

**MINUTES OF THE BISSELL BRIDGE MEETING  
TOWN OF CHARLEMONT  
MASS HIGHWAY  
HAWLEMONT REGIONAL SCHOOL  
NOVEMBER 30, 2004  
6:30 P.M.**

The meeting was convened at 6:30 P.M. by Chairman James Gariepy. Mass Highway District 1 Director Ross Dindio was introduced. The meeting was turned over to Mr. Dindio and the members of Mass Highway Boston for their presentation. Pamphlets were handed out.

Mr. Dindio explained that Mass Highway has been working on solutions to rehabilitating the Bissell Bridge along with making it safe for passage. Mr. Dindio hoped that the solution presented is one that everyone, Mass Highway and the residents of Charlemont, will agree upon.

Mass Highway announced that the Bissell Bridge can be saved and rehabilitated. The main areas of work are the floor that needs to have a new deck system between the main trusses, installing crash tested rails along both interior sides, and strengthening trusses and hangers. The bridge is in excellent condition and Mass Highway does not recommend not taking the bridge apart but repairing the bridge as it stands. The wood used in the original was found to have been treated with chemicals to deter rot. The replacement wood would also be treated. Current hardware for the bridge would be replaced with galvanized, of course finishing the hardware to Mass Historical standards.

Mr. Dindio stated that the crash rails will narrow the bridge by 4', two feet on each side. Mass Highway is suggesting the bridge be a one lane bridge to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclist alike. If reduced to one lane, traffic lights or possibly stop signs would need to be placed on each side of the bridge. Since it is a Town owned bridge, it is the Town's decision to have the bridge one or two lanes. Once the bridge has been rehabilitated and is open to traffic, the temporary bridge will be removed by Mass Highway. Mr. Dindio suggested that Mass Highway could possibly create a 2 to 3 car parking area and a look out at the south abutment of the temporary bridge.

The Town is to collect any questions, suggestions, and comments concerning Mass Highway's solution presented and forward them on to District 1 for their review. The Town is to also decide if the bridge is to be one or two lanes and if the Town will accept the design and renovations presented.

Questions/ comments during the meeting were:

Instead of lights to direct traffic for two lanes, could not stop signs work?

A single lane and traffic lights have already met resistance.

Love the idea of an observation deck and parking area.

Can the Town accept the design now and decide of the number of lanes later?

Could a side walk be created on the northerly side of the bridge for pedestrians?

What material will the deck be made out of? White oak

If the Town votes for one lane, will all the strengthening trusses be required? Yes

How will water on/in the deck be avoided?

The current road will need to be redone so that water does not run into the bridge.

Won't stainless steel metals last longer? Yes, but due to the cost factor, galvanized steel will be Used.

Can Mass Highway engineers give the Town preventative maintenance measures to the Town?

The roof will be replaced with wooden shingles.

The Mass Historical Commission is already on board.

How soon will the project be completed if the Town gives the go ahead by the first of the year?

Mr. Dindio requested that he be copied all letters sent to the Mass Highway Commissioner and Secretary.

Business being concluded, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Garipey at 8:45 P.M..

Respectfully submitted:

Approved by:  
Board of Selectmen

Kathy A. Chadwick  
Administrative Assistant

This document is to be considered a draft until approved and signed by the Board of Selectmen.