

February 28, 2011

Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes
Mercer County Administration Building
640 South Broad Street
P.O. Box 8068
Trenton, NJ 08650-0068

Re: Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape, RFP - Bear Tavern Road Bridge
214.2

Dear Mr. Hughes,

Knowing, as you must, from the press articles that we have both commented on, from letters to the editors of both the Trenton Times and the Hopewell Valley News, from meetings with Hopewell Township, and from your staff at the Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders, that the **Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape has been determined Potentially Eligible for the State and National Registers of Historic Places**, and that an application for the State and National Registers is being submitted for June Review, why would you continue moving ahead with an RFP which would effectively destroy a potentially historic Revolutionary site? Why would you waste taxpayer money and the time of the firms bidding on this project? Why would you issue an RFP without posting it publicly on the Mercer County web site, or posting the Bridge Design for that RFP? The Engineering firms had a scant few weeks to reply, as their deadline was February 25, 2011.

Although the State Historic Preservation Office determined the Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape to be Potentially Eligible for the National Register, although you are aware that an application is pending for the State and National Registers for Historic Places, and that a June Review is coming up, although you are aware that the Township of Hopewell, the Hopewell Township Committee, the Hopewell Township Historic Preservation Commission, Crossroads of the American Revolution and Preservation NJ are all opposed to the excessive roadway plan you have outlined in the County RFP - you continue to push forward with this destructive plan which benefits only a major corporation, Janssen Pharmaceutica.

You have allowed the County Engineering Department to call a meeting(8-24-10) at the NJ Department of Environmental protection, Land Use Division, which included representatives of both Janssen and Johnson and Johnson, without including a representative of the local Hopewell Township government. This was done while a Preliminary Application for Historic Eligibility was being determined at the State Historic office, prior to an RFP being finished or sent out, and prior to any permit

applications being submitted to Land Use for the project. Comments were made at that meeting by John Sebacus (Janssen) and Rick Lloyd (Director of State and Government Affairs- Johnson & Johnson) which could be called "influential" at best. They referred to the Master Plan in Hopewell Township, without the benefit of a Hopewell Township representative to counteract their comments by pointing out that both the Hopewell Township Committee and the Hopewell Township Historic Preservation Commission have passed Resolutions opposed to this "new" plan. Hopewell Township has stood firm on Alternative (3B) which was originally the preferred alternative of the 2004 Task Force for the Bear Tavern Road Bridge. Your County Engineer, Greg Sandusky, and Janssen Pharmaceutica sat on that Task Force.

Alternative 3B gives you all of the safety, height and weight provisions that the county outlined as necessary. It allows emergency vehicles to access the bridge. Your alternative *mimics the 1989 schematic* drawn up by Van Cleef Associates for the Hopewell Township Planning Board in direct relation to Janssen Pharmaceutica's take-over of the Bear Tavern Road facility, when they were exploring possible alternatives for their proposed eventual expansion.

That 1989 schematic was not a promise, it was not written in stone, and the awareness and knowledge that we now have in regard to our environment and history has caused Hopewell Township to take a stand against that plan because of the many detrimental aspects it poses in our community. The bridge and the roadway are County owned, but Janssen Pharmaceutica is a guest in Hopewell Township and your roadway plan affects both Ewing and Hopewell Townships well beyond the entrance to their campus. Janssen has been told that they can apply for permits to allow a Rt. 29 entrance, but their comments at the August meeting were that that option is "too expensive". What about the \$6 million cost to taxpayers?

Not only will you be destroying any vestige of the bucolic and environmentally preserved landscape that welcomes visitors to Hopewell Township from Ewing, your complete disregard for the history of this area is appalling. Your Engineering Department is putting forth the impression that residents, Hopewell Township government, and the larger historic community believe that Washington crossed the Jacobs Creek Bridge. *How can a man who has previously been recognized for his dedication to saving and preserving history allow such behavior in his administration?* Presentations of the information included in the application for the National Register of Historic Places have been made at Patriot's Week in Trenton and in January at the Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders. I personally invited Greg Sandusky and asked him to extend that invitation to both you and Aaron Watson. None of you attended. Yet your response, in the Trenton Times, regarding the letter you received from Crossroads of the American Revolution and Preservation NJ, states that there is "nothing new" to consider and you are moving forward. With respect, sir, how would you even know?

The communities of Hopewell Township, Ewing Township, Mercer County, New Jersey, and the larger historic community, continue with our dedication to fight this excessive roadway plan that will destroy our history, our environment, endanger our citizens, our Elementary schools, and the **Historic Harbourton District** in Hopewell Township.

This group of dedicated citizens has grown to over 3000 people, raised the funds for a professional consultant, and continues to grow in number and support every day. Given the overwhelming response to the preservation of the Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape, and the desire to see a rehabilitated Jacobs Creek Bridge in place to protect it's surrounding environment, it is not too late for you to reconsider the damage that will be permanently inflicted should you move ahead with this plan.

At the very least, you owe it to your constituents and to the larger National Historic Community, to allow the application for the National Register of Historic Places to move forward, unhindered and undisturbed until a final determination is made to it's status. Why wouldn't you give this important aspect of New Jersey and Revolutionary War history the respect it deserves? That is the question that perplexes us all.

Sincerely,

Roni Browne Katz

Applicant - Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape

cc: Beth Kerr - Applicant - Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape
David Blackwell - Applicant - Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape
Cate Litvak, Crossroads of the American Revolution
Ron Emrich, Preservation NJ
Congressman Rush Holt
Senator Shirley Turner
Senator Menendez
Walter Gravas, National Trust for Historic Preservation
Chair Pat Colavita, Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders
Bob Martin, NJDEP Commissioner
Amy Cradic, Asst. Comm, DEP, State Historic Preservation Office
Dan Saunders, Acting Administrator, State Historic Preservation Office
Marilyn Lennon, Asst. Comm, DEP, Land Use
Charlie Welsh, DEP, Land Use
Chris Jones, DEP, Land Use
Mayor Jim Burd, Hopewell Township Committee
Max Hayden, Chair, Hopewell Township Historic Preservation Commissioner
Judith Peoples, Ewing Historical Society
Lee Farnham, Ewing Environmental Commission
Vincent J. Calcagno, Township Council, Robbinsville, NJ
David Fried, Mayor, Robbinsville, NJ
John F. Biencivengo, Mayor, Township of Hamilton
William C. Weldon, J & J CEO, Chairman, Board of Directors
U.S.Senator Frank R. Lautenberg
U.S.Senator Robert Menendez
U.S.Representative Chris Smith
Save the Victory Trail & Jacobs Creek Bridge Coalition
Friends of Jacobs Creek Crossing
Hopewell Valley Historical Society
Dennis Bertland Associates, Cultural Resource Consulting