



DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

Thursday March 2, 2017 at 6:30 PM

At

**Town Hall
Council Hearing Room
75 Middle Street, Weymouth, MA 02189**

FOR THE PROPOSED

**Improvements to Pingree Elementary School –
Safe Routes to School(SRTS)
Project File No. 608003**

**IN THE TOWN OF WEYMOUTH,
MASSACHUSETTS**

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

**THOMAS J. TINLIN
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

**PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER**

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
Project File No. 608003

A Design Public Hearing will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed improvements to Pingree Elementary School – Safe Routes to School (SRTS) project in the Town of Weymouth, MA.

- WHERE:** Weymouth Town Hall
Town Council Hearing Room
75 Middle Street
Weymouth, MA 02189
- WHEN:** Thursday, March 2, 2017 @ 6:30 PM
- PURPOSE:** The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Improvements to Pingree Elementary School – Safe Routes To School (SRTS) project. All views and comments made at the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.
- PROPOSAL:** The objective of this project is to install traffic calming measures to provide more awareness of a school zone for students crossing Commercial Street. The proposed work includes “bump outs” to reduce crossing distance, improved sidewalks and crosswalks, installation of new pavement markings and signing, new flashing school zone warning beacons, and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB), in accordance with current state and federal standards.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Temporary Easements will be required. The Town of Weymouth is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT’s policy concerning land acquisitions will be discussed at this hearing.

Written views received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing shall be displayed for public inspection and copying at the time and date listed above. Plans will be on display one-half hour before the hearing begins, with an engineer in attendance to answer questions regarding this project. A project handout will be made available on the MassDOT website listed below.

Written statements and other exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements made at the Public Hearing regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Roadway Project Management, Project File No. 608003. Such submissions will also be accepted at the hearing. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked within ten (10) business days of this Public Hearing. Project inquiries may be emailed to dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us

This location is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT’s Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten (10) business days before the meeting.

In case of inclement weather, hearing cancellation announcements will be posted on the internet at <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/>

THOMAS J. TINLIN
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, 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,

Patricia A Leavenworth, P. E.
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.

TO SAFEGUARD THE PROPERTY OWNER

If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the State 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. WHO CONTACTS ME?

The Town of Weymouth. They will explain the impacts and your rights as protected under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 79.

2. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR MY PROPERTY?

Every offer is made to ensure that an equitable value is awarded to you for the property, or to appraise the “damage” to the property as a result of the acquisition. MassDOT appraisers, independent appraisers, MassDOT “Review Appraisers” and a Real Estate Appraisal Review Board may all contribute in arriving at an award of damages. The State also pays a proportionate part of the real estate tax for the current year for fee takings, and interest from the date the property is acquired to the payment date, on all impacts.

3. MUST I ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT’S OFFER?

No. If, after the figure established as market value has been offered to the owner, the owner feels he or she is not being offered a fair price, he or she has the right, within three years, to appeal to the courts. Pending a court decision, he or she can be paid on a “pro-tanto” basis (or “for the time being”) that in no way prejudices the court appeal.

4. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY HOUSE?

The owner will have the opportunity to buy back his or her house, provided he or she has a location to which it can be moved, and the proper permits for its removal. If the owner does not wish to repurchase, the house will be advertised for bids. The highest bidder, who must also have a location and permits for removal, will be awarded the house. Otherwise, the structure will be slated for demolition.

5. WHAT HAPPENS IF I MUST RELOCATE?

In addition to the market value of the property, the Department pays certain relocation benefits for both owners and tenants of acquired residences and businesses who meet eligibility requirements. Assistance in relocation is also provided. Department brochures are available for details on these benefits.



Figure 1: Project Location

Improvements to Pingree Elementary School -
Safe Route to School (SRTS)
Weymouth, MA

Data Source: MassGIS
Nitsch Project #9720.13

IMPROVEMENTS TO PINGREE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS), WEYMOUTH, MA

PROJECT LOCATION AND LIMITS

The proposed project begins on Commercial Street approximately 250 feet north of Cottage Street and ends 300 feet south of Pingree elementary school driveway. Work on the Pingree School Driveway extends approximately 200 feet east towards the school. A locus map of the project area is shown in Figure 1 above.

PURPOSE

The goals of the project are to install traffic calming measures to reduce speeds in the area, and improve the existing pedestrian facilities at the Pingree Elementary School. The project intersection currently experiences high vehicle volumes, high vehicle speeds, lengthy crosswalks, and limited sight distance due to wide curb-to-curb roadway width and large turning radii. The proposed project consists of improvements to the existing geometry including curb “bump outs”, improved sidewalk and crosswalks, new pavements markings and signage, flashing school zone warning beacons, and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) in accordance with current state and federal standards.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Pingree Elementary school has a total population of 271 students, 88% live within walking distance and approximately 13% of those students currently walk or bike to school. The school is located at 1250 Commercial street in the northeast corner of the Town of Weymouth, less than a half-mile from the borders of Hingham and Quincy. Majority of the population resides to the south of the school. The area surrounding the school consists of Commercial properties to the east and south and residential homes to the west and north.

Broad Street/High Street is an urban minor arterial roadway located approximately 650 feet south of the Pingree Elementary School and carries over 7000 vehicles per day. Commercial Street is also classified as an urban minor arterial roadway. Heavy traffic volumes along these roadways create a barrier between the Pingree School and students residing in neighborhoods south of Broad Street/High Street and west of Commercial Street.

The intersections of Commercial Street/Broad Street and Commercial Street/High Street are considered high crash locations near the school. A report from the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization from 2002-2006 claimed there were multiple crashes at these intersections involving pedestrians and bicyclists. A total of 95 collisions involving pedestrians and 41 involving bikes occurred at these intersections over the 5-year study period – total of 4 fatalities.

The project intersection experiences high volumes during parent drop-off/pick-up hours, increasing congestion near the school and creating a hazardous environment for students to walk and bike to/from school. The school’s driveway is located along a horizontal and vertical curve, making it difficult for motorists to see pedestrians in the crosswalk or queued to use the crosswalk. On-street parking, wide curb-to-curb roadway width, and large turning radii further exacerbates the problem. Large turning radii create long crosswalks, limited sight lines, long gaps in vehicle traffic, and high vehicle speeds. Existing wheelchair ramps in the surrounding area are not accessible and current school zone flashers are out of date or not functioning.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The proposed improvements for this project are as follows:

- Install curb “bump outs” along commercial street at existing crosswalks.
- Construct ADA compliant wheelchair ramps and crosswalks.
- Reconstruct sidewalks.
- Pavement milling and resurfacing throughout.
- Install new pavement markings with shared lane bicycle sharrows.
- Install new regulatory and warning signs.
- Install new flashing school zone warning beacons at Commercial Street crossing with current state and federal standards.
- Install new Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) in accordance with current state and federal standards.

MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC DURING CONSTRUCTION

Roadways within the project area will remain open to traffic throughout construction. Traffic Management Plans have been developed for the project. Access to all residences and businesses will be maintained during construction. Abutters will be notified in advance should access to their property need to be restricted.

RIGHT OF WAY

The Town of Weymouth is responsible for all Right-of-Way impacts. Temporary Easements will be required. This will be discussed at the Design Public Hearing.

PROJECT COST

The current estimated cost of construction is \$542,000.00. This project will be funded with both Federal and State funds.

PROJECT STATUS

The project is currently at 75% design. Comments made at this design public hearing will be incorporated to the maximum extent feasible into the final design. The project is currently scheduled to be advertised for construction in early Spring, 2018.

Please Fold and Tape



Please Place
Appropriate
Postage Here

Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E.
Chief Engineer
MassDOT, Highway Division
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116-3973

RE: Public Hearing
Improvements to Pingree Elementary School – Safe Routes to
School (SRTS)
Project No. 608003
Project Management

