

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing as a resident of Upper Allen Township to express my concern regarding the continued efforts to preserve and store the Bishop Road Bridge.

While I appreciate the desire to preserve local history when it is practical, many residents, including those who live near the bridge, have repeatedly expressed that restoring or storing this structure does not represent a responsible use of township resources. At a time when our township is relying on reserve funds to balance the budget, committing significant public money toward dismantling, storing, or potentially restoring a bridge that serves very limited practical use raises serious fiscal concerns. The current proposal to dismantle the bridge and store it in shipping containers appears to delay a decision while still committing taxpayer dollars to a project with no clear or funded long-term plan.

Before moving forward with any such action, residents deserve clear answers regarding:

- The total projected cost of dismantling and storage
- The anticipated duration of storage
- The estimated cost of eventual restoration or reuse
- The specific funding sources for each phase of the project

Many residents feel their concerns have not been adequately considered despite attending meetings, submitting comments, and communicating with township leadership. Respectful disagreement should not be characterized as an attempt to "drown out voices," but rather as residents exercising their right to participate in decisions affecting our community and tax dollars.

While I am not able to attend township meetings in person, I still want my concerns as a life long township resident and taxpayer to be heard regarding this issue.

I respectfully ask the Board to reconsider moving forward with dismantling or storage of the bridge and instead pursue the most fiscally responsible solution for the township.

Thank you for your time and for your service to the residents of Upper Allen Township.

Sincerely,

Brittany Bair

Melbourne Lane

Mr Fairchild,

My family has been in the township since 1935. I didn't move here until around 1962. I am very familiar with the bridge. I went to school with the Stewards that lived next to it as well as the Halls that had property down the road. As well as starting the Yellow Breeches Yacht Club that spent years going under that bridge. The bottom line that there is no reason by any stretch of the imagination that Upper Allen should spend 1 penny on a bridge that you have to go through another county to get to it from either side. I would appreciate a personal reply to let me know where I may be wrong. Thank you,

Bob Banzhoff

1930 Fisher Road.

Dear Commissioners,  
Bishop Bridge

First I would like to reply to the communication I have seen from Eric Fairchild in which he concludes township residents opposed to preserving Bishop Bridge are opposed to preservation.

While I can only speak for myself, I am not opposed to preservation, I am opposed to the preservation of Bishop Bridge. After reviewing all of the information available it does not make sense to waste money on this project.

Since there is much opposition to taking ownership and the preservation of this bridge when and by whom was it decided to disassemble this bridge and store it hoping to find private funds to restore and maintain Bishop Bridge? Also who bares the costs of the storage units and if private funds are not obtained who bares the cost of depositing of the bridge scrap?

My recommendation is to leave the bridge in place and ask Cumberland County for an extension on making a decision on this bridge until 2027. If private funds can be acquired and guaranteed to restore the bridge, including all future maintenance, with no cost to the residents of Upper Allen Township then I have no issues. If private funding for restoration and maintenance cannot be obtained and guaranteed then I support demolishing this bridge. If Cumberland County cannot extend a decision until private funding can be acquired then support demolishing the bridge.

I also recommend issues such as Bishop Bridge in which concerned residents oppose a proposed project that their voices be heard and in those instances let all residents vote for or against and allow the voting results determine whether the project proceeds or is eliminated.

Commissioner does not mean they support all of their views or projects.

Grantham Park

I do not support Transferring money from this project. All monies acquired for the Grantham Parks project should be solely used for this project. This park is unique that it has a pond that can be used to teach our children and grandchildren how to fish and experience an ecosystem up close.

The work that has been done so far looks great and has been a long time coming.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns and opinions. I hope they are given consideration.

Long time Upper Allen Resident  
Barb Brinser

Good evening, Commissioners.

My name is Josh Brown, and I reside at 834 Grantham Road.

In my line of work, I have learned that your moral compass must stay straight every day. You tell the truth, give the facts, and stay grounded in your values.

For me, those values started at a young age.

There are 12 points I try to live by every day: trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent. Those are not just words to me. They are values that shaped my life. Being an Eagle Scout taught me that, and I have carried those principles with me ever since.

Over the last 17 years in my IT career, I have tried to bring those same values into the community I care about.

This community is personal to me.

Grantham Park was the first place my grandfather ever took me fishing. He passed away 14 years ago, the day before Thanksgiving. During fishing season, we used to fish there every day after school. Those are memories I still carry with me. They remind me that places in this community are not just pieces of land or line items in a budget. They are part of our lives, our families, and our history.

I also hope that the tireless work of our Parks Department, along with DCNR grant support, will help complete Grantham Park so that ADA accessibility can be fully achieved for everyone.

That is why this matters.

The community poll was focused on financial responsibility surrounding a bridge issue that, in my view, has not been political. It has been about a community coming together, working together, and doing what is best for the greater good.

To date, more than 150 people have signed the poll digitally. To make sure the data was accurate, it was reviewed using technology and analytics. Yes, there were views from Florida, California, New York, Maine, Georgia, and Washington.

But those are not our taxpayers. They do not get a voice in how local taxpayer dollars are spent here.

Our focus should stay on the people who live here, pay taxes here, and are directly affected by these decisions.

That is why the community poll will be shared electronically with the Cumberland County Commissioners on Friday in regards to Bishop Bridge.

The community has spoken in more ways than one. I believe it is time to listen.

As we move forward, hope we keep our attention on the needs of our own community, including the families in the Mechanicsburg School District who are struggling and need our care and support along with our homeless.

At the end of the day, this is about honesty, responsibility, and keeping our focus where it belongs: on the people of this community.

Today, and moving forward, I ask the Board of Commissioners to "Think Different."

Respectfully,

Josh A. Brown

834 Grantham Road

Grantham, PA 17027

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my continued concern regarding the future of Bishop Bridge. While various solutions have been proposed, most carry significant fiscal or logistical shortcomings. I would like to propose a "status quo" alternative that requires no creative financing and establishes a repeatable blueprint for future inter-municipal dealings.

The Proposal: Conditional Retention I recommend the counties maintain current ownership while keeping the bridge closed. As the bridge has been closed for five years without incident or expense, there is no immediate pressure to commit to any flawed or incomplete plan. Instead, the counties should wait for a prospective owner to present a fully vetted proposal that includes:

- Engineering Delineation: A certified study outlining the vision for the future of the bridge, all legal approvals and execution costs for their vision.
- Verified Funding: Proof of "in-hand" capital to complete the project immediately upon transfer.
- Performance Timeline: A committed schedule for execution post-transfer.

By adopting this stance, Cumberland and York Counties avoid immediate expenditures and eliminate the perception that Upper Allen Township is receiving a "special deal."

This creates a transparent, fair process that can be applied to any future infrastructure challenges.

Thank you for your continued time and attention to this issue.

Jim Cochran

(Note Mr. Cochran's request was addressed to the County Commissioners)

Respected Chairman Neiderer, Vice Chair Foschi, Secretary Eichelberger, and Upper Allen Township Commissioners Fairchild, Smith, Clarke, Martin, and Walsh,

As residents of Upper Allen Township and long-time residents of Mechanicsburg, my husband and I want to chime in on the Bishop Bridge issue.

From time to time, there are structures and landmarks that are culturally significant to an area.

They provide meaning, offer residents' enduring memories, and serve their communities. Over time, the needs of communities may change and significance may fade as structures become antiquated, unusable, and residents move or pass on. At that time, after analysis, it may be determined that the monies these structures consume are best used elsewhere.

We believe this is the case with Bishop Bridge. We would like to request that the bridge not be restored or removed for storage for an indefinite period of time, but that it be dismantled.

We feel strongly that no additional funds should be spent on this project, because the funds can be much better used in other ways to enhance our growing community. The bridge has reached an antiquated, unnecessary stage in Upper Allen's life as a community and we believe it is time to let it go.

Sincerely,

Rachel and Nate Edwards

2169 Merrimac Ave, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

Please record these two township residents as AGAINST any financial commitment to this bridge restoration project. We object to spending tax dollars on this project for many reasons; it has no historical value, it doesn't serve the township, and the bidding process has many unanswered questions. Please put this on the ballot before committing to spending funds on this wayward project. Let the people paying for it decide.

Respectfully,  
Jeff & Beth Firestone

Good afternoon!

I am emailing today to express my objection to preserving Bishop Bridge. I join a large group of Upper Allen Township residents that are not in support of this project.

Thank you for your time.

Kelly Gerdes  
109 Woodside Drive  
Mechanicsburg 17055

Upper Allen Commissioners:

My husband and I are senior citizens who have lived in Upper Allen Township since 1987.

We have appreciated the committed individuals who have served both our township and the county throughout these years.

However, in regards to Bishop Bridge situation, I cannot support any use of our taxpayer funds for Upper Allen Township to take on responsibility for this bridge.

In my mind this is a "nice to have" not a "must have." And just as we individuals are having to make difficult decisions about our personal budgets, the township commissioners should also realize that this is not the time for the township to commit to this project.

Thank you for taking the time to read my opinion.

Jane Koppenheffer  
Principal Consultant  
FS Koppenheffer Consulting, LLC

Upper Allen Commissioners

As taxpaying residents of Upper Allen Township, our expectations are that our elected officials maintain a fiscal responsibility for all residents by determining project expenditures by needs and wants.

NEEDS - spending taxpayer funds (grant money from county, state and federal agencies is generated allocated from taxpayer money) where needed and by legal requirements, safety of the residents, infrastructure, the urgency of the project, and by the number of residents the project will serve.

The Mt Allen Stormwater/paving project is a NEED. Residents homes get water, the front/back of properties flood and this project is mandated by the Chesapeake Bay cleanup project. The township should have been prepared for the Mt Allen project since this has been a township wide agenda for several years now.

Since funding has not been adequately saved, understanding that most project costs run over, funds could acceptability be pulled from reserves. Grantham Pond Park restoration project is a NEED. This pond was built by the township. As happens with all ponds, they eventually must be drained and rebuilt. Grants received also allowed for enhancements to improve the area around the pond. This benefits property values for Grantham area residents. Providing a place for community to gather for social, recreational, educational uses. This may lead to someone opening a coffee shop or small cafe near the park which would benefit the tax base and community. While the township may need to add minimal additional funds to complete the project, this project benefits the township.

WANTS - Things that we would all like to have on our dream list. That the taxpayers vote on and approve, that are budgeted and saved for ahead of time to ensure the spending of money really makes sense.

Bishop Road Bridge project is a WANT. Yes, the bridge is old. However, Cumberland County, the current owner, wishes to demolish the bridge as this is the most economical, fiscally responsible choice for the county taxpayers. York county has washed their hands and wants nothing further to do with the bridge. Upper Allen Township is not prepared to take ownership of the bridge. The township has not budgeted one cent towards saving the bridge. It benefits no one living near the bridge. It does not benefit the community as there is no place to gather for social or recreational uses. Pulling funds from any township reserve would not be fiscally responsible for the residents of the township.

The township should be focus on the additional infrastructure repairs that are needed with the continuous development in the township. We have equipment sitting out in the open that needs to be properly stored under cover, and we are sure there are many more NEEDS just to maintain what current township levels, not including additional ongoing development.

Now is the time for the commissioners to look at the budget and focus on the NEEDS, save for future

NEEDS, and show that they truly care about the residents NEEDS and not WANTS. Be fiscally responsible and do not drain the rainy day fund for WANTS!

Kenneth and Cinda Leininger  
308 Berkshire Road  
Mechanicsburg, Pa 17055

Mr Fairchild, Mr Walsh, Ms Smith, Ms Clarke and Mr Martin,  
We have been residents of Upper Allen Township for over 49 years. In all those years, we had never heard of Bishop Bridge until the last few years when Mr Fairchild and Mr Walsh began their crusade to restore it at taxpayer expense.

We are strongly against Upper Allen Township taking ownership of Bishop Bridge. The responsibility for Bishop Bridge lies in the hands of York and Cumberland Counties. If they are unwilling to restore the bridge then we believe it should be demolished at their collective expense. Under no circumstances do we want our tax dollars used to disassemble and store these rusty old beams.

We are also strongly against redirecting funds already designated for phase 2 of the Grantham Pond Project and risk the loss of current and future grants and the reputation of UAT.

Respectfully,  
Dean and Cindy Lengel  
632 Wayne Drive  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

Mr. Fairchild,

I've kept my thoughts to myself up until now. I have a little background to share.

As a student at Messiah, I was part of the crew that carefully dismantled the covered bridge from Bowmansdale. Each day we loaded all the pieces onto a flat bed truck and moved them to a meadow (where the current large student parking lot is located today). We built the abutments and watched as the I beams were put in place. The next part was to put it back together. The original arches and support beams were put into their original spots which included reusing most of the original wooden pins which held everything together. I know little bit about refurbishing a bridge.

Below are some questions that I have been writing down over time. A series we watched they'll be Jay and then you went somewhere correct correct

1. Are you speaking with confidence that York County will agree to this?
2. You speak vaguely about who will pay for the demolition of the bridge. Specifically, who will pay for all the requirements that will be made by the EPA and other agencies regarding the debris that may fall into the water. Nails, bolts, nuts, asphalt from the surface of the road, rust, debris from the two bridge abutments, etc. This step will call for a large "diaper" that is hung above the water and extending the length of the bridge plus 2x the width of the bridge. This costs a pretty penny and what if something does get into the water? Could there be a hefty fine?
3. If step 2 is funded by both counties, who will pay for the company to dismantle the bridge? I have seen no cost breakdown of this step. As the bridge is dismantled, piece by piece, where will the pieces be stored while the rest of the bridge is dismantled? Will the bridge be refurbished by the same company that was at a previous meeting? I attended that meeting and heard no discussion as to what they would charge? Has a study of their previous work been done? Have they done a project of this size? I was not impressed with their presentation nor with the fact that they only saw the bridge, for the

first time, the day of the meeting. I assume the parts of the bridge would go back to their company headquarters? Who will pay for the transport to and from their business?

4. In a previous meeting you said the bridge, once refurbished, would be stored until money was raised to move on. Where will the funds come from to pay for this step? It could be years until the money is raised to reconstruct the bridge!

These listings and questions could go on and on.

As a citizen of this township for 58 years, my hope is that this whole project is tabled until a step by step plan with line items and cost per line item is presented!

Ken Mark

Commissioners have an elected responsibility to represent their constituents without bias. It is tough making decisions without giving in to emotion. In the case of Bishop Bridge ownership the most responsible decision, as evidenced by overwhelming public opinion, is to cut losses by letting ownership remain with the county. The bridge is simply a money pit with little historical value. Upper Allen residents expect their commissions to make informed decisions based on facts, not emotion. If you were to choose accepting ownership, future generations will wonder 'what were these fools thinking'.

Paul and Robin Setcavage  
310E Meadow Dr  
Upper Allen Township

I am adding the discussion on the Bishop Bridge. I am not part of the group that Commissioner Fairchild refers to in comments as "Most of the pushback (and misinformation) on the bridge is coming from a close nit [sic] group of individuals...". I am simply a resident who cares that our required infrastructure isn't fiscally compromised and who cares how residents with fixed incomes could be affected by this project.

This is not a new issue. They could have easily started a non-profit to secure donation to own and eventually operate the bridge. Taking funds from township accounts is not acceptable, especially if it affects safety and preparedness. Comparing the unnecessary bridge project to stormwater repairs is not logical. They state that other already in process projects may need to wait but then want to put tax money into a new project of their own. Even just having the counties disassemble it and the Township store it in a "shipping container" requires the rental or purchase of the container and added insurance to cover it.

The counties will look to Upper Allen Twp. to recoup at least part of their costs. This would not be an act of charity for them.

This whole bridge project has the potential to be equivalent to Harrisburg's incinerator fiasco and Mayo Reed's wild west memorabilia purchases wrapped into one. We do not want to model our township after the city. You want to preserve Upper Allen Twp.? Purchasing land to create undeveloped open areas and tightening the zoning would go a lot further to this goal.

Ann Wiewall  
77 Southpoint Dr

To the Upper Allen Township Board,  
My husband and I live at 120 Nittany Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, and we want to formally state our opposition to the use of township funds for the Bishop Bridge project. Andrew is traveling for work and cannot attend the meeting tomorrow evening, and I am unable to attend due to a recent hip replacement. Because we cannot be there in person, we ask that this email be entered into the public record.

We do not support this project. The cost, reported to be in the millions, warrants full community input. A project of this scale should be placed on the ballot so that all residents of Upper Allen Township have the opportunity to review the expense and vote on whether it should proceed.

Please record that neither of us supports the Bishop Bridge project and that we believe this decision should be made by the township's residents through a public vote.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,  
Andrew and Patricia Zink  
120 Nittany Drive  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055