



PUBLIC MEETING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2011 AT 7:00 PM

AT

AMESBURY MIDDLE SCHOOL
PERFORMANCE CENTER
220 MAIN STREET
AMESBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

FOR THE PROPOSED

WHITTIER BRIDGE/I-95 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
I-95 FROM EXIT 57 TO EXIT 60
Project No. 601096

IN THE CITIES OF AMESBURY AND NEWBURYPORT AND
THE TOWN OF SALISBURY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FRANK DEPAOLA, P.E.
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

THOMAS F. BRODERICK, P.E.
ACTING CHIEF ENGINEER

PRESENTERS

Joseph Pavao, Moderator, Project Management
Section, Accelerated Bridge Program, MassDOT,
Highway Division

Michael Bertoulin

Joseph Freeman, Tetra Tech Rizzo

Joe Sakelos, Arlington Typing & Mailing

SPEAKER INDEX

<u>Name</u>	<u>Page</u>
Joseph Pavao, Moderator	4, 42, 59, 72, 78, 80
Michael Bertoulin	6, 29, 43-45, 49, 60-70, 72-75
Joseph Freeman	22, 73, 77
Robert Gilday	42, 44
Dan King	44, 45
William Harris	46
Andy Port	50
Al Sabreavy	59, 61
Bill Rudolph	62, 63, 65
Jay Harris	65, 66, 67
Kempton Webb	68, 69, 70
Bill Posner	71
Evan Karp	72, 73, 74

SPEAKER INDEX

<u>Name</u>	<u>Page</u>
Karen Emerson	74
Tom Horth	75
Deb Carey	78

EXHIBITS

<u>Description</u>	<u>Page</u>
Notice of public hearing/ brochure	83 - 89
Sign-in sheet	90 - 100

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. PAVAO: I think we're going to get started if everyone could take their seats? I thank everybody for coming out tonight. I know the weather isn't the greatest to travel. Just for those of you that didn't sign in on the way in, if you could sign in on the way out, that'd be great. We try to keep a record of everybody who is in attendance tonight.

Can everybody hear me in the back? Perfect. Tonight's meeting is a public meeting on the environmental documents that were advertised for public comment. They were advertised in the Newburyport Daily News and the Amesbury News on November twenty-fifth and December second. There were also advertised in the Boston Globe and the Boston Herald on November twenty-third and November thirtieth.

My name is Joe Pavao. I work with Mass. DOT's highway division out of 10 Park Plaza, Boston. I work specifically in the accelerated bridge program. For those of you that have not attended prior public information meetings and public hearings, the accelerated bridge program is an eight-year program. It was signed into law by our Governor back in 2008.

1 As part of that program, approximately three billion
2 dollars was allocated for the repair, rehabilitation
3 and replacement of structurally deficient bridges of
4 structurally deficient bridges throughout the
5 Commonwealth.

6 The Whittier Bridge project is currently
7 programmed at about 285 million dollars. So just to
8 put that in perspective, out of three billion dollars,
9 we've got one project that's almost 10 percent of the
10 entire program. So this is a very significant project
11 for Mass. DOT and the Commonwealth. As of October
12 this also became a very significant project for the
13 federal government. The Obama administration selected
14 this project as one of 14 projects to be expedited
15 under the federal reviews for all of the federal
16 permits that are required under this project. Mass.
17 DOT is also going to be accelerating the permit
18 reviews at the state level to coincide with the
19 federal approvals.

20 So the purpose of tonight's meeting, as I
21 mentioned earlier, this is a meeting tonight to
22 solicit comment and answer questions on the
23 environmental documents. The document that was
24 published is an environmental assessment slash draft

1 Environmental Impact Report. Federal highway
2 recommended to Mass. DOT at the time that we combine
3 the two documents under the NEPA process which is the
4 environmental assessment, and under the MEPA process,
5 the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act, the
6 Environmental Impact Report. So we combined those
7 into one document, we published those for public
8 comment, and we're going to be seeking your comments
9 tonight.

10 So with that said, I'm going to turn it over to
11 Mike Bertoulin who is going to do an overview of the
12 project, and also with him is Joe Freeman in the front
13 here who is going to be going over the chapters in the
14 document just to provide an overview, and then we're
15 going to open it up to questions and answers. So if
16 you could just hold all your comments and questions
17 until the end of the presentation, that'd be great.

18 MR. BERTOULIN: Thank you, Joe. I just want to
19 get into the presentation. I've been running a loop
20 of one of our engineered models in terms of what it
21 would look like to drive northbound on the new
22 structure.

23 And we started all of our public meetings with
24 this slide in terms of the existing structure as we

1 move forward, we have made certain selections and
2 they're out there in the environmental review right
3 now. But this is actually the view of looking up
4 river of the new proposed structure which is a network
5 arch.

6 Now, from project description, Mass. DOT proposes
7 to replace the current structurally deficient John
8 Greenleaf Whittier Bridge and improve I-95 from Exit
9 57, Route 113, through Exit 59, which is I-495, to
10 Exit 60, which is the 286 exit to Salisbury.

11 The 1951 built Whittier Bridge mainspan is a
12 double barrel three-span continuous riveted steel
13 through-truss. What we found through various studies
14 and documented also in the environmental documents is
15 that it is structurally deficient. It's nearing the
16 end of its economic life, and it was determined that
17 it could not be rehabilitated or worked into any of
18 our design options. The highway also upholds an older
19 design standard. It's geometrically deficient in this
20 four-mile corridor and it also has some substandard
21 acceleration, deceleration lanes and some geometry.

22 As Joe mentioned, it's part of the Mass. DOT
23 accelerated bridge program where they commit three
24 billion dollars to spend over an eight-year period.

1 The goal was to reduce the number of structurally
2 deficient bridges, repair or remove the current
3 deficient bridges, and prevent additional bridges from
4 becoming classified as structurally deficient.

5 We're going to go through this process. And we right
6 now have found a per-bridge crossing and alignment
7 alternative, and the environmental process has
8 documented this. Again, it will be presented and is
9 being presented in the combined NEPA MEPA process and
10 we are holding the public review today. On the 30-day
11 public review, we're right about in the middle of it.
12 Comments are due December twenty-third. After the
13 comments come in, they'll be reviewed, dispositioned
14 and answered appropriately and we'll be looking for
15 filing the final EIR, and that will be out for review
16 sometime in March through April of 2012 where it will
17 be getting a NEPA decision sometime in the spring as
18 well as ending up with a MEPA certificate sometime
19 late spring on this project.

20 Today's agenda. We're going to go through a
21 presentation of the preferred bridge crossing and the
22 preferred highway alignment and we'll also do a
23 summary of the combined environmental document which
24 Joe Freeman, from Tetra Tech Rizzo, will do. And then

1 we have some models, and one of the models was running
2 in a loop. Project visualization we'll do at the end,
3 which actually a lot of the graphics that you saw up
4 front are part of the visualization presentation.

5 Just to, you know, focus in in terms of what
6 we're doing here, the Whittier Bridge in terms of
7 (inaudible) background was built in 1951. It was
8 built part of the 20-mile Route 1 relocating project
9 and it was to meet with the Route 1 down in the
10 Danvers area, pretty much on a straight line to
11 coincide and match up with New Hampshire Turnpike at
12 the state line. Up until this project was built,
13 Route 1 ran close to the route that it does today, and
14 the toll road in Salisbury was the connection to the
15 New Hampshire Turnpike. It was built, it was a modern
16 post World War II four-lane throughway as constructed,
17 and then it was completed in 1954, and in 1956 when
18 the interstate system came into being, it was
19 basically rebadged as I-95. Route 1 returned to the
20 current alignment along the coast as it is today.

21 In 1969, 495 was tied in in the interchange up at
22 495 at the interchange 58, and also it went to an
23 eight-lane section from 495 up to the New Hampshire
24 border. In the 1970s, the lower 16 miles of I-95 went

1 through an environmental review and it was built out
2 to the current eight-lane configuration through Exit
3 57 which is in Newburyport at which time you come out
4 of that exit near the Park and Ride, then you --
5 quickly after you pass under the Pine Hill Road
6 bridge, you drop from four to three lanes in each
7 direction, then as you approach the bridge you lose
8 the shoulders and it gets into a configuration that
9 the bridge is in today. The bridge originally was
10 built two lanes each direction with a breakdown lane
11 but during the seventies when this work was being
12 done, the bridge still had structural life left in it
13 so it was just reconfigured to get the three lanes
14 across to the total of six, and there were very
15 limited changes made to the alignment between that
16 point in time into the 495 work that had been done in
17 the late sixties.

18 So that portion of highway actually is of an
19 older design, older standards which is why some of the
20 ramps and the acceleration, deceleration areas feel a
21 little differently while driving in that area.

22 So we're going to -- for the purpose and need
23 standpoint, the purpose of this project is driven by
24 safety as far as the bridges and roadway geometry,

1 driven by accident numbers and also primarily the poor
2 structural rating of the Whittier Bridge. It came a
3 time for the Whittier Bridge to be replaced. That
4 also became a time to now bring up the rest of the
5 highway to the appropriate standards that match in on
6 either end of the bridge.

7 So the purpose is to improve the safety, provide
8 a bridge crossing to meeting current standards,
9 improve traffic flow. Also we're looking at the out
10 design here of 2030. Improve air quality by reducing
11 the build-up of congestion which would happen over
12 I-95 and support alternative or non-motorized modes of
13 transportation.

14 So from a project summary standpoint, as I
15 discussed, starts down here in Newburyport. As you
16 come over the curve you lose the four lanes down to
17 three, you get to the very tight configuration across
18 the bridge. Those of you who have been to the
19 presentations before, are reviewing the documents,
20 there's actually a cluster of accidents around that
21 (inaudible) and transition point onto the bridge.
22 That's one of the major safety improvements with the
23 new alignment, new structure which will have
24 shoulders.

1 The Pine Hill Bridge will be rebuilt, Whittier
2 Bridge will be rebuilt, the Evans Place Bridge will be
3 rebuilt -- that's a 495 structure -- and will be
4 widening out the bridges over Route 110 and the Exit
5 58 area, both the highway bridge and the bridges over
6 the railroad because we are preserving the corridor
7 for the future tie-in of the Powow Trail into the
8 Salisbury Ghost Trail network.

9 One other element we're doing, we found the
10 opportunity to basically create a north south crossing
11 for the shared use path, that being our alternate
12 transportation connection. Some of the views up top
13 represent what it looks like at the -- potentially at
14 the Park and Ride, also at the other head of trail
15 location up off Old Merrill Street, and then basically
16 an opportunity for an overlook on the bridge itself.

17 So that is -- I just ran through the bridges that
18 we're looking at. We have two I-95 bridges that we're
19 replacing. We have two I-95 bridges, both southbound
20 and northbound, that we're widening, and then one
21 bridge over which is the Pine Hill Bridge.

22 This graphic, you'll see more of it when I do the
23 visualization, is a good snapshot. It shows you one
24 of the driving issues that we have for the bridge and

1 we call this the east alignment when we looked at the
2 different options. Within the 300-foot right of way
3 that the state owns, the current bridge was on the
4 center of it so we had enough room to build a new
5 northbound bridge, actually build it a little bit
6 wider than it needed to be in its final configuration
7 for traffic, and you can take all six lanes of the
8 existing -- that are out there existing today and put
9 them on the new northbound bridge in a temporary
10 configuration. What this allowed us to do is
11 basically clean up the construction of this project
12 and also only have one demolition phase versus
13 multiple demolition phase of a structure which is very
14 problematic to do a partial demolition on. So we get
15 all the traffic off, we maintain the ride and lanes in
16 the exact configuration that it has today during the
17 construction period, and that will support our ability
18 to take down the existing bridge and then build a
19 final (inaudible) which I'll get into when I do the
20 visualization.

21 This graphic here shows looking north. And
22 virtually all -- I think all the slides I have
23 basically as we go from south to north along the
24 project limits. This slide right here looking north

1 off in this direction is Pile Hill coming over 95.
2 The existing bridge -- the original bridge was built
3 where we're going to put the new bridge back. So when
4 it was originally built in the fifties and actually
5 rebuilt again in the seventies, this corridor has
6 remained as the bridge has gone back and forth, and
7 what we're going to do is for the existing bridge,
8 we're going to operate that with one-way traffic, do a
9 partial demolition one way with the traffic signals
10 and then we'll build the whole new bridge snugged up
11 into that radius and really put the bridge back where
12 it was in the seventies as we build the new bridge.

13 The new bridge will have sidewalks on it like it
14 does today, but also be five-foot wider on each side
15 to allow for a bike lane for future tie-in to other
16 projects that may be coming into the city. There was
17 a long-term desire for us to do that and that's what's
18 being done.

19 Up in the Salisbury Amesbury area, these are the
20 bridges that are being widened. They fall in line
21 with the decision to widen the highway from this point
22 on as an interior widening while the other widening is
23 really being accomplished on the eastern edge of the
24 right of way when holding the existing western edge of

1 the highway. So we'll be widening in the medians of
2 the highway bridge over 110 as well as the railroad
3 bridge over 110. We did this to -- one of the primary
4 reasons was to reduce the environmental impacts to the
5 bordering vegetated wetlands. And also some of the
6 bridges in this area like 495 are of an older style,
7 that the piers run right behind the guardrails, and we
8 actually did a widening to the outside. Besides the
9 environmental impacts, there would be more bridges
10 that would have to be rebuilt.

11 So when the widening -- looking up basically from
12 mid-point of the project which is right around Route
13 110, with the existing three lanes with the four-foot
14 shoulder, we're now going to build out the interior
15 lanes still with the four-foot shoulder and a full
16 breakdown lane and basically fill in some of the wide
17 median and swale there and there'll now be a barrier,
18 a guardrail barrier on one of the sides because it's
19 dropped below the minimum distance that we can have
20 without having a guardrail there and meet current
21 standards.

22 And this should be review for a number of you
23 that have been here before. We have looked at
24 basically five different bridge types for the main

1 crossing. Basically we've been looking at
2 conventional bridges, steel girder boxes, both steel
3 and concrete, a network tied arch, which is the one
4 which wound up becoming preferred, a signal tower
5 extradosed bridge, and a signal tower cable stay.
6 This view is from the Chain Bridge looking out at the
7 existing. And we have a number of views. We're just
8 going to run through this one vantage point for this
9 series of slides. This was basically a conventional
10 built bridge pretty much applied for any of the looks
11 that you'd get from visual impact from girder or
12 boxes. This is the extradosed bridge. Excuse me.
13 This is the cable stay bridge. This is the extradosed
14 bridge. Pretty much the same pier configurations with
15 some minor variations that were noticed with these
16 projects.

17 One of the things that you will have noticed is
18 that the existing bridge has four piers in the water
19 and the new bridge only has three. We basically have
20 combined the middle two piers into one. Those of you
21 that are familiar with the river, there's a high rock
22 in between the two channels that are out there and
23 we've located that pier on the high rock as well as
24 we've pulled the abutments back about 50 foot to the

1 north and 50 foot to the south.

2 And this is the actual proposed network arch that
3 we looked at as a schematic model at the time. That
4 gives you the Whittier crossing, today's version, and
5 the preferred crossing alternative, what it will look
6 like. One of the things that became important with
7 the Whittier Bridge was dealing with a Section 106
8 historic coordination effort throughout the documents.
9 We coordinated with the historic commissions with the
10 three towns as well as the state.

11 And there were certain things about the existing
12 bridges that people had grown to appreciate. One of
13 them was the historic great seals of the state on the
14 (inaudible) beams, which is why in our model view we
15 actually are going to take those and have the
16 contractor when they build, to take them down,
17 refurbish them and reinstall them on the new bridges.
18 There are other old artifacts like what's known as a
19 builder's plaque. This actually has information of
20 the engineers and contractors involved with the
21 project. There's actually two of them and they will
22 be placed along the project. Some of them will be
23 placed along the shared use path so people will be
24 able to see those and get to them where today they

1 can't.

2 What most people don't realize is that on either
3 side of the abutments there are these eight foot
4 diameter great seals of the state and there's four of
5 them. And we're actually going to take those which
6 come out of the abutment walls of the existing bridge
7 and those are going to be distributed along the shared
8 use path and there will be one of these at each of the
9 called heads of trail locations where you can get onto
10 the path from the street network.

11 Once again this is also -- on each corner of the
12 bridge is basically the abutment date and also the
13 great seal is out there and those will be reused also.

14 One of the things we also looked at is many
15 people, you know, have an affinity for the types of
16 piers that were out there. The back edge, this view
17 is actually taken looking into -- from Amesbury shore
18 into Newburyport. The back edge has a -- is a sharper
19 angle which is actually meant to break up the ice.
20 And weather being a variable as it is up here, last
21 winter we had a lot of ice in the river and a lot of
22 it was getting broken up. If winter keeps going like
23 it's starting, we may not have the ice out there at
24 all this year. We're looking at -- we incorporated

1 some of that look and feel into the new bridge piers.

2 There also were some ramp safety improvements,
3 and there were two improvements made at Exit 58, the
4 Salisbury Amesbury exits. The first one on I-95
5 northbound to Route 110 east has a design speed right
6 now due to limited deceleration lane of 25; we've been
7 able to improve that to 35 miles an hour by pulling
8 back what's known as the departure nose. Likewise, on
9 the exit from northbound to Route 1 west, we've been
10 able to increase the design speed of that ramp from 20
11 to 25. And on Exit 60 up at 286, we've been able to
12 increase that, flatten out the curve and pull that
13 deceleration back to increase the design speed from 25
14 to 35. Those -- all three of those are significant
15 safety improvements.

16 This graphic right here shows you the approach
17 coming up to the ramp from north to east. This also
18 shows you the shared use path as it runs along the
19 edge of the highway separated by a barrier coming down
20 and meeting on 110. This view right here shows you up
21 at Exit 60 we're modifying the existing radius,
22 flattening it out and also pulling the nose back in
23 this shaded area to increase the distance for
24 deceleration up there by a couple hundred foot which

1 is why we've been able to deal with the design speed
2 change up there to make it a safer ramp also.

3 In terms of the alternative transportation, this
4 project as it was noted last year, this is the first
5 interstate bridge in Massachusetts to have a shared
6 use path on it. It's been done throughout the country
7 quite a bit over the past 10 to 15 years and it's made
8 itself into New England a little bit with some
9 projects in New Hampshire and Maine and also
10 Connecticut, but this is the first one that's on an
11 interstate bridge in Massachusetts. And one of the
12 reasons that it became an opportunity was how we were
13 staging the project as well as also the driven issues
14 coming from the community and the people that wanted
15 it. This actually ties into the Coastal Trail
16 network. And this was a key link that they were
17 looking for for bicycles to tie into existing systems,
18 trail systems that they had throughout Amesbury,
19 Salisbury and Newburyport. The transportation
20 network, it ties right into the Park and Ride in
21 Newburyport. It will get people across the bridge in
22 a local exit to Merrill Road and also we'll get people
23 right up to 110 where there's some recent improvements
24 in the 110 Rabbit Road area which will allow it to

1 connect to the Ghost Trail and also support for later
2 extension of the Powow Trail.

3 This view shows you what -- conceptually we're
4 working with some designs now of what it could look
5 like in the Park and Ride, a collection place. There
6 will be some guide signs. That's one of those
7 historic elements that was placed there to denote the
8 head of the trail. This basically is what the typical
9 environment will be like. It's a, you know, a 42-inch
10 concrete barrier with a two and a half foot fence to
11 keep debris from becoming a problem for people using
12 the path, but also because you can see through it, it
13 provides a sense of security that people are not
14 isolated and feeling a -- getting a tunnel effect
15 while being on the path.

16 This actually is another one of our projects.
17 This is actually the Woodrow Wilson Bridge project in
18 DC. It's a very successful shared use path on I-95 in
19 DC. This actually is a picture of one of the
20 overlooks. We thought it could be appropriate up
21 here. We took that and played with it a little bit,
22 thought it could be incorporated in an overlook on the
23 bridge. Since we would base the design further and
24 modeled it, this is what we think it could look like

1 right now.

2 This is the shared use path head of trail up in
3 Amesbury tying into Old Merrill Road. In the
4 background it's basically the ramp coming off of 95 to
5 Route 110 east.

6 I'm going to turn it over to Joe Freeman. He's going
7 to walk through the environmental process and I'll
8 pick it up at the end and run through some of the
9 modelling we did.

10 MR. FREEMAN: Thank you, Mike. The heart of any
11 environmental process, any environmental assessment,
12 Environmental Impact Report is an alternatives
13 analysis. As Mike said earlier, we did look at
14 alternative bridge and highway alignment alternatives.
15 We screened those alternatives for a series of
16 environmental and engineering criteria. Our result
17 was our -- what we call our preferred alternative
18 which is the eight-lane bridge across the Merrimack
19 River to the east with the inside widening of I-95
20 north of 110 up to past 495 up towards Exit 60 in the
21 inside, in the median, and including the shared use
22 path from the park and ride at Exit 57 up to the Route
23 110 intersection. That alternative best met some of
24 our engineering and environmental criteria including

1 purpose and need of the project, which Mike talked
2 about earlier, the configuration of the highway,
3 traffic, the configuration of the bridge, the
4 construction impacts, right of way impacts, and
5 various environmental criteria.

6 We also looked at the affected environment.
7 What's out there now along the highway corridor? This
8 is key to an environmental study because it provides
9 you with a baseline against which you assess the
10 potential impacts of your project. And we studied a
11 whole series of criteria and subject areas from
12 topography, land use, visual resources, open space,
13 traffic, safety, air quality, noise, water resources,
14 fisheries impacts in the Merrimack River, wildlife,
15 the wetlands along the corridor, flood plains,
16 historic and archaeological resources, not just the
17 bridge itself but other features in the area, whether
18 there's any oil and hazardous materials that exist
19 along the corridor, impact on existing utilities,
20 stormwater, what's the economic impact of the project,
21 and impact on navigation in the Merrimack River.

22 We have a very detailed environmental
23 consequences chapter. That's the environmental
24 impacts of our preferred alternative and our no-build

1 or what if we did nothing alternative. We looked at
2 both impacts during the construction period as well as
3 in the future. For example, 2030 is our year that we
4 looked at what the future impacts for highway noise
5 and traffic. What is the extent of both permanent and
6 temporary impacts? Not just permanent and temporary,
7 but secondary impacts. Will the project engender
8 impacts in a wider area? How about cumulative impacts
9 against when you compare the impacts of this project
10 with other projects in the area?

11 Where we can't avoid an impact, we look to
12 minimize that. And that's the key. And where we
13 can't avoid those impacts we have to propose some
14 mitigation. So our mitigation chapter includes those
15 measures that the department has committed to to build
16 this project. The visual impacts, overall minor, but
17 at one location we will have a fence to screen the new
18 highway; that's the Whittier Point Condominiums just
19 to the north of the river on the Amesbury side, on the
20 east side.

21 Traffic noise. We did a very detailed assessment
22 of the feasibility of noise barriers. They are not
23 warranted for this project per the terms of the Mass.
24 DOT policy. We do recognize that there will be some

1 noise during the construction period and we have
2 prepared detailed specifications in the contract to
3 minimize those impacts as much as possible.

4 For water quality along the entire corridor,
5 there will be an improved stormwater management system
6 which will result in much better water quality than
7 exists now. There are a lot of fish in the river. We
8 know that. Some of them are endangered species.
9 We've done an extensive series of coordination with
10 federal and state resource agencies which resulted in
11 some pretty detailed specifications on work in the
12 water as we build that to protect those fish.

13 Historic resources. Of course the bridge is an
14 historic bridge. There is a memorandum of agreement
15 under Section 106 of the National Historic
16 Preservation Act which has been signed by all the
17 signatories including each of the three towns. We are
18 going to document the existing bridge. That's the
19 archival documentation. And as Mike said, re-use some
20 of the elements of the bridge that make it special,
21 that make it historic, particularly along the shared
22 use path.

23 Oil and hazardous materials. We will have again,
24 detailed specifications for how to handle any

1 contaminated soils which we may encounter.
2 Navigation in the river. It's a very important issue
3 that we've detailed in or will be required to maintain
4 navigation in the river at all times. We are
5 coordinating both with the Department of Environmental
6 Protection on the state side and the US Coast Guard to
7 ensure that that happens.

8 And during construction, the detailed staging has
9 been developed. The intent of that is to minimize
10 impacts along the corridor. As Mike said, traffic
11 management is a big part. We will have six lanes of
12 traffic at all times during construction. So we don't
13 anticipate having to divert any traffic anywhere.
14 That will stay on I-95.

15 We have to address our compliance with state and
16 federal law as part of the environmental process and
17 we need a whole list of permits. Here's's list of
18 what we've already applied for these permits: As I
19 said, a permit from the US Coast Guard for the
20 construction of the bridge over the Merrimack. A
21 permit from the US Army Corp. Of Engineers under the
22 Federal Clean Water Act. This is for the wetland
23 impacts along the corridor. The section 106 MOA. We
24 need a -- what's called a consistency determination

1 from the Massachusetts CZM office. We have
2 coordinated both with the National Marine Fisheries
3 Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service on the
4 Endangered Species Act and essential fish habitat
5 issues. State side we need what's called a water
6 quality certification from Mass. DEP, a Chapter 91 or
7 waterways license for the construction of the bridge
8 from DEP. We have filed notices of intent to obtain
9 orders of conditions from each of the three towns
10 under the Mass. Wetlands Protection Act. And again,
11 endangered species coordination with the Massachusetts
12 Natural Heritage and endangered species program.

13 The document also contains a very detailed
14 comments and coordination chapter. As the slide says,
15 NEPA and MEPA certainly encourage early and continuous
16 public agency involvement. This is yet another of a
17 long series of meetings that we had. All of our
18 meetings are documented in this chapter. The document
19 also -- this chapter also includes detailed responses
20 to any comments that we've received on any of the MEPA
21 documents including the Environmental Notification
22 Form which was filed in 2009 and any subsequent public
23 and agency comments that were received at any of the
24 meetings we've had since that time. We summarized our

1 involvement activities and every piece of paper we've
2 gotten on this project, a comment is included.

3 Our next steps, that's the purposes of this
4 meeting, too, to remind people to if you have comments
5 on the EA or DEIR document, they're due on December
6 twenty-third. It's a legal requirement. There are
7 copies available in each of the three libraries, so if
8 you would like a see a copy, that's a good place to
9 see them. Once the comments are received by MEPA,
10 they will issue what's called a certificate on that
11 document which will outline the additional steps we
12 need to take to comply with MEPA. We'll have to
13 prepare a final EIR, and we're on schedule to file
14 that in the month of February with public comment
15 during March and April of next year.

16 On the federal side, the NEPA side, federal
17 highway will make a decision as to what the final
18 documentation requirements are, and MEPA will issue a
19 certificate on the FEIR after there's a public review
20 of that FEIR.

21 We have an ongoing public process. We're going
22 to continue public involvement throughout the process,
23 and our next major public hearing is on the design
24 documents in the spring of next year.

1 So at this point, Mike? I'll turn it over to Mike.

2 MR. BERTOULIN: Thanks, Joe. So in terms of our
3 key dates in terms of where we are, we started this
4 whole process back in November of 2008 with the
5 environmental study of the (inaudible) data
6 acquisition, field studies, research, and some concept
7 engineering to support the environmental documents.
8 We started a public outreach in March of 2009 with a
9 series of meetings with the towns' officials, followed
10 by we filed the Environmental Notification Form and
11 held our first overall public meeting in June first of
12 2009. We've had a series of quarterly meetings
13 between then and now bringing the public up to date
14 and speed where we were incrementally as we moved
15 through the process.

16 As we stated, tonight is a public meeting and in
17 support of the review process which started on
18 November twenty-third, the filing, release of the
19 environmental document, closing -- public comment
20 closing on December twenty-third, this month. We hope
21 to be in a position to file the final Environmental
22 Impact Report the end of February, 2012. We're
23 looking for our MEPA and NEPA approvals, both federal
24 and state approvals by April of 2012.

1 And one thing I didn't mention earlier is that,
2 you know, this project will be using a design build
3 procurement process, so we'll be bringing the project
4 documents to about a 25 percent completion level with
5 all the permits. A design build firm with an
6 engineering element will compete for this project.
7 And that process will start in April of 2012 but there
8 will be a public hearing on the design documents in
9 the spring of 2012. And as the procurement process
10 runs through the spring, summer and then basically the
11 (inaudible) responses for the request for proposals
12 and pricing through the fall, that will come in, be
13 evaluated, and awarded by the end of the year 2012
14 with the construction start in the spring of 2013.

15 What I'm going to do now is move into the project
16 visualization phase. We have some of the modelling.
17 Some of it you've seen some excerpts of some of the
18 still shots and also with that loop. We'll do that.
19 And there's also a walk-through and then we'll go
20 ahead and take questions.

21 I've just got to start another element here.
22 Okay. I'm going to take us to what we call our view
23 port. First, we have various views in terms of what
24 the project will -- still loading the software.

1 Sorry. This is the view from Moseley Woods of the
2 existing bridge. This is down near the covered eating
3 area within the park. The next view shows you the
4 modelled image of what the new structure will look
5 like. Another view from the shore just before the
6 chain bridge. It actually is a still shot looking
7 straight up the Federal Channel. The Federal Channel
8 will also have navigation lights on it as well as the
9 Steamboat Channel which is the southern channel within
10 the river; the split channel being the Steamboat and
11 this being the Federal Channel.

12 We have another similar view looking from the
13 chain bridge. This is the view of what the new bridge
14 will look like.

15 We have a view over at the Whittier Point
16 Condominium area. This is actually today what this
17 looks like. This fence line is actually the edge of
18 the state-owned right of way. There's a rubble wall
19 at the top of the wall coming into the project line.
20 Just from a -- just, you know, pay attention to the
21 tree and the light (inaudible) that's right here and
22 also the vehicle.

23 As the project moves east, basically there will
24 be a wall built on the right of way. It's on the

1 state right of way. Actually, this is where the wall
2 used to be. And conceptually, the wall will have some
3 sense of an architectural treatment on it. There will
4 be a planting zone. The actual highway element is up
5 here with the barrier with a sturdy snow fence because
6 the first phase, you can see the final phase looks
7 like a cut-away, but the first phase the shared use
8 path is not here and vehicle traffic is right here.
9 And so there's a 42-inch highway barrier out here and
10 also a debris barrier to prevent any snow from snow
11 operations from getting, you know, thrown over the
12 wall. And that'll protect this particular residence.
13 It's a very stout wall and will perform that function
14 very well.

15 This is the southbound view coming from Salisbury
16 from the north, you know, looking across the bridge
17 with the great seals of the state. There's another
18 residence nearby, Hawkswood Estates. This is the view
19 down near the point that we have today. This edge of
20 the highway, the western edge of the southbound
21 highway will stay exactly like it is. As the highway
22 gets widened, the northbound is actually pushed hard
23 to the east. The existing bridge comes out; the new
24 bridge is built on top of it. It is wider than the

1 existing, but the western edge of the highway is held
2 so the widened section goes to the area between the
3 northbound and southbound. And this is what the view
4 of the new bridge will look like in that area.

5 And this is the view which was playing the whole
6 time. It's a loop which was playing the whole time.
7 I'll let it cycle through it once and take it all the
8 way across the bridge. Here you're back on the
9 Amesbury shore. There's that wall off to the right.
10 This is going across Evans Place. And it'll stop here
11 and it will re-load.

12 So coming up, you can see the shared use path.
13 There's people along there. That wall coming down is
14 actually for a local connection from Pine Hill Road
15 which comes down and joins. There's like a highway on
16 ramp. There's an on ramp from the shared use path.
17 People will be traversing across. There are three
18 overlooks. First overlook is on the Newburyport
19 abutment. They're conceptually all the same design
20 right now.

21 There will be a series of interpretive panels
22 along the shared use path talking about the history of
23 the area. Basically we're talking about the history
24 of the crossing. It has three themes: History of the

1 crossing, history of the man, John Greenleaf Whittier
2 who the bridge was named for, and also the history of
3 the river itself. There will be a series of
4 interpretive panels along here. And on the ones
5 associated with the crossing, there most likely will
6 be some elements of the bridge. You have one of the
7 complex details or per se -- or one the riveted
8 connections will be on display so people can see how
9 old bridges -- old, relatively speaking, from the
10 1950s when it changed, 1950s before the bridges were
11 riveted structures, and so one of those will be there
12 with some explanation panels explaining the old
13 construction type.

14 There's also an interpretive -- an overlook just
15 before the arch. That's coming up right here.
16 Naturally the arch is framed with the two overlooks.
17 So there's two overlooks out on the bridge and there's
18 actually one on the -- one on the southern approach in
19 Newburyport. And that falls in place with the
20 original design of this bridge, is that actually on
21 the southern shore right near where the bridge is
22 being widened, there used to be a parking area there.
23 There was originally a cantilevered sidewalk on this
24 bridge. It was a scenic overlook. People could get

1 out. And as designed in fifties, you could get out
2 and park there, you could go out on the sidewalk and
3 look. When the project was -- highway was built in
4 the seventies and widened to the four lanes and the
5 shoulders went away, the parking lot was removed and
6 also the old sidewalk which had fallen into disrepair
7 was removed at that point in time.

8 This brings you across to the area where the --
9 that stout barrier is in place adjacent to Whittier
10 Point. Coming up on the Evans Place bridge, I-95 over
11 Evans Place. And we're coming to the end of this loop
12 and we'll turn this off.

13 There are a series of slides which you've seen a
14 couple of them. We have two perspective points. If
15 you came across some of the slides, they were all from
16 the Newburyport shore and we also have some from
17 Amesbury but I'll just run through them very quickly.

18 This shows you the bridge in it's existing
19 condition. This shows you as we're building adjacent
20 to the existing bridge and what we're building. All
21 three lanes on each direction are operational. As you
22 can see, there's three piers in the water. The
23 coloring shows you relatively speaking the depth of
24 the water. The water in this area is shallow. The

1 bridge, kind of the extension of the islands in the
2 river like the adjacent Deer Island which runs up in
3 this area.

4 In terms of the permitting, there is the Army
5 Corp. Channel, the Federal Navigation Channel which
6 comes up, aligns with the Hines Bridge. We'll be
7 placing navigation lights on the -- either side of the
8 bridge structures. Naturally the Federal Channel ends
9 up in this area. In addition, it was built -- it was
10 created and mapped and marked later but it wasn't
11 there originally when the bridge was built in the
12 fifties but the local community created a channel to
13 the south for boaters who didn't want to have to deal
14 with the Hines Bridge who couldn't get under the Chain
15 Bridge. This became the preferred route for most the
16 boating activities, the Steamboat Channel. That'll
17 also now receive navigation lighting on that
18 structure. There isn't any right now but the new
19 structure will have navigation marking that channel
20 very clearly.

21 In the documents which are going forward with the
22 Coast Guard, we're showing a construction area for the
23 contractors to utilize between the channels as well as
24 on the western side as well as barge lay down storage

1 up along and adjacent to the Army Corp. Channel.

2 The bridge -- one of the interesting things is
3 that the network arch bridge, one of our concepts
4 could very well be built out on the barges and
5 completed over the course of construction, while the
6 construction was going on, then it can be jacked up,
7 brought into place. And because the river is tidal,
8 it would nominally afford a six-foot tide to bring it
9 into position and let the lowering tide set it on the
10 pier, and it can be placed in this fashion.
11 It's very similar to how a bridge like this design --
12 those of you who are familiar with I-195 in
13 Providence, that's a network arch bridge. That bridge
14 was actually built about 10 miles away on land,
15 transferred to barges and then raised up and lowered
16 with jacks onto the existing piers. That was done
17 about five years ago now.

18 This shows you the completion of the northbound
19 bridge being operated in it's interim condition. As
20 you can see, we have the three lanes of traffic. That
21 allows us to deconstruct the original bridge. Now,
22 it's very specific. The original arch really needs to
23 be deconstructed in reverse order how it was built in
24 the first place, so the suspended roadway deck will be

1 removed. They'll start in the middle and work their
2 way out. As they get the arch down then they can use
3 more conventional methods in removing most of the
4 roadway decks and the truss beams for the approach
5 structures.

6 Once the bridge is out of the way and we hold
7 that edge -- that edge right there is the same edge of
8 the old bridge. The wideness comes in towards the
9 east, so we hold that western limit. We build the new
10 bridge over the old location of the original bridge
11 although it has three piers versus the four piers, and
12 the abutments are now 50 foot further back on either
13 side of the river. We build out at the same time the
14 network arch is being built out between the two
15 channels. It's brought into position again, placed,
16 at which time when the roadway is complete -- and all
17 the schedule of this project is driven by the
18 scheduled and sequence of the bridges here. There's
19 more than enough time to build the northern parts,
20 which the two local bridges have to be built at the
21 same time. When this bridge is being built, the new
22 northbound is being built. When the existing bridge
23 is being demolished, the existing Evans Place Bridge
24 is being demolished. When the new bridge is being

1 built, the Evans Place will be being built, the
2 southbound.

3 So the first thing that would happen is that we
4 move southbound over for the first time onto the new
5 bridge and that'll be sometime in 2016, at which time
6 the three lanes of traffic which have been constrained
7 on the new bridge, the middle barrier will be removed,
8 the traffic will be moved over, the barrier will be
9 replaced to create the shared use path which is at the
10 edge of the breakdown lane, at which time this bridge
11 can then go from three lanes northbound to four lanes
12 northbound. That'll take a couple of months to do so
13 we won't get four lanes northbound until a couple of
14 months after you get the four lanes southbound.

15 I'll just run you through these pictures real
16 quick. Same thing, but I'm not going to have any
17 descriptions this time. Same thing, from a different
18 vantage point over in Amesbury looking southwest.

19 So basically demolition starts, traffic is over
20 in the temporary condition, build out the bridge,
21 place the truss. Traffic -- southbound traffic is
22 moving, you have to reconfigure northbound and then
23 you'll end up with the final condition that we have
24 with the shared use path, the overlooks along the edge

1 of the bridge.

2 I've got one more model. This takes just a
3 little bit of time to load up. This actually gets you
4 onto the shared use path and the ability to move
5 around the site and get a look at this bridge from
6 various perspectives. It goes through a start-up
7 routine. It's almost like a video game starting up
8 but then I'll be able to take control and then show
9 you some different perspectives.

10 So you're coming up the bridge in a Coast Guard
11 Zodiac boat right now. Under the Chain Bridge. This
12 is giving you an aerial perspective. So this
13 basically shows you from different locations of, you
14 know, basically what the bridge looks like. And this
15 control is -- I'm under water right now. It's very
16 sensitive. This is not my normal computer. I had to
17 get one which has more power.

18 You'll look at it from different perspectives.
19 What I really have this for you is basically to show
20 you the walk demonstration. This gets you out onto
21 the shared use path. It has the ability to walk.
22 This is an example of what one of these interpretive
23 panels can look like as you're looking out over the
24 river. From barrier to barrier it's 14-foot. The

1 shared use path nominally is 10-foot wide but it has
2 two-foot shoulders within it so it's actually 14-foot
3 wide. It is wide enough so that if anything happened,
4 someone needed assistance, an ambulance could drive
5 down the shared use path to assist. The path -- this
6 is a 42-inch high concrete barrier and because it's
7 being used for bicycles, you need to protect the 54
8 inches so this pipe brings up the rail to 54 inches.
9 And that's done for safety.

10 As we're headed down towards Newburyport, this is
11 the other overlook. This is the other overlook, the
12 island in the background. Here's the overlook on the
13 Newburyport shore.

14 So that wraps up the presentation portion
15 tonight. So I think we're -- you know, we're here to
16 address questions and hopefully give you answers. And
17 on the next slide, for written comments, the
18 information on this sheet here shows you the comments
19 can come in to those various individuals. Federal
20 highway and the state will take them via e-mail. The
21 Massachusetts Environmental Policy Protection Act,
22 those need to be mailed; they're not set up to receive
23 them by e-mail now. So there's some contact
24 information for you. You can reference the project

1 but also you can reference it by the number which is
2 EAE number 14427. Written comments need to be in by
3 the twenty-third.

4 So we'll be happy to take any comments. We'd
5 like you to come up and speak to the microphone. That
6 way we can record the comments and hopefully that way
7 everyone else can listen also.

8 MR. PAVAO: Thanks, Mike. I just want to
9 reiterate as I mentioned earlier, the purpose of
10 tonight's meeting is to solicit comments on the
11 environmental document. Before we open it up to the
12 general public, are there any elected officials that
13 would like to speak or comment or ask questions
14 tonight? Yes, sir?

15 MR. GILDAY: Can I come up?

16 MR. PAVAO: Sure. Yeah. If you want to speak,
17 please come up to the mike because we have a
18 stenographer here from Arlington Mailing and Typing.

19 MR. GILDAY: I'm Bob Gilday, Councilor District 1
20 where most of this work in Amesbury is going to be
21 taking place. I was wondering if you could elaborate
22 a little bit more about the Whittier point
23 Condominiums. I know you showed that wall there.
24 It's going to be a real inconvenience for the

1 residents there. Could you elaborate more, you know,
2 what could be prevented for noise, pollution, sand,
3 dirt, anything? Can you really elaborate more on
4 that, please?

5 MR. BERTOULIN: We're working on our right of way
6 plans right now. They'll be available. We're working
7 on our right of way plans right now and they'll be
8 ready for the state to review later this month,
9 sometime early next year on any areas that will have a
10 right of way impact. And the good thing about this
11 project is we do not look at any permanent land
12 takings although there are a few locations where
13 they'll need construction period easements and the
14 Whittier Point Condo area is one of them, they'll
15 build that wall. So there will be some specific
16 meetings with those land owners, I believe it's an
17 association of the land owners, the four units there,
18 plus I believe the house on the street. So they'll be
19 contacted, coordinated with. There will be
20 appropriate controls put in place to make sure through
21 the construction period easements, you know, what will
22 be required, what are the conditions, you know, how
23 they can make sure that the people who live there can
24 live there, you know, and maintain their protection in

1 terms of, you know, equipment, debris and with the
2 appropriate environmental controls. But you know, for
3 that group that will happen sometime early next year
4 when they need to go out and have those discussions.

5 MR. GILDAY: Thank you.

6 MR. KING: Dan King, Laurel Road. In your
7 presentation you mentioned that the area doesn't
8 warrant sound intervention. In previous meetings
9 there was talk of reusing the sound barrier that
10 exists there now. Additionally the sound barriers are
11 bermed, the land area is bermed which gives us most of
12 the sound protection, and by putting the shared trail
13 on it, obviously it's going to bring it back even
14 further to the east and take out a green area that's
15 between our houses and the highway. So what is the
16 plan for sound mitigation? There's talk of reusing
17 the sound barrier but that's not being mentioned at
18 all. I'm just trying to get a handle on what is going
19 to happen.

20 MR. BERTOULIN: That's a good question. The
21 project from the economic model that gets run in terms
22 of how much it costs for a foot of wall to deal with
23 the protection that it gives, it doesn't -- the
24 project area does not meet the requirements to

1 substantiate that, but where walls exist today -- and
2 there is a wall along the area parallel with Laurel
3 Road -- that wall is going to be relocated so that the
4 value and protection of that wall at a minimum won't
5 be impacted, and it potentially has some opportunities
6 as the final engineering of that goes through to get a
7 little bit more protection out of that wall by the
8 elevation that it'll be placed at. Those details are
9 still being worked on.

10 And as we move forward -- but yeah, the wall will
11 be relocated. Because that wasn't mentioned tonight,
12 it's not going away. The current plan is to relocate
13 that wall, push it further back because as the roadway
14 moves within the alignment and with the shared use
15 path there, it'll push this wall closer to the edge of
16 the right of way but it will keep the appropriate
17 distance from the wall to the sound generator which is
18 the traffic, to optimize its best placement, to give
19 the best amount of protection from a structure like
20 that.

21 MR. KING: As a secondary benefit it will offer
22 some security to the neighborhood, too, from the
23 strangers on the shared path.

24 MR. BERTOULIN: We've taken place with some of

1 those discussions with the folks there and the wall --
2 as I said, it's going to be relocated so the wall will
3 still be there.

4 MR. KING: Thanks.

5 MR. HARRIS: My name is William Harris. I am
6 here tonight for a Foundation for Resilient Societies,
7 which is a New Hampshire non-profit. I live in
8 Newburyport and I'm commenting and will provide
9 detailed comments before your deadline in writing,
10 about mitigation during your project.
11 This project, it's accelerated and we're pleased it is
12 being accelerated and I commend you for the
13 environmental planning you've done so far which I
14 think has been outstanding. But because this project
15 is going to proceed over such a long period of time,
16 roughly four years, 2013 through 2016, it's important
17 that you mitigate environmental risks that may occur
18 during the construction phase, and the most important
19 from my perspective is the risk that you will be doing
20 construction across two significant emergency
21 evacuation corridors. One is the Whittier Bridge, six
22 lanes, someday it could evacuate effectively 10 lanes
23 in counterflow traffic if you count the shoulders.
24 But during construction, even though you will have six

1 lanes, if you do stage anything from the bridge, if
2 you ever take a lane that you're using for -- and have
3 construction equipment on it, there is a risk if
4 there's an evacuation from the Seabrook nuclear plant
5 that the counterflow traffic will be limited from six
6 lanes to five lanes or even potentially fewer.

7 So the main comment -- and at the same time Route
8 110, though it's not this project, the work on Route
9 110 is going on concurrently and that connects to 495,
10 another evacuation corridor. And during this period,
11 the highest risk to the Seabrook plant, a risk towards
12 a magnitude higher than all the other plants of
13 earthquake and tsunami, et cetera, involves the
14 geomagnetic storm. And there's a 10 and a half year
15 cycle that will peak in May, 2013 And the US
16 geological survey shows that the risks of a nature
17 geomagnetic storm tend to occur in the several years
18 after. So 2013 through 2015 is the maximum risk
19 period for geomagnetic storm, which could result --
20 this is roughly a three percent risk -- of a severe
21 geomagnetic storm in the period 2013 to '16 when you
22 are doing your work.

23 So if that happens there's a lower probability of
24 loss of outside power and (inaudible) fire (inaudible)

1 which may be mitigated by the Nuclear Regulatory
2 Commission. Their final Environmental Impact
3 Statement is being done in the summer of 2012 so it
4 will follow the orders, and they may in fact reduce
5 some of the risks. But I would commend to you the
6 studies of the National Academy of Engineering and
7 other studies that show that if you have, for all your
8 contractors, training to remove equipment from all
9 four lanes of I-95, especially at the bridge where you
10 have the bottleneck, and if you give financial bonuses
11 to have employees who take the training course, and
12 they're certified to have taken it, and penalties for
13 any contractor who would leave equipment blocking a
14 lane of evacuation during an emergency, you could save
15 thousands of lives.

16 And it's a low probably event but you have a duty
17 under NEPA and MEPA to consider low probability
18 high-consequence events that could cost thousands of
19 lives lost and tens of thousands injured.

20 So these are mitigation measures entirely within
21 the control of Mass. DOT. This will be your
22 department and your contractors and I strongly urge
23 you to plan for the training to be sure there are not
24 lanes that are left obstructed as has happened during

1 hurricanes in Florida and Louisiana and Mississippi
2 and Texas. So this is something within your control.
3 It's a low-probability risk, but it's important.
4 Thank you.

5 MR. BERTOULIN: Thank you. And I do suggest, you
6 know, you articulate that in writing. I think just in
7 general, the project will be maintaining the three
8 lanes that are out there whenever there are peak flows
9 of traffic. There are a certain few phases when like
10 during what we call the build-out of the crossover
11 when the transitioning over a couple nights there will
12 be some night work, but any of that work could very
13 quickly be pulled off the road as required. Within
14 the normal contracts of Mass. DOT puts out, there's a
15 number of requirements in there for a contractor to
16 have to get off the road when told whether it's due to
17 an emergency or whether it's due to certain highway
18 weekend schedules, so they have the ability to manage
19 that and that can be done very effectively and has
20 been done very effectively.

21 But in terms of the lane count that's out there,
22 the good thing about this project and one of the key
23 reasons for the east build of the bridge is that we
24 are able to maintain lane count during construction

1 that's out there today except for some off-peak hour
2 work that will begin with some transitions. And also
3 potentially when we're dealing with the demolition of
4 the existing bridge, we'll pull people back away from
5 the edge when the demolition is going on and probably
6 from like 11:00 to 5:00 in the morning drop to a
7 single lane in the interstate when there's demolition
8 going adjacent to the southbound side. But besides
9 that, we fully expect to have all lanes open and the
10 contractors are not going to be allowed to be parking
11 equipment on the highway or even in shoulders. It'll
12 all be off in the work zones. That's just a
13 maintenance and traffic issue. But we look forward to
14 seeing your full comments.

15 MR. PORT: Hi. For the record, my name is Andy
16 Port. I am the planning director for the City of
17 Newburyport. I'm here to speak on behalf of Mayor
18 Holaday who apologizes, she could not be here this
19 evening but did want to read a couple of comments into
20 the record. We will be submitting a letter on behalf
21 of the city in response to the DEIR, but a few points
22 I just wanted to make this evening.

23 Local approvals are required. Whittier Bridge
24 I-95 improvement project is currently in local

1 permitting through the Newburyport Conservation
2 Commission for work adjacent to wetlands and wetlands
3 resource areas associated with the Merrimack River.
4 The Commission's public hearing on this project will
5 begin December twentieth and is expected to continue
6 into January, 2012 in order to address issues related
7 to resource area impacts and stormwater management.
8 In addition, the Massachusetts Department of
9 Transportation anticipates using a portion of the
10 City's land between Ferry Road, Moseley Woods Park and
11 the Merrimack River for construction of the stormwater
12 and detention basin. This work must be coordinated
13 with the City of Newburyport Department of Public
14 Services and Water Commission and we recommend an
15 immediate dialogue regarding the exact metes and
16 bounds of the land expected to be used.

17 The Hines Bridge construction schedule, Spofford
18 roundabout and impacts to local traffic. Our first
19 and primary concern regarding the project as presently
20 presented is the impact of local traffic which will be
21 deferred at times between the Hines Bridge between
22 Newburyport, Amesbury and Salisbury. While traffic
23 will continue to flow across the bridge during
24 construction, the impact can still be felt. As you

1 may know, the small bridge supporting a significant
2 amount of traffic, the Hines Bridge, between the three
3 upon communities and the region. For over a year now
4 the Hines Bridge has been closed for reconstruction.
5 This Mass. DOT project is expected to be substantially
6 complete by summer 2012, only six months away.
7 During the past year or more we can have been
8 advocating for the completion of the adjacent
9 intersection improvement between Spofford Street,
10 Moseley Ave. and Merrimack Street. Traffic counts and
11 vehicular movements at this sprawling intersection are
12 higher than average in the region. This intersection
13 is a priority for our regional planning agencies, the
14 Merrimack Valley Planning Commission and the Merrimack
15 Valley NPO.

16 When bids for the Hines Bridge project came in
17 well below the estimated budget, additional funds with
18 us readily available, Mass. DOT refused to complete
19 these intersection improvements either through a
20 change order for the project or as a separate
21 contract. At the suggestion of state agencies, we
22 pursued a grant from MassWorks Infrastructure Program
23 which has goals and criteria directly aligned with
24 this type of project particularly as associated

1 traffic will benefit businesses and economic
2 development in the three communities including a
3 significant quantity of traffic heading towards
4 downtown Newburyport.

5 Again we were unsuccessful in convincing state
6 officials that this project should be funded ahead of
7 other projects especially in light of the Hines Bridge
8 work already under way. This funding requested for
9 this project, under one million dollars, is not a
10 significant request for mitigation for either of these
11 two projects which will continue to have sustained
12 impacts for local and regional traffic patterns. The
13 city has spent significant local funds to fully design
14 the roundabout project and address capacity and safety
15 issues at the intersection.

16 Mass. DOT's suggestion that the proposed shared
17 use path is substantial and significant mitigation for
18 local impacts for the Whittier Bridge project does not
19 acknowledge that both federal and state policy
20 directives now require the inclusion of these elements
21 in the baseline for projects of this kind in the
22 effort to make transportation projects more
23 substantial in general.

24 Proposed Ferry Road access and parking area. The

1 alignment of I-95 through Newburyport allows for only
2 a few public access points along the proposed shared
3 use path at existing streets and/or trail section
4 connections. Given the physical and regulatory
5 constraints along the Merrimack River, the most
6 reasonable location for a (inaudible) connection to
7 the trail between the Park and Ride facility and the
8 Whittier Bridge is the Ferry Road.

9 Mass. DOT represented us and provided renderings
10 of this pedestrian access point and have inquired as
11 to what concerns and/or recommendations the City has
12 with respect to the design of this trailhead. Mass.
13 DOT has generously offered to construct a small
14 parking area at this location to accommodate trail
15 users. However, in order to address resident concerns
16 regarding this parking area, we have declined to
17 request or approve the incorporation of this element
18 in the project. Again, these funds may be better
19 spent now in addressing traffic and safety issues at
20 the Spofford, Moseley and Merrimack intersection and
21 might have increased demand across the Hines Bridge
22 during long-term bridge construction.

23 Visual screening and fences adjacent to Laurel
24 Road neighborhood. This was a comment I think that

1 was mentioned briefly earlier. Over the past year,
2 one of the major concerns on the Newburyport side has
3 been the issue of barriers and screening for the
4 Laurel Road neighborhood which is in close proximity
5 to I-95. It is our understanding that Mass. DOT
6 proposes to do earthwork and grading in this area and
7 relocate existing articulated barrier walls so that as
8 to provide better protection to the neighborhood, or
9 the same protection as it currently does.

10 We have made several visits to this area and
11 after discussing with residents and Mass. DOT
12 representatives, we believe that the length of the
13 existing wall should be extended both north towards
14 Ferry Road Bridge and south toward the end of the
15 cul-de-sac and the Evergreen Valley Golf Course.
16 While we understand Mass. DOT's assertion that these
17 homes as receptors do not meet the technical threshold
18 for a full-scale sound barrier, we do not feel that
19 simply relocating the existing wall is sufficient.
20 Extension of the existing wall will provide a more
21 adequate sound barrier screening for the neighborhood.

22 Additionally, we expect that Mass. DOT will make
23 every effort possible to increase the height of the
24 wall through a significant new footing. Since Mass.

1 DOT has already had the obligation to relocate and
2 reconstruct the footings of this wall to allow
3 regrading to occur, the relative cost of increasing
4 the height of the wall should be minimal. We are
5 concerned that the most recent plans of this project
6 do not include either an increase in length or height
7 of this wall.

8 The importance of the shared use path. We are
9 pleased that Mass. DOT has taken the time to devote
10 resources in evaluating alternatives for incorporating
11 a shared use path as part of the Whittier Bridge I-95
12 improvement project. We consider the shared use path
13 be an essential design element with the new project
14 and I am delighted to see its inclusion. We also
15 recognize that this is a milestone for Mass. DOT in
16 approving both amenities and alternative modes of
17 transportation for our citizens. It is our
18 understanding that Mass. DOT is committed to this
19 alternative transportation element in the overall
20 project scale. This new recreational amenity and
21 alternative transportation mode will be considerable
22 benefit to the City of Newburyport and surrounding
23 communities. We appreciate that the inclusion of this
24 element in the project is a significant leap forward

1 for the Commonwealth's creation of alternative
2 transportation modes which will decrease our
3 dependence on gasoline and the automobile itself as a
4 full source of transportation.

5 We recognize that there are several outstanding
6 concerns to address as expressed by some of abutters
7 to I-95. We share and support their concerns for
8 neighborhood screening and noise mitigation. However,
9 we also believe that the community-wide benefits of
10 this path outweigh the perception that some of us
11 express that the project will have negative impact
12 with regard to public safety. There is much support
13 in Newburyport for this project including the shared
14 use path. Newburyport's Clipper City Rail Trail and
15 Harbor Walk, a similar shared use path, has been
16 welcomed by the community and a phase two extension of
17 this trail system is being developed at this time.

18 Our final comment I think is regarded for the
19 east west connection along the Merrimack River.
20 Early in our discussions with Mass. DOT for through
21 the Whittier Working Group we have expressed the
22 desire to have an east west trail connection along the
23 Merrimack River shoreline between Moseley Woods and
24 Maudslay State Park. The proposal setback a river --

1 of bridge abutments in this area will allow the
2 important multi-use trail connection where I-95
3 presently presents a barrier to alternative
4 transportation. Demolition, regrading, relocation of
5 utilities, installation of a gravel access road and
6 construction of new bridge abutments will require
7 disturbance in the subject area. As such, the
8 addition of a path underneath the abutment will
9 require relatively little work in this area.

10 After many discussions with Mass. DOT
11 representatives, we understand that creating a
12 permitting issue makes it difficult to incorporate
13 this element in the project undertaken directly by
14 Mass. DOT. However, we believe that Mass. DOT should
15 commit in writing to prior verbal assurances that a
16 public access permit will be allowed by Mass. DOT once
17 the construction of the project is complete.
18 Easements, licenses and/or right of way plans should
19 be developed and executed accordingly. A similar
20 pedestrian access already exists underneath the Route
21 1 bridge abutment in downtown Newburyport. A
22 commitment to this logical access under the Route 1
23 for the Whittier Bridge will allow the City to invest
24 time and resources in design of the construction of an

1 east west pedestrian connection based on the final
2 conditions left by the bridge contractor.

3 Again, I would like to thank the Mass. DOT team
4 and their consultants for all the time that they've
5 taken with us, with Mayor Holaday and myself and the
6 rest of our team to address all the concerns of each
7 community. We greatly appreciate that as well as what
8 you've put together here this evening and all the
9 renderings and so forth that you've done for the
10 shared use path the other elements of the project.
11 Thank you.

12 MR. PAVAO: Thank you, Andy. That's quite a
13 list. At one point or another over the past year
14 we've sat down and gone over almost all of those
15 points so I'm not going to sit and answer all of those
16 but I do encourage you to submit those as part of your
17 comments for the document, so thank you for that.

18 Yes, sir?

19 MR. SABREAVY: Al Sabreavy from Amesbury, Mass.
20 I have a few comments. It deals with the stormwater
21 management. And reasonably, Mass. Highway put in for
22 a notice of intent to modify a culvert in Amesbury,
23 bring it up to date. And at that meeting with the
24 Conservation Commission, other concerns were brought

1 up such as the water flow putting in from Salisbury
2 coming into area DP5 and DP6 which is about
3 (inaudible) street in Amesbury, Mass., and so the
4 concerns are -- will we be greater than they are right
5 now because Conservation will be looking at that and
6 it could hold back this project which they've been
7 working on for a couple of years, and I'm very
8 concerned about that. We show other brooks on your
9 plan but we do not show the Harrison (inaudible) Brook
10 which is the main brook that comes down and takes care
11 of 155 acres and flows through two culverts which
12 we've been having problems with and flooding the area,
13 and also the other culvert that crosses under Macy
14 Street. So we have some concern. We'd like to
15 somehow get those addressed so that we won't hold back
16 this permit because I think it's really needed because
17 a person is getting flooded and it's a safety hazard.
18 We'd like to take care of that.

19 So I will send in the information for you and I'd
20 like to have you look at it. If you can somehow have
21 somebody jump on the band wagon so that we can get
22 this other permit going, we'd appreciate it.

23 MR. BERTOULIN: We are aware of the work going on
24 on Elm Street to remove the current restriction in the

1 culvert. And as far as the detention ponds, in terms
2 of the new design, numbers five and six, they've been
3 designed to basically hold the peak rates and contain
4 that flow so it doesn't add to any of the peak rates
5 which are entering the parcel which would eventually
6 go to the culvert. So from a peak rate standpoint,
7 we're fine. I think when we get the written
8 documentation in, the specific questions, we'll have
9 our team take another look at it, but I'm basing on
10 what we know of that project and what we've done to
11 date, we think the peak rates are checked because of
12 the two new detention ponds which -- five and six, as
13 you mentioned, which are part of the Whittier project.

14 MR. SABREAVY: Do they take care of fallen trees
15 and so forth that fall across the brook and impede the
16 flow? The area needs to be cleaned up in that culvert
17 area and I wonder if your hydraulic studies don't take
18 that consideration into play? In other words, you can
19 check the plant growth and the tree growth and all
20 that particular stuff, but you really should be
21 considering some obstructions along the way in the
22 brooks.

23 MR. BERTOULIN: You know, I'm not the person
24 running the model but I had a brief discussion with

1 our folks a little bit about it today. They run the
2 model based upon the conditions that they're aware of.
3 Now, trees falling over brooks and private property,
4 whatever, elsewhere, there's no way to model those
5 types. That's just general maintenance that needs to
6 take place of the drainage shed by the actual owners
7 and elements of it.

8 But you know, get us in your written comments
9 and, you know, we'll make sure that we address them
10 and go back and double check some things in terms of
11 our responses.

12 MR. SABREAVY: Thank you very much.

13 MR. BERTOULIN: Thank you for your question.

14 MR. RUDOLPH: Bill Rudolph, Amesbury, Mass. I
15 live on Deer Island. And my first question is can you
16 tell me how much closer the north span of this new
17 bridge is going to come to the island or how wide it's
18 going to be aside of what is there now? We're
19 thinking of the sound. And I realize sound barriers
20 can't be put on the bridge but we've got a lot of
21 noise now and we want to know how much we're more
22 we're going to be getting.

23 MR. BERTOULIN: The one thing, is it's a 60
24 year-old bridge and they there have been problems on

1 the expansion bridge before, all of that banging,
2 clanking, especially at night, that's the old
3 structure having problems that it is today.
4 Fortunately the modern structure out there, just by
5 being a modern structure in terms of the expansion
6 joints on it, on the roadway deck, it'll be a lot
7 quieter.

8 The rough out to out dimension of the new
9 structure is about 88 feet, I believe. It's going to
10 be built five-foot off of the existing bridge. It'll
11 be a five-foot construction clearance, it'll be built,
12 and it's being built out to the edge of that 300 foot
13 right of way that exists.

14 MR. RUDOLPH: So it'll be 80 feet closer,
15 actually.

16 MR. BERTOULIN: You could call it 88 plus that
17 five, so 93.

18 MR. RUDOLPH: Okay. My second thought is -- and
19 probably, I'm sure this has been addressed, but the
20 present bridge has -- for stormwater run-off it just
21 goes directly into the river. In fact, a year or so
22 ago when there was a gasoline truck that turned over
23 near the Newburyport exit, that gasoline was in the
24 river in probably minutes.

1 What is the new situation for stormwater run-off for
2 the gasoline and oil that goes onto the roads? Has
3 that been addressed?

4 MR. BERTOULIN: Luckily the existing design was
5 put in in the seventies is a closed pipe system which
6 collects the water, and it wasn't going into detention
7 ponds or what they call recharge ponds along the
8 alignment because it's tied. It bisects the
9 Newburyport Water Department land. So it did capture
10 that flow quickly, put it in the system and luckily
11 where it was gasoline, gasoline basically did get
12 discharged in the river and very quickly, you know,
13 dissipated and evaporated for nominal conditions. So
14 it was an action, they put disbursements down. In the
15 places within the swale areas on the side of the road
16 they did dig and remove that material which contained
17 some local contamination.

18 Overall that system way of dealing with it was
19 actually the best for that area, which we checked with
20 the water supply. And we're putting a similar system
21 back in. We're also going to be collecting the
22 scuffers, flows along the bridge and they'll be
23 localized and so there will be some discharge points
24 at the piers and then some of the bridge flow will be

1 brought back to the shore which will be tied into that
2 pipe system which would then go into a new outfall.
3 There's a single combined outfall adjacent -- just
4 east of the Newburyport abutment. That's being
5 relocated because the new bridge is going right there
6 and it'll actually be relocated about 100 and so odd
7 feet upriver and it will avoid some -- a small zone of
8 saltmarsh grass that's there. The saltmarsh grass
9 will actually thrive better with the relocation of
10 that outfall.

11 MR. RUDOLPH: So the actual run-off on the bridge
12 itself will not be going directly into the river?

13 MR. BERTOULIN: It's not going to drop at every
14 location. It's going to be collected. It's going to
15 be piped. At the two piers in the river, some will be
16 directly contained and at the river itself will go in
17 directly. The portions closer to the ends or the
18 abutment areas will be brought back and go into the
19 collection system which then goes into an outfall
20 which goes into the river. But each scuffer is not
21 going to just drain directly down.

22 MR. RUDOLPH: Okay.

23 MR. HARRIS: Jay Harris. Newburyport. I have a
24 quick question. There is a paragraph in the written

1 report about the color of the bridge. And I know
2 green seems to be your favorite color at the highway
3 department but the report mentioned three or four
4 public agencies that would get a vote on the color.
5 And I was wondering if you're going to consider corten
6 steel as an option both for color and for maintenance.

7 MR. BERTOULIN: Right now we're working on some
8 of the final details. In terms of some of the
9 process, there's been a desire to have a look and feel
10 of the old bridge. And, you know, the look and feel
11 of that circa 1950s bridge is that DOT green. And the
12 concept right now is we're looking at basically making
13 it that color. The corten steel has other issues
14 associated with it. It has staining issues. It's not
15 reflective of the era of what the desire was for the
16 look and feel aspects of the bridge, so I think right
17 now we're looking towards a painting system of, you
18 know, a high-performance paint which can basically
19 last 20, 25 years before it requires a touch-up and
20 repainting. That's the current trend, although we
21 haven't completed the design yet and if you have some
22 comments, Mr. Harris, we'll take them and respond
23 accordingly.

24 MR. HARRIS: Is that just the highway department

1 opinion or is that the opinion of the three or four
2 agencies that were listed that got a vote on that?

3 MR. BERTOULIN: You're talking about the
4 historic -- the three town historic commissions and
5 the states which signed off the memorandum of
6 agreement? Is that what you mean?

7 MR. HARRIS: There was a paragraph about paints
8 and it mentioned specific government agencies that
9 would have to sign off on the color.

10 MR. BERTOULIN: Yeah, that's basically working
11 with the historical commissions. And some of the
12 ideas are reusing some of the elements. One of the
13 themes of reusing the great seals, people had an
14 affinity for those that were having the same look and
15 feel type bridge which is a network arch, which is
16 really a modern version of what's out there today. In
17 general, from some of those discussions the feeling
18 was people thought it should be -- you know, represent
19 the historical color that it had been. Whenever we
20 got feedback, you know, it was that. We didn't
21 really -- there wasn't too much discussion of other
22 alternatives in terms of look. People had an opinion,
23 seemed to kind of want it more to preserve what they
24 had.

1 MR. HARRIS: Okay. Thank you.

2 MR. BERTOULIN: Thank you.

3 MR. WEBB: I'm Kempton Webb of Whittier Point. A
4 lot of the questions have been focused on the noise
5 barriers and reinforcing this of course is the fact
6 that the shifting toward the east side only, not the
7 west, puts Whittier Point really as the point of major
8 impact of this project. We are in fact the closest
9 abutter. And it's somewhat ironic that in the report
10 there is a description of Whittier Point being as much
11 as 150 feet from the right of way. At another point
12 it said 15 feet. I hope that that will be corrected.

13 In the visual presentation, I'm wondering, you
14 show the barrier anticipated for the future and on
15 the -- I would say the Laurel Road side of the bridge
16 it shows a sloping -- a slope to the top of the
17 barrier there. It looks much higher than the one
18 opposite Whittier Point and I just wonder if you could
19 tell us how high those barriers are from the road
20 surface? Shouldn't there be some congruence in terms
21 of a horizontal?

22 MR. BERTOULIN: Mr. Webb, are you talking about
23 one of the model pictures I had there of the cutaway?

24 MR. WEBB: Yeah.

1 MR. BERTOULIN: Okay. Let me -- it'll just take
2 me about 30 seconds to get that back. I have to open
3 up another application. And roughly from the edge of
4 the home to the fence, the edge of right of way is
5 roughly 15 foot if I remember correctly?

6 MR. WEBB: Right.

7 MR. BERTOULIN: You're talking about this right
8 here?

9 MR. WEBB: Yeah.

10 MR. BERTOULIN: That's a 42-inch, you know,
11 highway barrier. The current barriers out there are
12 32; the new modern design is 42 inches. In addition,
13 where this area will be vehicles traveling on it for
14 the first potentially two winters in terms of how the
15 schedule works out, the idea is that this needs to
16 protect, you know, basically the plowing operations
17 from basically having the snow be flung into the
18 property which has to be contained.

19 So this wall, the top of the wall height is
20 roughly about 12-foot. From the walking surface up to
21 the top of the wall is roughly about 12-foot. That's
22 basically, you know, to protect during that earlier
23 construction period and it can provide other benefits
24 besides just, you know, just capturing the debris at

1 the same time.

2 MR. WEBB: Off the top of your head do you know
3 how high the wall is closer to the -- you know, the
4 start of the wall on the other side of the river? It
5 looked like it's considerably higher.

6 MR. BERTOULIN: The roadway in this area is about
7 six foot higher when it touches down than it is today.
8 By the time it gets up to Evans Place, it meets the
9 existing grade and that's part of the design in terms
10 of moving the high point of the bridge to basically
11 get it in the middle of the arch and for drainage
12 purposes and how the whole area works. And that's
13 part of the design.

14 MR. WEBB: I was referring to opposite Laurel
15 Road, the Laurel Street.

16 MR. BERTOULIN: Oh, that other wall that comes
17 down?

18 MR. WEBB: Yeah. It looks like it slopes down.

19 MR. BERTOULIN: That is basically -- and it was
20 Mr. Port from Newburyport addressed it. The shared
21 use path, there's also a connection point besides at
22 the Park and Ride at Pine Ferry Road area from the
23 Upland area. It's like an on ramp from the street
24 surface getting to the shared use path. Now, it is

1 very long. One of the issues here is a shared use
2 path needs to meet appropriate grades for Americans
3 with Disabilities Act, so basically all these are very
4 low -- low gradients to allow people of any ability to
5 be able to get out and walk on them and enjoy them.

6 MR. WEBB: Well, I do know that sound refracts;
7 it doesn't go in a straight line. And as high as
8 these barriers are, I have serious doubts as to how
9 much impact they're really going to have on the sound.
10 Okay.

11 MR. PAVAO: Yes, sir.

12 MR. POSNER: Thank you. My name is Bill Posner.
13 I'm a member of the board of the Massachusetts Bicycle
14 Coalition, it's Mass. Bike, and we will be submitting
15 written comments with respect to the EADEIR. I'm also
16 a member of a local cycling club, North Shore
17 Cyclists. First of all, I would like to thank Mass.
18 DOT for demonstrating its commitment to cycling and
19 walking as well as its commitment to the Healthy
20 Transportation Compact and the Green Dot policy. I'd
21 also like to thank the Towns of Amesbury, Salisbury
22 and the City of Newburyport for recognizing the
23 economic and recreational benefits of cycling and
24 walking as well as their support for the inclusion of

1 the shared use path as what we consider to be a
2 signature design element in this proposal.

3 Our very brief comment is that we are very much
4 in support of this project and we appreciate Mass.
5 DOT's consistent support for cycling and walking.
6 Thank you.

7 MR. PAVAO: Thank you for your comments. Yes,
8 sir.

9 MR. KARP: Hi. Evan Karp from Newburyport. I
10 live alongside the Pine Road, Ferry Road Bridge there.
11 It was mentioned that the bridge is moving back to
12 where it was in the seventies or something. I was
13 just curious what that was, just curious how it
14 affects my house.

15 MR. BERTOULIN: The right of way that's out there
16 today, it will work within the existing right of way.
17 What's going to happen there, I have a slide which
18 would show it, but basically, you know, the existing
19 bridge today is on a radius, and what's going to
20 happen first thing out there is that the traffic on
21 the existing bridge is going to be restricted to a
22 one-lane (inaudible) operated by signals and that will
23 allow one half of the bridge to be demolished.
24 That'll be the southern inside radius. That lane will

1 be removed and it'll be operated as a one-lane bridge.
2 That will allow the new bridge to be built right
3 within and snugged up into that radius of the existing
4 bridge, but it's being built south of the existing
5 bridge edge. That puts it back virtually where it was
6 before it was rebuilt in the seventies to the current
7 condition that it is today.

8 The -- we stayed well within the existing right
9 of way. And I'm not sure which home. Are you on the
10 east side or the west side?

11 MR. KARP: I guess it's east on Ferry Road.

12 MR. BERTOULIN: Okay. The coming in, some of the
13 opening area in front of your home right now, the road
14 will shift. It's all on state land. There is --
15 there are no right of way takings required of your
16 property to make this work.

17 MR. KARP: How do I find out where that right of
18 way ends?

19 MR. FREEMAN: We're going to be completing the
20 right of way plans at the end of this month. Once we
21 get the right of way plans complete and approved
22 within the department then we'll have -- a right of
23 way agent will contact you and go over right of way.

24 MR. KARP: Okay.

1 MR. BERTOULIN: The graphic which I had in my
2 Power Point presentation, that's in the environmental
3 documents that's out there right now and it does show
4 the limit of the right of way land and which actually
5 ties into the edge of right of way is basically your
6 front property line.

7 MR. KARP: Right like where the sidewalk is?

8 MR. BERTOULIN: That's actually -- the sidewalk
9 shows the curb line but the land behind that sidewalk
10 is still part of the right of way that's owned by --
11 as you get within the state right of way for the
12 highway where they overlap, that's either town land or
13 state land but it's not private land. It's where the
14 road used to be.

15 MR. KARP: Okay. Thanks.

16 MS. EMERSON: Good evening. My name is Karen
17 Emerson and I reside at Whittier Point and I just
18 wanted to mention that presently the construction with
19 the Hines Bridge, or as you call it the Chain Bridge,
20 for over a year now it's been -- I haven't had the
21 need for an alarm clock for six days a week. And
22 also, it sounds as if there's not going to be a need
23 until the 2016.

24 But at any rate, aside from that I'd like to ask

1 your -- how are your plans for the storage of the
2 equipment and the -- during the construction? Because
3 the abundance -- now, if you look at the present with
4 the small -- the small bridge, you know, small
5 construction with the Hines Bridge but yet there's an
6 abundance of construction vehicles all over the place,
7 lots of lots of things, and now I see -- this is small
8 in comparison to what we're going to be faced with and
9 I'd like to know what your plans are and where you're
10 going to put all of the construction materials and
11 debris and so forth.

12 In addition to the -- well, that's primarily my
13 concern as well as on a pure personal side I'd like
14 for you to address the migration patterns with regards
15 to the wildlife, the bald eagles because that's a very
16 popular area to come to view the bald eagles which we
17 will no longer enjoy.

18 MR. BERTOULIN: The environmental documents does
19 address the endangered species and it does address the
20 bald eagles and it's -- also the peregrine falcons
21 which are out there, and the project is not seen as
22 having any impact on them.

23 This project is a lot larger but it's also much
24 different than the Hines Bridge. The Hines Bridge

1 is -- you know, it's constrained but with two local
2 approaches, they had to get the project on the
3 Newburyport side or the Amesbury side. The state has
4 a 300-foot wide right of way of which they have a
5 highway on right now and they're going to be building
6 within their right of way, there will be access points
7 along the right of way driving up the highway for the
8 vehicles to come on. There will be some local work on
9 Evans Place as the new bridge gets built for the
10 highway for the northbound and the traffic gets
11 shifted, and also that retaining wall that you see in
12 that graphic. There will be work out in the river
13 building the first bridge, but you know, basically the
14 bridge, virtually all those materials will most likely
15 from any economic model we've looked at, that will be
16 barge traffic that will be coming up river. Concrete
17 trucks will be delivering concrete but they'll be
18 approaching from the highway side and pumping the
19 concrete either for pier construction or for, you
20 know, placing it on the concrete decks.

21 You know, I think we have the appropriate noise
22 restrictions and specifications within the documents
23 to deal with that. You know, unless of course the new
24 northbound bridge gets built, it'll be the demolition

1 on the other side will be going on, and of course the
2 new build-out. But basically the closed road you have
3 right now, I don't see -- it'll have different impacts
4 in terms of how they get built because of the access
5 from the main highway.

6 MR. FREEMAN: I just want to add one more thing.
7 Regarding the staging, we don't dictate where the
8 contractor is going to stage. This is a design-build
9 contract. One of the first things that they're going
10 to have to do is come up with the staging plan and an
11 access plan. They're going to need to acquire
12 property on their own and tell us where they're going
13 to stage all their equipment for our approval. So we
14 don't dictate that on the plans. The contractor will
15 be required to tell us how they're going to build the
16 project and stage this. So until we see that from
17 them, we can't be specific.

18 As Mike's doing, he's kind of guessing at what
19 they're going to do based on the nature of the project
20 but that's something that the contractor will tell us
21 and we'll have to approve it.

22 MR. HORTH: Tom Horth from Newburyport. Member
23 of the board, Coastal Trails Coalition. First of all,
24 we'd like to congratulate you in including the shared

1 use path. This is going to be an incredible amenity
2 to our area and eventually to general bicycle
3 transportation up and down the east coast. We'd also
4 like to reinforce and support the points that Andy
5 Port made about Newburyport, and in particular we very
6 strongly support the building of a better sound
7 barrier for the Laurel Lane people. They really
8 deserve it. And frankly, Mass. Highway's standards in
9 this regard are inadequate.

10 Finally, I'd like to make sure that you -- at
11 least when you re-build the old bridge over the old
12 railroad north of the northern end, that you don't do
13 anything that would make it more difficult to connect
14 the Ghost Trail to the Powow Riverwalk in the future.
15 Thank you.

16 MR. PAVAO: Thank you for your comments, and
17 we'll continue to work with the towns. Anyone else?
18 One more.

19 MS. CAREY: Hi, I'm Deb Carey from Amesbury. I'm
20 a member of the Coastal Trails Coalition; actually,
21 one of the founding members. The Coastal Trails
22 Coalition started in Amesbury, started with the Powow
23 Riverwalk. It was the first piece of the trail system
24 to be built using former -- it used to be called Mass.

1 Highway, now it's called Department of Transportation.
2 I want to second Tom Horth's comments with regards to
3 thanking you for the shared use path which we know is
4 so important getting across this river.

5 I would like to express my personal concern, the
6 concern of many people I spoke with about the
7 connection of Evans Place. I understand and
8 sympathize with the fact that there is more than a
9 little difficulty in making any connection there given
10 the requirements of ADA, and also I understand there's
11 also some wetlands in that area, and to get this built
12 you need to get it built fast.

13 At the same time I do know that many, many, many
14 cyclists love to cycle along the Merrimack, and the
15 fact that they're going to have to go up as far as
16 they have to go, which I recognize they do because of
17 the slope, to get on the trail to cross the bridge
18 will be some -- something of a detriment to them.
19 Nevertheless, I am very happy for that. And I also
20 want to second Tom's motion about the rebuilding of
21 the former -- train bridge. That connection, right
22 underneath that on the highway, 95, I wasn't around
23 when 95 was built. I wasn't here. I was around, but
24 I wasn't here. And I don't understand why Mass.

1 Highway doesn't take that right of way when they had
2 the chance to get it. It is the only safe way to
3 connect from the Amesbury Riverwalk to the Ghost
4 Trail. It is the only safe link. Now you're even
5 increasing the speed on the off ramps. For safety
6 purposes, I understand, but it's not safe to bicycle
7 cross those on off ramps on 95. It's just not safe.

8 And we know that we have a lot of work to do to
9 make a process to get a right of way a design for that
10 right of way, to get funding to purchase it or to
11 build a path along it, but we also know that it is the
12 only safe way to get from one side, the Salisbury
13 Ghost Trail to the Amesbury Riverwalk. And I want to
14 just express to you my -- I guess the word would be
15 frustration because I wasn't part of the conversation
16 and I know it's all negotiated. I recognize that. My
17 continued frustration with that critical link, there
18 are only two critical links to the system: The first
19 is getting across the river, which you solved for us,
20 and the second is making that link under 95. So thank
21 you.

22 MR. PAVAO: Thank you. Anyone else?

23 I think that's going to conclude. Just a couple
24 reminders. If you didn't sign in on the way in, we

1 would appreciate you signing in on the way out so we
2 can have an accurate record of who is in attendance
3 tonight. And also I just want to encourage everybody
4 to submit comments in writing. That is the purpose of
5 tonight's public meeting is to solicit comments on
6 these environmental documents. So we appreciate the
7 verbal comments. Please submit your comments in
8 writing. Thank you.

C E R T I F I C A T E

1
2
3
4
5 I, Sharon G. Saalfield, do hereby certify that the
6 foregoing record is a true and accurate transcription
7 of the proceedings in the above-captioned matter to
8 the best of my skill and ability.
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18

19 _____
Sharon G. Saalfield

20
21
22 **ALL NAMES NOT PROVIDED WERE SPELLED PHONETICALLY TO
23 THE BEST OF MY ABILITY

ATM, Inc
339-674-9100