



Selectmen's Public Hearing & Meeting
Tuesday, May 2, 2023
5:00 pm

Select Board: Charyl Reardon, Gil Rand Scott Rice-Absent

Staff: Judy Welch, Mike Welch, Kevin Millar, John Mackay, Cathy Riley

NHDOT: David Scott, Bill Saffian

USFS: Roger Boyer, Scott Hall

In-Person Public: Kristen Durocher, Samantha Woodworth, Tom Sabourn,
Mark Sellingham, Elise J. Clark, Brenda Kneeland

Zoom: Mike Donahue, Guest by phone

Call to Order

Charyl called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm

NHDOT/Bill Saffian/Pier Scour Mitigation at Bridge

Charyl introduced Bill Saffian, Senior Project Engineer with NHDOT, to discuss the pier scour mitigation work at the south 175 Woodstock 195/093 Bridge, south of Exit 31.

Bill introduced David Scott, the project manager for the Scour Project, and presented a slide show.

Bill stated that the bridge was evaluated on a scale of 0-9. Although the bridge is in good condition, the substructure is rough, with scouring at one of the piers. It was given an overall rating of 4, putting it on the state's "red" list, which means it gets more awareness to fix it.

The subject pier is the southerly pier of the bridge, and the issue is on the upstream left side of the pier. 12-14 feet of scour needs to be removed.

The first step would be to build an access road to the side of the bridge. The fix is to install a steel four-sided cofferdam which will be permanent. Bill stated that the river should not undermine that in the future.

There will be an effect on traffic on the bridge as a crane will need to be constructed on the deck initially. The bridge will need to be closed 24 hours a day for two weeks at the beginning and end of the project. Primarily the remaining work will be underneath the bridge.

Permits will be needed for the projects from the NH Department of Environmental Services and Army Corp of Engineers permit.

Bill also stated that they will be looking at the Atlantic Salmon habitat and make sure there is no effect there, as well as the regulatory floodplain.

Water quality will be covered by best management practices, which is regulated by the Department of Environmental Services.

As navigable waters, the US Coastguard has determined that there is no permit needed, with no adverse effect.

Bill stated that when it came to protected species, the Natural Heritage Bureau of NH determined that there were no concerns. After contacting the Fish and Wildlife Department, there will be appropriate measures in the contract concerning the endangered Long Eared Bat. He also stated that with concern to contaminated soils, they do a limited reuse soils which should have no impact.

The bridge is not considered historic, so no adverse effect. There are archeologically sensitive areas in the vicinity of the work which will be noted on plans but should have no effect.

Bill invited the audience to be part of a process as a vested interest (such as an abutter, town official) consultant party will be invited to the project meetings.

The contact if interested in joining that party would be: Jamie Sikora of Federal Highway and get more information.

For the 3 months in between the full closure will be an alternating flow of traffic with signals.

Bicycles will travel like a car through the work zone.

Detours:

Due to other work on the 175 Green Bridge, that will not be an option for a detour. The best detour options for this project will be to use exits 30 or 31 on I93.

The greatest impact will be to emergency response vehicles. NHDOT will give out two vehicle preemptive devices (can arrange for more if needed) that will turn lights green in case of emergencies. The southerly fire station would be the most impacted.

During the closure time, the southerly station will have to Exit 30 and go up to Exit 31, and the northerly station will have to use Exit 32 to 31.

Fire Chief John Mackay stated that they usually get their tanker water from a fire hydrant across from South Station, which is the water resource for anything North of that hydrant on Rte. 175.

Mike stated that a hydrant at the sewer plant could be used to fill the tanker trucks, although it would be tight.

Bikes will have to use Rte. 3 when the bridge is closed.

Schedule:

Will advertise on July 27, 2023, and construction will begin Spring through Fall of 2024. They have a restriction in the river that is shorter than those 3 months

due to flow, and they need calm and low flow. It will probably be mid-to-late summer to early fall.

Minimal work was done with minimal effect on traffic when putting the access road in, but the actual 2-week closure, in the beginning, would be after the water is diverted, so not sure of an exact date, but they will only have two weeks. They have two weeks to get it out on the project's back end, but it might not take that long since it is easier.

Bill gave the direct project website

link: <http://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/woodstock42534/index.htm>

You can also contact the project engineer, David Scott or Bill Saffian, with any questions.

Kristen Durocher raised a question if it would be visible above the water line. Bill replied that the permanent cofferdam would be visible depending on the flow.

Charyl asked Bill what happens to the access road after it is built. Bill replied that the road will be restored to its natural state. There might be some tree/brush clearing, but vegetation should grow back after they take it out.

Another question posed by Charyl was what would happen to the opening in the guard rail created for the access road because people might try to use it to get to the river. Bill replied that they would put a request in to try to get that piece of guardrail put back.

David Scott presented that some Towns have laws on the books stating that for any work on Town roads, the Town needs to provide police presence. When NHDOT does work, they have the authority to use their own traffic control. They ask Towns to sign the Municipal Work Zone Agreement, saying that all are on the same page on how to handle traffic control is the decision of the state.

Charyl asked if there were any other questions, and Kristen asked where the closed sign would be.

Bill stated they are still developing the traffic control plan, so there will be some advanced notice. Message boards are in the contract.

Gil had a question on the permanent cofferdam and asked if it was square to the river flow and the effect downriver and the beach area.

Bill showed a picture showing how the water sweeps and how it is oriented to be square to the pier cap. He was unsure of the exact effect downriver, but basically, the same footprint that it did originally, but with every storm, it could change the topography.

Bill stated that they could be contacted with any other questions.

Approve & Sign Municipal Work Zone Agreement/Scour Mitigation Work on Woodstock Bridge 195/093

Charyl made a motion to accept the Work Zone Agreement, Gil seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative. Charyl and Gil signed the agreement.

Forest Service vegetation management opportunities in the Lost River area:

Charyl introduced Roger Boyer and Scott Hall, who were there on behalf of the Forest Service, to speak on vegetation management in the Lost River area on Routes 112 & 118.

Roger stated that he was acting as Pemigewasset District Ranger, covering for Brooke Brown for the next four months. His colleague was Scott Hall, the National Environmental Policy Act Coordinator.

They were there to give a very brief overview of an upcoming project that they are calling the Lost River Integrated Resource Management Project. They are still in the early stages of the project, so they wanted to let people know they can get involved in the planning process.

Roger stated that the overview is to implement the Land and Resources Management Plan (Forest Plan) document. They would select an area and appraise conditions on the ground, then look at existing conditions and compare them to the objectives in the forest plan.

The project area is primarily in Woodstock in the Route 112/118 area.

The plan's objectives include providing sustainable managed timber products and meeting wildlife habitat objectives for various birds and animals that include commercial or precommercial harvesting activities to create different forest age classes. They will try to promote oak, pine areas, birch, and aspen.

They will also be looking at the transportation systems in that area, which include forest service roads, to see if they need to be decommissioned, maintained, or upgraded for either timber harvest access, wildlife management, or recreation purposes. Snowmobile trails and Elbow Pond will also be looked at for recreation access.

They want to see public input from those with vested interests in the area to help develop the management plan.

Scott Hall then added what their analysis process looks like. He stated that they take a hard look at any environmental effects that may occur, and the other is to involve the public in those actions.

He stated that they wanted to hear from the public in advance about some ideas, concerns, and knowledge of the area. Scoping is the initial proposal that goes out to the public, and they have 30 days to give feedback. They take the feedback and make an analysis, and then next year, around this time, and put out a draft of environmental assessments.

The public can review the draft at that time and give some more feedback, and after that, they finalize the assessment and put out a draft decision notice. The public will then have a chance to give any objections. After that process, they

take as a region and take those objections to the greater region, which is the forest from Minnesota to Maine and down to West Virginia. The region will review the objections and see if their assessment is adequate or need to be improved.

Timeline: Mid-June- Public scoping for feedback, a draft of the environmental assessment will go out May 2024, objections will start in June 2024, a final decision will be put out from August to September 2024—invitations to start sometime in 2025.

Chief Kevin Millar asked if the project would be connected to the Elbow Pond project, and Scott replied that yes, and the camping area would be included. Chief added that he had concerns about the Elbow Pond area and had contacted the Forest Service.

A member of the audience asked if it would close snowmobile trails at all, and Scott replied that it depends on the conditions of the trail. They may need to be moved, or they may be fine. They will look at snowmobile trails and hiking trails.

Judy suggested that they contact the clubs in the area. The Forest Service will be sending out letters to all the abutters, snowmobile clubs, and other concerned people.

Charyl asked if the main focus is part of 112 and 118, and Roger replied yes, there is a spot also north of the Lincoln/Woodstock line that they are also taking a look at.

Tom Sabourn wanted clarification as to whether the plan was to log the area, to which Roger replied that, yes, timber harvesting will be analyzed, and they will diversify, and could be patches or single tree selection.

When asked by Gil whether the plan might include clear-cutting, Roger replied that the Forest Service allows clear-cutting up to 30 acres, which is part of their standards and guides.

Judy added that it was a scenic byway, so clear cutting would not be great.

Roger stated that many departments would look at analysis to look at what the harvesting might look like from different areas.

Roger stated that the last work done in the area was on Walker Brook Road in 1999.

Charyl asked if there was any clean-up of the vegetation on the cliff area from the last forest fire. Roger said that they were unsure of the Forest Service boundary up there, and the terrain would make the timber harvesting and replanting difficult anyway.

When asked about Elbow Pond again, they said that ideas would come from their recreation specialist to look at the campsites and maybe add more campsites, treating erosion, and what that would look like.

When Tom Sabourn asked about paying campsites, Roger replied that they don't have a proposal yet, but it can be given by the public to see what they want, and input is important. It may be somewhere in the middle.

Kevin had concerns about the shooting range at the Elbow Pond area and the trash left behind. He had heard that the range would be moved back from that area, and he felt that then the area would be harder to monitor, making the problem worse. He noted that people would shoot all over the area if it were removed.

Roger agreed that this is the type of feedback they need to hear and is interested in hearing more about that issue.

Charyl asked for the best contact for interested people, and Scott said he would be the contact for anyone wanting to participate in the project.

The Forest Service will also have a public engagement meeting in Lincoln at the Town Hall on May 25th at 6 pm.

Hopefully, they will have more of a map showing some roads at that meeting as well as a forester, wildlife biologist, and recreation specialist.

Bill Waterhouse wanted to add that the firing range sound travels far, affects his dog, and probably bothers wildlife. Roger added that there is a trade-off between recreation uses and wildlife. He said there has to be balance, which will be part of the decision-making process.

Charyl thanked them for coming to the meeting.

Approve & Sign Minutes/April 18, 2023

A motion was made by Gil and seconded by Charyl to approve and sign April 18 minutes. The vote was affirmative.

Alpine Adventures Request

Charyl stated that she had a letter from Alpine Adventures requesting permission for their maintenance crew to do some repairs to some drainage and erosion that occurred over the winter after the rain washed out a portion of Avery Farm Road. They have already spoken to Mike Welch and hoping to start this week. It is a Class 6 road, so they have to ask permission.

Mike added that it is passible, but they want to clean up the road, clean ditches and culverts, and repair the rest of the road.

Gill made a motion to approve the request for permission to repair the damage to Avery Farm Road, Charyl seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Tax Collector/Tax Deeding Update

Cheryl Bourassa will present an updated list of properties to be deeded on May 25, 2023, at the next meeting on May 16th. Judy stated that two have been removed and made arrangements with a couple of others on the list.

Accept Donations/Woodstock Firefighter Fund:

Woodstock Firefighters/Pemi Valley Church/Donation/\$500.00

Charyl made a motion to accept a \$500 donation from the Pemi Valley Church to the Firefighter's Fund. Gil seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Woodstock Firefighters/T-Shirt Sales/\$1,420.00

Charyl made a motion to accept a donation of \$1420.00 for t-shirt sales to the Woodstock Firefighters Fund from the Woodstock station, including \$40 from their own sales. Gil seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Approve Check Requests/Woodstock Firefighter Fund:

Neptune Uniforms & Equipment/\$8,938.90

Charyl made a motion to approve a check request in the amount of \$8,938.90 for uniforms and equipment. Gil made a second motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Neptune Uniforms & Equipment/\$1,558.45

Gil made a motion to approve a check request in the amount of \$1,558.45. Charyl seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Neptune Uniforms & Equipment/\$165.00

Charyl made a motion to approve a check request in the amount of \$165. Gil seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Melissa Sabourn/\$570.72

Gil made a motion to accept a check request in the amount of \$570.72 for Easter Egg Hunt supplies and cards and flowers for Bill Mellet's funeral. Charyl seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Old/Other Business/Brought forth by the Board:

18 Sargent Street/Trail Town Property/For river access

Charyl brought up an issue with 18 Sargent Street and a trail down to the river.

Judy explained that there were complaints from the area, so she asked that Mike go there to check the area out. The property is an Airbnb, with a trail along the back of Town property and then down to the river. There are also detours onto two different property owners, and there is a 30-foot drop down to the river behind the Town Hall.

Mike added that there was no real path to the river; people are using the trail to access a campfire set up and have found people out there thinking they have use

of it. There is no safe access down to the river on the Town's property, so there is concern that someone may fall down the embankment.

Judy has spoken with the Town's attorney, and the board must vote to put up "No Trespassing" postings. Judy suggested a letter be sent to the owner of the Airbnb to inform the renters. Judy also noted that there had been some dumping in the area also.

Charyl made a motion to give the Public Works Director permission to post "No Trespassing" signage on the Town property and for the Town's attorney to send the owners of the property a letter. Gil seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

Public Participation

Kristen Durocher wanted to add that she wanted to help with the Forest Service Assessment and see the process through. Charyl thanked her.

Adjournment

Charyl made a motion to adjourn at 6:11 pm. Gil seconded the motion, and the vote was affirmative.

The public could participate remotely over Zoom by going to www.zoom.us, using the Zoom App on a cellphone, or on a **landline calling 1-646-558-8656 Password: 432845** and entering **Meeting ID: 840 0082 0895 Password: 395022**.

Those wishing to hear the recording of the whole meeting may access it by using this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxMH7OFC8H3KqBhYHsBr53g>



Charyl Reardon, Chairman

May 16, 2023
Date

Scott Rice



R. Gil Rand