



THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Victoria F. Sheehan
Commissioner

William Cass, P.E.
Assistant Commissioner

Bureau of Highway Design
(603) 271-2171

February 23, 2021

Board of Selectmen
Town of Newington
205 Nimble Hill Road
Newington, NH 03801

RE: Request for Property Transfer
General Sullivan Bridge - Draft Section 106 Mitigation Stipulations
Spaulding Turnpike / Little Bay Bridge: NHS-027-1(037), 11238S
Newington and Dover, New Hampshire

Dear Messrs. Connors, Latchaw, and Marconi:

I am writing in response to your letter to Stephen LaBonte dated December 30 in which you request transfer of a portion of Newington Tax Map 7, Lot 25 to the town, along with the refurbishment of the historic train depot located on that property. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) intends to pursue these requested actions as part of the on-going Section 106 consultation and Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) related to the rehabilitation or replacement of the General Sullivan Bridge (GSB) (“the Project”).

Potential mitigation for historical impacts to the GSB has been discussed throughout the Section 106 process. Ms. Lulu Pickering has participated in these discussions as a Consulting Party. Following execution of the Adverse Effects Memo in January 2020, meetings among NHDOT, New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (NHDHR), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Consulting/Interested Parties focused on developing mitigation for adverse effects resulting from the project.

The mitigation measures relate directly to the adverse effects resulting from the Project and appear to have broad support among most of the agencies and Consulting/Interested Parties. The language of the stipulations to be included in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) will be discussed at an upcoming meeting on March 11 with NHDHR and the Consulting/Interested Parties, and will be included in a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (Draft SEIS) scheduled to be released this Spring prior to a public hearing. Following the public hearing, a final set of mitigation measures would be included in a final MOA, which would be executed prior to issuing a Final SEIS and FHWA Record of Decision.

Of particular concern to the Town of Newington, the following draft stipulations pertaining to the rehabilitation of the Newington Railroad Depot and Toll House, and the state-owned land on Bloody Point currently read as follows:

E. Rehabilitation of the Newington Railroad Depot and Toll House, and State-Owned Land on Bloody Point

- i. NHDOT shall support the future rehabilitation and reuse of the state-owned portion of the Newington Depot property, according to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. Specifically, NHDOT shall:
 - a. Engage a consultant to prepare a building assessment of the Newington Depot, following the NH Preservation Alliance’s format, identifying extant character-defining features and potential future**

- uses that can support the retention of these historic features. An electronic copy of the final assessment shall be provided to NHDOT, NHDHR, and the Town of Newington.*
- b. Develop a land master plan and a rehabilitation plan for the Newington Depot property based on the results of the building assessment.*
 - c. Provide direct financial support for the rehabilitation of the Newington Depot property based on the building assessment, land master plan, and rehabilitation plan up to \$(to be determined). Any costs beyond this amount shall be provided by the Town of Newington or a third party (see Stipulation E.ii below).*
- ii. NHDOT shall continue discussions about the feasibility of transferring ownership of the property to the Town of Newington. If a mutual agreement cannot be reached, NHDOT shall market the property for sale at current market value with a historic preservation covenant, to be held by NHDHR, requiring rehabilitation by the future owner that meets the Standards for Rehabilitation, which is to be overseen and approved by NHDHR as holder of the covenant.*

While NHDOT intends to transfer the property to the town pursuant to a final executed Section 106 MOA, we note that by law (RSA 4:39-c), NHDOT may only transfer property at current market value. We are currently assessing whether that provision applies in a case where the property is transferred for purposes of mitigating project impacts.

Please contact me at (603) 271-3401 or Jennifer.E.Reczek@dot.nh.gov if you have any questions or would like to discuss the mitigation measures pertaining to rehabilitation of the Newington Railroad Depot and Toll House and state-owned land on Bloody Point. We would be pleased to meet with your board to discuss further if necessary, either prior to or following the SEIS public hearing later this spring. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jennifer E. Reczek, P.E.
NHDOT Project Manager

JER/PJW/hb

cc: Rep. Dennis J. Malloy

Ecc: Stephen LaBonte, NHDOT
Marc Laurin, NHDOT
Jamie Sikora, FHWA
Lulu Pickering, Town of Newington
Peter J. Walker, VHB
Greg Goodrich, VHB

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