



## Hunterdon County Democrat

### Geigel Hill Road bridge will be replaced this year

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By Kevin J. Guhl

Geigel Hill Road Bridge in Tincum Township, closed since a car slammed into it and damaged the steel truss structure in 2002, is finally being dismantled this week in anticipation of a replacement being installed, according to Supervisor Nick Forte.

"The township is very pleased that PennDOT (the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation) has taken a very proactive view of this project," said Mr. Forte.

"We're prepared to take it down," PennDOT spokesman Charles Metzger said Friday. PennDOT performed tree removal near the bridge previously. The replacement bridge can be installed as soon as the hydraulic analysis of the water that will flow under the designed bridge is approved by PennDOT's Harrisburg office and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Mr. Metzger said he could not provide an exact date for when construction would begin but it is likely to be this year.

The new bridge will be 15 feet wide, one-lane as requested by the township, and have the original steel truss mounted on it decoratively if it can be saved. If not, PennDOT will build a brand new decorative truss identical to the old one. The wooden deck will be stained with a color of the township's choosing. The bridge will have real stone facing.

Tincum wanted a bridge similar in size to the old bridge, which does not meet PennDOT's current design standards. In order for the approximately \$1.5 million project to go forth, Tincum will "takeback" ownership of the bridge after PennDOT builds it. Supervisors and residents feared that widening the bridge would create speeding problems and make the bridge too big to blend into the rural area.

Mr. Metzger said that PennDOT will provide Tincum with a lump sum for bridge maintenance, but the final amount agreed upon was not available by press time. In June 2007, the figure for the sum was planned to be \$200,000.

"It's a win-win situation," said Mr. Forte of the project going forth. "It will retain the historical integrity and will have modern day standards to carry emergency vehicles, school buses, etc."

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