

**HISTORIC DISTRICT &  
HISTORIC PROPERTY  
COMMISSION**

Allison Sanders, Chair  
Lisa Pojano, Vice-Chair  
Gilbert Weatherly, Clerk  
Jeffrey Bendremer  
Lori Fusco

*Alternates*

Pam Brown  
Peter Gaboriault  
Alice Schroeder



**TOWN HALL  
238 Danbury Road  
Wilton, Connecticut 06897**

**Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, January 5, 2021  
Electronic Meeting: 7:30 pm**

**I. Call to order 7:32 pm**

- a. Attendance: Commissioners Sanders, Pojano, Weatherly, Bendremer and Fusco present.
- b. Minutes: Clerk informs Commissioners that the Nov. 9 minutes were indeed complete and correct. After discussion Chair moves to accept and Pojano seconds the motion. Vote to approve is unanimous. Pojano moves to accept the Dec. 1 minutes and Bendremer seconds. The vote to approve is unanimous.
- c. Finalize 2021 meeting dates: After discussion it is determined that the 2021 dates are: Jan 5, Feb 2, March 2, April 6, May 5, June 1, Sept 14, Oct 5, Nov 3, Dec 7

**II. GIS Overlay of Historic Districts, Update: Lisa Pojano will go to Town Hall to identify the lot numbers, street names and numbers of all the buildings in Historic Districts.**

**III. Lover's Lane Bridge Replacement, Update: Allison Sanders informed the HD&HPC that the Commission is not a signatory to the project but the Commission will be kept informed as the project progresses. Text of the letter from CTDOT follows:**

Lucas A. Karmazinas **Date:** December 17, 2020 National Register Specialist

Allison Sanders Chair, Wilton Historic District & Historic Property Commission SENT  
VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

State No.: Project Title:

Town: Wilton

161-142 Replacement of Bridge #04975 Lovers Lane over Comstock Brook Wilton

## **Response to HD/HPC Comments**

Dear Ms. Sanders:

The Connecticut Department of Transportation's (CTDOT) Office of Environmental Planning (OEP) appreciates the opportunity to respond to comments and questions raised in the Commission's November and December 2020 meetings as forwarded to OEP by representatives of the Town, as well as contained in a statement sent to CTDOT dated November 9, 2020, regarding State Project #161-142, Replacement of Bridge #04975, Lovers Lane over Comstock Brook. As a project partially funded with federal monies, the proposed undertaking was initially reviewed by OEP cultural resources staff for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act in April 2020. At that time, OEP staff determined that Bridge #04975 is located within the Wilton Center Historic District,<sup>1</sup> yet is not a contributing resource, nor should it be considered such.

This being said, it was also determined that there were several historic properties (10 Lovers Lane, 15 Lovers Lane, 80 Ridgefield Road, and a stone mill dam) listed as contributing elements that are located within or in close proximity to the identified Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the project. The identified and anticipated impacts of the undertaking on these resources, and the probability of the work resulting in effects that might compromise the historic character and integrity of the district, were then evaluated. These effects were ultimately determined not to rise to the level of an Adverse Effect as they will be relatively limited, temporary, and will not compromise the historic character of the district.

As State Project #161-142 was determined to result in No Adverse Effects to Historic Properties, it was then administered under the authority established by the Programmatic Agreement executed between CTDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer (CTSHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) regarding compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) for Minor Transportation Projects<sup>2</sup> and no signatories are required, as would have been

the case should the project have resulted in an Adverse Effect and a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) drafted to mitigate these effects. Consultation with Federally-recognized Native American Tribes was initiated via FHWA in July 2020 and is ongoing.

It should also be noted, however, that while the project was initially reviewed before implementation of a temporary bridge to be located adjacent to the existing in order to maintain roadway access during construction was selected as part of the preferred alternative, it is standard procedure for our office to complete Section 106 documentation before all details are finalized. For this reason, OEP staff typically identifies a “buffer zone,” within which we attempt to predict typical or hypothetical impacts, including access to the project area or structure(s), the area to be physically or visually impacted as part of demolition and new construction, traffic handling, etc. In this case, the APE included a 50' buffer in all directions from the bridge, this resulting in the identification of the properties and resources identified above. All this being said, the intention to implement a temporary bridge was eventually identified as a component of the preferred alternative for this project in August 2020, at which time our office revisited the original determination. The proposed location of the temporary bridge was reexamined by OEP cultural resources staff and no historic properties or features that would result in the need to revisit the project's previous *No Adverse Effect* finding were identified. The cultural resources staff affirmed that based upon the relatively small footprint that the bridge would require, the temporary nature of its use, and the intention to minimize removal of trees and other landscape features, implementation of the temporary bridge the would not significantly change the historic character of the district.

If, at some future date, the design plans were to further evolve or change in a dramatic way, however, such a reevaluation could occur. As a matter of practice, OEP staff reviews design drawings as they develop toward final design. In addition to checking for potential effects to historic properties, staff will coordinate with CTDOT's Bureau of Engineering to ensure that the concerns identified in the Commission's November 9, 2020, letter are reflected in the final design. These

include the recommendation that the new bridge be sympathetic in size and aesthetic to the surrounding area, that property takes and physical impacts on the environment and landscape features be minimized wherever possible, that natural materials be used in the design of the new bridge and associated features wherever feasible, and that full restoration of the project area with sympathetic native plantings take place upon completion of the undertaking. As of the drafting of this correspondence, it is the opinion of OEP staff that all of these concerns are being satisfactorily addressed by CTDOT's Division of Bridges and its consultants.

Relevant design considerations include:

- Reduction of the initially-proposed bridge curb-to-curb width from the standard 24' to the town-minimum 22'.

- Facing the new bridge barrier walls and wing walls with a true stone veneer.

- Implementation of open rails on the topside of the bridge.

- Implementation of steel-backed, timber guide rail along the approaches.

- Limiting the impacts resultant of the temporary bridge to a small section of the parcel at 10 Lovers Lane on the south side of Comstock Brook and the roadway ROW on the north side and keeping alignment of the bridge as close to the existing as possible.

- Avoidance of stone walls located on the Wilton Congregational Church property at 70 Ridgefield Road.

- Limited impacts to, and subsequent reconstruction of, stone walls, if necessary, at 80 Ridgefield Road and 19 Lovers Lane.

- Minimizing takes and impacts to 80 Ridgefield Road.

- Minimizing clearing of existing trees and sympathetic restoration of the landscape upon completion of the project.

Again, as Bridge #04975 was not identified as a contributing feature of the Wilton Center Historic District, and as OEP cultural resources staff determined that the aforementioned aspects of the proposed project prevented it from presenting an

adverse effect, additional signatories or consulting parties were not identified or required. This being said, OEP staff appreciates the Commission's expertise and diligence on this matter and will continue to coordinate with the Commission as the project moves towards final design. The Commission's November 9, 2020, correspondence will be included as part of the project file and, as noted, the recommendations implemented to the fullest extent possible. OEP welcomes additional comments and information, as relevant, and looks forward to continuing to collaborate in efforts to preserve the historic character of the town of Wilton.

Many thanks,

Lucas A. Karmazinas

National Register Specialist

Office of Environmental Planning

Connecticut Department of Transportation

IV. Impact on Georgetown LHD#6 by Nissan Dealership storage lot expansion, P&ZSP#471  
Update: Allison Sanders reported that input regarding P&ZSP#471 is closed. P&Z will discuss it at the Jan.11 meeting.

V. 275 Hurlbutt St., Platt Raymond House at Ambler Farm: Chair shared pictures of the Platt Raymond House and described the deterioration of the exterior. Weatherly suggests that the HD&HPC should invite the Board of Selectmen to establish all Town owned buildings listed in the Historic House Survey and not currently located in Historic Districts as Historic Properties.

VI. Certified Local Government (CLG) application: Commissioners reviewed the CLG Checklist. It is determined that the Town will qualify. Chair will get needed guidance from SHPO on how to structure our application.

VII. Public Comment: Tim Burt, Executive Director, Ambler Farm observed the meeting and reported on the efforts Ambler Farm is taking to renovate the Platt Raymond House.

VIII. Adjournment: 9:13 pm

Next Meeting February 2, 2021

Submitted by Gil Weatherly, Clerk

