

REBUILDING THE BOARDWALK – 2021

What is proposed?

Our plan is to widen the walkway to 6 feet, elevate the structure by approximately 4 to 5 feet, add railings, and to strengthen the foundation with new metal helical piles. The new piles will be underground and won't be readily apparent.



Why is this needed now?

Since last fully reconstructed in 1992, storms, weathering, and decay have taken a heavy toll. Many of the beams, posts, bracing, and metal fasteners are nearing the end of their serviceable lives. Major rehabilitation is needed soon to prevent large-scale loss. Permitting and flood zone rules require a higher elevation for the Boardwalk, railings and slope adjustments are needed to meet accessibility standards.

Who will benefit?

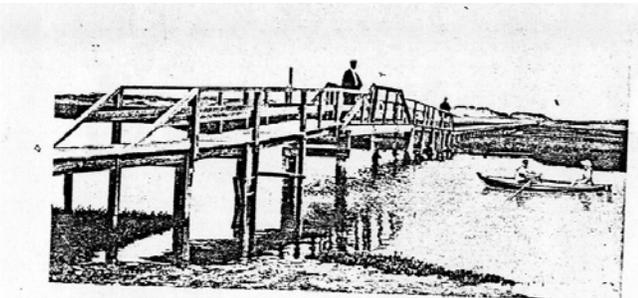
Everyone who appreciates having the Boardwalk available to use, even after strong storms and many years of future weathering will benefit from this project. The rebuilt Boardwalk will also be ADA accessible and available for many more of our residents and visitors to use.



...Isn't the Boardwalk a historic structure?

The Boardwalk is an important cultural asset. The current 1992 vintage structure was not accepted for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Our records show many variations in construction and appearance of the Boardwalk over its 145+ years. Constants through all those years have been the access link it provides between the historic village and Town Neck Beach and simple timber construction.

A design goal is to follow the current construction patterns and materials as closely as possible. As envisioned, the height will change, railings will be added where required by code, and the slopes approaching the Mill Creek bridge will be lengthened to meet Accessibility requirements.



The Boardwalk over the Town Marsh, Sandwich

Credit: Sandwich Historical Society

Built in 1875 to connect the Glass Factory area with the beach, which is beyond the dunes in the distance. At high tide the marsh is fully flooded. In high winds one is conscious that there is no handrail. TWB crossed here at age five to see a stranded whale.

What will happen to the engraved planks?

The existing engraved planks will be removed and made available to the original donors who contributed for the planks. The Town plans to administer a new plank donation program to incorporate new engraved planks into the work.

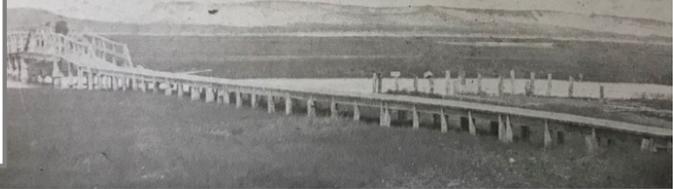
Will I still be able to jump off the Mill Creek Bridge? And go crabbing? And get to the beach?

There are no plans to change access or further restrict current activities. Beach access will be improved as part of the design. A longer line may be needed to crab over the rail.

When will the work take place?

There will be a long lead time before construction can start to allow for design, permitting, and bidding. The permitting process is expected to take approximately one year to complete. It is anticipated that construction will be timed to occur during the off season between October and May following permit approval requirements.

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What permits are needed?

Due to the Boardwalk's location in salt marsh and other protected resource areas, the permit process will include the following: Wetlands Notice of Intent (WPA and Local Bylaw), Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) Review, Chapter 91 License and Section 401 Water Quality Certification, Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Environmental Notification Form filing, Department of the Army Permit (GP1-PCN), and Old Kings Highway Historic District Committee review, and permitting under the Massachusetts Building Code.

How much will it cost and how is the work funded?

This project is funded through a debt exclusion voted at Annual Town Meeting May 7, 2018. Construction costs are currently projected as approximately \$2,382,000.



Will I still be able to walk the Boardwalk while the work is going on?

The Boardwalk will be closed during construction. Public access cannot be allowed during this time for safety and liability reasons. It is envisioned that construction will take approximately nine to ten months and run roughly from October into the following May. The Boardwalk will be reopened as soon as it is safe to do so.

How may I get my engraved plank and order a new one?

The Town will make an announcement and advertise when the existing planks are removed and become available for pick up. That won't happen until sometime after construction starts. The new plank donation program will likely occur around the same time. Details on both efforts are being worked out, so please stay tuned.

