
Press Release

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PUBLIC INFO SESSION SCHEDULED FOR SMITHVILLE BRIDGE PROJECT

County To Hold Information Session on March 16th at Smithville Park

Burlington County Freeholders will move a step closer to replacing the heavily traveled 97-year-old Smithville Road bridge in Eastampton when the Engineering Department holds a public information forum on the construction Wednesday, March 16, 2011.

The meeting will be held from 4 to 7 PM in the Billiards Room of the Smithville Mansion, at the County's Historic Smithville Park. Consultant Dewberry-Goodkind, Inc. of Mount Laurel will be present to answer questions about the project.

Demolition of the existing bridge and construction of a new span will not take place for at least another two years. The public information session will give interested parties an opportunity to review the studied alternatives and provide comments.

The current bridge, built in 1914 and rehabilitated in the 1950s, has a 15-ton weight limit. It spans the Rancocas Creek near historic Smithville Park.

"A project of this magnitude in this location really demands that all potentially impacted parties have a full understanding of both the public safety considerations as well as the design features," said Freeholder Joseph Donnelly.

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Total construction cost of the new bridge is estimated at \$2.6 million; the County anticipates federal funds covering both design and construction. Because the plan involves demolition of the existing span, a portion of Smithville Road will be closed for approximately nine to twelve months, necessitating detours.

The current bridge is 125 feet long, carries one lane of traffic in each direction, and has no shoulders or sidewalks.

The conceptual replacement plan calls for a concrete beam bridge that includes a thirty-foot wide, two-lane roadway, and a sidewalk on the westerly side.

Because it is located in the State and Nationally Registered Smithville Historic District, aesthetics will be addressed. For example, the new bridge will utilize a decorative steel railing reflective of the turn-of-the century (1900) era.

The State Historic Sites Council approved the conceptual design more than a year ago.

The County is working in cooperation with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning commission, the Federal Highway Administration, and the New Jersey Department of Transportation to replace the bridge.

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