



DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING WEBINAR

March 4, 2021

**FOR THE PROPOSED
BRIDGE REPLACEMENT
CREAMERY ROAD/UNITAS ROAD OVER THE WARE RIVER**

**Project No. 608851
Bridge No. H-08-003=N-07-002 (C7G)
Project Management**

IN THE TOWNS OF HARDWICK & NEW BRAINTREE, MASSACHUSETTS

**COMMONWEALTH OF 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. 608851

A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be published on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed bridge replacement project on Creamery Road Over Ware River in Hardwick and New Braintree, MA.

WHEN: Thursday, March 4, 2021

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed bridge replacement project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing/meeting will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: This proposed bridge project consists of a 100' long single span bridge. The bridge will increase the total curb-to-curb width to 14' and an architecturally styled concrete bridge railing system will be located along both sides of the bridge with a steel highway guard railing located on both sides of both approaches. The roadway will be raised approximately 2' to provide for hydraulic clearances which will require approximately 200' of roadway improvements along both sides of the bridge.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The Towns of Hardwick and New Braintree towns are 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, File No. 608851. 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 massdotprojectmanagement@dot.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). 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.

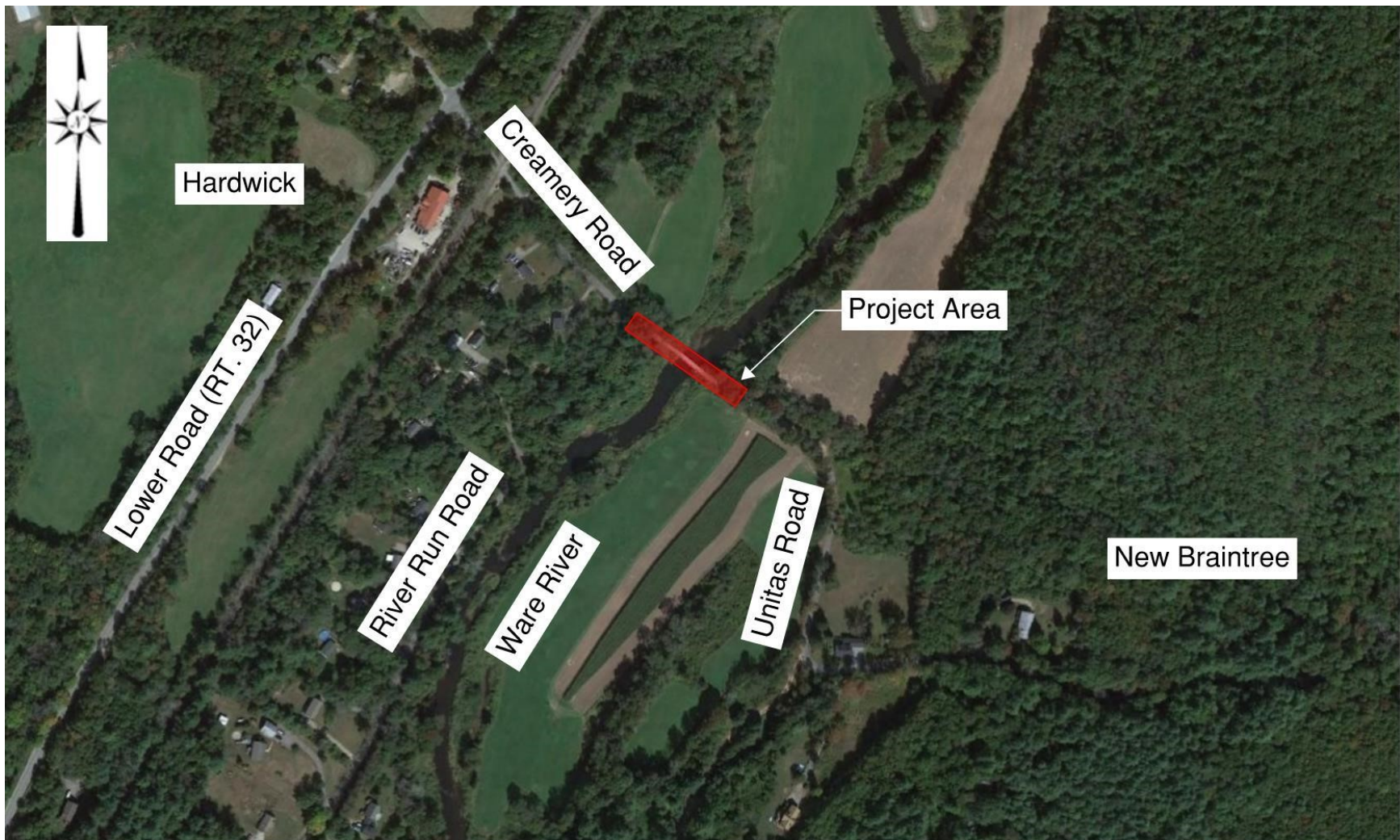
A Right of Entry is a document that is signed by the owner. It allows the Contractor to perform certain types of work on the owner's land. The work is usually minor in nature and frequently consists of loaming/seeding behind sidewalks, new driveway apron work, grading/sloping, and wetland protection,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



LOCUS PLAN

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MASSACHUSETTS HIGHWAY DIVISION
PUBLIC HEARING

BRIDGE REPLACEMENT – BRIDGE NO. H-08-003=N-07-002 (C7G)
PROJECT FILE NO. 608851
IN THE TOWNS OF HARDWICK & NEW BRAINTREE, MASSACHUSETTS

Project Location and Limits:

The project is located in the Towns of Hardwick and New Braintree and includes the Creamery Road/Unitas Road Bridge over the Ware River as MassDOT Bridge No. H-08-003=N-07-002 (C7G) and the roadway approaches to the bridge. The attached locus map shows the location of the project. The length of the project is 440 feet between the limits of work.

Purpose and Need:

The purpose of this project is to replace the structurally deficient bridge over the Ware River with a new bridge in the same location. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) proposes bridge safety improvements with the replacement of the superstructure by widening the bridge width to match the existing approach roadway widths and raising the roadway profile to meet the 2-foot minimum freeboard clearance.

Existing Conditions:

Roadway Characteristics -

- Creamery Road and Unitas Road consist of bituminous concrete with a curb-to-curb width of 14 feet. There are guardrails on the approaches to the bridge but are low to the ground and not attached to the existing bridge rails.

Bridge Characteristics -

- The bridge, constructed in 1939, is a 79'-4" long single span bridge consisting of two steel beams supporting a reinforced concrete deck with a bare concrete wearing surface. The south stub abutment consists of a reinforced concrete cap with a stone masonry backwall and stone masonry stem. The north abutment consists of reinforced concrete.
- The bridge is carrying a single alternating 11-foot travel lane with concrete curbs on both sides supporting timber railings for a total out-to-out width of 14 feet.
- The existing bridge railings consist of timber rails and timber posts bolted to the exterior faces of the concrete curbs and deck.
- Two 36WF150 steel stringers support a 6½-inch concrete deck that is crowned in the middle to 7 inches thick. The surface of the deck is bare concrete with random bituminous concrete patches.
- All of the existing steel beams have moderate corrosion throughout, with severe corrosion, section loss, and rust holes at the ends.
- According to the latest inspection report, the bridge is posted as follows for a 3-Ton weight limit.
- The existing south abutment displays voids and loss of mortar between the stone masonry and the existing north abutment exhibits minor spalling and hairline cracks.

Utilities Within Bridge Site -

- There are existing aerial utilities along the west side of the bridge and a utility pole at the northwest corner of the approach. It will have to be relocated for construction purposes as well as to meet required offset distances from the proposed guardrail.

Hydraulics at Bridge Site -

- The current freeboard does not provide the minimum 2-foot clearance for the 10-year design storm.
- The existing bankfull width does not provide adequate room for wildlife passage along the embankment beneath the bridge.

Environmental -

- There are small width wetlands on both sides of the Ware River.
- The project is located within a Priority Habitat of Rare Species and Estimated Habitat of Rare Wildlife.

Proposed Design:

Modified Geometry -

- The superstructure will consist of a 100-foot span with three steel girders supporting a concrete deck and an increased curb-to-curb width to match the existing approach roadway width.
- The approach roadway and bridge profile will be raised to meet the 2-foot minimum freeboard clearance.
- The substructure will consist of a concrete integral abutment system which removes the need for joints over the girder ends.

Safety Enhancements -

The following safety improvements are included in the project:

- Replacement of the deteriorated bridge superstructure with a non-fracture critical superstructure.
- Construction of new bridge railing in conformance with current standards.
- Installation of guardrail on the approach roadways tapered to the bridge and attached to the proposed bridge railing.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation -

- Creamery Road/Unitas Road is a municipal unstriped local road having no posted speed limit. Neither sidewalks for pedestrian nor shoulders for bicycle exist on the existing roadway; therefore, none are proposed for this project.
- The low volume of traffic, pedestrians, and cyclists expected to use the facility will share the road section as is currently the practice at the site.

Hydraulics -

- The raised roadway will provide compliance with the 2-foot minimum freeboard clearance for the 10-year design storm.
- The increased span length will meet the Hydraulic Report's recommended bankfull width if 95 feet which will provide a larger opening for better flow and wildlife passage.

Environmental -

- The project does not meet any Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Review Thresholds for a mandatory Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or an Environmental Notification Form (ENF).
- The project is a footprint bridge project and is exempt from the requirements of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (MWPA).
- Since the project will involve filling and/or dredging of resource areas, Section 401 Water Quality Certification will be necessary.
- The project will be required to obtain coverage under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Massachusetts General Permit.
- The MassDOT Environmental Unit will coordinate with Mass Wildlife's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program regarding Priority Habitats.
- Wetland resource areas impacted by the proposed structure shall be minimized the greatest extent possible.
- Any Bordering Vegetated Wetlands near the bridge temporarily disturbed by construction shall be restored.
- Any Bordering Vegetated Wetlands permanently disturbed by construction shall be replicated.
- Any flood storage volume removed either temporarily or permanently by the construction of the proposed bridge shall be compensated.
- Demolition of the remaining components of the existing bridge shall be performed to minimize disturbance to sediments and debris falling into the waterway.
- Channel width shall not be impacted by the proposed bridge.

Traffic Management -

- There will be a 3.7-mile long detour of Creamery Road/Unitas Road beginning at the bridge.
- Staged construction is not an option due to the narrow bridge and there only being two beams, which are severely deteriorated.
- Using a temporary bridge would be cost prohibitive.

Right of Way -

- The current design plans indicate that there are 6 temporary easements and 2 permanent easements required.
- The property owners impacted by this project will be contacted by municipal officials. They will present the proposed impacts to each owner and discuss the methods with which they may acquire the needed rights for the project.

Utility Relocation -

- The existing utility pole at the northwest corner of the approach – jointly owned by National Grid and Verizon – will need to be relocated for construction purposes as well as to meet required offset distances from the proposed guardrail.
- The relocated utility pole would require a push brace, which requires a 12 to 15-foot lead. A permanent easement will be required as a result.
- The relocated utility pole will require National Grid to re-tension their wires that span this pole to the next pole to the northwest.

- This relocation will result in a slightly longer span across the river, so National Grid will need to confirm if the increased span will work; if not, the pole across the river may need to be relocated to the west to reduce the span.
- The new alignment may necessitate a ROW easement.

Project Cost -

The estimated cost of the proposed construction of the Creamery Road/Unitas Road Bridge over the Ware River is approximately \$2,200,000.

Construction Duration -

Construction is anticipated to begin in the Spring of 2023 and complete in one construction season.

Project Status -

The plans on display tonight are at the 25% Design Stage. Comments received this evening will be considered in determining the final design. The design of this project is anticipated to be completed and advertised by October 2022.



Image 1 – North Approach



Image 2 South Approach



Image 3 – East Elevation



Image 4 West Elevation



Image 5 – Underside of Deck



Image 6 South Abutment



Image 7 – North Abutment



Image 8 – East face of deteriorated East Girder at South Abutment



Image 9 – Severe deterioration at south end of deck surface



Image 10 – Northwest approach guardrail low to the ground and not attached to bridge rail



Image 11 – Downstream View



Image 12 – Upstream View

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

Hardwick/New Braintree, MA
Bridge Replacement Project
Creamery Road/Unitas Road Over the Ware River
Project File No. 608851

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated. Please 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 Section

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 Webinar.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Please Fold and Tape



Please Place
Appropriate
Postage Here

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

RE: Public Hearing Webinar
Bridge Replacement Project – Creamery Road/Unitas Road Over the Ware River
Hardwick & New Braintree
Project File No. 608851
Project Management Section

