

# BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE REPORT

**SUBJECT:** Monthly SHPO-FHWA-ACOE-NHDOT Cultural Resources Meeting

**DATE OF CONFERENCES:** February 10, 2017

**LOCATION OF CONFERENCE:** John O. Morton Building

**ATTENDED BY:**

<b>NHDOT</b>	Leah Savage	<b>FHWA</b>	
Sheila Charles		Jamie Sikora	<b>Town of</b>
Victoria Chase	<b>NHDHR</b>		<b>Merrimack</b>
Jill Edelmann	Laura Black	<b>QCC</b>	Dawn Tuomala
Jon Hebert	Edna Feighner	James Bouchard	
Kirk Mudgett		Lisa Martin	
Rebecca Martin			

**PROJECTS/PRESENTATIONS REVIEWED THIS MONTH:**

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**Merrimack, 15841, X-A004(550)**

Participants: Robert Hudson, NHDOT; Dawn Tuomala, Town of Merrimack; Lisa Martin, James Bouchard, QCC.

Continued consultation to provide an update on the project status and to discuss potential mitigation for the adverse effect resulting from the removal of the abandoned Darrah Bridge on Bedford Road, adjacent to the proposed bridge replacement project. The Darrah Bridge is the second bridge at this location and is named after a local farmer.

L. Martin started the meeting by reviewing the project to date. The initial and continuing consultations occurred in 2013. Since then the project has been on hiatus pending allocation of funding. As discussed at previous meetings, the project will involve the replacement of the Bedford Road bridge over Baboosic Brook. The existing bridge is a 21-foot corrugated metal pipe structure that is undersized and contributes to routine backup and flooding of the area and frequent inundation of Bedford Road.

QCC evaluated a number of alternatives for replacement of the existing bridge including large span flood relief structure at location of roadway overtopping; two smaller structures one located at the roadway overtopping location and at the current crossing; and the large structure at the current crossing. The flood relief structure was reviewed with NHDES Wetlands Bureau and NH Fish and Game. Both entities discouraged placement of a structure at the overtopping location due to potential for increased erosion and sediment transport.

The project now proposes a 90-foot span at the existing crossing location. Hydraulic analyses have also identified the need for removal of the existing abandoned Darrah Bridge to increase hydraulic capacity.

QCC was questioned if the existing Darrah Bridge can remain with an additional culvert placed beside it for capacity. QCC noted that the existing bridge is below the 100-year flood occurrence elevation and routinely overtops.

QCC noted that following the February 14, 2013 consultation, an Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment was undertaken. Additionally, a Phase IB inventory was conducted with the test pits proving negative for sensitivity within the Area of Project Effect. An historical Individual Inventory Form was completed for the Darrah Bridge and the bridge received a Determination of Eligibility for the National Register under Criterion C – Engineering.

At the December 15, 2013 Continued Consultation it was concluded that the removal of the Darrah Bridge would be an adverse effect and that the Town should undertake a public participation process and follow guidelines for ACHP for determination of mitigation efforts.

On January 5, 2017, an Interested Parties Meeting was held at the Town of Merrimack public offices with notices/invitations provided to the general public, abutters, Town and State agencies. The Town and QCC presented the project including the purpose and need for the project, the preferred alternative, and the need for removal of the historic Darrah Bridge. Attendees provided good feedback as to potential mitigation efforts be in the form of an interpretive sign panel be developed and mounted on the replacement bridge. Preferred placement is on the outboard side of the sidewalk bridge rail so view is directed towards the current Darrah Bridge site.

Currently the project schedule is scheduled to bid this fall. As such, it is important to develop the Memo of Effect and proceed with the Memorandum of Agreement. The Adverse Effect Memo and MOA will be prepared for review and signature in the near future.

FHWA noted that a Section 4f process must be undertaken. QCC is aware and proceeding accordingly. It was noted that a Department of Interior review is required of the Section 4f documentation.

NHDHR inquired as the location of the plaque that was mounted on the Darrah Bridge. QCC noted that the Town has noted efforts to locate to no avail. NHDHR noted that one did exist on the other similar bridge removed, which is believed to be in the possession of the Town. This plaque could be utilized to link the history of the two bridges to the Town with presentation of history on the interpretive sign panel and/or brochure.

### **Ossipee 10431, C-MGS-NHS-X-T-027(032)**

Participants: Victoria Chase, Jon Hebert, Kirk Mudgett, Sally Gunn, Rebecca Martin; NHDOT

Jill Edelman distributed NH Division of Historic Resources Determination of Eligibility from February 8, 2017 for the Route 16 Project Area DOT Project 10431 (RPR8204). Rebecca Martin shared a packet of information detailing the results of the Area Form completed by Lisa Mausolf, the proposed project impacts, photos of eligible and potentially eligible resources, and current and historical plans.

The group is familiar with the project, which consists of two different proposed treatments. At the southern portion of the project beginning at the intersection of Route 16 and Route 28 the project proposes signal upgrades, restriping and a pavement overlay with minor drainage work. The

treatment will extend from the intersection with Route 28 on Route 16 to the intersection with Isaac Buswell Road. The slip ramp to merge onto Route 28 will be removed and a yield right turn lane will be constructed. From around the intersection with Isaac Buswell Road and extending north to just north of Polly's Crossing Road the treatment will be full box reconstruction with widening and drainage work. A concrete pad underneath the roadway will be removed. The project proposes 4 stormwater treatment areas. A Public Hearing for the project is scheduled for February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The Determination of Eligibility (DOE) Committee met on February 8<sup>th</sup> and recommended inventory updates for 3 properties that were previously surveyed in accordance with the 10 year policy: Isaac Buswell Park, Isaac Buswell House, and the Duncan Lake School House. In addition, the committee concurred with the consultant who recommended inventory of the Route 16 (Moore's/Twombly's) Dairy Bar, the Wood House located at 19 Elm Street, and Tompkin's Chalet. The DOE Committee also recommended more information for the stone box culvert proposed for removal and replacement as part of the Ossipee 10431 project drainage improvements.

The group discussed each of these potential resources, the DOE Committee recommendations, and proposed project impacts in these locations.

At the border of the overlay proposed in the southern portion of the project and the full box roadway reconstruction is the old Route 16 granite stone box culvert (2' X 3.5') at the intersection with Isaac Buswell Road. The culvert was significantly altered when the roadway was changed as shown on the 1930s Highway Plans, when a cast iron length was added to the old stone box culvert. The project proposes to replace the stone box culvert and cast iron pipe, due to instability and the benefit of straightening the drainage alignment.

Although the project area form prepared by Lisa Mausolf indicates that infrastructure such as culverts have been compromised by multiple road projects and changes in alignment, Laura Black recommended documentation of the culvert as part of ongoing research associated with state infrastructure. Sheila Charles shared that there have been two other stone culverts inventoried in Ossipee in 2007. Jill Edelmann commented on the lack of accessibility of the culvert. Sally Gunn commented that NH DOT cannot enter the culvert due to its dimensions. The photos that were available demonstrate that some of the granite blocks have fallen in. There is concern that if a new culvert were installed with the existing left in place, sink holes could develop. The group determined that during construction a member of the Bureau of Environment will document the culvert as it is removed. The culvert will be more accessible during removal. Photographs will be taken and documentation will be presented in a New Hampshire Individual Inventory form. It is recommended that sections of the stone culvert form used in the ca. 2007 culvert inventory be used and included, as appropriate, as a tool to share information specific to culverts. Individuals conducting the documentation should be aware and take precautions due to the presence of poison ivy.

The next cultural resource along the proposed project area discussed was Isaac Buswell Park on Route 16 at the intersection with Isaac Buswell Road. This property was previously inventoried (Inventory #OSS0003) by Lisa Mausolf and in 2001 was determined by the DHR DOE committee to not be eligible for the National Register. On 2/8/2017 the DOE committee recommended an updated individual inventory form for the park to clarify the age and significance of the park. Jill

Edelmann shared that she called Lisa Mausolf and discussed the park. Lisa Mausolf had shared with Jill Edelmann on the phone that there was very little information available about the park. Lisa has been unable to find concrete information on the development of the park after reviewing town histories, directories and annual reports. Jon Hebert explained that the project does not propose any impacts to the park. Rebecca Martin directed the group to a photo of the monument in the park within the informational packet. The group agreed that since there will not be impacts to the park, no inventory will be completed for this project.

The group next discussed the Isaac Buswell House located at 4 Isaac Buswell Road. The DOE committee had recommended an inventory update in accordance with the 10 year policy. The group briefly discussed that in 2001 it was determined that the property was Not Eligible (Inventory #OSS0004). The group commented on some of the alterations to the property that led to the previous determination. Laura Black commented that the way that properties are evaluated has evolved over the last 16 years since the property was inventoried. Jon Hebert and Kirk Mudgett commented on the very small drainage easement proposed on the property for replacement of the stone culvert. The group viewed photos of the property and viewed the area of proposed impacts from Google Streetview. The drainage easement proposed is on the northern portion of the property near the property boundary in the area of a large sign advertising the business (Rhymes) which occupies the Isaac Buswell House. The area where the drainage easement is proposed is across a gravel parking lot from the building. Laura Black commented that an inventory is not necessary for the current project because of the minimal impacts proposed and since the landscape in the area of the proposed impacts has previously been altered.

The group next discussed the Route 16 Dairy Bar, which is also known as Moore's/Twombly's Dairy Bar. Jon Hebert explained that the project proposes to adjust the alignment of the Elm Street intersection with Route 16. The two way left turn lane will extend to this area to address public concerns about access during periods of heavy traffic. The proposal to adjust the alignment of Elm Street would include some impacts to the grass/gravel island at the corner of the intersection. A very small amount of these impacts could possibly be on the property of the Dairy Bar. The project proposes to add a curb and grass island. Sally Gunn commented that there would be some impacts to the business through construction. Jamie Sikora commented that access to the business would be maintained throughout construction. Sally Gunn indicated the elevation will be maintained and that there are multiple means of access to the facility, and thus access will not be lost during construction. Jon Hebert indicated that proposed actions will not affect the proprietors' parking space. Sally Gunn commented that the activity in this area would not be prolonged. Alternating one way traffic may be necessary during the day, but two way traffic would be restored at the end of the work day. Laura Black commented that she recommends an individual inventory for this parcel.

The group had an extended discussion about the appropriateness of an inventory form for the parcel, considering the minor impacts proposed to the parcel for the project. Laura Black indicated that she was not sure if the parcel would be determined to be eligible, but that it would be wise to inventory the parcel. Jill Edelmann commented that even if the project were determined to be eligible, the impacts on the property proposed are very minor and would likely not constitute an adverse affect. She indicated impacts are being minimized and the business will have continued access while they are open. She inquired about what potential mitigation would be appropriate for such small impacts. Laura Black commented that she did not know if the property was eligible, but

that it might be prudent to contact the property owners to see if they would have concerns regarding the project activities.

Victoria Chase shared that the property owners had received a certified letter regarding the upcoming Public Meeting, but that they have not made contact to date. She mentioned that it was unlikely that there would be an opportunity to interact with the property owners as they are likely out of state. The group discussed that the construction of the project will pose a temporary inconvenience for all of the business owners in the area due to traffic slowdowns, noise, and dust. There are standard provisions included in NH DOT contracts to minimize these impacts.

Sally Gunn inquired about the process for evaluating effects to historic resources and Laura Black explained that the first step is to identify if impacted properties are eligible or listed on the National Register. Laura Black reiterated that it would be good to know if the property owners have concerns about the project and potential business impacts. Laura Black commented that it is best to look at the project holistically. Jamie Sikora commented that the right-of-way process can not begin until NEPA is complete and that a Section 106 finding is needed for completion of NEPA.

The group agreed to come back to the property at the end of the meeting. Once the other properties with potential impacts were discussed, the group returned to the Dairy Bar discussion. Jill Edelmann commented that in her mind, if the property were eligible, it would be for the building and not for the large expanse of parking and pavement around the building. Laura Black commented that the property warrants survey, the question is whether the impacts of the proposed project warrant a survey. Laura Black said she would leave it to NH DOT to determine if the property should be inventoried at this time. Victoria Chase commented that when she had spoken with Leah Savage about the Elm Street intersection, Leah Savage seemed confident that impacts to the property could be avoided. The group discussed that the two way left turn lane and realignment of Elm Street would have a positive impact on the Dairy Bar. However, since the project schedule affords little room for delays, the group determined that the proposed impacts will be shifted off of the Route 16 Dairy Bar. If the realignment cannot be completed without impacting the Dairy Bar parcel, Jon Hebert commented that the scope at the intersection work can be reduced to a pavement overlay of Elm Street. The project will commit to not impacting the Dairy Bar property, and so, an individual inventory of the property will not be necessary for this project.

\*\*\*Leah Savage commented after the meeting that she believes it is plausible that the current plan to shift Elm Street slightly can be accomplished without impacts to the Dairy Bar property. However, she has not had sufficient time with the design to guarantee that this is possible. Rebecca Martin shared with Leah Savage that during the meeting it was determined that the project will not impact the Dairy Bar property and that Jon Hebert had shared that a change to the scope of the impacts at the Elm Street intersection is possible, to include reducing the length of the two-way left turn lane on Route 16 and an overlay of Elm Street.

The group discussed the wood house located at 19 Elm Street. Rebecca Martin explained that previously traffic had travelled down Elm Street and onto Island Path, but that in the 1930s the road was rerouted to the current location of NH Route 16. The group viewed an image of the Wood House from Elm Street and from Route 16 through the forested area adjacent to Route 16 using Google Streetview. The group discussed that the project will include some tree clearing and may impact a stone wall that is perpendicular to NH Route 16 on this property. Laura Black

commented that it is good to be aware of how the stone wall relates to the property and to follow the DOT Stone Wall Policy guidelines. Sheila Charles explained that if there are small impacts to perpendicular stone walls, the stone wall will not be reconstructed. The group agreed that no individual inventory is necessary for the Wood House for the current project impacts.

The property adjacent to 19 Elm Street is the Folsom House at 3 Island Path. This house is similar to the neighboring 19 Elm, there is a forested area between the house and Route 16. The impacts proposed will be similar to those at 19 Elm, a small amount of clearing and potential impacts to a stone wall. The DHR DOE committee did not recommend an inventory of the property due to a loss of integrity. The group discussed that the impacts to the stone wall would be minor and no individual inventory will be needed, although the DOT Stone Wall Policy guidelines should be followed.

The Tompkins Chalet at 939 Route 16 was discussed. This property was recommended by the DHR DOE for further study if it would be impacted by the proposed project. The group discussed that the tree clearing was expected to be within the existing State right of way, but that there was potential for some minor slope impacts or a temporary construction easement on the property. Laura Black commented that if there will be impacts, the property should be inventoried. Jon Hebert commented that he can tighten up the back slope and ensure that the property is not impacted. The group agreed that if impacts to the property are avoided, no individual inventory is needed.

The Duncan Lake School House (7 Island Path) was determined to be eligible in 2001, but according to the Project Area Form completed in 2016 by Lisa Mausolf, the property has seen some significant alterations. The DHR DOE committee recommended an update to the Individual Inventory form per NH 10-year survey policy. The group discussed the project impacts in the vicinity of the property. Laura Black commented that it is important to be mindful that the NR boundary may not coincide with the State right of way. Jon Hebert commented that some tree clearing may be necessary in the area, but that the project will avoid impacts to the stone wall that marks the boundary of the Duncan Lake School House property. Laura Black commented that if impacts to the property are avoidable, a new inventory form does not need to be completed for the current project as work will avoid and be outside of the stone wall perimeter.

\*\*\*A review of the NH DHR Inventory OSS0008 which was reviewed by the DHR DOE committee on January 24, 2001 indicated that the “historic boundary of this property would be synonymous with the current tax map parcel (Map 19, Lot 136) which represents all that remains of the original schoolhouse property.” This does not suggest that the boundary would extend into the State right of way.

The Bertwell House (stone house) was discussed. The property was previously determined to be eligible for the National Register, and as there have not been significant changes, the DOE committee did not recommend any additional survey. Jon Hebert and Kirk Mudgett explained that impacts within the State right of way may include curbing or ditching in front of the property, but that there would be no impacts to the property or the stone wall in front of the property. Jill Edelmann commented that this would not adversely affect the property because the project will maintain the current conditions and direct water away from the property.

The group agreed that if there were changes to the design of the project after the NEPA process is complete, the impacts to any eligible or potentially eligible (i.e. future study recommended by DOE committee) would need to be evaluated. There was concurrence that, as currently proposed and with the commitments discussed, the proposed project will result in no adverse effects to cultural resources.

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

Submitted by: Sheila Charles and Jill Edelman, Cultural Resources