



## Timeline of the Sellers Avenue Bridge Project (as of July 26, 2022)

*The below timeline has been compiled by Council President, Dane Collins, and the Borough Manager Rich Tutak, for the purpose of providing background to the participants of a Special Meeting to be held on Wednesday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022, regarding the closure of the Sellers Avenue Bridge.*

*Collectively, the Council President and Borough Manager researched the details provided below via email, letter correspondence, news articles, council meeting minutes, handwritten notes, information provided from governmental agency websites, blueprints and design layouts and the recollection of appointed Borough Officials. Both individuals acknowledge the below timeline may lack full detail. However, as of the date provided, both feel that this is the most accurate timeline that could be compiled from the records retained by the Borough.*

See below for detail:

- 2005 – Amtrak and PennDOT entered into an agreement dated September 20<sup>th</sup> of that year, providing for the performance by Amtrak of various support services during the design phase of the Sellers Avenue Bridge Project (*Source: Sellers Avenue Bridge Agreement dated April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020*).
- 2006 – first discussions of the Sellers Avenue Bridge Project between the Borough and PennDOT (*Source: Catania Engineering Comments and background from Mayor Hank Eberle’s letter dated January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019*).
- 2008 – further discussion between the Borough and PennDOT (*Source: Catania Engineering Comments*).
- 2010—a series of discussion and correspondence regarding right of ways. Ended in the Borough receiving compensation from PennDOT for right of way access (*Source: Correspondence between PennDOT and the Borough Manager*).
- 2012 – Funding was set aside from Transportation Improvement Program (*Source: TIP*).
  - In August of that year, Council members and residents circulated a petition to delay bridge construction over the need to raise the height of the bridge (*Source: Articles in the Delco Times*).
  - Reports from engineering firm Gannet Flemming indicated that construction was to begin in March of 2014 with a completion date of September 2015.
- 2013 – Borough’s HARB received a Determination of Effect memo for the Sellers Avenue Bridge Project (*Source: Memo to Chairmen of HARB*).
- 2015 – Sellers Avenue Bridge Sidewalk Closure after inspection of the bridge deemed the sidewalk unsafe. The orange barriers went up (*Source: Catania Engineering Report July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015*).
- 2016 - The Delaware Valley Region Planning Commission’s website indicates that cash flow to the project ended in February of 2016.
- 2019 – Mayor Eberle requested the help of a bipartisan group of elected officials, with assistance in pushing this project forward. Senator Kearney’s office wrote to a senior executive at Amtrak in February of that year, requesting cooperation in the completion of the Seller’s Avenue Bridge. (*Source: Mayor Hank Eberle’s letter dated January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019, and comments provided by the Mayor*).
- 2020 – On April 23<sup>rd</sup> of that year, the Borough and Amtrak enter into an agreement, to release Amtrak of all liability related to the loss of life, personal injury damage or loss of property and interruption of business. This was done so that the construction of the Bridge could proceed in a timely manner. A liability risk fee in the amount of \$112,178 was paid to Amtrak. (*Source: Agreement dated April 23<sup>rd</sup> and copy of the check.*)
  - On October 15<sup>th</sup> of 2020, Mayor Eberle and Senator Kearney announced a breakthrough on the Sellers Avenue Project. “After months of discussions between Senator Kearney’s office, State Representative Dave Deloso, borough officials in Ridley Park, federal partners like U.S. Senator Bob Casey and Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon, and senior representatives from PennDOT and SEPTA, the project reached a breakthrough when Delaware County Commerce Director Pat Killian and

the Delaware County Industrial Development Authority (IDA) agreed to fund \$112,000 for the indemnification policy. Two weeks ago, IDA issued funding to the borough for the Amtrak payment, allowing construction to finally commence”.

*(Source: <https://www.senatorkearney.com/senator-kearney-mayor-eberle-announce-breakthrough-on-sellers-avenue-bridge-project/>).*

- Amtrak and PennDOT officials reached out after reading the article to confirm that a project start was still some time away. Correspondence shows that PennDOT believed the project was at least 18 months away from beginning *(Source: email correspondence)*.
- Amtrak and PennDOT officials began to meet regularly to discuss final stages of design and agreements to begin construction with work set to begin in FY23 *(Source: Max Toth Email dated November 24, 2020)*.
- 2021 - Follow up on November 4<sup>th</sup> of 2021 provided update that the project agreements were finished, and design was moving forward to completion *(Source: Max Toth email dated November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021)*.
- 2022: February 2022 PAPUC provided a letter that the weight restriction on the bridge would be reduced, but no set date was provided. Emergency vehicles were not exempt from this new restriction *(Source: PAPUC letter dated January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022)*.
  - February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022, PennDOT contacted Senator Kearny’s office about addition of an all way stop on the Sellers Avenue bridge due to sightline concerns.
  - March 7<sup>th</sup> received follow up email from Jane Brophy of Amtrak that:
    - “On March 2, Amtrak transmitted our comments back to PennDOT on the 100% design submittal. PennDOT will need to provide an itemized response to all 32 comments as well as send a revised pdf set”.
  - March of this year, the bridge weight limit was further downgraded.
  - April 11<sup>th</sup> all way stop was enacted at the intersection, no contact was provided to Borough. *(Source: Email Borough Manager dated April 11, 2022)*
  - July 20<sup>th</sup>, Sellers Avenue Bridge was closed to all traffic effective 2PM that day, without any prior notice being provided to the Borough.