



DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

AUGUST 15, 2019

AT

POMPOSITTICUT COMMUNITY CENTER

509 GREAT ROAD

STOW, MASSACHUSETTS

6:00 PM

FOR THE PROPOSED

GLEASONDALE BRIDGE REHABILITATION PROJECT

Project No. 605342

Bridge No.: S-29-001 SR62

IN THE TOWN OF STOW, 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
Project File No. 605342

A Design Public Hearing will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed superstructure replacement project for the Gleasondale Road Bridge over the Assabet River in Stow, Massachusetts.

WHERE: Pompositticut Community Center
509 Great Road
Stow, MA 01775

WHEN: Thursday, August 15th, 2019 at 6:00 PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to inform the public of the proposed bridge superstructure replacement project and to provide an opportunity for public question and comment. All questions and comments raised at the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent practicable.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of the replacement of the superstructure and portions of the substructure of Bridge S-29-001 SR62 which carries Route 62, locally known as Gleasondale Road over the Assabet River in the Town of Stow. The bridge will be reconstructed in the same footprint as the existing span. The new structure will include one travel lane in each direction, a bicycle-accommodating shoulder in each direction, and a sidewalk on both sides of the bridge. New bridge railings are also proposed. When complete, the new bridge will allow two-way traffic without the need for the temporary traffic light currently controlling traffic on the existing, weight-limited structure. The bridge will be built in two phases, with the traffic light remaining during construction, to allow the continued passage of traffic during construction.

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

Written comments received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing shall be displayed for public inspection and copying at the time and date listed above. Plans will be on display one-half hour before the hearing begins, with an engineer in attendance to answer questions regarding this project. A project handout will be made available on the MassDOT website listed below.

Written statements and other exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements made at the Public Hearing regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Bridge Project Management Section, Project File No. 605342. Such submissions will also be accepted at the hearing. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked within ten (10) business days of this Public Hearing. Project inquiries may be emailed to dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us

This location is accessible to persons with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) 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 (10) business days before the meeting.

In case of inclement weather, hearing cancellation announcements will be posted online at <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/>

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.

TO SAFEGUARD THE PROPERTY OWNER

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.

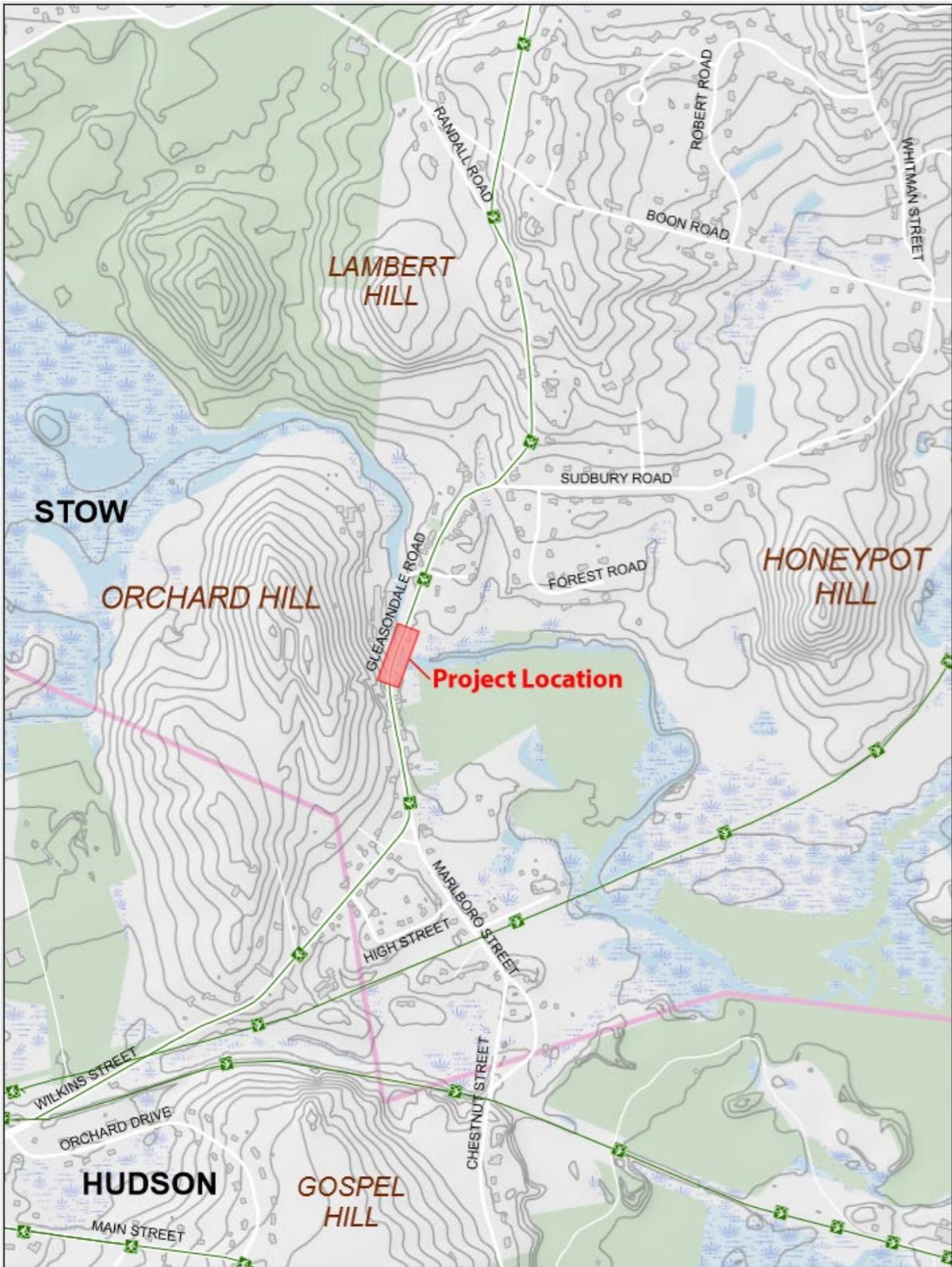


FIGURE 1: LOCUS MAP



FIGURE 2: Proposed Bridge (Aerial View)



FIGURE 3: Proposed Bridge (looking north)



FIGURE 4: Proposed Construction Phase 1



FIGURE 5: Proposed Construction Phase 2

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Location:

MassDOT proposes to rehabilitate the Gleasondale Road (Route 62) Bridge, structure S-29-001 SR62 over the Assabet River in Gleasondale, a neighborhood of the Town of Stow. Gleasondale Road runs through Gleasondale, a “mill village” of homes clustered around a former textile mill which now hosts a variety of local businesses. Gleasondale Road provides access to the various apple orchards for which Stow is well-known. The apple orchards offer “pick your own apples” each fall generating significant weekend traffic on Gleasondale Road between, roughly speaking, Labor Day and Columbus Day. More generally, Gleasondale Road is also an important truck route leading from Stow and points north into the neighboring town of Hudson.

Existing Conditions:

In 2015, a bridge inspection was conducted by MassDOT which discovered significant deterioration of the bridge’s beams which led to it being weight limited and constricted to a single lane on the structure’s west (towards the mill buildings) side. Traffic over the bridge is currently controlled by a pair of traffic signals which allow for alternating north (towards Stow) and southbound (towards Hudson) flows over the bridge. One sidewalk is currently available on the side of the bridge open to vehicle traffic.

Project Purpose:

The purpose of the project is to rehabilitate the Gleasondale Road Bridge so that it can again carry two-way traffic without the need for the current signalization. This will relieve traffic congestion on Route 62, especially during fall weekends, ensure public safety, and reduce the maintenance burden the bridge places on MassDOT in its current condition. This will also have the benefit to the surrounding community of not needing to frequently close the bridge to traffic to allow for an enhanced schedule of bridge inspections.

Proposed Improvements:

The rehabilitation will include complete replacement of the bridge’s superstructure, the portion of the bridge where vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians travel, including supporting beams, and the northern abutment. The southern abutment and piers are sound and will be reused.

The new structure will be constructed in the same footprint of the existing bridge. Steel beams will be used to carry the new roadway deck as these members are lighter and offer greater clearance over the Assabet River for canoe and kayak users. The new bridge will include one, 10-foot lane in each direction, a 5-foot bicycle accommodating shoulder in each direction, and a 6-foot sidewalk on both sides of the bridge. Work on the approaching sections of Route 62 has been minimized to the extent possible to reduce property impacts and speed up construction.

Construction of the bridge will require that overhead utilities be moved and placed into a new temporary alignment over the Assabet River. As a result of this work, a temporary utility corridor will be created leading to the riverbank at approximately the same location as today’s canoe and kayak launching point. The temporary utility corridor improvements will be retained and provide significantly improved canoe and kayak access without impacting private property.

Traffic Management:

The bridge will be built in two phases, allowing one lane and one sidewalk to remain open throughout construction. The temporary traffic signal will remain in place allowing for alternating north and southbound traffic. It is currently anticipated that, for public safety, there will be periods when the bridge will have to be closed to all traffic in its entirety. These periods will be associated with removal of the old bridge’s deck and setting of the new bridge’s beams. At present, MassDOT, in coordination with the Town of Stow first responders and other town staff, has projected that total closures should take place at night and outside of the Labor Day to Columbus Day apple picking season.

Property Impacts

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

Project Cost

The estimated construction cost for this project is approximately \$\$6,500,000. Funding for the construction will be by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Project Status and Schedule

The project plans on display this evening are at the 25% preliminary design stage. Comments from this Public Hearing will be incorporated into the final design plans to the maximum extent possible. It is anticipated that the final design plans will be completed, and the project advertised for construction bids in 2020 with construction beginning in 2021.

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
GLEASONDALE ROAD BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT
STOW
Project File No. 605342
Bridge Project Management
Attn: John Fallon
