

Worthington Conservation Commission
Minutes of Continuance of Public Hearing
Sam Hill Road Bridge
June 1, 2016

1 Attendance

Members: Andrew Madden, Peggy O'Neal, Mary Gerken, Virginia Sowers, Ed Lewis

Guest: Marc LeVasseur (Foresight Land Services)

2 Continuation of Public Hearing

The continuation opened at 06/01/2016 07:00:14 PM

Mr. Lewis gave a brief synopsis of the public hearing process.

The hearing was continued from June 19 so Foresight Land Services (Foresight) could investigate lowering the existing bridge abutments to accommodate a greater stream width at low flow conditions.

Mr. LeVasseur outlined State of Massachusetts Department of Transportation requirements relative to bridge design. A copy of a letter submitted to the commission concerning the requirements is [attached](#).

Lowering the abutments involves lowering the footings into the underlying ledge requiring in-stream blasting. Additional costs of \$50,000 would be expected for the modified design. This design could be considered an alternative design for the work.

Another alternative (submitted as a formal design change) lowers the existing abutment by 0.8 feet which accommodates some removal of the existing abutment, but not as much removal as requested.

The estimated cost of the total project is \$700K.

Question: (Ms. O'Neal) will the changes we recommended avoid extensive Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) permitting?

Mr. LeVasseur stated that as long as work is out of water it will not be subject to ACOE permitting.

Ms. O'Neal suggested it might be possible to obtain construction bids for the bridge for several alternatives.

Mr. Madden commented: "We do not want to be obstructionist. The bridge is important and the town has town has grant money now to construct the bridge. What does not sit right with me is calling the work a stream crossing with 1.2 times with when the width (at low water) is the same as it was before. We may judge that the work complies with the stream crossing standard to the maximum extent practicable due to costs. I not like the description as fully meeting stream crossing standards when it doesn't."

A discussion on a regulation known as "Stream Crossing Standards" points to (portions of wetlands protection) regulation 310 CMR 10.54(4) (Bank performance standard) and 310 CMR 10.56(4) (Land Under Water performance standard).

This work is subject to 10.54 (bank) and 10.56 (land under water). Mr. Lewis read the performance standard portion of the regulations to the group.

Mr. LeVasseur testified that the bank-full width is about 22 feet. A 26.4-foot span accommodates the 1.2 multiplier.

Mr. Lewis raised the question: is the additional work in the river bed to lower the bridge abutments, being an improvement over conditions that have existed for many years, worth the disruption to the stream that would result from needed blasting and other work. Is the trade off worth it? We are held somewhat hostage with the DOT design manual.

Mr. Madden suggested that the commission has sufficient information to deliberate on the issue of an order of conditions. It may be time to close the public hearing.

Abutting neighbor RJ Beaudrey testified on June 19 about excessive erosion on her property. Foresight proposes to install a reinforced vegetated waterway in the area, replacing the existing grassed swale. The waterway consists of a geo-textile structure that will resist erosion. Mr. LeVasseur presented a plan to the commission for the design which is in immediate proximity of the bridge and will be included with the bridge construction contract. Being an erosion control measure (environmental improvement over existing conditions), commissioners agreed that the swale construction be included in the order of conditions.¹

Mr. LeVasseur explained the narrative relative to the bank and land under water performance standards presented in the Notice of Intent.

Mr Lewis: "Does the work meet the performance standards of 310 CMR 10.24 and 310 CMR 10.26?" Mr. LeVasseur testified that the work does, answering "yes".

Ms. Sowers questioned the financial implication. "What is the break point relative to finance?" Mr. LeVasseur explained that it is incumbent to meet the standards as best as one can.

¹Order of Conditions section A(8)(f) "Additional Plan or Document Title" incorporates the design into the Order of Conditions as "Sam Hill Road Drainage Improvements, June 1, 2016".

Mr. Madden offered a motion that Ms. O'Neal seconded that the public hearing be closed. The commission approved the motion unanimously.

The public hearing closed at 06/01/2016 07:51:38 PM

3 Order of Conditions

The commission drafted the order of conditions on DEP WPA Form 5 as a group.

Ms. Sowers offered a motion that Ms. O'Neal seconded that the commission issue the standard order of conditions with a special condition: "Work in the Land Under Water Resource Area will be completed during low flow conditions." The commission approved the motion unanimously.²

The meeting adjourned at 06/01/2016 08:10:39 PM.

The commission prepared and issued the Order of Conditions (File Number 350-0058) to Mr. LeVasseur immediately after the meeting.

²The text of the special condition appears as the last line of section D3 of the Order of Conditions. The text is not particularly conspicuous.

Subject: Sam Hill Road Bridge Notice of Intent - Proposed Revisions
Date: Tuesday, May 31, 2016 at 4:03:46 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Marc Levasseur
To: Edward Lewis
CC: Mary Gerken-Newcomb, Andrew Madden, Peggy O'Neal, James Molyneux, Virginia Sowers, Diana Noble
Attachments: Sam Hill Road Proposed Bridge - Sheet 1 of 8.pdf

Dear Worthington Conservation Commission Members,

During the public hearing on May 19th the Commission requested that the design include removal of the existing abutments to the water level during low flow conditions.

The current design, per MassDOT "LRFD Bridge Manual", requires 3 feet minimum clearance from the bottom chord of the proposed bridge structure to the top of the remaining portions of the bridge abutments. The current design also conforms to the MassDOT Bridge Manual which requires a 3 foot minimum layer of Riprap over a 1 foot layer of crushed stone bedding (4 feet total) above the top of footing. The Riprap and stone provides for footing scour protection and bank stabilization. Water control, during the construction phase, will be maintained within the existing abutments and the natural stream channel will not be disturbed.

Meeting the Commission's request would require lowering the current design elevation of the abutments and footings approximately 3 feet to provide for the 4 foot layer of riprap and crushed stone protection. The additional costs associated with this alternative is approximately \$50,000 for additional ledge excavation, additional reinforced concrete stem walls and/or footing thicknesses, shoring or underpinning of the existing abutment if required, additional water controls and trench dewatering, and project delays.

Based on the high additional costs and project delays during M.G.L. Chapter 85: Section 35 Review (MassDOT Bridge Review) and construction, we do not recommend lowering the abutments to the stream low flow water level.

In order to maintain conformance with the design requirements, timelines, and budget, we recommend lowering the existing abutments an additional 0.8 feet from the current design. There are no significant additional costs associated with this recommendation.

Please see the attached plan sheet 1 of 8 showing the proposed abutment removal elevation or follow the link, <https://www.dropbox.com/s/3lf6nr59nuu25jk/Sam%20Hill%20Road%20Proposed%20Bridge%20-%20Plan%20Set.pdf?dl=0>, for a complete set . Hard copies of the revised plans will be provided to the Commission tomorrow.

Please contact Foresight Land Services if you have any questions or need additional information.

Thank you,
Marc

Marc A. LeVasseur
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