

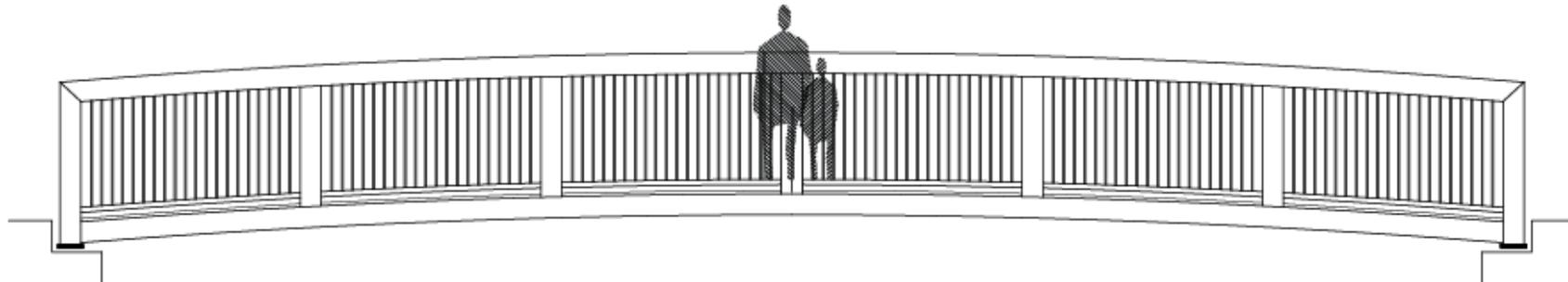
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Prepared for: Hightstown Borough Greenway Bridge Committee

Overview: The pedestrian bridge over Peddie Lake dam had to be removed due to safety reasons. Members of the community have formed a Bridge Committee with the hopes of raising the necessary funds to have the bridge replaced.

Design Challenge: It has been determined that replacing the bridge with a new, custom designed span would be cost prohibitive. With that in mind, the Bridge Committee, after much exploration, has sourced a prefabricated bridge that will cost significantly less – however, the issue is that it looks prefabricated and not unique to Hightstown. The design challenge lies in how to enhance the prefabricated bridge railings with elements that will make it unique to Hightstown, while still maintaining its affordability and safety regulations.

Observations: If this bridge were purely utilitarian in nature, and transportation was being hampered by its absence, the goal should be to replace the bridge as soon as possible. This not being the case, careful thought should be given to the aesthetics of the structure and how it fits in with the existing area and streetscaping. Attempts should be made to tie it into the visual theme of the Borough (quaint, historic, intimate village). Also considering that the bridge will be located on the original site where John and Mary Hight established Hightstown in the early 1700s, special consideration should be given the history of its location.

Following, you will find a recommended solution that will address the Design Challenge, based on the specifications and safety regulations provided, along with rationale and support from the Borough of Hightstown Master Plan and other documents.



Prefabricated Bridge Structure

Design Solution: “Memorial Park History”

The bridge will be located on some of the most historic ground in Hightstown. Long before Europeans arrived, Lenni-Lenape Indians has established a winding trail through the wilderness here, which is now known as Main Street in Hightstown. In the early 1700s, John and Mary Hight established their settlement here consisting of a log cabin, Mill, blacksmith shop and a few other buildings. In 1920, this area was the scene of a great fire that burned the Gross flour and feed mills to the ground. The land was then purchased by William H. Thompson and D. Herbert Davison, and given to the Borough to become Memorial Park, a tribute to soldiers from the area.

Two-sided, hand-hammered “medallions” depicting a turtle (Lenni-Lenape Indians), log cabin (Hight settlement), water wheel (Hight Grist Mill), Blacksmith (early blacksmith shop), wheat chaff (Gross Feed Mills), and American flag (Memorial Park dedication), will tell the story in pictures of the history of this area.*

Support for this design from *A Short History of Hightstown/East Windsor*, Hightstown/East Windsor Historical Society:

“...Earliest records show that long before Europeans came there was an Indian Trail traversing the wilderness here. This path was later incorporated in the “Lower Road,” which as early as 1676 crossed the flat coastal plain and connected the Raritan and Delaware River areas. The English conquerors called it the Duke of York Road – today it is the Old York Road...There are no records that show any settlement here until the coming of John and Mary Hight in 1721. He purchased most of what is today Hightstown. Meager information concerning his settlement here is furnished by one of his descendants who wrote: “1721 – First log cabin (somewhere on Rocky Brook); 1749 – First blacksmith shop; 1751 – First mill...Memorial Park, located on some of the most historic ground in Hightstown, has been dedicated to their service. This ground was the original site of the first mill and early buildings in Hightstown. In 1920 it was the scene of a great fire that burned the Gross flour and feed mills. Although the catastrophe was great at the time, it later proved a challenge to the town planners and intelligent citizenry. William H. Thompson and D. Herbert Davison bought the ground and donated it to Hightstown. Later the park was beautified and dedicated.”

Support for this design From Historic Element of Hightstown Master Plan

B. Goals and Objectives

“...It is clear within the Goals and Objectives that an historic image for the town should be most clearly evident in the downtown area of Hightstown.

The business district should be redeveloped along a unifying visual theme which is small scale and quaint. The small scale will make the business district more inviting to pedestrians and the quaintness will be comfortable and appear friendly. An historic visual theme will provide an opportunity to reintroduce elements of Hightstown's past which have been lost over time.”

*A plaque/historic marker should be placed adjacent to the bridge explaining the history of Memorial Park – including the old Indian Trail, the settlement of John Hight, the Gross Feed Mills and the dedication and redevelopment of Memorial Park; this will explain the medallions and help visitors and residents learn about our history and encourage them to explore the bridge and surrounding area.

Master Plan Support for installation of plaque/historical marker:

From the Historic Element of Hightstown Master Plan – Planning Recommendations:

“Historic markers should be placed throughout the Borough, taking note of significant places and buildings. To be most beneficial, the markers should include a very brief history of the identified site, so visitors are not required to seek out a separate printed guide pamphlet. A pamphlet might be available to provide additional information, but a minimal amount of information should be available on the marker itself.

