



**VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING**

**April 5, 2022**

**FOR THE PROPOSED**

**Bridge (No. C-05-0420 Replacement Project  
East Oxbow Road over Oxbow Brook**

**Project No. 608858**

**Project Management**

**IN THE TOWN OF CHARLEMONT, MASSACHUSETTS**

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HIGHWAY DIVISION**

**JONATHAN GULLIVER  
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

**CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.  
CHIEF ENGINEER**

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**  
**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION**  
**NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING**  
**Project File No. 608858**

A Live Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed **Replacement of Bridge (C-05-042), East Oxbow Road over Oxbow Brook** project in **Charlemont, MA**.

**WHEN: 6:00 PM, Tuesday April 5, 2022**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed East Oxbow Road Bridge Replacement project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

**PROPOSAL:** The purpose of this project is to completely replace the structurally deficient one-lane bridge with a new two-lane bridge with improved geometry and hydraulic capacity. The width of the roadway approaches will also be increased to match the new bridge and existing road widths beyond the approaches. Sidewalks and bicycle lanes are not included at these facilities do not exist beyond the bridge limits.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The **Town of Charlemont is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands**. The policies concerning land acquisitions will be presented in the hearing.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to [MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us) or via US Mail to Suite 6340, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: **Project Management, Project File No. 608858**. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted on the MassDOT website listed below.

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g., interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email ([MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us)). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the hearing, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

This Live Virtual Design Public Hearing or a cancellation announcement will be hosted on the internet at [www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings](http://www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings).

JONATHAN GULLIVER  
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.  
CHIEF ENGINEER



Dear Concerned Citizen:

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is committed to building and maintaining a transportation infrastructure that is both safe and efficient for all who use our roadways, bridges, bicycle facilities and pedestrian paths, while maintaining the integrity of the environment.

As part of the design process for this project, we are conducting this public hearing to explain the proposed improvements, listen to your comments and answer any questions you may have. At the conclusion of the hearing, MassDOT will review all of your comments and, where feasible, incorporate them into the design of the project.

We recognize that road and bridge construction can create inconveniences for the public. MassDOT places a great deal of emphasis on minimizing the temporary disruptive effects of construction.

MassDOT encourages input from local communities and values your opinions. Please be assured that we will undertake no project without addressing the concerns of the community.

Sincerely,

Carrie E. Lavalley, P.E.  
Acting Chief Engineer

## **WHAT IS A PUBLIC HEARING?**

### **WHY A PUBLIC HEARING?**

To provide an assured method whereby the Commonwealth of Massachusetts can furnish to the public information concerning the State's highway construction proposals, and to afford every interested resident of the area an opportunity to be heard on any proposed project. At the same time, the hearings afford the Commonwealth an additional opportunity to receive information from local sources which would be of value to the State in making its final decisions to what design should be advanced for development.

### **WHY NOT A VOTE ON HIGHWAY PLANS?**

The hearings are not intended to be a popular referendum for the purpose of determining the nature of a proposed improvement by a majority of those present. They do not relieve the duly constituted officials of a State highway department of the necessity for making decisions in State highway matters for which they are charged with full responsibility.

### **WHAT DOES A PUBLIC HEARING ACCOMPLISH?**

It is designed to ensure the opportunity for, or the availability of, a forum to provide factual information which is pertinent to the determination of the final alternative considered by the state to best serve the public interest, and on which improvement projects are proposed to be undertaken.

It is important that the people of the area express their views in regard to the proposal being presented, so that views can be properly recorded in the minutes of the meeting. These minutes will be carefully studied and taken into consideration in the determination of the final design.

## RIGHT OF WAY CONCERNS

Your Municipality is responsible for securing the right of way for this project. If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the Municipality for highway purposes in the interest of all people of the Commonwealth, your rights are fully protected under the law. Briefly, here are some of the answers to questions you might ask.

### 1. REASON FOR PROJECT

The completion of this project will serve local needs. The proposed enhancement will also be in the interest of others in the greater community, and provide for the public good.

### 2. WHO CONTACTS ME?

Representatives of the municipality have already contacted or will contact you. They will explain the procedures used in acquiring any necessary rights in land.

### 3. WHAT ABOUT DONATIONS? WHAT IS A RIGHT OF ENTRY?

Town officials will often seek donations, of parcels, where permanent rights are required. This procedure will minimize the acquisition cost for your community.

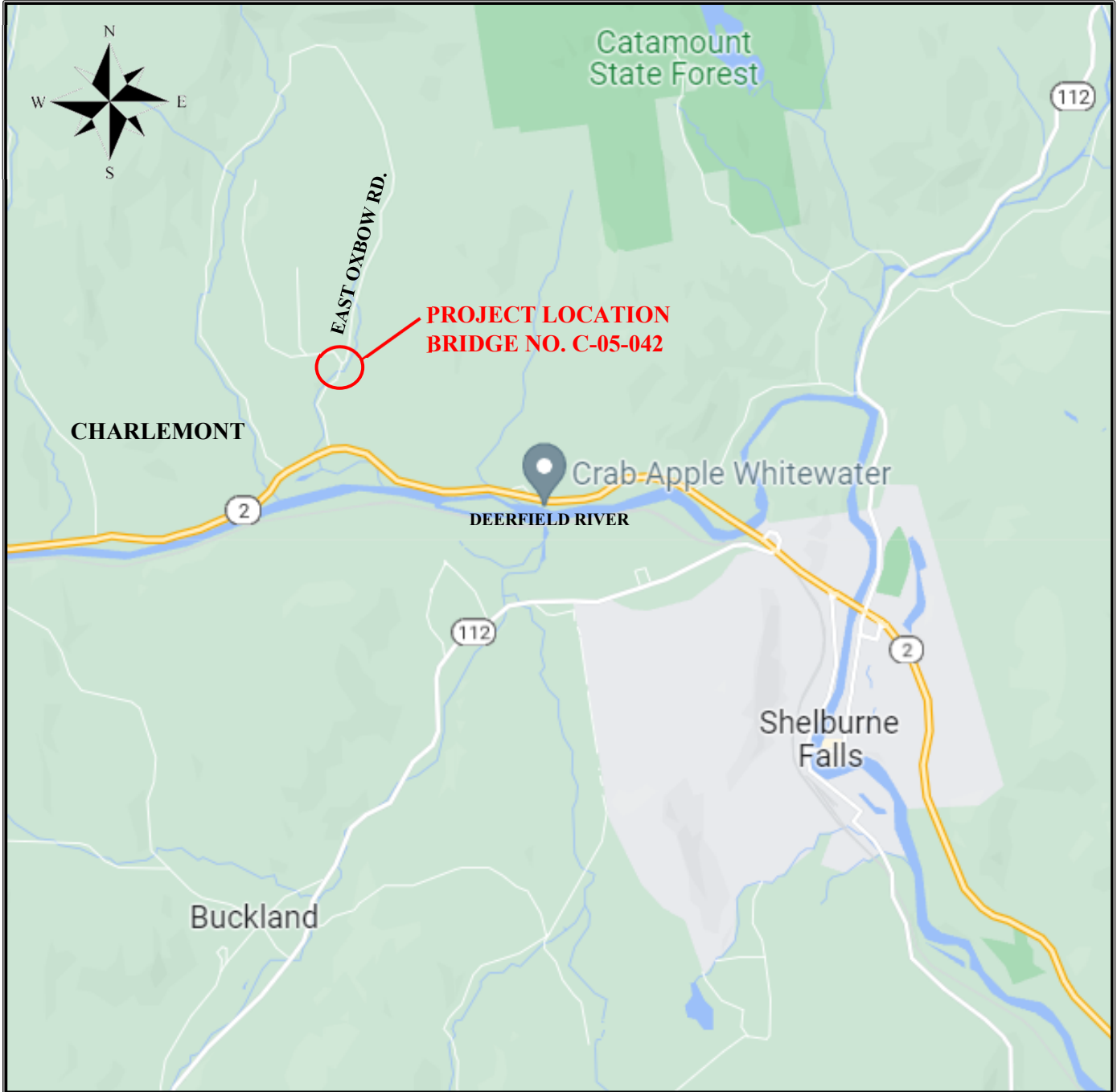
A Right of Entry is a document that is signed by the owner. It allows the Contractor to perform certain types of work on the owner's land. The work is usually minor in nature and frequently consists of loaming/seeding behind sidewalks, new driveway apron work, grading/sloping, and wetland protection, etc. The rights granted are temporary in nature.

### 4. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR THE ACQUIRED PARCELS?

In the event that donations are not considered, or completed, every effort will be made to ensure that an equitable value is awarded. Municipal and/or outside appraisers will complete an appraisal. Consideration is given to the type of rights needed, whether in fee, permanent or temporary easements. The appraisal will be the basis for arriving at a fair price (for damages that result).

### 5. MUST I ACCEPT THE MUNICIPALITY OFFER?

No, if the owner feels that the offer is not fair the owner may petition the courts. This action does not stop or delay the acquisition. The action must occur within 3 years. The owner(s) may be paid pro tanto (for the time being). The pro tanto payment will not prejudice the court's final decision.



**LOCUS MAP**

**Bridge Replacement Project  
Bridge No. C-05-042  
East Oxbow Road over Oxbow Brook  
Charlemont, MA**

# **BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

## **PROJECT PURPOSE:**

The purpose of the project is to replace the existing Bridge No. C-05-042 in the Town of Charlemont, which carries East Oxbow Road over Oxbow Brook and is a structurally deteriorated with a new bridge along a slightly modified horizontal and vertical alignment.

## **PROJECT LOCATION AND LIMITS:**

The bridge is located on East Oxbow Road about 2,000 feet north of Route 2 and just south of the intersection of East Oxbow Road and Hawk Hill Road in Charlemont, Massachusetts. The bridge carries East Oxbow Road over the Oxbow Brook. The attached locus map shows the location of the project. The roadway approach project limits are approximately 200 feet to the south and 150 feet to the north of the bridge.

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS:**

East Oxbow Road is a rural, local road running south to north at the project location. The bridge crosses Oxbow Brook which flows from east to west. The existing bridge is a 14-foot wide and 44-foot long, single-span structure that was constructed in 1940. The bridge is comprised of steel stringers and a reinforced concrete deck supported by concrete abutments and wingwalls. There is currently a concrete barrier placed on the bridge that limits the roadway width to about 12 feet, only allowing one lane of traffic over the bridge. There are no sidewalks on the bridge or approaches.

## **PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:**

The proposed project consists of demolition of the existing bridge, installation of a new bridge, and reconstruction its roadway approaches. The new bridge will be widened from the existing approximately 14 feet (curb-to-curb) width to carry two 11-foot wide travel lanes. The structure will be comprised of five steel beams supported on concrete abutments. The bridge span will be lengthened about 24 feet, the skew of the abutments will be decreased and the profile its vertical profile slightly increased to improve the hydraulic opening below the bridge. Roadway improvements will include adjustments to the vertical profile and horizontal curves as well as the installation of standard guardrails and bridge barriers. Additional work for construction will include overhead wire utility relocations.

## **TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT:**

During construction, East Oxbow Road will remain open with one lane of alternating traffic controlled by temporary traffic signalization. In order to maintain traffic, a temporary bridge will be installed directly west of the existing bridge. However, due to the narrow travel way and limited right-of-way, short-term full closures at the bridge are anticipated to facilitate various construction activities. During these short closures, traffic will be detoured around the site by

utilizing West Oxbow Road, which is the only way around the site. The full detour length is approximately 4.7 miles.

**UTILITIES:**

The only utilities crossing Oxbow Brook at the bridge are overhead wires running parallel to East Oxbow Road. Overhead wires and poles will require temporary and permanent relocations for construction.

**ENVIRONMENTAL:**

Environmental permits will be required for the construction of the bridge.

**RIGHT OF WAY:**

Right-of-way will be necessary for this project. Temporary easements will be required for the temporary bridge and utility relocations west of the bridge. Due to Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR), no work requiring easements east of the bridge is proposed.





Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please Fold and Tape



Please Place  
Appropriate  
Postage Here

Carrie E. Lavalley, P.E.  
Chief Engineer  
MassDOT – Highway Division  
10 Park Plaza  
Boston, MA 02116-3973

RE: Virtual Public Hearing  
**CHARLEMONT**  
East Oxbow Road over Oxbow Brook Bridge Replacement Project  
Project File No. 608858  
Attn: Project Management

