



Meeting Notes

Date: November 13, 2024 Notes Taken By: Bob Landry and James Macpherson

Place: Dover City Hall Re: GSB Stakeholders/Brainstorming Meeting

Project No.: Newington – Dover 112385
General Sullivan Bridge
(VHB 52381.03)

ATTENDEES:

NHDOT Commissioner Bill Cass
NHDOT Asst Commissioner Dave Rodrigue
NHDOT Bridge Administrator Jennifer Reczek
Dover Asst Engineer Jillian Semprini
Newington Town Manager Martha Roy
NH Senator David Watters
US Coast Guard, Gary Croot

Pease Development, Adam Wrinkler
Rockingham RPC, Scott Bogle
Strafford RPC, Colin Lentz
VHB, Bob Landry
VHB, James Macpherson
Bike Group, Andy Goodell
Bike Group, Kean McDermott

Notes:

General Sullivan Bridge (GSB) Stakeholders / Brainstorming Meeting

- Jennifer Reczek started the meeting by completing introductions of the attendees and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to bring everyone up-to-day on the project status and solicit feedback and ideas on how to move forward.
- This meeting gathered interested Stakeholders from NHDOT, City of Dover, Town of Newington, NH Senator, US Coast Guard, Stafford RPC, Rockingham RPC, Pease Development, and Seacoast Area Bicycle Riders (SABR) for addressing the GSB that provides for access for non-motorized vehicles across Little Bay adjacent to the Spaulding Turnpike bridges.
- Jennifer provided a quick review of the project history, the past two unsuccessful advertisement of the project, and successfully securing the \$20 million RAISE Grant. Highlights included:
 - This included the allowable in-water work window from November 15th to March 15th.
 - High volume of work in the area that is either underway or in the bidding process and the limited number of large bridge contractors that can complete this kind of in-water work.
 - The temporary multi-use path across Little Bay on the Northbound Spaulding Turnpike Bridge created by taking the fourth lane provides for a 9.5-foot width path that is less than design standards.

Comments

- Concerns about the lack of winter maintenance being provided for the temporary multi-use path making the path impassible at times.
- Concerns for users of the temporary multi-use path during NB Spaulding Turnpike snow removal operations after the storm. Plows sending snow cleanup onto the path from the NB bridge.
- Limited width (9.5 feet) for passing bicyclist given the steep grade on the temporary multi-use path at both ends of the bridge.
- Potential for stripping to separate cyclist from pedestrians.
- Could the RAISE Grant funds be at risk due to the new administration if not obligated? [Nobody knows currently.](#)
- How long can we wait to obligate the RAISE Grant funds secured? [September 2027](#)
- Need for GSB is the ideal crossing given its location away from the NB Bridge with the additional width. 9.5 feet is not acceptable when 14 feet (10' lanes and 2' shoulders) is recommended by AASHTO, although it was recognized that 14' may not be achievable.
- Can RAISE Grant funds be used for other efforts? [RAISE Grants are for construction of a bicycle crossing.](#)
- Currently, 3 lanes on NB Bridge seem adequate in handling the traffic, will this be the same in 10 to 20 years?
- Can a lower structure be designed to reduce the replacement cost? [Need to maintain vertical clearance at or higher than the NB Spaulding Turnpike Little Bay crossing.](#)
- Can a switchback like the Casco Bay pedestrian path be used for to provide the needed waterway clearance? [Given ADA requirements and the 30' raise, this length of over 600' on each side is extensive.](#)

Brainstorming / Next Steps

- Next step is to address the safety need for mariners by removing the existing GSB superstructure. Looking to have a contract ready for late Spring / early Summer 2025 that uses obtained permits and satisfies Section 106 Historic mitigation elements to preserve existing bridge elements at Woodman's Museum, Hilton Park Dover Side, and Newington Historic Society.
- Complete a Traffic Study for Southbound traffic in current year to determine if a lane of the current SB Spaulding Turnpike can be used for the removal of the GSB superstructure safely especially with the merge from US 4 also happening prior to the SB Little Bay bridge.
- Complete traffic control plan for US 4 / SB Spaulding Turnpike to ensure merge and lane reduction can be done safely if traffic volumes indicate that a SB lane closure could be accommodated during the superstructure removal project.

General Comments

- Cost versus Need is currently a tough sell given that the temporary crossing is available using the NB Spaulding Turnpike bridge currently and the current traffic demands on the NB Spaulding Turnpike with 3 lanes versus the projected required 4 lanes.
- Securing a little additional width for the multi-use path and making it permanent for the next 20 years probably makes sense if the traffic volumes support it. Will need revised traffic study, then to reopen and revise the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Study to gain concurrence on an alternative that included the reduction of NB Spaulding Turnpike lanes from 4 to 3 and reduces/reallocates shoulder width on the NB LBB.