



THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Victoria F. Sheehan
Commissioner

William Cass, P.E.
Assistant Commissioner

Bureau of Bridge Design
(603) 271-2731

July 13, 2021

Ms. Judith Lee Shelnuttt Brotman, Chair
Mr. Ben Kilham
Mr. David Kahn
Town of Lyme Select Board
One High Street
PO Box 126
Lyme, NH 03768

RE:Lyme 14460 – Bridge Rehabilitation of East Thetford Road over the Connecticut River
A000(394)

Dear Town of Lyme Select Board,

I am writing regarding the New Hampshire Department of Transportation's upcoming bridge project, which will rehabilitate the bridge that carries East Thetford Road over the Connecticut River between the Towns of Lyme, New Hampshire, and Thetford, Vermont and extend its service life. I became the Project Manager for this project at the end of May, after the recent retirements of past Project Managers Bob Landry and Joe Adams, whom you may have corresponded with previously.

The existing bridge, built in 1937, is a two-span steel high Parker truss with equal spans of 231'-9" between bearings. The bridge is 21'-0" wide between curbs and currently has a posted weight limit of 15 tons. Work to be carried out under this project includes rehabilitation of the concrete abutments and pier; replacement of the concrete deck, expansion joints, curbs and bridge rail; replacement of select steel floor support members; cleaning and painting of the structural steel (including environmental protection); and reconstruction of a short section of roadway at each approach to the bridge. The limits of work begin on East Thetford Road (VT 113) in Vermont approximately 175 feet west of the bridge and continue approximately 775 feet easterly, crossing the bridge and ending approximately 125 feet past the bridge in New Hampshire. After completion of the project, NHDOT anticipates the bridge will have sufficient capacity to carry legal loads and that the weight limit can be removed.

There are two areas that have caused delay in the project schedule since the Department last held a public meeting for the project. The first is design related, as we worked to evaluate the condition of the pier and develop a plan to rehabilitate or replace it. After extensive consideration, it has been decided to retain the pier, which will receive repairs above the waterline and be encased in a reinforced concrete "jacket" below. The second item that has caused delay was securing the temporary property rights needed to allow the contractor access to the Connecticut River (and bridge pier) during construction. Based on early conversations with abutting property owners, the access was planned to be from the Vermont side of the river. However, that did not occur and we were eventually able to reach an agreement with the owner in Lyme.

The Department recognizes that closure of this bridge creates a hardship for residents of both States, and has therefore set the project schedule to minimize disruption to the travelling public as much as possible by limiting bridge closures to the following periods: April 1, 2022 to November 4, 2022 and April 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023.

It is intended that the bridge deck replacement/superstructure rehabilitation work is to be completed during the first season, while the cleaning and painting of the bridge structural steel will primarily occur the following year. The bridge will be closed and traffic detoured during the construction operations but will remain open during the winter season.

Throughout the duration of the project, and at the discretion of the Department, uniformed officers and flaggers will be used to control traffic. Portable changeable message signs will be used to notify motorists in advance of upcoming work and provide messages during construction. Additionally, notice will be provided to the Town of Lyme, NH; the Town of Thetford, VT; Connecticut River Byway Council; and the public relative to the bridge closure, schedule, and progress of work at key points during the project, such as at least two weeks in advance of bridge closure or reopening and changes in traffic patterns.

This project is scheduled to advertise on September 14, 2021, with bids opening on October 14, 2021. Assuming a successful bid opening and award of contract to the low-bidder, on-site construction is not anticipated to begin until spring 2022 and project completion will be at the end of summer of 2023. A pre-construction meeting, to which the Town will be invited, will be held by the Contractor prior to the start of construction

Included with this letter is a copy of the Municipal Work Zone Agreement (MWZA) that all municipalities are asked to sign as an acknowledgement that the Department will have the authority to control traffic through the work zone for the duration of the project. Please sign the enclosed document and return it to me. Electronic signatures and transmittal via e-mail are acceptable, or if you prefer to send hard copies with wet signatures, please send me two original signed copies. One signed copy will be returned to the Town and one retained in the Design file.

Information presented at past public meetings is available on the Department's website at <https://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/lymethetford14460/index.htm> for your reference. As noted above, the pier treatment and construction access have changed from what was previously presented. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this project further, feel free to contact me at 271-3401 or send an e-mail to Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov.

Sincerely,



Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E.
Project Manager

Attachment

cc: Police Chief Shaun O'Keefe, Town of Lyme