BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT

CONFERENCE REPORT

DATE OF CONFERENCES: July 2 and 10, 2008

LOCATION OF CONFERENCES: J.O. Morton Building

ATTENDED BY: Joyce McKay, Sarah LeVaun Graulty, Kevin Nyhan, Marc Laurin, Matt Urban, Mike Dugas, Chris Waszczuk, Trent Zanes, Christine Perron, Steve Johnson, Nancy Mayville, Harry Hadaway, Laurel Kenna, Matt Urban, Charlie Hood, NHDOT; Edna Feighner, Linda Wilson, Beth Muzzey, Chris St. Louis, NHDHR; Jamie Sikora, John Cater, FHWA; Dan Allen, Friends of the Northern Rail Trail; Jason Lodge, HTA.

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

Berlin, X-A000(052), 12958B
Windham Surplus Land
Lebanon, NH-Hartford, VT, X-A000(627), 14957
Andover, X-A000(219), 14169
Andover-Wilmot-Danbury X-A000(219), 14823
Nashua-Hudson 10644 (no federal number)
Winchester, DPR-BRF-X-0111(005), 12906
Winchester Ashuelot Branch RR Corridor (STP-TE-000S(201), 12133-C
Eaton, 14168 (no federal number)

Agenda

Wednesday, July 2, 2008

Berlin, X-A000(052), 12958B. P**articipants: Elizabeth Muzzey, Linda Wilson, NHDHR; Jamie Sikora, John Canter, FHWA; Lynne Emerson Monroe, Kari Laprey, Preservation Company; Chris Waszczuk, Mike Dugas, Trent Zanes, Marc Laurin, Joyce McKay, Sarah LeVaun Graulty, NHDOT.**

Attendees met for a preliminary discussion of the historical properties adjacent to and within the 4E and 2 alternative corridors for the reconstruction of NH Route 110 that travels through the Berlin Heights District. At the outset of the meeting, L. Monroe noted that roughly ninety percent (or more) of the buildings in the Berlin Heights Historic District are contributing. The density of original fabric is high, and many of the structures date to approximately 1890 to 1930. The district boundary is a combination of a grid plan and the consultant's visual inspection for contributing/non-contributing properties.

L. Monroe noted that the discussion was not intended to be a debate over eligibility – there was a consensus determination on this matter approximately two years ago. Instead, the meeting was intended to update the NHDOT and NHDHR on the findings of Preservation Company concerning district boundaries and integrity in the project area.

L. Monroe and K. Laprey presented an overview and context discussion for the historic district, including the evolution of the neighborhood. The Berlin Heights Historic District grew out of several subdivision plans laid out in Berlin in 1892-3. Plan D (1892) created the characteristic Y-intersection at Green Street and Second Avenue. Plan E (1893) laid out a very specific grid, as well as "Grand Boulevard" at Third Avenue. Zoning was not introduced in Berlin until 1929.

L. Monroe then presented the resources that would be affected by both Alternative 2 and Alternative 4e. She offered photographs of each impacted building, noted whether or not it was contributing, and whether or not it would be taken under the alternative. Digital copies of this PowerPoint presentation were distributed to both DHR and DOT.

In total, Preservation Company broke each alternative down as follows (though visual impacts and effects may change):

Alternative 2:

Taken

9 Contributing (C) Primary Buildings
3 Contributing (C) Secondary Buildings
2 Noncontributing (NC) Primary Buildings
1 Noncontributing (NC) Secondary Building

Visual Effect

30 Contributing (C) Primary Buildings
16 Contributing (C) Secondary Buildings
2 Noncontributing (NC) Primary Buildings
3 Noncontributing (NC) Secondary Buildings

In addition, Alternative 2, she noted, eliminates the broad, straight character of Third Avenue's Grand Boulevard – an important contributing element in the district.

Alternative 4e:

Taken

26 Contributing (C) Primary Buildings
12 Contributing (C) Secondary Buildings
3 Noncontributing (NC) Primary Buildings
1 Noncontributing (NC) Secondary Building

Visual Effect

15 Contributing (C) Primary Buildings
13 Contributing (C) Secondary Buildings

1 Noncontributing (NC) Primary Building
4 Noncontributing (NC) Secondary Buildings

Additionally, Alternative 4e would take a significant building known as the French Block. This building type is a variation on the triple-decker type.

After the presentation by Preservation Company, the group briefly discussed the process by which an alternative will be chosen. B. Muzzey stressed the importance of keeping the neighborhood's residents involved in the decision process. C. Waszczuk observed that the city had held many planning meetings to identify the 4e alternative. The need for a community impact assessment was discussed. C. Waszczuk requested J. McKay to investigate who might conduct such a study and whether comparable projects had been completed with an assessment of project effect on the project area several years after completion. What would happen to the neighborhood if the truck route were removed? It was also noted that heavy pedestrian traffic in the area should also be considered. J. Sikora reminded the group that ACHP should be contacted and might want to be a consulting party.

On July 16th, representatives from DOT will meet with City staff at the Berlin City Hall.

Thursday, July 10, 2008

Windham Surplus Land. Participant: Cathy Goodmen (6781).

NHDOT has had a request to purchase 8.3 acres of land adjacent to the south side of the new NH Route 111 alignment and just west of the Boston and Maine Railroad Recreation Trail. This parcel is currently wooded, but was most likely farmed at one time as there are several stone walls on property lines and none of the trees are very large diameter. The only access to the parcel is a narrow frontage on Range Road. This land is on high ground, so any access would need to create a sloping drive. The prospective purchasers most likely want the parcel as a buffer to their property. The parcel is approximately 0.25 miles from Canobie Lake, so there is the possibility of pre-historic resources. E. Feighner requested that if we sell this parcel there be language in the transfer of the land that states that if any excavation were to take place all necessary phases of archaeological investigation would need to be conducted before the excavation. The parcel should be transmitted with an easement to that effect.

Lebanon, NH-Hartford, VT, X-A000(627), 14957. Participants: Christine Perron (3717) and Steve Johnson.

The presentation involved an initial review of replacement options for the US Route 4 Bridge over the Connecticut River (Bridge #058/127). This project is still in the conceptual design phase. The eligible structure consists of two riveted High Pratt Trusses and one riveted Warren Pony Truss placed on stone abutments and piers with concrete caps. Approximately 14,000 vehicles cross the bridge each day. The bridge

was built in 1936, with a major rehabilitation completed in 1975. The bridge has deteriorated since the last rehabilitation, with significant corrosion throughout the bottom chord and truss system. In addition to this deterioration, the bridge also has geometric deficiencies that cause safety concerns. First, its curb-to-curb width is only 24 feet. The narrow width leaves no room for bicycles, and any bicyclists traveling into Vermont must cross vehicular traffic to walk their bicycles on the sidewalk along the south side of the bridge. Second, the vertical clearance of the bridge is only 13'-9" at the high trusses, which have been hit at least twice by trucks. Finally, the bridge approaches have poor geometry, resulting in poor sight distance and contributing to accidents.

Potential archaeological resources were discussed first. Given the location along the Connecticut River, an area known for its high potential for deep archeological deposits, Joyce McKay suggested that a combined Phase IA/IB survey with a backhoe should be completed in all four quadrants within 200 feet of the bridge. Edna Feighner concurred. Currently, it appears that archaeological survey would be needed for the on-line and upstream options.

Steve Johnson presented photos of the existing bridge structure showing the extent of deterioration on the existing trusses. The photos showed holes through chord members, seriously deteriorated gusset plates, deteriorated tension chord splices, and damage to the portal framing from over-height trucks. He noted that the rate of deterioration has accelerated, and the project is being moved up in the program to address concerns about the structure.

Steve Johnson presented alignments for three replacement options, noting that these are still conceptual. Listed in order of preference:

1) New bridge upstream from existing bridge – this alignment results in the best geometry and is the least expensive option. Two or three buildings would need to be removed (1 in NH, 1-2 in VT), all of which are potentially historic.
2) New bridge on existing alignment – this option is costly due to the necessity for a temporary bridge, which would be placed just downstream. The temporary bridge could be installed without impacting any buildings.
3) New bridge downstream from existing bridge – this alignment has undesirable geometry and would require the removal of at least three buildings (2 in NH, 1 in VT), one of which is potentially historic (in NH). This option would also impact a park and would require the construction of a new railroad overpass in Vermont.

Feighner asked if the existing bridge could be used as a pedestrian bridge. Johnson stated that the preference is to remove the existing bridge because of the high cost of rehabilitation and maintenance that would be necessary even for pedestrian traffic. Pedestrian loading for the full width of the existing deck is almost equivalent to truck loading, so the rehabilitation to carry pedestrian traffic would be essentially the same as that required to carry truck traffic. A narrower width path could be put on the structure to reduce the load, but unless the path is enclosed by chain link fencing, it would be tempting for adolescents to "walk the floor beams" out to the trusses. Feighner stated

that these costs must be looked at in comparison to the overall project and reported at a future meeting. For instance, would using the existing bridge for pedestrians preclude the need for sidewalks on the new bridge, therefore reducing the cost of the new bridge?

Linda Wilson asked if closing this bridge altogether was an option. Johnson and Alex Vogt replied that other crossing options are some distance away. There is so much traffic at this bridge that closing it would create a huge inconvenience and could cause traffic issues at other crossings. The bridge was closed for several months during the 1975 rehab when there was significantly less traffic and drivers were apparently extremely displeased with the closing even for that short period of time.

If the existing bridge was used for pedestrians, Wilson asked if signals could be added at either end of the new bridge to allow bicycles a safe opportunity to cross traffic to get to the pedestrian bridge. Johnson noted that another traffic light could create safety and traffic concerns, but that the traffic data would need to be analyzed to determine if this was feasible. Vogt noted that bicyclists could currently use an existing crosswalk at the intersection of Route 10 (to the east of the bridge).

Sarah Graulty reviewed photographs of the potentially historic buildings in the project area. In NH, State Line Sports and the diner are potentially eligible structures. There is a Queen Anne style dwelling in the northeast quadrant that would act as a potential constraint to the project. In Vermont, the two tenement buildings in the northwest quadrant are potentially eligible, as well as the railroad overpass. Wilson concurred that Individual Forms would need to be completed for these structures and that a District Area Form would not be necessary. It was noted that this effort would need to be coordinated with Vermont. It was also noted that additional potentially eligible buildings lie just outside the project area; these may need to be inventoried if the project area expands. Currently, the expected project area is located between the intersection of Crafts Avenue in NH and the railroad overpass in Vermont.

Wilson asked if a skewed alignment that would avoid buildings was possible. Johnson said that he has tried numerous alignments and presented only those options that are feasible and logical. Some of the options that were rejected could be shown at a future meeting to explain why they are not feasible or logical.

Request for Project Review Form. Participants: Charlie Hood; Christine St. Louis, Edna Feighner, NHDHR.

DHR's expectations of the DOT regarding this new form were discussed. E. Feighner and C. St. Louis went through the RPR form and explained which information should be provided by DOT and to what degree of detail. DOT agreed to supply the requested information, which will often be very brief and general but will nevertheless allow DHR to create a record in their database and streamline the review process. Normally, NHDOT would need to complete only the first page and append a USGS map and reduced project map and photos if available. Municipalities could bring plan sheets,

USGS map, and photographs to the meeting, and the form could be completed during the meeting. If the project is reviewed in-house and not presented to NHDHR, then the completion of a form is unnecessary.

Andover-Wilmot-Danbury X-A000(219), 14823. Participant: Dan Allen (natanddan@nhvt.net; 763-5320).

D. Allen, Project Environmental Coordinator, came before the committee for an initial discussion of the proposed application of hard pack surface to the Northern Rail Trail from Potter Place in Andover, through Wilmot, and to the Highway Garage in Danbury, an 8.3 mile-long TE project. This section of trail has a surface of 3" ballast that was laid in the 1970s through an EDA grant and is not conducive to recreational use. This trail conversion project proposes grading the ballast and installing rock dust on top.

This action was determined not to be an Adverse Effect to archaeological or aboveground resources. However, D. Allen explained that the group might want to clean culverts and ditches as part of this project, in which case archaeological sensitivity might come into play. Once the group has a plan for cleaning, the proposed work should be reviewed by E. Feighner and DHR because there are areas of sensitivity along this corridor. A no adverse effect to resources and a de minimis finding for Section 4(f) was also found for this project.

D. Allen will fill out the Municipal Memo and email it to S. Graulty or J. McKay.

Nashua-Hudson 10644 (no federal number). Participants: Harry Hadaway, Nancy Mayville, and Marc Laurin.

Information on the historic status, commitments and potential historic covenants need to be determined to assist the Department's appraiser in determining a reasonable assessment of the value of Benson's property.

M. Laurin pointed out that a determination was made by NHDHR in 1997 that Benson's no longer qualified as a Historic District. L. Wilson agreed, however, the DOE committee will need to formally determine the status of the area. A discussion ensued regarding the applicability of the previously proposed, but never finalized, historic covenants. Given the passage of time the property has so deteriorated that it makes sense to only place covenants on the individual structures that retain their historic eligibility. S. Graulty showed photographs of the existing conditions at Benson's. She pointed out that the majority of the property does not retain its feeling as a wild animal park. The stairway leading from the upper to the lower area of Benson's is one of the few landscape elements that still reads as a component of the park. Discussion occurred on what information was appropriate to provide the DOE committee. An individual inventory form will be done for the office building, the depot and the Hazelton barn. Other buildings remain. While the Elephant House may have been a significant building, it has

been recorded and is collapsing. The food stand, gorilla cage, and Old Lady in the Shoe were not found to be eligible and do not require documentation.

E. Feighner stated that the potential archaeologically sensitive areas that have been previously determined need to have the site forms filled out. J. McKay stated that most of the undisturbed areas would be on steeper terrain that is not buildable or developable. Approximately 10% of the area is sensitive. It was decided that archaeological surveys to verify this number would not be pursued at this time. The need for survey would depend on future use; they would need to be initiated if these areas were disturbed.

H. Hadaway inquired about whether the buildings would need to be rehabilitated. At a minimum, J. McKay stated that they would need to be stabilized to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards if there are no plans for repair or reuse. If reuse were pursued, then the town would need to follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. N. Mayville discussed the Town's concerns on having to follow the Standards and that Town officials are now discussing with the Department not wanting the buildings and only wanting to use the property to provide recreational trails. L. Wilson mentioned that the Town might qualify for grants through LCHIP or the Moose Plates programs.

Winchester, DPR-BRF-X-0111(005), 12906. Participant: Laurel Kenna, Mike Dugas, Don Lyford, and Steve Babalis.

M. Dugas briefly discussed the plans for the Winchester 12906 project. He explained that this project is in its preliminary stages and there is really no way of determining what will actually be done at the bridge site, so any input from SHPO would be taken into account during the later stages of planning. The project is described as a bridge replacement in the Ten Year Plan, however the possibility of rehabilitating the structure will also be investigated during preliminary design. The bridge work may require a detour bridge to maintain traffic during construction.

The committee requested that a combined Phase 1A and 1B be done on impacted areas. It is not yet known on which side of the bridge the detour bridge would be situated. M. Urban noted that because the West side has pine trees that would trigger aspects of the new Shoreland Protection regulations and the East side was already disturbed with utility poles, he guessed that the East side looked like a better option. E. Feighner noted that the poles are not necessarily a sign of significant digging in the ground because of their size. Also, working in this area may necessitate relocating the utilities. At this point, it was restated that Phase 1A and 1B testing must be conducted if there are any plans to alter the footprint of the bridge or build a detour bridge. McKay requested that M. Dugas provide her with a rough plan showing the limits of the project for the Phase 1A and 1B. She noted that if the 1B has negative results, DHR and DOT could institute the short form.

L. Wilson stated that the bridge is probably eligible for the National Register and that it would need to be sent through the DOE process. An individual inventory form should be completed for the bridge.

J. Sikora then inquired about widening the shoulders. M. Dugas said that since there are no shoulders present on the current structure they would most likely be added into the plan for the new bridge. Dugas also mentioned the possibility that the new bridge may end up being higher than the existing structure.

L. Wilson mentioned a previous bridge project on Route 9 over the Soucook River in Chichester. She explained how they used jersey barriers on the bridge to maintain a safe barrier for cars while still maintaining the historical appearance of the bridge from the outside.

Winchester Ashuelot Branch RR Corridor, STP-TE-000S(201), 12133-C. Participants: Laurel Kenna, Matt Urban, and Sarah Graulty.

Bureau of Rail and Transit has proposed to grant an easement of approximately 11,000 linear feet on State owned railroad property to Clean Power Development, LLC. The rail line is not eligible for the National Register per a determination made in 1995. However, individual structures on the line could potentially be eligible. SHPO also indicated that there are potential archaeological resources associated with the work that has been proposed. Such resources include both Native American and historic. It was noted that a box factory had been located on both sides of the rail line.

Should the Department decide to move forward with granting an easement, SHPO requested that the applicant conduct archaeological surveys and submit their results. E. Feighner recommended that a combined Phase 1A and 1B survey be done. The surveys would need to be preformed at all locations where the applicant proposes to disturb any earthed material (i.e. above-ground electricity pole locations, including guidewires, and points of access and egress). Considerations for heavy machinery over existing stone box culverts will also need to be addressed.

Eaton, 14168 (no federal number). Participant: Jason Lodge (jlodge@hoyletanner.com).

J. Lodge briefly presented the status of this project concerning Bridge No. 072/137 – Potter Road over Conway Lake Inlet. Proposed work involved replacement of the existing 40-foot long, steel beam bridge with a 60-foot long concrete structure. Roadway approach work will be limited to approximately 250' to the east and to the west of the bridge. The existing bridge was built in 1970 and is currently listed on the NHDOT Municipal Redlist. Phase 1 testing has been completed, and the report was sent to both DHR and DOT. All parties agreed to a No Historic or Archaeological Properties Affected finding and the Municipal Memo was signed.

Andover, X-A000(219), 14169. **Participant: Kevin Nyhan (1553).**

Kevin Nyhan reminded the group about what the proposed project entailed, which is the introduction of a new bridge structure along the 69-mile corridor of the Northern Railroad. In addition, the Department proposes to construct a parking facility adjacent to the ramp and railroad corridor in an area that has been previously disturbed by the existing bridge project. This parking facility will be big enough to accommodate vehicles with trailers. The Section 106 consulting parties favor the parking proposal, however the town still needs to weigh in. No one in attendance objected to the parking facility, as it would not impact any additional cultural features associated with the railroad or adjacent Potter Place. The Adverse Effect memo was signed.

Submitted by Sarah LeVaun Graulty and Joyce McKay