

U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



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16591

March 25, 2019

New Jersey Transit Planning Authority  
Attn: Ms. Sarbjit Kahlon  
Principle Planner, Programming Project Development  
1085 Raymond Blvd, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
(One Newark Center)  
Newark, NJ 07102

Dear Ms. Kahlon,

The Coast Guard has completed a navigational survey pertaining to Monmouth County and New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority's (NJTPA) submission of an application for authorization to construct a replacement for the Monmouth County Oceanic Bridge (S-31), across the Navesink River, mile 4.5, in the Borough of Rumson and Township of Middletown, New Jersey. As discussed below, we have determined that the reasonable needs of navigation require the replacement bridge, if a movable bridge, provide for a minimum 22 feet vertical clearance (VC) at mean high water (MHW) in the closed position; if a fixed bridge alternative is selected, its VC must be at least 65 feet at MHW.

A review of NOAA chart #12325 indicates that the Navesink River is uniquely situated between the Atlantic Ocean and Shrewsbury River. The clearance from the Atlantic Ocean and Sandy Hook to the Navesink and Shrewsbury Rivers is currently restricted by the Highlands Fixed Bridge (Route 36), which has a VC of 65 feet above MHW and a horizontal clearance (HC) of 179 feet. Entrance to the Navesink River from the southeast via the Shrewsbury River is via the Seabright Bridge, a bascule bridge that has a VC of 15.4 feet MHW in the closed position, unrestricted when opened, and a HC of 75 feet. Overhead power cables with an authorized clearance of 58 feet are located, at mile 8.2, and control the VC for all points upstream from there to the Cooper's Bridge (Route 35), a fixed bridge located immediately upstream of the overhead power cables and has a VC of 12 feet at MHW and a HC of 103 feet.

The Navesink River at milepost 4.5 is heavily traveled by a large number of recreational vessels with varying VC requirements (<20 to >60+). The commercial industry is mostly boat rentals, charters for sailing and fishing excursions, and occasional barge transits. The surrounding townships and municipalities are plentiful with private docks, marinas, yacht and boat clubs, and provide boat ramps for dockage and additional mooring fields. Some marina expansion is ongoing (approximately 10 more slips per year). Transient vessels, typically during spring and fall, include east coast transits between Florida/Georgia and New York/New England. Bridge logs summaries reviewed from 2011 through 2015 noted between 810 - 935 lifts per year.

NJTPA developed 24 alternative design options for the Bridge encompassing a range of possible alignments. The public preference survey selected alternative 7(A), an east alignment that can be built as a movable or fixed bridge. The preferred bridge type selected was a movable bridge with a 22 foot VC (closed); the second choice was a fixed bridge with a 65 foot VC. The result of our navigation study support selection of either option. The U.S. Coast Guard is satisfied that NJTPA was diligent in public outreach during the development of the NIR prepared by Michael Baker International.

Based on the information presently available, we have made a preliminary determination that to provide for the current and prospective needs of navigation on the Navesink River, an application for replacement of Oceanic Bridge should provide for 22 feet VC in the closed position at MHW, for the movable bridge alternative. If a fixed bridge is selected, the VC requirement at MHW is a minimum of 65 feet at MHW.

Please note that this preliminary determination does not constitute an approval or final agency determination, which we can only make in accordance with regulation and after Monmouth County submits a complete bridge permit application.

To assist with the application for a bridge permit, please refer to the Coast Guard's Bridge permit Application Guide, COMDTPUB P16591.3 (series), which is available on line at: <https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Office-of-Bridge-Programs/>, and contact me at the number above with any questions. We look forward to working with NJDOT and moving this project forward.

Sincerely,



C.J. Bisignano  
Supervisory Bridge Management Specialist  
U.S. Coast Guard  
By direction

Copy: (1) FHWA-NJ Division  
(2) USCG Sector New York