



To:	Joe Pavao Project Manager	Date:	May 22, 2018
From:	Kate Andrews Howard Stein Hudson	HSH Project No.:	2013061.36
Subject:	MassDOT Chelsea/Route 1 Viaduct Rehabilitation Project, #605287 North Suffolk Mental Health Association Briefing Meeting Notes of April 26, 2018		

Overview

On April 26, 2018, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Highway Division presented an update on the Chelsea/Route 1 Viaduct Rehabilitation Project to employees and management of the North Suffolk Mental Health Association. The meeting, which was arranged due to a request from the North Suffolk Mental Health Association, was held at the Association's training facility at 37 Hawthorne Street in Chelsea.

MassDOT Project Manager Joe Pavao began the meeting by giving attendees a brief overview of the project and its purpose, the schedule, work to be done and the mitigation package the community will be receiving, including the reopening of Ramp A and turning the rehabilitated Carter Street lot over to the City of Chelsea following construction. The floor was then opened up to the public for questions and comments.

The tone of the discussion was positive and focused on parking issues, ramp closures and weekend work. Mr. Pavao explained that to reduce impacts to the Chelsea community and to commuters, much of the work will be done on the weekends. This will also limit noise during overnight operations. Employees of North Suffolk Mental Health Association were vocal about the lack of parking in the area and asked that they be given consideration when the Carter Street lot is handed over to the City of Chelsea. Mr. Pavao instructed them to discuss the parking situation with Chelsea's City Manager, Tom Ambrosino.

Following the final design submission, the project is anticipated to be advertised in July.

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Detailed Meeting Minutes¹

Welcome & Opening Remarks

C: Joe Pavao: My name is Joe Pavao and I am the MassDOT Project Manager for the Chelsea Viaduct Rehabilitation Project. Thank you for having us today. We've had several public information meetings. We've met with community organizations as well as the business community and the Chamber of Commerce. A Design Public Hearing was held in January. Since then we've had a few more meetings to update the public on the project's progress. We are currently finalizing the design and have been working with the City Council and the City Manager on the mitigation commitments in the contract. We are putting the package together.

We anticipate advertising the project in late May or early June.² We still need to finalize the environmental documents to submit to the Federal Highway Administration in order to get full funding for the project. The cost of the project, including escalation and contingencies, is about \$215 million. It's gone up significantly from the original estimate of \$110 million. We have added work to the project such as redoing the substructure and parking lots beneath the viaduct, aesthetic treatments, installing new drainage as well as additional lighting and surveillance. We've also added architectural treatments to the columns and we will be replacing the superstructure.

We are replacing the entire elevated structure off of the Chelsea curves. There are 75 spans, northbound and southbound, to be replaced. We are redoing the Carter Street ramp. Originally, we had proposed to eliminate the Arlington Street ramp; however, we are going to redo that ramp and reopen it. The Chelsea Street on-ramp is part of Tobin Bridge project which is under construction. We have many projects going on at the same time and I will talk about that.

¹ Herein "C" stands for comment, "Q" for question and "A" for answer. For a list of attendees, please see Appendix 1.

² The project was advertised in July.

Q: Joyce Troisi: Are you doing the Revere ramps too?

A: Joe Pavao: This is just for Chelsea.

C: Joyce Troisi: There should be another ramp for Revere.

C: Yovanny Reinoso: On Route 1 where it narrows down from three to two lanes at Route 60, the traffic gets so bad.

A: Joe Pavao: That is outside the limits of this project. The purpose of this project is to replace the structurally deficient viaduct. The roadway is in poor condition, drainage is essentially non-existent. It is really deteriorating quickly.

Q: Deb Snow: Are you talking about the tunnel? What part is the viaduct?

A: Joe Pavao: The viaduct is the elevated portion. The entire deck is structurally deficient. The state is spending a lot of money on repairs every year. It seems like we are out there all the time either painting the Tobin Bridge or doing lane reductions. We decided it's time to fix it. It will have a 75-year design life. That doesn't mean we won't be back to do some minor repairs or repaving to maintain the structure, but the frequency will be more like every 20 or 25 years rather than every year.

We are trying to take advantage of the timing of the Tobin Bridge project. Traffic is going to be down to two lanes in each direction on the Tobin Bridge in 2020. Part of the reason why the cost of this project escalated is because a job like this would normally take four to five years to complete. We're doing it in nine months. We will be employing multiple crews and we will be using Pre-Fabricated Bridge Units, or PBUs, to replace it. With PBUs a section of the bridge is removed and then its replacement is dropped back in. I'm not sure if you're familiar with the Route 3 bridges. We just replaced two of them and they were completed using this method over a 55-hour weekend. We have the technology and the experience, and this is the project to utilize those skills. We want to get in and out as quickly as possible.

There has been a lot of discussion about what are we doing for the community in terms of mitigation. We've been working with Tom Ambrosino, the City Manager, and the City Council to do what is appropriate. Some of our mitigation efforts include the repaving and restriping of the parking lots underneath the viaduct. New lighting and drainage will also be installed. There were requests to turn over some of that land back to the community. We cannot do that. That land is state owned, and we have leases in place with many agencies, including the city. But

there is one lot that is overgrown near the high school under the viaduct. We're going to repave that Carter Street lot and use it to mitigate some of the parking that will be lost during construction. At the completion of construction, we will turn that lot over to the city for whatever they want. It is a fairly large area. We are going to do a zero-cost lease agreement with the city, also called a 99-year lease. Ramp A will remain open and we will rebuild it. That was a big thing that the community asked for.

Another issue that came up was noise barriers. This project does not qualify for noise barriers. We don't meet the requirements because we are not adding lanes of traffic, therefore the FHWA will not pay for it. However, we will be installing a new snow fence in certain areas where it does not obstruct sight lines for traffic. There were a lot of complaints about debris sneaking through the snow fence and breaking car and building windows. To remedy this, we will be installing a solid snow fence barrier and it has the same sound dampening qualities of a noise barrier. We are going to realize the benefits of installing a noise barrier and meet the requirements that we're looking for in terms of protecting the nearby homes and businesses.

As far as schedule, we're going to try and advertise the project in late spring, early summer. We want to have a contractor on board by September or October. Work will probably begin in Spring 2019. In 2019 we will be focusing entirely on substructure work. From April 1, 2020 to November 2020, the entire superstructure will be replaced. In 2021 we will be finalizing any miscellaneous work that needs to be done. We'll now open up the floor to questions.

Discussion

Q: Julio Vazquez: The ramp on Walnut Street, under the structure, is currently fenced off. After the project is completed is their going to be a net gain or net loss in parking?

A: Joe Pavao: We are not adding any more area. Any space that we have there is going to be what we have after we are finished with construction. However, the design consultant is looking at reconfiguring the area to see where we can be more efficient with spaces. They will be developing a new striping plan to figure out how we can get more cars into the lot. Some of the parking will be impacted by the columns. The steel columns now are very large, and we are encasing them in concrete, so they will be larger under the structure. That will impact some of the spaces, but I think we have a net gain overall just by restriping the lots.

Q: Julio Vazquez: What about the ramp near 3rd Street and Walnut Street, the closest ramp to us?

A: Joe Pavao: That's part of the Tobin project which is already under construction. There have been a few meetings for that project. These are both MassDOT projects, but they are separate projects. They are going to have two different contractors, however by chance they could both be J.F. White. For the 4th Street off-ramp we are cleaning and repaving the ramp as well as installing new barrier and signage to improve it. We will have a closure for the ramp and there will be a detour, but we don't have the final plans yet. We are coordinating that with Bus Route 111. Information on that will be forthcoming.

Q: Yovanny Reinoso: Is all the parking underneath the viaduct state-owned?

A: Joe Pavao: The area under the viaduct is owned by the state. We have lease agreements with the City of Chelsea and a few others. Those agreements are all getting renewed.

C: Nate Cabral-Curtis: If anyone has questions related to the Tobin Bridge project, there is someone in my office that is working on it. If you signed in today, I'll add your names to the Tobin Bridge Project stakeholder database and you will start receiving that information and updates as well. That way, you can direct your Chelsea Viaduct questions to Joe and we can direct your Tobin Bridge questions to Tobin's project manager.

C: Joe Pavao: Send your questions to Nate and we will get them to the right person. One other thing I'd like to mention is there has been a lot of discussion and concern regarding all the MassDOT projects in this area. There is the new Wynn Casino, the Tobin Bridge Project, the Chelsea Viaduct Project and the North Washington Street Bridge Project. The City of Boston is talking about redoing Rutherford Avenue. We have some work that we're doing on the Alford Street Bridge. There is going to be a lot of work going on that will impact traffic coming from the North Shore and Chelsea. We're taking a global look at all the work that is going on and we are going to figure out how we can better manage the overlap.

The MBTA is heavily involved in this effort because one of the biggest impacts is going to be on the bus service. We are aware of this. Jessica Casey, the Deputy Chief Engineer of Operations for the MBTA, has been out in the community, speaking about our coordination efforts. She is going to continue coordinating with Chelsea and Boston. Initially we don't anticipate too many impacts to the bus routes as part of this project per se, but when work on the North Washington Street Bridge Project begins, there will be impacts to Bus Route 111. The MBTA is working hard to improve service on other lines and mitigate those impacts. That is part of the ongoing dialogue that we've been having.

Q: Kim Hanton: Looking through this presentation it looks like you are trying to confine a lot of the work to the weekends to avoid affecting the commute. Is that the plan?

A: Joe Pavao: Yes and no. There are a couple components involved. The whole superstructure of the viaduct needs to be replaced. That work will take place primarily at night. Noise is obviously an issue so a lot of the saw cutting, that loud, noisy work, will be done during day. At night it will be a crane picking up the PBUs and putting them into place. We have very specific work that is happening during the night time hours. That is going to take place nightly for nine months.

On the superstructure of the viaduct, we have five spans called a grid deck. It's the portion over the new Silver Line gateway and approaching the Tobin Bridge. This portion of the viaduct has a different construction and to replace that it is a lot more tedious and consists of breaking up concrete. It would be too noisy to do this work at night and it would be disruptive to the Chelsea community. For those locations we picked 12 weekends, six in the spring, six in the fall. The contractor will begin working Friday night at 10:00 p.m. and they will be off the road Monday morning by 5:00 a.m. By giving them those weekends they can get in and complete the work on those portions of the viaduct. It will be continuous weekend work, but the traffic isn't as bad on the weekends. Traffic will be down to one lane in each direction during those weekends and we will manage those lane restrictions as best as we can. But our thought process was to get in and get the work done as quickly as possible.

To accomplish that we are placing incentives and disincentives on the contractor meaning that for every hour that they're not open on those Mondays at 5:00 a.m., they are paying a large fine. In other words, they will be opening the roads at 5:00 a.m. because if they don't, they're going to encounter those high penalties. Conversely, every hour that they finish early they get a bonus. That also applies to the 12 weekends. They have 12 weekends to get the work done and if they beat that schedule, they get a bonus. That's how we control that. They will also have four weekends of work for the Chelsea off-ramp. We must close that ramp and rebuild it. We have the Department of Conservation and Recreation pool at that location, so we don't want to inconvenience that all summer. There will be incentives and disincentives for that work as well.

Q: Yovanny Reinoso: Are you expanding the Carter Street off-ramp?

A: Joe Pavao: That ramp will remain the same size.

Q: Yovanny Reinoso: Would you be able to stripe the ramp so that people know that its two lanes?

A: Joe Pavao: Striping is easy, it's just paint. That is something that I'll look at. I've driven that ramp many times and I know exactly what you're talking about. Everybody piles up in two lanes and you have people waiting to take a left blocking the people who want to take a right. I will look at that. We may not be able to stripe it all the way back to the viaduct, but maybe at the end we can stripe it and put some arrows and signage to direct people. That might already be in the contract.

Q: Kim Hanton: How long is that ramp going to be closed?

A: Joe Pavao: It will be closed for four weekends. There will be a detour on the weekends.

There will be extensive public outreach for this project whenever anything happens. We're not done communicating. Even when this goes to a contractor, they're going to be required to come out to the public and have public information meetings before they do any of this work. Every time they close a ramp, or if there is a traffic shift, they'll be out telling people about it. We are also spreading the word up to the North Shore. We want to discourage people from coming over Route 1.

Q: Yovanny Reinoso: Are there any plans for Route 1 by the Route 16 overpass? The pavement is in bad shape.

A: Joe Pavao: I know where you mean but I don't know if anything is programmed for that. We do a five-year CIP, Capital Improvement Program. We also have the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) which is the federally funded side of it. I don't know if those bridges are on there. Unfortunately, sometimes the bridges that look the worst aren't that bad. Just because the pavement is bad, it does not mean the bridge is necessarily structurally deficient. Our bridges are prioritized based on condition and need. I can find out where that is in the timeline. As for Route 1, I'm not sure when they last paved it.

C: Yovanny Reinoso: Paving work along Route 1 has been going on for a few years.

A: Joe Pavao: I know that the District has a paving project, but I do not know how far up it extends. I don't know about paving up there.

C: Margaret Farmer: We will send out information to all users and we will post updates to the intranet to let people know. We have a lot of people who commute in and we will keep them as aware as possible.

I know you said it's not possible, but I must tell you that parking is a huge issue for us. It's hard for our staff to find parking. If there are any lots that you can turn over to the City that they can turn into free parking lots, that would be great. There is a lot of space under the bridge that we would love to park in.

A: Joe Pavao: There is a long list of people who have requested that. We know parking is a huge issue. We are working hard to make sure we're not eliminating parking as part of this project. I think we are going to gain some spaces just by redesigning the lots. But certainly, with that vacant lot that we are going to be turning over, your best chance of getting parking is to go to the City Manager and the City Council and talk to them. That is, if they are going to use that for parking.

C: Margaret Farmer: We advocate with them on a regular basis and that is probably why you hear from them.

C: Joe Pavao: We also have a website, so it might be a good idea to have a link to our website on your website if people want additional information. You will find all of the PowerPoint presentations, meeting minutes, and other information on the website.

C: Judi Lemoine: Just to echo the need for parking: we are considered an essential program. We don't close, even for snow emergencies. Parking is a real issue for us. Thank you for this presentation. This is helpful.

C: Joe Pavao: We are available anytime.

Q: Zohreh King: What is the impact on parking during the project?

A: Joe Pavao: There will be some impacts to parking. One of the things we're trying to be cognizant of is school parking. We tried to schedule work in the summer months so we're not impacting school parking. I think we've mitigated everything one for one in terms of parking. Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance, or DCAMM, a sister agency of MassDOT, will probably experience the most impacts. But there will be some loss of parking during construction. The contractor will not be allowed to take any of those spaces up. If people see personal or construction vehicles taking up resident only spots on streets, let us know about that and we will enforce it. The contractor is only going to be allowed to use the fenced in construction zones that we give them to perform the work. Parking is on their own. They have to take public transportation or find parking somewhere else. But in order to get the substructure work done, we're going to have to move parking around beneath the viaduct. We have a plan and

we have gone over it with the City Manager. I think it is a reasonable plan, but it is going to be a little bit difficult for one year.

Q: Julio Vazquez: This might be beyond the scope, but we need more parking downtown. Do you know if there are any plans to add parking to the downtown? Is there someone we can ask at MassDOT?

A: Joe Pavao: I would say to talk to Tom Ambrosino and the City Council. I know he's working hard on the parking issue. He has been working with the state on the parking lot leases.

A: Margaret Farmer: I can answer this question. Tom Ambrosino has worked on securing those lots. Because there is so much construction on the bridge right now, they are using those lots as a staging area. It's also a safety issue. When the work on the bridge is done they're going to push the issue again so there is that potential. If it does happen, it won't be there until 2022.

A: Joe Pavao: I think there were some commitments under the Tobin Bridge Project to turn over some of those lots. If you talk to the City Manager, he can confirm that.

Q: Margaret Farmer: Considering where this is located, I suspect that a lot of people are going to jump off the Revere rotary and cut through Revere during construction. Are there any plans to address that?

A: Joe Pavao: Yes. We have done a lot of modeling and we have a lot of experience with diversions. The Springfield I-91 Viaduct is a very similar project. They are building a casino there. It's the same type of work involving lots of traffic. Nate is experienced on how to communicate with the public on these kinds of projects.

On this project we're going to take it down from three lanes to two lanes for a year. We anticipate that some of that traffic will divert. We are not expecting a lot of diversion because we are going to do so much outreach. We are hoping to keep people away from Route 1 and that they will stay on I-93 or take alternate modes of transportation.

There will be impacts. I'm not going to lie and say it's going to be smooth sailing. We are looking at where we think people will divert during construction and we're going to deploy police at those locations for the first couple of weeks to monitor the situation. We will make adjustments. If there is a location where we find there isn't a problem, we'll take that police detail and move them somewhere else. We'll work with the City on those efforts. For the first the couple of weeks,

we'll be focused on finding the problem locations. We're also going to do signal timing improvements if needed. We do have a plan in place.

Q: Yovanny Reinoso: Will the commuter rail be impacted?

A: Joe Pavao: No, other than when we have to replace that one span over it. We are coordinating with the MBTA to figure out the best times to do that work. We will try to coordinate with other closures on other projects. Most of the work that needs to be done will involve minor impacts. We'll have flaggers, but this will be done during off peak hours. The Silver Line is open now. We don't anticipate any impacts to that service.

Q: Yovanny Reinoso: Will there be a special bus lane on the Tobin Bridge?

A: Joe Pavao: We understand that Bus Route 111 is the third busiest bus line in the state. Right now, it goes down Broadway and Chelsea Street and uses Ramp A, the ramp we will be closing for repairs. One of the benefits that Bus Route 111 is going to realize is that when the Chelsea on-ramp is complete as part of the Tobin Bridge project, that bus is going to move permanently from Broadway to the Chelsea on-ramp. It will not be taking Ramp A anymore. It will eliminate one stop, which will be moved to Broadway. The MBTA is estimating that that will save three to five minutes on the route. In the MBTA world, that's a lot of time. Using the Chelsea ramp instead allows it to get past the two-lane squeeze. It won't solve Bus Route 111 problems, but it will help. The MBTA is working hard to improve bus service overall so that people have options.

Are there any more questions? Please check the website. That will provide you with the most up to date information. Thank you for your time.

Next Steps

The project team will work to complete the design before the project is advertised in July.

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Nate	Cabral-Curtis	Howard Stein Hudson
Margaret	Farmer	North Suffolk Mental Health
Kim	Hanton	North Suffolk Mental Health
Sandra	Heath	North Suffolk Mental Health
Jaime	Jimenez	North Suffolk Mental Health
Doug	Johnson	Howard Stein Hudson
Zohreh	King	North Suffolk Mental Health
Judi	Lemoine	North Suffolk Mental Health
Kate	Moore	North Suffolk Mental Health
Joe	Pavao	MassDOT
Emmy	Porto	North Suffolk Mental Health
Emily	Randall	North Suffolk Mental Health
Yovanny	Reinoso	North Suffolk Mental Health
Daniel	Reis	North Suffolk Mental Health
Jason	Romarro	North Suffolk Mental Health
Peter	Schindler	North Suffolk Mental Health
Deb	Snow	North Suffolk Mental Health
Joyce	Troisi	North Suffolk Mental Health
Manjola	Ujkay	North Suffolk Mental Health
Julio	Vazquez	North Suffolk Mental Health