

PROPERTY REPORT

Property ID: -1051934152

Property Name: Main Street Bridge over Cranbury Brook

Ownership: Public

Address: Main ST

Apartment #:

ZIP: 08512

PROPERTY LOCATION(S):

County:	Municipality:	Local Place Name:	USGS Quad:	Block:	Lot:
MIDDLESEX	Cranbury township	Cranbury	Hightstown		

Property Photo:



Old HSI Number:

NRIS Number:

HABS/HAER Number:

Description:

The Main Street Bridge over Cranbury Brook is a single-span, brick barrel arch bridge constructed in 1896. The bridge measures 23 feet in length, 34 feet, 6 inches in width, and carries two lanes of Main Street over Cranbury Brook. Main Street travels on a north-south alignment over the bridge, flanked by concrete sidewalks and four-rail, metal pipe railings (added 2014, similar in appearance to historic railings). The bridge is supported by coursed rubble stone spandrels and wingwalls, capped in concrete with utility pipe cuts. The east and west faces of the arch are lined with stone voussoirs. The intrados of the arch are coated with gunite (added in 1987). Adjacent to the upstream (east) face of the bridge, Cranbury Brook is dammed with a concrete spillway to form Brainerd Lake. The upstream approaches are reinforced with concrete buttresses. A coursed rubble stone retaining wall extends from the northwest bank to the roadway.

History: The Main Street Bridge over Cranbury Brook was constructed in 1896, replacing an earlier wood bridge of an unknown type (A.G. Lichtenstein & Associates, Inc. 1994). Its construction coincided with the construction of a new dam for Brainerd Lake, located immediately adjacent to the east of the subject bridge. Brainerd Lake was first dammed in 1736 and initially functioned as a mill pond (Nissen 1997:14). Main Street is first mapped as traveling over Brainerd Lake in 1850 (Otley and Keily 1850). When completed, the Main Street Bridge over Cranbury Brook was a brick barrel arch bridge with coursed rubble stone spandrels and wingwalls. The bridge's masonry arch construction was selected by the Middlesex County Freeholders due to the type's efficiency and durability (A.G. Lichtenstein & Associates, Inc. 1994). The subject bridge first appears cartographically on a 1916 Sanborn map of Cranbury (Sanborn Map Company 1916). Early twentieth-century photographs of the bridge show that four-rail, metal pipe railings flanked the roadway over the bridge during that period (Brennan and Brennan, Jr. 1995). No major alterations to the bridge are discernible on twentieth-century maps and aerial photographs (Sanborn Map Company 1916, 1933; Nationwide Environmental Title Research 1940, 1970, 2012). In 1987, the intrados were coated with gunite (A.G. Lichtenstein & Associates, Inc. 1994). The Brainerd Lake dam and spillway were replaced in 2014; however, it does not appear that the subject bridge was altered during their construction. The extant four-rail, metal pipe railings were also added in 2014 and are similar in appearance to railings that historically flanked Main Street over the bridge. According to the New Jersey Bridge Survey, the subject bridge is the last remaining brick barrel arch bridge in Middlesex County (A.G. Lichtenstein & Associates, Inc. 1994).

Character-defining elements of the Main Street Bridge over Cranbury Brook include its brick barrel arch, coursed rubble stone spandrels and wingwalls, and four-rail, metal pipe railings

Setting:

Survey Name: Cranbury Historic Sites Survey Phase III

Property ID:

Page 1

Surveyor: Matthew Goldberg

☒ (Primary Contact)

-1051934152

Organization: Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

The Main Street Bridge over Cranbury Brook is sited between two irregularly shaped parcels (Block 33, Lot 68 and Block 7, Lot 24) in Cranbury Township, Middlesex County, New Jersey. The bridge carries Main Street over Cranbury Brook and is adjacent to the west of Brainerd Lake. The subject property is located adjacent to the south of the commercial and residential core of downtown Cranbury.

**Registration
and Status
Dates:**

National Historic Landmark?: ☐

National Register: 9/18/1980

New Jersey Register: 8/9/1979

Determination of Eligibility: 3/25/1977

Certification of Eligibility:

SHPO Opinion:

Local Designation: 9/26/1988

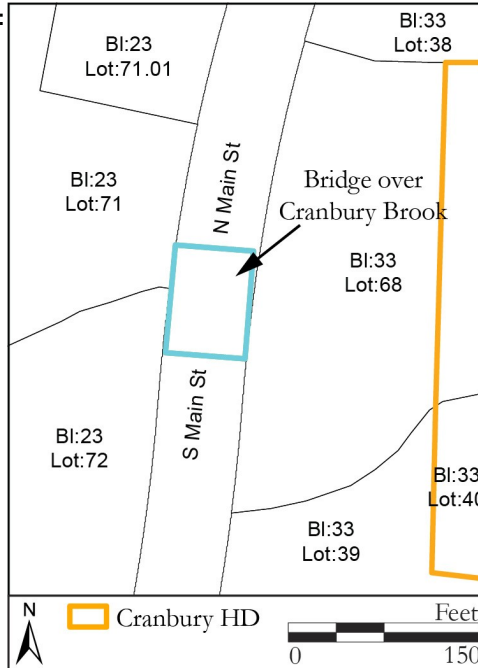
Other Designation:

Other Designation Date:

☐ **Eligibility Worksheet included in present survey?**

☐ **Is this Property an identifiable farm or former farm?**

Location Map:



Site Map:



BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Author:	Title:	Year:	HPO Accession #:	(if applicable)
A.G. Lichtenstein & Associates, Inc.	New Jersey Historic Bridge Survey. Prepared for the New Jersey Department of Transportation, Bureau of Environmental Analysis, and the Federal Highway Administration, New Jersey Division, Trenton, New Jersey. On file, State Historic Preservation Office, Trenton, New Jersey.	1994		
Brennan, Peggy and Frank J. Brennan, Jr.	Cranbury. Arcadia Publishing, Dover, New Hampshire.	1995		
Nationwide Environmental Title Research (NETR)	Historic Aerial Photograph. Electronic Document, http://www.historicaerials.com/ , accessed July 2023.	1940		
Nationwide Environmental Title Research (NETR)	Historic Aerial Photograph. Electronic Document, http://www.historicaerials.com/ , accessed July 2023.	1970		
Nationwide Environmental Title Research (NETR)	Historic Aerial Photograph. Electronic Document, http://www.historicaerials.com/ , accessed July 2023.	2012		
Nissen, Lee, editor.	Cranbury: 1697-1997. Historic Cranbury, Cranbury, New Jersey.	1997		
Otley, J.W. and J. Keily	Map of Middlesex County, New Jersey. Lloyd Vanderveer, Camden, New Jersey.	1850		
Sanborn Map Company	Insurance Maps of Cranbury, Middlesex County, New Jersey. Sanborn Map Company, New York, New York.	1916		
Sanborn Map Company	Insurance Maps of Cranbury, Middlesex County, New Jersey. Sanborn Map Company, New York, New York.	1933		

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Page 2

Additional Information:

Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc. recommends the Main Street Bridge over Cranbury Brook as a contributing resource to the Cranbury Historic District due to its date of construction and design. The bridge retains sufficient integrity of materials, design, workmanship, setting, location, feeling, and association to convey the significance of the historic district.

More Research Needed? ☐ (checked=Yes)

INTENSIVE-LEVEL USE ONLY:

Attachments Included:

<input type="checkbox"/> Building	<input type="checkbox"/> Bridge
<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape
<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry

Historic District ? ☒

District Name: Cranbury Historic District

Status: Contributing

Associated Archeological Site/Deposits? ☐

(known or potential sites. If Yes, please describe briefly)

Conversion Problem? ☐ **ConversionNote:** Null

Date form completed: 7/14/2023

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-1051934152

Page 3

PROPERTY REPORT: PHOTO CONTINUATION SHEET

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Property Name: Main Street Bridge over Cranbury Brook

Address: Main ST



Photo 2



Photo 3

Property Name: Main Street Bridge over Cranbury Brook

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Photo 4



Photo 5