



THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Victoria F. Sheehan
Commissioner

William Cass, P.E.
Assistant Commissioner

SEABROOK-HAMPTON 15904
X-A001(026)
Rehab or Replacement of NH 1A over Hampton River

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July 3, 2019

Mr. Chris Bisignano, P.E.
Supervisory Bridge Management Specialist
First Coast Guard District
Battery Building, Room 301
1 South Street
New York, NY 10004-1466

RE: Rehab or Replacement of the Single Leaf Bascule Bridge
Navigation Impact Report

Dear Mr. Bisignano:

I am writing in response to your letter dated February 4, 2019 regarding the Neil R. Underwood Bridge located in Hampton, New Hampshire. As identified in your letter, our team has reviewed guidance provided in Section 1 and Appendix A of the USCG Bridge Permit Application Guide, COMDTPUB P16591.3D, July 2016, and enclose the Navigation Impact Report for your review and comment.

As previously stated in my January 18, 2019 letter, the project is intended to address the poor structural, mechanical and electrical conditions of the bridge, which has hindered reliable operation, and provide improved pedestrian and cyclist accommodations. This letter provides a summary of project background and approach to this Navigation Impact Report. The following documents are included to provide you with pertinent information to assist in your decision making process. They include:

- Attachment 1 – Navigation Impact Report
- Attachment 2 – Vessel Summary and Lift Log Transcription
- Attachment 3 – Bridge Use Statistics
- Attachment 4 – Hampton and Seabrook Harbors Mooring Permit List
- Attachment 5 – Vessel User Surveys
- Attachment 6 – Bridge Plans
- Attachment 7 – USCG regulation for Lifts of the Neil R. Underwood Bridge

The bridge carries NH Route 1A (Ocean Boulevard) over the Hampton River, and is NHDOT Bridge No. 235/025. The bridge consists of 13 spans, and is 1,193' long. There are 11 approach spans approximately 94' in length. The span over the navigational channel is a single leaf bascule with a structural span length of approximately 65', providing a horizontal navigational clearance of 40'. The bridge, built in 1949, is structurally deficient and functionally obsolete, and has been prioritized by the NHDOT for rehabilitation or replacement.

The project will assess rehabilitation and replacement alternatives. This navigational impact report assesses two bridge replacement alternatives, which are as follows:

- Replacement of the existing bridge with a new fixed bridge westerly of existing. This bridge alternative is comprised of seven (7) 195' spans, providing a navigation clearance through the bridge of 150' horizontal x 44' vertical at MHW.
- Replacement of the existing bridge with a single leaf bascule bridge westerly of existing. This bridge alternative is comprised of 6 approach spans of varying length and a 105' bascule span, providing a navigation clearance through the bridge of 80' horizontal and x 34' vertical at MHW when closed (unlimited vertical clearance when open).

For the purposes of this Navigation Impact Report, a navigation clearance of 80' horizontal x 44' vertical through the bridge is proposed, which encapsulates both alternatives.

The project team has performed research on state and USCG vessel registrations, and the existing bridge lift log. The team also performed public outreach to current and prospective channel users via 6 public meetings between September 2018 and January 2019, by phone when user contact information could be determined, as well as through a user survey distributed during a public meeting for vessel users and posted at the NH Division of Ports and Harbors. Additional information on these outreach efforts is available on the project's website at: <https://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/seabrookhampton15904/index.htm>. The project team proposes the navigational clearance of 80' horizontal and 44' vertical based our research and outreach, and offers that this meets the needs of the community.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the lead agency for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation for this project and an Environmental Assessment (EA) is under development.

Based upon the outcome of the public outreach efforts described above, the ability to improve traffic flow, and in consideration of construction costs and future operation and maintenance costs, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation's current preference is for the fixed alternative, however, we are still working through the NEPA process to determine the impacts of this alternative.

Given that this bridge is a vital link for the communities of Seabrook and Hampton, as well as the need for emergency services to utilize this bridge to respond to calls, it is hoped that the review process can proceed in an expedited manner. It would be appreciated if the USCG could provide an estimated timeframe needed for the USCG to develop its conclusion regarding the proposed navigational clearances.

Thank you for your time and attention to the issues involving this project. We look forward to receiving your response and continuing to work with you throughout this process. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if you need additional information. I can be reached by email at Jennifer.Reczek@dot.state.nh.us or by phone at 603-271-3401. I would also be happy to meet in person as needed.

Sincerely,



Jennifer E. Reczek, PE
Project Manager