

May 6, 2009

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF HIGHWAY DESIGN**

CONFERENCE REPORT

PROJECT: NEW IPSWICH
X-A000(403)
14465
NH 123 / NH 124 bridge over Souhegan River

DATE OF CONFERENCE: November 25, 2008

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: New Ipswich Town Office

ATTENDED BY: NHDOT
D. Lyford
D. Scott
M. Urban
M. Dugas

Others
David Keurulainen - Selectman
James Coffey - Selectman
Bentti Hoiska – Selectman
W. Garrett Chamberlain – Police Chief
J. B. Mack – Southwest Reg. Planning Commission
Charles Howland – president, Warwick Mills

SUBJECT: Project introductory meeting with Selectmen

NOTES ON CONFERENCE:

J.B. Mack explained that the Department of Transportation is beginning a new project that will investigate needed improvements to the Highbridge on NH 123 / NH 124 over the Souhegan River. Due to the unique nature of the bridge and its setting, and the many resources present in the vicinity of the bridge the Department, with the assistance of the Southwest Regional Planning Commission, proposes to employ the techniques of Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) during the project's design phase. CSS is defined as "Context sensitive solutions (CSS) is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility."

D. Lyford expanded on the explanation of CSS. He stated that as an element of the CSS process an advisory task force of stakeholders would be formed to advise the Department during the project development and serve as a liaison between the Department and the Town.

The Selectmen expressed support for the CSS process and agreed to compile a list of suggested stakeholders for the advisory task force and provide it to J.B. Mack.

The attendees then offered comments and observations on the upcoming project.

- D. Keurulainen recommended that the Department avoid construction during the planned school expansion in 2010. D. Lyford responded that the bridge improvements are currently scheduled for 2012.
- C. Howland stated that he was “not enthusiastic” about the possibility of using Mill Street as a temporary detour because it would have security implications for the Warwick Mills. He acknowledged, however, that a detour will likely be necessary. He mentioned that the residence opposite the school, which is possibly a former school (i.e., historic), is for sale. He also explained that the Mill is considering using water power as 60 feet of head is available on the Souhegan River between Water Loom Pond and the Mill.
- J. Coffey felt that regional detours would be needed to divert as much traffic as possible away from the project area and minimize the amount of traffic that needs to pass through the construction zone. He also noted that the Highbridge is an “absolutely unique spot.”
- B. Hoiska stated that a connection between the town center and Mascenic High School during construction is crucial.

Submitted by:

Michael J. Dugas, P.E.
Chief of Preliminary Design

MJD/mjd

cc: W. Cass
C. Green
M. Richardson
C. Hood
D. Graham – District 4