

Public Hearing

Lancaster-Guildhall

BHF A001(159)

**Bridge 127 on US Route 2
Over
Connecticut River**

Date: November 13, 2014

Time: 6:30 PM – Open Forum
7:00 PM – Formal Hearing

Location: Guildhall Town Hall
13 Courthouse Drive
Guildhall, Vermont



WHAT IS A PUBLIC HEARING ?

WHAT IS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT?

A continuous process of two-way communication between the citizens and public agencies, during which a conceptual plan is discussed and the field of choice narrowed until a final solution/plan is developed.

WHY A PUBLIC HEARING?

A Public Hearing provides an opportunity for the Agency of Transportation and the community to exchange information about proposed highway/bridge projects. The Hearing lets us listen to the concerns of local residents and obtain information on the proposed project. Input from local sources is very important for determining various design elements to be included in a project.

WHAT IS AN OPEN FORUM?

An Open Forum is an informal process of answering design or right-of-way related questions. During the Open Forum, members of the public may look at project displays and ask questions of representatives of the Agency of Transportation.

WHAT IS A FORMAL PUBLIC HEARING?

During the Formal Public Hearing, representatives from the Agency of Transportation will explain the proposed project and then take questions and comments, all of which will be recorded by a court reporter. For individuals who prefer to make their comments in writing, a comment form is included in this packet. Additional forms will be available at the Hearing.

GENERAL INFORMATION

PROJECT LOCATION

The project begins in the Town of Guildhall on US Route 2 at a point approximately 200 feet south of the junction of US 2 and VT Route 102 and extends easterly along a new US 2 alignment north of the existing alignment crossing the Connecticut River for approximately 2450 feet. Additionally, the existing 'Y' intersection of US 2 and VT 102 will be reconfigured to a Tee intersection.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to provide a safe highway crossing on US 2 over the Connecticut River, that is capable of supporting all of the anticipated vehicular loads.

PROJECT NEED

Bridge 127 is considered structurally deficient with the following noted points of concern:

- Bridge deck cracking, spalling and leakage.
- Bridge rail deterioration
- Extensive deterioration of floor system members
- Bottom chord advanced deterioration
- Lower half of truss diagonals advanced rusting and deterioration
- Truss members damaged from vehicle impacts
- Abutment and pier concrete cracking and spalling

The approach to the bridge from the east has poor sight distance for turning traffic at the US 2 and VT102 intersection.

SCOPE OF WORK

The proposed project will consist of constructing a new bridge on a new alignment to the north of the existing bridge and reconstructing the roadway approaches to this bridge. Additionally, the intersection of US 2 and VT 102 will be reconfigured from a 'Y' to a Tee type intersection. The width of the proposed bridge and roadway will include 5 foot shoulders and a 12 foot travel lane in each direction as well as a 10 foot wide sidewalk on the upstream side of the bridge. During construction, traffic will be maintained on the existing truss bridge.

RIGHT-OF-WAY REQUIREMENTS

The existing highway right-of-way along US 2 and VT 102 in this area, based on preliminary research, is as shown on the plans. The actual extent of land acquisition is unknown at this time as the limits of construction indicated on the plans are only conceptual at this stage of design. Every effort will be made to minimize impacts to the adjacent property owners.

TIME SCHEDULE

The current schedule for this project shows that construction could begin in 2019. Funding constraints and/or the time needed to obtain environmental permits and acquire the land or easements necessary to construct the project may affect our schedule.

COST

The preliminary construction cost estimate is \$10,000,000. Funding for construction will be 80% from Federal sources and 20% from State sources (NH 90%/VT 10%). No local funds will be required.

RIGHT OF WAY ACQUISITION PROCEDURES

[FOR INFORMATIONAL USE ONLY IN CONNECTION WITH THIS PUBLIC HEARING]

INTRODUCTION: The State of Vermont’s program for acquiring rights of way for Federal-aid transportation related projects (such as the project described in this handout) is conducted in accordance with a Federal law entitled “*The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Land Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended*” (referred to as the “*Uniform Act*”), and Vermont statutory law relating to the governmental right of eminent domain. A brief description of the various phases of Right of Way (ROW) acquisition is outlined below.

I. Initially, property owners will be contacted by an agent who will inquire about the physical characteristics of the property, such as the locations of property lines, water lines, septic systems, etc. At this time, the agent will explain preliminary details about the design of the project and the anticipated effects on the property.

II. Following the initial property owner meeting, a title search of the property will be conducted in the Town/City Land Records. This information will be used by the ROW Section as a basis for the formation of project specific ROW Plans.

III. Utilizing the ROW Plans, the acquisition effects on property will be valued by a licensed appraiser (or by an agent/negotiator if the acquisition is considered an uncomplicated appraisal assignment). Depending on which valuation method is applicable, an Appraisal (Value Finding) Report is prepared by an appraiser, or a Waiver Valuation Estimate is prepared by an agent/negotiator. A value amount will be determined prior to the initiation of negotiations; this is generally accomplished by inspecting the property and comparing prices at which similar properties have sold recently or utilizing the municipality’s equalized assessment for the subject property.

The Appraisal Report or Waiver Valuation will be reviewed by a Review Appraiser, Right of Way Acquisition Chief, or qualified designees who have the responsibility for final approval of the values estimated for just compensation.

IV. Subsequently, a ROW agent/negotiator will contact each owner to review the project and its effect on the property, and to present in writing the State’s fair market value offer of monetary compensation for the land and/or rights needed to construct the project. ROW brochures are available that explain in greater detail the acquisition process where an “Agreement” has been reached with the property owner, or when “Condemnation” is utilized (in the absence of an agreement and the State elects to exercise its right to condemn by use of formal hearing/court procedures).

V. Please note that when property is acquired for Federal-aid projects and as a result owners/occupants need to be displaced from their homes or businesses, in compliance with the “Uniform Act” relocation assistance and payments are available. More detailed information about this program can be obtained directly from the ROW Section upon request.

The foregoing was a brief outline of the Right-of-Way function. If you have specific questions, we will try to answer them, or refer them to our Right-of-Way Section for reply. You can also call the Right-of-Way Section at 802-828-2571, or write to:

Vermont Agency of Transportation
Right-of-Way Section
National Life Building
1 National Life Drive
Montpelier, Vermont 05633

In addition, should you have any specific questions or comments concerning this project, please feel free to contact Project Manager Douglas Bonneau by phone at 802-828-3874 or by letter at the following address:

Douglas E. Bonneau, P.E.
Structures Section
1 National Life Drive
Montpelier, Vermont 05633

Vermont Agency of Transportation

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WRITTEN COMMENTS

We would appreciate your input and suggestions.

Please return this sheet, with comments, to a staff member at this hearing, or by mail to the address on the back of this sheet. In order to be included as an official part of the hearing transcript, the final postmark date for written statements and other information will be 10 calendar days from the Hearing date.

COMMENTS:

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

NAME _____

Property owner adjacent to project

ADDRESS _____

Organization Representative
(Org. and Title)

Other:

1) Fold along dashed lines 2) Tape or staple 3) Place stamp and mail



Place
Stamp
Here

Richard M. Tetreault
Highway Bureau Chief Engineer
Vermont Agency of Transportation
1 National Life Drive
Montpelier, Vermont 05633

