

Connecticut Department of Transportation
Public Information Meeting
State Project No. 0057-0123
Replacement of Bridge No. 00293
Carrying Interstate 395 over Bishop Crossing Road
Town of Griswold

October 25, 2023, 7:00 PM
Meeting Held at Griswold Town Hall

Report of Meeting

A Public Information Meeting (PIM) was held for the project on October 25, 2023, at 7:00 PM. The purpose of the meeting is to provide the community an opportunity to learn about the proposed project and allow an open discussion of any views and comments concerning the proposed improvements.

Present:

Public Officials:

Dana Bennett, Griswold First Selectmen
Todd Babbitt, Director of Public Work
Thomas P. Holowaty, Fire Marshall

Connecticut Department of Transportation

Andrew Cardinali, Principal Engineer, Bridge Design
Ken-Taro Plude, Project Manager, Bridge Design
Ameh Fioklou, Project Engineer, Bridge Design
Eddie Baiocco, Project Designer, Bridge Design
Matthew Geanacopoulos, Property Agent, Office of Rights of Way
Eileen Ego, District Engineer, District 2
Mark Elliot, District 2 Construction

Public Attendees:

Nine (9) town residents

Presentation

Department of Transportation (CTDOT) Project Engineer Ameh Fioklou began the meeting at approximately 7:00 p.m. with an introduction of the CTDOT project team, brief overview of the project and reading the Title VI slides. Design Engineer Eddie Baiocco then presented the project using a Power Point presentation in which he provided information on the existing bridge (including bridge geometry and deterioration) supported by photos documenting the existing condition. Mr. Baiocco presented the proposed scope to replace the existing bridge. He explained the permanent relocation of the overhead utilities, presented the detour map and outlined the project schedule and cost. The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer period.

The period to provide comments and questions to the project team extends through November 8, 2023.

Presentation Key Points:

- The existing bridge is a three-span simple supported steel multi-girder bridge with a reinforced concrete deck that rest on concrete abutments and piers.
- The bridge was built in 1958.
- Based on the 2022 bridge inspection report the deck is rated a 6, the superstructure 4 (poor) and the substructure a 6. The superstructure's poor rating triggered the need for this project.
- The proposed replacement structure is a 77' long steel multi-girder bridge which will rest on top of a GRS-IBS abutment and is 103'-8" wide. It was noted during the presentation that other options were evaluated and considered during the design process and the proposed option was selected based on life cycle analysis.
- 129 Bishop Crossing Road will be impacted by construction easements to accommodate construction operations.
- Matt Geanacopoulos presented an overview of the Rights of Way process followed by CTDOT, including property acquisitions.
- The existing overhead power and fiber optics utility lines attached to the bottom flanges are going to be relocated underground.
- The southbound portion of Bridge #00293 carrying I-395 will be removed and reconstructed in 2026. During construction of the southbound portion of Bridge #00293, southbound traffic will be diverted to the northbound lanes to maintain a minimum of one lane of traffic in each direction.
- The northbound portion of Bridge #00293 carrying I-395 will be removed and reconstructed in 2027. During construction of the northbound portion of Bridge #00293, northbound traffic will be diverted to the southbound lanes to maintain a minimum of one lane of traffic in each direction.
- It is anticipated that detour utilizing Roode Road, Route 12 and Route 201 will be in place between April – November of 2026 and April – November of 2027 to detour Bishop Crossing Road. However, CTDOT is also evaluating an option to provide an alternating one-way traffic pattern on Bishop Crossing Road.

Following the presentation of the project scope, the project schedule, estimated cost, funding sources, and a summary of anticipated environmental permits was presented.

- Estimated Construction Cost: \$10,200,000 (90% Federal, 10% State)
- Project Schedule:
 - Utility Relocation: Spring 2026
 - Start of Construction: Spring 2026
 - End of Construction: Fall 2027

Public Comments and Question During the Live Q&A that followed the presentation:

Question 1: Can you keep one lane open on Bishop Crossing Road?

Response 1: At this stage we are proposing the closure of Bishop Crossing Road, but as the design progress we will be looking into other alternative such alternating one-way traffic pattern.

Comment 1: Fire Marshall also expressed the need to have one lane open to reduce the response time for calls initiated from houses along Bishop Crossing Road.

Question 2: Will there be signage on either side of the road?

Response 2: As the design progress, various signalization will be evaluated. Whether a stop signs or traffic signals is needed, depends on the site.

Question 3: What is RSF?

Response 3: A Reinforced Soil Foundation (RSF) serves as the foundation of a GRS-IBS abutment. The RSF is composed of granular fill material that is compacted and encapsulated with a geotextile. It provides the embedment and increases the bearing width and capacity of the GRS-IBS abutment. The GRS-IBS abutment is a fast, cost-effective method of bridge support that blends the roadway into the superstructure to create a jointless interface between the bridge and approach.

Question 4: The bridge deck was replaced just 25 years ago so why are you proposing to replace the bridge now?

Response 4: While the deck might be 25 years old, the piers and abutments are not. To select the best course of action we performed a life cycle analysis which incorporates the age of the bridge's main components to determine which alternative is the most cost effective over a long run. The result of this analysis indicated that replacing the bridge is most cost-effective alternative.

Question 5: How much damage is anticipated to be done by construction vehicles because Bishop Crossing Road has been recently paved?

Response 5: Design Team will coordinate with CTDOT Construction Unit to evaluate available methods for protecting the newly paved Bishop Crossing Road. There are various mechanisms available to protect the roadways. Any damage to the roadway section due construction activities will be addressed as part of the project.

Question 6: Any potential damage will be limited to the bridge area?

Response 6: Yes, the potential damage area will be limited to the bridge area.

Question 7: Why did you install a monitoring well?

Response 7: The CTDOT team was not aware of the wells at the time of the presentation. [Subsequent to the Public Informational Meeting, the design team determined that the monitoring wells were installed by the Department's Soils and Foundations Unit to monitor water level.]

Question 8: Do you have any assessment of what the traffic will be over the 7 miles round trip detour?

Response 8: The traffic on Bishop Crossing Road is approximately 100 vehicles per day. As such, there will not be significant change along the proposed detour route. If alternating one-way traffic pattern is selected to maintain one lane of traffic on Bishop Crossing Road, the amount of additional traffic along Route 12 and Route 201 will be minimal.

Question 9: Why didn't you specify the detour on Geer Road?

Response 9: The Department typically utilizes states routes rather than local roads for project detour routes.

Question 10: What is the construction duration?

Response 10: As of now we anticipated two years (two construction seasons) with construction starting around the Spring of 2026 and ending in the fall of 2027. However, we still are the early stages of design and as the design advances construction durations may be reduced.

Question 11: What are the conditions of other bridges in Griswold?

Response 11: The design team did evaluate whether there are other projects around Bridge #00293. Based on our research we only found one project near our bridge and believe this project will not impact our project. The design team did not evaluate the condition of other bridges in Griswold.

Question 12 (Follow up to Question 11): I suspect they are all probably around the same age.

Response 12: The bridges in Griswold may have been built around the same time as Bridge #00293 but the deterioration levels of the bridges in Griswold will be different. This project was initiated because of the level of deterioration observed at the beam ends. Other bridges in the area with a similar age might not have the similar level of deterioration at the beam ends.

Question 13: Will the contractor be working 24 hours a day?

Response 13: We are not planning on having the Contractor work 24 hours a day. On some projects, night work is required because the work is scheduled around times of low traffic volume. However, for this project we will be utilizing a traffic cross-over on I-395 to maintain one lane of traffic in each direction to allow the Contractor to work during the day.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:50 P.M.