BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT
CONFERENCE REPORT

SUBJECT: Monthly SHPO-FHWA-ACOE-NHDOT Cultural Resources Meeting
DATE OF CONFERENCES: December 6 & 13, 2012
LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: John O. Morton Building
ATTENDED BY:

NHDOT
Sheila Charles
Mike Dugas
Jill Edelmann
Cathy Goodmen
Tom Jameson
Marc Laurin

Federal Highway Administration
Jamie Sikora

NHDHR
Laura Black
Edna Feighner

ACOE
Rich Roach

City of Concord
Martha Drukker
Ed Roberge

CHA
Robert Faulkner
Peter Perkins

Historic Documentation Co.
Rich Casella

VHB
Dale Abbott
Nicole Benjamin-Ma
Peter Walker

(When viewing these minutes online, click on an attendee to send an e-mail)

PROJECTS/PRESENTATIONS REVIEWED THIS MONTH:
(minutes on subsequent pages)

December 6, 2012 1
Concord 12004 BRF-X-5099(021) 1
December 13, 2012 3
Manchester, 16099 4
Gilford 16207, X-A000(187) 5

(When viewing these minutes online, click on a project to zoom to the minutes for that project)

December 6, 2012

Concord, 12004, BRF-X-5099(021)
Participants: Participants John Parelli, Robert J. Faulkner, CHA; Martha Drukker, Ed Roberge, City of Concord; Richard Casella, Historic Documentation; Cathy Goodman, NHDOT

Continuing consultation, previously reviewed on May 25, 2000; December 7, 2000; January 1, 2002; May 1, 2002; March 13, 2003; January 12, 2006; November 12, 2009; April 1, 2010; October 7, 2012; September 113, 2012. RPR#1691. The purpose of the meeting was the presentation of the rehabilitation assessment of the existing bridge and review of other alternatives.

E. Roberge began with a brief introduction and the following items were discussed:

1) Review of Current Project; R. Faulkner gave a brief review of the project history and current status.
   a) Project was started in 1999 as a bridge replacement project. NHDOT led the project as a Part A Preliminary Engineering Phase. Many alternative alignments were considered and through the

process the project evolved into rehabilitating the existing bridge. More alternatives that included reuse of the bridge were developed.

b) The preferred alternative (Alternative H) included rehabilitating the truss to support northbound traffic with a cantilevered sidewalk on the downstream side and building a new single lane bridge upstream of the truss to accommodate southbound traffic.

c) The preferred alternative progressed through the majority of the NEPA process, however the MOA was never completed. In 2010 the project was turned over to the City of Concord to be completed under the Bridge Aid Program as a Municipally Managed Project.

d) The initial phase of work under the Final Design was an in-depth bridge inspection and load rating to determine the extent of rehabilitation required.

e) The results of the load rating showed that the cantilevered sidewalk on the downstream fascia of the bridge was not practical, as the majority of the downstream truss panels would need to be strengthened or replaced. In addition, without the addition of a sidewalk, a significant number of the truss members would still require strengthening or replacement. The switching of the sidewalk to the upstream side of the new bridge resulted in increased impacts to LCIP property as well as mid-block crosswalks at the Fish and Game and Concord Monitor driveways.

f) As suggested by NHDHR, Historic Documentation Companies was hired to comment on the effect of rehabilitation on the historic significance of the bridge. The conclusion was that while the extensive rehabilitation is considered an adverse effect, the structure could still be considered historically significant.

g) The City remains concerned with the safety and reliability of the truss considering the non-redundant nature of its construction. The limited horizontal and vertical clearance and fatigue life do not meet the City's long-term needs when considering the potential plans for future development and the overall transportation system.

2) R. Faulkner gave a brief description of the Alternatives being considered further which had been developed as part of the Preliminary Engineering Phase.

a) <u>Alternative 4</u> consists of a new two-lane bridge upstream of the existing bridge. The existing bridge would remain and could be used for pedestrians although a new sidewalk would be constructed on the new bridge. The bridge could also remain abandoned in place as a "monument". This alternative has the longest project length and the greatest ROW impacts and environmental footprint.

i) It was noted by R. Roach that keeping the bridge as a monument is not desirable as demonstrated by previous projects where the bridge is left to rust.

b) <u>Alternative 8</u> consists of a new two-lane bridge on the existing horizontal alignment. This alternative has the best vertical geometry but would require the removal of the existing bridge.

c) <u>Alternative H</u> was the preferred alternative coming out of the Preliminary Engineering Phase and consists of a new one lane bridge upstream of the existing bridge and rehabilitation of the existing truss bridge, all on new substructures. This alternative has the least desirable roadway geometry and has the highest construction and maintenance costs.

d) R. Roach asked what the City's preference was and whether they were willing to pay the cost for Alternative H.

e) R. Faulkner responded that the cost is the highest, estimated at about $13 million. There was a discussion about the alternatives requiring additional ROW. R. Faulkner noted that there will be additional easements and ROW requirements and the costs are approximate. The City also discussed the high-continued maintenance costs for keeping the truss.

f) L. Black asked how many of truss bridges still exist in the State and how many have been demolished in recent years.

g) R. Casella summarized the historic effects of the rehabilitation.

h) P. Perkins reviewed the extent of required rehabilitation to the truss to carry legal highway loads.

i) R. Roach again asked what the City's desire was and further noted that the City cannot be forced to keep the bridge if they don't want to.

3) Going forward; E. Roberge reviewed the City's next steps:

a) A report will be submitted to the City Council in January for consideration at the January City Council Meeting. This report will include City Staff's recommendation to proceed with the On-line Replacement Alternative.

b) The City will also hold a public information meeting in late January to hear public comment.

c) City council is anticipated to provide the direction on which alternative to proceed with at their February meeting.

d) The city will conduct their standard outreach program with announcements in multiple locations and in multiple media including mailings. The City can list FHWA as a contact for information in advertisements.

4) There was a discussion about the importance of getting the public involved and the Section 106 requirements. L. Black and E. Feighner emphasized the need to *reach out* from a Section 106 consulting party standpoint, aside from general public meeting announcements. The group discussed what parties need to be included in the new decision process. It was also noted that an advocate for the bridge is needed and rehabilitation options need as much promotion as replacement options.

5) It was noted that the previous ad-hoc committee for the project has expired and not all past members are available. The City Heritage Commission was a party and will be included in the January meetings. E. Roberge gave a summary of what past public meetings were held under the Preliminary Engineering Phase.

6) The group informally discussed possible mitigation options that included using pieces of the truss portal and stones from the pier in a display at the Fish and Game property. Options can also include documentation and dissemination of documentation to the public through libraries and schools.

Conclusion: The City will start the public outreach process for the January and February meetings.

December 13, 2012

Manchester, 16099
Participants: Pete Walker, VHB; Dale Abbott, VHB; Nicole Benjamin-Ma, VHB; Mark Laurin, NHDOT; Mike Dugas, NHDOT

Initial review for an Interstate system project with FHWA involvement. NHDOT presents the results of a Planning Study that evaluates interchange configurations and system connectivity of the FEE Turnpike/I-293 at Exit 6 and the potential for a new full-access interchange for Exit 7 north of the existing location that will provide access to NH Route3A and Dunbarton Road.

- Pete Walker (VHB) began by explaining that while there is no "project" as of yet, the parties participating in the Planning Study wanted to meet with NHDHR as early as possible. The Planning Study is the first step in a potentially long process that is expected to take a number of years, but will hopefully go into the next phase quickly rather than remaining shelved. Hopefully, this (and any subsequent) meeting will help "flesh out" major concerns and red flags, while more specific concerns can be identified and addressed when more definitive designs are available.
- Jill Edelmann (NHDOT) noted that the agencies are encouraging the submission of preliminary information during early planning and project phases, which makes early NHDHR knowledge more valuable. Laura Black (NHDHR) recommended that as soon as an APE can be identified, a Project Area Form be completed, which will help initiate the next step in the process in a timely manner.
- Dale Abbott (VHB) explained the boundaries and extent of the Study Area, and the major components targeted for redesign. One of the major Study components is the relocation of Exit 7 approximately one mile north of its current location. This may trigger changes at the current exit location, and may entail a new connection to Dunbarton Road and an extension to Goffstown Road. Pete Walker noted that the alternatives are still conceptual.
- Dale Abbott reported that the third public meeting took place the previous evening, during which the types of alternatives to be evaluated were presented to the public– e.g., types of interchanges rather than various engineered designs for this location.
- Dale Abbott explained that the City of Manchester has been maintaining historic resource information as a GIS layer, noting resources that are listed, eligible, and properties that are of interest to the planning department but not formally designated at the local level. The maps and information submitted with the RPR were put together using this GIS layer, a site file search at NHDHR, and Nicole Benjamin-Ma's windshield survey. Assessing data were also consulted.
- Dale Abbott explained that the Planning Study component of adding a lane in each direction of I-293 creates a difficult situation near the Amoskeag Millyard, where alternatives may consider partial demolition or encroachment on a few of the buildings; I-293 is already quite close to the river here, too. At Exit 5, which was the subject of improvements a few years ago, the project team was able to minimize both environmental and cultural resource impacts, and those methods will be consulted in the alternatives developed for this project. Jaime Sikora (FHWA) noted that perhaps the auxiliary lane component may be removed from consideration at some point; Mike Dugas (NHDOT) suggested leaving the lane component as is for now, since the improvements are still in such a preliminary planning stage.
- Nicole Benjamin-Ma briefly summarized the methods and results of the windshield survey. As no APE could be defined yet, the effort was made to find out the current integrity of inventoried properties, as well as existing conditions in the Study Area – character, setting, any potentially significant properties, etc.
- Pete Walker asked if NHDHR could offer any preliminary comment on any additional known issues/properties that have not been identified during the Planning Study efforts so far, and whether any other items would be helpful for the attendees at this stage.
    - Sheila Charles (NHDOT) noted that the Amoskeag Falls area is one of the most important archaeological areas in the state – first evidence of pottery, a Native American cemetery,

and deposits go down to two meters. Archaeology is going to be a big component of this project, if and when it proceeds.
    - Edna Feighner (NHDHR) suggested the preparation of a Phase IA report along with the Planning Study. She also noted that during the Exit 5 improvements, a site was found underneath the roadway. So sensitivity is going to be far-reaching for this project.
    - Mike Dugas asked about the potential archaeological sensitivity of Black Brook. Edna Feighner responded that there is certainly potential there, and reminded everyone that such sensitivity isn't limited to the borders of the brook itself. Laura Black asked if the path of the brook has changed over time, and Edna Feighner confirmed that there have been water table and pathway changes over the years.
- Edna Feighner asked about the area of the potential connection of the new Exit 7 north to Dunbarton Road, possibly to Goffstown Road – it will be beneficial during future research to note if there were mills in this area.
- Pete Walker asked for suggestions about how to balance the level of effort at this point in time. Jill Edelmann reinforced that the first steps will be to refine the APE and the preparation of a Project Area Form.
    - Pete Walker asked about the use of the term "Study Area," as the project team has been trying to use this term in order to differentiate it from the yet-to-be-established APE. The APE will likely be different from and/or larger than the Study Area employed during the current Planning Study.
    - Jill Edelmann noted unless the Study Area encompasses all possible effects areas – the widest possible extent of all future APE alternatives – then the Study Area research effort effectively becomes null and void for future use.
    - Jaime Sikora noted that since the alternatives will be refined during the course of the Planning Study, the project team doesn't want to undertake too much, too early. Pete Walker suggested that perhaps an attempt can be made at this point to identify a larger Study Area for cultural resources, or a preliminary APE. This phase is concerned with alignments, whereas the environmental component will not begin until August at the very earliest.
    - Laura Black offered to provide some documentation and guidance for the identification of APEs, for consideration and discussion amongst all parties.
- Pete Walker and Dale Abbott noted that alternatives are entering the conceptual engineering phase soon, and Pete suggested that May might be a good time to schedule another interagency meeting, so the alternatives can be presented and discussed. The Planning Study won't be complete until August, but everyone will have more of a handle on what the future project will encompass.
- Laura Black noted that for future submission of materials, such as the Project Area Form, NHDHR will largely be commenting on the information and analysis provided to them, as well as the information already submitted with the RPR.

Gilford, 16207, X-A000(187)
Participants: Trent Zanes, Mike Dugas, NHDOT.

Initial review of a proposed reconstruction of the intersection of NH 11A with Belknap Mountain Road/Schoolhouse Hill Road to improve operations and safety. Trent Zanes described the need for the project. Due to the number of accidents at the intersection, the sight distances from Belknap Mountain Road and Schoolhouse Hill Road need to be improved. The guardrail on the east side of NH 11A will be pulled back and the shoulders slightly widened. The existing stone retaining wall on the west side of NH 11A will be reconstructed 8 to 10 feet further back into the slope. A geo-grid will be used to stabilize this slope and will reduce the impacts to the slope. A geo-grid will also be constructed on the east side of NH

11A along the highway slope adjacent to the Gunstock River. All work would remain within the existing ROW.

Edna Feighner asked about the location of the recorded sawmill site. M. Laurin pointed out that it was north of the project limits, however a grist mill foundation, remnants of which appears to have straddled the Gunstock River, is located along the riverbank next to the intersection. T. Zanes stated that the geo-grid itself would be installed in the existing roadway slope and would not extend to the foundations, though there may be some fill needed along the toe of slope to install the grid. M. Laurin stated that there seemed to be a jumble of stones (likely from the foundation) in this area of potential fill and that the area seemed to have been previously disturbed by the construction of NH 11A. E. Feighner asked that a Site Form of the grist mill with appropriate photos and evaluation of the site be done. She asked that impacts be minimized. T. Zanes thought that most of the work in that area would be able to be done from above.

Laura Black stated that the project is located within the Gilford Village Historic District, but there is not much information on this District as it was never formalized. The Gilford Library is National Register-eligible. The Morrill Farm Tenant House is located west of NH 11A where the retaining wall will be rebuilt. Laura asked that the date of the construction of NH 11A/intersection changes be provided and that Section 106 feedback be received from the owners of the Morrill Farm Tenant House as well as from the Gilford Heritage Commission. If all are fine with the impacts, then there would not be a need to do any Inventory form. If needed the Inventory form would be for the Morrill Farm complex and the Historic District. T. Zanes stated that there were no concerns from the owners during the public informational meeting held in August 2012. L. Black reiterated that they would need to be specifically approached for their input on the Section 106 historic process.

****Memos/MOA's**:

Submitted by: Sheila Charles and Jill Edelmann, Cultural Resources

http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/technicalservices/crmeetings.htm