

**WIN 18736.10**

**Gardiner Multi-Use Path**

**August 24, 2017 Public Meeting**

**Public Comment Cards**

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**George**

**Comment:** Is this a wag the dog DOT Bridge project: I care about the environment and hiking. Hiking and trucks and cars don't work together. Right of way means public access not please everyone. Keep environment and traffic separate. Hikers and ????? separate or don't bother.

**Response:** This project is a shared use path as defined by FHWA and as such, is designed to accommodate non-motorized users. This includes bicyclists (with a wide range of skill levels, including young children), pedestrians (including walkers, runners, people using wheelchairs, and people with strollers), skate boarders and skaters. This section of the path is in an urban area with tight constraints of the stream, the Maine Avenue and Arcade roadways and the adjacent private and commercial parcels which does place the path adjacent to traffic with separation created through curbing. This section of path is also meant to serve as a connector for the off road facility Kennebec River Rail Trail and the future Cobbosseecontee Path which will also have off road sections while encouraging recreational access to the downtown urban area.

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**Dorothy**

**Comment:** Japanese Knotweed has overgrown many sections along the stream and the entrance to the railroad trestle. If not controlled or removed it will continue to spread. It will also be an eyesore along the trail. Are there any plans for removing it??

**Response:** The weed will be removed within the limits of the Multi-Use path and the two highway bridge projects (Maine Avenue and Bridge Street). Removing the weed beyond these limits is the responsibility of the City.

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**Steve**

**Comment:** 1. Flow studies based on "Status Quo" introduce a major error – Must take into consideration sea level rise anticipated. 2. Perforated "barriers" (fencing) will entrain debris in flood events and create additional flood impact.

**Response:** 1. MaineDOT considers mean sea level rise on a case by case basis on projects and encourages the use of updated National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) tidal data where possible and prudent. Mean sea level rise was not considered on this project for the following reasons. The entire area of the multi-use recreational and Maine Avenue highway bridges across the Cobbosseecontee Stream and the surrounding area on Arcade and the southerly Hannaford's parking lot are within the regulated FEMA Floodway for the 100-year flood level of the Kennebec River. This area of the project will be inundated during this flood level with the Kennebec River overflowing its banks and

backwater conditions occurring in the Stream, as has occurred several times during past historical flood events. Considering mean sea level rise in this case would not change the outcome or recommendations of the design, as the trail and bridge structures at Maine Avenue will already be under water without considering mean sea level rise. The project site is not an immediate coastal area, so we believe factoring in mean seal level rise would have minor impacts to the hydraulic analysis. Historical floods of record have reportedly been during periods of ice jamming on the Kennebec River. The Coast Guard now cuts the ice in the River, reducing the risk of historical flood levels being increased by any mean sea level rise.

The proposed Maine Avenue bridge total waterway opening is increased by 24% over the existing bridge opening. The proposed multi-use recreational bridge that is 50 feet upstream of the highway bridge has approximately the same opening as the proposed highway bridge (1% less). The 2 proposed bridges each have 3.4 feet of vertical clearance above the 100-year flood elevation when considering peak stream flow alone without coincident backwater from the River.

The Bridge Street highway bridge and adjacent trail section is within the regulated FEMA Floodway for the Cobbosseecontee Stream flow only. FEMA did not map this Floodway accounting for coincident peak flood conditions in the River and the river tidal effects are diminished about half way between Bridge Street and Maine Avenue. The proposed Bridge Street bridge waterway opening is less than existing by only 10% despite a much shorter bridge. The reduction in bridge length will be largely offset by the removal of Dennis's Pizza building, 2 existing piers in the stream, and regrading the north stream bank to its natural stream width. FEMA's 100-year flood elevation with coincident peak flooding on the Kennebec River and backwater effects in the stream is a few feet up on the bottom of the existing and proposed bridge, but the roadway is not overtopped. There is 10.4 feet of vertical clearance above the 100-year flood elevation when considering peak stream flow alone. The proposed bridge abutment foundations are located outside of the mapped FEMA Floodway and our hydraulic analysis shows that there is not a negative impact on the 100-year flood elevation for stream flow alone.

We will protect the bridges from flood damage as much as possible given the site constraints and the project proximity to a FEMA mapped Floodway area. We believe that the proposed design will not increase flooding in the project area even if mean sea level rise was accounted for.

2. Consideration will be given to selecting a trail safety barrier that will reduce the potential to snag debris during flooding to minimize effects on the waterway opening.

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**Cynthia**

**Comment:** Be careful!

**Response:** No response needed.