



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

JANUARY 28, 2021

FOR THE PROPOSED

**RESURFACING AND INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS ON LONGMEADOW
STREET (ROUTE 5) AND CONVERSE STREET (0.84 MILES)
608881**

Project Management

**IN THE TOWN OF LONGMEADOW and CITY OF SPRINGFIELD,
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. 608881**

A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be published on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed RESURFACING AND INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS ON LONGMEADOW STREET (ROUTE 5) AND CONVERSE STREET (0.84 MILES) project in Longmeadow-Springfield, MA.

WHEN: Thursday, January 28, 2021

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed RESURFACING AND INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS ON LONGMEADOW STREET (ROUTE 5) AND CONVERSE STREET 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 intersection improvements at the intersections of Converse Street and Laurel Street, Converse Street and Longmeadow Street and Longmeadow Street and Forest Glen Road/Western Drive. Improvements will include new and improved turn lanes, and traffic signal reconstruction. Work will also consist of new signage and pavement markings. Bicycle accommodations consisting of a 5' to 6' bicycle lane in both directions 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 Town of Longmeadow and The City of Springfield 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, Project File No. 608881. 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.

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 ISSUES

A secure Right of Way is required for this project. If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the State or Municipality for highway purposes in the interest of all people of the Commonwealth, your rights are fully protected under the law. Procedures are different depending on whether the State or Municipality is making the acquisitions. Briefly, here are some of the answers to questions you might ask.

State Acquisitions

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.

MassDOT also provides for dispute resolution through the administrative settlement process. You can initiate this by providing documentation and information relative to the value of your property, including but not limited to, an appraisal for our review. If resolution cannot be reached through the administrative settlement process, you can still bring a claim in court for additional monies at any time during the three-year period.

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.

Municipal Acquisitions

1. REASON FOR PROJECT?

The construction of this project will serve the needs of local users as well as those of the greater surrounding communities. The proposed enhancement has been designed to service 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 process and procedures used in acquiring any necessary rights required for the proposed project.

3. APPRAISALS, DONATIONS, RIGHTS OF ENTRY?

Impacted Property owners are entitled to an appraisal and Just Compensation, however, municipalities will often seek donations of parcels as 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 temporary 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, etc.

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

When donations or Rights of Entry 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 and review 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 (Just compensation), for the rights to be acquired.

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 from the date of the recording of the acquired parcel(s). The owner(s) may be paid pro tanto (for the time being). The pro tanto payment will not prejudice the court's final decision.



FUSS & O'NEILL

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FIGURE 1: LOCUS MAP

PROJ. NO: 20170404.A10

Corridor Improvements - Longmeadow, MA

October, 2018

This project will include intersection improvements at the intersections of Converse Street and Laurel Street, Converse Street and Longmeadow Street and Longmeadow Street and Forest Glen Road/Western Drive. Improvements will include new and improved turn lanes, and traffic signal reconstruction. Work will also consist of improved bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, new signage and pavement markings.

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: Virtual Public Hearing
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