



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

MARCH 9, 2022

FOR THE PROPOSED

**Bridge Superstructure Replacement, Holmes Road over Housatonic Railroad
Project No. 611955
Bridge No. P-10-002
Project Management**

IN THE CITY OF PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

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

**JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

**CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER**

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
Project File No. 611955

A Live Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed bridge Superstructure Replacement project on Holmes Road in Pittsfield, MA.

WHEN: Wednesday, March 9, 2022, at 6:30 – 8:00 PM.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed bridge superstructure replacement 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 replacement of the existing bridge superstructure currently reduced to one single alternating lane of traffic due to the presence of severely deteriorated beams on the east side, with a new superstructure at the same location with minimal and limited approach work in both directions. The new proposed roadway and sidewalk width will remain approximately the same as the existing widths, except that the usable space will be altered to provide two 10-foot travel lanes, with shoulders that will allow bicycle accommodation in both the northbound and southbound directions. The sidewalk will be replaced on the east side of the bridge, and the safety curb will be replaced on the west side. The project will be constructed during the summer of 2023 using a full closure of Holmes Road with a traffic detour.

A secure right-of-way is available for this project. At this time, acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements will not be required.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavalley, 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. 611955. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted on 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 Live Virtual Design Public Hearing or a cancellation announcement will be hosted on the internet at www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEY, 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,

Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E.
Acting 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

A secure right-of-way is available for this project. At this time, acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements will not be required.

The State is responsible for securing the Right of Way for this project. 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?

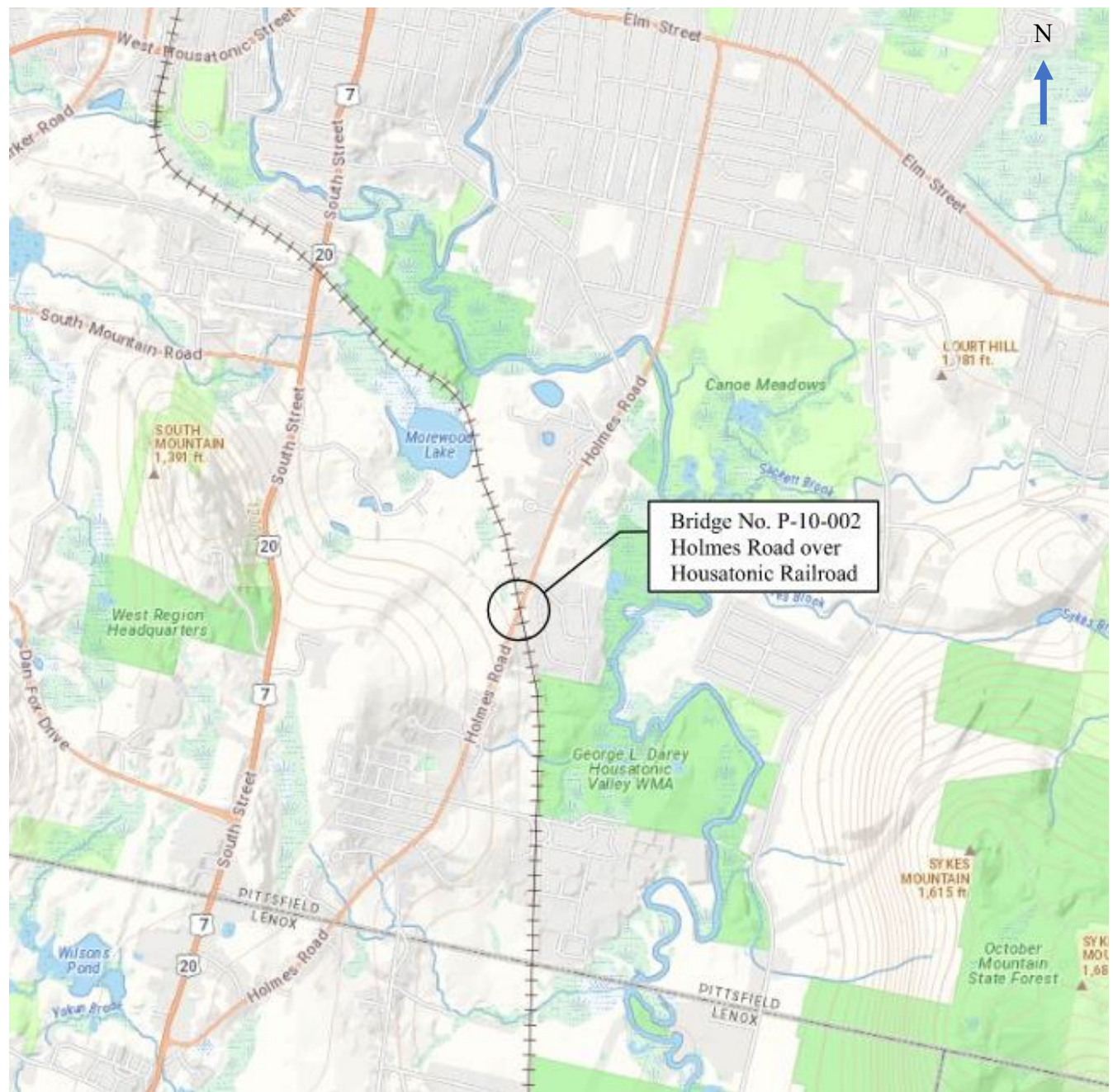
No. If, after the figure established as market value has been offered to the owner, the owner feels he or she is not being offered a fair price, he or she has the right, within three years, to appeal to the courts. Pending a court decision, he or she can be paid on a "pro-tanto" basis (or "for the time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



BRIDGE SUPERSTRUCTURE REPLACEMENT
PROJECT NO. 611955
Holmes Road over Housatonic Railroad

Project Purpose and Extents of Work

The purpose of this project is to replace the existing bridge overpass structure that carries Holmes Road over the Housatonic Railroad which is currently reduced to one single alternating lane of traffic due to the presence of severely deteriorated beams on the east side, with a new bridge overpass structure in the same location. The work on this project will include improvements to the approach roadways that extend 125 feet to the north of the bridge and 225 feet to the south of the bridge. The resulting total project length is approximately 425 feet along Holmes Road.

Proposed Work

The primary work on this project will be the replacement of the existing bridge overpass structure and rehabilitation of the existing bridge support structure. The bridge overpass structure is an approximately 70-foot-long single span prestressed concrete beam bridge spanning over the Housatonic Railroad. The existing bridge support structure are concrete abutments and retaining walls located alongside and parallel to the railroad tracks. The new bridge overpass structure is to be built along the same alignment as the existing bridge and will be the same length. The existing bridge support structure will be rehabilitated and reused.

The new roadway and sidewalk width on the bridge will remain approximately the same as the existing widths, except that the usable space will be altered to provide two 10-foot travel lanes with shoulders that will allow bicycle accommodation in both the northbound and southbound directions. The sidewalk and barrier on the bridge will be replaced on the east side and will include accessible pedestrian ramps at each end, and the barrier will be replaced on the west side. Additional improvements include new highway guardrail that will meet current safety standards.

Traffic Management

Holmes Road in the vicinity of the bridge will be closed to traffic and pedestrians during the summer of 2023 for construction of the new bridge overpass. A temporary detour will be signed along Route 7 & 20, Crofut Street, and Pomeroy Avenue. Also, MassDOT has been coordinating with the City of Pittsfield to ensure continuance of essential emergency services during the bridge closure. When construction is happening before and after the bridge closure, the roadway will be open to traffic and managed by police.

Utilities

There are existing overhead wires located along the west side of Holmes Road and crossing the roadway just to the south of the bridge. The project has been developed so that the existing overhead wires may be maintained in their existing locations during construction while cranes and heavy equipment operate. Other utilities cross the railroad along different paths than Holmes Road and do not affect this project.

Right of Way

The project has been developed so that the work may be performed within the existing right of way already owned by the state and the city. It is anticipated that fee takings, permanent easements and/or temporary construction easements are not required for this project.

Environmental Impacts

This project will produce no adverse impacts to environmental resource areas surrounding the bridge site. As a result, no environmental permits will be required for construction.

Project Status and Schedule

The project is nearing the final design and review stage in anticipation of advertisement for solicitation of bids early this summer. Comments from this Public Hearing will be taken into consideration to the maximum extent possible.

Project Cost

The estimate of the total construction cost is \$3,500,000.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

Pittsfield, MA
Bridge Superstructure Replacement, Holmes Road over Housatonic Railroad
Project File No. 611955

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:

Carrie E. Lavalley, 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: _____

Please Fold and Tape

Please Place
Appropriate
Postage Here

Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E.
Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116-3973

RE: Virtual Public Hearing
Bridge Superstructure Replacement, Holmes Road over Housatonic Railroad
PITTSFIELD
Project File No. 611955
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