BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT
CONFERENCE REPORT

SUBJECT: Monthly SHPO-FHWA-ACOE-NHDOT Cultural Resources Meeting
DATE OF CONFERENCES: August 4, 2011
LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: John O. Morton Building
ATTENDED BY:

NHDOT
John Butler
Jill Edelmann
Jon Evans
Cathy Goodmen
Jim Kirouac
Tonya Loveday
Joyce McKay
Kevin Nyhan
Christine Perron
Susan Soucie
Alex Vogt

Federal Highway Administration
Jamie Sikora

NHDHR
Laura Black
Edna Feighner

NHDRED
Chris Gamache

Town of Bristol
Michael Capone

Town of Enfield
Steve Schneider

FNRT
Alex Bernhard

City of Keene
Rhett Lamb

KV Partners
Mike Vignale

Preservation Consultant
Liz Hengen

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

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

August 4, 2011 1
Enfield, X-A000(087), 12967B 1
New Hampton 13876 (no federal funding for this portion) 4
Keene, Cheshire Railroad Stone Arch Bridge 5
Bristol, X-A001(092), 16026 5
Franklin, X-A000(737), 13928A 6
Sanbornton, X-A000(214), 16293 7
Lancaster (no project numbers) 7

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

August 4, 2011

Enfield, X-A000(087), 12967B
Participants: John Butler, Jon Evans and Alex Vogt, NHDOT; Alex Bernhard, consulting party, Northern Rail Trail; Steve Schneider, Town of Enfield

Jon Evans began the meeting by indicating that the intent of the meeting was to run though each of the alternatives and determine the effect each alternative would have on the areas cultural resources. He felt the best way to determine the effect was to briefly review the design of each alternative prior to a discussion of its effect on area cultural resources. J. Evans also indicated that as a result of the last April meeting, the Department developed another alternative (alternative 2A) which would be reviewed in more detail during this meeting.

John Butler summarized the alternatives that have been developed to date prior to each discussion on the alternatives effects on area cultural resources:

Alternative 1

Construct a grade separated crossing with a new bridge carrying the rail-trail over Main Street. Main Street would be relocated slightly to the east. The rail-trail would be raised by approximately 8 feet to achieve appropriate vertical clearance over Main Street. Short 5% grades would be required on the rail-trail approaches to the bridge. A sidewalk would be constructed along Main Street to connect the existing sidewalk north of Sargent Street to the proposed sidewalk that will be constructed on the new bridge over Mascoma Lake. This sidewalk connection would be part of the proposed layout with any of the alternatives. This alternative impacts the rail-trail bridge and profile, and has a small impact on the former motel property.

Laura Black indicated that this alternative would result in an adverse effect given the substantial alterations to the grade of the existing railroad profile, the removal of the existing bridge and the installation of a new bridge structure along the rail corridor. Jamie Sikora indicated that he agreed with this conclusion.

Alternative 2

Construct an at-grade Main Street/rail-trail crossing by raising Main Street slightly and lowering the rail-trail. The rail-trail would be lowered by approximately 9 feet with 4% or 5% grades leading down to Main Street and short landing areas at the bottom. Main Street would be realigned similar to Alternative 1. Lowering the rail-trail may impact an underground fiber optic cable that runs along the rail corridor. This alternative impacts the rail-trail bridge and profile, and has a small impact on the former motel property.

L. Black indicated that this alternative would result in an adverse effect given the substantial alterations to the grade of the existing railroad profile and the removal of the existing bridge. Jamie Sikora indicated that he agreed with this conclusion.

Alternative 2A

This alternative is similar to Alternative 2 except it doesn’t lower the rail trail by as much as in Alternative 2. It would construct an at-grade Main Street/rail-trail crossing by shifting Main Street approximately 70 feet to the east of the existing underpass. The profile of Main Street would be brought up by approximately 4 feet and the profile of the rail trail would be lowered by approximately 6 feet at the proposed crossing location. This would result in 3% and 2% grades on the rail trail approaching the crossing from the southwest and northeast sides, respectively. This alternative would result in small impacts to the former motel property.

L. Black indicated that despite the fact that this alternative has less of a change to the grades on the railroad bed, it would still result in an adverse effect given the alterations to the grade of the existing railroad profile and the removal of the existing bridge. Jamie Sikora indicated that he agreed with this conclusion.

Alternative 3

Upgrade the existing emergency access road to become a permanent relocation of Main Street. The south end of the access road would be realigned to become free-flowing rather than a 90 degree turn, the profile would be flattened near the rail trail crossing (currently about 8%), and the entire roadway would need to be widened. A “T” intersection would remain near the north end of the project. This alternative would not impact the rail-trail profile or bridge, but would impact the entire former motel property.

L. Black indicated that although this alternative does involve the addition of a new at grade crossing, this alternative would result in a no adverse effect determination as it involves only minor alterations to the profile of the railroad and leaves the existing Main Street bridge untouched. She also indicated that this alternative brings the new permanent roadway through an existing break in the treeline/vegetation leaving it more intact to block the view of the more modern roadway structure. Jamie Sikora indicated that he agreed with this conclusion.

Alternative 4

Relocate Main Street opposite Sargent Street, forming a 4-leg intersection, which would operate as either a 3-way or 4-way stop. The rail-trail would need to be lowered by approximately 3 feet to match the elevation of Main Street. The rail-trail profile would be modified with a 1% grade on the north side of Main Street and a short 5% grade on the south side. The existing bridge would not be impacted. Approximately two thirds of the former motel property would be impacted.

L. Black indicated that although this alternative does involve the addition of a new at grade crossing, this alternative would result in a no adverse effect determination as it involves only minor alterations to the profile of the railroad and leaves the existing Main Street bridge untouched. Jamie Sikora indicated that he agreed with this conclusion.

Alternative 5

Relocate Main Street with short reversing curves (minimum radii for a 30 mph design speed), keeping it as a free-flow roadway similar to Alternative 2. Main Street would be raised to match the elevation of the rail-trail. A design concern with this alternative is that the position of the crest in Main Street relative to the horizontal curves could make it difficult for drivers to see the horizontal curves after traveling over the crest. This alternative would not impact the rail-trail profile or bridge, but would impact approximately two thirds of the former motel property.

L. Black indicated that although this alternative does involve the addition of a new at grade crossing, this alternative would result in a no adverse effect determination as it involves only minor alterations to the profile of the railroad and leaves the existing Main Street bridge untouched. Jamie Sikora indicated that he agreed with this conclusion.

Alex Bernhard asked when the Department could produce a defined purpose and need. J. Evans responded that typically the purpose and need would be included in the environmental document. It was agreed that the Department would provide the purpose and need statement shortly, in advance of the environmental document.

New Hampton 13876 (no federal funding for this portion)
Participants: Jon Evans and Jim Kirouac

This project involves the reconstruction and expansion of the existing New Hampton Park and Ride facility as well as the widening of a 1,000 foot section of nearby NH Route 104. Jon Evans began by indicating that the park and ride portion of the project was reviewed at the April 5, 2007 Cultural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting. At that meeting it was determined that the project would not impact any historical properties or archaeological resources.

J. Evans indicated that the Department has since changed the project. He noted that the park and ride expansion has remained relatively the same to what was previously presented. The only changes to the park and ride portion of the project were to reconfigure the parking space design and add a detention basin to allow for treatment of the water running off the facility. All of this work will still be contained within the Department's existing property boundaries.

J. Evans indicated that the Department had also added a second portion to the project. This portion of the project involves the expansion of the eastbound shoulder of NH Route 104 approximately 2.3 miles east of its intersection with I-93 at exit 23. As this portion of the project is really a separate effort which was not previously reviewed by DHR, J. Evans provided DHR with an RPR form for the Route 104 widening. Jim Kirouac indicated that the intent of this effort was to expand the existing 4-foot shoulder to a 10-foot shoulder to allow eastbound traffic to go around vehicles turning into the Route 104 Diner. He indicated that this will require the reconstruction of approximately 1,000 feet of NH Route 104. The department intends to achieve the additional shoulder width and eliminate the need for guardrail by cutting and filling adjacent to the eastbound side of the roadway, utilizing 4:1 slopes. A substantial portion of the cut sections will require ledge removal which will most likely entail blasting. This effort will require property impacts to Parcel 1 in the form of a permanent slope easement.

J. Evans indicated that only the Park and Ride facility involves funding from FHWA. The Route 104 efforts are being constructed using state Betterment funds and therefore do not have any direct Federal participation. He indicated that while both efforts will be constructed under the same project they are really two separate efforts and therefore the Department would like to obtain separate effect determinations.

Edna Feighner indicated that she did not have any archaeological concerns with either the park and ride or the Route 104 work. As the older than fifty years diner in the Rt. 104 project area has been substantially altered and will not be impacted, and the impacted property along Rt. 104 is modern, Laura Black indicated that neither effort would result in impacts to historic properties. It was determined that the April 12, 2007 No Historic Properties Affected Memo still stands for the park and ride facility portion of the project and that the Route 104 effort would also result in a No Historic Properties Affected determination as well. A memo indicating such was subsequently signed on August 10, 2011.

Keene, Cheshire Railroad Stone Arch Bridge
Participants: Chris Gamache (cgamache@dred.state.nh.us), DRED; Rhett Lamb, City of Keene

The proposed MOA was previously reviewed on July 14, 2011. This meeting was specifically to receive input from DRED on the proposed MOA language. C. Gamache stated that DRED has very limited involvement on this section of the trail, and would leave it up to city of they wanted DRED as a signatory.

The City agreed that even though there is limited involvement at present, there may be additional involvement in the future, and would prefer DRED sign the MOA.

DRED had very limited changes to the MOA; one was to include DRED in the 'whereas' statements. The other was to include the word 'wheeled' under Section D.

All changes were agreed upon, and the revised MOA would be sent out once more for all parties to review.

Bristol, X-A001(092), 16026
Participants: Mike Vignale, KV Partners (mvignale@kvpllc.com); Liz Hengen, Preservation Consultant

Mike Vignale and Liz Hengen gave a brief description of the project as follows:

- The limits of work include portions of Pleasant Street, North Main Street, South Main Street and Summer Street as depicted on the attached plans. The project includes roadway reconstruction, sidewalks, drainage improvements, intersection improvements, street trees, and streetscape amenities at Central Square in Bristol, NH. The project area is within the Central Square National Register Historic District.

- The majority of the work will be completed within the Town's right-of-way but it is possible that grading rights of entry agreements may be required to match into existing grades. No permanent acquisition will be required.

- The proposed improvements include relocation of Route 104 (Summer Street and Pleasant Street) to the north to improve roadway alignment, addition of a left turn lane for safety, removal of excess pavement areas to create a Town Common area and enhance pedestrian safety, possible relocation of the cannon and three war memorial monuments (to another location in the square), street trees, ornamental lighting and associated streetscape elements. All streetscape elements will be designed to be consistent with the historic character of the area.

- The proposed excavation limits will be within the proposed improvements depicted on the plans. In general, the depth of construction will be 2 feet or less to allow curb, sidewalks and roadway base materials to be constructed. Proposed drainage (not shown on the plan at

this time), light pole bases, relocated monument bases, flag pole base, and street trees will all require some limited excavation deeper than 2 feet.

Comments from the panel included:

- Archeological monitoring is required during construction for the NHDOT owned parcel at the north end of the square (currently a parking lot). This parcel was the site of a building that burned down many years ago.

- The tree locations should be around the perimeter of the site to maintain the openness of the square. Smaller planting within the square might be acceptable.

- If the monuments were to be relocated they should be located such that their appearance and visibility is enhanced. There were no specific concerns raised about relocating the monuments but additional detail is required for review.

- Once concepts for the common area and plantings (including lighting, benches, trash receptacles, etc.) are further developed this project will be presented again to the Cultural Resources group. It was suggested that Liz Hengen continue to consult with the development of the plans

Franklin, X-A000(737), 13928A
Participants: Cathy Goodmen and Alex Vogt

The continued review of project to improve the intersection of US Route 3 and Industrial Park Drive in Franklin, NH was presented. The project will include full reconstruction of US Route 4 approximately 1000 feet north and south of the intersection with Industrial Park Drive. This will include constructing a right turn lane south bound on the west side, before the intersection, adding 4-foot shoulders and a 12-foot bypass shoulder on the east side of the northbound lane at the intersection. Alex Vogt presented proposed impacts to the Northern Rail Road Trail Corridor due to widening of US Route 3 and subsequent new guard rail and utility poles. NHDOT wishes to purchase additional right of way at various locations along the project area for the Highway as the existing right of way is very narrow and will not allow for the widening and maintenance. The utility poles should be placed 8 feet from the face of the guardrail. The proposed right-of-way would be approximately split between the highway and the center of the rail-trail. The project will also improve the drainage culverts at some locations, which may impact the rail-trail corridor. The project is to advertise in autumn of 2013 and start construction in 2014.

Alex Bernhard of the Friends of the Northern Rail Trail, Merrimack County, FNRT, noted that they have a grant to improve the trail with the addition of ballast and trimming of the vegetation. This work will begin in autumn of 2011. E. Feighner noted that there is some erosion at the north end of the project on the east side of the rail bed. If NHDOT goes out of the shown disturbed area, archaeology testing will be needed due to the close proximity to the Merrimack River. L. Black noted that there appears to be no concerns with above ground resources and no major impact to the RR line. It was noted that the trail will most likely have temporarily short closures if any drainage work has to be done to some of the culverts. A. Bernhard noted that this project will be beneficial

as it will improve the drainage in the area. As the proposed project does not have any significant archaeological or architectural concerns, it was determined to have No Adverse Effect, noting that if NHDOT goes outside of previously disturbed areas, all necessary phases of archaeology will be completed.

Sanbornton, X-A000(214), 16293
Participants: Susan Soucie, NHDOT

Susan Soucie presented a District 3 Maintenance project containing betterment funding, located on NH Route 132 in the Town of Sanbornton starting from Pearly Hill Road to the Junction of NH Route 127. S. Soucie informed DHR that DOT was proposing underdrain work that is on the edge of the previously disturbed roadway shoulder. She also mentioned that the project would include culvert replacements on numerous small pipes that were sent through the NH DES wetlands process and subsequently reviewed by DHR during that time without concern. S. Soucie informed the committee that no mature trees would be cut unless one posed as an immanent threat to public safety. In addition, the Department would not be impacting any stone walls and all work will be contained within the existing ROW. As such, Susan noted that a No Adverse Effect Memo was issued for a previous segment of work that was done to NH Route 132 last year. The proposed project is located outside the limits of the Sanbornton Historic District. E. Feighner had no archaeological concerns, as the work is proposed within previously disturbed areas. L. Black was not concerned with above ground resources being impacted, as stone walls and mature trees will not be impacted and the work is not within in the known Historic District boundary. All existing culverts are modern. It was agreed that this project will have a No Historic Properties Affected determination.

Lancaster (no project numbers)
Participants: Christine Perron

Christine Perron provided an overview of this District 1 maintenance project. A stone box culvert, located under NH Route 135, was at some point extended with a 15” concrete pipe at the inlet side. The stone structure is deteriorating and must be replaced in order to protect the integrity of the roadway. The replacement structure has not yet been determined but will likely be approximately the same length. The Connecticut River is nearby.

The end of the stone box culvert that is visible (outlet end) is collapsing. Several stones have fallen into the stream channel, blocking the outlet of the pipe. The interior of the box is narrow and some stones appear to be shifting. The culvert is not listed in Rich Casella’s Historic Stone Highway Culverts in NH Asset Management Manual.

Edna Feighner stated that she had no concerns with archaeological resources. Laura Black stated that the box looked like a basic example and was probably constructed by local workers to serve a specific purpose. She asked that a culvert form be completed to determine the structure’s eligibility.

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

Submitted by: Joyce McKay, Cultural Resources Manager
Jill Edelmann, Cultural Resources Assistant

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