

**New Castle-Rye Bridge Project  
Summary of Meeting  
Cultural Resources Coordination Meeting  
February 6, 2014**

**Attendees:**

Jill Edelman, NHDOT  
Sheila Charles, NHDOT  
Victoria Chase, NHDOT  
Bob Landry, NHDOT  
Marc Laurin, NHDOT  
Bob Juliano, NHDOT  
Michael Dugas, NHDOT  
Jamie Sikora, FHWA  
Laura Black, NHDHR  
Edna Feighner, NHDHR  
Jim Murphy, HDR  
Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, FHI  
Jill Barrett, FHI

The third coordination meeting with SHPO on the New Castle-Rye Bridge Project was held on February 6, 2014 at NHDOT. Bob Landry with NHDOT began by reviewing the progress to date. He indicated that the Type, Size and Location Report was completed in January and that it recommended replacement of the bridge with a bascule span.

Jill Barrett with FHI then reviewed the public process on the project. She indicated that three Public Advisory Committee (PAC) Meetings had been held with near perfect attendance. In addition, two public meetings were held and had wide attendance from the residents of New Castle. The public expressed that they want a brief closure and that they prefer the replacement option.

Jim Murphy with HDR went on to outline the reasons for the selection of the Replacement Alternative. These include a shorter closure time, longer life span, and increased safety due to the 4-foot shoulders. In addition, the Replacement Alternative would be cost effective and would allow for a viewing area for pedestrians on the east side of the bridge. He indicated that the new bridge would have a similar profile and massing to the existing bridge and would maintain two bascule spans in the State of New Hampshire.

Stephanie Dyer-Carroll with FHI then reviewed the cultural resources findings to date. She stated that the Phase 1A Archaeological Survey had been completed and that it showed the site was primarily fill. Although the 1874 bridge abutments are located in the vicinity of the bridge, they would not be affected by the project. She also discussed the Scammell Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), pointing out the discrepancy in the language between the MOA and a 1994 letter from the Commissioner of the NHDOT to the SHPO. She indicated that, while extensive rehabilitation and repairs had been done to the bridge since 1994, it is now posted at a 15 ton weight limit. She also indicated that NHDOT has determined that the project would have an adverse effect on the New Castle-Rye Bridge, however it would not adversely affect other historic properties in the vicinity of the bridge including the 1874 Bridge Abutments, the Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion and the Wentworth by the Sea Hotel.

Attendees then discussed the Determination of Effect, Memorandum of Agreement for the New Castle-Rye Bridge, and future steps. The comments included the following:

- Mr. Murphy asked whether NHDHR agreed with the Finding of Effect (submitted to NHDHR in mid-January). NHDHR stated that the TS&L Study was clear and that the argument for replacement is reasonable. However, before responding, NHDHR wants to clear up how to address commitment made in Scammell MOA. NHDHR indicated that they have reached out to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) for guidance on how to address requirements that are not being met. Without knowing what guidance ACHP will provide, NHDHR will not sign the Determination of Effect.
- Jim Murphy stated that NHDOT feels the intent of the Scammell MOA has been met since extensive work was undertaken on the bridge over a 20 year timeframe. They feel that the deterioration of the bridge represents an exceptional circumstance under the Scammell MOA.
- Jamie Sikora with FHWA concurred, stating that the previous MOA was poorly worded and has broad, unrealistic stipulations. He stated that he would forward ACHP the maintenance records for the bridge for their reference. He indicated that a time had not yet been set to discuss the issue with the ACHP, but that he hoped it would be resolved within the next three weeks.
- Jill Barrett shared that Jim Cerny with the New Castle Historical Society has researched the other bridges at the site and that he's especially excited about obtaining more information on the history of this bridge to supplement history of bridges at that location over the last few centuries. The New Castle Historical Society has suggested additional research and documentation of the bridge, as well as portable display panels on the history of the bridge, as potential options for mitigation. Other suggestions by NHDOT and NHDHR included an interpretive panel at the viewing area on the bridge, the development of a military context for the bridge, a monograph on the bridge designer, the marketing of the bridge, a website, or educational programming for junior and high students devoted to movable bridges. NHDHR said that any educational programming should be focused on history and not just on engineering.
- Jim Murphy said that the consultant team would work with NHDOT to pull together a proposal for mitigation.
- Jim Murphy also said that the consultant team and NHDOT are concerned about the timeline. They hope to complete the 30% design in July 2014 and advertise the construction in 2016.