



GLOUCESTER Drawbridge Replacement Project

GLOUCESTER DRAWBRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Virtual Public Meeting – Summary

Tuesday, March 30, 2021

MBTA Attendees

Angel Donahue-Rodriguez

Brad Nicoll

Jody Ray

Katy Zazzera

Peter Gagnon

Project Team Attendees

Kate Barrett, Regina Villa Associates (RVA)

Kyle Olsen, RVA

Nancy Farrell, RVA

Elected Officials

Senator Bruce Tarr

Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken

Public Attendees

Anne Hyde

Betsy Basch

Bob Ryan

Chris Galatis

Christopher Sicuranza

David Tower

Dan

Ethan Finlan

Felicia

Jaime Garmendia

Jane Gagliardi

Joe Orlando, Orlando Associates

Ken Burdsall

Lynn Jackson

Martin Basch

Regina Villa

Stefan Wuensch

Tim Sova

Materials

PowerPoint Presentation ¹

¹ The presentation and a recording of the meeting are available on the project website, <https://www.mass.gov/rohttps://www.mbta.com/events/2021-03-30/gloucester-drawbridge-virtual-community-meeting?preview=&vid=latest&nid=5250urke-bridge-replacement-project>

PRESENTATION

Kate Barrett, Regina Villa Associates, welcomed attendees to the Gloucester Drawbridge Replacement Project Virtual Public Meeting. She noted the meeting will be recorded and posted on the project website. Angel Donahue-Rodriguez, MBTA, invited elected officials in attendance to provide opening remarks before the technical presentation.

Senator Bruce Tarr, 1st Essex and Middlesex, thanked the project team for its work to move the project forward and for the communication efforts. He encouraged all attendees to stay in touch with the project team via the project email address. Senator Tarr also thanked Ted Costa from his staff, who has been working on issues related to the Gloucester Drawbridge Replacement Project.

Gloucester Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken echoed Senator Tarr's sentiments, and explained she looks forward to continued communication on the project.

Mr. Donahue-Rodriguez provided a general overview of the project. The Gloucester Drawbridge is located between West Gloucester and Gloucester Stations on the Rockport Commuter Rail line. Bus diversions between Manchester-by-the-Sea and Rockport Station are currently in effect on weekdays and weekends and will continue through summer 2021. Mr. Donahue-Rodriguez noted that bus shuttles are free, and typically add about 10-20 minutes to commuters' overall trip time.

Current ridership on the MBTA Commuter Rail System is about 8 – 12% of the pre-pandemic levels. Mr. Donahue-Rodriguez noted the MBTA will be adding service in anticipation of the economy reopening and encourages attendees to check the MBTA website for the April 5 schedule change.

The full diversion from West Gloucester to Rockport Stations implemented in summer 2019, which was held under normal ridership conditions, caused no significant parking issues. Mr. Donahue-Rodriguez explained that alternate stations along the Newburyport/Rockport line, like Salem and Beverly Station, have large parking garages providing additional capacity during the diversion.

The project team has been working closely with delegation, Mayor's Office and members of the City Council to make sure constituent concerns are addressed properly. Additionally, there is a project dedicated inbox, project website, fact sheet, monthly newsletter, and project email list.

Brad Nicoll, MBTA, outlined the construction progress so far. The full diversion resulted in tremendous progress on construction over the past year. A photo showed the demolition of the existing timber trestle. Another photo showed construction crews working to install drilled shafts for the bridge foundation. Mr. Nicoll noted that the contractor's focus during the winter was on

foundational elements, including the drilled shaft work. A final photo showed completed approach slabs at the east abutment.

Mr. Donohue-Rodriguez noted that the contractor is anticipating construction on the single southern bascule to be complete in late summer 2021, allowing for Commuter Rail service to resume to Gloucester and Rockport Stations. A second bridge track is anticipated to be completed in 2022.

Public Q&A

Ms. Barret outlined the public Q&A process and noted that any questions following the meeting can be sent to the project email address: Gloucesterdraw@MBTA.com.

Joe Orlando explained he represents the Sova and Pye families on Lyndale Avenue. He asked who made the decision to idle trains in the Lyndale Avenue neighborhood vs. West Gloucester station, and if there is an alternative to idle the trains before the station? Mr. Donohue-Rodriguez explained he does not feel it is appropriate to comment during the meeting if there is pending litigation that Mr. Orlando is handling.

Bob Ryan asked if the project team could provide a specific date for the start of service over the Gloucester Drawbridge in late summer 2021. Mr. Donohue-Rodriguez explained it is difficult to pin down a specific date at this point. Ms. Barrett added that Mr. Ryan could subscribe to the project email list, where an update will be sent once the date is determined.

Lynn Jackson asked if there are any anticipated impacts to boat traffic under the bridge? Mr. Nicoll explained that there is a notice to mariners currently for a closure from April 7 to April 30 from 6:00 AM to 4:00 PM each day, Monday through Saturday. Additionally, Mr. Nicoll expects another diversion in late spring to continue into late May or early June, as well as a mid-week closure associated with construction work. Ms. Barrett added that Ms. Jackson should continue to visit the project website, where any new notice to mariners would be posted; however, the U.S. Coast Guard's Notice to Mariners website is the best source of this type of information.

Senator Tarr asked if the project team anticipated any operational changes, or if service will stay the same until the single span is opened in late summer. Mr. Nicoll explained he does not anticipate any operational changes on the bridge. Mr. Donahue-Rodriguez reminded the audience of the Commuter Rail schedule change to be implemented on April 5, which is the only operational change he is aware of currently. Any service changes moving forward will be shared on the MBTA website.

Ms. Barrett closed the meeting and reminded the audience to continue checking the project website for project updates and to sign up for email alerts. A copy of the presentation has been posted to the project website, and an advisory will be sent to the project email list once the meeting recording has been posted.