

Connecticut Department of Transportation

**State Project No. 0015-0339
Rehabilitation of Bridge No. 02475
Route 130 over Pequonnock River
City of Bridgeport**

Thursday, November 19, 2020

Minutes of Virtual Public Informational Meeting

Presenters/Speakers:

Jon R. Hagert – Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT)

Rosmery Rodriguez – CTDOT

Matthew P. Geanacopoulos – CTDOT Rights of Way

Yihui Wu – Michael Baker International

John McKenna – Michael Baker International

Attendees

10 via TEAMS

6 via YouTube

Presentation: A virtual presentation was held through TEAMS and Streamed on YouTube for the project and was delivered by Ms. Rosmery Rodriguez and Mr. Jon Hagert from CTDOT, Mr. Yihui Wu and Mr. John McKenna from Michael Baker International, and Mr. Matthew Geanacopoulos of CTDOT Rights of Way.

The following items were discussed during the presentation:

- A construction project for the rehabilitation of Bridge No. 02475, Route 130 (Stratford Ave.) over Pequonnock River in the City of Wallingford, is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2022 and be completed in the fall of 2024.
- The project is proposed due to the deteriorated condition of the existing steel beams of the lift span as well as the deteriorated condition of the approach span precast concrete beam ends, cast in place concrete diaphragms and concrete deck. Additionally, upgrades to mechanical equipment and electrical systems are required.
- The proposed rehabilitation consists of concrete beam repairs, steel superstructure repairs and painting, replacement of the lift cables, mechanical and electrical systems upgrades and repairs, replacement of the pier protection fender system, repurposing of the existing control house, construction of a new control house and substructure repairs. The concrete deck will be patched as necessary and a new liquid membrane waterproofing and bituminous overlay will be placed.
- Rehabilitation of the bridge will be performed utilizing 3 stages of construction with one lane of traffic maintained in each direction during each stage of construction. A detour utilizing city streets will be implemented at those times that the lift span needs to be in the raised position for repairs or testing after installation of upgraded systems.

- Temporary easements are anticipated primarily for accessing the areas below the bridge in the river to work on the stone clad piers and replacement of the existing fender system around the lift span piers.
- Coordination with utilities to provide services to the new control house will be required. No existing utilities are carried by the bridge and no relocations are necessary.
- Coordination with the City of Bridgeport has been initiated and will continue during the project design to accommodate the City's needs as best as possible, particularly as it pertains to the addition of a bicycle lane on the bridge and any other enhancements.

Public Comments and Questions:

Question:

Will work on the lift bridge cause traffic to back up to the Water Street intersection and affect traffic on Water Street?

The design team will conduct a traffic analysis at this location to optimize the traffic control scheme, including signal timing adjustments to mitigate traffic impacts or potential backups. Pedestrian movements will be included with this analysis.

Question:

Why will this construction project take two years to finish and why can't it go any faster?

This is a large bridge project with specialized construction, such as installation of enclosures for blast cleaning and painting, lift span control house installation, mechanical and electrical system upgrades, and pier protection fender system replacement. There are also construction limitations to consider, such as in-water construction in off-peak seasons (no summer in-water work).

Question:

Will pedestrians still be able to cross the bridge during construction?

During stage construction, one sidewalk will remain open at all times to allow pedestrians to cross the bridge. At times when the detour is in place, a shuttle service will be set up with the contractor to transport pedestrians from one side of the bridge to the other.

Question:

Will bicyclists still be able to cross the bridge during construction?

Bicyclists will be able to cross the bridge during stage construction. Since the bridge width will be reduced, bicyclists may need to dismount their bicycles and cross the bridge by walking on the sidewalk with their bicycles.

Question by City Engineer Jon Urquidi:

When will the roadway impacts commence in the project schedule? Specifically staged construction and potential closures/detours.

Roadway impacts will likely begin in Spring 2023; however, the schedule is preliminary. The contractor will likely start the work on top of the bridge at a time of year such that work in a particular stage can be completed before the cold weather. The contractor will determine the sequence that works best and will submit a proposed schedule to CTDOT for approval. CTDOT will communicate with the City in advance of any activities that will affect traffic.

Question:

How noisy will this work be and how will you try to control the noise?

This work will be noisy. There will be noise from activities such as compressors, blast cleaning of the steel and jackhammering. The contract will have provisions to limit the amount of noise the contractor can make and the DOT will monitor noise levels and enforce the restrictions.

Question:

Are there any specific reasons to add a control house on west tower to replace the on east tower?

There is currently only one control house on the east tower without any back-up for the lift span operation in case of any potential mechanical/electrical equipment malfunctions. A control house will be added to the west tower and the east tower control house will be converted for placement of an emergency generator to provide a back-up for the lift span operation. Another benefit is the second control system will allow the lift span to remain operational during any repairs, upgrades and rehabilitation.

Question:

How and when would the public be notified on the starting of construction:

The public will be notified of the start of the project by means of public notices that will be issued at least two weeks before the start of construction. Variable message signs will be placed at the project site to inform the public of impending construction and other milestones, such as the implementation of a detour.

Question:

What outreach have you done with the local maritime community?

Outreach to the local maritime community will be primarily through the Harbor Master, but will also include coordination with the U.S. Coast Guard. CTDOT can also communicate information through the City's website. CTDOT has already obtained a log of the bridge openings to determine periods of lower activity and will continue to coordinate with the Harbor Master and Coast Guard through Final Design and into Construction.

Question:

During times when the detour is going on, how will pedestrian traffic be accommodated?

During the detour, a transportation service will be provided on demand to bring pedestrians from one side of the bridge to the other to commute to work and for other needs. There will be an advertised telephone number that pedestrians may call to obtain service. This service will be available during the detour for the short periods of time that the bridge will be closed to traffic.

Question:

In the presentation you mentioned AASHTO MASH standard requirements, could you please provide clarification on what that is?

AASHTO is an acronym for "American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials." This is a group representing the 50 states who set standards for the country. MASH stands for "Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware." AASHTO MASH standards relate to the safety hardware, like railings and impact attenuators, that are placed beside the roadway to protect vehicles from severe impacts and keep people safe. On this project, CTDOT has identified a need to install an impact attenuator to protect vehicles from crashing into the barrier that protects the lift cables, and possibly at the leading ends of the railing. The safety of the bridge railing will also be investigated during the Final Design phase of the project.

Adjournment: The project was generally well received by those who attended the meeting. The live event virtual presentation was closed at approximately 8:15 p.m.