

Connecticut Department of Transportation

State Project No. 56-305 80% Federally Funded 20% State Funded Replacement of Bridge No. 01872 carrying U.S. Route 1 over Greenwich Creek Town of Greenwich

**Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via RingCentral**

Minutes of Public Update Meeting

In Attendance: There were 38 people in attendance. The meeting participants included residents and representatives of the Town of Greenwich, the Connecticut Department of Transportation, BL Companies, and A. DiCesare Associates.

Presentation: A Public Update Meeting was held for this project on the night of March 31, 2021. This meeting was held virtually via RingCentral. The formal presentation began at 6:30 p.m. Transportation Project Engineer Susan Morneault began the presentation by introducing the representatives of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), BL Companies (BLC), the Consultant Liaison Engineer and the project Designer, A. DiCesare Associates (ADA). Susan Morneault, CTDOT Transportation Project Engineer, David Cicia, BLC Principal Engineer, and Julie Georges, ADA Engineer-in-Charge, gave a thirty-minute PowerPoint presentation describing State Project No. 56-305, the Replacement of Bridge No. 01872 carrying U.S. Route 1 over Greenwich Creek in the Town of Greenwich. Matthew Geanacopoulos with the CTDOT Office of Rights-of-Way also presented information regarding the rights-of-way acquisition process.

The presentation included the following items:

- Review of previous coordination and meetings with residents, the Town, and Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP).
- The purpose and need for the project describing the poor condition of the existing bridge, its hydraulic inadequacy, and the use of U.S. Route 1 as an emergency evacuation route.
- Review of the project hydraulic design, including review of the recent roadway flooding event, constraints on the hydraulic design (upstream of U.S. Route 1, at Bridge No. 01872 and downstream of U.S. Route 1), as well as the objective of the hydraulic design balancing the benefits and encumbrances to meet the project's needs.
- The proposed replacement bridge is a 38-foot span multi-girder steel superstructure on pile founded precast concrete abutments and wingwalls. The roadway profile is being raised approximately three foot – six inches at the bridge and nearly two feet at the intersection of U.S. Route 1 and Hillside Road, requiring the reconstruction of approximately 850-feet of roadway reconstruction to raise the profile of the road. The roadway will be widening and the stone dike downstream of the bridge over Greenwich Creek will be removed.
- Two lanes of traffic on U.S. Route 1 will be maintained during each of the two primary stages of construction. The left turn lane from eastbound U.S. Route 1 to Hillside Road will be maintained through construction. Two proposed detours for Hillside Road and Woodside Drive are required for construction. Coordination with the Town of Greenwich is ongoing.

- Pedestrian channelization along southern sidewalk.
- Utility, environmental, and rights-of-way impacts.
- Project schedule, construction cost, and project funding.

Public Comments and Questions: Following the formal presentation, a live Question and Answer session was opened to attendees. The questions and comments below were provided verbally or through RingCentral chat:

- Verbal Question: A resident expressed concern in regard to the impact on traffic, particularly the residential and non-profit community, specifically schools and the transportation to and from schools. Can you assure there is adequate funding for traffic control? Who is going to be responsible for the traffic control, Greenwich Police, flag persons or Connecticut State Police?

A representative of ADA responded that the use of the municipal police will be minimized by the staging with one lane in each direction; the vehicles will be channelized through the barriers. Costs for traffic persons are included in the project and paid for with project funds.

- Verbal Question: A resident asked what is a construction season? What will be the working hours?

A representative of ADA responded that a typical construction season lasts from April to November but can sometimes vary as contractors may request different time frames. It was noted that it is ordinary for construction to pause for the winter months.

A representative of ADA also responded that night work is not anticipated. The representative further elaborated that the contractor would be mindful of existing noise ordinances, but estimated a typical start time of 7-8am, concluding at 3:30-4:30pm; Monday through Friday. There may be circumstances when the contractor may be bringing special equipment in outside of this timeframe.

- Chat Question: Who in the town municipal government has been informed of this project?

A representative of BLC stated coordination with the town has been ongoing, namely with the Town of Greenwich Department of Public Works Deputy Commissioner. It was elaborated that the town has given input throughout the design phase of the project to make the project more amenable to the town.

- Chat Question: Has any consideration been given to dredging the existing creek bed and just repairing the bridge?

A representative of BLC responded that dredging the existing creek and repairing the bridge would not result in a large enough hydraulic opening. It was noted that the existing bridge features a 13.5-foot wide opening and that the proposed bridge has a significantly larger opening of 38-feet, a significant increase. Furthermore, simply dredging the creek bed and rehabilitating the bridge would

not provide the area required to pass 25 or 50-year storms without the roadway overtopping. Therefore, replacing the bridge is necessary to improve the hydraulic condition.

- Chat Question: Will there be a comment period for residents? Will the material presented be available online?

A representative of BLC noted that a formal comment period hadn't been set and encouraged that all attendees that may have additional questions or comments after the live presentation contact the State via the email address provided at the end of the presentation (Louis.Bacho@ct.gov).

- Chat Question: What local approvals, example IWWA, are needed given that the State doesn't own all the land at this point in time?

A representative of BLC responded that this is a State project and therefore isn't subject to the local Inland-Wetland approval, however the project is reviewed by CT DEEP and CTDOT's Office of Environmental Planning to ensure the necessary environmental permits are acquired. It was noted there is a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit as well as a CT DEEP permit for the project.

- Verbal Question: A resident asked what is the design going to look like for residents on Hillside and Post Road? Specifically pertaining to the sidewalks and hand railings. The resident also noted that they were in support of the project due to the flooding benefits that she anticipates for her and her neighbors upstream who have experienced flooding from previous storms.

A representative of ADA responded that the sidewalk will look typical along the Hillside Road side of the project, further elaborating that on the opposite side of the street will have a metal bridge rail.

- Verbal Question: A resident asked which properties are in the condemnation profile? Also, will there be landscaping money from the state to replace the inevitable disruption of the greenscape? Will the State be replacing the landscaping in those areas?

A representative of ADA stated that the landscape should not be affected by fill slopes. It was elaborated that trees are often addressed through the rights-of-way process.

A representative of CTDOT – ROW also noted that when trees and landscaping are impacted on private property, it is taken into consideration with the compensation package. For impacts on private property, owners are compensated for their loss of landscaping. If it is within the existing state property limits, landscaping plans are prepared.

- Verbal Question: A resident asked if the landscaping plan will be provided for review?

A representative of BLC noted that the proposed landscaping plan is designed in-house by the Connecticut Department of Transportation staff, with the main features of the plans focusing on slope control and plantings where stormwater outlets are. Any disturbed lawn areas will have lawn reestablishment. If there are any requests from the public, they will be discussed internally, and a response provided.

A representative of ADA reiterated the fact that there is turf establishment proposed for the lawns being affected by construction.

- Verbal Question: An attendee noted the high speeds of the traffic present on Brookridge Drive currently and the expected increase in speed during construction. Has any consideration been made to putting speed restrictions or speed bumps on this road during construction?

A representative of BLC noted that Brookridge Drive is a town-owned and maintained street, which is not part of the project, and that the resident should discuss address concerns directly with the Town.

- Chat Question: Will pedestrian access to sidewalks be affected?

A representative of ADA noted that some portions of sidewalk will experience changes to pedestrian access, but a pedestrian plan is provided and pedestrians will be accommodated during construction.

Another representative of ADA elaborated that pedestrian traffic would shift with the vehicular traffic. If the southern portion of the bridge is being rebuilt the pedestrians would be directed to the northern sidewalk, and if the northern side of the bridge is being rebuilt pedestrians would be directed to the southern sidewalk.

- Chat Question: Will two lane traffic be restored during the non-construction season? (Outside of the aforementioned November to April period)

A representative of ADA responded that the duration of the winter shutdown will not necessarily occur between November and April, and that the lane configuration would be dependent on construction sequencing and staging. Furthermore, the project utilizes precast concrete elements and that if feasible, the elements could be installed in the winter. The difficulty in opening the roadway (to two lanes in each direction) during winter shutdown is the difference in the elevation of the roadway between the stages, as the new bridge is approximately three feet higher than the existing bridge. Once construction starts traffic will not be able to shift traffic back and forth from four lanes to two.

- Chat Question: Will this project coincide with the I-95 repaving project? The resident noted that this referenced project would add more traffic to U.S. Route 1.

A representative of CTDOT – District 3 Construction stated that they were unsure of the timing of the project and therefore could not speak to it, but did not believe that traffic would be transferred to U.S. Route 1.

Later in the presentation, this question was re-visited and it was noted by a representative of CTDOT – CE Bridge that the projects will coincide and be coordinated as such.

- Verbal Question: A resident, who represents the Fire Department Fire Marshal's Division, asked will the Woodside Drive and Hillside Road closures allow emergency apparatuses to utilize them when the road is closed?

A representative of ADA noted that the Fire Department and other emergency services will have access to these roads. Woodside Drive will have an opening to allow for emergency vehicles to enter from U.S. Route 1 during the detour. It is expected that Hillside Road will be closed for one week for paving, and access will not be inhibited, but the roadway surface may not be smooth during this period. The resident noted that fire apparatus may weigh as much as 80,000 lbs. and the irregular surface may not work. A representative of BLC suggested that a separate meeting be scheduled to discuss emergency access. The representative of the Fire Marshal's Division noted their availability for more discussion to ensure that residents will have the same fire protection that they experience today.

A representative of BLC noted that the town has been involved at all stages of the design phase but is more than willing to meet and facilitate the aforementioned coordination. Project is currently at the 60% design phase and the plans can be shared.

- Chat Question: How will the flow under the new bridge affect West Brother Drive and will the existing channel adjacent to West Brother Drive be adequate to allow the water to flow through to the Lake without spilling over onto West Brother Drive?

A representative of BLC noted that the downstream area and downstream property will be receiving more flow due to the larger proposed bridge opening. He further stated that West Brother Drive overtops in the existing conditions during the 100-year design event and will continue to do so in the proposed condition. Downstream properties will receive more inundation during extreme storm events, but during normal flow/conditions, there will be no change.

- Chat Question: Has anyone contacted the school district about the amount of traffic that will be headed to Greenwich High School? There are 2,800 students and over 300 staff members heading to school between 7:45 and 8:30am each morning and leaving at 3:30pm each day.

A representative of CTDOT – CE Bridge stated that the State has been in contact with the Department of Public Works Deputy Commissioner, Jim Michael. It was suggested that construction schedules could potentially be adjusted until after

school buses come in and, in the afternoon, to allow students and buses to leave.

The Principal of Greenwich High School noted that traffic is congested even in the existing condition using four lanes, let alone reducing to two lanes, as proposed during construction. He acknowledged that the project is needed and requested more coordination between the DPW, the Town, the State, and the school district.

A representative of CTDOT – CE Bridge noted that the I-95 project mentioned previously would be coinciding with this project. A representative of ADA responded that even if the projects coincide, the timing could be quite different as the I-95 is a paving project which typically takes place at night and the work with the bridge project typically takes place during the day.

A representative of ADA also noted that sequencing of traffic signals could be optimized during construction to help in alleviating some of the congestion at the intersection. A representative of BLC noted that if people feel they are being delayed utilizing Route 1 they will find alternate routes.

- Verbal Question: An attendee who identified himself as a land use planning consultant working with the Millbrook Owners Association, asked if sedimentation transport had been looked into for this project? He noted historically, the pond south of the bridge has served as a sediment trap. It is his understanding the plan is to remove the dam which created the pond and add a stone weir. It was asked if the amount of sediment moving with the new flows been evaluated? Stating with the removal of the dam creating the pond the sediment will continue to travel downstream and settle out in the lake where it is more improved and sediment removal would be more costly. Is there plan for a similar sediment trap been prepared to work with the increased flows?

A representative of BLC noted that sediment transport has not been evaluated as part of this project, but understands the pond is capturing sediment. He further noted that a wider bridge will slowly flush the existing sediment downstream but elaborated that the sediment will then end up in a long narrow water body on its way to the Long Island Sound. There is no dredging proposed for this project and is not anticipated it to be added. The goal is to replace the bridge.

The attendee elaborated that they believe the design removes a sediment trap without replacing it. The attendee added that the sediment would stop at the lake and not make its way to Long Island Sound. They elaborated that if the sediment were to stop at the lake, it would be substantially more difficult to remove than the existing pond as utilized in the past. The attendee expressed their belief that sediment control is an obligation as a sediment trap is being removed.

A representative of BLC responded that the subject dam will be disturbed during construction yet would be restored. The representative also stated the rock weir is being added to aid in fish passage. The representative acknowledged the fact that flushing would be increased due to the larger bridge opening, but the representative restated the fact that the stone weir that maintains the pond would not be removed but replaced.

The attendee expressed that this was not clear and questioned whether the replacement structure would still serve as a sediment trap with the proposed high flow volumes. The attendee noted that they would follow up with the representative of CTDOT – CE Bridge, with whom the attendee has been in contact with.

- Verbal Question: An attendee asked if this project coincides with the Bruce Park Bridge Project? It is a current bypass for people who exit I-95 at exit 4 and travel downtown.

A representative of the Town informed CTDOT that the Bruce Park Bridge Project would be completed prior to the commencement of this project.

- Verbal Question: A resident asked if the CTDOT was aware of the Greenwich High School field remediation process that will involve the intense trucking of thousands of tons of toxic material during the construction season?

A representative of BLC responded that this work occurring during the summer months and coordination between the contractors will be necessary.

- Chat Question: Where will we find a recording of this meeting and/or a copy of the presentation?

A representative of CTDOT – CE Bridge noted that the presentation would be sent to the Town of Greenwich and that and that the question and answer session would be posted on the CTDOT webpage.

- Chat Question: The I-95 Repaving project will be happening concurrently with this project, coupled with the Greenwich High School Remediation project, how will the area handle all this?

A representative of BLC noted the common understanding that there is a lot going on within this area which will need to be coordinated. The representative stated that coordination will continue through design and construction.

- Verbal Question: A resident questioned the practicality of re-routing traffic for several miles as part of the proposed detours. The resident also noted the fact that this area is a very sensitive historic area as one of the most intact historic neighborhoods of Greenwich. The resident questioned whether there are any alternatives to the proposed metal bridge railings?

A representative of CTDOT – CE Bridge noted the detour for Hillside Road was going to be approximately one week. A representative of ADA responded that the detour plans provided represent the safest possible way to navigate the temporary road closures, no acute angles or weight restricted bridges. She also stated that locals may choose an alternative route in lieu of the detour. The detour for Woodside Drive would be longer, maybe four to six months.

In regard to the bridge rail, a representative of CTDOT-CE Bridge referenced the design criteria pertaining to the selection of this rail. The representative explained that the rail is required to have no deflection ability, which provides better protection of people and vehicles.

A representative of BLC noted that form liners could be applied to the concrete parapets for aesthetic appeal. Additionally, it was also explained that the open metal bridge rail selected due to the hydraulic requirements and a solid parapet cannot be specified.

A representative of ADA noted that the shape of the parapets is comprised of certain elements for safety reasons and that those need to be retained to meet those requirements. Form liner or staining options can be explored to help enhance the aesthetics of the parapets.

The resident followed up asking for coordination with the Greenwich Sustainability Committee for beautification on this.

- Chat Question: Can you confirm the mechanism for the public to register concerns and obtain information once the project is underway, website, email or an individual to speak with?

A representative of the CTDOT – District 3 noted that there would be a press release issued at least two weeks before the start of construction and that general contact information would be provided there including phone numbers and email addresses which would get routed to the project team. They would then reach out to whomever is asking to address concerns or provide the requested information.

Adjournment: A representative of CTDOT – CE Bridge provided his email address for any additional questions or comments regarding the project following the meeting.

The presentation was generally well received, with exception to a few questions which will need to be addressed in future coordination between the Design Team, the Department of Public Works and other services within the Town. The meeting was adjourned around 8:00 p.m.