

Thanks for the update, Steve. I'm not sure but I think the minutes to the meeting may contain an inaccuracy with regard to historical designation of the bridge.

When our neighbor Sue Barnett (an expert and consultant on historical buildings, etc.) discussed the potential historical standing of the bridge with the Travis County Historical Commission, she was told that the bridge's "owner" - Travis County - had to be in on the application. When she spoke with Commissioner Daugherty to request that the Commissioners sign on to the application, he said that he wouldn't support it because it would prevent any work on the bridge. Sue feels that that is not correct but, nevertheless, could not convince the commissioner to support the idea.

So, unless something happened subsequently to Sue's interaction with the commissioner, the Historical Commission has neither accepted nor denied the bridge's historical status. They, as far as we know, have not had an opportunity to even consider the matter.

By the way, we feel that this bridge is a very important historical structure. It was built in 1924-25 by the men of the area, who laboriously hauled buckets of concrete by hand. They did this primarily for their children who previously often had difficulty getting across the river to go to the one room schoolhouse at Hamilton Pool. The dedication of this brigade of farmers made a structure that has stood its ground against many floods, including the enormous flood of the mid fifties which, reportedly, brought a 50 foot wall of water and logs downstream. That flood was powerful enough to take out a large pecan grove on the west side of the river and most of the huge, ancient cypress trees on the other side. Yet that little bridge remains.

You proclaim that all this energy, expense and almost guaranteed environmental degradation is in the interest of "safety". I contend that, given today's standards of workmanship and materials (consider the array of pot-holes left behind by the last "improvements" that the County did to Hamilton Pool Road), a new bridge might just be less safe. Imagine a higher bridge, made of Chinese steel and low-bid concrete, getting slammed the way this one did. I can just picture the mangled, twisted mess that might leave behind.

Please, just leave our wonderful, historic, powerful, scenic bridge alone!

Respectfully,
Ric