



## MONMOUTH COUNTY

### Local Preliminary Engineering Phase for Monmouth County Bridge S-32 on Rumson Road (CR520) over the Shrewsbury River Borough of Rumson and Borough of Sea Bright

#### **WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED - SUMMARY**

*(30 Day Comment Period: 6/8/16 - 7/8/16)*

*Note: Public Comments arranged by topic, followed by the tally of similar comments. (Note: some comments were received prior to comment period and after - 2 prior, 2 after)*

#### **Old Rumson Road - Option 1 or Option 2**

- I suggest that option 2 would have fewer feeder roads in the nearby vicinity causing potential problems.  
(2)
- Preference to Alternative 1 – Keeping Rumson Road a 2 way street for it provides additional traffic relief to West Park.  
(1)
- Preference to Alternative 2 – concerning improvements at the intersection of Rumson Road and Ward Avenue, minimizing the entrance/exit arteries would help avoid confusion and traffic incidents. It is not feasible for it will draw excessive traffic from Rumson Road into West Park clogging the already tight streets.  
(12)
- Rumson Road should remain one way eastbound for safety reasons to prevent unnecessary traffic flow and congestion on Lincoln Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood.  
(1)
- We believe that option 2 would be the best option for both the school and for entrance to and from the Ward neighborhood where our children have many friends. Regarding the school, the redesign would significantly reduce the traffic back-up at drop-off and pick-up (especially during the warm weather season when beach traffic increases). It would also allow for easier entrance and exit from the Ward neighborhood. It is especially difficult after drop-off and pick-up to make a left-hand turn from Ward onto Rumson Rd towards Sea Bright during peak hours. It is especially difficult after drop-off and pick-up to make a left- hand turn from Ward onto Rumson Rd towards Sea Bright during peak hours.  
(1)
- With no signage at the corner of Lincoln and Waterman to the effect that a right turn only on the bridge is allowed at ORR, drivers will not know they can not head West when they turn on to ORR from Waterman. This will lead to many drivers ignoring the law and try to go straight onto RR to go West. I can only imagine the accidents happening as a result of this situation. As it is now, we don't have signs noting that ORR is one way into West Park. During St. George's Sunday services, special events and Summer weekends, cars are parked on both sides of Waterman starting on ORR down to

Grant. Due to these parked cars Waterman essentially becomes a one lane road. If you allow cars to go North on Waterman to exit West Park via ORR while cars are coming in and going South, well you can imagine the traffic jam.

(1)

- Thank you to you and all of your colleagues for the work you have done on this project. It is obvious that you have listened to the stakeholders and made adjustments according to our input. I would like to give some input on the Rumson Road intersection. I do not think that the old Rumson Road leg of the intersection should be a two way street. It will overwhelm our small, quiet neighborhood with beach traffic in the summer months. I think it should remain one way.

(9)

General public consensus is for Option 2. County will coordinate with Borough of Rumson to determine final configuration as Old Rumson Road is under local jurisdiction.

### **Traffic**

- During summer season there are significant traffic delays caused by heavy traffic that cannot proceed North on Rt. 36 due to traffic making a left over the bridge – and traffic heading south wanting to make a right onto the Rumson Bridge – blocked up by traffic continuing south on Rt. 36 – stopped at the traffic light. Please increase/widen the North and South lanes on Rt.36 at the Bridge Access to permit better traffic flow.

(1)

The proposed northbound left turn lane storage length has been increased from existing (215 feet) to approximately 260 feet to allow more vehicles to queue in the left turn lane and minimize blocking the through lane. Additionally, the proposed signal phasing has been modified to provide a green arrow to the northbound left turn lane before green is given to southbound Route 36 traffic. Once the green arrow phase is over, the northbound left turn lane will continue to have a green ball that will allow vehicles to continue to make left turns when there are gaps in southbound traffic.

Southbound traffic on Route 36 wanting to make a right turn onto CR 520 will be able to move through the intersection with less delay. The southbound storage lane will be increased and southbound right turning traffic will no longer have to wait at a red signal. The signal for southbound right turning traffic will be replaced with a YIELD sign, which will allow vehicles to move through the intersection more easily.

Additionally, the southern access for the Sea Bright Beach Club will be closed and relocated as the 4<sup>th</sup> leg of the traffic signal with CR 520. Drivers going to the beach club will be able to go straight at the signal from CR 520 or turn left from southbound Route 36 (new left turn lane installed) as opposed to traveling south on Route 36 and having to stop to turn left into the existing access and get stuck waiting for queued northbound traffic to clear out. This will reduce instances in which Route 36 southbound traffic will be stopped behind a vehicle waiting to turn left into the beach club.

## Design

- An advantage and \$ saving reason for the future is at the time of bridge replacement you can rebuild one structure at a time without having to run a detour away from downtown Sea Bright and its beaches.  
(1)

Proposed bridge to be constructed while old bridge maintains existing traffic flow with no detour. Only short-term detours may be required while the roadway approaches to the proposed bridge are being constructed. Any temporary detour to be utilized off-peak seasons and not during the summer.

- As a local resident and frequent traveler to and from Sea Bright, I firmly believe that your design can meet these small requests while still providing improved access and not compromising the safety of pedestrians and our little ones who accompany us in our vehicles.  
(1)
- As a parent of Holy Cross School children I would like to advocate for a 25 MPH speed limit on the approach to the new bridge. Also, reducing speed limit on other approaching streets and the intersection near the school.  
(13)
- Additionally, we strongly support a permanent reduction of the speed limit to 25 mph on Rumson Rd in front of the school and on the approach to the bridge. It would facilitate a safer and easier entrance and departure of school buses to and from Rumson Road. Additionally, many children who live close to the school walk or ride and it would increase their safety when crossing Rumson Road. Finally, many families avoided the pick-up line this past spring (which was very congested due to alternating closures of Hartshorne and/or Rumson Rd due construction on Ward Ave) by parking across from the school on the opposite side of Rumson Rd near the West Park and their children were required to cross Rumson Rd for their ride home. I am a PTA board member so my comments also reflect my experiences not only during the peak drop-off/pick-up periods but also throughout the day as I am often at school for meetings or to participate in classroom activities and assemblies. I would be happy to answer any addition questions or address concerns.  
(1)

County recently reduced speed limit from 40 mph to 35 mph. Additional pedestrian cross walk striping, flashing beacons and signage will be part of the improvements at Rumson Road and Ward Avenue intersection.

- Build on bridge span directly alongside the existing bridge then build second span in its place. This allows redundancy in case one span does not close in an emergency evacuation.  
(1)

Redundancy in the operating system, such as a backup diesel generator, will be provided to allow for bridge openings should the main system fail.

- Concerns about the Nautilus Condo becoming a thoroughfare to public traffic.  
(1)

Entrance from Old Rumson Road is anticipated to remain as is. The current Route 36/Ocean Avenue access to Old Rumson Road does not change or impact the existing vehicle access to Nautilus Condos from Old Rumson Road.

- Interest in preserving the local playground and need for safe access to the beach.  
(1)

West Park playground in Rumson is anticipated to be maintained during construction. Pedestrian access to the beach in Sea Bright will be improved with sidewalk improvements in West Park and on the east side of Ocean Avenue /Route 36.

- Keep open work “Railings” to maintain view of river.  
(1)

The proposed bridge railings will be open.

- Needs to be a longer exit lane going south to the bridge in order to turn right into Rumson.  
(1)

The proposed bridge is shifting to the south about 75 feet and the Route 36 southbound right turn lane storage will be increased. Also, in proposed conditions, the signal for Route 36 southbound right turning traffic will be replaced with a YIELD sign, thus allowing vehicles to turn more freely and not have to wait for a green light.

- Please add the complete streets thinking - do over plan. Cyclists and pedestrians need consideration in the building of this new bridge.  
(1)

Sidewalks on both sides of Rumson Road and Route 36 will be provided for pedestrians. Bicyclists will be able to utilize the shoulders on Rumson Road and bicycle lanes on Route 36.

### **Construction**

- Question: When will construction Stages be made known?  
(1)

Construction staging will be determined in the Final Design phase.

- When will construction take place? On Weekends? What times during the week?  
(1)

Construction will take place mostly on weekdays. There may be some weekend work. Construction staging and durations will be determined in the Final Design phase.

## **Bridge Alignment**

- Concerns that the bridge is too close to the Nautilus Condo Community and concerns as to how the traffic flow will affect condo owner's rights. Note concerns specifically about the left turn from the south into the Nautilus and the left turn out of the Nautilus onto Ocean Avenue.  
(2)

Nautilus Condos' entrance from Old Rumson Road and exiting traffic onto Route 36 (Ocean Ave) will remain unchanged.

- Request to move the new Bridge north of the existing bridge, so Sea Bright could be spared from unreasonable traffic patterns. Other concerns Nautilus parking entrance being blocked by parked cars, traffic over flow and U Turns occurring mid street.  
(1)
- Concerns that the bridge is being moved south and not north where there is a park that is not being used. The park is on the north side of bridge and unused also there is no parking for the park, which again causes it to be unused space. The area to the south will be further cramped and very dangerous.  
(3)

The Concept Development Phase recommended a bridge replacement alternative south of the existing alignment as the preferred alternative as it met the Project Purpose and Need with minimum impacts to residential properties, improves traffic operations for the high volume movement from Ocean Avenue southbound to Rumson Road westbound, and avoids impacts to the Green Acres encumbered Sea Bright property at the northeast corner of the Rumson Road and Ocean Avenue intersection. Access improvements are being proposed along Ocean Avenue, both northbound and southbound, to improve traffic flow during the summer months.

## **General - Other**

- Very informative and well prepared. Thanks.  
(1)
- It's appreciated that you held two meetings recently, one in Sea Bright and one in Rumson, but both were held on the same day. While that no doubt facilitates your schedule, it doesn't do much for those of us who live here and are directly impacted by this bridge. Week schedules being what they are, there were many of us who had to miss both meetings (Rumson and Sea Bright) because they were held on the same day. In the future, please schedule both meeting in the evening, on two different days. That will allow the maximum amount of stakeholders to attend and participate. Thank you.  
(1)

The Public Meeting is normally scheduled at one day at one location, but as a bridge project between two communities, the County provided two locations and two sessions (afternoon and evening) to maximize opportunity for attendance. If unable to attend either session, summary reports of each session and the power point presentation are posted on the Monmouth County web site ([www.visitmonmouth.com](http://www.visitmonmouth.com), click box on right titled "County Bridge & Road Projects" and select Rumson Sea Bright Bridge from list.)

## West Park

- Need for direct pedestrian access via a walkway through West Park from Old Rumson Road to cross on the right side of the bridge (it appears like it weaves under the bridge only). Do not want pedestrian walkway under the bridge – unsafe and too perilous to the base of the bridge.  
(3)
- Interested in natural beauty along bridge at the pedestrian pathway – suggests a high visibility crosswalk at the west end of West Park. Wants a cost effective solution.
  - Our Primary concern is the proposed pathway that will connect the south side of West Park with the north side of West Park under the bridge. Although we do believe there is a need to safely connect the two sides, we do not believe the pathway under the bridge is the right approach.
  - As you know, a bulkhead will be needed to prevent the land from falling into the river. The current riprap structure was installed because the entire park was falling into the river. Therefore, any pathway under the bridge will be very close to the base of the bridge. The current fence erected around the base of the bridge, as well as continuing fence several feet to the north, is to prevent people from accessing the bridge from underneath for safety reasons. A pathway would be perilously close to the base of the bridge and compromise the safety of the bridge.
  - Any pathway would most likely result in a very large zigzagging structure along a very steep slope on the north side. The last feature the park needs is more concrete and permanent structures. We need to retain the natural beauty of the park, particularly the bluff areas, which is a beautiful gateway into Rumson and a natural habitat for many indigenous animals. A pathway under the bridge will also provide an easy entrance point for trespassers to access private property. Additionally, if you look at the wall under the west side of the bridge, it is covered with expletives painted in graffiti. It is probably the only location in Rumson that is covered with offensive graffiti. We do not need to give vandals easier access.
  - A better solution would be a high visibility crosswalk at the west end of West Park. Many children, beachgoers, and employees of Sea Bright businesses cross Rt. 520 there, and it would increase the safety. People are still going to cross Rt. 520 on foot, so it is best to create a safe way for them to do so. It is unlikely many, if any, of them will decide to take the path under the bridge.
  - To summarize, we do not want any more large permanent structures in the area when a better, more cost effective solution is available, benefits more people, retains the natural beauty of the area, and improves the safety of the existing intersection.

(1)

The proposed improvements in West Park with the ADA compliant walkway connecting both sides of the park was to provide enhanced access to the Park and public waterfront area. The walkway can be designed without compromise of the bridge structure and would provide another access point to walk to each side of the West Park without crossing roadway traffic improving safety for pedestrians. There are also proposed intersection improvements at Rumson Road and Ward Avenue which include additional pedestrian cross walk striping, light flashing and signage for safe mobility and access to and from West Park, the neighborhoods and Holy Cross elementary school and parish for pedestrians and bicycles.