



**VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING**

**OCTOBER 30, 2020**

**AT**

**FOR THE PROPOSED**

**RECONSTRUCTION AND RELATED WORK ON ROUTE 23/41  
From Creamery Road to North Undermountain Road  
Project No. 608767  
MassDOT Project Management Section**

**IN THE TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS**

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HIGHWAY DIVISION**

**JONATHAN GULLIVER  
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

**PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.  
CHIEF ENGINEER**

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**  
**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION**  
**NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING**  
**Project File No. 608767**

A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be published on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed reconstruction and related work on Routes 23/41, from Creamery Road to North Undermountain Road project in Egremont, MA.

**WHEN:           Friday, October 30, 2020**

**PURPOSE:**   The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Reconstruction and related work on Routes 23/41, From Creamery Road to North Undermountain Road project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

**PROPOSAL:** The proposed project's purpose is to improve safety, operations, and connectivity for all users. Specifically, the project will: Enhance safety and connectivity by eliminating gaps in the sidewalk network and improving mid-block crossings. The project will also update intersection geometrics to MassDOT standards at North Undermountain Road, Buttonball Lane, Sheffield Road, and Creamery Road. Bicycle accommodations consisting of a usable shoulder have been provided in accordance with applicable design guides.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The **Commonwealth of Massachusetts** is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be presented in the hearing.

Written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: **Project Management**, Project File No. **608767**. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after the hearing is posted to the MassDOT website listed below. Project inquiries may be emailed to [dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us](mailto:dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us).

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email ([MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us)). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

This Virtual Design Public Hearing or a cancellation announcement will be posted on the internet at [www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings](http://www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings).

JONATHAN GULLIVER  
PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.

HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR  
CHIEF ENGINEER



Dear Concerned Citizen:

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is committed to building and maintaining a transportation infrastructure that is both safe and efficient for all who use our roadways, bridges, bicycle facilities and pedestrian paths, while maintaining the integrity of the environment.

As part of the design process for this project, we are conducting this public hearing to explain the proposed improvements, listen to your comments and answer any questions you may have. At the conclusion of the hearing, MassDOT will review all of your comments and, where feasible, incorporate them into the design of the project.

We recognize that road and bridge construction can create inconveniences for the public. MassDOT places a great deal of emphasis on minimizing the temporary disruptive effects of construction.

MassDOT encourages input from local communities and values your opinions. Please be assured that we will undertake no project without addressing the concerns of the community.

Sincerely,

Patricia A Leavenworth, P. E.  
Chief Engineer

## **WHAT IS A PUBLIC HEARING?**

### **WHY A PUBLIC HEARING?**

To provide an assured method whereby the Commonwealth of Massachusetts can furnish to the public information concerning the State's highway construction proposals, and to afford every interested resident of the area an opportunity to be heard on any proposed project. At the same time, the hearings afford the Commonwealth an additional opportunity to receive information from local sources which would be of value to the State in making its final decisions to what design should be advanced for development.

### **WHY NOT A VOTE ON HIGHWAY PLANS?**

The hearings are not intended to be a popular referendum for the purpose of determining the nature of a proposed improvement by a majority of those present. They do not relieve the duly constituted officials of a State highway department of the necessity for making decisions in State highway matters for which they are charged with full responsibility.

### **WHAT DOES A PUBLIC HEARING ACCOMPLISH?**

It is designed to ensure the opportunity for, or the availability of, a forum to provide factual information which is pertinent to the determination of the final alternative considered by the state to best serve the public interest, and on which improvement projects are proposed to be undertaken.

It is important that the people of the area express their views in regard to the proposal being presented, so that views can be properly recorded in the minutes of the meeting. These minutes will be carefully studied and taken into consideration in the determination of the final design.

## **TO SAFEGUARD THE PROPERTY OWNER**

If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the State for highway purposes in the interest of all people of the Commonwealth, your rights are fully protected under the law. Briefly, here are some of the answers to questions you might ask.

### **1. WHO CONTACTS ME?**

Representatives of the Right of Way Bureau of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Highway Division. They will explain the impacts and your rights as protected under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 79.

### **2. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR MY PROPERTY?**

Every offer is made to ensure that an equitable value is awarded to you for the property, or to appraise the "damage" to the property as a result of the acquisition. MassDOT appraisers, independent appraisers, MassDOT "Review Appraisers" and a Real Estate Appraisal Review Board may all contribute in arriving at an award of damages. The State also pays a proportionate part of the real estate tax for the current year for fee takings, and interest from the date the property is acquired to the payment date, on all impacts.

### **3. MUST I ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFER?**

No. If, after the figure established as market value has been offered to the owner, the owner feels he or she is not being offered a fair price, he or she has the right, within three years, to appeal to the courts. Pending a court decision, he or she can be paid on a "pro-tanto" basis (or "for the time being") that in no way prejudices the court appeal.

### **4. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY HOUSE?**

The owner will have the opportunity to buy back his or her house, provided he or she has a location to which it can be moved, and the proper permits for its removal. If the owner does not wish to repurchase, the house will be advertised for bids. The highest bidder, who must also have a location and permits for removal, will be awarded the house. Otherwise, the structure will be slated for demolition.

### **5. WHAT HAPPENS IF I MUST RELOCATE?**

In addition to the market value of the property, the Department pays certain relocation benefits for both owners and tenants of acquired residences and businesses who meet eligibility requirements. Assistance in relocation is also provided. Department brochures are available for details on these benefits.

## **Project Background**

The Village of Egremont is located in Berkshire County, Massachusetts which is adjacent to the New York State line. Egremont is a historical village with a charming center that welcomes residents and visitors. Route 23/41 is a state road that runs through South Egremont and is bounded by residential and commercial businesses along with several historical landmarks.

Between Creamery Road and North Undermountain Road, Main Street (Rte. 23/41) runs through the village center of Egremont. There are intermittent segments of sidewalk. Currently there are two mid-block crosswalks, one located at the South Egremont School and the second at the post office. Un-signalized stop controlled intersections within the project limits are located at North Undermountain Road, Sheffield Road, Buttonball Lane, and Creamery Road. This segment of Main Street consists of two 12-foot travel lanes with varying shoulder widths. The existing pavement width varies from 28 to 36 feet.

## **Project Need**

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is proposing to reconstruct State Highway Routes 23/41 in the Village of Egremont (The Project). The Project is needed because of gaps in the sidewalk network and limited crosswalks which negatively impact pedestrian connectivity. The intersections at North Undermountain Road, Buttonball Lane, Sheffield Road, and Creamery Road have substandard design features including insufficient stopping sight distance and decision sight distance, and instability in the asphalt pavement. The existing pavement structure is failing due to a poor subbase as rutting is formed at multiple locations within the project. The current geometrics within the study area lead to excessive vehicle speeds.

## **Project Purpose**

The purpose of the Project is to improve safety, operations, and connectivity for all users, consistent with the MassDOT Complete Streets initiative. Specifically, the Project will:

1. Enhance safety and connectivity by closing gaps in the sidewalk network and improving mid-block crossings.
2. Encourage safe vehicle speeds by updating intersection geometrics to MassDOT standards at North Undermountain Road, Buttonball Lane, Sheffield Road, and Creamery Road.

## **Project Goals**

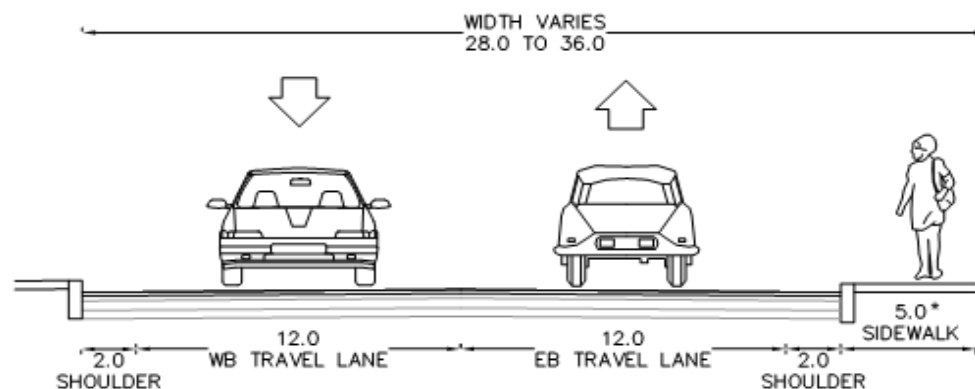
In addition to the stated purpose of the project, the Route 23/41 road reconstruction project will achieve the following goals. These are preliminary goals and will be developed further with input from multiple state agencies, town officials, and the public.

- Maintain the character and charm of the village center.
- Create partnerships to advance the design within the community, business associations, and local civic groups.
- Avoid adverse impacts to historic structures or sites.
- Avoid, minimize, and mitigate environmental impacts.
- Avoid, minimize, and mitigate State Right-of-Way impacts.
- Avoid, minimize, and mitigate roadway widening along the south side of the roadway within the proximity of Hubbard Brook.
- Improve access management to limit driveway interruptions and improve pedestrian and bicycle mobility with continuous, uninterrupted sidewalks and bike lanes.
- Implement best design practices to manage and reduce speed.
- Maintain sensitivity and awareness to abutter needs throughout the project, as well as keep the public involved and informed throughout the design and construction process.

# Proposed Concept

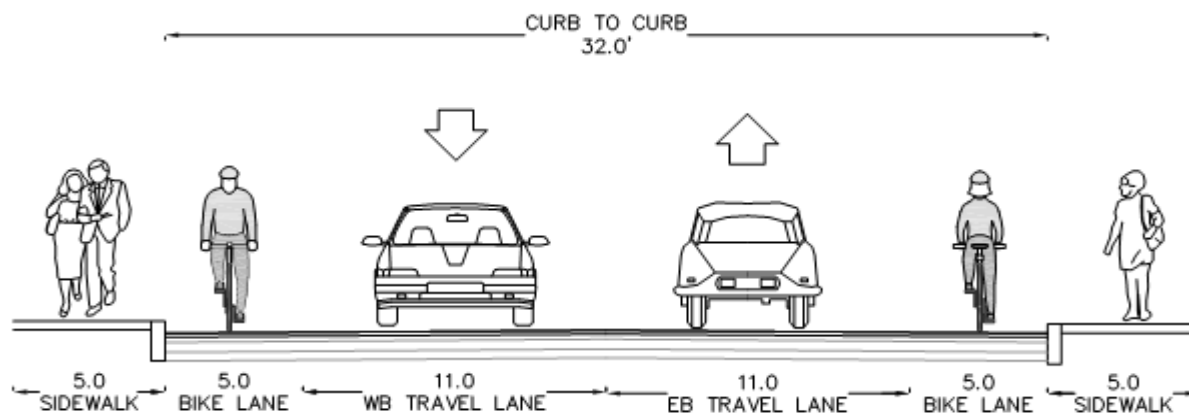


# Proposed Concept



*Existing Typical Section*

*\*Existing sidewalk sections vary*



*Proposed Typical Section*

## Existing: Main St at Mom's Cafe



# Proposed: Main St at Mom's Cafe



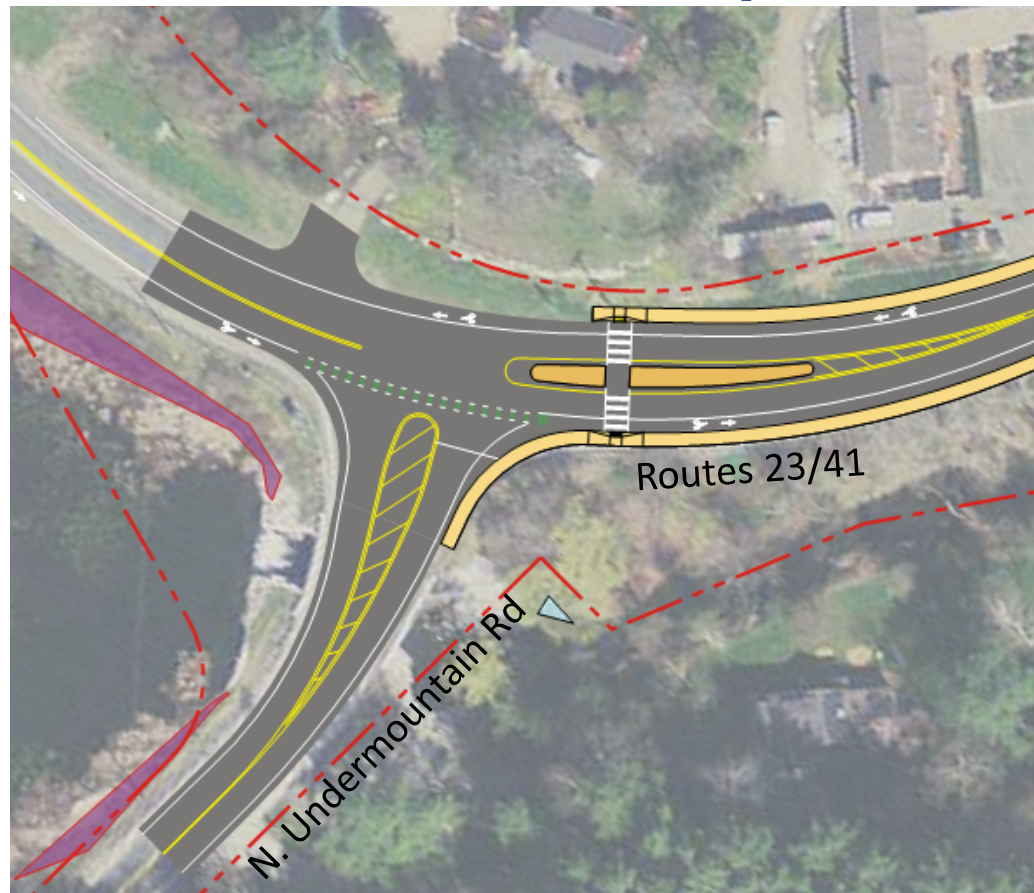
# Intersection Improvement

- *N. Undermountain Road- Existing Intersection*



# Intersection Improvement

- *N. Undermountain Road - Proposed Intersection*



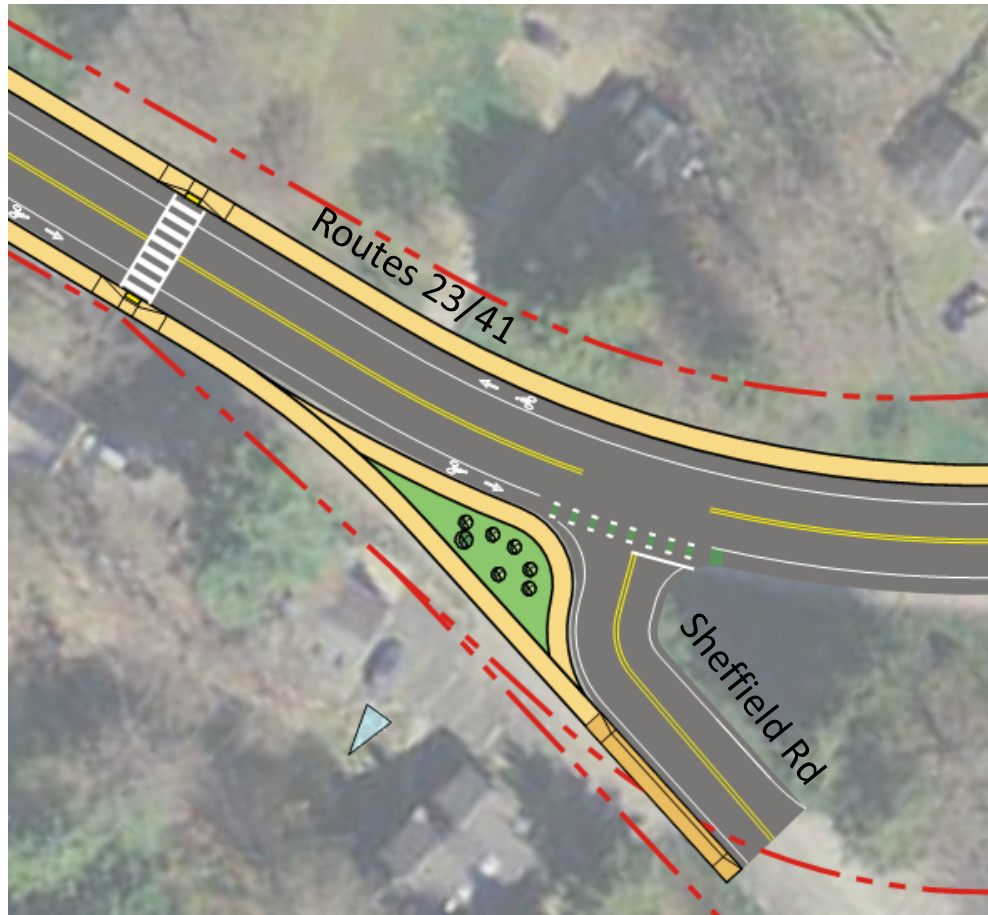
# Intersection Improvement

- *Main Street & Sheffield Rd - Existing Intersection*



# Intersection Improvement

- *Main Street & Sheffield Rd - Proposed Intersection*



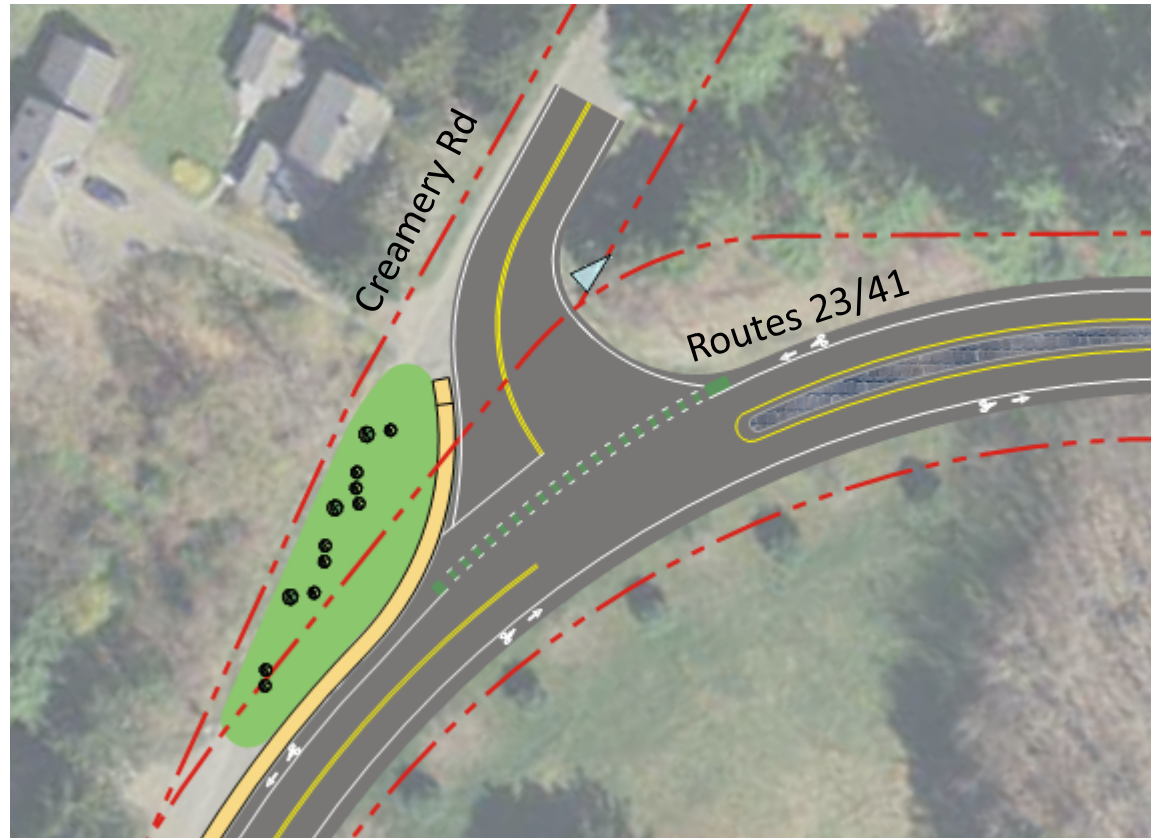
# Intersection Improvement

- *Main Street & Creamery Rd - Existing Intersection*



# Intersection Improvement

- *Main Street & Creamery Rd – Proposed Intersection*



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

EGREMONT, MA  
Reconstruction of Route 23/41  
Creamery Road to North Undermountain Road  
Project File No. 608767

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated. Please return your sheet, with comments, to a staff member at the meeting, or mail to:

Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer  
MassDOT – Highway Division  
10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116-3973  
Attn: Tom Currier, P.E. MassDOT Project Manager

The final date for receipt of written statements and exhibits for inclusion into the official hearing transcript will be ten (10) days after the Public Hearing.

**PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY.**

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Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

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Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E.  
Chief Engineer  
MassDOT – Highway Division  
10 Park Plaza  
Boston, MA 02116-3973

RE: Public Hearing  
RECONSTRUCTION OF ROUTE 23/41  
**TOWN OF EGREMONT**  
Project File No. 608767  
Roadway Project Management

