

**TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD
SELECTBOARD HALL – 96 MAIN STREET – THIRD FLOOR
PUBLIC HEARING
MONDAY, March 13, 2023**

APPROVED MINUTES

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

This is a public informational meeting for the purpose of presenting the evaluation and recommended remediation of Bridge Number 4 on Vermont Route 106. Bridge #4 is very near Springfield Fence. After the presentation by representatives of the Vermont Agency of Transportation, there will be an opportunity for the public to ask questions and voice concerns about the project.

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair, Kristi Morris, called the Public Hearing to order at 6:31 pm. Some technical difficulties were experienced with Zoom and were corrected, and the meeting resumed.

Selectboard Members: Chair, Kristi Morris, Vice Chair Michael Martin, and Everett Hammond were present in-person. Walter Martone and Crissy Webster joined via Zoom.

Administration: Town Manager Jeff Mobus and Public Works Director Jeff Strong were present in-person. Library Director Sue Dowdell and Road Foreman Donny Turner joined via Zoom.

School Board Liaison: Steve Karaffa was not in attendance.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus introduced the Public Informational meeting and introduced Laura Stone from the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) who joined via Zoom.

Laura Stone of VTrans shared a PowerPoint presentation regarding the evaluation and recommended remediation of Bridge Number 4 on Route 106 (not included in the meeting packet and is available upon request through the Town Manager). Laura Stone of VTrans noted that Rob Young will be the VTrans Project Manager for this project. Laura Stone of VTrans added the purpose of this meeting was to provide an understanding of their approach to this project and talk about project constraints, the existing condition of the culvert, discuss their selected alternative including maintenance of traffic, and to provide an opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns.

Laura Stone of VTrans described the location being about ½ mile east of the intersection with VT Route 10 and located very close to Springfield Fence Company. Laura Stone of VTrans added the culvert is under 20 feet of fill and is the kind of structure you drive over all the time and you don't even realize you are driving over a bridge. Chair Kristi Morris pointed out that locals may recognize this as the local swimming hole on the downstream side by the pull-off.

Laura Stone of VTrans described the project development process timeline, and noted this project is in the early stages of project development. Laura Stone of VTrans added that the project has been funded, the project definition has been initiated that is when they identify the environmental and cultural resources, they evaluate alternatives and the end of that they have a scoping report, noting they are now at the public participation piece. Laura Stone of VTrans further added that ultimately, they want to build consensus towards a selected alternative. Laura Stone further described after the public participation piece, that is when they call the project defined. Laura Stone of VTrans discussed that is when the project

will be going into design and they will be quantifying areas of impact, going through the right-of-way process if needed, doing the environmental permits, developing the plans estimates specifications, after project design a contract will be awarded, and it will move into construction.

Laura Stone of Vtrans described the road as being classified as a major collector, currently a 13' span and 176' long corrugated metal plate type. Laura Stone of VTrans added it is owned by the State of Vermont so there is no town share, noting it is 80% federally funded and 20% state funded. Laura Stone further added it was constructed in 1958. Laura Stone of VTrans discussed that there are no municipal utilities through the project area but there are some arial utilities running along the side of the road.

Laura Stone of VTrans discussed the existing conditions that the culvert is in poor condition, there is heavy rust scale with deep pitting and section lose and there are some perforations along the waterline in that culvert. Laura Stone of VTrans added there is also quite a bit of undermining happening, noting when they see undermining that is pretty indicative of them losing material from around the pipe from the outside of the pipe, such as roadway fill material. Laura Stone of VTrans further added the existing 13.5' clear span does not meet the State Stream Equilibrium Standard of 21' per bank full width so it is undersized hydraulically.

Laura Stone of VTrans discussed the bridge is rated a 4 which corresponds to a poor rating and the channel is rated a 6 satisfactory. Laura Stone of VTrans added for existing cultural and environmental resources there is a small wetland complex in the northwest quadrant of the project and in terms of wildlife habitat the Baltimore Brook is a very important brook for fisheries, noting it is a tributary to the Black River and cold weather fish species like to use this stretch and this culvert is really the only impediment fish have from accessing that cold water. Laura Stone of VTrans additionally added a lot of times when they see these big scour holes it means you have an undersized culvert hydraulically, noting you get high velocities through the culvert that scour it out.

Laura Stone of VTrans described the design criteria and considerations that there is an average daily traffic of 6,300 vehicles per day so fairly high, design hourly volume of 770 vehicles per hour and percent trucks of 11.7. Laura Stone of VTrans added they looked a couple different rehabilitation options invert repair just repairing the bottom side of the culvert where the perforations were happening, or a full pipe liner or cured in place pipe liner, that is when they put a smaller pipe into the existing pipe and grout in between them. Laura Stone of VTrans further added the culvert does have a lot of its existing shape left so while it would be structurally okay to line from the fishery standpoint it really would not be permittable. Laura Stone of VTrans continued to describe how they looked at replacing the culvert with a three-sided frame or a buried bridge and then culvert replacement with an integral abutment bridge which would be replacing the culvert with a more conventional bridge.

Laura Stone of VTrans discussed how they selected to replace the existing culvert with a new three-sided buried frame, noting this option was more cost effective. Laura Stone of VTrans added it would be a 21' span with a natural bottom for aquatic organism passage and to meet the bank full width standards. Laura Stone of VTrans further added there would be two 12' travel lanes with 8' shoulders on either side of the road, noting it does exceed the standards to match what is there already. Laura Stone of VTrans further discussed they expect this to have a 75-year design life.

Laura Stone of VTrans discussed the proposed layout that the new buried structure would be put right along the same exact existing channel alignment, noting it's just going to be a bigger structure. Laura Stone of VTrans added there is 20' of fill here so it is a significant amount of excavation. Laura Stone of VTrans further added the new bridge will meet minimum hydraulic standards for bank full width, the minimum standard geometric design criteria, and have a 75-year design life. Laura Stone of VTrans noted the grade of the road will not be changed, they will match existing grade and try to keep the impacts of the project as minimal as possible.

Laura Stone of VTrans discussed the maintenance of traffic options they considered included looking at an offsite detour, a temporary bridge option, and they looked at a phased construction option. Laura Stone of VTrans added they selected

phased construction for this project. Laura Stone of VTrans further added they discussed a detour at length, but felt the length of the detour, the amount of traffic here, considering the amount of excavation, and how long that detour would have to be duration wise, it didn't make sense. Laura Stone of VTrans further noted regarding keeping impacts to a minimum, they did not want to go with a temporary bridge. Laura Stone of VTrans restated they are recommending two phases of construction with two-way traffic maintained in each direction.

Laura Stone of VTrans described a phased construction as when you keep traffic on one side of the road while you are constructing the other side and then you just flip-flop. Laura Stone of VTrans added for the phase one layout they would have traffic on the south side of VT Route 106, noting in order to accommodate two-way traffic they need to bump out the road slightly and those exact limits will be determined in design. Laura Stone of VTrans noted they would bump out the road and put in some sheet piling there so they can maintain that two-way traffic. Laura Stone of VTrans noted when you get into a design hourly volume or peak hour of traffic of 770 vehicles per hour, that's when you can start seeing some delays with that one-way alternating type of traffic. Laura Stone of VTrans further added during phase one the north side of the culvert would have a new buried structure installed. Laura Stone of VTrans continued that they would move traffic over onto that new section of culvert while they construct the downstream (South) end while maintaining two-way traffic.

Laura Stone of VTrans described the preliminary project schedule they have this in the budget for the spring/summer of 2026, noting it is always possible to move out a year for many different reasons though they do not expect it to deviate more than one year. Laura Stone of VTrans added right now they are expecting this to be constructed in 2026 with a total cost estimate of \$5.3 million. Laura Stone of VTrans summarized the project that they are going to replace the existing culvert with a new three-sided buried frame or a buried bridge while maintaining traffic via phased construction, it will be constructed in two phases while maintaining two-way traffic, the new structure will have a 21' span with a natural bottom for aquatic organism passage and to meet the minimum bank full width standards, maintaining that 12' 8' typical roadway section, and there is a utility relocation that will likely be avoided with phased construction though it is possible that minor alterations to the arial utilities will be needed, but really minimal if at all. Laura Stone of VTrans noted there will be a minimal amount of right-of-way needed and that is just at the inlet and outlet to stabilize the channel.

Laura Stone of VTrans noted the scoping report, PowerPoint, and all future presentations on the website will be available at the following website and is available through the Town Manager:

- <https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/vtrans/external/Projects/Structures/17B174>

Everett Hammond inquired if the minimum hydraulic standards was a 100-year design storm for the State. Laura Stone of VTrans responded that the minimum hydraulic standard is based on Q50, noting it's like a 50-year design storm. Laura Stone of VTrans continued really what this culvert is substandard for is how much water the pipe can pass and also if it constricts the natural channel width, noting with this existing structure it's that natural channel width that's constricted, this 13' existing span does not meet the bank full width of 21' and that is the hydraulic standard that we are not meeting. Everett Hammond asked to confirm if that 21' span will only be a 50-year storm or a 100-year storm. Laura Stone of VTrans responded the new one is likely going to carry more than the design storm of the 50-year storm really because they are oversizing it for that bank, that is something they will do with the final hydraulic analysis which is done in design.

Further discussion ensued that there are no utilities there now but there is a lot of fill there and they could possibly go over the top.

Doug Johnston via Zoom inquired why the culvert was being called a bridge and will this project affect the swimming hole by opening that up by affecting the depth of it or the width of it. Laura at VTrans responded they consider anything that is greater than 6' with the nomenclature of a bridge and so while it is a culvert anything more than 6' gets a bridge number. Laura Stone of VTrans added in terms of the scour hole it is likely going to get affected because they are opening this up and the velocities are going to slow down, noting she expects this scour hole is going to start to fill in overtime and get smaller.

Jessica Martin via Zoom inquired how long is the project anticipated to take. Laura Stone of VTrans responded she would expect it to take the entire construction season as there is a lot of excavation and when you are doing phased construction you have to do everything twice, noting she does not think this is going to go more than a second construction season. Rob Young VTrans Project Manager via Zoom added sometimes when they have phased construction there is a possibility of it extending out to two seasons, but he thinks with this particular project with the frame and likelihood of it being precast concrete there won't be much for field work as far as cast in place goes, so he would anticipate their normal construction season from April 15th to December 1st.

Chair Kristi Morris commented on the upstream side of the culvert if you go off the road far enough there is the end of the airport runway, but there is a field in there that occasionally has horses that graze out there, and he inquired who will be responsible for contacting the neighbors to advise them of this project. Rob Young VTrans Project Manager responded any interaction with folks in and around the area they have a right-of-way process where they reach out to all the adjacent property owners, noting this is a State-owned project so any coordination with adjacent property owners will be Vtrans' responsibility.

No further discussion. The Public Hearing was closed at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie M. Kellow, Recording Secretary