



DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 2019 AT 6:00 P.M.

AT

POMPOSITTICUT COMMUNITY CENTER  
509 GREAT ROAD  
STOW, MASSACHUSETTS 01775

FOR THE PROPOSED

GLEASONDALE BRIDGE REHABILITATION PROJECT  
Project No.: 605342  
Bridge No.: S-29-001 SR62  
Bridge Project Management

IN STOW, MASSACHUSETTS

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HIGHWAY DIVISION

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HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

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**PRESENTERS**

John Fallon, Project Manager,  
MassDOT - Highway Division  
Mickey Splaine, District 3 Office,  
MassDOT - Highway Division  
Melissa O'Day, Right of Way Bureau,  
MassDOT - Highway Division  
Nathaniel Curtis, Manager of Public Involvement,  
Howard Stein Hudson  
Taylor Miller, Public Involvement Specialist,  
Howard Stein Hudson  
Jaime French, P.E., Project Manager,  
Fuss & O'Neill, Inc.  
Kristen Hayden, P.E., Senior Project Engineer,  
Fuss & O'Neill, Inc.

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1 -- all right, that's very good, gentlemen. Thank you.  
2 But, your state officials, folks.

3 REPRESENTATIVE KATE HOGAN: Good  
4 evening, everyone. I will be brief. But I wanted to  
5 let everyone know, first and foremost, I am very, very  
6 pleased with the progress the Gleasondale Road Bridge  
7 rehab project is on. I think that everybody has been  
8 working together, that all of these meetings that  
9 we've been having along the way as we arrive at the 25  
10 percent Design Public Hearing tell us that people are  
11 listening, people are working to make sure that  
12 everybody's voices are heard, that there's access both  
13 to the bridge and to the river. And I'm just very,  
14 very pleased, glad to be here tonight, and glad to see  
15 so many people because everybody is still -- the  
16 MassDOT and the state are still taking comments.

17 So, thank you all for being here  
18 tonight. And I'm passing the mic over to Senator  
19 Eldridge. Thank you, all.

20 SENATOR JAMIE ELDRIDGE: Thank you so  
21 much, Representative. And I want to thank MassDOT for  
22 coming out here for the 25 percent Design Public  
23 Hearing. And I really want to thank Representative  
24 Hogan and her staff for being the lead on advocating

1 to make sure that the Gleasondale Bridge has  
2 improvements, some of which she talked about, the  
3 corridor access for boating, canoeing. I know that  
4 we've heard from a lot of residents about bike lanes.  
5 I've seen the PowerPoint presentation by MassDOT. So,  
6 very, very encouraging. And it's obviously just such  
7 an historic bridge and an historic neighborhood.

8 I also represent Hudson with  
9 Representative Hogan and, of course, Stow. And it's a  
10 critical, critical road connecting the two towns and  
11 the two downtowns. If you think about all the apple  
12 orchards on Route 62, it's one of the most historic  
13 roads in the district that I represent. So, the  
14 project is so critical and so important to the Town of  
15 Stow.

16 So, I just want to be here to lend my  
17 support. And, of course, at the state level, you  
18 know, we continue to advocate for state funding to  
19 make sure that this program and this bridge proposal  
20 is finished on time. I know it's been very  
21 frustrating the past few years with the single-lane  
22 bridge. But, all things considered, it seems to have  
23 worked out fairly well. And that's what I've heard  
24 from abutters as well.

1                   So, once again, thanks very much to  
2 MassDOT for being here. And if I can be a resource,  
3 please contact my office, or if you have any questions  
4 after tonight's public hearing.

5                   Thank you very much.

6                   NATHANIEL CURTIS: Thank you very much,  
7 Senator and Representative.

8                   At this time, I'd like to bring our  
9 MassDOT project manager, John Fallon, up. I will be  
10 handing over the microphone and I will be dimming the  
11 lights a little bit so folks can see the screen a bit  
12 better.

13                   Take it away, John.

14                   MODERATOR JOHN FALLON: Thanks, Nate.

15                   As Nate said, my name is John Fallon.  
16 I'm the project manager for the Gleasondale Road  
17 bridge project, which will be presented tonight. I  
18 work in the Bridge Project Management section at the  
19 MassDOT headquarters in Boston.

20                   Once the hearing is complete this  
21 evening, the attendance sheet will become part of the  
22 public record. So, if you want your attendance to  
23 become part of the public, we have the sign-in sheet  
24 in the back.



1                   Also, there's a public hearing handout  
2 that talks a little bit about the project. It's also  
3 available in the back.

4                   So, just to go over the agenda really  
5 quickly, we'll do introductions. We'll introduce the  
6 project team and the members. We'll talk about the  
7 existing conditions that are out there, the project  
8 goals. We'll talk about what we're proposing to  
9 rehabilitate the bridge. We'll talk a little bit  
10 about construction staging, our thoughts on that  
11 currently. And then we'll open it up for public  
12 comments and testimony.

13                   I just would like to sort of emphasize  
14 that we want to hold all questions to the end of the  
15 hearing. It just helps things as we go forward.

16                   So, at this point, I'd just like to go  
17 through some introductions. So, from MassDOT's  
18 District 3 Office, we have the assistant bridge  
19 engineer Mickey Splaine. Our Right of Way  
20 representative from MassDOT is Melissa O'Day.  
21 Consultant representation tonight from Fuss & O'Neill  
22 is Jaime French and Kristen Hayden. Our public  
23 outreach coordination consultant is Nate Curtis, who  
24 you met earlier, and Taylor Miller. Our stenographer

1 tonight from Arlington Typing and Press (sic) is Greg  
2 Tarbox. He will be making a verbatim transcript of  
3 the hearing tonight.

4                   The public hearing notice was placed in  
5 the *MetroWest Daily News* on August 1<sup>st</sup> and August 8<sup>th</sup>.  
6 It was placed in the *Beacon Villager* as well on August  
7 1<sup>st</sup> and August 8<sup>th</sup>. And the notice was also in the *Stow*  
8 *Independent* and *Bolton Independent*. Those dates that  
9 it appeared was July 26<sup>th</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>. A copy of the  
10 public hearing notice will be attached to the final  
11 hearing transcript.

12                   So, part of the project team, the  
13 MassDOT in-house bridge design group is doing the  
14 bridge design, and Fuss & O'Neill will be doing all  
15 other highway design, utility coordination design,  
16 environmental permitting. Howard Stein Hudson, as I  
17 mentioned earlier, are assisting us with the public  
18 involvement. But, I also want to point out at this  
19 point that the Town of Stow has been a great team  
20 member in this project through the preliminary design,  
21 helping us out, identifying important aspects of the  
22 bridge location, the concerns of the citizens.

23                   So, the public hearing handout explains  
24 the purpose of a hearing, which gives MassDOT a formal

1 presentation of the proposed project, and it gives us  
2 time to get public feedback on the design to date.

3                   So, the project we are representing or  
4 we are presenting tonight is the Gleasondale Bridge  
5 rehabilitation project. It involves replacing the  
6 bridge's superstructure, which is basically the top  
7 part of the bridge, the surface that you're driving  
8 on, the beams. It also includes new bridge railings,  
9 a new north abutment, and some minor approach roadway  
10 work.

11                   We're currently in the preliminary  
12 design phase, or 25 percent design phase, which means  
13 we've developed an alignment, an option that MassDOT  
14 is able to present to the public for comment.

15                   We estimate that the total project will  
16 be approximately \$6.5 million, which will come from --  
17 80 percent will come from the Federal Highway  
18 Administration and 20 percent will come from MassDOT.

19                   In order for this project to be funded  
20 and advertised for construction, it has to be  
21 programmed in the statewide Transportation Improvement  
22 Program. And this project is programmed in the 2020  
23 federal fiscal year. So, money has been programmed or  
24 allocated for this construction.

1                   The estimated cost does not include any  
2 right of way acquisitions.

3                   The design is expected to be completed  
4 in the summer of 2020. And, at this point, we expect  
5 that the construction duration will be two to two-and-  
6 a-half construction seasons.

7                   As you are aware, this project's  
8 purpose is to address the current structural elements  
9 of the bridge that are causing the current bridge  
10 narrowing with the one-way alternating traffic  
11 pattern.

12                   In a few minutes, we'll have the design  
13 team get into the presentation and particulars of the  
14 project. But, before I do that, I'd like Melissa  
15 O'Day from MassDOT's Right of Way will come up and  
16 just give an overview of the right of way process.

17                   MELISSA O'DAY: Thank you, John.

18                   Good evening. My name is Melissa O'Day  
19 and I represent the Right of Way Bureau at MassDOT.

20                   The Right of Way Bureau is responsible  
21 for acquiring all of the necessary rights in private  
22 and public lands for the design, construction, and  
23 implementation of this project.

24                   The current design plans indicate that

1 fee takings and permanent easements may be required.  
2 Other areas may also require temporary construction  
3 easements.

4 Affected property owners' rights are  
5 protected under our Massachusetts General Laws,  
6 primarily Chapter 79. If a project is receiving  
7 federal funds, the property owners' rights are further  
8 defined under Title III of the Real Property Acts of  
9 1970 as amended.

10 I will be happy to answer any of your  
11 general questions regarding the right of way  
12 activities during the open forum for questions, and I  
13 will be available after the public hearing for any  
14 specific questions you may have.

15 Thank you.

16 MODERATOR FALLON: Thanks, Melissa.

17 Before I turn it back over to Nate to  
18 get into the rest of the presentation, I just want to  
19 make note that the details that we're presenting  
20 tonight are preliminary engineering plans, so there  
21 might be questions that you have that we can't answer  
22 at this time. But, you know, it also means that  
23 there's still final design work that needs to be done  
24 to fine-tune the particulars of this project. And

1 just, once again, just please hold your questions till  
2 the end. And I'll turn it over to Nate now for a  
3 couple of slides.

4 NATHANIEL CURTIS: Thank you very much,  
5 John. Appreciate it.

6 Okay. So, this is our project area  
7 right here, the area that I'm circling with the laser  
8 pointer. That's the bridge in Gleasondale. We have  
9 the homes of some of our abutters whom we've joined on  
10 a couple of site walks. And then, of course, as the  
11 Senator mentioned, we have some of the apple orchards  
12 around here, this being a very important road.

13 This summer, my toddler has developed a  
14 fixation with the book called *Picking Apples and*  
15 *Pumpkins*. So, I have a feeling I may be joining you  
16 in the fall. I will try not to be an obstreperous  
17 driver when I get back.

18 So, the existing conditions that are  
19 out there. This is a picture of the underside of the  
20 bridge. And you can see those deteriorated  
21 conditions. There are other photos that are worse,  
22 but I thought that's a pretty good one. It's pretty  
23 indicative.

24 So, as all of you who live in town are

1 aware, the bridge has been in its condition of a  
2 single lane in each direction, alternating with the  
3 traffic signal, since 2015 when there was a bridge  
4 inspection, which a weight limit of the structure put  
5 it into its single-control lane and single sidewalk  
6 down one side.

7                   As John mentioned, there are parts of  
8 the bridge that are really past their useful lifespan.  
9 They can't be repaired. That includes the deck and  
10 the rails, the rails being the part that stops you  
11 from toppling over when you're looking at the water,  
12 the beams, which support the roadway deck, and then  
13 the northern abutment. As it turns out, the southern  
14 abutment is in reasonable condition and will be  
15 reused. So, between the southern abutment and the  
16 northern abutment, some big differences.

17                   So, the project context. You know, the  
18 Senator touched on some of this; the Representative  
19 did as well. It's an important commuter route. It is  
20 a key trucking link. We know there are heavy trucks  
21 that travel this route. Its access to Stow's pick  
22 your own apple orchards between Labor Day and Columbus  
23 Day, we know that's a very important time for the  
24 Town's economy. It provides access to the Gleasondale

1 Industrial Park, the former woolen mill. And we know  
2 from our efforts with the Stow first responders -- we  
3 coordinated with them several times -- 62 is an  
4 important corridor for first response, just moving  
5 through the area.

6                   The bridge is closely abutted by homes  
7 to the north and south. We are aware of the canoe and  
8 kayak launching point on the bridge's northeast  
9 corner. We know the Assabet is an environmentally  
10 sensitive resource. And we know that right now, the  
11 bridge in its current condition is subject to a  
12 stepped up schedule of instruction, or inspection  
13 rather. And, when that happens, the bridge has to  
14 close with assorted traffic and travel impacts on all  
15 of you.

16                   As we get through this, one thing I  
17 wanted to draw your attention to, I know John has  
18 asked you to hold your questions. One thing that  
19 would help folks is to know how much longer they have  
20 to hold their questions. We do have this sort of gas  
21 gauge. So, as this green bar creeps across the bottom  
22 of the screen, the closer the green bar gets to the  
23 number, the closer we are to being at Q and A.

24                   Getting to today, the design effort was



1 launched in 2017. As you can see, we've had  
2 substantial public outreach, including just beginning  
3 with office hours. I recognize some folks from my  
4 initial visit to Stow where we sat in Town Hall and  
5 just asked people what they thought about the project.  
6 We've met with Stow frequently.

7                   The other thing that I would note is  
8 that in advance of this meeting, you know, John ticked  
9 off all of the places where the meeting was advertised  
10 in advance of this. There were flyers placed in the  
11 corridor to either side of the bridge on homes there,  
12 drops of flyers in the town hall, post office, and the  
13 public library. And then we spent two hours last  
14 Thursday distributing flyers at your Shaw's on 155  
15 Great Road, just to make sure that we got enough  
16 people to this meeting tonight, which I think we did.  
17 Good turnout.

18                   And, with that, I'd like to bring up  
19 John to take us through a few more slides. And then  
20 we'll turn it over to Jaime to take you through some  
21 of the engineering pieces.

22                   All right. I'll enhance it for you.  
23 Don't worry about it.

24                   MODERATOR FALLON: Thanks, Nate.

1                   So, I think really the project goals  
2 were established and identified, and through some of  
3 Nate's efforts, Howard Stein Hudson's efforts, and the  
4 public outreach, we identified some of the goals that  
5 we wanted to achieve in this project. In  
6 rehabilitating the bridge, it will achieve -- the  
7 bridge will be brought up to current design standards  
8 as far as the highway design and the function of the  
9 facility. We'll bring it up to structural -- the  
10 requirements up to current day standards.

11                   Also, some of the goals were to,  
12 obviously, to return the traffic to two-way traffic,  
13 one lane in each direction, to provide sidewalks on  
14 both sides. We heard that bicycle-accommodating  
15 shoulders were very important. You know, reducing  
16 inspections by rehabilitating the bridge. Right now,  
17 the bridge is on a six-month inspection schedule that  
18 involves some closing of the bridge and work on the  
19 bridge on a frequent basis. By rehabilitating the  
20 bridge, that will no longer be needed on that  
21 frequency.

22                   Another goal was to maintain the  
23 footprint of the bridge because of the size, and the  
24 width, and how much area it takes up.

1                   And, another important goal was to not  
2 preclude any future Town improvements as far as the  
3 adjoining street network that they may have planned in  
4 the area.

5                   So, the proposed bridge that we're  
6 talking about tonight, some of the improvements  
7 includes a little -- include two ten-foot travel  
8 lanes. There will be a five-foot bicycle-  
9 accommodating shoulder. Right now, it's four feet.  
10 We will be putting back sidewalks, currently what's  
11 out there today, and extending their limits in some  
12 areas. The bridge will include a new crash-tested  
13 railing and end-posts at the back of the sidewalk.

14                   One of the things that we heard through  
15 just coordinating with the Town was that the views of  
16 the river were important to the users of the bridge  
17 and the residents. So, we modeled our proposed bridge  
18 railing on an adjacent one that's in Hudson that  
19 you'll see examples of in the presentation.

20                   Also, the proposed bridge, right now,  
21 the drainage on the bridge, the roadway drainage, goes  
22 directly into the river through scuppers. So, with  
23 this project, we will be able to take that drainage  
24 off the bridge and discharge it indirectly to the

1 river with treatment, so an improvement on the  
2 drainage in the area.

3 So, at this point, I think I'll turn it  
4 over to Jaime to get into the good details.

5 JAIME FRENCH: Thanks, John.

6 So, this basically shows what the  
7 bridge is going to look like when it's done. As was  
8 mentioned before, this, up here, is the northern  
9 abutment. This will be completely replaced due to its  
10 condition. Both of these in the river are the two  
11 piers. Those will be maintained as will the southern  
12 abutment down here. We will be going in and doing  
13 some work just to patch them up and get them up to  
14 where they need to be. But they're in good shape, so  
15 we'll keep them.

16 Everything you see up here, the bridge  
17 deck, the girders, the deck, all of that will all be  
18 replaced and will all be new. It's going to look a  
19 lot like it does now.

20 NATHANIEL CURTIS: But better.

21 JAIME FRENCH: But better, yeah.

22 So, part of what we need to do to  
23 construct the project is relocate a lot of utilities.  
24 Everybody around here knows there's a lot of overhead

1 utilities there. There's quite a few in the ground as  
2 well. So, the first thing that we're going to do is  
3 move some of the utilities.

4                   There is a utility pole that's  
5 somewhere in here. To get to that pole, we will have  
6 to create an access in this sort of shaded red area  
7 here. Typically, we would remove that access and  
8 restore it with grass and whatnot. But, because this  
9 is where the existing put in for the river is, we are  
10 going to leave the majority of that access in there.  
11 It will be about five feet wide. It will have a  
12 gravel surface. It will have a little bit of drainage  
13 on the inside corner so that water will drain in this  
14 way into the river, but we will leave that there for  
15 folks to use for access as they do now.

16                   This is just a view of the bridge  
17 looking south once it's all done. We'll be extending  
18 -- wrong button. Oh, no.

19                   NATHANIEL CURTIS: Go back. There you  
20 go.

21                   JAIME FRENCH: All right. So, we'll be  
22 extending the sidewalk down this side. We'll also be  
23 extending the sidewalk a little bit to this side,  
24 about to the end of the guardrail. This is where that

1 access is and the put in for the canoes. You can see  
2 over here, here's the mill entrance as well.

3                   And here is looking north. Again --  
4 why do I keep hitting the wrong button?

5                   NATHANIEL CURTIS: It takes a trained  
6 public involvement specialist to run that thing.

7                   JAIME FRENCH: It does. It does.

8                   NATHANIEL CURTIS: I can't build a  
9 bridge, but I can operate a laser pointer.

10                  JAIME FRENCH: So, again, here is the  
11 mill entrance, and then looking north.

12                  So, this is the bridge rail that John  
13 had mentioned. It's a standard MassDOT rail. It will  
14 allow people to see the river. And the standard color  
15 is black on that.

16                  So, the construction staging. The  
17 bridge will be built in two stages. Right now, we're  
18 estimating it will take two to two-and-a-half  
19 construction seasons to complete the construction.  
20 We'll be replacing half the bridge at a time. It's  
21 basically going to be in the configuration it is now  
22 for the first stage. And then we'll just flip and do  
23 the other side. Pedestrian access will be maintained  
24 throughout the duration on the sidewalk that is open.

1                   We will have the need to fully close  
2 the road for a couple of construction activities,  
3 those being removing the existing bridge and setting  
4 the new beams. This is because we have to use a crane  
5 to do it, and the crane placement will take up the  
6 majority of the roadway width. And, also, swinging  
7 those components around, we don't want to do that over  
8 active traffic. It just isn't a safe condition.

9                   That work, right now, we are intending  
10 to do those activities at night. So, we are  
11 estimating right now to remove the existing bridge  
12 will take about three 12-hour nights. To set the new  
13 beams will take about two 12-hour nights. That will  
14 happen in each phase. So, there will be 60 hours of  
15 closure in each phase. And they won't be all at the  
16 same time. The first one will happen pretty quickly,  
17 and then the next one would happen about halfway  
18 through that stage.

19                   And we have also coordinated with  
20 emergency services, fire and police, and have  
21 concluded that nighttime is the best time to do it.

22                   So, this is the existing configuration  
23 of the bridge with the lane closure. When we come in  
24 to start construction, you'll see that half of the

1 bridge go away. The first thing we'll do is all the  
2 utility work. Then we'll come in and replace that  
3 abutment, patch up the piers, and then move on to the  
4 deck.

5                   Once that side is completed, we'll flip  
6 it. We'll put traffic onto the newly completed phase.  
7 And we will move on to completing the second phase of  
8 construction.

9                   And, again, this is what the completed  
10 bridge will look like. Again, you see the access  
11 there for the canoes.

12                   So, this is just the plan view. This  
13 is the same plan that you saw on the board over here.  
14 One of the questions that has kind of come up is at  
15 the southwest corner, which is right over here. As  
16 you kind of come around this corner, there's a stone  
17 wall over here. And that's really limiting the amount  
18 of width we have. And in that area, we can either do  
19 a bike lane or we can do a sidewalk; however, we don't  
20 have enough space for both.

21                   That's a photo of it. So, you can see  
22 there's a very, very narrow shoulder there. And you  
23 can see the stone wall in the left of the photo. So,  
24 we can't disturb that wall. We can't go the other way



1 because of a house. So, we really, we kind of have to  
2 pick and choose what we want to do there. And that's  
3 one of the items that we're looking for feedback from  
4 you guys on is what you would like to see there. So,  
5 if you have any thoughts on that, please let us know  
6 during the question and answer period.

7                   So, for the canoe and kayak access  
8 during construction that's there now, that will  
9 basically be closed for the duration of the  
10 construction. The entire area is going to be a  
11 construction zone. It's going to be ripped up right  
12 away to put the utility work in there. So, it's  
13 really just not safe to have people going into that  
14 area. And it will be closed till the end, and then it  
15 will be left as we have it.

16                   If there are other areas where folks  
17 can put in a canoe, preferably downstream from the  
18 construction site, MassDOT is willing to work with  
19 folks to make sure that that information is out there  
20 so people know where to go.

21                   We are doing work over a stream, which  
22 is, obviously, environmentally significant. At this  
23 stage, we will be making sure there's protections in  
24 the contract so the contractor doesn't get silt and

1 sediment into the stream.

2                   We also are aware that there are septic  
3 tanks and wells that are very close to the project  
4 site. Those will be noted on the plans so that the  
5 contractor knows where to provide the appropriate  
6 protections.

7                   And, at this point, I believe it goes  
8 back to you.

9                   NATHANIEL CURTIS: Thank you very much.  
10 I appreciate it. Nicely done, Jaime.

11                   So, you know, Jaime spoke about, you  
12 know, how we determined something about the best  
13 timing for that work that will close the whole bridge.  
14 That was coordinated by a series of meetings that we  
15 held with your fire and police chief here in Stow.  
16 They've been extremely helpful on this. So, you know,  
17 as you saw, we worked with them quite a bit. And some  
18 of the things that we've agreed on is so when the  
19 contractor is going to undertake those closures,  
20 probably the first people to know outside of the  
21 MassDOT resident engineer for the job will be your  
22 fire and police chief, who will receive 30 days notice  
23 in advance of any closure of the bridge.

24                   The fire department has offered to

1 reach out to other surrounding first responders. They  
2 do, apparently, a daily radio check to something like  
3 30-odd communities. So, they will be able to, you  
4 know, broadcast that news. They will determine if  
5 staged equipment is needed to the south of the bridge  
6 during periods of full closure.

7                   And then, you know, one of the things  
8 is, in particular, when the bridge is closed, there is  
9 a need to detour traffic. At present, the most close,  
10 logical detour route also has a weight-limited bridge  
11 on it. So, part of what we would need to do during  
12 those full closures is work with Stow Police as well  
13 as the Mass. Motor Trucking Association to really get  
14 out the information to truckers so that you don't wind  
15 up with a truck kind of going beyond the point of no  
16 return and getting trapped adjacent to the work zone  
17 or one of the roads near it.

18                   We will not -- the outreach -- that's  
19 me, actually, right there. I'm wearing this shirt but  
20 not this tie. You know, the outreach will not end  
21 with construction. So, we anticipate that there will  
22 be a public information meeting, probably in this  
23 room, in advance of the construction beginning. The  
24 contractor will, you know, show up and appear in this

1 room. And, you know, you can meet them and understand  
2 how they are going to undertake their work.

3                   MassDOT has gotten very good, in recent  
4 years, about issuing regular emails on project  
5 progress and what's ahead. So, we have projects  
6 where, basically, if you join the stakeholder  
7 database, which all of you who signed in have already  
8 done, you will get an email every couple of weeks  
9 saying, "This is what we achieved in the last two  
10 weeks. Here's what you can expect in the next two  
11 weeks."

12                   Obviously, there will be specialized  
13 outreach in advance of the full closures to really,  
14 you know, clue people in, similar outreach to what you  
15 saw in advance of this meeting, trying to get people  
16 either electrically (sic) or in person.

17                   We have had a lot of, you know, around  
18 some of the closures for inspections, we've made sure  
19 to reach out to the orchards. You saw the slide  
20 earlier. The goal of the project is to undertake  
21 those nighttime closures outside the apple orchard  
22 windows. But, obviously, we would reach out to them  
23 anyway because we know how important this is.

24                   And then, I don't know if folks

1 remember TomTom. Remember the ad: "We're lost, Sue  
2 Sue?" But, TomTom, if you can believe it, they've  
3 kind of gone underground. They actually provide the  
4 backend for the directions here in the phone. And so  
5 through some of the work that I've done with MassDOT,  
6 I've gotten to know Tara Race, who is the lady who  
7 basically pushes all the updates for Massachusetts out  
8 into the phones. So, as we get into some of these  
9 detours, we'll be reaching out to both her and TomTom  
10 to get it in people's phones, and then the Mass. Motor  
11 Carriers, again, just so that we don't get a long haul  
12 truck getting past the point of no return on a detour  
13 route.

14                   And so John is going to come up and do  
15 next steps, and I think there is literally one more  
16 slide after this and we'll do Q and A then.

17                   MODERATOR FALLON: Thanks, Nate.

18                   So, I just want to quickly talk about  
19 some of the next steps and some of the permits that  
20 are required. So, right now, we're at the 25 percent  
21 design hearing. So, the next design submission would  
22 be the 75 percent design, which we anticipate will be  
23 in the winter of 2019 or early 2020. One hundred  
24 percent design would then follow in the spring of

1 2020.

2                   Similar with the preliminary design, we  
3 would share those design submissions with the Town and  
4 the departments therein in the Town for their feedback  
5 and comments on those design submissions.

6                   So, right now, we are carrying an  
7 advertisement date for construction in the fall of  
8 2020. And what that means is the plans would be made  
9 available to contractors to place their bids on if  
10 they're interested in doing the construction for the  
11 project.

12                   We anticipate construction beginning in  
13 the spring of 2021. And, right now, we anticipate the  
14 construction to take place in two to two-and-a-half  
15 construction seasons. As we develop the design plans  
16 and specifications through final design, we'll get a  
17 better handle on the construction duration. So, as  
18 the design develops, we can refine that frequency of  
19 that period.

20                   As mentioned earlier on one of the  
21 slides about the importance of the resources in the  
22 bridge area, there's some environmental permits that  
23 we'll be filing. One is the Section 106 with the  
24 Mass. Historic Commission. And what that does is

1 makes sure that we're not doing anything harmful to  
2 any historic or archaeological resources in the area.  
3 Just from our early coordination and investigation, we  
4 don't think we are, but Mass. Historic Commission will  
5 make a decision on that.

6                   We'll need to file a Water Quality  
7 Certificate with MassDEP. And this is MassDEP  
8 administers the Massachusetts Clean Water Act for fill  
9 that occurs in waterways of Massachusetts, dredging in  
10 the river or filling the river resources.

11                   We'll also need to coordinate with the  
12 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on a Section 404 permit.  
13 And, the Army Corps of Engineers administers the Clean  
14 Water Act at the federal level for federal  
15 jurisdictional issues with regard to impact to  
16 waterways and resources.

17                   We'll also need to provide proof that  
18 we're compliant with the National Environmental Policy  
19 Act. And we'll need to do what's called a Categorical  
20 Exclusion Permit. It's a list of questions that  
21 documents or tries to elicit if we're causing any  
22 significant at all. And we are pretty fairly  
23 confident that we are not.

24                   So, before I open up the public hearing

1 to public comment, I just want to go over a couple of  
2 the ground rules that we have just to help this part  
3 of the presentation go smoothly.

4                   So, as I mentioned earlier, the public  
5 hearing is to solicit input regarding this project.  
6 As the plans are not yet complete, aren't complete, or  
7 are in preliminary design, there might be some  
8 questions that we might not be able to provide you an  
9 answer with now.

10                   So, anyone that wishes to speak, we'd  
11 like to have them come forward, you know, to this  
12 general area up here. We have, from Arlington Typing  
13 and Press (sic), you know, Greg is doing a verbatim  
14 transcript with the microphones here. So, it will  
15 help him pick up the information that you want to  
16 share with us. And we need you to state your name,  
17 spell it, please, list what your affiliation is, if  
18 you're an abutter, local official, whatever. And,  
19 again, this is for us to get a verbatim transcript.

20                   Also, for people that don't want to  
21 speak tonight, there's a mail-in sheet for your  
22 comments. It's available in the public hearing  
23 handout. You can, you know, write your questions or  
24 comments on that and leave it with me tonight or mail



1 it into MassDOT within ten days and we'll respond to  
2 those.

3 So, finally, it's normal procedure to  
4 ask if any elected officials want to offer their  
5 comments first. And I know we had a couple that did  
6 earlier. So, I don't know if there's any federal,  
7 state, or local officials who would like to speak at  
8 this time who haven't spoken.

9 NATHANIEL CURTIS: Yes, sir. Go right  
10 ahead.

11 SELECTMAN JAMES SALVIE: Is there a mic  
12 you want me to speak into?

13 STENOGRAPHER: Just speak -- that's  
14 good. Just speak up.

15 SELECTMAN JAMES SALVIE: Jim Salvie, S-  
16 a-l-v-i-e, a member of the Board of Selectmen.

17 First of all, thanks very much for  
18 being here and doing this. This has been an important  
19 part of this process. Ever since I think it was  
20 October 2015, we've had you guys communicating with us  
21 regularly.

22 Two questions and a comment. First of  
23 all, I think you answered this, but I want to make  
24 sure. Will you be giving residents notice, in

1 particular, of the three or four 12-hour night work  
2 sessions that will be occurring?

3 NATHANIEL CURTIS: Yes, definitely. It  
4 will, in all likelihood, and this is based on, you  
5 know, discussions that I've had with John and Mickey,  
6 but it will likely be us. We will likely stick with  
7 the job.

8 Gentlemen, is that still correct?

9 MICKEY SPLAINE: Right.

10 NATHANIEL CURTIS: Good. So, Howard  
11 Stein Hudson, the public involvement firm which has  
12 worked on the project so far, will continue on with  
13 the general contractor in some fashion or another to  
14 help provide that notice. So, yes.

15 SELECTMAN JAMES SALVIE: Will you give  
16 them notice in enough time to make alternative  
17 arrangements if they don't want to --

18 NATHANIEL CURTIS: If they would like  
19 to take a motel room elsewhere?

20 SELECTMAN JAMES SALVIE: Or if they  
21 want to call some relatives.

22 NATHANIEL CURTIS: Sure. Yeah. We  
23 would typically try to provide at least a week's  
24 notice on a thing like that.

1                   SELECTMAN JAMES SALVIE: Okay. Maybe a  
2 little bit more than that if that's possible.

3                   NATHANIEL CURTIS: If we can do two,  
4 we'll do two.

5                   SELECTMAN JAMES SALVIE: Okay. The  
6 utility corridor access ramp is a very nice feature  
7 that I wasn't aware of. Just a question about how  
8 that will work. Who will own it, and will that  
9 entity, I guess, presumably, DOT, will you be giving  
10 an easement to the Town for public access?

11                  NATHANIEL CURTIS: John, do you want to  
12 cover that one?

13                  MODERATOR FALLON: Yes.

14                  NATHANIEL CURTIS: That's a very dotty  
15 question.

16                  MODERATOR FALLON: Right now, as it's  
17 shown on the graphics, it actually -- it takes place  
18 on state-owned land that's associated with the bridge.  
19 So, it would remain in the ownership of the state.

20                  SELECTMAN JAMES SALVIE: But I'm  
21 assuming that the idea is that there will be public  
22 access?

23                  MODERATOR FALLON: Yes.

24                  SELECTMAN JAMES SALVIE: So, will there

1 be something either in the -- in the chain or an  
2 easement granted to the Town to keep that in the chain  
3 of title?

4                   MODERATOR FALLON: You know, that I  
5 don't know right now. But what we envision is it  
6 being accessed as it currently does today. So, I'm  
7 not sure if there's any easements today on that land,  
8 but we wouldn't, you know, preclude anyone from  
9 accessing this land as they do today.

10                   SELECTMAN JAMES SALVIE: I guess I'm  
11 saying I'd like people, if possible, to have a right  
12 to go on the land, something that if it were ever to  
13 be taken away would either be difficult to be taken  
14 away or we'd have to be given notice of the change, if  
15 that's possible.

16                   MODERATOR FALLON: Yeah, I'd need to  
17 look into that.

18                   SELECTMAN JAMES SALVIE: Okay. I'd  
19 appreciate that.

20                   And then, finally, a comment, and this  
21 is as an individual. You asked for feedback on  
22 whether you should build a sidewalk or a bike lane in  
23 that narrow area with the wall. I'm a cyclist, and I  
24 have to say a sidewalk makes sense since cyclists can

1 go -- since bicycles can go in the road and  
2 pedestrians really shouldn't. Please give some  
3 thought to, if you do that, to the transition from  
4 bike lane to road. There are several places in  
5 Arlington and Cambridge where a bike lane suddenly  
6 disappears and turns and, all of a sudden, you're in  
7 the road or, even worse, a bus lane, and there's no  
8 notice to the bicycles or the buses. And that kind of  
9 thing becomes very important.

10 MODERATOR FALLON: That's a really good  
11 point. We'll make that the design will --

12 SELECTMAN JAMES SALVIE: Signage, or  
13 road markings, or something like that that shows that  
14 there's a transition going on.

15 MODERATOR FALLON: Yeah, that's a  
16 great, great point.

17 SELECTMAN JAMES SALVIE: Thank you.

18 MODERATOR FALLON: Thanks. Is there  
19 any other local officials that would like to speak?

20 NATHANIEL CURTIS: Yes, ma'am. Go  
21 right ahead.

22 LISSA COOLIDGE: My name is Lissa  
23 Coolidge. I live in Gleasondale and I'm also a tenant  
24 in the mill.

1                   STENOGRAPHER: Could you spell your  
2 last name for the record?

3                   LISSA COOLIDGE: C-o-o-l-i-d-g-e.

4                   STENOGRAPHER: Thank you.

5                   LISSA COOLIDGE: I was wondering, at  
6 this time, do you know what, if any, land you are  
7 planning to take from private owners?

8                   MODERATOR FALLON: Jaime or Kristen, if  
9 you guys want to speak to that? I mean if there's a  
10 specific interest or --

11                  LISSA COOLIDGE: It's just a general  
12 question.

13                  MODERATOR FALLON: Yeah, the project is  
14 going to include temporary and permanent easements for  
15 work associated with the project. But if there's a  
16 particular parcel you want to talk about, we can talk  
17 after the hearing and go over the plans.

18                  LISSA COOLIDGE: Well, right now, we  
19 have a bridge and private land on either end of it.  
20 And I'm just wondering, the bridge looks a little  
21 wider. Is it going to encroach sideways on the land  
22 at the end? Is it going to extend further than it now  
23 goes?

24                  MODERATOR FALLON: The bridge that's

1 going back is primarily the same width as the existing  
2 bridge.

3 LISSA COOLIDGE: Okay.

4 MODERATOR FALLON: But, as I mentioned,  
5 there might be some temporary easements that are  
6 needed for the contractor to construct the bridge.

7 LISSA COOLIDGE: Yeah.

8 MODERATOR FALLON: Again, if there's a  
9 particular area, we can talk afterwards and roll out  
10 the plans.

11 But, Jaime, if you have any --

12 JAIME FRENCH: There will be some  
13 temporary easements, mostly just to give access to the  
14 contractor to get down to the river to get to the  
15 piers and that kind of stuff. There will be some  
16 minor permanent takings, and that's mostly for roadway  
17 slopes for the ends of the guardrails and things like  
18 that. So, there is not going to be a lot of major  
19 changes.

20 LISSA COOLIDGE: Thank you.

21 JAIME FRENCH: And no major changes.

22 NATHANIEL CURTIS: The mill will not go  
23 poof.

24 MODERATOR FALLON: Okay, folks. Other

1 hands? I think we're through our stack of elected  
2 officials. So, anybody else? Yes, sir. Go right  
3 ahead.

4 BILL ROSS: My name is Bill Ross from  
5 521 Gleasondale Road.

6 I wondered if there was any --

7 NATHANIEL CURTIS: R-o-double s for the  
8 gentleman?

9 BILL ROSS: What's that?

10 NATHANIEL CURTIS: R-o-double s for the  
11 stenographer?

12 BILL ROSS: Yes.

13 NATHANIEL CURTIS: Very good.

14 BILL ROSS: Sure. I wondered if there  
15 was any thought to -- in the design, to limit the  
16 speed going across the bridge and what the speed limit  
17 going across the bridge was going to be. So, that's  
18 my first question.

19 NATHANIEL CURTIS: So, Jaime can speak  
20 a little bit more to that. However, if you noticed  
21 here -- and close your eyes if you get motion sick --  
22 but one of the things about the bridge is, right now,  
23 the shoulders are very narrow. So, you see here two  
24 five-foot bicycle-accommodating shoulders and two ten-



1 foot travel lanes. So, part of what's actually been  
2 done is to reallocate the space on the bridge a little  
3 bit so that the travel lanes that are out there will  
4 be narrower than they are today. And the way that we  
5 manage to get the bridge to occupy roughly the same  
6 space it does today, but provide those bicycle-  
7 accommodating shoulders, is to take that space from  
8 the travel lane. So, we are actually looking at going  
9 to a ten-foot travel lane as a traffic calming and  
10 traffic slowing device.

11                   Typically, in an urban environment, you  
12 will see bicycle and pedestrian advocates push for a  
13 ten-foot travel lane, especially on turns, as a way to  
14 slow down vehicles. So, that is what we sort of view  
15 as kind of a speed control device.

16                   Jaime, do you want to say anything  
17 further on that?

18                   JAIME FRENCH: I believe the speed  
19 limit out there right now is 30, and it will stay at  
20 30. So, right now, we don't have any intention on  
21 lowering it.

22                   BILL ROSS: So, I live just past the  
23 bridge on the south side. And it's been my experience  
24 that people come across the bridge and step on it and

1 speed through there. So, if there could be some  
2 realignment so that the -- when you came off the  
3 bridge, you weren't heading straight into that little  
4 straightaway there, I think that would calm the  
5 traffic also. I don't think people come across there  
6 at 30 miles an hour now. And I don't think if it's  
7 straight coming off the bridge into that southward  
8 part of Gleasondale Road, I don't think they'll be  
9 going 30 then either. So, if you could make it so  
10 that the bridge points more toward that stone wall  
11 that is where there's not much right of way and then  
12 people have to turn, that is what they've done at the  
13 -- where Marlboro Road comes off Gleasondale Road.  
14 There's a bit of a turn that you need to make that  
15 keeps people from having the speed straight through  
16 there. That would be helpful.

17 JAIME FRENCH: It's going to be  
18 difficult to change the orientation of the bridge  
19 because we're maintaining -- we're keeping the  
20 existing substructures. So, we're not really going to  
21 be able to --

22 BILL ROSS: I know that it's difficult  
23 to make the orientation, but the way you, you know,  
24 put lines on it and the way you, you know, construct

1 the sidewalks and the bike lanes might -- you know,  
2 even a few inches here and there might, you know, calm  
3 the traffic a bit.

4 JAIME FRENCH: Yeah, we can look into  
5 it, but it's pretty tight out there now, you know,  
6 with the bridge width being what it is. We only have  
7 so much room we can work with, and we have to make the  
8 alignment fit back to match it back into the existing.  
9 So, we're a little bit limited, but we can take a  
10 look.

11 BILL ROSS: I understand what you're  
12 saying. But to what extend you can do it, I would  
13 appreciate you trying.

14 NATHANIEL CURTIS: We definitely will.

15 MODERATOR FALLON: If I could just add  
16 one quick thought on that. We are aware that the Town  
17 of Stow is looking into a Complete Streets sort of  
18 study in the bridge area for the streetway network.  
19 Our project is specific to the bridge. But we are  
20 aware that they'll be looking into improvements in the  
21 street network in the area that can possibly maybe  
22 address some of those concerns as they go forward.  
23 So, it's something to think about.

24 NATHANIEL CURTIS: I think you were

1 next, sir. Yeah.

2 ALLAN FIERCE: My name is Allan Fierce.  
3 It's A-l-l-a-n. Fierce is F-i-e-r-c-e.

4 So, I live up in the northeast part of  
5 Town, but I'm on the Board of OARS. And just a  
6 general comment. I want to say thank you for  
7 listening to our concerns about at least not  
8 eliminating the informal put-in that we have right now  
9 at the Assabet River there. I think your plan with  
10 respect to the utilities and leaving that access there  
11 for, again, probably an informal put-in, is a terrific  
12 idea. So, thank you for doing that.

13 I just want to get on the record some  
14 of the things I had talked about with the staff  
15 earlier. One is the parking. Right now, it's very  
16 informal off-road parking for maybe two or three  
17 vehicles that come in with canoes or kayaks on the  
18 roof and need to unload and get down to that spot.  
19 And we talked about that earlier. And my  
20 understanding is that you will, you know, do what you  
21 can do continue to allow that kind of informal parking  
22 to occur there. So, that's good.

23 You know, the only downside is, of  
24 course, that during the construction period we aren't

1 going to have a canoe or kayak put in there. And just  
2 I guess this is a question just to confirm. It sounds  
3 like, based on when construction is to begin, spring  
4 of 2021, and then end, anticipated, fall of 2022 or  
5 maybe another half a construction season as I  
6 understand it, so that's the period of time then we  
7 will not have the access at all to a put-in at the  
8 river, 2020, the season, the paddling seasons of 2021  
9 and 2022, is that correct?

10 JAIME FRENCH: That's correct.

11 NATHANIEL CURTIS: Yeah, the only thing  
12 that I would add to that is, you know, we did have --  
13 you know, we noted that -- where is it? I want to  
14 thank OARS for coming to the office hours in 2017.  
15 The comments that they made were very well put  
16 together. I admit I forget the names of the two  
17 ladies who joined me that evening, but they were  
18 extremely pleasant. And I think, you know, if there  
19 are other locations that you know of in the area that  
20 allow people to access the river, we are happy to  
21 generate materials for you that you can disperse to  
22 your membership to say, "Hey, this is closed. Please  
23 go here," just so that, you know, for two -- I mean  
24 probably the second year, people will know what to do.

1 But that first construction season, you might get  
2 people, you know, bumping off of it and going, "Hey,  
3 there's a bulldozer in my canoe launch."

4 So, you know, we'd be more than happy  
5 to help out with that --

6 ALLAN FIERCE: Yeah.

7 NATHANIEL CURTIS: -- because we  
8 recognize it is important to you.

9 ALLAN FIERCE: All right. I think  
10 we're going to need some signage or something to warn  
11 people not to go down there at the spot they're used  
12 to going while you're doing your construction because  
13 it could be dangerous for both the paddlers and you.

14 I just want to put on my biking hat for  
15 a moment because I also was advocating for the five-  
16 foot bike lanes. You've got that in your plan. Thank  
17 you, again. I think that's terrific.

18 Regarding Mr. Salvie's comment about  
19 what to do with the bike lane, I second that. You  
20 know, we've got to make sure the bike riders  
21 understand what they're doing. I think a worse option  
22 would be to have the bike lane and send the bike rider  
23 off into a gravel, you know, siding there. I'm happy  
24 to ride in the road after I get over the bridge. It's

1 really nice to have that space on the bridge because  
2 there's nowhere else to go.

3 NATHANIEL CURTIS: You got it.

4 ALLAN FIERCE: So, again, just thank  
5 you for being responsive to our comments. I've been  
6 to many public hearings over the years and, in many  
7 cases, comments just get disregarded. And I thank you  
8 for being responsive.

9 MODERATOR FALLON: Thank you.

10 NATHANIEL CURTIS: You are very  
11 welcome, sir. Thank you for your comments.

12 Other hands? Jesse Steadman, Town of  
13 Stow.

14 JESSE STEADMAN: Yeah, thank you, guys.  
15 So, yes, Jesse Steadman, Town of Stow, Town Planner.

16 If you guys could just explain -- I  
17 know MassDOT has a pretty stringent right of way  
18 process -- when would folks who might have a temporary  
19 easement or a permanent easement, when would they  
20 first be contacted? How would that work? I just want  
21 to try to avoid any surprises when that time comes.  
22 Thank you.

23 NATHANIEL CURTIS: Should we bring our  
24 friendly neighborhood ROW specialist down? Because,

1 you know, right of way is the one thing in this whole  
2 process that actually scares me. So, here we go.

3 MELISSA O'DAY: So, the process that  
4 will be assigned to us, it's probably going to be  
5 about eight months prior to construction beginning.  
6 And then we'll come out and we'll explain everything  
7 to the property owners that are affected. Does that  
8 answer your question?

9 JESSE STEADMAN: Yeah, I think I just  
10 want to get a general timeframe so people are thinking  
11 ahead.

12 MELISSA O'DAY: So, if it is -- what  
13 did we say, it was spring of '21, 2020. So, it will  
14 probably be -- yeah.

15 NATHANIEL CURTIS: So, what, that would  
16 be kind of like March, April, Mayish of next year,  
17 right?

18 MELISSA O'DAY: Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

19 NATHANIEL CURTIS: So, kind of Q1 to  
20 Q2, yeah.

21 Other hands? Going once. Going twice.

22 (No response.)

23 NATHANIEL CURTIS: Then, it falls to  
24 our MassDOT project manager to declare the hearing



1 closed.

2                   MODERATOR FALLON: Before I close the  
3 hearing, I just want to, you know, say thanks to the  
4 Town again, you know, not only for the use of this  
5 facility, but also just for the preliminary design  
6 with Jesse Steadman in the Planning Office, Mike in  
7 the Highway Department, and the police and fire have  
8 been great on this project. And we look forward to  
9 working with you guys during final design.

10                   So, with that, it's 7:00 p.m., and I  
11 declare the hearing closed.

12                   Thank you.

13                   (Whereupon, the hearing was closed at  
14 7:00 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Judith A. Luciano, do hereby certify that the foregoing record is a true and accurate transcription of the proceedings in the above-captioned matter to the best of my skill and ability.

---

Judith A. Luciano

**\*\* ALL NAMES NOT PROVIDED WERE SPELLED PHONETICALLY TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY**

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