

## **Connecticut Department of Transportation**

**State Project No. 0111-0125**

**Federal-Aid Project No. 6111(012)**

**Replacement of Bridge No. 05664 – Taft Pond Road over Mashamoquet Brook  
Town of Pomfret**

**October 17, 2023 at 7:00 PM**

**Virtual Meeting via Zoom Webinar and YouTube Live**

### **Minutes of Public Informational Meeting**

#### **In Attendance:**

There were 6 people in attendance (6 on Zoom and 0 on YouTube), not including the project team. The meeting participants included residents and representatives of the Town of Pomfret, the Connecticut Department of Transportation, and CHA Consulting, Inc.

#### **Presentation:**

The virtual meeting, using Zoom Webinar and YouTube Live was started at 6:59 p.m. with an introductory slide which provided project contact and website information for attendees to view while they waited for the presentation to start. At 7:00 p.m., the formal presentation started with Transportation Supervising Engineer, Mr. Marc Byrnes, stating the goals for the meeting and that the purpose of this public information meeting is to present the proposed design and discuss any questions, comments, or concerns that the public or town officials may have. He provided details of how participants could interact with the project team during the meeting and then outlined the Design Managed by State (DMS) program and the subject project goals. Mr. Byrnes then turned it over to Ms. Maureen Nicholson, Town of Pomfret First Selectwoman, who provided introductory remarks. Mr. Byrnes then continued by introducing the representatives of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), and CHA Consulting, Inc. (CHA), the Consultant Liaison Engineer (CLE). Mr. Byrnes then gave a general overview of bridge elements and explained how the element conditions are rated on a scale from 1-9.

Ms. Rachelle Clark from CHA continued with the technical portion of the presentation. She explained the existing bridge condition, provided an overview of the project site, and described the purpose of the project. Ms. Clark presented the proposed project plans and maintenance and protection of traffic plan to replace Bridge No. 05664. Ms. Clark described the environmental and right-of-way impacts associated with the project and noted that there were no utilities present at the bridge site. Ms. Kathleen Ericson from CTDOT Division of Rights of Way continued the presentation with an explanation of the right-of-way acquisition process. Ms. Clark then finished the presentation with the proposed project schedule and estimated cost.

#### **Key Points Regarding the Existing Bridge:**

- The existing bridge was built in 1900 and consists of a single 22-foot-long span. The bridge was rehabilitated in 1996 and in 2021.
- The existing roadway width on the bridge is 22 feet and the roadway is classified as a Minor Rural Collector.

- A traffic count taken in November 2022 determined the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) on the bridge to be 168 vehicles per day.
- The existing clear span is 20.2 feet, which is less than 1.2 times Bankfull Width.
- The existing height of backwater above natural conditions is 1.8', which is greater than the standard of 1.0' Max.
- The existing underclearance is 0' for the 100-year design storm, which is less than the required standard of 2.0' Min.
- The existing freeboard is 0.5' for the 100-year design storm, which is less than the required standard of 1.0' Min.
- The existing bridge abutment spread footings assumed to be founded on soil are scour critical and unstable for the design scour event.
- There are no utilities carried by bridge. Overhead utilities are not present at the site.
- The existing deck is rated to be in good condition, and the superstructure is rated to be in satisfactory condition. The substructure is rated to be in serious condition based on an underwater inspection performed by CTDOT in January 2022 due to undermining observed below the south abutment foundation from scour. The bridge is currently posted for a 3 Ton weight restriction at both approaches.
- The existing bridge rail system is in good condition; however, the existing bridge and approach rail systems do not meet current safety standards.

**Key Points Regarding the Proposed Bridge:**

- The proposed replacement structure will consist of a single span prestressed concrete adjacent deck unit bridge with a 39'-0" span. The increase in span length is achieved by shifting the location of the southern abutment further to the south. The existing 22' wide roadway will be increased to a 24' width. U-shaped concrete wingwalls are proposed at all four corners.
- The proposed replacement structure will provide a 36-foot clear span, which meets the requirement for 1.2 times the Bankfull Width, which is 30'.
- The proposed replacement structure reduces the backwater surface elevation from 1.8' above natural conditions to 0.1' above natural conditions, meeting the 1.0' maximum criterion.
- The proposed replacement structure does not meet the 2.0' minimum criterion, but it provides an improved 1.7' underclearance over the existing 0' of underclearance.
- The proposed replacement structure also provides 2.2' of freeboard, which meets the criterion of 1.0' minimum.
- The new bridge will provide a service life of 75 years and is anticipated to require minimal maintenance.
- The proposed open bridge rail system and approach guiderail systems will meet current safety standards.
- Exposed concrete surfaces for the bridge end blocks are proposed to have simulated stone concrete form liner applied to the surface. The three-tube, open bridge railings are proposed to be metallized to a color of the Town's choice.
- The project will include roadway reconstruction of approximately 500 feet along Taft Pond Road, starting approximately 270 feet south of the bridge and ending approximately 230 feet north of the bridge.
- The proposed maintenance and protection of traffic plan involves a closure of the bridge and detour of traffic for the duration of construction, which is estimated to be 8 months. The proposed primary detour to the east utilizes Hampton Road, Deerfield Road, and

Brayman Hollow Road. The proposed secondary detour to the west utilizes Hampton Road, Pomfret Road, Eastford Road, and Boston Turnpike. The proposed primary detour route is approximately 9 miles long (estimated travel time - 15 minutes), and the proposed secondary detour is approximately 11 miles long (estimated travel time 17 minutes).

- Environmental permits will be required from federal, state and Town of Pomfret permitting agencies for the project and best management practices will be used to minimize impacts to the wetlands and watercourse during construction.
- Slope Easements, Right to Construct Driveway, Right to Install Sedimentation Control System, and Right to Grade are proposed at two properties that abut the bridge to the east for construction of the new bridge.
- Construction is currently anticipated to start Spring 2026, subject to approval of environmental permits and ROW acquisitions.
- The project Design, Construction, and ROW acquisition costs will be funded with 80% Federal funds and 20% State funds (0% Town Funds). The construction cost is currently estimated to be \$2.45 million.

### **Public Comments and Questions:**

There were five public comments or questions submitted during the meeting:

- Ms. Nicholson asked if the old abutments will be taken out? Ms. Clark from CHA responded that the old abutments would be removed and elaborated with a sequence of construction along with a description of the anticipated temporary earth retaining system.
- Ms. Elizabeth Bottieri asked, "Can you elaborate on both temporary and permanent changes to the flow of the brook and wetlands?" Mr. Scott Young from CHA responded that there will not really be any significant changes to the brook or the wetlands. The bridge will be opened up [made longer] to allow the river to flow through. Temporary stages will narrow the brook during construction.
- Ms. Bottieri asked, "Who will manage the road closure?" Ms. Clark stated that the Contractor will be responsible for setting up the road closure and the signage. The Town will help notify the residents of the closure, and the Contractor is required to notify the Town 30 days prior to the beginning of the road closure. Ms. Nicholson commented that the Town has had previous experience with this when the bridge was closed in 2021.
- Mr. Barry Rider asked, "Will DOT provide business detour signage (4H Camp)?" Mr. Byrnes commented that this was something that could be included in the Contract. Once the design has progressed, that signage could be determined. Ms. Nicholson commented that there was concern about the parents dropping their kids off at the camp and how they would be notified of the detour. Mr. Byrnes commented that a handout could be provided to the camp to pass out to the parents.
- Ms. Bottieri stated, "We had significant damage done to the pavement of our driveway when vehicles turned around, (last minute) on our property during the previous bridge repair when the roadway was closed. Better signage is needed at the South entrance of Taft Pond." Ms. Nicholson noted that the Town marked the bridge as closed and put-up barriers. The Town had people who defied the notices that were put up. It is irritating to the residents that have their driveway used repeatedly. Mr. Byrnes noted several methods of notification to motorists including advanced signing, advanced barricades, and potential message boards. Mr. Jeff LeMay from CHA asked for the address of Ms. Bottieri's property and suggested additional signage or barricades to try to prevent use

of their driveway as a turnaround. The address of 80 Taft Pond Road was provided, and it was further noted that this address is southwest of bridge.

**Adjournment:**

The email address, telephone number and project webpage address were provided for any additional questions or comments regarding the project following the meeting. Attendees were reminded to fill out the voluntary survey and that any additional comments can be submitted until October 31, 2023.

The presentation was well received, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Two days after the meeting, a request by Ms. Erica Anderson with The Nature Conservancy was received by the Town of Pomfret to provide access to a recording of the meeting. The meeting was posted on YouTube, and link to the recorded presentation via the Town's webpage was provided to Ms. Anderson. No other questions were received by either the Town or CTDOT.