



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

June 2nd, 2021

FOR THE PROPOSED

**Safe Routes to School – Bridge Street School Improvements
Project No. 609515
Project Management**

IN THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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

**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

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
Project File No. 609515

A Live Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed Bridge Street Elementary School Improvements (Safe Routes To School) project in Northampton, MA.

WHEN: Wednesday, June 2, 2021, 7:00pm

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Bridge Street Elementary School Improvements (Safe Routes To School) 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 new and reconstructed sidewalks and curb ramps, curb cut narrowing, curb extensions, crosswalks (including raised crosswalks), pavement markings, and related drainage on Bridge Street (Route 9), Parsons Street, and Hawley Street. There will be a rectangular rapid flashing beacon installed at the crosswalk across Bridge Street (Route 9) in front of the school. Since Hawley Street and Parsons Street are both functionally classified as local roads, which are both low-speed roadways and too narrow to accommodate bicycle lanes, bicyclists will continue to share the roadway with vehicles under proposed conditions.

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

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. **609515**. 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 occurs (by June 16, 2021).

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

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).

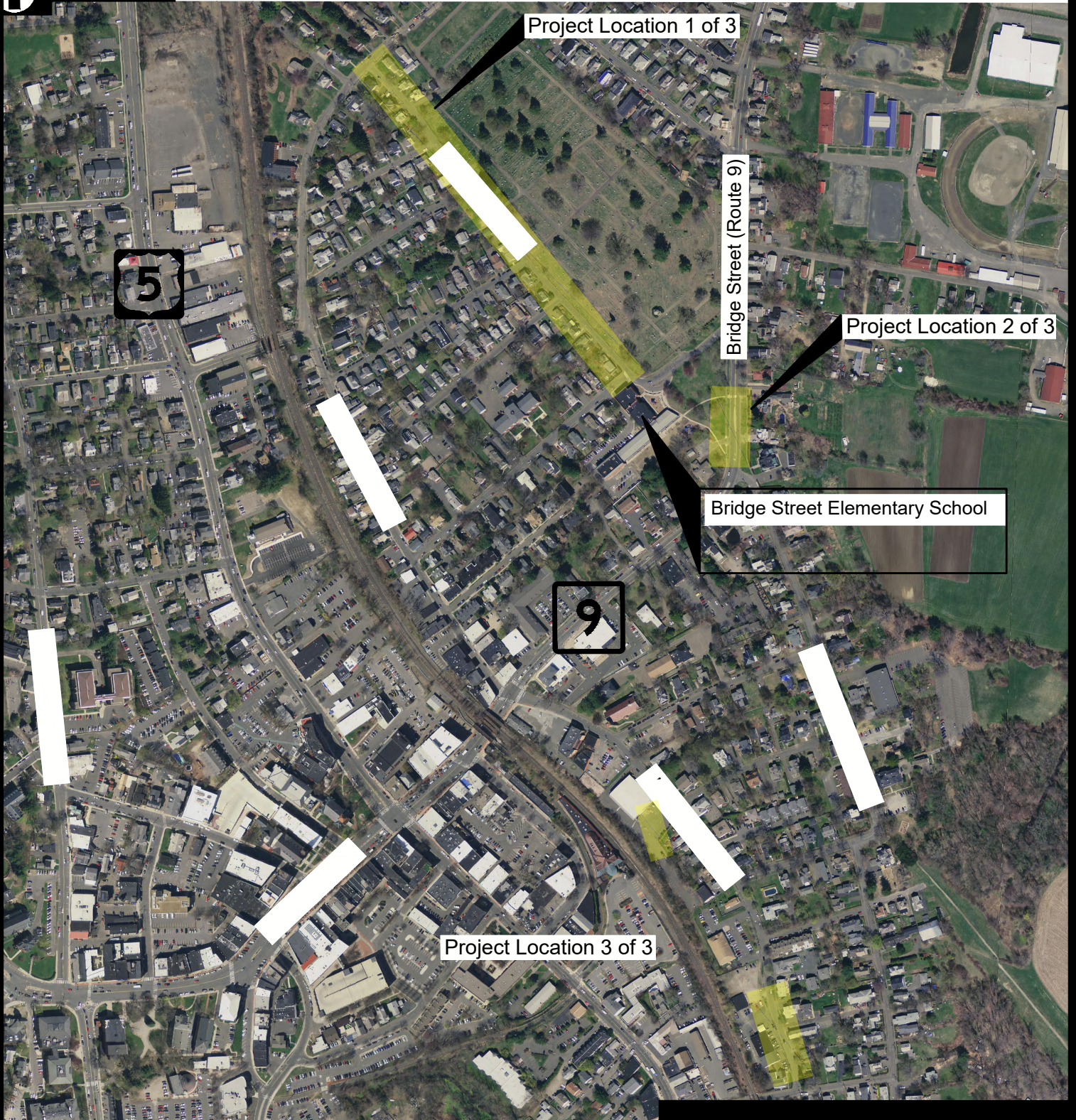
5. MUST I ACCEPT THE MUNICIPALITY OFFER?

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.



1" = 500'

Bridge Street (Route 9), Parsons Street & Hawley Street - Northampton, Massachusetts



146 Dascomb Road
Andover, MA 01810

www.TheEngineeringCorp.com

June 2, 2021

LOCUS MAP

Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Program
Bridge Street School Improvements
(Parsons Street / Bridge Street / Pomeroy Terrace / Hawley Street)
Northampton, MA

PROJECT LOCATION

The project includes traffic and pedestrian safety improvements along portions of Parsons Street, Bridge Street, Pomeroy Terrace, and Hawley Street associated with the Bridge Street Elementary School Improvements in Northampton, MA. The attached Locus Map outlines the project location.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and the City of Northampton are proposing traffic and pedestrian safety improvements along approximately 1,500 feet of Parsons Street between North Street and the Bridge Street Elementary School; isolated crosswalk, traffic control, and traffic calming improvements along Bridge Street and Pomeroy Terrace; and approximately 400 feet of “in-fill” sidewalks in two separate areas where there is a gap of pedestrian infrastructure along Hawley Street (near #33 and #111/#123). This proposed project is primarily intended to improve the safety and accessibility for pedestrians from the surrounding neighborhoods to the Bridge Street Elementary School.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The project includes pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements along segments of the four area roadways. The proposed improvements include:

- **Parsons Street** - construct approx. 1,500 feet of new 5-foot wide cement concrete sidewalk with 6-inch granite curbing in a similar location to the existing on the southwest side of the roadway
- **Parsons Street / Union Street** – reduce crosswalk lengths by “bumping out” curb line adjacent to the school; establish all-way stop control
- **Bridge Street** – reconstruct mid-block crosswalk with new median island and high-visibility pedestrian-activated warning device
- **Pomeroy Terrace** – reconstruct pavement, install additional catch basins, and construct a raised crosswalk with new signs and markings to slow traffic
- **#33 Hawley Street** – reconstruct curb cut, driveway apron, and 5-foot wide cement concrete sidewalk at the Northampton Center for the Arts
- **#111/#123 Hawley Street** – construct defined curb cuts, driveway aprons, and introduce a 5-foot wide cement concrete sidewalk
- **General** – construct new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) / Architectural Access Board (AAB) compliant accessible curb ramps within the various project limits

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

During typical construction operations, all roadways in the project area will remain open to residents and other traffic. Occasional short traffic disruptions and travel lane/shoulder closures may occur, but every effort will be made to minimize inconvenience to the travelling public and abutting residents and businesses. Pedestrian and vehicular access to abutting properties will be maintained throughout construction.

RIGHT OF WAY IMPACTS

Temporary construction easements will be required for minor grading impacts to lawns, driveways, and walkways; and to restore features on adjacent properties. Small permanent easements will also be required to position the constructed sidewalks and related improvements within publicly owned or -controlled property. The City of Northampton will be responsible for securing all necessary easements. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisition will be discussed at this hearing.

PROJECT COST

The current estimate of the total construction cost of this project is approximately \$921,000 using a combination of Federal and State funding sources. The City of Northampton is financially responsible for all costs associated with the acquisition of temporary and permanent easements.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The design plans presented this evening are at the 25% design stage. Design, permitting and right of way acquisition must be completed by Spring 2022. Construction is anticipated to begin in the summer of 2022 and continue through the fall of 2022, and possibly finishing in the spring of 2023.

Address: _____

Please Fold and Tape



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
Safe Routes to School Bridge Street Elementary School
NORTHAMPTON
Project File No. 609515
Insert section: Project Management

