

## Revised Minutes of the 1/6/14 Bridge Steering Committee Meeting

I opened the meeting at noon at the Old Town Hall. Videotaping was not performed at this meeting. The entire committee was present as well as approximately 12 towns people in the audience including Selectman Steve Davis and our state Representative Duane Brown.

I had been informed by Steve Davis that there was issue with two of our board members – Max Corbett and Ellie Murray – as not being sanctioned by the Board of Selectmen and not being listed on the Town's website. Steve addressed this issue by stating that Max, being newly added, was definitely not sanctioned. Ellie Murray stated that she had told Catherine Stover the night that the Steering Committee and Francis were all sanctioned that she wanted to be a member of the committee. Verification of Ellie's status will need to be decided by the Board of Selectmen. For the purposes of our meeting today Ellie was allowed to vote, while Max was not.

John Meade reiterated his conversations with Stan Graton as stated below in the previous e mail of 3G Construction concerning the Goffe's Mill Bridge. John went through the four options( listed in attached e mail )that he was providing the committee today. Donna King asked that we add Option #5 which was to accept the proposed 5' wide walkway offered at the public meeting by the NHDOT on December 10<sup>th</sup>. I did so.

Discussion was held all around concerning the multiple options including all pros and cons. Kay Thompson Bailey asked questions concerning the eventual ownership of the bridge as well as the status of whether the Town of Wentworth was going to be forced to accept the roadways to and from the bridge. John advised the committee that the Town's acceptance of the roadways and/or the ownership of the bridge is at the sole discretion of the Town of Wentworth Selectman and is beyond the authority of this committee.

Janice Thompson questioned if the Steering Committee was in possession of all reports concerning the historic status of the existing 1909 bridge. John stated that he was aware of potentially one report that we did not have. He felt that this report had less impact than the historic architects report which plainly states that the 1909 bridge is, in fact, of historic significance. He also stated that the NHDOT (both at the meeting in Concord and the meeting on Dec 10<sup>th</sup>) made it quite clear that they were not bound by the historic relevance of the bridge. The NHDOT can mitigate the removal of the 1909 bridge by installing informational boards and other means. It is quite clear that the NHDOT has determined that no need for a vehicular bridge exists at this location. They have clearly accepted responsibility for a pedestrian crossing.

Kay Thompson Bailey questioned whether the abutments were part of the roadway and if the Town accepted the abutments would they in turn be accepting the roadway. Steve Davis made comment that he did not feel that this was so. Kay responded that she wanted a legal determination by Town Counsel. Steve Davis said he could investigate and find an answer without involving Town Counsel at a cost. Steve stated that he is trying to avoid the involvement of lawyers at this juncture.

Francis Muzzey stated that any consideration for any option should look to the future and lay a foundation for potential vehicular traffic. He feels that it would be short sighted not to put in a sub-structure that could not provide for a 6,000 pound vehicle. John Meade stated that the NHDOT has a requirement going forward that all roadway and crossing designs must be 6 tons or more to align with Federal Highway Administration guidelines. This has been stated to him multiple times by Mark Richardson of the NHDOT. Steve Davis commented as well as others that the deck could be removed in the future and a new bridge deck installed availing itself to vehicular traffic.

A board member asked if Stan Graton was to truck the bridge, who would insure it over the road. John Meade replied that Mr. Graton, being contracted for this work, would be responsible for the bridge while under transport. Kay Thompson Bailey went on to ask who would insure the bridge once it was in place. John Meade replied who ever owned it. John then asked Steve Davis how other bridges in town were

insured. Steve replied that they are covered for liability only under the Wentworth policy. No replacement coverage exists.

Kay Thompson Bailey felt that there should be an Option 6 where nothing should be done at this time. It was her feeling that we were proceeding too fast without all the information available and this is a long term commitment. Francis Muzzey reiterated the same point. John Meade explained that if the Goffe's Mill Bridge was to be considered we needed to react now solely due to the fact that the demo contractor and developer in Bedford are proceeding forthwith. If we want to slow down the process, Options 1 and 2 should be removed from consideration and not voted for.

Option 2 (Goffe's Mill Bridge set on steel) would raise the deck height by 28" inches above its present location. George Peterson asked if the steel could somehow be recessed into the abutments or off to the side to eliminate this issue. John Meade replied that cost is a primary concern but it certainly would be possible if engineered correctly and potentially performed by the state. The NHDOT is awaiting our load requirements for dead weight so they can proceed with engineering for the steel. John Meade stated that this was another reason why decisions needed to be made quickly. As a Town, we do not want the NHDOT to remove the old bridge without a plan in place for its replacement. NHDOT is proceeding with engineering and requirements to remove the 1909 bridge and expect to fulfill all of these requirements to put the removal out to bid between April and June of this year.

Due to the fact that we do not have a 'rock solid' commitment from the developer for the Goffe's Mill Bridge, John Meade asked that each committee member provide a vote on two preferences in order of personal priority.

Donna King requested at this time that a poll of the members be taken. In alphabetical order, John Meade read off the names of the committee members who voiced their choices which were independently tallied by Jennifer Meade and John Meade who confirmed their totals after the fact. Voting was as follows (personal priority listed first, alternate listed second):

Leslie Backstrom	#5, #1
Kay Thompson Bailey	<b>(Stating she couldn't vote because didn't like any of the options without enough information to make an informed vote</b> Kay abstained. When at the end after Options 1 & 2 were in a tie at 4 members each <b>Kay was asked to vote again to break the tie she did so.)</b> #2, #3
Maxwell Corbett	(Awaiting Approval By Selectman)
Susan Corbett	#1, #3
Donna King	#2, #3
Palmer Koelb	#2, #3
Peter Kosak	#1, #3
Jen Meade	#1, #3
John Meade	#1, #3
Ellie Murray	#2, #3 <b>(We were later informed that these votes are disqualified as Ellie was never officially recognized by the Board of Selectmen placing #1 and #2 back in a tie at 4 votes each)</b>
Francis Muzzey	#2, #3

Though Max's vote was not counted, he did state that his preference would be options 1 and 2 in that order.

Of the 10 members voting, acceptance of the Goffe's Mill Bridge (to be installed either with or without steel) was the majority of the vote. Eight of the ten members voting chose either Option 1 or 2 as their first priority. If for some reason the Goffe's Mill Bridge does not come to fruition, 8 of the 10 voting members voted for option 3.

Catherine, we're asking that this please be added to the Selectmen's Business Meeting for this Tuesday January 6<sup>th</sup> for a vote. Obviously, time is of the essence. Please let me know I am working in Boston that day and would return to address the board.

Thank you,  
John Meade

**From:** John Meade [<mailto:john.meade@preferredmechanicalservices.com>]

**Sent:** Saturday, January 03, 2015 10:38 AM

**To:** 'Jen Meade'

**Cc:** 'Kay Bailey'; 'Donna King'; 'Ellie Murray'; 'Susan Corbett'; [leslie@sixohthree.com](mailto:leslie@sixohthree.com); [peterK262@gmail.com](mailto:peterK262@gmail.com); 'John Meade'; [maxwell.s.corbett@gmail.com](mailto:maxwell.s.corbett@gmail.com); 'Francis Muzzey'; 'Palmer Koelb'; 'Catherine Stover'; Paula Davis

**Subject:** Bridge Steering Committe

Hello All,

Above are the 11 members of the steering committee as well as Catherine Stover and Steve Davis representing the town select board. Besides this list I have 7 other people that have asked that they be on our e mail chain. I have not included them on this list this morning as I wanted to keep the committee aware of what has quickly come at us these past few days and what needs to be decided at the meeting tomorrow. So there is no confusion I was instructed to pursue the option of the Goffes Mill bridge without commitment. Now the developer is demanding commitment so we need to vote as a committee what we want to do.

The Wayfarer Bridge has been offered to us with the caveat that it be removed from site once the contractor swings it from its perch.

I met with Stan Graton of 3 G construction yesterday to see what his thoughts were on the bridge. Stan and his family have been in the covered bridge business for three generations. The Smith Bridge in Plymouth and The Squam River Bridge are just some of their work. I have no expertise on wooden bridges so I involved Stan as an expert. It is great that he is from Holderness.

I asked Stan the potential reuse as well as costs to disassemble, remove it from Bedford and bring it to Wentworth. I also asked Stan for his thoughts on longevity of this bridge and potential costs to rehabilitate it. The rehab costs should be in hand by the Sunday meeting but he felt the bridge is sound.

Stan after viewing the bridge presented us some thoughts

Removal, disassembly and move to Wentworth to be stored near the King Mill would cost between \$20,000-\$25,000. I have spoken with Jennifer and while we cannot bear this entire amount we are willing to front this cost to gain this opportunity if the committee votes for this decision. We are willing to donate long term \$5,000 towards the bridge. This would mean we would need to find supplementary funding to repay our up front monies.

**Option 1-** Stan reviewed the bridge and his first thoughts were it could be reinstalled on our abutments without any steel. It could be a true covered wooden truss bridge. He believes with maintenance along the way that this bridge could have a 70 year lifespan from this point forward. He was going to check to see if this bridge at 50 years old would qualify as a historic covered bridge.

So then the NHDOT has a figure of roughly \$60,000 to rehabilitate and install the steel and deck with rails they spoke of. Is it possible to have the 1909 bridge removed then have 3 G install our rehabilitated covered bridge. The \$60,000 would significantly cover the costs to do so with the remainder made up by donations.

Down side is we are left solely with a pedestrian/OHRV bridge and there is no future for any vehicle crossing since the steel support no longer exists. This is NOT a guarantee as the developer could renege on donating the bridge to us. So it would be important for us to decide on a second option.

**Option 2-** Install the 4 steel I beams then set the Goffes Mill bridge on top of the steel. This would allow for long term support in the event that a vehicle need is found later. It removes liability of the weight limitations of an all wooden Covered bridge.

Down side it removes a potential funding source to rehabilitate the covered bridge and it would never be a true covered wooden bridge. It also elevates the bridge to where roadways will need to be significantly modified.

**Option 3-** Have the 4 sections of rehabilitated steel installed with a wide wooden deck for Pedestrian and OHRV installed by the state. The two I beams the town presently has would be donated to the state for this use with the two the state already has slotted for this. Once this crossing is built install a cover over a portion of the deck with local funding and manpower. This probably would be the quickest and least costly decision up front.

Downside is this is a steel bridge with cover and has no historic value.

**Option 4-** Rehabilitation of the 1909 Steel Bridge. While some of our committee are adamant that this should be our only consideration the cost is \$880,000 to rehabilitate this bridge. The NHDOT has been adamant that they see no need for vehicular traffic and will not seek Federal funding to do so. This would leave this cost to bear on Wentworth. The option here is to seek town funding, private funding and or to litigate with the State over a need to save this as the last bridge of its kind and to prove we have a need for vehicular traffic.

Down side High cost, Vehicular traffic through the green and an extended time frame without a pedestrian crossing.

It is my intent to have a vote by committee member of all of these options for the record I will ask for your votes. Prior to our vote I will read the options in front of us for public comment. I would need a selection of two options by each committee member in order of priority of first and second choice.

Once we have voted it is up to the town to guide us on how to proceed forward as we either have a the NHDRED , Town accept the bridge or a non profit be formed so that donations are tax deductible and they accept the administration of the bridge.

Finally it is up to the town to have dialogue with the NHDOT concerning the acceptance of the roadways to the Bridge. I was caught off guard at the NHDOT open meeting where this became a caveat to the removal of the bridge. I believe this is outside of Bridge Steering Committees control.

Thanks all for your time.  
John