



**PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING**

**APRIL 18, 2017**

**AT**

**TOWN HALL**

**AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS**

**6:30 PM**

**FOR THE PROPOSED**

**Intersection Improvements and Related Work on Routes 9 and 116, from University Drive  
to South Pleasant Street  
Project No. 608084  
Roadway Project Management**

**IN THE TOWN OF AMHERST, 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 INFORMATIONAL MEETING**

**Project File No. 608084**

A Public Informational Meeting will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed Routes 9 & 116 Improvement project (from University Drive to South Pleasant Street) in Amherst, MA.

WHERE: Amherst Town Hall, Town Room  
4 Boltwood Ave  
Amherst, MA 01002

WHEN: Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017@ 6:30 PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the various design options considered for the proposed Routes 9 & 116 Improvement project (from University Drive to South Pleasant Street). All views and comments made at the informational meeting will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The goal of the project is to improve access and safety for all users. The key design elements include: roadway widening; pavement resurfacing; new bicycle lanes; and reconstructed sidewalks and wheelchair ramps. The following four bicycle accommodation options have been evaluated and will be presented: 1) two, 7-foot wide raised and separated bike lanes; 2) two, 5-foot wide painted and separated bicycle lanes; 3) one, 10-foot wide raised and separated bike lane; and 4) one, 10-foot wide multiuse path.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be discussed at this informational meeting.

Written views received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the informational meeting will be displayed for public inspection and copying at the time and date listed above. Plans will be on display one-half hour before the meeting 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 Informational Meeting 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. 608084. Such submissions will also be accepted at the meeting. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public informational meeting transcript must be postmarked within ten (10) business days of this Public Informational meeting. Project inquiries may be emailed to [dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us](mailto: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](mailto: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, informational meeting 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 MEETING?**

### **WHY A PUBLIC MEETING?**

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 MEETING 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?**

Representatives of the Right of Way Bureau of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Highway Division. 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.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project consists of the reconstruction and improvements of approximately 0.8 miles of Route 9/116 in the Town of Amherst. The work will begin at the intersection between Route 9/ 116 and University Drive and continue north, terminating prior to the intersection between Route 9/116 and South Pleasant Street (Route 116). The intent of the project is to reconstruct the roadway and create a “Complete Streets” corridor, providing safe and accessible accommodations for all users including pedestrians and bicyclists.

## PROJECT GOALS

Provide bicycle accommodations, increase walkability by providing accessible pedestrian routes, improve the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians, resurface the existing roadway, and improve safety at the intersection of Route 9 and University Drive.

## CONCEPT ALTERNATIVES

### **Concept 1: Separate Accommodations for All Users**

11’ Lanes, 4’ Shoulders, Both Sides: 2’ Grass Buffer, 7’ HMA Bike Path, Concrete Sidewalk

Pros: Accommodates and separates all users

Cons: Requires a significant amount of ROW and utility relocations

Estimated ROW impacts = 16,500 sf +/-

### **Concept 2: Bike Lane in Roadway w/ 3-ft Gore**

12’ Travel Lanes, Both Sides: 3’ Gore Area, 5’ Bike Lane (Street level), Concrete Sidewalk

Pros: Accommodates all users; Minimal ROW impacts

Cons: No vertical separation between bicyclists/vehicles, minimal standard dimensions, no shared use accommodations

Estimated ROW impacts = 3,500 sf +/-

### **Concept 3: Separated Bike Lane & Sidewalk (South) with Sidewalk (North)**

11’ Travel Lanes, 4’ Shoulders, South Side: 10’ HMA Bike Path Concrete Sidewalk, North Side: Concrete Sidewalk

Pros: Accommodates all users; Bicycle and pedestrian accommodates separated from vehicular traffic (South)

Cons: ROW impacts, bicycle accommodations on one side only

Estimated ROW impacts = 5,800 sf +/-

### **Concept 4: Multi-use Shared Path (South) & Sidewalk (North)**

11’ Travel Lanes, 4’ Shoulders, South Side: 2’ Grass Buffer, 10’ HMA Shared use path, North Side: Concrete Sidewalk

Pros: Accommodates all users with vehicle separation; minimal ROW impacts; minimal driveway crossings

Cons: Alignment shift, two-way pedestrian/bicycle shared use, utility pole relocations, Amherst College property impacts (south side)

Estimated ROW impacts = 1,500 sf +/-

### **Concept 5: Multi-Use Shared Path (North) & Sidewalk (South) **\*\*PREFERRED CONCEPT\*\*****

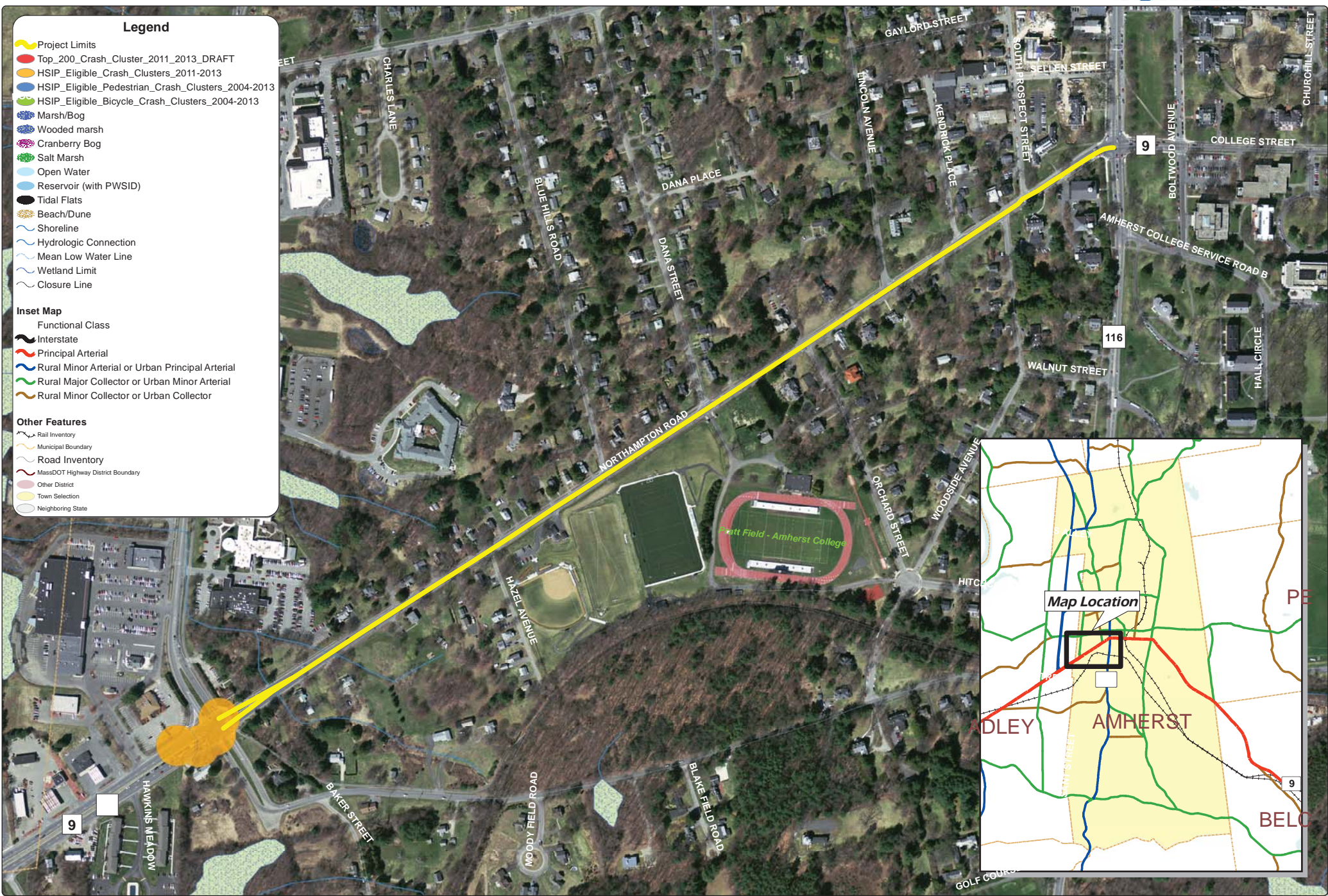
11’ Travel Lanes, 4’ Shoulders, South Side: Concrete Sidewalk, North Side: 2’ Grass Buffer, 10’ HMA Shared use path

Pros: Accommodates all users with vehicle separation; minimal ROW impacts, avoids majority of Amherst College property (south side)

Cons: Alignment shift, two-way pedestrian/bicycle shared use, utility pole relocations

Estimated ROW impacts = 1,500 sf +/-

# AMHERST, IMPROVEMENTS & RELATED WORK ON ROUTES 9 & 116 (#608084)



**Legend**

- Project Limits
- Top\_200\_Crash\_Cluster\_2011\_2013\_DRAFT
- HSIP\_Eligible\_Crash\_Clusters\_2011-2013
- HSIP\_Eligible\_Pedestrian\_Crash\_Clusters\_2004-2013
- HSIP\_Eligible\_Bicycle\_Crash\_Clusters\_2004-2013
- Marsh/Bog
- Wooded marsh
- Cranberry Bog
- Salt Marsh
- Open Water
- Reservoir (with PWSID)
- Tidal Flats
- Beach/Dune
- Shoreline
- Hydrologic Connection
- Mean Low Water Line
- Wetland Limit
- Closure Line

**Inset Map**

- Functional Class
- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Rural Minor Arterial or Urban Principal Arterial
- Rural Major Collector or Urban Minor Arterial
- Rural Minor Collector or Urban Collector

**Other Features**

- Rail Inventory
- Municipal Boundary
- Road Inventory
- MassDOT Highway District Boundary
- Other District
- Town Selection
- Neighboring State



File: Amherst\_02084\_0000  
 Date: November 17, 2015  
 Author: bshubler

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

Amherst, MA

Intersection Improvements and Related Work on Routes 9 and 116, from University Drive to  
South Pleasant Street  
Project File No. 608084

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated. Please return  
your sheet, with comments, to a staff member at the meeting, or mail to:

Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer  
MassDOT – Highway Division  
10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116-3973  
Attn: Roadway Project Management

The final date for receipt of written statements and exhibits for inclusion into the official hearing  
transcript will be ten (10) days after the Public Hearing.

**PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY.**

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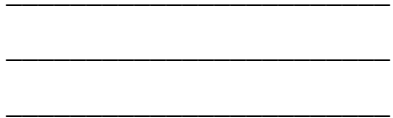
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Please Fold and Tape



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

RE: Public Information Meeting  
Intersection Improvements and Related Work on Routes 9 and 116, from University Drive  
to South Pleasant Street  
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**Project File No. 608084**  
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