



DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

APRIL 8, 2026

FOR THE PROPOSED

**Ledge Stabilization on Route 7 between Mile Marker 51.9 and 52
Project No. 613074
Project Management**

IN THE TOWN OF WILLIAMSTOWN, 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 DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING**

**Project Description: Williamstown – Ledge Stabilization on Route 7 between Mile Markers 51.9 and 52
Project File No. 613074**

A Design Public Hearing will be held to present the design for the proposed project in Williamstown, MA.

WHERE: Williamstown Town Hall, Conference Room
31 North Street
Williamstown, MA 01267

WHEN: **Wednesday, April 8, 2026 @ 6:00pm**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed 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 replacing a deteriorating concrete retaining wall within State Highway layout on the east side of Route 7 just south of Mile Marker 52.0. The existing retaining wall provides structural support for an embankment on the cut-side of the highway and supports a local street (Jamieson Heights) which is the sole access road for several residences.

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 presented in the hearing.

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 7550, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Project Management, Project File No. 613074. 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 date.

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 and prior to the hearing, 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.

In case of inclement weather, a cancellation announcement will be posted on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, 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. Lavalley, 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

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.



LEGEND: PROJECT AREA

613074 - ROUTE 7 LEDGE
STABILIZATION BETWEEN MM 51.9
AND MM 52
LOCUS MAP



Jacobs.
120 ST. JAMES AVENUE, 5TH FLOOR
BOSTON, MA 02116

Project Location and Existing Conditions

The Project is located in Williamstown along North Street (Route 7) at Jamieson Heights, approximately from Mile Marker 51.9 to Mile Marker 52. The rock slope to be evaluated and removed/set back from the roadway edge is approximately 250-feet-long, along the east side of a curved section of North Street/Route 7. The current conditions include a rock/vegetated slope with an existing cement concrete retaining wall along North Street/Route 7. The existing retaining wall is in very poor condition and needs to be replaced.

The roadway cross section consists of two 12-foot travel lanes with 2-foot shoulders on both sides of the roadway and 5-foot sidewalk on the west side of North Street/Route 7. The existing cross section does not include bicycle facilities.

Hemlock Brook is located west of North Street/Route 7 and within the 200-feet of the rock slope and proposed work zone.

There are overhead power and communication lines located along the east side of North Street/Route 7. Underground utilities consist of stormwater drainage catch basins, manholes and pipes; sanitary sewer manholes and pipes; water main pipes and valves and natural gas pipes.

Project Scope of Work

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is proposing to remove the existing cement concrete retaining wall and portions of the existing rock slope along North Street/Route 7 at Jamieson Heights, approximately from Mile Marker 51.9 to Mile Marker 52. The scope of the project is to remove the existing deteriorated cement concrete retaining wall, remove and cut back portions of the existing rock slope, install/construct a soil nail/rock anchor retaining wall system to improve the stability of the existing slope, and improve sight distance and minimize hazards for motorists.

The existing cross-section width of the road will be maintained in the proposed conditions. The proposed cross-section will match existing conditions and include two 12-foot travel lanes, two 2-foot shoulders and a 5-foot sidewalk on the west side of the roadway. It is anticipated that the rock slope will be cut back from the edge of roadway approximately 6-feet. The proposed roadway surface within the limits of work will be milled & overlaid with Hot Mix Asphalt, SUPERPAVE Surface Course.

Existing drainage patterns and infrastructure will remain unchanged in the proposed condition as well as the existing water, sewer and gas.

The existing utility poles and overhead wires on the east side of North Street/Route 7 do not provide adequate separation with the existing and proposed retaining walls. This will require the utility poles and overhead wires to be relocated to the west side of North Street/Route 7, starting at the existing utility pole at the south side of Jamieson Heights to the existing pole just north of house 273 North Street.

Environmental permitting and coordination include the preparation of an Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) permit, that will be submitted to the Williamstown Conservation Commission for work being conducted within 200-feet of Hemlock Brook.

Maintenance of Traffic During Construction:

The Contractor will be required to coordinate with MassDOT and Town Officials regarding work hours and changes to traffic patterns.

It is anticipated that the existing retaining wall removal and proposed rock and ledge removal will require impacts to the existing traffic patterns on North Street/Route 7. The potential for a lane closure will be required during certain construction activities which will result in alternating traffic on North Street/Route 7, during construction hours. Access to adjacent residence will be maintained during construction.

Project Schedule:

The design reviewed at this meeting is at the 25% stage of completion. Comments made at this design hearing will be incorporated to the maximum extent feasible in the 75% design currently scheduled for August/September 2026. Final design is scheduled to be completed in early 2027. The date for public bidding advertisement is scheduled for Spring 2029.

Project Cost:

The estimated construction cost for this project is approximately \$3.4 million. Funding for the construction will be Federal Highway Administration (80%) (FHWA) and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (20%).

Please Fold and Tape



Please Place
Appropriate
Postage Here

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

RE: Public Hearing
Ledge Stabilization on Route 7 between Mile Marker 51.9 and 52
WILLIAMSTOWN
Project File No. 613074
Attn: Project Management

