

UPDATES January 6, 2018

HISTORY: The Glimmer Glass Bridge was built around 1883 and the 34' drawbridge was installed in 1938. The unique rolling counterweight design, which originated in 19th century France, features a drawbridge lifted by a pair of cables connected to rolling counterweights that run along an elliptical track. The bridge is architecturally significant as it exemplifies advances in moveable bridge technology for transportation of vehicles over navigable water ways. It is the only remaining example of its type in the USA. The bridge was entered on the National Register of Historic Places and the New Jersey Register of Historic Places in 2008.

CURRENT SITUATION: The bridge is now closed to automobile traffic because of deteriorated pilings in the substructure. It is estimated in January, 2018 that the bridge will have to be closed for 18 weeks to make the necessary repairs.

A review of the biennial bridge inspection reports since 1980 shows that major deficiencies that have accumulated over the years have not been corrected:

1980, Cycle 1 Report, p.4, "the substructure is in marginal condition"

1989, Cycle No. 4 Report, p.4-4, "the substructure remains in marginal condition"

2007, Cycle No. 12 Report, p.12-2, "the substructure is in serious condition".

In August, 2014, an overweight truck was driven onto the bridge which caused the deck and substructure to be damaged. The bridge was closed to traffic for 8 months while repairs were made. The work, which involved about 30% of the bridge, was done in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards so that the bridge remains on the Historic Registers.

Currently, plans call for repair of all remaining pilings also in accordance with Secretary of Interior Standards. This will leave mainly only the portal and approaches to complete the repairs giving the bridge a new long life.

The Committee to Save The Glimmer Glass Bridge continues to promote the complete rehabilitation, not the destruction, of the Glimmer Glass Bridge. It has petitions signed by over 2,350 people, mostly Manasquan and Brielle residents....but also signers from 21 different States: Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, New York, New Mexico, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Massachusetts and Hawai. They ALL want this bridge SAVED.

The petition says "We, the undersigned, celebrate the Glimmer Glass Bridge as a National Treasure....the only one of its kind in the United States. It represents a way of life to the local residents of the area, as well as to the many visitors who enjoy the ambiance of life at the Jersey Shore. We want the Glimmer Glass Bridge rehabilitated in its entirety, in accordance with Secretary of Interior Standards for historic places, as is stipulated by the Bridge's placement on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places and the National Register of Historic Places."

SAFETY: The bridge has been a safe crossing for 122 years. As per FHWA, Office of Project Development & Environmental Review, the 20' road width on the bascule span is a traffic calming device. Numerous studies have shown that a wider span encourages faster speeds, which results in the increased likelihood of accidents.

The Glimmer Glass Bridge is one of 3 bridges that serve 0.9 miles of Manasquan's beachfront. All emergency vehicles are sent over the Main Street Bridge or the Ocean Avenue Bridge.

76% of Manasquan's 99 streets have LESS or the same passable width (20') as the Glimmer Glass Bridge.

FEDERAL MANDATE: Section 106, and Section 4(f), adopted by Congress in 1966, state that transportation projects must avoid historic sites unless there is "no feasible and prudent alternative". This unequivocal "hands off" directive has been invoked hundreds of times over the past 40 years to keep the nation's heritage from being destroyed. In this case, as shown in the report from Childs Engineering, one of the nation's leading timber bridge engineering firms, there is a perfectly feasible and prudent alternative, repairing the bridge, thus mandating that the bridge must be preserved for its historic value.

THE REPAIR IS FEASIBLE AND PRUDENT: The Glimmer Glass Bridge can be fully repaired and saved for less money, \$10 million instead of \$20 million for a new bridge, and in far less time than the 3-5 years that the crossing would be closed to remove and replace the existing bridge, not to mention the loss of this unique icon forever.

Hopefully, the future of the Glimmer Glass Bridge will be based on factual data from the experts, not on unfounded assumptions.

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