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To:	Joe Pavao Project Manager	Date:	April 25, 2018
From:	Doug Johnson Howard Stein Hudson	HSH Project No.:	2013061.36
Subject:	Massachusetts Department of Transportation Chelsea/Route 1 Viaduct Rehabilitation Project Stakeholder Briefing for Business and Commercial Property Owners Meeting Notes of March 19, 2019		

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## Overview

On March 19, 2018, MassDOT Highway Division, along with the project consultant team, held a stakeholder briefing for business and commercial property owners. Mark Kolonoski of HNTB gave a brief presentation before answering questions.

The questions focused mainly on the traffic impacts of the project, and how business and property owners will receive information about road closures and detours during construction.

## Detailed Meeting Minutes<sup>1</sup>

**C: Joe Pavao:** I'm Joe Pavao, the Project Manager. We have an informal presentation for you today. I just want to start by saying that we've been doing public participation going back to November with an initial Public Information Meeting on November 8<sup>th</sup>. Since then we've met with the Chamber of Commerce, Chelsea GreenRoots, the Chelsea Collaborative, and other community organizations. I've been meeting with the City Manager to work on measures to mitigate the impacts from this project.

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<sup>1</sup> Herein "C" stands for comment, "Q" for question and "A" for answer. For a list of attendees, please see Appendix 1. For copies of meeting flipcharts, please see Appendix 2.

Mark will go over the PowerPoint and then I'll summarize some of the changes we've made to the project since the last public hearing on January 24<sup>th</sup>. There were a lot of concerns relative to Ramp A, so we listened to the community and made some changes. We'll go over those later.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** Thanks for coming. We've had a lot of meetings, from small ones to large public meetings, so hopefully this project isn't a surprise. You are a unique group of stakeholders, and we know there are others. This isn't the end of the process. This is an open line of communication.

I'm going to go through the presentation quickly. I'll talk about why we're doing this project, existing conditions, what work will entail, our efforts to mitigate the project impacts, and finally the next steps.

The Project Team includes the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the City of Chelsea. The Project Limits extend from the Tobin Bridge near the Walnut Street Synagogue to the northern limit at the Washington Street overpass and the Chelsea High School.

The viaduct is a critical piece of transportation infrastructure that carries thousands of vehicles a day. It was built in the 1950's and needs repair. It also carries buses including Route 111, which currently uses Ramp A. That ramp is staying open. We originally proposed to close it since traffic modeling shows some safety issues with it, but it will stay open after the project is complete based on community preferences.

These pictures show the existing conditions. The viaduct is structurally deficient. It's not going to fall down but work needs to be done to fix it. Rehabilitating the bridge will keep it in service for another 75 years with regular maintenance.

**C: Joe Pavao:** The structure is safe to drive on. There is no danger, but it does need to be fixed.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** We're pretty far along in the design phase. We plan to advertise the project sometime in mid to late spring. We're a little behind schedule due to the public input process. We originally wanted to advertise around now, but we wanted to have a more robust conversation and public process.

This slide shows the Design Schedule including the preliminary design work and the Design Public Hearing on January 18<sup>th</sup>. The final design is being worked on right now. The is primarily a large rehabilitation project. We're not changing the alignment of the viaduct or widening it, so not much can change in that regard. What can change is mitigation, construction phasing, timing, etc.

This slide shows the Scope of Work. The Scope includes fixing the substructure and replacing the superstructure. We'll be using Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) methods, including Prefabricated Bridge Units (PBUs). PBUs are fabricated off site and then laid down in place. This allows for more accelerated construction, a shorter timeline, and less impacts on the community.

**C: No Name Given:** Hopefully that's not what they were using in Florida.

**C: Joe Pavao:** Accelerated Bridge Construction is just the technique. I'm not sure what happened in Florida, but ABC has been used since 2008. It's a proven method that accelerates construction itself. It's a very safe method.

**Q: No Name Given:** Is that what you used on the Fast 14 Project?

**A: Joe Pavao:** Yes, that project used ABC. We also just did Route 3 in Braintree over the Burgin Parkway this way.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** The other elements included in the Scope of Work are new crash-tested barriers, solid snow fence, new lighting under the bridge, upgraded drainage, and reconstructing the parking lots under the bridge.

**Q: Patricia Simboli (ACS Development Corporation):** What's a crash-tested barrier? For example, on the Chelsea curve, how high will the barriers be?

**A: Joe Pavao:** The standard height for barriers when the bridge was initially built was 36 inches. The FHWA has new standards. The new barriers will be 42 inches high. They also have more stringent crash requirements.

**Q: Patricia Simboli:** So, let's say I break down and pull over to the right. There will be a 42-inch-high wall to my right. Can I get out and stand on that?

**A: Joe Pavao:** No, you would not want to do that.

**Q: Patricia Simboli:** What if I wanted to kill myself? There are people who would do that. What's to stop them?

**A: Joe Pavao:** There will be snow fence on top of that. It won't impede sight distance, but it will make the barrier taller.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** This is another picture of the existing conditions. You can see that on the bridge pier the paint has chipped off and the steel is rusted. The substructure is structurally deficient and it's not aesthetically pleasing. We want to give the columns an ornamental treatment that better contributes to a sense of place by making the area more welcoming.

These slides show different options for how the piers could look. We haven't made a decision yet as to what the piers will look like. You can see we have fluted elements that give the piers more of a shape. There are options for art displays. They could be interchangeable panels. Local artists could potentially display their art.

We're working with the City to pick the final design for the piers. There are four options in total. We have boards on display at the library and city hall. We want your feedback on this. The decision won't be made until later in the design process.

**C: Joe Pavao:** We'll have contractors bid on any of the 4 designs. We'll set up a committee to refine the decisions. Given the amount of time we have before we advertise the project, it won't be feasible to come up with one solution.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** They will be consistent throughout the structure.

This slide shows an example of a Prefabricated Bridge Unit (PBU) being lifted off a truck. This is a picture from the Route 3 project. The PBUs will be brought in by truck and dropped into place. Then the contractor will move on to the next section.

**Q: NNG:** The pieces will be trucked in?

**A: Joe Pavao:** Yes. They'll be formed off-site, stockpiled elsewhere, and trucked in nightly.

**Q: Patricia Simboli:** There will be one lane closed on the viaduct at all times?

**A: Joe Pavao:** Yes. One reason we're accelerating the process is the Tobin Bridge Project. In the northbound direction the Tobin Bridge will be two lanes. We want this project to coincide with the Tobin Bridge Project so that the two lane condition continues through both projects. We don't want it to open to three lanes and then go back down to two lanes six months later. The southbound side will be down to two lanes for nine months. If we didn't do this, we'd have two or three years of construction.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** This is a rendering of how a PBU will be installed.

**Q: Patricia Simboli:** What's the estimate on the amount of traffic added to the commute? I'm thinking about the Carter Street exit. We have employees who need to get off there. People will get off at any exit if others are backed up. What will that do to Everette Avenue?

**A: Joe Pavao:** We looked at traffic when the viaduct will be down to two lanes. Let's keep going through the presentation and we'll talk about travel times.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** There are isolated spans of the Viaduct where PBUs won't work. In those locations we will use traditional construction grid decking. Those spans are at the southern limit of the project, approaching the Tobin Bridge, and over the Commuter Rail tracks. Due to the constraints of those sections, we will be working on them longer. We also have a mitigation plan in place for those locations.

For the Construction Schedule, we will be advertising the project this spring, a Notice to Proceed will be issued this fall, and work on the substructure will start in the Fall of this year. We do not anticipate significant traffic impacts during substructure rehabilitation. There will be some impacts to local traffic at night. The detour routes have been identified and I'll get into that later. We have a plan in place for detours. The specific timing is not available yet. The contractor will create the schedule.

**Q: No Name Given:** What work will that include?

**A: Mark Kolonoski:** It will be all substructure work, which consists of the beams and supports. Anything underneath the viaduct will be done in 2019.

**C: Joe Pavao:** That work will be done on weekdays and on some weekends. There will be parking impacts, but the superstructure won't be impacted. On and off ramps will stay open, except maybe at night on occasion. The viaduct will be two lanes going northbound and then it will open back up to three as you get past the project.

**Q: No Name Given:** What will the noise impacts be?

**A: Mark Kolonoski:** We've analyzed existing noise levels. We have a plan in place that says the contractor can't exceed a certain decibel level at different locations. We've identified the neighborhoods. During the day if those noise levels are exceeded, the plan will go into effect. The contractor will be required to have a sound engineer to monitor noise levels. If they exceed the allowed level, they will have to install temporary noise walls to block the source of the noise. We also

have specifications restricting certain activities at night. There will be no saw cutting, no jackhammering, and no pile driving at night.

**Q: No Name Given:** Unlike the Silverline project. They did jackhammering at night.

**A: Mark Kolonoski:** That shouldn't occur on this project. We will have a 24 hour hotline in English and Spanish. If people need to call and complain they can.

**C: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis:** The work zone will move along down the viaduct as PBUs are installed.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** It will sort of caterpillar along, so the noise impacts won't be in one location for weeks or months at a time.

**C: Patricia Simboli:** Carter Street to here is really one location regardless of where you're doing the work. It might matter where you're sitting, but I'm not sure how big that distance is when you say caterpillaring. We all have our concerns for different reasons. I'm sensitive to noise but even more so vibration. I can't tell how far of a distance that is.

**C: Joe Pavao:** There will not be a significant amount of vibrations. A lot of the noise will be saw cutting during the day and cranes removing concrete, but there will not be pounding sounds. We will also monitor properties adjacent to the structure, before and after construction, to make sure no damage has been done.

**Q: No Name Given:** Are the existing footings still good?

**A: Joe Pavao:** Yes, the footings are good. We may have to strengthen a couple, but that will be few and far between. The concrete encasements we put around the piers will take the load of the structure.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** Now I'll go over the traffic impacts. From 2019 to 2020 there will be no impacts to the viaduct. Impacts to local roads will be minor. There will be some impacts to parking lots where substructure work is taking place. During the fall of 2020 there will begin to be traffic impacts on the viaducts. The viaduct will go from three lanes down to two lanes. For the locations where we can't use PBUs, we'll do that work over the course of 12 weekends. During those weekends the viaduct will go down to one lane in each direction for a 55-hour window. Six of those weekends will be in the spring and the other six will be in the fall. The intent is to limit the impacts of that work to the weekends only. Otherwise, it would take six months of work.

**C: Patricia Simboli:** It will be hellish.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** We want to finish it quickly and not drag it out. It's a hit we must take to get out as quickly as we can. It's a form of mitigation.

**Q: Jeanette McWilliams (MGH Chelsea Health Center):** What time will the work take place?

**A: Joe Pavao:** It will be 24 hours a day for 55 hours. It will be done over six weekends in the spring and six in the fall. Hopefully it will be done even faster, but it's more complicated than PBUs. There's no other way to do it.

There are incentives and disincentives in the contract. If the contractor can complete the work faster, they get a bonus, and if they go longer they face a penalty. We want them to get the work done quickly. On Route 3 in Braintree, the contractor finished 5-hours faster per bridge than they were required to.

**Q: Patricia Simboli:** It will be 12 consecutive weekends?

**A: Mark Kolonoski:** It will be six in the spring and six in the fall.

**Q: Patricia Simboli:** Will there be announcements ahead of time?

**A: Joe Pavao:** Yes, we will announce everything ahead of time. The contractor will be responsible for keeping the public informed during construction.

**Q: No Name Given:** Have you analyzed the traffic impacts of the Wynn Casino opening in 2019?

**A: Joe Pavao:** Yes, we have. There are so many projects going on at the same time. We've analyzed all of the impacts to the north shore from all these projects. That report will come out separately from this project.

Regarding the impacts of this project, we anticipate that some traffic will divert to other routes. It won't be a huge amount, but some will divert. We looked at travel times along the corridor and from Route 16 to Charlestown this project will add an estimated three to five minutes of delay on average.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** It's a 20% increase in travel times during an average commuting time. We know that sometimes it takes longer, but if it takes on average 15 minutes to get from Route 16 to Charlestown, then this project will add 3 to 4 minutes. Of course, sometimes it can take up to 40 minutes, but the added 20% is still only eight minutes.

**C: Joe Pavao:** That's just on average. We know that if a car breaks down on the viaduct it changes everything. Now, some traffic will stay on the viaduct no matter what, so we're doing extensive outreach all the way back to the north shore to try to get some traffic to divert to alternative routes. We're using transponder data to notify people ahead of time. Locally we'll have a very robust police detail presence at every off ramp and at key locations. It will be overkill for the first week. After that we'll evaluate everything to see what works and what doesn't, and we'll move details around as needed. The first week or two will be evaluated. It will be an ongoing process that we will work on. We work very closely with the police. If you see a problem, let us know and we'll address it.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** We'll also have Real Time Traffic Management. We will have message boards in place at various locations to let commuters know they can use alternate routes. We want to give people the choice.

**Q: Jeanette McWilliams:** Have you been in discussions with the MBTA about commuter rail service?

**A: Joe Pavao:** We coordinate with the MBTA. We recognize that we're one agency. For this project we've looked at Bus 111. We don't anticipate any impacts to Bus 111 as a result of this project. That is partly because Ramp A won't be closed, we are rebuilding Ramp A, but it's also because the MBTA is moving the Bus 111 route to the Everett on ramp. It will no longer be using Ramp A. That change is happening independently of this project. This change was going to happen in April, but it is now delayed because the Tobin Bridge Project will be rehabilitating the Everett Ave ramp. Moving Bus 111 to that ramp will save three to five minutes.

When this project has the viaduct down to two lanes, the bus will use the Everett ramp and be able to skip the part of the viaduct that is two lanes. It will get on the viaduct where there are three lanes. However, improvements to the bus system in general need to be made. The MBTA has committed to working with the community and facilitating discussions. They've been to our meetings and listened. They came to the City Council briefing and talked about the 111.

**C: Patricia Simboli:** We're commuters from the north, south and the west. We want to get into Chelsea, not out. The north shore train from Newburyport captures people. You have a strong concern and sensitivity to residents, but we are businesses. We have a slightly different issue with commuting. We feel like we are under siege. Between Spruce Street, the Silver Line project, Everett Avenue, and now this, you're making it more difficult for people to get to work. That's what's impacting us. We want ways to get people here more efficiently. We need changes for the long-term benefit. We hope the MBTA considers that. It benefits us if people can get here easily. This is a major shift in an asset that's going away more and more. People use to say you can only get into Chelsea if



you live to the north. Now you can't get here in any easy manner any longer. Now I-93, Route 16 and Route 1 are so bad. When and how can you get here anymore? It's a moat around Chelsea.

**A: Joe Pavaio:** You make a great point. I'll talk to the MBTA so that they focus not just on Bus 111, but also on other bus lines. They are looking at this globally and not just Bus 111. If they can improve service outside Chelsea, they can alleviate Bus 111, but I can't speak for them.

**C: Jeanette McWilliams:** Improvements to the Commuter Rail would be great. I went to the Chamber of Commerce meeting and I raised these concerns. The Carter Street ramp during school hours or even on trash day is difficult to get through. The MGH Health Center is right in the middle of that. On a normal day congestion is terrible. Hopefully policy details will help. Our staff have trouble getting to work. That is my concern.

**C: Joe Pavaio:** We'll be sure to notify everyone when we release the global analysis. We'll reach out. It's still being worked on.

**Q: No Name Given –** Are you improving 2<sup>nd</sup> street? It's a mess. You have to go so slow to not wreck your car. Is anyone looked at improving that road?

**A: Joe Pavaio:** During construction, if people dump off onto 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, we have police details that we can relocate to maybe improve traffic flow. In the long term, that's a city street, so it's their responsibility.

**Q: Patricia Simboli:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Street at Spruce Street.

**A: Joe Pavaio:** I don't know if the city has plans for that, but we'll have police details during construction

**C: No Name Given:** Take a ride on 2<sup>nd</sup> street. The pavement condition is bad. It will impact Everett Avenue.

**C: Joe Pavaio:** I'll take a look at it.

**C: John Lucero (New England Produce Center):** I run the New England Produce Center. We have a unique issue. We have 1000 to 1500 trucks coming into our facility every day. Having said that, there's construction on the water lines, the gas lines, there's the solar project and other projects over the next two years. We're looking at the impacts from all of these projects. We need to maintain efficiency. We need daily updates from you about this project. Because 2<sup>nd</sup> Street is in poor condition,

our vehicles get pushed onto other roads. But those roads are terrible too. It ruins our produce. Before this project, you need to address bad roads.

**A: Joe Pavao:** We'll notify people of changes to this project during construction. We'll also have a project website. It would be helpful for us if we could have an idea of your projects, so we can see more specifically what our impacts will be.

**C: John Lucero:** The Beecham Street reconstruction is happening. I've got to be talking to someone.

**C: Joe Pavao:** We don't want this project to happen in a silo. We're looking at nighttime work, ramp closures on weekends, etc.

**A: John Lucero:** Our day starts at 10 PM. It goes from 10 PM to 5 AM. Right now, you'll have semis lined up to get into the market. The impact is so significant the trucks will back up into side roads so much so there will be gridlock.

**A: Mark Kolonoski:** This is important, and we need to touch base with you.

**A: Joe Pavao:** Before you leave, let's set up a separate meeting with you.

**C: Mark Kolonoski:** We're running out of time today.

**C: Joe Pavao:** Briefly, I want to mention noise, dust, and lead paint abatement. We've had a lot of discussions with the City Manager about mitigation. We've talked to the City Council. We are listening and we want to address the concerns.

**C: Patricia Simboli:** None of those people have reached out to us. They don't consider us their constituents. That is why I reached out to you personally. It's great you're taking care of residents, but we also need a voice. We pay taxes. Many of these people have invested lots of money and employ a lot of people. I can't stress that enough. There should be a 1 to 1 comparison, we need your attention.

**C: Joe Pavao:** I agree 100%. MassDOT puts equal weight on residents and commuters. I'm not saying the City gets more than anyone else. That's why we went to the Chamber of Commerce. We're extending outreach for more input. That's why we are here now. We're just getting to mitigation. Some of it will address your concerns in terms of traffic and parking. This slide shows the changes that have been made since the Design Public Hearing.

Ramp A was a big concern. We're keeping that ramp. We have a solid snow barrier. This came about because of sound mitigation. The project can't have sound barriers, but adjacent buildings are getting snow thrown on their homes, there are broken windows, so we rethought the fencing. Chain link fence isn't working so we changed it to a solid snow fence, it also has sound damping properties. Its significant. Everywhere we can, we will put it in. It's a benefit to the community.

We're also giving \$800,000 to the City. We're working with the City Manager for an enhancement fund for fixing things that the project isn't addressing. It could be for anything. It could be for repaving 2<sup>nd</sup> street or something else. We've agreed to that much money.

Another thing is the land under the viaduct. All of it belongs to MassDOT, and most of it is already in lease agreements for parking, but we're building a new lot on Carter Street. We will pave it for temporary parking use during the job and then give it to the city by lease when we're done. They can do what they want with it.

The final thing, this is the biggest, we're talking about coordinating globally with the MBTA. North Washington will have a big impact, we're working with the MBTA on that. They will be out to talk to Chelsea about global impacts.

These were the changes that came about since the Design Public Hearing as a result of the community's input.

**C: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis:** The only other thing I'd add is, make sure you got on the sign-in sheet. Our stakeholder database is up to 1,900 people and growing. The contractor will have that database and be able to use it to reach out to you. Putting your contact information on the sheet is the best way to find out about what is happening with the project.

**Q: Patricia Simboli:** What about aesthetics?

**A: Joe Pavao:** All of the aesthetic improvements will be underneath the structure. On top there isn't much we can change. The solid snow fence will be better than standard chain link fence. The viaduct will look nicer. There will be new steel and new paint. It will be cleaned up but there are no other opportunities for aesthetic improvements. There will be new lighting. If the City Manager wants to use some money for architectural lighting, they'll have the \$800,000 at their disposal.

**Q: No Name Given:** Will there be maintenance of the paint?

**A: Joe Pavao:** We're out there painting every year right now. In the future, after we're done, it will be a new structure. Paint is a lot better today. This bridge will last 75 years at a minimum.

Maintenance is as-needed, but there will be better paint. We have 75 spans with joints where water comes through and destroys the steel and paint. The new joints are waterproof. They will last a lot longer with periodic maintenance. Also, all lead paint on the viaduct will be contained and moved off-site.

Are there any other questions? We can also set up more meetings. Please let us know if you'd like to schedule a briefing.

**C: Patricia Simboli:** We're missing an opportunity to enhance the aesthetics of the bridge. It could be a gateway into Boston. Whether its lighting, columns, etc. I'm not asking for it to look like the Zakim, but it could be more than just a regular bridge. This is a onetime opportunity to do something. There are thousands of cars that see the bridge every day. Chelsea has grown a lot recently. Image what would happen if a nicer looking bridge was in place. I feel we're missing an opportunity.

**C: Joe Pavao:** The only thing I'll mention, I do ask folks to think of one thing, paint we can do, but this is a very expensive maintenance project. The substructure is retained, and we can't add more loads. The new solid snow fence brings this structure to the limit of the loads. We had to do a full reengineering of the bridge just to add the solid snow fence.

**C: No Name Given:** Nobody cares what it looks like as long as it flows.

**C: Patricia Simboli:** It won't flow any better.

**C: No Name Given:** The design is done anyways.

**C: Patricia Simboli:** Some things can happen, believe me.

**C: Joe Pavao:** There are opportunities underneath the structure for aesthetic improvements.

**C: Patricia Simboli:** We appreciate you listening to us.

**C: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis:** Thank you for coming today. As we mentioned, there are board in the library and at City Hall that show the different options for the columns. Please take a look at them and provide your input.

## Next Steps

The next Public Information Meeting will occur on April 5, 2018, to update the community on the design changes and project progress since the 25% Design Public Hearing.

# Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Nathanial	Cabral-Curtis	HSH
Bob	Chausse	Market Basket
Ben	Dulac	North River Co
Peter	Endicott	Acorda Therapeutics
John	Finamore	Simboli Properties
John	Floramio	Floramio's Restaurant
Michelle	Haselhuhn	Homewood Suites by Hilton
Doug	Johnson	HSH
Mark	Kolonoski	HNTB
Jim	Lamp	Market Basket
John	Lucero	New England Produce Center
Jeannette	McWilliams	MGH, Chamber of Commerce
Joe	Pavao	MassDOT
John	Petrozzelli	FBI
Cara	Pirkey	HNTB
Chase	Radice	One North of Boston
Patricia	Simboli	ACS Development Corporation
Susan	Veres	Acorda Therapeutics