



TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
201 WASHINGTON CROSSING-PENNINGTON ROAD
TITUSVILLE, NEW JERSEY 08560-1410

609-737-0605

September 27, 2009

Mr. Brian M. Hughes, County Executive
Mr. Greg Sandusky, Mercer County Engineer
640 Broad Street
PO Box 8068
Trenton, NJ 08650-0068

Re: Jacob's Creek Bridge

Dear Mr. Hughes and Mr. Sandusky:

The Hopewell Township Historic Preservation Commission has had an active voice in the protection of the Jacob's Creek Bridge beginning with the inclusion of the bridge on our local historic register in 2001. Shortly thereafter Heidi Kahme served as the HTHPC's liaison to the Jacob's Creek Task Force. There, after many lengthy and public discussions, Ms. Kahme represented the commission's view to restore the bridge in place - that suggested repairs would compromise the historical and architectural integrity of the bridge so altering it that its historicity would be called to question. In 2007, our HTHPC also reviewed with the county's bridge consultant some dozen options for repair and/or replacement and again our commission voted to restore the bridge in place. Most recently Mercer County informed both the Hopewell Township Committee and the Historic Preservation Commission that the bridge would be replaced with a new span and that the old bridge would be relocated to the Aliger Tract, a tract of land that Hopewell Township is in the process of creating a passive recreation area. After reluctantly accepting this decision by the county to replace the historic old span, the HTHPC asked for involvement not only in the restoration/relocation of the antique King bridge but also on that bridge's replacement. The county consented and Mr. Greg Sandusky requested a special meeting with the HTHPC in early September of this year to discuss the design options for the bridge replacement - either a steel span somewhat mimicking the original bridge in some form or another; or a concrete bridge that could or could not be faced with stone to be more in keeping with the existing stone walls of Bear Tavern Road. A large attendance by area residents who opposed the replacement of the bridge, brought among other things one important aspect of the bridge environs that the HTHPC had only tangentially discussed - that the surrounding landscape of the bridge appears much today

MAXIMILLIAN HAYDEN, CHAIRMAN
BETSY ACKERMAN, DAVID BLACKWELL,
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as it had when George Washington and his troops crossed the creek to advance into Trenton. No other stretch along the Victory Trail appears as unaltered as this site does, albeit with a 19th century bridge. In light of the recent closing of the bridge over safety concerns (the HTHPC was equally concerned that the bridge not suffer the same fate as the Province Line Road bridge spanning the Bedens Brook - as you are well aware, that bridge was overloaded by a large dump truck and fell into the brook totally destroying that historic bridge - also a King bridge) such information begs the county to further investigate this claim and explore more fully how to best approach this situation.

The Commission greatly appreciates the time and effort that the county has undertaken on this project to date and asks for this one further indulgence. The HTHPC would very much like to continue to be involved in further discussions regarding the bridge and as such look forward to hearing from you and working with you in the near future.

Again, thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. James Hayden III". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name of the signatory.

M. James Hayden III, Chair

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