



TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

MERCER COUNTY

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October 18, 2010

Brian Hughes, County Executive
County of Mercer
640 South Broad Street
PO Box 8068
Trenton, NJ 08650-8068

Dear Executive Hughes:

I am writing to acknowledge your letter of September 29, 2010, which offered Hopewell Township the opportunity to assume ownership of the Jacobs Creek Bridge and the segment of County Route 579 between the Ewing Township boundary and its intersection with County Route 546.

The Hopewell Township Committee discussed your offer in open public session at its meeting on Tuesday, October 12, 2010. At that time committee members and members of the public raised several questions about how a transfer of ownership would be accomplished and what such a transfer would mean to the Township. In addition, the Township Committee discussed a letter that was issued October 1, 2010 by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), which indicated that the area around the bridge "is potentially eligible for the New Jersey and National Registers" as "the Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape."

In order to better understand the effect that such a designation would have on the bridge and surrounding area, the Township Committee has requested answers to a series of questions that it has sent to NJDEP Commissioner Robert Martin. For example, the Committee needs to understand from the NJDEP exactly how the designation might limit the design of the bridge, and what the time frame would be for the agency to render a final determination.

In addition, the Committee has asked the Township Administrator/Engineer to continue to research the very complex budgetary, legal and long term capital maintenance issues involved with municipal ownership of the bridge.

As you know, a decision of this magnitude cannot be undertaken lightly, and therefore we respectfully request that you extend your October 30, 2010 deadline to October 30, 2011. This extension would give the Township an opportunity to receive and review NJDEP's

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responses to the Township's questions and permit the Township to complete the due diligence required before it can respond to your offer.

Finally, there were also questions raised during our meeting, which are properly directed to Mercer County. I ask that you direct these questions to the proper County official for response. Answers to these questions will better enable the Township to make an informed decision on your offer:

1. What are the funding sources for this Jacobs Creek Bridge project and the amounts of each of those sources?
2. Do these funding sources include the refurbishing and relocation Jacobs Creek Bridge to Alliger Park?
3. May the funding sources be used for rehabilitation of the bridge to Alternate 3B status?
4. If Hopewell Township assumes ownership of the bridge and roadway segment are the funding sources for the bridge project transferrable to Hopewell Township in whole or part?
5. Will the County resurface the roadway and complete all bridge improvements as a prerequisite to Township acceptance of the offer?

Thank you for your consideration and continued assistance.

Very Truly Yours,



Michael Markulec, Mayor

C: Hopewell Township Committee