

Connecticut Department of Transportation

**State Project No. 0011-0156
Replacement of Bridge No. 01489 carrying Rt. 178 over Beamans Brook
and
State Project No. 0011-0158
Replacement of Bridge No. 05576 carrying Rt. 185 over Tumbledown Brook Channel
In Bloomfield**

**December 11, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.
Bloomfield Community Center
330 Park Avenue, Bloomfield**

Minutes of Public Informational Meeting

Present:

Jonathan Thiesse - Town Engineer
Karen Isherwood - Deputy Town Engineer

Three (3) residents

Connecticut Department of Transportation (Department)

Mary E. Baker - Bridge Design
Bryan H. Reed - Bridge Design
Nicholas J. Martin - Bridge Design
Michael J. Lajoie - Bridge Design
Jonathan J. Kempf - Bridge Design
Jessica Carvajal - Bridge Design
Mohammed Bishtawi – Assistant District Engineer, District 1 Construction
Matthew P. Geanacopoulos – Office of Rights of Way
Adam Boice – Office of Rights of Way

Presentation, Public Comments and Questions:

The presentation was started at approximately 6:30 p.m. by Bryan Reed, the Project Manager of each project, who welcomed all attendees to the meeting, thanked the Town of Bloomfield for allowing the Department to hold the meeting, acknowledged the Town officials in attendance, and introduced the Department representatives. The attendees were informed that copies of a pamphlet, which addresses storm water management, were available. Attendees were also informed of an optional demographic survey and encouraged to complete the survey.

Mr. Reed introduced Jessica Carvajal, the Prime Designer for Project 0011-0158, who presented an overview of the project. The following were key points of the presentation:

- Basic information on the existing bridge
- Existing bridge condition, deterioration and reason for replacement
- General scope of work and method of construction
- Traffic maintenance, including a 2-week road closure of Rt. 185 and associated detour

- Overhead and subsurface utility constraints
- Environmental considerations
- Rights of Way impact
- Project Schedule
- Project Cost and Funding
- ROW acquisition process
- Attendees were informed that the presentation and meeting minutes will be available at a CTDOT website

After the presentation for Project 0011-0158 was concluded, the attendees had a number of questions for Department personnel. The following items were discussed:

- A Bloomfield resident had a question regarding the September and December dates provided on the presentation as they did not coincide with the start of construction (spring of 2022).
 - Response/Discussion: The Department clarified that these dates are for final design plans and advertisement of the project respectively. After the project is awarded and the Contractor can proceed, the start of construction would be in the spring of 2022.
- A Bloomfield resident had concerns regarding the detour route and the amount of traffic that it would generate. His concern was that adding 9100 vehicles in an already congested area would create a lot of traffic for citizens like himself and would make it more difficult to exit surrounding parking lots, for example the Town library. He mentioned that Department did a good job at selecting a route with signalized intersections but the area was still very congested area.
 - Response/Discussion: The Department explained that not all 9100 vehicles would use the detour route, and the design team is aware that many drivers will use shorter local routes. An all-State Route detour was selected to keep as many trucks as possible off of local roads during the roadway closure.

Commentary: On a highway carrying a lane of vehicular traffic in each direction, the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) refers to the total number of vehicles that pass through a defined section of the highway on an average day (24 hour period) for both directions of travel combined.

- A resident asked a follow-up question regarding the duration of the road closure and detour. He asked if 14 days for the road closure would be enough for the Contractor to install the culvert. He referenced a different project in Bloomfield where the Contractor took longer than one season and the road was closed for an extended period of time, which caused many traffic disruptions.
 - Response/Discussion: The Department assured the resident that 14 days was enough time to complete the box culvert installation so the roadway could be re-opened to 2-way traffic. The Department also informed the resident that the liquidated damages are assessed if the Contractor fails to open the road within the allowed timeframe. The Bloomfield Town Engineer mentioned that the bridge needs

- to be replaced and he doesn't see another way of replacing the bridge without the detour. He agreed that it is better to close the road down and perform the work in a two-week period than extend Construction for a much longer time.
- A resident asked as result of the length of culvert being shortened, if the shoulder widths would be reduced making it more challenging for cyclists.
 - Response/Discussion: The Department assured the resident that the shoulders will not be narrowed as a result of this project.
 - A resident asked where the signs would be located informing the traveling public of the road closure and detour.
 - Response/Discussion: The Department explained that signage would be placed in advance of the road closure and detour. Variable message signs may be used. CTDOT Construction explained the notification process for closures, i.e. press releases, notification to schools, abutters, merchants, etc. Bloomfield engineering staff explained commuters will find other routes in addition to the posted detour and that there are many alternate streets which will provide buffer.

Nicolas Martin introduced Michael Lajoie, the Prime Designer for Project 0011-0156, who presented an overview of the project.

The following were key points of the presentation:

- Basic information on the existing bridge
- Existing bridge condition, deterioration and reason for replacement
- General scope of work and method of construction
- Traffic maintenance, both vehicular and pedestrian, including a 8-week road closure of Rt. 178 and associated detour
- Overhead and subsurface utility constraints
- Environmental considerations
- Rights of Way impact
- Project Schedule
- Project Cost and Funding
- ROW acquisition process
- Attendees were informed that the presentation and meeting minutes will be available at a CTDOT website

After the presentation for Project 0011-0156 was concluded, the attendees had a number of questions for Department personnel. The following items were discussed:

- A resident asked how the detour route was selected.
 - Response/Discussion: The Department explained that the detour route was coordinated with the Bloomfield Engineering Department. The town had agreed to

use town roads. Routes with railroad crossings in the vicinity of signalized intersection were avoided. Non-signalized intersections will be investigated to determine need for temporary signalization. The Department will continue to coordinate with the Town.

- A resident asked where the signs would be located informing the traveling public of the road closure and detour.
 - Response/Discussion: The Department's Traffic Design Unit will develop a plan for the sign locations.
- A resident inquired about maintaining pedestrian access during construction. The resident also expressed concern for the safety of pedestrians when the bridge is closed.
 - Response/Discussion: The Department explained that pedestrian access during the road closure could be provided by a temporary bridge or a taxi/shuttle service. The Bloomfield Town Engineer noted that an old railroad bed, owned by Eversource, downstream of the bridge, could potentially be used for a temporary pedestrian crossing.
- Two resident abutters inquired about ROW impacts due to the project.
 - Response/Discussion: The Department explained that currently only temporary and permanent easements are required. No permanent property takes are currently identified. A ROW agent will meet with property owners once the property maps detailing the impacts have been finalized.
- A resident asked if the existing utility service will be maintained during construction.
 - Response/Discussion: The Department explained that all utility services would be maintained during construction. Overhead utilities will be temporarily relocated. Gas service is currently fed from the east and is carried by the bridge. The gas main will be removed from the bridge. Gas service will be maintained by providing service from both the east and the west of the brook.

Public Response:

No public objections to the scope of the work for either project were voiced by the Town officials or the residents in attendance. Although a resident expressed concerns about the proposed road closures and associated detours, the Town has no objection to closing the roads for the proposed durations and detouring traffic to a combination of town and state routes.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30 p.m.