

August 10, 2017

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

**CONFERENCE REPORT**

**PROJECT:** WALPOLE-CHARLESTOWN 14747  
Reconstruct NH Route 12 from Main Street in North Walpole north,  
approximately 3 miles, to NH Route 12A in South Charlestown

**DATE OF CONFERENCE:** June 28, 2017

**LOCATION OF CONFERENCE:** North Walpole School

**ATTENDED BY:** See attached sign in sheet

**SUBJECT:** Public Informational Meeting

**NOTES ON CONFERENCE:**

This Public Informational Meeting (PIM) was held to provide an update on the project status. D. Lyford started the meeting with a brief introduction describing the design updates since the previous PIM on June 8, 2016. He introduced the NHDOT staff present and turned the meeting over to S. Fifield who presented the finalized design, environmental impacts and required permits. S Fifield then turned the meeting over to J. Evans who explained the wetland impact mitigation (an approximate \$1.25 million payment to the Aquatic Resource Mitigation ARM Fund) and that the the communities of Walpole and Charlestown would have the first opportunity to use the mitigation funds within the towns prior to DES adding these funds to the pool of ARM Fund money. He also explained the types of projects that can be completed using ARM Fund money and that the Department is currently coordinating with DRED to purchase additional conservation land for Fall Mountain State Park as part of the mitigation for this project.

D. Lyford apologized for guaranteeing at the last meeting that the design would incorporate 12 foot lanes at a time in the design process where uncertainty existed as to the feasibility of providing that lane width. As the design was developed it was necessary to use 11 foot lane widths with 5 foot shoulders to strike a balance of roadway use and environmental impacts for this very constrained area. The design provides a safe roadway that should be permittable.

During and following the presentation, questions were taken from the Public. Below is a summary of the public's comments and or questions and the Department's responses to the questions:

1. Can the Department make sure that queue lengths do not block the Fire Station located at 70 Church Street, North Walpole?

*The Department has determined that the Fire Station will not be blocked by queuing traffic during construction. The Fire Station is located approximately 2700 feet (0.51 miles) south of the start of the project and the anticipated queue length during the peak traffic hour is estimated at 350 feet, based on incorporating single lane alternating two way traffic patterns during construction. Moreover standard contract language advises the Contractor to address traffic issues that may arise during construction.*

2. There are several homes located along NH Route 12 within the proposed work area. How will residents have access to their homes during construction? Will the traffic control flagger create conflicts between residents leaving their homes and traffic?

*Standard contract language advises the Contractor building the project to provide safe access to homes and businesses along the work limits. This means that a flagger will be posted in the vicinity of the homes so that safe access may be provided to homes within the work zone. The Contractor will also have to coordinate directly with property owners when work will be completed on their drives or at any other location that may impact access to their homes, such as with drainage installation.*

3. If temporary signals are used will they come with emergency vehicle preemption?

*The Department can specify the use of temporary signals with preemption. However, the the length of the work zone will be limited when temporary signals are used to allow for drivers to see the opposing traffic. Standard traffic laws will still apply during construction and drivers within the work zone will be required to yield to emergency vehicles.*

4. What can the ARM Fund be used for? What is the towns' deadline to apply for the funds before they go into a general account for statewide use?

*The ARM Fund may be used for environmental mitigation efforts which NH DES feels are appropriate to compensate for the impacts associated with the Walpole-Charlestown NH Route 12 reconstruction effort. The deadline for the town to apply for funds is now as DES would have to approve a proposed mitigation project prior to this project receiving its wetland impact permit, which has a target date of August 22, 2017. However, the Towns will have another opportunity to apply for ARM Fund money when DES requests proposals early in 2018, for projects in the Lower Connecticut River watershed area.*

5. Will the project cause downstream erosion? Has the Army Corp of Engineers approved the design?

*The Department has submitted a US ACOE Individual Section 404 Permit to the ACOE. The Corp is reviewing the application at present. The Department is also required to submit a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) to FEMA which requires a detailed HEC RAS analysis of the Connecticut River pre and post construction. The analysis will determine how the project will impact the characteristics of the river and if mitigation for that impact is required. Results of this analysis will be posted on the project's website when it becomes available.*

6. When does the project advertise and when will construction start?

*The project is currently scheduled to advertise on September 19, 2017. Contractors will bid on the project 3 weeks later. The project will then go to Governor and Council for approval about six weeks later. So, construction could start in late December 2017 or early in January 2018.*

7. Mr. John Bruno read a letter he wrote to Commissioner Sheehan to meeting attendees, attached to this report. D. Lyford handed to Mr. Bruno the Commissioner's response to Mr. Bruno's letter, also attached to this report.
8. Walpole Police Chief Michael J. Paquette requested an estimate of the amount of hours that the Department anticipates needing officers for Traffic Control. He also requested an estimate of the Department's budget for uniformed officers so that he may incorporate that amount into his budgetary request to the Town. It seems that although the Department will be paying for the use of his officers that he must still request that money from the Town as part of his budget.

*The Department will provide to Chief Paquette an approximation of the hours for uniformed officers anticipated for this project.*

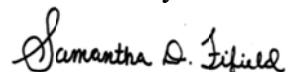
9. An attendee expressed great concern with increased traffic (especially Trucks) crossing over the North Walpole Arch Bridge into Vermont to avoid the project area and asked if the Department could prevent truck traffic from crossing the bridge.

*If a bridge has been deemed deficient a weight limit can be imposed over a bridge to prevent overloading the structure. However, if a bridge on a public way can carry a legal load then the Department cannot prevent the use of that bridge. Ideally, traffic will continue to use NH Route 12 during construction because it will take less time to go through the work zone than if they detour into Vermont or to other Routes in NH.*

10. Can the Department use night work to complete the work?

*Night work is predominately used only on projects where the traffic counts are so great that queuing lengths would be miles long. The average daily traffic for this project is approximately 4500 vehicles. This volume of traffic can easily be handled with alternating lane closures during the day. Night work tends to take a little longer and would require temporary lighting, which creates some safety concerns.*

Submitted by:



Samantha D. Fifield, P.E.  
Consultant Supervisor

SDF/sdf

NOTED BY: J. Evans, D. Lyford

cc: D. Lyford, File

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Public Informational Meeting

PROJECT: Walpole-Charlestown 14747

DATE: June 28, 2017

LOCATION: Walpole, NH

NAME	ORGANIZATION	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
Aare Ilves	Town of Charlestown	603-826-3126	aareilves@comcast.net
BOB BRESLEND	N. Walp. Resident	603 4455417	
LAMONT BARNETT	GOLDEN KNIGHT LTD	802-376-5589	awknight@SOVER.NET
HERBERT FRINK		352-6416	herbertfrink@ME.COM
Peggy Schirree	Walpole Select Board	756-3672	P.pschirrer@aol.com
Brandon Gibbe	Great River Hydro	413/834-1909	bklibbe@greatriverhydro.com
Richard Tracy	Hinsdale Pt 63	—	—
Don Purnell	N. Walpole Resident	603-445-2064	
Josh Thibault	Resident	603-445-5501	
Michael Abbott	NH House	603-336-7090	amsabb@hotmail.com
Cameron Payette	Eagle Times		cameronp@eagletimes.com
RAY BOAS	WALPOLE C-ARLON	603 756-4545	rayboas@comcast.net
Dominic Salas	Charlestown	603 445-5166	

Public Informational Meeting

PROJECT: Walpole-Charlestown 14747

DATE: June 28, 2017

LOCATION: Walpole, NH

NAME	ORGANIZATION	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
PETER POWERS		603-445-5061	PPowers920@gmail.com
STEVON D'ACOSSIO	Town of Walpole		stevon@townofwalpole.com
Henry Underwood	SWRPC	603-357-0557	hunderwood@swrpc.org
Dwight Smith			dhsmit10@comcast.net
Nick Pelletti		603-445-2062	
John Bruno		603-445-2307	lmbruno7@gmail.com
Kamylhaugh	Charlestown		
Adam Ricker	UVLSRPC	603-448-1680	aricker@uvlsrpc.org
Meghan Butts	UVLSRPC	603-448-1680	mbutts@uvlsrpc.org
John Dagnoli	NH		
Chief Michael J. Pagnette	Walpole Police	603-445-2058	mpagnette@walpolenh.us
Steven Smith	State Rep.	603-826-5976	nhfirst@gmail.com
GABRIEL St. Pierre	FMRSD School Board	603-558-8001	g.a.saint@gmail.com

Public Informational Meeting

PROJECT: Walpole-Charlestown 14747

DATE: June 28, 2017

LOCATION: Walpole, NH

NAME	ORGANIZATION	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
Jeremy St. Pierre	St. Pierre Inc.	(603) 826-4121	jeremy@stpierreinc.com
Christ Mercer	Jacobs		
Cheryl Mayberry	Town of Walpole + TAC	603-313-2599	marykate1967@gmail.com
Jacqueline Walker	NW Village	603-558-0143	jaq8walker@gmail.com
Don J. Thomson	MR-G'S STORES	603-209-6303	
Terry & Janet Roth	N. Walpole	603-313-5757 (Terry)	Terry-Roth@comcast.net
Bryan Wetherby	Walpole Fire Dept.	603-381-2479	bryan@eehoughton.com
Jim McClannan	CRK		McClannan@aol.com
Charles Lennon	Len-Tex Corp.	603-445-2342	charlie@lentexcorp.com





**JOHN BRUNO**

**ENGINEER & LAND CONSULTANT**

P.O. Box 1273

603 445 2307

Charlestown, New Hampshire 03603

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June 12, 2017

Commissioner Victoria Sheehan  
Department of Transportation  
PO Box 483  
Concord, NH 03302-0483

Re: NH Route 12 Reconstruction  
Charlestown – Walpole NH

Dear Commissioner Sheehan:

As background, I have BSCE and MSCE degrees and am a licensed Professional Engineer with over 50 years of design experience.

Your Department is in the process of designing the reconstruction of NH Route 12 between South Charlestown and North Walpole. I attended a June 8, 2016 public meeting regarding the proposed design. The design presented at that meeting consisted of 11-foot travel lanes. At that meeting, I pointed out to the hearing officer, Donald Lyford, that these lane widths did not meet the New Hampshire Department of Transportation Design Standards, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Design Standards ("Green Book") and Federal Design Standards for rural arterial highways. NH Route 12 is a major north/south arterial with a high volume of traffic including a high percentage of trucks traveling at speeds of 50 to 60 miles per hour. An arterial with these traffic characteristics should consist of 12-foot travel lanes to provide a safe highway.

In the public portion of the meeting I brought up this issue and Mr. Lyford assured and promised the public that the lanes would be 12 feet.

I represent the Town of Charlestown on the Connecticut River Joint Council Mt Ascutney Subcommittee. As a member, I obtained a copy of the dredge



and fill permit application for the Route 12 project. In reviewing the application, I was astounded to find that the design consists of 11-foot travel lanes. This is a complete contradiction of what Mr. Lyford promised when he said that we should trust him. He did not qualify his statement that he would consider it, but said trust him, the lanes would be 12 feet. If I had realized that I could not take Mr. Lyford at his word, I would have been more involved in the process regarding the decision on travel lane widths.

I understand that there may be environmental considerations i.e. regarding a minimal increase in the fill to the Connecticut River and a minimal increase in storm water runoff from the extra 2 feet of impervious pavement.

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation Design Standard (NHDOTDS) states "Safety is the principal design consideration. All designs have maximum safety as their objective."

The 11 foot lanes will result in an unsafe condition for the major north/south highway in the eastern part of the State. Investing the millions of dollars in a reconstruction project that will be around long into the future with continued increases in traffic volumes, it is unconscionable to construct a substandard facility.

It is my professional opinion that the present NH Rte. 12 design does not meet the NHDOTDS design goal stated above or any other of the above referenced design standards and will result in an unsafe and negligent design.

I felt that it was necessary to bring this important issue to your attention and I hope that your interest is in providing safe highways for the traveling public for both the present and the future.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Very truly yours,



John Bruno

CC: Governor Christopher Sununu  
Adam Ricker UVLSRPC



THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Victoria F. Sheehan  
Commissioner

William Cass, P.E.  
Assistant Commissioner

June 27, 2017

Mr. John Bruno  
P.O. Box 1273  
Charlestown, NH 03603

RE: Walpole-Charlestown – 14747 (NH 12 Reconstruction)

Dear Mr. Bruno:

This is in response to your letter of June 12, 2017 regarding the reconstruction of NH 12 in Walpole and Charlestown. Specifically, you have concerns with the 11 foot travel lanes proposed for the project. We do strive to provide a safe roadway system for all those who use the roadways.

In this instance we found that to arrive at a balance of impacts to the environment and still provide an improved roadway, 11 foot lanes with 5 foot adjacent paved shoulders is appropriate. This provides an overall pavement width of 32 feet, creating a much safer roadway than the existing approximate 24 feet of pavement with no shoulders through this segment. The standards you note do allow for flexibility of design to fit within constraints. As you know this area does have constraints of the Connecticut River, the railroad and the steep terrain.

Mr. Lyford does acknowledge that at the June 8, 2016 Public Informational Meeting he stated it was his intent to have 12 foot travel lanes for this proposed 3 mile project. However, subsequent to that meeting it was determined that the 11 foot lanes were appropriate for this area to strike a balance of impacts.

We appreciate your input and hope you can understand compromises are necessary on many projects. The 11 foot lanes with adjacent shoulders provide reasonable and acceptable travel lane width, shoulders as a buffer for other users, and do not adversely impact safety.

Sincerely,

Victoria F. Sheehan  
Commissioner

cc: The Honorable Christopher Sununu, Governor  
Adam Ricker, UVLSRPC  
B. Cass, Assistant Commissioner  
D. Lyford, Project Manager

JOHN O. MORTON BUILDING • 7 HAZEN DRIVE • P.O. BOX 483 • CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03302-0483  
TELEPHONE: 603-271-3734 • FAX: 603-271-3914 • TDD: RELAY NH 1-800-735-2964 • INTERNET: [WWW.NHDOT.COM](http://WWW.NHDOT.COM)