



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

MARCH 24, 2021

FOR THE PROPOSED

**RESURFACING AND RUMBLE STRIP INSTALLATION ON ROUTE 140
PROJECT FILE NO. 608891
HIGHWAY DESIGN**

IN THE CITY OF GARDNER, 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 MEETING
Project File No. 608891

A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be published on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed Resurfacing and Rumble Strip Installation on Route 140 project in Gardner, MA.

WHEN: Wednesday, March 24, 2021

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Resurfacing and Rumble Strip 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 consists of the resurfacing of 1.4 miles of Green Street (Route 140) in Gardner between the Winchendon town line to the north and Green Street to the south. The proposed improvements including mill and overlay of the roadway and the replacement of the recently installed rumble strips and stanchions within the limits of the project. The project also includes the replacement of existing guardrail and upgrades to the respective end treatments, as well as cleaning and flushing of pipes and repairs to catch basins. The roadway beyond the travel lanes will be marked and provided for bicyclists. Sidewalks are not included as part of this project.

All Resurfacing work will be within the existing Public Roadway Layout.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us or via US Mail to Suite 6340, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: **Project Management**, Project File No. **608891** Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after the hearing is posted to the MassDOT website listed below.

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). 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.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.
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.

RIGHT OF WAY CONCERNS

Your Municipality is responsible for securing the right of way for this project. If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the Municipality 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. REASON FOR PROJECT

The completion of this project will serve local needs. The proposed enhancement will also be in the interest of others in the greater community, and provide for the public good.

2. WHO CONTACTS ME?

Representatives of the municipality have already contacted or will contact you. They will explain the procedures used in acquiring any necessary rights in land.

3. WHAT ABOUT DONATIONS? WHAT IS A RIGHT OF ENTRY?

Town officials will often seek donations, of parcels, where permanent rights are required. This procedure will minimize the acquisition cost for your community.

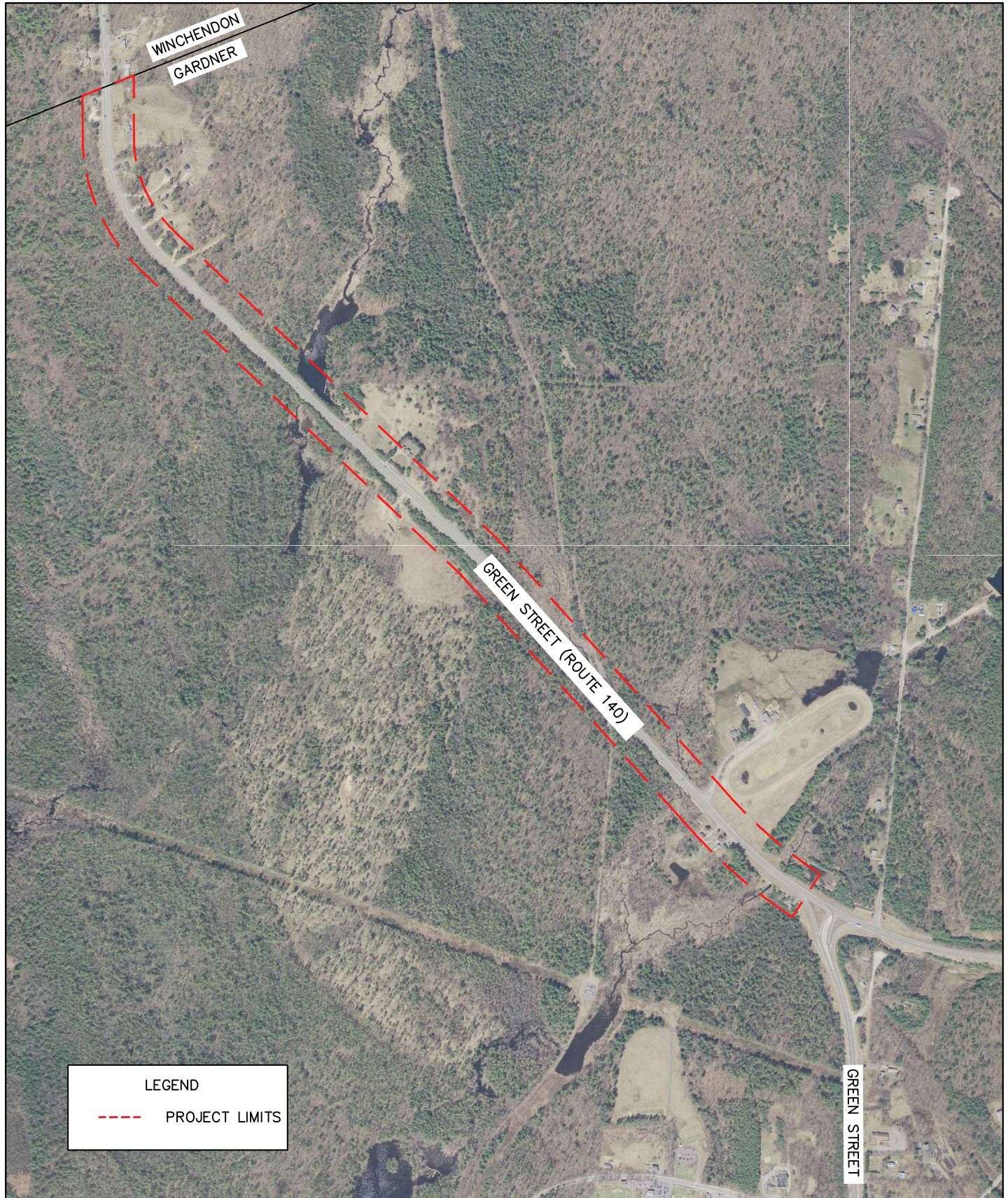
A Right of Entry is a document that is signed by the owner. It allows the Contractor to perform certain types of work on the owner's land. The work is usually minor in nature and frequently consists of loaming/seeding behind sidewalks, new driveway apron work, grading/sloping, and wetland protection, etc. The rights granted are temporary in nature.

4. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR THE ACQUIRED PARCELS?

In the event that donations are not considered, or completed, every effort will be made to ensure that an equitable value is awarded. Municipal and/or outside appraisers will complete an appraisal. Consideration is given to the type of rights needed, whether in fee, permanent or temporary easements. The appraisal will be the basis for arriving at a fair price (for damages that result).

5. MUST I ACCEPT THE MUNICIPALITY OFFER?

No, if the owner feels that the offer is not fair the owner may petition the courts. This action does not stop or delay the acquisition. The action must occur within 3 years. The owner(s) may be paid pro tanto (for the time being). The pro tanto payment will not prejudice the court's final decision.



RESURFACING AND RUMBLE STRIP INSTALLATION ON ROUTE 140

Project File No. 608891

PROJECT LOCATION AND LIMITS

The Green Street (Route 140) roadway resurfacing project is located in Gardner, Massachusetts and extends for approximately 1.4 miles along Route 140, between the Winchendon, Massachusetts town line to the north and Green Street to the south. Route 140 is a two-way, two-lane roadway extending in the north-south direction through the City of Gardner. There is a climbing lane in the northbound direction on the northern section of the project limits. Route 140 is part of the National Highway System (NHS) and is classified as an urban principal arterial. It is under City of Gardner jurisdiction.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to resurface the roadway and improve safety along Route 140 within the project limits. The City of Gardner is the proponent of this project. The crash data collected from MassDOT for the project length indicated that a total of six crashes occurred during the five-year study period, the majority of which were single vehicle incidents caused by vehicles running off the road. However, there are documented high severity crashes along Route 140 within the Town of Winchendon and the City of Gardner beyond the project segment. The corridor cross section and geometric characteristics are consistent along Route 140 within these communities.

A recent MassDOT project implemented short-term improvements to mitigate crashes attributed to running off the road and lane departures along Route 140 between Betty Spring Road in Westminster and Spring Street (Route 12) in Winchendon. The project replaced warning and regulatory signs, implemented center and shoulder rumble strips and rumble stripes, installed center stanchions and removed most of the passing zones. As part of this proposed project, the recently installed rumble strips and stanchions within the project limits will be replaced. The project also includes the replacement of existing guardrail and upgrades to the respective end treatments, as well as cleaning and flushing of pipes and repairs to catch basins within the State right-of-way.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Route 140 is part of the National Highway System (NHS) and is classified as an urban principal arterial under the City of Gardner jurisdiction between the project limits of the Winchendon/Gardner town line and Green Street. Generally, Route 140 extends in a north/south direction providing one lane of travel in each direction. Existing travel lanes are 12 feet wide with a varied width (6 feet to 12 feet) paved shoulder. A northbound climbing lane is provided for approximately 0.90 miles on Route 140 along the northern section of the project limits. The speed limit on Route 140 within the project limits is posted at 50 mph in both directions. There are “no passing” zones along Route 140 within the project limits in both the northbound and southbound directions. There are currently no sidewalks or bicycle accommodations present along Route 140 within the project limits. Under current conditions, the roadway has centerline and shoulder rumble strips as well as stanchions along the striped median.

The current cross section of Route 140 has 11.5-foot-wide travel lanes in each direction, a 6-foot wide at-grade striped median and shoulders that vary between seven and nine feet in the southern section of the corridor. On the northern section, the travel lanes vary between 11 and 11.5 feet in width, the median is 4-foot wide with shoulders that vary between five and seven feet.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The proposed improvements include resurfacing the roadway along Route 140. In addition, the replacement of rumble strips and stanchions are intended to enhance the visibility of the operating lanes and alert motorists as to when they are approaching the edges of the travel lane. The proposed improvements are designed to increase safety within the project corridor and mitigate the deficiencies identified in a Road Safety Audit (RSA) conducted in 2007, as well as a safety review meeting held in April 2017.

The Healthy Transportation Policy Directive P-13-0001 encourages that all MassDOT projects make an effort to increase and encourage more pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Proposed shoulders are proposed to be marked as a buffered bicycle lane per the MassDOT Engineering Directive E-20-001.

The proposed cross section of Route 140 reduced the travel lane widths from 11.5 feet to 11-foot-wide travel lanes in each direction, the striped median is also reduced to 2 feet and 8 inches in width with 7.5-foot-wide shoulders in the southern section of the corridor. On the northern section, the travel lanes are proposed to be 11-foot wide, with a 2-foot and 2-inches wide median and 5-foot-wide shoulders. The shoulders are proposed to be marked as buffered bicycle lane.

Rumble strips are proposed on the shoulders and on the median. The median would also have stanchions to enhance the visibility for drivers under inclement weather conditions.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

It is expected that in order to construct the majority of the proposed improvements, lane closures may occur with one lane of travel provided in each direction along Route 140. Travel lane widths of 10 to 11-foot will remain open through the work zones. As part of this project, vehicular traffic flow will be maintained and bicycle access will be accommodated within the traffic flow on the shoulders. There are no existing pedestrian routes to maintain during construction.

UTILITIES

Existing utilities in the project area are not anticipated to be impacted by the proposed improvements.

ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING

A categorical exclusion will be needed from the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for this project.

RIGHT-OF-WAY

Right-of-way acquisition is not anticipated for the proposed improvements.

PROJECT COST

The estimated total cost of the project is \$2,000,000. This project is funded under the Federal Aid Program whereby 80% of the construction cost will be funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and 20% of the construction cost will be funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PROJECT STATUS

The design plans displayed at this Virtual Design Public Hearing are at the 75% design stage. Comments made at this hearing will be incorporated to the maximum extent feasible. The project is expected to be advertised for construction in the Summer 2021 subject to obtaining all necessary environmental permits. The construction is expected to start in Fall 2021. This project must be programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program in the appropriate Federal Fiscal Year in order for MassDOT to solicit bids for eventual construction.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

Gardner, MA
Resurfacing and Rumble Strip Installation on Route 140
Project File No. 608891

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated. You may e-mail comments directly to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us or you may mail this sheet with any additional comments to:

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

Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after the hearing.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

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

RE: Virtual Public Hearing
Resurfacing and Rumble Strip Installation on Route 140
GARDNER
Project File No. 608891
Attn: Project Management

