



Animating Infrastructure

Site Information and Design Specifics

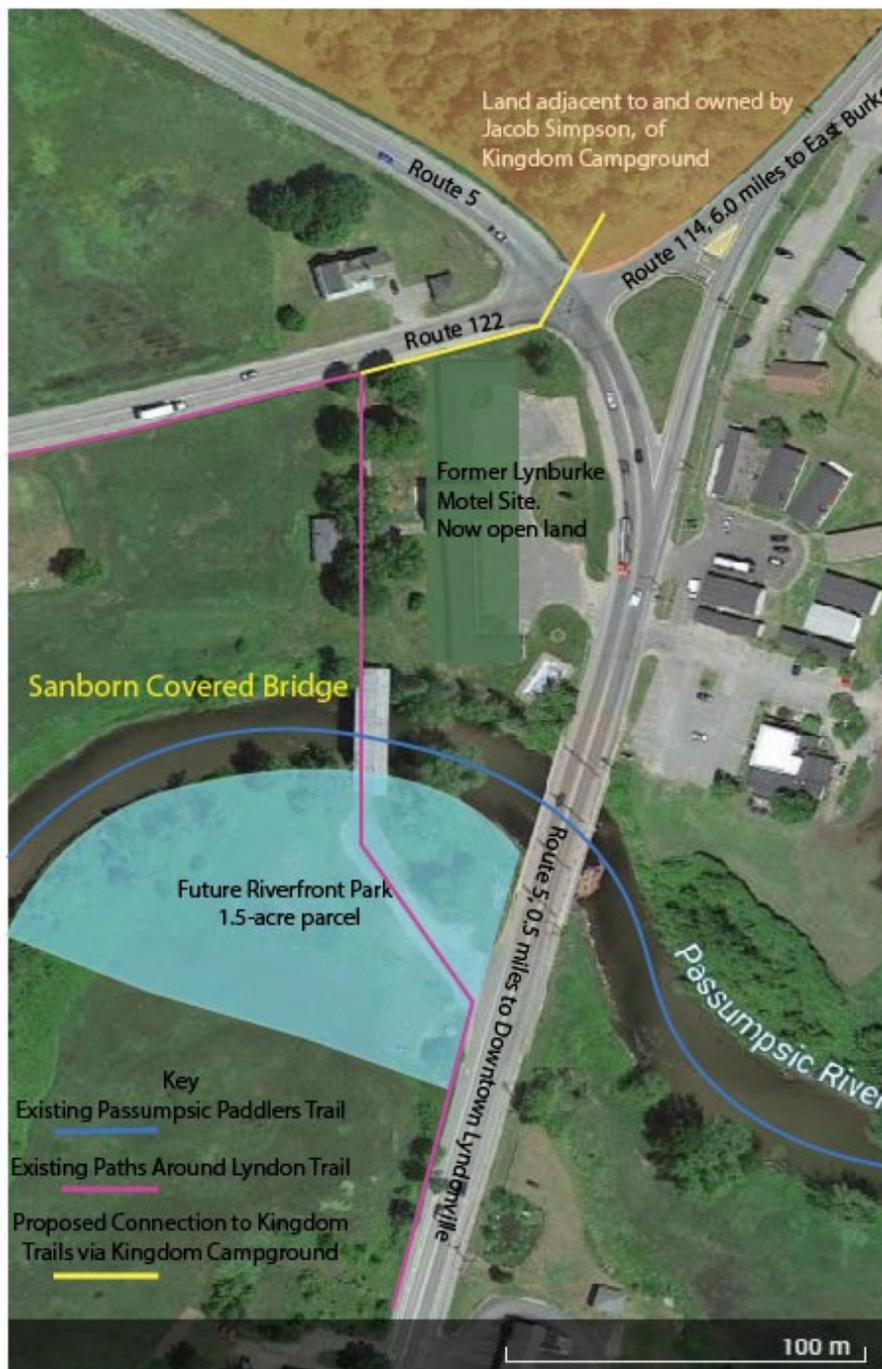
Sanborn Covered Bridge- Town of Lyndon, Vermont

The Sanborn Covered Bridge is located at the junction of Route 122, Route 5, and Route 114 in Lyndonville, VT crossing over the Passumpsic River. The bridge is on the National Register of Historic Places and is the longest single span Paddleford truss type bridge in New England. The bridge spans 118' across the Passumpsic and is a trail connector for VAST snowmobile travelers' and pedestrians using the Paths Around Lyndon walking trails. The future plan for the site is to create a riverfront park on the south side of the bridge as a place to connect to outdoor recreation networks, engage in passive recreation on the site, draw people into exploring downtown Lyndonville, and enjoy natural, historic, and artistic features of the park and bridge space.



The Town of Lyndon

The Town of Lyndon is located in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom. The Town has a population of approximately 5,000 residents. Within the Town of Lyndon is the Village of Lyndonville, where the Sanborn Covered Bridge lives. The Sanborn Covered Bridge site is less than a half mile from the designated Village Center of Lyndonville. The bridge currently serves as a trail connector and proposed trails would make the site even more connected to downtown, the Passumpsic River, and Kingdom Trails. The map below shows the site in a bigger context with existing and planned trail connections displayed.



Sanborn Covered Bridge Revitalization
Project Location Map

History of Sanborn Bridge

The Sanborn Covered Bridge was built in 1869 on Center Street. Some maps still refer to the bridge as Centre Covered Bridge. The bridge originally linked Lyndon Center with the fields that laid on the other side of the river, where downtown Lyndonville is now located. Up until 1960, the bridge was a primary link between Lyndon Center and Lyndonville.

In 1960, the Town upgraded the road and bridge along the portion of Route 122 where the bridge stood, and the Sanborn Covered Bridge was deemed obsolete. Luckily, a local landowner acquired the bridge and moved it to its current location adjacent to Route 5/Main Street. Many locals can remember watching the bridge move through town in 1960, recalling exactly where they stood as the bridge moved slowly from Center Street to Main Street.

Since 1960, the bridge has been in private ownership, changing hands a few times as the land on the north side of the bridge changed hands. The last private owners, Arthur and Jeannie Elliott, owned the bridge from 1975 to 2021. In 2014 emergency repairs were conducted by Tim Andrews, of the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, to keep this historically significant one-of-a-kind bridge from falling into the Passumpsic River.

In 2021, the Town Selectboard reevaluated the Town's assets and determined that ownership of the Sanborn Covered Bridge was not only in the best interest of the bridge (municipal ownership opened up funding opportunities for its restoration) but in the best interest of the town. Lyndon is known as the "Covered Bridge Capital of the Northeast Kingdom" with only one bridge fewer than the town with the most in Vermont. The bridges are a huge tourist draw and can be leveraged to spark additional economic development in downtown Lyndonville.



Bridge moving through Lyndon in 1960.

Local Ecology, Local Economy

The Sanborn Covered Bridge spans the Passumpsic River, a 22.7 -mile-long tributary of the Connecticut River. Though primarily a Caledonia County river, it is the only river to flow through all three counties of the Northeast Kingdom. It is home to several native species of animals including native Brown Trout, Brook Trout, Rainbow Trout, and native plants including sedges, panic grasses, and Jointweed.

Up until the 2010's Lyndon's local economy was mainly focused on farming, forestry, and manufacturing. One of the last major manufacturers in Lyndon closed its doors in 2014. Very recently, with the spike in tourism to Kingdom Trails in East Burke, Lyndon has begun to embrace its role as a hub community for outdoor recreation and tourism. Small shops and services catering to the needs of visitors seeking authentic outdoor recreation experiences have popped up, and unique historical sites, such as the five covered bridges, have had increased visitation.

Sculptural Location

The sculptural piece must communicate with the historic Sanborn Covered Bridge in some way. In a preliminary concept design for the future site, space for the sculptural piece is front and center on the site with the piece nodding and welcoming locals and visitors to engage with the historic covered bridge and Passumpsic River.

Here is the preliminary concept design for the site as a whole. Object 3 is the proposed location for the sculptural art installation. Because the concept design is still in the preliminary phase, the location of the art could shift and change, but will most likely stay close to the entrance to the site and close to the covered bridge.



Sanborn Covered Bridge
Preliminary Concept Design
Object 3 is proposed site for sculptural art installation

Questions?

Inquiries about the site information or design specifics can be made by sending an email to Nicole Gratton at planning@lyndonvt.org or by calling 802.626.1269.