
TOWNSHIP OF WEST MILFORD, COUNTY OF PASSAIC, NEW JERSEY

Minutes of: Governing Body Special Meeting
Date of Meeting: April 21, 2017
Time of Meeting: 11:00 A.M.
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The Special Meeting of the Governing Body was called to order by Mayor Bettina Bieri.

Adequate Notice Statement

Mayor Bieri read the following statement:

Please note that in accordance with Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975 of New Jersey, adequate advance notice of this Special meeting was advertised in the Herald News in its issue of April 9, 2017; copies were provided to the Suburban Trends, the Record and Star Ledger and posted continuously on the bulletin board in the main corridor of the Town Hall and on file in the Office of the Township Clerk.

Please also make note of all fire and emergency exits - located to the left, right, front and rear of this room - for use in case of an emergency. Thank you.

Agenda No. I

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Bieri led all in attendance in a salute to the flag.

Agenda No. II

Roll Call

Present: Councilmembers Ada Erik, Mike Hensley, Tim Wagner,
Peter McGuinness, Luciano Signorino, Mayor Bettina Bieri
Absent: Marilyn Lichtenberg
Also Present: Township Administrator/Clerk Antoinette Battaglia

Agenda No. III

Presentations

Debbie Hirt, DOT – Proposed Improvements to the Route 23 Northbound over the Pequannock Bridge

The purpose of the Local Officials Briefing is to present the Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) to the West Milford Township stakeholders and obtain a Resolution of Support.

Summary of Discussion

Ms. Hirt introduced the members present from the NJDOT and the purpose of the meeting. Mr. Mulcahy introduced the design consultant (KMA Consulting Engineers, Inc.) and the other staff present. Mr. Mulcahy said that the project they will address is the replacement of the Route 23, Northbound Bridge over Pequannock River; Structure No. 1605-174; Milepost 25.52. Mr. Henson presented the project location map. Key location features were discussed:

- The Pequannock River is the divider between Morris and Passaic County.
- The New York, Susquehanna & Western Railway runs adjacent to Route 23 northbound.
- The structure is located south of Canistear Road.

Mr. Henson stated the purpose of the project is to replace the structurally deficient Route 23 northbound Bridge. Other project needs were developed during the scoping of the project:

- Improving stopping sight distance
- Upgrading guiderail and end treatments
- Upgrading inlets
- Replacing drainage CMP with RCP

Mr. Henson reviewed the existing conditions of the roadway and bridge. The roadway is posted for 55 MPH and has two (2) 12-foot wide lanes, a 10-foot wide outside and 3-foot wide inside shoulder. The bridge has been in service for approximately 50 years and is experiencing severe corrosion of the substructure. Mr. Iocco added that a corrosive investigation and testing was conducted and rehabilitation measures were evaluated. The cost to rehabilitate versus full replacement was evaluated.

There are Verizon-owned utility poles adjacent to Route 23 southbound with aerial lines owned by Verizon and Cablevision. There are guy poles anchored along the Route 23 northbound embankment. The guy poles may require relocation due to traffic staging.

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Mr. Iocco presented the environmental constraints of the project.

- There is a potential for old foundations or building rubble in the study area. Further investigation will be conducted in the next phase of the project.
- There will be tree clearing required at the vicinity of the bridge for construction access.
- The Pequannock River is a "C-1" waterway and will require mitigation for any disturbance within the riparian zone. A Hydrology & Hydraulics analysis was conducted on the river. It was found out that the existing structure maintains freeboard during the Flood Hazard Design Storm event. Permit Requirement: Flood Hazard Area Control Act Individual Permit
- There are freshwater wetlands in the study area. Further investigation will be conducted in the next phase of the project. Permit Requirement: Freshwater Wetlands General Permit
- There is a potential for Threatened & Endangered Species in the study area. Further investigation will be conducted in the next phase of the project.

Mr. Iocco presented the following:

Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA). The superstructure types evaluated are listed below. The Spread Box Beams were the preferred solution.

- AASHTO I-Beams – A replace-in-kind solution
- Rolled Steel Beams – To match the existing Route 23 southbound structure
- Spread Box Beams – Efficient section for span-to-depth ratio

The General Plan & Elevation, and Typical Section for the PPA.

- The proposed section over the bridge will have wider shoulders so that the bridge construction can be completed in two stages.
- Standard safety shape parapets will be placed along both fascias of the bridge with upgraded guiderail attachments at all corners.

The Construction Plan and Profile for the PPA.

- The profile will raise the roadway approximately 9-inches to improve the stopping sight distance of the road. The impacts from the profile raise are limited to roadside grading.
- The paving limits will begin approximately 1250-feet south of the bridge and stop just before the Canistear Road intersection.
- Due to the mitigation requirement in the Flood Hazard Area Control Act rules, median plantings are proposed. These plantings will provide a glare screen for Route 23 northbound traffic from Route 23 southbound traffic.

The staging solution for the PPA.

- Stage 1:
 - Route 23 northbound traffic will enter the construction zone at a posted speed of 45 MPH.
 - One lane of Route 23 northbound will crossover onto Route 23 southbound. The median barrier will separate the northbound and southbound traffic. The transitioned lane of Route 23 northbound will shift back to the existing lane prior to the Canistear Road intersection.
 - One lane of Route 23 northbound will be maintained across the western half of the existing structure in order to construct the eastern half.
 - Advanced signing will be posted to alert motorists to "Stay Right for Local Traffic" to access Canistear Road.
 - The crossover duration will be 6 months or less.
- Stage 2:
 - Both lanes of Route 23 northbound will be shifted to the eastern half of the new bridge to construct the western half (no crossover).
 - Approximate stage duration will be 6 months.

Councilman Hensley asked if the traffic pattern would remain during the winter months. Councilman Signorino asked if the cold weather could have an effect on the construction timeline. Mr. Iocco stated the final contract plans and specifications would be written such that the contractor must complete the work by a certain date. If the 6-month crossover stage duration was exceeded, it would trigger additional permitting impacts that the contractor would be responsible for. Ms. Hirt stated that the state would assess Liquidated Damages at a per day dollar value. Mr. Henson added that there would be an Interim Completion Date in the specifications to apply the Liquidated Damages. Councilman Wagner asked the estimated cost and Mr. Iocco said approximately \$3.5 million dollars.

Ms. Hirt noted when the project starts they will not use local police. There is a policy in effect by the state that they can only use state police during the construction. She spoke about the problems the Township is experiencing with people driving the wrong way on to Route 23 by the Clinton Road intersection and how there is lack of signage and pavement markings.

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She recommended that Mayor Bieri send a letter to the DOT Commissioner requesting that the areas get looked at. She will make it known to the Traffic Engineering Unit. They will not have an investigation conducted until they receive the letter. Councilman Signorino requested a copy of the letter, and Administrative Battaglia said it will be on the cloud.

Mr. Miller asked for an update on the S-turns by Smoke Rise. Mr. Mulcahy said they finalized the minutes from the public meeting, and Ms. Hirt said she would send them to Mr. Miller. Mr. Mulcahy spoke about looking into doing additional studies on the Kinnelon intersection, and they requested gate information from Smoke Rise to see how many people are utilizing the gate. Ms. Hirt said there was a lot of negative feedback about closing the Smoke Rise U-turn from Kinnelon because of the further distance people would have to travel to make the U-turn. Mr. Mulcahy said they are proposing to leave it open to emergency vehicles only.

Councilman Signorino said after he heard the presentation in Kinnelon, the S-turns will not be fixed. He recommended cutting through the mountain and straightening out the turns. There have been a lot of problems with the S-turns. Mr. Mulcahy said they have looked at alternatives, cost and environmental impact for the S-turns. They also looked at all the variables, and if they can achieve an acceptable, cost effective condition they will pursue it. Councilman Signorino asked them to please revisit the project because he would like the rock cut to straighten out the S-turns. Mayor Bieri mentioned that a big part of the S-turn problem is the sloping of the road. It would be a huge step to get the grading correct. Councilman Hensley said his concern is the S-turns have been a problem for numerous years. If they don't address the actual direction of the road and the cut there will continue to be problems. The S-turns are also a problem for the teenager drivers and people that are not familiar with the area. Cutting the rock back would solve the problem. Councilman Wagner asked if the S-turns are safer. Mr. Mulcahy said eliminating the S-turns would be safer. Mayor Bieri asked if the Governing Body could get copies of the analyses and summaries because with that insight maybe they can suggest an alternative. Mr. Mulcahy mentioned that there are a lot of expenses related to cutting the rock. Councilman Wagner suggested that the Council take a vote on whether they support the S-turns or not, and Ms. Hirt said they received a resolution from the Governing Body supporting the current preferred alternative. Councilman Signorino said that it's not solving the problem and he would like it solved. Mayor Bieri suggested waiting for the analyses before the Governing Body makes any suggestions or decisions. Councilwoman Erik mentioned a project that was supposed to begin on Route 23 southbound and the Highcrest Bridge to alleviate traffic. She asked what happened to the project, and Ms. Hirt suggested sending a letter to the Commissioner regarding that project because she had no knowledge of it. Ms. Hirt referred back the presentation and said she would need a resolution from the Governing Body for the Route 23 Northbound Bridge.

Agenda No. IV

Public Comments

Mayor Bieri opened the meeting to the public after advising that there is a five-minute limit for each speaker.

There being no comments from the public, Councilman Signorino moved to close the public portion of the meeting.

Moved: Erik Seconded: Signorino
Voted Aye: Unanimous voice vote
Voted Nay: None
Motion carried.

Agenda No. V

Council Comments

None

Agenda No. VI

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Council, the Governing Body adjourned the meeting at 11:53:44 a.m.

Moved: Erik Seconded: Signorino
Voted Aye: Unanimous voice vote
Voted Nay: None
Motion carried.

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Approved: June 7, 2017

Respectfully submitted:

Sherry Zbrzeski, Clerk Typist

MAYOR BETTINA BIERI, PRESIDING OFFICER

ANTOINETTE BATTAGLIA, TOWNSHIP CLERK