have
6 some concerns relative to the inclusion of the Bloody
7 Point property. I'm still not -- not quite sure I see
8 the direct correlation between mitigation of the General
9 Sullivan Bridge and something that's been determined to
10 have no adverse impacts to it by the replacement of the
11 bridge, but I'll flush those out and follow up comments
12 to be issued before the deadline on the 7th.

13 Thank you for doing this tonight, and have a
14 great night.

15 MS. MEANEY: Thank you, Mr. Parker.

16 Okay. Are there any federal or state agencies
17 in attendance that would like to speak?

18 Okay. I'm not noting any hands up. Oh, I was
19 too fast. It looks like -- and I'm going to do the last
20 four digits of a phone number. 6933. If you could
21 unmute yourself and also state your name for the record?

22 MR. HICKS: Yes, this is Mike Hicks with the
23 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

1 MS. MEANEY: Go ahead, Mr. Hicks.

2 MR. HICKS: Yes. Very good presentation. The
3 Corps has been tracking this project for some time now.
4 We will be looking at the application, looking forward to
5 the application when it arrives at the Corps. I think
6 the DOT and its consultants have done a very good job
7 tonight explaining this, and we're looking forward to the
8 evaluation process. That's all I have right now.

9 MS. MEANEY: Thank you for your comment, sir.

10 MR. HICKS: Thank you.

11 MS. MEANEY: Oh, you're welcome. Now I'll open
12 the meeting to anyone else wishing to speak. If you wish
13 to speak, just as a reminder, you can electronically
14 raise your hand to be called upon. After you're called
15 upon, your line will be unmuted so that we can hear you.
16 If you're using a landline or a cell phone, please let us
17 know that you wish to speak by pressing star 9. When
18 your name is called, state your name and address and make
19 your remarks.

20 And with that, I'll open it up to the floor.

21 Okay. I see several hands. The first one I
22 see is J. Mullen. So if you could unmute yourself, J.
23 Mullen, state your name and address.

1 MR. MULLEN: Sorry. Hello?

2 MS. MEANEY: Yes, we can hear you. Go ahead.

3 MR. MULLEN: Oh, I'm sorry.

4 MS. MEANEY: No, no, you're fine.

5 MR. MULLEN: My microphone wasn't working
6 there. My name is John Mullen. I live in Nottingham,
7 and I have crossed the General Sullivan Bridge hundreds
8 of times on my bicycle. I'm a bike commuter, and I ride
9 my bike to work, so I crossed it twice a day, and I
10 crossed it year-round. So I'm really hoping that when
11 you consider the bridge design, you take into account
12 four-season use. That is, what happens in the winter. I
13 notice a couple of those options where you got the
14 pedestrian bridge smack up against the highway bridge.
15 That's a disaster if you've got snowplowing. It plows it
16 right onto the bridge. Snow already hits the General
17 Sullivan Bridge. I've been on it where snowplows going
18 over the highway bridge throw snow onto the General
19 Sullivan.

20 So here's my next concern. I like your -- the
21 option 9 a lot. It looks great. Could you put a cover
22 over it? That would allow four-season use in the
23 wintertime without having to clear it. I think you're

1 saving lots of money here, so, you know, versus rehabbing
 2 the -- refurbishing the General Sullivan Bridge, so throw a
 3 cover over it. It'd be -- it'd fit in good with New
 4 England covered bridge model. I think it'd be simple and
 5 would really provide a great benefit in the wintertime,
 6 because crossing that bridge in the winter can be really
 7 tough. The snow gets deep and it takes forever to melt.

8 So that's my comments. Nice job. Thank you.

9 MS. MEANEY: Thank you, Mr. Mullen. Okay. I
 10 see David Emery. If you could unmute yourself, sir?

11 MR. EMERY: Always got to find where the unmute
 12 button is.

13 MS. MEANEY: You found it.

14 MR. EMERY: Okay. This is some respect to the
 15 historical question. Did NHDOT maintain the bridge, the
 16 Sullivan Bridge, once the Little Bay Bridge span opened?
 17 What are the consequences of not maintaining an historic
 18 resource prior to a decision to replace it? The concern
 19 I've heard is that NHDOT kind of put its thumbs on the
 20 scale for replacement by leaving a bridge in that hostile
 21 climate unmaintained for ten or so years. Thank you.

22 MS. MEANEY: Thank you, Mr. Emery. Ms. Reczek,
 23 did you want to answer that now, or would you provide

1 that in writing to Mr. Emery?

2 MS. RECZEK: We'll provide a more detailed
 3 response in writing, but -- and the team -- Pete can jump
 4 in and tell me I'm wrong, but I believe there is a
 5 document on the website that outlines the maintenance
 6 that has been performed over a period of time, but
 7 we'll -- we will put together a more detailed response.
 8 Thank you for the comment.

9 MS. MEANEY: We do have one comment in the Q&A,
 10 and I believe it just echoed the comment that Mr. Mullen
 11 had made about the new bridge being covered allowing for
 12 year-round use, and so I just wanted to read that into
 13 the record, but it does echo the sentiments that
 14 Mr. Mullen had stated.

15 So I'm not seeing any hands raised in the room.
 16 Wait. I spoke too soon. I see Andy Goodell.
 17 Mr. Goodell, if you could unmute yourself?

18 MR. GOODELL: Hi. Can you hear me?

19 MS. MEANEY: I can.

20 MR. GOODELL: All right. Thank you. My name
 21 is Andy Goodell. I'm a Dover resident. I work in
 22 Portsmouth. Similar to John, I commute by bike as often
 23 as possible. And the couple of years I had been

1 commuting on this bridge before it closed, I had crossed
 2 about 450 times. From the DSEIS, the stated purpose of
 3 the General Sullivan Bridge project is to provide
 4 recreational access and connectivity between Newington
 5 and Dover across Little Bay for pedestrian and
 6 nonmotorized use, as you know. However, one of the
 7 issues inconsistent with the statement is the lack of
 8 winter maintenance. The bridge is frequently unusable,
 9 because without winter maintenance, this windy corridor
 10 sees up to three-foot-deep snowdrifts. When it does warm
 11 during the day and then freezes at night, the deck turns
 12 into a sheet of ice. Depending on the conditions, the
 13 snow or ice often stays on the deck for days, if not
 14 weeks, sometimes months. While I do love a challenge,
 15 this half-mile section of snow or ice doesn't make for
 16 reasonable access between Dover and Newington.

17 DOT staff seem pretty firm that winter
 18 maintenance was too burdensome, despite the other nearby
 19 lanes on Little Bay Bridges being cleared immediately
 20 throughout winter, even including the four full-width
 21 shoulder lanes which are completely unused except for the
 22 rare emergency situation.

23 So my question is this: Will the rehabilitated

1 General Sullivan Bridge be able to get basic winter
 2 maintenance to keep it accessible year-round? Thank you.

3 MS. MEANEY: Thank you, Mr. Goodell. As had
 4 been stated earlier, we will be responding to comments
 5 and questions in writing after tonight's hearing when
 6 we're able to gather more information and speak to it
 7 more fully.

8 And so I'm looking through the room. I don't
 9 see any other hands raised, and so I wanted to see if
 10 there was anyone else who had comment and would like to
 11 make comment tonight?

12 I'll remind you that you do have the ability to
 13 make comment until June 7th, 2021, in writing to Ms.
 14 Reczek, either by snail mail or email, so you have
 15 options.

16 I don't see any questions in the Q&A or
 17 comments in the Q&A, and I see no hands raised, so with
 18 that, I'm going to make a last call.

19 And, seeing none, again, as a reminder,
 20 following this public hearing, a transcript will be
 21 prepared to include all the testimony that was heard this
 22 evening as well as any written statements received during
 23 the comment period.

May 13, 2021 Public Hearing Responses

Name

Senator David Watters

Christopher Parker

Michael Hicks

John Mullen

David Emery

Andy Goodell

**Response to Comments Made by
Senator David Watters
District 4, New Hampshire State Senate**

Comment: Thank you very much. This is Senator David Watters, District 4, and I live in Dover. I wanted to thank the DOT for this very thorough, open, and transparent process. And, in particular, I wanted to thank DOT for the care it has taken with Section 106 and 4(f) and involving the partners at every step in the process. I do want to express my -- a preference for the preferred Alternative 9. I think that, for several reasons, it's the best way to go.

One of the -- and perhaps first and foremost is cost, not only for the cost of construction, but also for life cycle maintenance of it. One of the reasons that Senator Stiles and I called for the 2014 study and a reopening of the 2007 determination was our great concern of the escalating cost due to the deterioration of the bridge. I think this is a very good alternative in terms of helping the taxpayers save their dollars.

Secondly, I think that it does a very good job at mitigation in terms of -- you know, in the sense, the irreplaceable General Sullivan Bridge, in terms of a design. But this is an excellent design. It evokes the previous bridge, and I think that this aspect of it is a real plus as well. Other factors of the mitigation here I think are reasonable, thorough, and provide an opportunity for many ways to mitigate the impacts of the loss of the General Sullivan Bridge, and also the construction of the new one.

Thirdly, I want to do -- I do also want to mention the issue of design here. Since we are facing potentially three feet or more of sea level rise during the lifespan of this new structure, I think that it is really important that you have the kind of clearance that is here, and increased clearance on the outside spans as well. I think that will help in terms of Coast Guard issues for required clearance, and then also for others who want to use the structure decades into the future.

So, again, I just want to thank DOT. This has been extraordinary. And all the folks who have participated in it and interested parties. And that's my comment.

Response: Thank you for your comments and support of the project.

The vertical clearance of the navigational channel is controlled by the Little Bay Bridges. Sea level rise was taken into account when the Little Bay Bridges were designed and permitted by the US Coast Guard.

The low steel of the proposed General Sullivan Bridge will be higher (approximately 48 feet) than the Little Bay Bridges (about 46.5 feet). As such, it will not control the vertical clearance of the navigational channel. Therefore, maintaining the maximum vertical clearance during any future sea level rise is not a concern of the new bridge.

**Response to Comments Made by
Christopher Parker
Dover, Assistant City Manager
Director of Planning and Strategic Initiatives**

Comment: Thank you. This is Christopher Parker. I'm the Assistant City Manager in Dover, and I want to echo the Senator's comments about the process and about the preferred alternative. I think it does a good job of keeping the pedestrian need, the bicyclist's needs in mind, and also replicating the design. And I also echo the efforts of support for recognizing climate adaptation and sea level rise. I will put some comments in writing.

I do have some concerns relative to the inclusion of the Bloody Point property. I'm still not -- not quite sure I see the direct correlation between mitigation of the General Sullivan Bridge and something that's been determined to have no adverse impacts to it by the replacement of the bridge, but I'll flush those out and follow up comments to be issued before the deadline on the 7th. Thank you for doing this tonight, and have a great night.

Response: Thank you for your comments and support of the project. Please see the response to Senator Watters' comments regarding sea level rise and climate adaptation.

The 2008 Record of Decision (ROD) included the following commitment: "NHDOT will continue to work with the Town of Newington to develop an agreement to transfer the historic former railroad station on Bloody Point and the land immediately surrounding the building to the Town." The new Section 106 MOA incorporates Stipulation E to support the future rehabilitation and reuse of the Newington Depot property as a means to further expand upon efforts that NHDOT has already completed to satisfy the 2008 ROD commitment and come to an appropriate resolution that discussions through the 2008 ROD could not resolve.

**Response to Comments Made by
Michael Hicks
US Army Corps of Engineers
New England District**

Comment: Yes, this is Mike Hicks with the US Army Corps of Engineers. Yes. Very good presentation. The Corps has been tracking this project for some time now. We will be looking at the application, looking forward to the application when it arrives at the Corps. I think the DOT and its consultants have done a very good job tonight explaining this, and we're looking forward to the evaluation process. That's all I have right now.

Response: Thank you for your comments and for your time in reviewing the document.

**Response to Comments Made by
John Mullen
Nottingham, New Hampshire**

Comment: My name is John Mullen. I live in Nottingham, and I have crossed the General Sullivan Bridge hundreds of times on my bicycle. I'm a bike commuter, and I ride my bike to work, so I crossed it twice a day, and I crossed it year-round. So I'm really hoping that when you consider the bridge design, you take into account four-season use. That is, what happens in the winter. I notice a couple of those options where you got the pedestrian bridge smack up against the highway bridge. That's a disaster if you've got snowplowing. It plows it right onto the bridge. Snow already hits the General Sullivan Bridge. I've been on it where snowplows going over the highway bridge throw snow onto the General Sullivan.

So here's my next concern. I like your -- the option 9 a lot. It looks great. Could you put a cover over it? That would allow four-season use in the wintertime without having to clear it. I think you're saving lots of money here, so, you know, versus rehabbing the -- refurbishing the General Sullivan Bridge, so throw a cover over it. It'd be -- it'd fit in good with New England covered bridge model. I think it'd be simple and would really provide a great benefit in the wintertime, because crossing that bridge in the winter can be really tough. The snow gets deep and it takes forever to melt. So that's my comments. Nice job. Thank you.

Response: Thank you for your comments and support of the project. A cover over the bridge would be a significant increase in construction cost and complexity, not just for the cover itself, but the increased wind load that would affect other bridge elements.

The NHDOT and FHWA acknowledge that winter maintenance responsibility of the proposed replacement bridge deck needs to be determined. Based on State RSA 231:92 and in accordance with NHDOT's accepted policies and practices, maintenance responsibility for a pedestrian/bicycle facility such as the GSB is the responsibility of the Towns and Cities which the facility serves, and that maintenance would be performed under a maintenance agreement with NHDOT. Any such maintenance agreement would be entered into at the discretion of the City of Dover and/or the Town of Newington.

**Response to Comments Made by
David Emery**

Comment: Okay. This is in some respect to the historical question. Did NHDOT maintain the bridge, the Sullivan Bridge, once the Little Bay Bridge span opened? What are the consequences of not maintaining an historic resource prior to a decision to replace it? The concern I've heard is that NHDOT kind of put its thumbs on the scale for replacement by leaving a bridge in that hostile climate unmaintained for ten or so years. Thank you.

Response: The document entitled "Timeline of Maintenance Activities on the General Sullivan Bridge" on NHDOT's General Sullivan Bridge project website ([Appendix M - 74](http://newington-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

dover.com/gsb_subsite/contract_documents.html) outlines the extensive maintenance that has been performed over a period of time from 1984 through 2015. Since 1984 when traffic was removed from the bridge, the GSB has seen multiple repairs to ensure safe passage for the multi-modal use by pedestrian and bicycles.

After the issuance of the 2008 ROD, the NHDOT proceeded to complete structural inspections in support of the original decision. Two extensive hands-on structural inspections were completed in May of 2014 and June of 2016 that brought to light the level of deterioration of the GSB, which put the original commitment to rehabilitate the GSB into question. Both of these inspections resulted in sequentially greater restriction of access on the structure for the safety of the public.

To further evaluate the potential for rehabilitation, an in-depth analysis was completed for painting the built-up truss structure. Due to the extreme pitting of the steel on the bridge and the level of packrust within the critical truss joint connections, the feasibility for painting the structure had been called into question. The painting operation and structural repairs represented a more significant investment of time and expense than envisioned prior to 2008. Due to the extremely high risks, it put into question the prudence for rehabilitation of the GSB. Additionally, a steel truss structure in a saltwater environment will not have an indefinite life and will need to be replaced at some point in its lifetime.

The NHDOT recognizes the responsibility in maintaining our infrastructure across the State. This responsibility continues to be a challenging task when the State's infrastructure needs outpace the revenue to undertake the tasks. As such, the NHDOT is continually put into the difficult position of prioritizing the limited funds to best address the statewide transportation needs. The first priority for the NHDOT is safe and efficient, intermodal use on the State highway system. The priorities are established through State's legislative development of the Ten Year Transportation Plan (10-Year Plan), which includes a transparent, interactive process through our Regional Planning Agencies, and Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation prior to legislative review and adoption by State Law.

Funding has been set aside through the 10-Year Plan and Turnpike Expansion Program to address the pedestrian and bicycle access across the Little Bay (*i.e.*: Contract 11238S). The original vision has been to complete the rehabilitation of the GSB in compliance to the NEPA approval. As previously discussed, the subsequent inspections have shown how severe the deterioration of the existing truss structure puts into question the feasibility to meet the original commitments. Our updated project estimates and evaluation of risks supports the re-assessment of the original commitments.

**Response to Comments Made by
Andy Goodell
Dover, New Hampshire**

Comment: All right. Thank you. My name is Andy Goodell. I'm a Dover resident. I work in Portsmouth. Similar to John, I commute by bike as often as possible. And the couple of years I had been commuting on this bridge before it closed, I had crossed about 450 times. From the DSEIS, the stated purpose of the General Sullivan Bridge project is to provide recreational access and connectivity between Newington and Dover across Little Bay for pedestrian and non-motorized use, as you know. However, one of the issues inconsistent with the statement is the lack of winter maintenance. The bridge is frequently unusable, because without winter maintenance, this windy corridor sees up to three-foot-deep snowdrifts. When it does warm during the day and then freezes at night, the deck turns into a sheet of ice. Depending on the conditions, the snow and ice often stays on the deck for days, if not weeks, sometimes months. While I do love a challenge, this half-mile section of snow or ice doesn't make for reasonable access between Dover and Newington. DOT staff seem pretty firm that winter maintenance was too burdensome, despite the other nearby lanes on Little Bay Bridges being cleared immediately throughout winter, even including the four full-width shoulder lanes which are completely unused except for the rare emergency situation. So my question is this: Will the rehabilitated General Sullivan Bridge be able to get basic winter maintenance to keep it accessible year-round? Thank you.

Response: The NHDOT and FHWA acknowledge that winter maintenance responsibility of the proposed replacement bridge deck need to be determined. Based on State RSA 231:92 and in accordance with NHDOT's accepted policies and practices, winter maintenance responsibility for a pedestrian/bicycle facility such as the GSB is the responsibility of the Towns and Cities which the facility serves, and that maintenance would be performed under a maintenance agreement with NHDOT. Any such maintenance agreement would be entered into at the discretion of the City of Dover and/or the Town of Newington.