STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF BRIDGE DESIGN

C O N F E R E N C E R E P O R T

PROJECT: Winchester, 12906
DPR-BRF-X-0111 (005)
NH Rte 10 over Ashuelot River
Br. No. 152/181

DATE OF CONFERENCE: September 10, 2009

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: Swanzey Town Office

ATTENDED BY:

Project Lead Team

J. B. Mack – Southwest Regional Planning Commission
Neel Patel – Southwest Regional Planning Commission
Donald Lyford – NHDOT Project Manager (PAC Member)
Michael Dugas – NHDOT Highway Design Preliminary Design Chief
David Scott – NHDOT Bridge Design In-House Design Chief
(Absent) Jason Tremblay – NHDOT Bridge Design Senior Project Engineer
Laurel Kenna – NHDOT Environmental Coordinator (PAC Member)

Project Advisory Committee

(Absent) Bob Gray, Winchester Town Administrator
Bruce Bohannon, Swanzey Emergency Management Director
Bruce Tatro, Swanzey Selectman
Carol Keene, Westport Village Resident
(Absent) Cindy Richard, NH Dept of Safety, Bureau of Homeland Security & Emergency Management
Clyde Keene, Westport Village Resident
(Absent) Dale Gray, Winchester Highway Superintendent
(Absent) Gus Ruth, Winchester Selectman
(Absent) Herb Stephens, Winchester Emergency Management Director
(Absent) John Gomarlo, Town of Winchester, SWRPC Board of Directors
Lee Dunham, Swanzey Public Works Director
(Absent) Nancy St. Laurent, NH Department of Safety, Bureau of Homeland Security & Emergency Management
(Absent) Norman Skantze, Swanzey Fire Chief
Richard Busick, Swanzey Police
Sara Carbonneau, Swanzey Planner

Others

None

SUBJECT: Project Advisory Committee Meeting #5

NOTES ON CONFERENCE:

On September 10, 2009 approximately 13 people gathered at the Swanzey Town Office for a meeting facilitated by the Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC). The intent was for the PAC members to finalize the screening criteria and to discuss design alternatives.

DESCRIPTION

J. B. Mack of the SWRPC welcomed everyone and asked that the committee members introduce themselves.

A motion to accept the minutes from PAC Meeting #3 was approved. Another motion, to accept the minutes from PAC Meeting #4, was also approved. The only revision to PAC Meeting #4 minutes was that Jeremy Laplante is no longer with the NH Dept of Safety, Bureau of Homeland Security & Emergency Management

Next, the screening criteria developed at PAC meeting #3 and refined at PAC meeting #4 were briefly discussed. A motion to accept these criteria was approved. These screening criteria will be posted to the project website at http://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/winchester12906/documents/AltScreenCriteria_Edited.pdf

Mike Dugas then discussed project alternatives. The first five were a review from the previous meeting, and the final four were developed based on input from the PAC at the previous meeting.

- Alternative 1: Utilizes the existing horizontal and vertical alignment but does not provide adequate sight distance to the south for the crest curve at the posted speed of 50 mph. Mike explained that this alternative is not acceptable to NHDOT.
- Alternative 2: Utilizes the existing horizontal alignment but raises the vertical alignment at the bridge by 3' and cuts approximately 8' at the rail/trail crossing, to the south of the intersection. S. Carbonneau mentioned that Winchester is reconsidering the 40-45 unit Van Dyke development, which would be affected by this alignment. M. Dugas mentioned that the grade differential would pose traffic control challenges during construction.
- Alternative 3: Utilizes the existing horizontal alignment but raises the vertical alignment at the bridge by 10' but closely matches the grade at the rail/trail crossing.

The first three alternatives keep NH Route 10 on the existing alignment, so a detour will be required during construction. Mike Dugas next presented an upstream and a downstream detour alignment, both of which are designed for 40 mph. It was observed that the Willard property would be more affected by the upstream option and that the owner would like to maintain the berm, which is a noise barrier.

Mike then discussed other alignments that maintain the existing bridge for traffic during construction.

- Alternative 4: Builds new bridge, and NH Route 10, upstream of the existing bridge. This requires a relatively long scope of roadwork and would require the acquisition of Shamrock Realty. It lowers the grade at the trail by 5' below the existing grade.

- Alternative 5: Builds new bridge, and NH Route 10, downstream of the existing bridge. This requires a relatively long scope of roadwork and would require the acquisition of four buildings. It raises the grade at the bridge by 5'.
- Alternative 6: Builds new bridge downstream of the existing and places it at a skew to the existing bridge. It raises the grade at the bridge by approximately 10'. Although, this entirely curved alignment alternative keeps NH Route 10 from going through any buildings, the house immediately SW of the bridge would be acquired due to the proximity of the road to the house.
- Alternative 7: This alternative is similar to alternative 6, but would closely match the grade at the trail crossing. It builds the new bridge approximately 8' higher than the current bridge. This alternative will also require the acquisition of the house immediately SW of the bridge.
- Alternative 8: Proposed bridge is skewed in relation to the existing alignment to minimize property impacts. It requires the acquisition of the house immediately SW of the bridge and lowers the grade at the trail by 4'.
- Alternative 9: Alternative is similar to Alternatives 6 and 7 but has reversing curvature so that the proposed roadway ties into the existing roadway in the shortest possible distance. M. Dugas does not believe this alternative will require superelevation (banking). Proposed bridge is 10' higher than the existing bridge.

S. Carbonneau asked about the house at the SE limit of NHDOT's survey. The plan only shows a driveway. Mike Dugas will attempt to locate the house, in relation to the driveway, by using aerial photos.

All of the alternatives enhance drainage and remove trees, which will allow for more sunlight to melt winter snow.

M. Dugas discussed estimated costs for construction and detours, but not right-of-way (ROW) acquisition. Alternative 1 is $4.9 million. All others range from $5.6 million to $7.0 million, with Alternative 4 being the most expensive. Alternative 9 is estimated at $5.8 million.

All alternatives will be posted to the project website.

There was discussion about holding a public informational meeting before screening the alternatives. There is an outstanding question whether all alternatives should be shown at the Public Information meeting. D. Lyford hopes to resolve this issue by posting all alternatives online and getting feedback from Winchester, which had no representatives at this meeting.

J. B. Mack will contact Winchester to determine their feedback.

The next meeting has not yet been scheduled although possible dates were discussed.

Submitted by:

David L. Scott, P.E.

DS/ds

NOTED BY: M. Dugas, D. Lyford

cc: D. Lyford
D. Scott
J. Tremblay
L. Kenna
Bill Cass, Director of Project Development
D. Graham - District 4
J.B. Mack – SWRPC
PAC Members