

Hill Street Culvert Reconstruction, Raynham



Hill Street Culvert before (above left) and after (above right) reconstruction. Photo SRPEDD

Who: The Town of Raynham, Mass DOT, SRPEDD, Electrochem Commercial Power

What: The Town of Raynham worked with state, regional, local, and economic development partners to upgrade a culvert on Hill Street that was a source of stormwater loading to an unnamed stream resulting in neighborhood flooding and habitat degradation. The stream also flowed directly into the federally designated Wild & Scenic Taunton River.

When: The culvert upgrade was completed in 2010.

Where: Off of Route 44 in Raynham, in a residential neighborhood, near Paramount (Industrial Park) Drive at the crossing of an unnamed stream.

Why: The culvert is located in an area that was at one time rural, and was built (3-foot width) to handle stormwater runoff from the area. In the last twenty-five years, this area has experienced increased development in virtually all of its surrounding areas (multiple auto dealerships and commercial plazas to the north along the Route 44 corridor, and in the Paramount Park, which is upgradient, and to the west,

and through which the unnamed stream flows). The increased development brought increased impervious surface, and the stream and culvert could no longer handle the amount of water generated by a two-year level storm event. This caused chronic flooding on residential properties in the neighborhood adjacent to the stream, and even back to Route 44 during severe storms, resulting in property damage and transportation safety issues.

In addition, the poor drainage conditions at Hill Street decreased the value of the nearest industrial lot in Paramount Park. At the time, Electrochem Commercial Power was considering developing an 82,000 square foot facility on twenty acres in the industrial park. The environmental issues associated with the culvert and flooding caused Electrochem to consider another site upon which to develop its facility. This would mean the potential loss of 300 jobs and approximately \$700,000 in annual tax revenues to the region.

How: The Town of Raynham used \$340,000 in Chapter 90 funds allocated from Mass DOT, and a grant obtained through the Massachusetts Opportunity Relocation and Expansion Grant Program (MORE), in the amount of \$27,000, to facilitate the engineering, design, and construction of the replacement culvert. Technical assistance to the Town on the MORE Grant application was provided by the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD). (The MORE Grants Program no longer exists)

Benefits: The social, economic, and environmental benefits of the Hill Street culvert upgrade include:

- Mitigation of chronic flood problems to the adjacent neighborhood, which is located in an MS4 area
- Retention of and potential increase to residential property values
- Increased value of developable residential and industrial properties due to the reduction in flood risk
- Improved fisheries and wildlife habitat and connectivity
- Improved water quality in the stream due to less scouring during storm flows
- The retention of approximately 300 jobs and \$700,000 in local and regional tax revenues