

**Connecticut Department of Transportation  
State Project No. 0040-0146  
Replacement of Bridge No. 02510  
Carrying Route 82 over Strongs Brook  
Town of East Haddam**

**October 14, 2021**

**Subject: Virtual meeting with Town of Salem First Selectman Kevin Lyden regarding the proposed detour of the project**

**Attendees:**

Kevin Lyden, Town of Salem First Selectman  
Meredith Eisenberg, Town of Salem Administrative Assistant

Bart Sweeney, Manager of Bridges, CTDOT  
Andy Cardinali, Principal Engineer, CTDOT Bridge Design  
Kevin Blasi, Supervising Engineer, CTDOT Bridge Design  
Ken-Taro Plude, Project Engineer, CTDOT Bridge Design  
Ashley Heredia, Project Designer, CTDOT Bridge Design  
Treyvis Karanxha, Project Designer, CTDOT Bridge Design  
Joe Arsenaault, Supervising Engineer, CTDOT Highway Design  
Joe Jazwicz, Project Engineer, CTDOT Highway Design  
Colin Baummer, Supervising Engineer, CTDOT Traffic Design

A meeting between the Department and the Town of Salem was necessary because of the Department's intention to establish an all-State-route detour signed for trucks only and to establish a shorter detour signed for passenger vehicles which was composed of State routes as well as local roads in the towns of East Haddam, Lyme, and Salem. The proposed detours would occur concurrently with an estimated six week duration. For cases in which the Department is proposing the use of local roads for a detour, a letter is sent to the municipality to obtain concurrence from the municipality that such use is acceptable for the project. Specific to the Town of Salem, a portion of the detour proposed to use White Birch Road and Darling Road. In a response letter dated September 14, 2021 to the Department, First Selectman Lyden did not concur with the use of Town of Salem roads for a detour and opposed the closure of Route 82 for Project 0040-0146. He requested that staged construction be used in lieu of a closure of Route 82.

**Report of Meeting**

After introductions by the attendees, Andy Cardinali noted that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the concerns put forth by First Selectman Lyden in his September 14, 2021 letter to the Department (CTDOT). Andy added that the Department was hopeful that some mitigation measures might be able to be put in place for the project which would allay First Selectman Lyden's concerns about the proposed detour route.

Ken-Taro Plude, Kevin Blasi, and Andy Cardinali followed by explaining the combined environmental (regulatory) and site constraints that remove the possibility of using alternating one-way traffic throughout the duration of the project in lieu of a closure of Route 82. Specific to environmental constraints, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection has determined that Strong Brook is a thriving habitat for brook trout at the bridge location.

Limitations were therefore placed upon how much of the brook and adjacent wetland area could be disrupted for the project.

Ken-Taro also highlighted the immediately adjacent proximity of the shared driveways to the northeast of the existing bridge. He pointed out that an overbuild of the structure to the south to avoid the staging conflict with the driveway entrance would require a relocation of the upstream portion of the brook running parallel to Route 82. A southerly relocation of the upstream brook would require an earth retaining system to support the embankment to the south of the brook and would result in additional impacts to the watercourse as well as require additional right-of-way and tree removal.

First Selectman Lyden noted that although he appreciated the presentation being provided, he questioned whether there was no possibility of providing staged construction for the project in lieu of the Route 82 closure and he said he remained opposed to the use of Town of Salem local roads for a project detour. He noted that State Project 0120-0090, which is now substantially complete in construction, used the same proposed local route for a detour and that excessive speeding as well as truck use was observed during this time which resulted in complaints from residents. He also noted that Town funds have been used to perform repairs to the road after the detour use.

Andy highlighted the high skew of the proposed concrete box and demonstrated that placement of the box culvert would be limited to two sections before conflicting with the roadway earth retaining system and roadway protective barrier. Any encroachment on the stage travel-way width would not permit a lane of traffic to be maintained. The constraints of the project site, including Strong Brook running parallel on either side of Route 82 combined with the narrow existing roadway are contributing factors to how much additional environmental impact would be necessary to accommodate staged construction of the project.

Andy added that it is generally the practice of the Department to perform a pre-construction condition survey of any local roads that are to be used for a future detour on a project so that the State can establish a baseline to perform any needed repairs to the local route as a direct result of detour usage, post-construction. Andy then offered that temporary speed humps to slow traffic moving along the local road portion of the detour could help reduce traffic speeds.

Andy continued that there was a potential that if an all-State-route detour was implemented for all vehicles rather than just for trucks, local roads, now not included in the project detour, may still be subjected to additional traffic as a result of personal navigation apps.

First Selectman Lyden added that it is the Department's right to detour traffic onto State routes as may be deemed necessary, but reiterated that he wouldn't accept a detour that used Town of Salem roads.

Bart Sweeney agreed that since the Town of Salem was not in favor of the proposed detour using local roads, the Department would have to establish a State route detour for all vehicles.

Prepared by: Kevin Blasi

Approved by: Andy Cardinali