

Kevin Skeels, scudderfallsbridgeecomments@hntb.com
Delaware River Joint Toll Commission
110 Wood & Grove Streets
Morrisville, PA 19067

Dear Mr. Skeels:

I am writing on behalf of New Jersey Future—a statewide, smart-growth advocacy organization based in Trenton—to request that the Delaware River Joint Toll Commission give serious consideration to the addition of a bicycle/pedestrian facility in its redesign of the Scudder Falls Bridge. In addition to preserving open space and revitalizing neighborhoods, a key component of our mission is providing transportation choices, and this goal serves as the basis for our comments.

Recently, New Jersey Future, along with partners including the Tri-State Transportation Campaign and the Greater Philadelphia Bicycle Coalition, succeeded in persuading the New Jersey Department of Transportation to adopt a “Complete Streets” policy governing all state roads. Although the NJDOT policy does not apply directly in this case (since the bridge falls under the jurisdiction of the DRJTC), we believe the principle behind “Complete Streets”—to provide for the needs of all users, not just drivers, when designing transportation improvements—is nonetheless applicable to the Scudder Falls Bridge project.

In addition to providing greater mobility, increasing transportation choices offers environmental benefits. The transportation sector represents nearly a third of all the greenhouse gas emissions in the country; it is New Jersey’s largest single source of emissions and is a significant contributor to Pennsylvania’s carbon footprint. Meeting our states’ and our nation’s greenhouse gas reduction goals will require not only increasing the fuel efficiency of our automobiles, but also reducing the amount of miles we drive. To accomplish this, we must provide viable alternatives to single occupancy vehicle travel. As a regional connector, the Scudder Falls Bridge can be an important link for non-motorized travel, especially given the dearth of alternatives for those seeking to cross the Delaware by means other than the automobile.

We urge the DRJTC to consider the inclusion of a bicycle/pedestrian facility in its redesign of the Scudder Falls Bridge in light of its potential to expand transportation options in the region, and the multiple benefits that would derive from this expansion.

Sincerely,

Peter Kasabach
Executive Director
New Jersey Future