

March 3, 2021

To The Merrimack Town Council,

The value of commemorating 275 years of community lies not in how we may celebrate the past, but in how we may celebrate the future.

What might our citizens one hundred years hence point to with pride and affection for predecessor's wisdom in having provided for their commonwealth?

The remembrance committee of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary gave us the Abbie Griffin bandstand with the hope that it would provide a platform for entertainment and culture in the center of our town. And that it would stand as an iconic symbol for what we as citizens can create; perhaps, more deeply, what character Abbie Griffin, and people like her, left to the future that she would never know.

There was a reverence for our two covered bridges. They were not just some bucolic imagery; though that in itself may well have been enough. They made couples young and old kiss in passing through. They were engineered marvels of river crossings, bringing us closer to each other and the things we needed to share. They were scenic vistas from which we watched the rivers and fields and woods and all that lived within sight. They were a testament to the skills of master craftsmen and their tools. They stood as reminders of self reliance, perseverance, patience and ingenuity.

Ever since the loss of our covered bridges there has been an unsatisfied lament that an important part of our town is gone forever. But that need for restoration can be met, and simultaneously provide for our future, with the creation of a true covered bridge in Twin Bridges Park.

Twin Bridges Park was acquired a hundred years ago by far seeing forefathers of Merrimack unknown to most of us today. Recognizing the unique geology and picturesque nature of the parcel; they wanted to protect it from exploitation and leave it to future generations of residents to enjoy. Many of them worked in the great depression of the 1930s to replace the original bridges with two concrete bridges spanning Baboosic brook. Recently, the Town of Merrimack replaced one of the bridges that had decayed and was damaged. From an historic perspective, this location and bridges was the first road in Merrimack; laid out when we were part of the Narragansett Land Grants. Narragansett no 5 was given in payment to the soldiers who fought in King Phillips war.

The good effects that can accrue to the public as a whole are almost too numerous to particularize. With all this in mind, I offer the following proposal:

That we fund and build an authentic Covered Bridge at Twin Bridge Park. This may be accomplished by installing the bridge directly over the top of the present concrete structure without disturbing any of the abutments or span. This would also have the effect of preserving the existing bridge and archeological site while offering a new attraction to an increasing use of public space.

I look forward to a discussion of the merits with all who are interested and make myself available to do so.

Charles H. Mower  
4 Depot St.  
Merrimack NH  
603-424-1200